

# Building Stronger Links Between Researchers and Policy Makers

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# Outline

- Issue
- Challenges
- The ISRN Cluster Study
- Lessons Learned
- Opportunities

# The Issue: Knowledge Transfer

- How to improve policy makers' understanding and use of research? – framed largely as an issue of communications.
- How to improve the applicability of research to policy making? – framed largely as an issue of relevance.
- The “policization” of research requires ongoing engagement between researchers and policy makers.

# Ongoing Engagement Around:

- framing research questions and policy needs
- understanding the current state of knowledge and practice
- structuring research projects
- communicating findings and refining questions, needs, and practices

# Challenges to Effective Engagement

Who? – diverse, changing communities

What? – different interests, pressures

When? – varying time frames

Where? – geographic boundaries

Why? – desired outcomes differ

How? – different modes of participation and  
communication

# ISRN Cluster Study

- Senior policy makers regarded as partners from the beginning
- Involved various levels of policy makers and advisors and researchers
- Sustained interaction throughout different aspects of the project
- Formal and informal interaction between senior policy makers and researchers
- Various modes used to communicate results

# Lessons Learned

## Engage

- early
- often
- across a variety of levels
- formally and informally
- in policy specific communication
- with current and future projects in mind

# Opportunities to Engage Policy Makers

- newsletters
- website
- government lecture series
- policy focused workshops
- written policy summaries and concise literature reviews



# Conclusion

Policy questions rarely die, but they often hibernate.

Ongoing interaction between researchers and policy makers will benefit both.