

Assessing and Mapping Current Capacity

Using the elements described below as a guide, assess and map what capacity is currently in place and identify where capacity strengthening efforts need to be concentrated at the individual, institutional and national levels. The total research system capacity is made up of all three components and their interactions with each other and with other international partners. All components have complementary strengths and should be developed simultaneously. This is a dynamic process: required capacities will vary across time and different capacity needs.

INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY

HUMAN RESOURCE SKILLS NEEDED FOR RESEARCH FOR HEALTH

Conducting research

- Knowledge and expertise in a particular discipline
- Research techniques and analytic skills
- Ability to engage in multidisciplinary research across sectors

Managing research

- Ability to engage in multidisciplinary research across sectors
- Skills in managing research, research staff and resources
- Administrative / research support skills
- Grant writing and contracting skills

Communicating research results

 Skills in writing up and disseminating research findings for different audiences

Develop and enhance these skills by:

- Instituting individual training on a continuum of increasing financial investment: from 'learning by doing' to postgraduate training
- Providing opportunities for career development, inter-disciplinary interaction and mentorship
- Fostering flexibility, responsiveness and mutual accountability

CAPACITY

INSTITUTIONAL

CHARACTERISTICS
OF SUPPORTIVE
INSTITUTIONS

Staffing

- A critical mass of skilled human resources
- Clear and appropriate pathways for career development, including adequate remuneration, recognition and professional development opportunities
- Strategies for promoting the retention of skilled, experienced human resources

Management

- Leadership, managerial capacity and management systems
- Financial & grants management personnel and systems
- Ensure access to core funding: balance between external and national funding sources
- Mentoring and coaching support for managers

Environment

- A dynamic research culture that is supportive of individual capacity building efforts
- A facilitating environment which provides opportunities for collaboration, establishes research networks and enhances access to information
- A physical environment conducive to productive research – infrastructure, equipment, space, internet access and
- Capacity to engage in international collaborative partnerships

NATIONAL CAPACITY

SYSTEM SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH FOR HEALTH CAPACITY

- Develop a national strategy for human resources involving all sectors (e.g. training, retention, promotion)
- Build national research and innovation infrastructure
- Develop a strategy for institutional capacity strengthening
- Allocate a dedicated budget for capacity building
- Establish and implement indicators to monitor capacity strengthening efforts
- Build national demand for research by targeting decision makers, media, civil service organisations (CSOs), and advocacy groups
- Build national capacity to use research, including research management capacity and capacity in evidence-based policy development
- Build in opportunities for consultation around changes in policy and practice

The COHRED Group

