

National Health Research Policy of Nepal
नेपालको राष्ट्रिय स्वास्थ्य अनुसन्धान नीति

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FOREWORD

As per Nepal Health Research Council Act 1991 section 6 sub-section "chha", it has been mentioned to publish and disseminate the knowledge, experience and achievement of research under taken in Nepal. It is my immense pleasure to bring out research policy of this council for coming five years which will serve as guidelines for future direction of the activities to be carried out by council

It has been basically drafted by Dr. B. B. Karki with his enormous experience of planning and policy in Ministry of Health. Thereafter it has been refined several times in different session of workshops after exhaustive and brainstorming exercise.

The National Health Research Policy comprises of vision, mission, goal and the future strategies as it aims to promote health research in all areas including biomedical, clinical, public health, behavioral, traditional and health economics research so that the priority health problem which has been identified by Ministry Of Health could be addressed and could lead for the promotion of health research culture in the country. The description in the policy definitely add the growing focus on health research systems at least for the five years with various additional dimensions in the research. This policy may eventually lead to desired outcomes that might be the mile stone for the health gains.

Lastly, I want to pay my heartiest gratitude to the then chairman of council Prof. Dr. Gopal Prasad Acharya for his indelible input and unforgettable contribution through his tremendous experience, efforts and knowledge during preparation of this policy document. I want to pay my thankfulness to all seen and unseen persons who contributed to bring this in desired shape and order.

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MBBS, MD
Member-Secretary
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National Health Research Policy

PREAMBLE:

The function of the National Health Research Policy (NHRP) is to give a definite direction for the promotion, implementation, management and utilization of all aspects of health research in Nepal.

The role of the policy is to provide health information to His Majesty's Government (HMG) for evidence based health policy formulation. .

The policy promotes health research activities in its broader dimensions with inter-sectoral and multi-disciplinary participation.

The policy assures networking and collaborating among all the stakeholders in health research as well as the utilization of health research findings. .

The National Health Research Policy institutes the National Health Research System (NHRS).

National Health Research System (NHRS):

The National Health Research System (NHRS) creates a systematic approach to health research development. It is a system for planning, coordinating, managing monitoring and evaluating health research activities and resources for equitable national development.

Goal of the NHRS:

The overall goal of the NHRS is to function as the "brain" of the health system. It should aim to generate new knowledge, and facilitate the use of available knowledge and advances for overall health development.

Objectives of the NHRS:

- a. To develop a broad strategic vision for health research including short- term and long- term health research strategies.
- b. To develop a National Health Research Policy, Health Research Agenda, and Health Research Priorities.
- c. To link health research to national and local health priorities.
- d. To develop standard procedures and a mechanism to ensure ethics, equity, accountability and transparency in the health research system.

- e. To promote coordination, collaboration, and partnership in health research.

Functions of NHRS

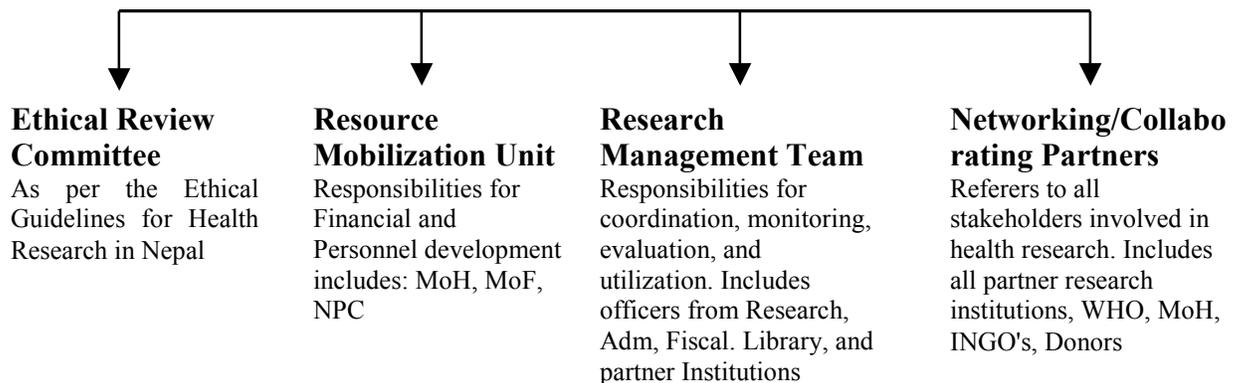
- a. **Stewardship:** Quality and effective leadership is required to promote an efficient health research system.
- b. **Capacity development:** Appropriately trained human resources are essential for research promotion capacity development. This training includes development skills and ethical review skills. Development of a critical mass of personnel in this area is essential. Institutional capacity development in terms of research facilities (research laboratory), educational/training institutions and centers need to be further developed, sustained and networked.
- c. **Knowledge management:** The system will generate new knowledge for health development and research findings will be utilized for policy making to provide better health for all.
- d. **Resource mobilization:** This involves the proper mobilization of human, financial, and other required resources including the generation of funds.
- e. **Networking/collaboration:** A mechanism is established to promote networking/collaboration among all stakeholders involved in health research. NHRC, as the central point, will network with the education system, science and technology system and health system.

Organization Structure For: National Health Research System

Nepal Health Research Council (NHRC)
(Central body)
Executive Board (NHRC)

Implementing Body for NHRC
(Chairman/Member Secretary)

Committees



Vision:

The achievement of better health for all through health research focusing on equity and social justice.

Mission:

To promote health research in order to contribute towards the improvement of health for all in Nepal

Goal:

To facilitate health research for overall health development.

National health research policy statement:

The National Health Research Policy for Nepal strives for the achievement of better health for all through health research with an emphasis on equity, social justice and ethics. The policy aims to establish linkages between health research and the National Health Policy of His Majesty's Government.

The policy promotes health research in all aspects. The policy seeks to ensure availability of human and financial resources required for health research.

This policy seeks to collaborate and network with all major stakeholders involved in health research, while at the same time, endeavoring to promote inter-sectoral participation and international linkages.

In order to facilitate the success of this policy it will be necessary to establish a National Health Research System.

Strategies:

The National Health Research Policy will function in collaboration with the National Health Policy of the Ministry of Health and the Science and Technology. The short term and long-term plan for the National Health Research Policy will be developed and the mechanism for monitoring and evaluation will be strengthened.

The health research capacity for Nepal will be continually developed and maintained to provide better health for all with judicious utilization of available resources. The mechanism to further strengthen the health

The research policy will promote on-going development of the health research culture by incorporating the core curriculum for health research at the Bachelor Level health science program and by providing health research grants and awards as well as by conducting health system research methodology training programs.

The health research database will be improved by networking/ collaborating with all the stakeholders involved in health research. Evidence based health research findings will be utilized by policy makers.

Linkages will be strengthened among all the sectors, institutions, disciplines, and communities. .

Financial resources from HMG, INGO's, NGO's, donor agencies and other sectors will be mobilized for health research promotion.

The National Health Research System will provide the structure and function for networking/collaborating with all health researcher/research institutes. The mechanism for planning, coordinating and managing health research resources and activities will be strengthened. At the same time, emphasis will be given to policy/ system analysis, communication, resource flow and mobilization and management of resources.

POLICY AIMS:

1. To emphasize ethical practice in all health research to achieve equity and social justice.
2. To augment health researches in the priority areas set by the National Health Policy and to provide advice based on evidence to His Majesty's Government of Nepal for formulating appropriate health policies.
3. To promote health research in all aspects.
4. To facilitate collaboration and networking with all major stakeholders involved in health research at the national level.
5. To enable, support and sustain human, financial, technical and other resources required for health research.
6. To promote inter/intra - sectoral participation in health research.
7. To secure international linkages and collaboration for health research.
8. To establish a National Health Research System.

POLICY AIM 1:

TO EMPHASIZE ETHICAL PRACTICE IN ALL HEALTH RESEARCH TO ACHIEVE EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR ALL.

OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES:

- 1.2 To ensure broad based participation of the vulnerable and marginalized member of the society in priority setting; e.g. Women, children, the disabled, the aged, poor and socially disadvantaged groups.
 - 1.1.a. Discussions at the local level will take place to identify the needs of the vulnerable population. Local public health workers and community leaders will also be involved.
 - 1.1.b. The public health issues of the vulnerable members of the society will be identified.
 - 1.1.c. Steps will be developed and implemented to ensure participation and benefits. This will need to involve the local population, various ministries and other aid groups.
 - 1.1.d. Public health research priority at the local as well as at the national level will be reviewed and revised.
 - 1.1.e. Mechanism will be developed to capture, protect and exploit the knowledge, innovation and resources at the local level.
- 1.2 To conduct research with a special emphasis on respect for persons, justice, beneficence, respect for the environment and ethical responsibility in the use of animals for research.
 - 1.2.a. International ethical health research guidelines will be incorporated into Nepal's ethical guidelines.
 - 1.2.b. National Ethical Guidelines For Health Research In Nepal will be followed.
 - 1.2.c. Nepal Health Research Council, as the apex body, will continue to promote Ethical Review Boards in all appropriate institutions.
 - 1.2.d. Ethical Review Boards of Nepal Health Research Council will be strengthened.
 - 1.2.e. The present National Ethical Guidelines For Health Research In Nepal will be continuously evaluated for their effectiveness and usefulness.
 - 1.2.f. The National Ethical Guidelines for Health Research In Nepal will be updated.
- 1.3. To protect intellectual property rights
 - 1.3.a. A mechanism will be developed to protect, exploit and capitalize intellectual property rights issues related to health issues.

POLICY AIM 2:

TO AUGMENT HEALTH RESEARCHES IN THE PRIORITY AREAS SET BY THE NATIONAL HEALTH POLICY AND TO PROVIDE ADVICE BASED ON EVIDENCE TO MINISTRY OF HEALTH FOR FORMULATING APPROPRIATE HEALTH POLICIES.

OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES:

- 2.1. To develop a mechanism for close collaboration with the Ministry of Health.
 - 2.1.a. Nepal Health Research Council will collaborate with the ministry of health to promote health research.
 - 2.1.b. A joint team of Nepal Health Research Council and the Ministry of Health will be formed to promote health research in policy development, priority setting, research process and dissemination and utilization of research findings.
 - 2.1.c. Nepal Health Research Council will continue to promote health research by collaborating/networking with regional focal points along with agencies involved in health research.
- 2.2. To ensure that health policy is evidence based.
 - 2.2.a. Health issues to be addressed will be identified using reliable data.

POLICY AIM 3:

TO PROMOTE HEALTH RESEARCH IN ALL ASPECTS.

OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES:

- 3.1. To promote research on biomedical, clinical and behavioral sciences, public health, health economics, health policy, traditional medicine, and other areas.
 - 3.1.a. More research proposals and reports will be invited.
- 3.2. To accelerate the development of the health research culture at all universities, hospitals, medical colleges, health system providers, and other health related institutions, e.g. NGOs, INGO's etc.
 - 3.2.a. Core curriculum for health research will be incorporated in the bachelor level health science program.
 - 3.2.b. Health research grants/awards will be allocated to improve the health research culture. Undergraduate grants, postgraduate grants, young scientist's grants, experienced researcher grants, and outstanding research awards will be provided.
- 3.3. To simplify the process of health research approval, while at the same time maintaining the technical, scientific and ethical excellence required.

POLICY AIM 4:

TO FACILITATE COLLABORATION AND NETWORKING WITH ALL MAJOR STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED IN HEALTH RESEARCH AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL.

OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES:

- 4.1 To develop a National Health Research Information System.
 - 4.1.a. A national data base center will be identified for the collection of data.
 - 4.1.b. Health research data will be made available to all qualified personnel, e.g. researchers, policy makers, etc.
 - 4.1.d. A national data base center will be established on traditional medical practices, knowledge, recipes, manuscripts and medicinal plants.
- 4.2. To strengthen the capacity to utilize health research data for health policy development.
 - 4.2.a. Policy makers and all stakeholders will be involved for health research.
 - 4.2.b. Research data will be transformed into a language that is useful and understandable to the community and to policy makers.

- 4.2.c. A mechanism for a more structured dissemination of health research information will be developed so that the benefits of research can be more useful to the community.
- 4.2.d. Research findings will be communicated to policy and decision makers to facilitate policy development that is evidence based.
- 4.2.e. A mechanism for collaboration and networking with all stakeholders to promote health research in all its aspects will be developed that includes capacity development, sharing of resources, promotion of good ethical practices, ownership of researches, etc.

POLICY AIM 5:

TO ENABLE, SUPPORT AND SUSTAIN HUMAN, FINANCIAL, TECHNICAL AND OTHER RESOURCES REQUIRED FOR HEALTH RESEARCH.

OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES:

- 5.1. To address the existing gaps and constraints in health research. 5.I.a.
A critical mass of health researchers will be developed.

- 5.I.b. Training/updating workshops on health system methodology will be conducted on a regular basis.
- 5.1.c. Necessary financial resources will be generated for health research.
- 5.I.d. Funds/sponsorships for qualified health researchers will be actively sought.
- 5.I.e. The compatibility of local health issues with His Majesty's Government health programs will be assessed.
- 5.2. To determine the feasibility for a National Health Research Laboratory.
 - 5.2.a. Analysis and assessment of existing Health Research Laboratories will be carried out.
- 5o1.b. Feasibility study on establishing a National Health Research Laboratory will be conducted. This will include the total financial cost, personnel required, plan for sustainability as well as a list of possible donors.
- 5.2.c. Various divisions of health research laboratories that may be required for Nepal will be determined based on analysis, assessment and feasibility reports.
- 5.3. To establish a National Health Research Library/information database center.
- 5A. To establish a mechanism for networking and sharing of resources between His Majesty's Government, NGO's, INGO's and others related with health research.
 - 5A.a. The stakeholders involved in health research will be listed.
 - 5A.b. The stakeholders will be requested to identify their research resources.
 - 5A.c. A database of resources for health research will be established.
 - 5A.d. Collaborating and sharing of resources will be promoted to strengthen the health research culture in Nepal.

- 5.6. To have His Majesty's Government contribute 2% of the total National Health sector budget and 5% of all donor health sector development budgets to health research. (As. per the recommendation of the "International Conference for Health Research Development", Bangkok, 10-13 October.. P. 65 Financing)
- 5.7. To actively seek funding from donor agencies interested in health development in Nepal.
- 5.8. To develop a mechanism whereby Nepalese resources in health research can be identified and utilized to strengthen health research capacity inside as well as outside of Nepal.

POLICY AIM 6:

TO PROMOTE INTER/INTRA- SECTORAL AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN HEALTH RESEARCH (ALL FOR HEALTH).

OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES:

- 6.1 To collaborate/network with those in education, environment, ecology, social and behavioral sciences, population, agriculture, trade and commerce, science /technology, forestry, and others.
 - 6.1.a. A core group of experts from various disciplines will be identified to support health research.
 - 6.1.b To network/collaborate with the Village Development Committee (VDCs), community leaders, social workers and women.
- 6.2 To develop a research culture wherein policy makers and the community are sensitive to the value of research and are supportive of science and scientists.
 - 6.2.a. Awareness programs taking place on the local level with the community and policy makers.

6.2.b. Government, INGO's, NGO's, sponsoring/funding agencies for health research commit resources.

6.3 To encourage public/private partnership to promote health research.

POLICY AIM 7:

TO SECURE INTERNATIONAL LINKAGES FOR HEALTH RESEARCH.

OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES:

- 7.1. To develop a mechanism for the successful collaboration/ networking for the transfer of technology and capacity building for health research.
- 7.2. To further develop and strengthen partnership with External Developmental Partners including WHO, UN Agencies and others.

POLICY AIM 8:

TO ESTABLISH A NATIONAL HEALTH RESEARCH SYSTEM

The National Health Research System will be developed which will be required for planning, coordinating, monitoring and managing health research resources and activities and for promoting research for effective and equitable national health development.

OPERATIONAL STRATIGIES:

- 8.1. To develop a mechanism for the governance of the National Health ..Research System.
 - 8.I.a. A designated focal point will be identified for the governance of the system.
 8. Ib. The focal point will coordinate with education system, science and technology system and health system.

8.2. To coordinate and unite fragmented health research.

8.2.a. Establish a research management team.

8.2.b. The research management team will develop a mechanism for research evaluation.

8.2.c. The research management team will evaluate the long and short-term impact of health research and the use of research results,

8.2.d. The research management team will provide a record (confidential if required) of the successes and failures of the total research process as a way to accomplish better research.

8.3. To bring synergy between different research organizations.

8.3.a. A networking mechanism will be developed for collaboration and communication within the country and outside involving all stakeholders involved in health research.

8.4. To better align health research with national health priorities.

8.4.a. A priority research agenda will be developed based on national needs for health.

8.4.b. Health research will align itself with the needs of the society based on evidence.

8.5. To develop research capacity and to mobilize resources for research and development.

8.5.a. Increase self-reliance in financing and human resources development.

8.6. To set rules procedures and standards.

8.6.a. Good ethical practices will be followed and attention will be paid to the vulnerable members of the society.

8.7. To develop the following divisions to encompass major health problems of the country such as communicable diseases, noncommunicable diseases, family health and nutrition, basic science, information and publication and environmental health.

Legal Provision:

In order to implement the above-mentioned provisions, His Majesty's Government should endorse by formulating necessary laws, acts, rules and regulations.

Ethical Review Committee

As per the Ethical Guidelines for Health Research in Nepal

Resource Mobilization Unit

Responsible for Financial and personnel development includes: MoH, MoF, NPC

Research Management Team

Responsible for coordination, monitoring, evaluation, and utilization. Includes officers from Research, Adm., Fiscal Library, and partner Institutions

Networking/Cooperating Partners

Refers to all stakeholders involved in health research. Includes all partner research institutions, WHO, MoH, INGO's, Donors