Part 5
Reflections on Health Policy and Systems Research
This final section of the Reader aims to stimulate broader thinking about key methodological and other issues when doing Health Policy and Systems Research (HPSR). Some of the papers presented here focus on research strategy issues, including critical papers that address weaker areas of current HPSR practice in low- and middle-income countries. Other papers report researchers’ own reflections on their experience.

In addition to this selection of papers, we encourage readers to draw on the ‘How to do …’ series of papers in the journal Health Policy and Planning as they can inform and guide the use of particular methods in HPSR.

References


- **Rationale for selection:** to stimulate thinking about new approaches to intervention evaluation that allow for systems

http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/adc.2007.126466

- **Rationale for selection:** to provoke critical reflection on the practical and methodological challenges of doing intervention and evaluation work in LMIC health settings

http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/heapol/czn021

- **Rationale for selection:** practical introduction to investigating power in implementation

http://dx.doi.org/10.1186/1471-2458-8-205

- **Rationale for selection:** practical guide to development and Monitoring and Evaluation study, with strong focus on feedback to support implementation

Part 5 - **Reflections on Health Policy and Systems Research** 471

- **Rationale for selection:** provides insights into application of stakeholder analysis with conclusions for how to use research to influence policy


- **Rationale for selection:** To provoke critical reflection on ethical issues for household level HPSR


- **Rationale for selection:** reports important method for investigating actor understandings and perceptions


- **Rationale for selection:** provides an example of a strong document review


- **Rationale for selection:** to provoke critical reflection on how to assess patient and user perspectives


- **Rationale for selection:** reflective paper on research approaches, addressing ethical issues


- **Rationale for selection:** to provoke critical reflection on how to do health policy analysis work
What does this Reader offer?

Health Policy and Systems Research (HPSR) is often criticized for lacking rigour, providing a weak basis for generalization of its findings and, therefore, offering limited value for policy-makers. This Reader aims to address these concerns through supporting action to strengthen the quality of HPSR.

The Reader is primarily for researchers and research users, teachers and students, particularly those working in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). It provides guidance on the defining features of HPSR and the critical steps in conducting research in this field. It showcases the diverse range of research strategies and methods encompassed by HPSR, and it provides examples of good quality and innovative HPSR papers.

"Health Policy and Systems Research is a rapidly developing and critically important field of health research, but has lacked any coherent presentation of its nature, scope and methods. This Reader remedies this gap, and will be an indispensable source of guidance for anyone conducting Health Policy and Systems Research or wishing to learn about it," said Anne Mills, Professor of Health Economics and Policy and Vice-Director, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

The production of the Reader was commissioned by the Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research and it will complement its other investments in methodology development and postgraduate training.