REFANI Research Uptake:
Communicating evidence to ensure more effective humanitarian interventions

Overview on the Research Uptake Strategy

OVERVIEW

Led by Action Against Hunger, the REFANI Research Uptake Strategy (RUS) makes project results available and accessible to both technical and non-technical audiences, enabling the use of REFANI’s evidence in policy and practice. Central to the strategy is stakeholder engagement, which is intended to provide REFANI with the feedback necessary to tailor uptake activities for maximum impact.

RESEARCH UPTAKE

According the UK’s Department for International Development (DFID), research uptake facilitates and contributes to the use of research evidence by policymakers, practitioners and other development actors – supporting the supply of research (relevancy and tailored communication materials) and the usage of research (access, evaluation and synthesis). Building upon DFID’s uptake guidelines, the REFANI RUS is a cyclical process driven by examination and engagement, with key stakeholders, which begins with a stakeholder analysis.

REFANI identifies a diverse array of relevant stakeholders and begins correspondence with each organisation. Through this interaction, REFANI is able to highlight significant project details whilst simultaneously collecting feedback on what the stakeholder is most interested in discovering. This feedback is critical for REFANI, as it ensures that the RUS can be successfully modified so that key stakeholders eventually become research users – those who use REFANI evidence to adapt their policies or activities based upon the project’s results.

The aim of the RUS is therefore to make direct links between those who have information and those who need or want to use the information, throughout the life of the project. This habitual, proactive engagement with stakeholders sets the REFANI RUS apart from other research communication or dissemination strategies, which focus on sharing information at the end of the project and pay less attention to connecting with interested stakeholders before final results are available.

RESEARCH UPTAKE ACTIVITIES

The RUS has identified several ways to engage with stakeholders in the early stages of the project, before project results are available. Project briefs, an updated website and interviews with experts are just some of the REFANI materials which will retain and engage stakeholder and user attention until final project findings are published.

CURRENT STATUS & FUTURE PLANS

With introductory stakeholder engagement, the RUS began implementation in July 2015. The REFANI website was launched and implementation briefs and the literature review have been shared with target audiences. Project-related news and other materials will be shared periodically, culminating in the release of project findings in late 2016/early 2017.

For more information, please visit the REFANI website, www.actionagainsthunger.org/REFANI or contact REFANI@actionagainsthunger.org.