



**IMPROVING HEALTH CARE  
 THROUGH  
 DECISION-LINKED RESEARCH**

*APPLICATION IN  
 HEALTH SYSTEMS AND MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT*

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**PART IV**

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## INTRODUCTION

The decision-linked approach to research in health systems and manpower development (HSMD) is explained in Part I of this document. Specific options for implementing the approach under different circumstances are presented in Part II. Preparing for the changes implicit in the implementation of these options is the subject of Part III. In Part IV, initiatives which can be taken to encourage and facilitate implementation of the approach will now be considered. How can the process be started and momentum developed? In addressing this issue, several types and sources of initiatives will be considered. An overview of their applicability under differing national circumstances will be presented.

### Types of initiatives

In general, two types of initiatives may be taken. Operational initiatives (Part IV, pages 2-4) are characterized by steps to implement specific options in decision-linked research with orientation of the decision-makers and researchers concerned taking place in tandem with the implementation efforts. This approach may be envisaged when the options to be implemented have been selected and commitment to the effort is high. Moving directly to implementation has the advantage of underscoring the relevance of decision-linked research to the solution of commitment to decision problems. The need to adapt operational initiatives to the differing "absorptive capacities" of Member States is recognized (Part IV, pages 5-7).

In the second type of approach, the initial intervention is educational (Part IV, pages 8-15). It consists of a workshop or other short-term learning experience which precedes and is designed to facilitate implementation of specific options. An educational initiative may be appropriate when the extent of commitment to decision-linked research is uncertain, the choice of options is unclear or when subsequent implementation efforts may be compromised because of lack of experience with this approach. Educational initiatives will usually take the form of workshops or other short-term learning experiences.

The format of the workshops may be adapted to different exigencies. When substantial commitment to decision-linked research has been made but appropriate implementation options have yet to be selected and a plan of action developed, holding a preparatory workshop (Part IV, page 8) may be appropriate. On the other hand, efforts to expose a wide audience of decision-makers and researchers to the concepts and methods of decision-linked research might best be achieved through "piggyback" workshops (Part IV, page 10) in which a component of decision-linked research is added to a more broadly-based workshop for decision-makers and/or researchers. Specialized workshops (Part IV, page 13) are more focused on issues related to decision-linked research. They may be considered in response to well-circumscribed training needs in specific situations.

### Sources of initiatives

Opportunities for initiatives in decision-linked research may arise in several ways. At the global level, a network of linkages involving interested units at WHO/HQ (e.g., the Division of Health Manpower Development (HMD), the Office of Research Promotion and Development (RPD), the Division of Strengthening of Health Services (SHS) and the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR)) and certain nongovernmental organizations (e.g., the Network of Community-Oriented Educational Institutions for Health Sciences) is being developed. Opportunities for the various types of initiatives described above may be identified by collaborating WHO units and nongovernmental organizations. WHO Regional Offices will also play a key role in identifying opportunities at the regional and global levels. Responsibility for following through on initiatives which have been undertaken will also involve the WHO Regional Offices to a considerable extent.

OPERATIONAL INITIATIVES IN DECISION-LINKED RESEARCH

**Definition:** Operational initiatives are those in which the initial effort is directed at implementing one or more of the options in decision-linked research applied to HSMD.

**Objectives:** In situations characterized by commitment to implement specific options, the objectives of operational initiatives are to:

- (a) support implementation of appropriate options in decision-linked research as a means to improving decision-making in HSMD.
- (b) document the process and outcomes of such efforts as a guide for others contemplating similar action.

**Rationale:** At times, an operational point of entry for implementing decision-linked research may be appropriate. This is so when there is substantial commitment to the approach and selection of options poses no problems. Under these circumstances, steps may be taken directly to implement the pertinent options.

Procedures to be followed will vary as a function of the options selected. These are described in detail elsewhere (Part II: Implementation options). At some point, a workshop may be held for those involved in the process of implementation. It differs from the preparatory workshop described on page 8 in that it does not constitute the initial activity. Rather it is one step in implementing the options which have already been selected. Hence, objectives of the workshop will focus more on the roles and responsibilities of participants in the implementation process.

In operational initiatives, momentum generated by initial commitment to decision-linked research is channelled from the outset into efforts to secure its implementation. Absence of a time lag decreases the probability that this momentum will be dissipated. It is important that operational initiatives be adapted to the needs of individual Member States.

- Process:**
1. Exploration of possible opportunities. Situations which lend themselves to operational initiatives are characterized by:
    - (a) a commitment to implementing a decision-linked approach in the particular setting.
    - (b) a clear idea of which implementation options (see Part II) are appropriate in the situation under consideration.
    - (c) availability of the support and resources needed to implement the options selected.

Situations exhibiting these characteristics may be identified in several ways. They may be sought actively through preliminary contacts with ministries of health, research institutes and educational institutions. In addition, they may come to light through the good offices of collaborating WHO units or nongovernmental organizations with whom linkages have been established.

2. Implementing the initiative. Implementation of an operational initiative calls for putting into effect one or more options in decision-linked research. These include:

- Option 1 Designing original decision-linked research
- Option 2 Modifying projected investigator-initiated research
- Option 3 Adapting ongoing research
- Option 4 Marketing results of completed research
- Option 5 Applying results culled from the literature
- Option 6 A comprehensive association of multiple options

The implementation process for each option is described in detail in Part II, pages 4-18. Implementation efforts may be started in several ways. These include:

- (a) provision of consultants to assist in the initial stages of establishing and activating the infrastructure required for the implementation of the options selected.
- (b) collaboration in the design and delivery of specialized workshops (see page 13) as the need arises.
- (c) assistance in mobilizing adequate resources to ensure successful implementation.

3. Follow-up. Once the initial stages of an operational initiative have been completed, ongoing follow-up will be instituted. Its purpose is to increase the probability that the new patterns for relating research to decision-making in HSMD will be sustained. Follow-up measures may include:

- (a) provision of consultants to troubleshoot significant problems as they arise.
- (b) development of channels of communication to facilitate exchange of ideas and experience among units of government, research institutes and educational institutions in different countries which are taking part in operational initiatives.
- (c) documentation of the process and outcomes of the various initiatives as a guide to others contemplating similar action.

Anticipated  
outcome(s):

These relate specifically to the individual options selected for implementation. Anticipated outcomes associated with each option are described in Part II, pages 4-18. In general, the outcome common to all options and which is the underlying purpose of every operational initiative is improvement of HSMD through more informed decision-making. Only to the extent that this outcome is perceived as having been achieved can the effort and resources absorbed by the research activities be justified.

Advantage(s):

- 1. In those situations where operational initiatives are appropriate, they represent the most direct way of benefitting from decision-linked research.
- 2. The rate at which the options selected are implemented can be adapted to existing resources and constraints.
- 3. The options selected can be implemented through a process of successive approximations. This allows for progressive improvement as experience in coping with problems encountered is acquired.

Limitation(s): If undertaken under inappropriate conditions, operational initiatives are unlikely to succeed. This may be the case if:

- (a) operational goals are not consistent with existing resources and constraints (see page 5).
- (b) commitment to decision-linked research is weak and adequate support for its implementation is unlikely to be forthcoming.
- (c) inappropriate options have been selected.
- (d) there is lack of motivation and/or competencies on the part of decision-makers or researchers concerned.

Examples:

1. The third national health plan will shortly be prepared in a Member State. Substantial budgetary shifts from tertiary to primary care facilities will be considered. The director-general of the ministry of health has selected Option 1 (Designing original decision-linked research) as the most effective way of reaching an informed decision concerning the various possibilities.
2. There is a central mechanism for funding all research proposals, including those which address issues in HSMD, in a Member State. This involves consideration of each proposal by a review committee under the auspices of the national research council. The review committee is considering modifying the funding criteria to include provisions which relate to the eventual utilization of research findings (Option 2 Modifying projected investigator-initiated research).
3. A WHO Regional Office has taken the initiative of promoting registries of ongoing research related to HSMD in countries within the region. These registries can now be used by national authorities to implement Option 3 which is designed to align ongoing studies in which data which are still being collected or analysed more closely with information needs for decision-making.
4. A major study of utilization patterns in rural clinics has been completed by the department of community health in a regional medical school. The scientists who carried out the study have established contact with those units of the ministry of health which are responsible for operating the clinics. A joint meeting will be organized to consider the implications of the research findings for the delivery of health care in the clinics. (Option 4 Marketing results of completed research).
5. The educational committee of a medical school has decided to review methods currently being used to evaluate clinical competencies of students during the course of their clerkship in community clinics. In the course of carrying out the review, the committee will have occasion to apply Option 5 (Applying results culled from the literature). Results obtained with various methods of evaluation elsewhere will be used to guide the committee's deliberations to determine whether changes in the current way of assessing students are warranted.

ADAPTING TO COUNTRY NEEDS

The purpose of initiatives taken at country level is to enhance capabilities of Member States to use decision-linked research as a means of improving delivery of health services. This encompasses capabilities to generate research which addresses health care issues of national priority and to utilize the findings for decision-making in health services and manpower development.

Development of initiatives should reflect the recognition that with respect to health systems and manpower research (HSMR), Member States differ on three important variables:

1. degree of commitment to using HSMR as a means for improving health care;
2. extent to which mechanisms for incorporating HSMR results into the decision-making process are both viable and effective;
3. capacity to implement HSMR, including the availability of both human resources and appropriate facilities.

National commitment to using HSMR as a means of improving health care will be a pre-requisite for participating in the present initiative. Eligible countries will therefore vary in the two later respects - their capacity to carry out HSMR and the effectiveness of existing mechanisms for incorporating research findings in decision-making. Using these criteria, countries may be classified into four categories as shown in the table below.

Classification of eligible countries by mechanisms for linking HSMR to decision-making and capacity to conduct HSMR

MECHANISMS FOR LINKING HSMR TO DECISION-MAKING

		Viable mechanisms currently <u>in place</u> need strengthening	No existing mechanism but good potential for development
CAPACITY TO CONDUCT HSMR	reasonably adequate personnel and facilities	1	2
	inadequate personnel and facilities	3	4

Category 1 - High potential: Countries with reasonably adequate capacity to conduct HSMR. Viable mechanisms for linking research findings to decision-making are in place but need strengthening.

- Objectives:
1. To strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of existing mechanisms for linking HSMR to decision-making.
  2. To generate decision-linked research which addresses issues in HSMD of high national priority.

Approach: For countries in this category, efforts to increase the effectiveness of existing mechanisms for linking HSMR to decision-making will be supported. These may involve structural or functional changes as well as improvement of staffing patterns. Concurrently, health care issues of national importance will be identified. Information needed to address these issues will be specified and research will be generated to meet these specific requirements.

- Anticipated outcome(s):
- Anticipated outcomes in participating countries include:
1. effective mechanisms for collaborative interaction between decision-makers and researchers;
  2. a specified number of HSMR projects addressing health care issues of national priority and reflecting a decision-linked approach.

Category 2 - Good potential: Countries with reasonably adequate capacity to conduct HSMR. Although there is no existing mechanism for linking HSMR to decision-making, the potential for its development is good.

- Objectives:
1. To establish viable and effective mechanisms for linking HSMR to decision-making.
  2. To generate a limited number of HSMR projects. The number of projects will be a function of the capacity of the newly-established mechanism to link the research findings to decision-making.

Approach: For countries in this category, the initial focus will be to develop mechanisms for linking HSMR to decision-making. Once these mechanisms are in place and able to function, specific research projects can be generated progressively.

- Anticipated outcome(s):
- Anticipated outcomes in participating countries include:
1. effective and sustained mechanisms for collaborative interaction between decision-makers and researchers;
  2. a limited number of HSMR projects whose findings will be incorporated into the decision-making process.

Category 3 - Fair potential: Countries whose current personnel and/or facilities for conducting HSMR are inadequate. Viable mechanisms for linking HSMR to decision-making are in place but need strengthening.

- Objective:
1. To strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of existing mechanisms for linking HSMR to decision-making.
  2. To increase the national capacity for conducting HSMR through training of research personnel and development of appropriate facilities.
  3. To generate HSMR projects when Objectives 1 and 2 have been sufficiently attained.

Approach: Countries in this category will require considerably more support than those in Categories 1 and 2. Efforts to establish appropriate linkage mechanisms will be undertaken in tandem with the development of increased capacity to conduct HSMR. Specific research projects will be generated only when the research capacity is adequate and the mechanisms for using the research findings are in place.

Anticipated outcome(s):

Anticipated outcomes in participating countries include:

1. functioning mechanisms for linking HSMR to decision-making which can be sustained;
2. an increase in national capability to conduct HSMR;
3. a limited number of HSMR projects.

Category 4 - Low potential: Countries with low capacity to conduct HSMR and with no mechanisms for linking research results to decision-making.

Objectives: Problems presented by countries in this category are multi-faceted. These problems will be addressed in a separate document.

## PREPARATORY WORKSHOPS IN DECISION-LINKED RESEARCH

- Definition:** Preparatory workshops are initiatives in which initial efforts have both educational and operational dimensions. They precede and are designed to expedite implementation of one or more options in decision-linked research within the context of a specific setting.
- Objectives:** In situations characterized by commitment to explore the feasibility of implementing a decision-linked approach to research in HSMD), the objectives of preparatory workshops are to:
- (a) orient decision-makers and researchers concerned to the ways in which decision-making in HSMD can be used and the range of options through which the approach may be implemented.
  - (b) facilitate acquisition of competencies in implementing decision-linked research.
  - (c) develop a plan of action to implement those options judged to be both appropriate and feasible in the situation under consideration.
- Rationale:** Preparatory workshops are indicated when a general commitment to the notion of decision-linked research in HSMD has been made and what needs to be determined is how best to implement the approach. Under these circumstances, the workshops provide a forum within which decision-makers and researchers concerned can become better acquainted with the implications and methods of decision-linked research. In parallel, ways in which the approach can be translated into a concrete plan of action can be explored. The probability of successful implementation of the options selected will be determined, in part, by the extent to which the educational and operational objectives of the workshop have been attained.
- Process:**
1. Exploration of possible opportunities. Situations in which preparatory workshops may constitute an appropriate point of entry for the implementation of decision-linked research are characterized by:
    - (a) a commitment to exploring the feasibility of implementing a decision-linked approach in a particular setting.
    - (b) lack of clarity as to which implementation options (see Part II) are most appropriate in the situation under consideration.
    - (c) a need to orient decision-makers and researchers to decision-linked research prior to undertaking implementation of the approach.
- Opportunities which meet the above criteria may be identified at the global or regional levels. At the global level, they will be explored through linkages with relevant WHO/HQ units (e.g., HMD, RPD, SHS, TDR) and nongovernmental organizations. At the regional level, opportunities may be brought to light within the WHO Regional Office itself and through contacts with Member States. Opportunities at all levels will result from both systematic exploration as well as from serendipity.

2. Implementing the initiative. Under optimal circumstances, participants will include decision-makers and researchers who will assume key roles in implementing the options selected. Objectives for the workshop which reflect its educational and operational dimensions will be formulated. Workshop activities and associated learning materials will be developed.
  3. Follow-up. This will involve monitoring and support of efforts by workshop participants to carry out the plan of action which emerges from the workshop deliberations.
- Anticipated outcome(s):
1. A plan of action which incorporates one or more options for implementing a decision-linked approach to research in HSMD.
  2. A cadre of decision-makers and researchers with motivation and competencies needed to implement this plan of action.
- Advantage(s):
- Preparatory workshops may increase the probability of successful implementation of decision-linked research by:
- (a) involving the decision-makers and researchers from the outset in determining the approach and how it will be implemented. As a result, those likely to be affected can identify with the effort.
  - (b) providing an opportunity for considering a range of implementation options followed by selection and adaptation of those judged to be appropriate. This is likely to result in a better match between the options selected and the operative resources and constraints.
- Limitation(s):
- There is the risk that the plan of action developed will not be pursued. Hence the importance of ensuring adequate commitment and resources to follow through on workshop recommendations.
- Examples:
1. A decision-linked approach to research in HSMD has been reviewed by the director-general of the ministry of health. A preparatory workshop is to be held in order to orient key decision-makers and researchers as well as to select and refine implementation options which are consistent with national resources and constraints.
  2. A national association of nursing schools will assess the advisability of increasing community-based instruction in member institutions. The commission responsible needs information concerning the potential impact of such a curriculum change and ways in which it can be implemented. A preparatory workshop is to be held to determine what information would be most useful, how and by whom it is to be acquired and when it can be made available.

DECISION-LINKED RESEARCH COMPONENTS  
IN MORE BROADLY-BASED WORKSHOPS

("Piggyback" workshops)

- Definition: "Piggyback" workshops are educational initiatives in which the initial effort consists of orienting decision-makers and researchers to decision-linked research in HSMD, as part of a more broadly-based workshop or other short-term learning activity.
- Objectives: In situations characterized by potential interest on the part of decision-makers and/or researchers, the objectives of "piggyback" workshops are to:
- (a) orient workshop participants to the purpose and methods of decision-linked research in HSMD.
  - (b) identify a subset of participants who are interested in implementing decision-linked research in their respective settings.
- Rationale: "Piggyback" workshops provide opportunities to reach a wider audience by joining forces with sponsors of workshops on more general themes of concern to decision-makers and researchers (e.g., techniques in management, research methodology). In such instances, enrichment of the workshop curriculum through the addition of a component on decision-linked research may be considered. Potential interest without prior commitment, on the part of workshop participants may be expected. It is also assumed that some of those exposed to the decision-linked approach will decide to explore the feasibility of its implementation in their own settings.
- In principle, a decision-linked research component can be added to a wide range of more broadly-based workshops. This type of educational initiative is limited only by the extent to which collaborative arrangements can be made with those responsible for conducting such workshops and the availability of resources to implement the decision-linked research component. In this connection, the "piggyback" approach can be quite cost-effective. The attributable cost is only that of adding the decision-linked research component (e.g., learning materials, facilitators, etc.). Other expenses remain the responsibility of the workshop sponsor. This may be WHO, a unit of government or a nongovernmental organization.
- Process:
1. Exploration of possible opportunities. Opportunities in the context of this initiative are to be found in situations with the following characteristics:
    - (a) a workshop or other short-term learning activity for decision-makers and/or research is scheduled.
    - (b) the theme of the workshop is consistent with the inclusion of a component on decision-linked research.
    - (c) sponsors of the workshop are agreeable to incorporating instruction in decision-linked research into the workshop and to allocating a specific time bloc for this purpose.
    - (d) appropriate learning resources (e.g., learning materials, facilitators) can be mobilized to deliver the decision-linked research component in the time bloc allocated.

- (e) funds are available to cover the increment in cost of the workshop attributable to inclusion of the decision-linked research component.

As with other educational and operational initiatives, possible opportunities may be identified at both the global and regional levels. Of particular importance in the case of "piggyback" initiatives is the network of linkages which is established with potential sponsors of broadly-based workshops for decision-makers and researchers.

2. Implementing the initiative. Once a possible opportunity has been identified, steps can be taken to implement the initiative. These include:
  - (a) determining the objectives of the decision-linked research component of the more broadly-based workshop. Objectives will be adapted to the general theme of the workshop and the characteristics of participants.
  - (b) developing an instructional module to facilitate attainment by participants of the objectives set for the decision-linked research component of the workshop. The module will include specified learning activities and associated learning materials.
  - (c) negotiating with sponsors of the workshop for the time needed during the workshop to present the module. If the time available is insufficient, it may be necessary to modify the objectives and/or the contents of the module.
  - (d) arranging the logistics for delivering the decision-linked research module within the framework of the workshop. This includes preparing instructional materials and possibly arranging for a facilitator familiar with the module to participate in the workshop. Delivery of the module by a facilitator trained for this purpose can substantially increase its impact and will therefore be encouraged to the extent that resources permit.
  - (e) delivering the decision-linked research module. The module will be presented as part of the more broadly-based workshop in accordance with the arrangements made with the workshop sponsors.
3. Follow-up. It is anticipated that some of the participants in the workshops will be interested in exploring the feasibility of implementing decision-linked research in their settings. Follow-up of the workshops will be directed primarily towards supporting efforts by participants in this direction. In this connection, appropriate consultation and collaboration in subsequent preparatory workshops are two possible follow-up activities.

Anticipated  
outcome(s):

Variability in the immediate outcomes of "piggyback" workshops is anticipated.

1. Certain participants may respond to the new approach by developing preliminary plans for its implementation in their respective settings.
2. Others may leave the workshop with motivation and ability to use a decision-linked approach but without specific plans for its implementation.
3. Most of the participants will carry away from the workshop a general awareness of decision-linked research in HSMD. This may subsequently stimulate consideration of its applicability when appropriate situations arise.

Over the long term, the outcome of significance is actual implementation of decision-linked research by decision-makers and researchers who have attended the "piggyback" workshops. The extent to which this occurs will depend, in part, on the impact of the decision-linked research component of the workshop and the pertinent resources and constraints in the participant's setting.

Advantage(s):

1. "Piggyback" workshops provide a mechanism for presenting the idea of decision-linked research in HSMD to a much wider audience of decision-makers and researchers than would be possible through specialized workshops alone. The latter are reserved for special circumstances (Part IV, page 13).
2. Cost-effectiveness is high in that expenses are covered by the sponsors of the workshop. Only that increment attributable to the decision-linked component is charged to the initiative.
3. Follow-up can be highly targeted. Resources can be used selectively to support efforts by workshop participants to move towards implementation of appropriate decision-linked research options in their respective settings.

Limitation(s):

1. Interest generated in enriching appropriate workshops through the addition of instruction in decision-linked research may exceed the resources available for this purpose.
2. In some circumstances, collaborative efforts may break down due to poor communication or administrative problems.

Examples:

1. Several countries, in collaboration with WHO, sponsoring a one-week workshop for directors of their ministries of health to consider more effective ways for achieving HFA/2000. The organizers have agreed to set aside one morning session to consider the use of decision-linked research to support decision-making within the ministries.
2. A workshop is planned which will bring together senior managers of the ministry of health and researchers in HSMD working within the ministry and in departments of community health at the country's three medical schools. The theme of the one-week workshop is "integration of health systems research and management". The concept of decision-linked research is considered by the workshop organizers as central to the interests of participants. They have requested collaboration in ensuring that the topic is adequately represented in the programme of the workshop.

## SPECIALIZED WORKSHOPS IN DECISION-LINKED RESEARCH

- Definition:** Specialized workshops are short-term educational initiatives whose objectives relate specifically to decision-linked research.
- Objectives:** In situations where the need arises for a cadre of decision-makers and/or researchers who understand and can utilize decision-linked research, the objectives of specialized workshops are to:
- (a) orient participants to the purpose and methods of decision-linked research in HSMD.
  - (b) increase the capability of participants to implement selected options in decision-linked research.
- Rationale:** Specialized workshops are situated midway in the spectrum between "piggyback" workshops on the one hand and preparatory workshops on the other. They differ from the former in that they are more focussed and relate primarily to decision-linked research. Unlike the latter, they lack an operational dimension and are not necessarily linked to the introduction of a decision-linked approach in a specific setting.
- Whenever there is a need for a cadre of decision-makers and/or researchers who are motivated and have the capability to carry out decision-linked research, a specialized workshop may be held. Because they are focussed and limited in scope, these workshops can go beyond a general orientation and facilitate acquisition of specific competencies in the implementation of selected options in decision-linked research. In this respect, participants are likely to emerge more "qualified" than they do from "piggyback" workshops.
- The benefits to be derived from specialized workshops, however, may under certain circumstances be outweighed by other considerations. They may cost considerably more than "piggyback" workshops. Time spent by senior managers and researchers in a workshop with a rather narrow scope may be difficult to justify. It is advisable that these considerations be taken into account in determining the expediency of holding a specialized workshop. Certainly, this type of initiative can contribute significantly to the implementation of decision-linked research. In order to do so, it should be utilized selectively and when it is most cost-effective in achieving well-defined goals.
- Process:**
1. Identification of possible opportunities. In the light of the above considerations, it will be recognized that specialized workshops are most effectively used in response to well-circumscribed needs in a specific situation. For example, a specialized intercountry workshop may be an appropriate response to multiple requests made to a WHO Regional Office to hold orientation sessions. Similarly, if implementation of a particular option in decision-linked research is impeded by a lack of understanding on the part of the researchers concerned, a specialized workshop may be held to overcome the difficulty. In contrast, therefore, to the other initiatives described in this document, specialized workshops do not usually entail active searching for possible opportunities.

2. Implementing the initiative. Once a decision has been reached to hold a specialized workshop, steps can be taken to:
  - (a) define the specific objectives of the workshop as a function of the purpose for which it is being held and the needs of participants.
  - (b) develop a programme of workshop activities and associated learning materials to facilitate attainment of the workshop objectives.
  - (c) arrange the necessary logistics and deliver the workshop as planned.
3. Follow-up. The type of follow-up will depend on the nature of the workshop, its projected long-term impact and the needs of participants.

Anticipated  
outcome(s):

1. A cadre of decision-makers and/or researchers who are oriented and have developed competencies in the application of decision-linked research. In general, the level of competence developed will be higher than that acquired through participation in "piggyback" workshops.

Advantage(s):

1. Specialized workshops provide an opportunity for participants to acquire a significant measure of competency in implementing decision-linked research within a relatively short period of time.
2. The workshop programme can be designed specifically to meet the objectives established without constraints that may be associated with "piggyback" workshops (e.g., time restrictions, competing foci of activity).

Limitation(s):

1. Costs are relatively high.
2. Difficulties may be encountered in arranging released time for senior managers or researchers to attend a workshop limited to consideration of decision-linked research.

Examples:

1. The ministry of health in a Member State has decided to initiate a programme of decision-linked research which encompasses a combination of three implementation options. It is recognized that the researchers who are likely to be affected will be unable to respond appropriately as they have had no prior experience with decision-linked research. A three-day specialized workshop will be held so that they may learn about the approach and develop basic competencies in its application.