



**SKILLS DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP
FOR RESEARCH ON ROAD TRAFFIC INJURIES**

Kandy, Sri Lanka – 5 January 2005

Understanding Policy Makers

**Abdul Ghaffar
Health Policy and Systems Specialist
Global Forum for Health Research
Geneva**



Why policy makers?

- **It is their mandate and ultimate responsibility to design, develop and execute a responsive and functional health (research) system**
- **They are accountable to people, public and parliament**
- **They control most of funds for research**



**War is too serious a matter to entrust to
military men "only"**



(Georges Clemenceau)



Why Researchers?

- **Research is an essential component of a strong and responsive health system**
- **There are no clear answers for many issues commonly confronted by the policy planners**



Problem.....?

- **Evidence based (informed) policies-is it desire of both researchers and policy makers ?**
- **Limited evidence to support the argument**
- **Different opinions about the role of science in policy**
- **Differences between researchers and policy makers are genuine, systemic and structural**



Distinguishing Features

	Researchers	Policy Makers
Overall Goal	To advance science	To gain popular and political support
Specific Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tenure track positions• Publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Re-election• Re-appointment
Output	Detailed reports	Press releases
Desired Outcome	Respect by the peers	Popularity among the supporters
Impact	Real	Perception more important than reality
Time factor	Long	Short
Accountable	Peers and editors	Constituents



Some Common Features

- **Culture of blame and arrogance**
- **In some cases, even, lack of mutual trust and respect**
- **No real incentives for either to work together**

"Policy makers and politicians don't see the light but feel the heat" Anonymous



Likely Middle Ground.....

- **Shared vision and responsibility**
- **Confidence building measures:**
 - **Joint policy planning exercises**
 - **Mediation by external forces**

Media



Civil Society



Opinion Leaders





**All diseases have two causes, one
pathological, the other political**

(Rudolf Virchow)



Global Forum for Health Research HELPING CORRECT THE 10/90 GAP

**Global Forum
for Health Research**
HELPING CORRECT THE 10|90 GAP

**Combating disease
and promoting health**

FORUM 10

29 October - 2 November 2006
Cairo, Egypt

المنتدى 10

www.globalforumhealth.org