

## **Why is evidence synthesis centre important for Nepal? An opportunity for networking, collaboration & partnership**

Evidence synthesis is a powerful research process that allows researchers to combine relevant data from multiple studies and draw conclusions based on the most up-to-date evidence available. Evidence-based health care has undergone a revolution over two decades. However, evidence syntheses take a long time, require access to expensive databases, are labour-intensive and expensive. Hence, systematic reviews often produced by researchers in high-income countries. But, not including local perspectives from low-income countries negotiates the principle of ‘best evidence synthesis’, e.g. critical evidence from Nepal, to help local decision-making might not be included in global reviews with a global question in mind.

Therefore, we argue that there is a need for a National Evidence Synthesis Centre under NHRC which can synthesize global, national and local research evidence that is relevant to a local context and meets demand of programme managers and policymakers at national and sub-national levels in Nepal. The Centre also must promote the use of systematic review findings to appropriate decision-makers to ensure they have the best chance of getting implemented. Regular evidence synthesis can also contribute to the tracking of progress of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) indicators. This national centre should work in close collaboration with national and international academics and research institutions, Federal, Provincial and Local Governments, health experts and health care providers.

There are many types of outputs that use evidence synthesis, such as policy briefs, systematic reviews, clinical practice guidelines and so on. Finally, establishing a National Evidence Synthesis Centre would be very timely to help develop mechanisms of evidence synthesis as well as improve research communication. The first step could be the planning of a national workshop to identifying evidence gaps, next independent research teams can be formed for evidence synthesis while experts from institutions in the global north can provide mentoring support for capacity building and help ensure the centre’s sustainability.

### **Reference**

1. Simkhada P, Dhimal, M, van Teijlingen E, Gyanwali P (2022) Nepal Urgently Needs a National Evidence Synthesis Centre, *J Nepal Health Res Council*, **20**(3): i-ii.