

Appendix C: Gaps in the evidence use process

Different gaps which may occur in the evidence use process are then identified, for example evidence may be applied by policymakers but policies may not be implemented, meaning evidence is not actioned.

Table 9 Potential gaps in the evidence use process

The blurred actor roles and complex pathways between the different stages of the evidence use process mean there is no single type of evidence use gap (for example an evidence-policy adoption gap, or a policy-practice gap). There are a range of potential evidence use gaps that may arise between the different stages and stakeholder groups of the evidence use process, detailed in Table 9.

Evidence Use Gap	Details
Reality and Research	Evidence on problem x or solutions y, z does not exist or incomplete (footnote 1) Types of research gap: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evidence has not been collected at all • evidence is not complete (for example, Interventions are made but are not evaluated for effectiveness) • evidence is not applicable to relevant context (for example, geography, population not equivalent) • evidence which exists is fragmented (for example, across disciplinary fields) and not synthesised
Research and Policy-making ('science-policy interface'; 'knowledge transfer')	Evidence exists but does not reach/is not understood by policymakers Evidence is understood by policymakers but is not reflected in policy.
Research and Commercial Practice ('knowledge transfer'; 'technology transfer'; knowledge transfer partnerships; 'diffusion of innovations')	Evidence exists but does not reach/is not understood by businesses OR Reaches businesses but is not reflected in their practice.
Policy-making and policy Adoption (by deliverers)	Evidence is reflected in policy but the evidence-based policy is not disseminated to/adopted by deliverers.
Policy Adoption and Policy Implementation (by practitioners)	The evidence-based policy is disseminated to and (theoretically) adopted by deliverers but not implemented (effectively) in reality.
Policy Implementation and Policymaking	Implementation issues are not monitored and not used to inform policymaking/adaption.

Source: Authors

The evidence use gaps identified above helped to inform the selection of relevant literature for the rapid evidence review. Some of the gaps from Table 4 can also be considered barriers to the uptake of evidence into policy and practice, presented in the results section.

1. Sources: Parsons, K. and Barling, D. (2021). Food Systems Transformation - What's in the Policy Toolbox?. A Report for the UKRI Transforming UK Food Systems Programme. Available at: <https://www.foodsecurity.ac.uk/research/foodsystems-spf/outputs/>; OECD (2021a) 'Making better policies for food systems: Executive summary,' OECD iLibrary, Available at: <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/ddfba4de-en/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/ddfba4de-en>.