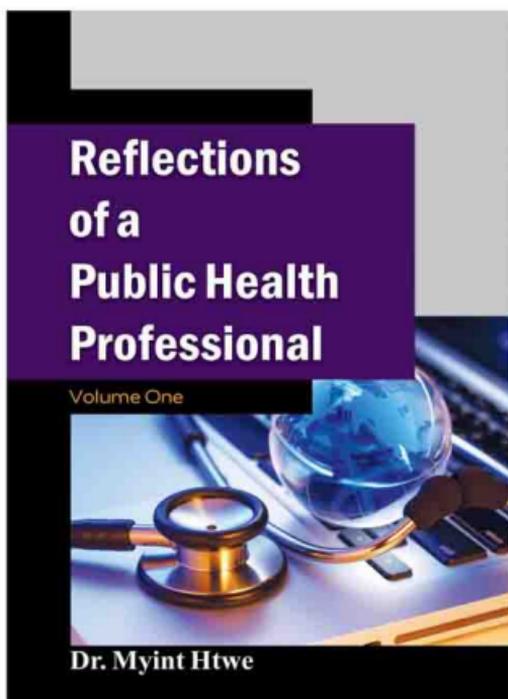


# Characteristics of a Good Health Research Institution



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# 1. Characteristics of a good health research institution

Research institutions perform with varying degrees of efficiency, based on their capacity, capability of researchers and funding availability. In order to make the research institution strong and as efficient as possible to contribute to the health development of a country, the following preliminary checklist may be used to quickly assess the requirements in terms of its infrastructure, functions and performance. The findings can be used to further improve the performance of the research institution from all perspectives. The checklist is by no means exhaustive, but could serve as a basic minimum to assess the research institution in a generic manner.

Any research institution can possess many of the characteristics mentioned below, but there is always room for improvement. The characteristics mentioned below can be expanded (additional subset questions) if one really wants to conduct a detailed review and assessment on the overall performance of the research institution. These characteristics are interconnected. The strength of a research institution is as strong as its weakest characteristics. In other words, the characteristics of the research institution need to be strengthened in a well-balanced manner. The following generic checklist may be applied to assess the general scenario or performance of the research institution.

1. *Is there a “National Health Research Policy and Strategies” in the country? If there is, are goals, vision, mission statements, and objectives of the research institution clearly stated and also reflected the spectrum of “National Health Research Policy and Strategies?”*

## *Reflections of a Public Health Professional*

2. *Are there institutional guidelines on “Responsible Conduct of Research”? If so, what is the level of adherence by researchers to these guidelines?*
3. *Are there institutional guidelines on “Research Ethics”? If there are, what is the level of adherence by researchers to these guidelines?*
4. *What is the level of performance of “Ethics Review Committee (ERC)” or “Institutional Review Boards (IRB)”?* *“Are there specific guidelines for members of ERC and IRB?”* and *“Is the membership of ERC and IRB well balanced?”*
5. *Are there institutional guidelines on “Good Research Management Practice”? If so, what is the level of adherence by researchers to these guidelines?*
6. *Is there a dynamic and comprehensive “Research Information System” in the research institution? Is research prioritization a common phenomenon for the institution?*
7. *Are there regular and systematically run “Research capacity building programmes for various domains of research and Research mentoring programmes?” If there are, any review and assessment being made from time to time?*
8. *Are there clearly defined “pathways for career development of researchers?”*
9. *Are there regular forums for presentation of research findings by researchers? Some examples are research symposiums, research congresses, research seminars, etc.*
10. *Are there opportunities for young researchers to publish their papers, such as Research Bulletin and Research Journals?*
11. *Is there an annual report of the research institution being issued regularly? If so is any analysis being made on the annual report from time to time, or is there an “analytical section in the annual report”?*

12. *Is there any “Resource Flow Analysis for Research” being done?*
13. *Are there “Sister Research Institutions” or networking among research institutions inside the country as well as with research institutions outside the country?*
14. *Is there a “Researchers Exchange Programme” with other research institutions (both in-country and abroad)?*
15. *Does the research institution have a “Research Enabling Environment”?*

This set of 15 questions was framed in the context of research institutions in developing countries. A separate review may be made to assess the “*Research Infrastructure*” of various sub-domains of research, applying the checklist also. Each of the above 15 checklist questions can be further expanded to explore more in detail regarding the performance of various sub-domains of research. Generally, if a research institution can fulfill the majority of the items in the checklist in an affirmative or satisfactory manner, the research institution can be regarded as a good research institution. We should all strive collectively to make our research institution “*A Good Health Research Institution*” to serve the country most effectively and efficiently.