**Citation**:
Asare, B.A; Abassah-Konadu, E; Otoo, D.D.; Asante, H.A; Amankwah, I; Afriyie-Twumasi, A.; Dalaba, M.A; Immurana, M.; Aberese-Ako, M.; Yevutsey, S.; Azeez, J.; Ansah, E.; Okorosobo, T.; Ogundahunsi, O.; Hodgson, A.; Gyapong, M. (2025). Applying implementation research methodology to policy decisions for the adaptation of new technologies: Lessons from the Ghana SAVING Consortium. *UHAS Research Conference*.

# Applying implementation research methodology to policy decisions for the adaptation of new technologies: Lessons from the Ghana SAVING Consortium

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**Objectives:**

Implementation Research (IR) provides a mechanism to adapt evidence into policy amid shifting health priorities. This study illustrates the adaptable, multidisciplinary, complex, and contextual characteristics of IR, which ensure responsiveness to the shifting policy environment.

**Methods:**

A retrospective case study was conducted through a combination of document reviews and participant observation. It examined how core IR characteristics facilitated adaptive use of IR in policy decisions in Ghana within the SAVING Consortium, between January 2021 and April 2025. Data sources included policy documents, technical reports, observation notes, minutes, and timeline documentation on the challenges and associated mitigation approaches along the IR process, ie, pre-intervention, intervention phase and post-intervention phase. Data was analysed thematically.

**Results:**

The IR originally focused on malaria vaccines in October 2021 as part of the project design, shifted to COVID-19 vaccines in December 2021 in response to the global pandemic, and later refocused on malaria vaccines in May 2023, with a de-prioritisation of COVID-19. This demonstrated the adaptability of IR to shifting and complex public health priorities in real-life contexts. It was observed that systematic adaptations were made to Health Technology Assessment methods to adapt to the changing priorities. Key themes on adaptations included (1) re-aligning research focus to emerging priorities, (2)

broadening stakeholder engagement, and (3) integrating multidisciplinary perspectives from health economics, immunisation, and regulation.

**Conclusion:**

The Ghanaian experience highlights IR flexibility as an effective characteristic for navigating the interface between evidence generation and policymaking and can offer guidance for other settings adopting new health technologies. Limitation: Undocumented events could have been missed