



United Nations
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UNESCO Chair in Community Based
Research and Social Responsibility
in Higher Education



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Strengthening Community University Research Partnerships

University of Victoria
Strengthening Community University Research Partnerships: Global Perspectives

Strengthening Community University Research Partnerships: GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES



Edited by Budd Hall, Rajesh Tandon, Crystal Tremblay

Institutionalizing Community
University Research Partnerships

A user's manual

Global Study on Organizational Structures of CURP

Methods and Outputs:

- Global web based survey - 336 responses from 53 countries in 4 languages.
 - Respondents from HEI, CSO, funding agencies, and policy makers.
- 12 Country case studies
- Products: an e-book and a set of practical guidelines
- Open Access policies: <http://unescochair-cbrsr.org/unesco/publications/>



Key Survey Findings

- Global South data difficult to obtain
- Large variation in the language, conceptualization and practice of these engagements
- ‘Knowledge cultures’ of CSOs and HEIs vary tremendously
- Contradiction between professed commitment to co-construction and practice of doing CBR (*i.e. origins of research, sharing of resources*)
- Expressed need for building community capacity to play equitable roles in the research partnerships
- Over 60% of HEIs identified have some form of facilitative structure created within the last 10 years



C.Wardhani, Indonesia



Survey Highlights

Institutional supports

- Over 60% of HEIs identified have some form of enabling CURP structure created within the last 10 years
- Over 60% of CSOs do not have access to library and academic funding opportunities
 - Strong evidence for capacity at CSO level
- CSOs rely heavily on volunteers. More than 65% of CSOs have between 1-20 volunteers



W.Lepore, Argentina



C.Tremblay, South Africa

Survey Highlights

Role and Process of Partnership

- Co-creation of knowledge is a primary goal in CURP (95%)
- Less than 15% of CURPs originate in the community
- Participation in decision-making and distribution of funds is predominantly controlled by HEIs.

Challenges and Recommendations

- Differences in timeline expectations (43.7%), and participation of members (42.9%)
- Different nature of knowledge cultures and diverse institutional processes that shape how research partnerships function



J.Gutberlet, Brazil



H.Mulder, Netherlands

Survey Highlights

Training in CBR

- Over half the respondents have not had training in CBR
- Most common training need is CBR methodology
 - including the philosophy and practice of co-created knowledge and ways of increasing equity in partnerships
 - methods and tools in participatory research, research design, data collection and analysis



B. Hall, Canada



Country Case Studies

Two categories of countries:

1. Those where a clear national/provincial policy for such engagements and partnerships already exist.

- *Canada, South Africa, United Kingdom, Indonesia, Argentina, Netherlands, United States, Brazil*

2. Those countries where such policies are in the making and potential for institutionalization of such policies is very high.

- *India, Uganda, Ireland, Jordan*

- Existing policies and funding mechanisms reviewed in each country
- 2 HEI and 2 CSO selected for institutional review

Comparative Analysis of Country Policies, Institutional Structures, and Networks

1. When overall policy framework at national/provincial levels positions Higher Education (HE) as **contribution to socio-economic transformation**, there is greater readiness to accept Community Engagement (CE) as an integral part of the mandate.
2. Explicit inclusion of CE in national policy is **a more recent phenomenon** in most countries, and it encourages HEIs to institutionalize CE.
3. When government **creates a focal office** on CE, HEIs take it seriously and practices get institutionalized.
4. Very few such CE structures within HEIs are **co-governed with community representatives**, and mostly remain within the unilateral control of HEI administration



Comparative Analysis of Country Policies, Institutional Structures, and Networks

5. Where explicit focus on research in CE is encouraged through **funding councils/schemes**, HEIs engage in building research as a part of community engagement plans/activities.
6. Principles of **mutuality and co-construction of knowledge** with community is not explicitly incentivized in such funding mechanisms.
7. **National networks for knowledge sharing** of CE with focus on research generate greater momentum at national/provincial levels.
8. **Provision of awards**, recognitions and accreditations of universities for engaging in CE activities further incentivizes CUE.

Some Conclusions



- When national policy creates formal expectations to promote CE, HEIs tend to show greater readiness and financial support for CE
- Top leadership of Ministries/HEIs can have huge impacts on promotion of CE in general, and CURPs in particular; by prioritising CE in research functions
- Middle level leadership—Deans, Centre Directors, Professors—and student leaders can nurture and operationalise CE by championing these in their faculty, centres, associations
- Even with monitoring mechanisms, accountability to communities and reporting to civil society is not a common practice at all

Some Conclusions

- Long term commitment is required to institutionalise such practice; 5-10 year partnerships is critical
- Investing in CB of students and faculty at HEIs in CBPR methodologies is critically missing
- In general, civil society has shied away from demanding greater responsiveness and accountability from HEIs in various countries around the world
- The mind-set in HEIs continues to negate community knowledge and practitioner expertise in research;
- Widespread systematisation of practitioner knowledge and sensitisation of the next generation of researchers can make a difference