Multilateral Dialogue on Principles and Values in International Research and Innovation Cooperation

Workshop on "Encouraging equitable research and innovation partnerships with low- and middle-income countries"

Thursday, 18 January 2024, 13:00-16:00 (CET) via WEBEX

Content

Concept note

This workshop was co-designed by The Guild, the German Commission for UNESCO, Euroscience, Institut de recherche pour le développement (IRD), TRUST project, Coimbra Group Latin America Working Group, Spain, France, South Africa and the European Commission.

The initial concept note, framing the workshop context, objectives and discussion topics is given below. This concept note was distributed to the registered participants in advance of the event.

Background Information

The European Commission initiated a Multilateral Dialogue on Values and Principles underpinning international research and innovation (R&I) collaboration in July 2022. The aim of this dialogue is to have an open discussion between EU Member States, partner countries and stakeholders to develop a shared understanding of these principles and values as a reliable basis for international research and innovation cooperation.

This workshop, the eighth of the series, focuses on equitable research and innovation partnerships with low- and middle-income countries. The approach is in line with the conclusions reached by the Council[1] which calls for enhanced, tailored R&I partnerships with low- and middle-income countries.

Equitable and supportive R&I partnerships are generally defined as those in which, at all stages of the research process, there is mutual participation, trust and respect taking into account the asymmetries of research systems (e.g. in terms of research infrastructure, human resource development, or publication opportunities). This should imply also a common commitment to overcome possible inequities as part of the partnership's commitment to excellent research and innovation to which all should be enabled to contribute according to their ability, not their circumstances, regardless of their role (as researcher, participant, beneficiary, funder, local community or otherwise).

Equitable R&I partnerships recognise and aim to mitigate the power imbalances that exist within the global research ecosystem. They emphasise the need to redress the perceived injustice of research that was based on low resources and/or that was too unilaterally designed or insufficiently co-created. This refers, for instance, to 'parachute' or 'helicopter' research, where researchers from high-income countries work in the Global South without mutually agreed interests and benefits, or adequate support of local researchers, institutions, communities and infrastructure. It is only one of many examples of how global research is normally structured to perpetuate inequalities.

International collaboration undoubtfully strengthens R&I. However, unless we build or consolidate better international R&I partnerships, inequities will continue to exist. The work undertaken in the context of, and through the forthcoming workshop, aims to address the following question: ***How can we strengthen research in the Global South and address inequities within the global research ecosystem before, during and after the research takes place?***

Against this backdrop, this workshop aims to provide a platform for an open discussion to exchange experiences and best practices to ensure sustainable, impactful and equitable R&I partnerships for the future. The workshop will bring together representatives from national and regional authorities, academic and other research institutions and international (stakeholder) organisations from the Global North and Global South.

The virtual setting of this three-hour workshop allows for a maximum number of countries/ regions to participate in the discussions.

To structure the discussion, the following topics will be addressed in parallel breakout groups during two discussion rounds. All workshop participants will be able to select their two preferred topics upon their registration which will be taken into account as much as possible in composing the break-out groups.

The outputs gathered during the workshop will be consolidated in a report that will be published on the Europa Webpage of, The Multilateral Dialogue on Values and Principles and will contribute to future discussions on Values and Principles such as during the Ministerial

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[1] st10125-en22.pdf (europa.eu)

Conference on the Multilateral Dialogue on Principles and Values that will be held in Brussels on 16 February 2024.

The three main topics covered in this workshop are:

Topic 1: Key challenges in developing equitable partnerships in international research BEFORE the research begins.

Questions to consider in addressing this topic include:

- What are good examples of practices and behaviours that your country, your organisation or that you personally, apply to encourage equitable research partnerships before the research begins?
- How to improve the joint definition of overarching research topics in funding-lines to address unbalanced research agenda setting practices? Which stakeholders should be involved and how?
- How to operationalise equity in calls for proposals and in proposals? More concretely, how can research funding providers build sustainable equity considerations into their calls for proposals, and how to ensure that applicants do the same in their research proposals before the research activities start?

Topic 2: Key challenges in developing equitable partnerships in international research DURING the research work.

Questions to consider in addressing this topic include:
- What are good examples of practices and behaviours that your country, your organisation or that you personally apply to encourage equitable research partnerships in the execution phase of research projects?
- How can research roles and responsibilities - from research design, data collection to publication and evaluation - be defined and distributed equitably, also ensuring mutual learning?
- How to ensure fair and beneficial involvement of marginalized (research) community members in the research team and research activities with, for example uneven access to (technology, research) infrastructure and digital resources?

Topic 3: Key challenges in developing equitable partnerships in international research AFTER the research is completed.

Questions to consider in addressing this topic include:
- What are good examples of practices and behaviours that your country, your organisation or that you personally apply, to encourage equitable research partnerships after the research has been completed?
- What are concrete examples of practices which funders could require from grant holders in order to foster a fair and inclusive sharing of research results and benefits to all stakeholders, including (local) society?
- What models are there for building up and sustaining collaborations with communities and enterprises during and after the research? How can (science) communication,

dissemination and evaluation of research outcomes be undertaken so that all relevant research stakeholders are involved (including local communities in the Global South)?

Further reading and background material

(provided by the organising team and complemented by the participants during the workshop)

- [Council conclusions (14 June 2021)](#) on EU partnerships with Middle-Income Countries: Opportunities for the development in transition agenda (4 pages)
- [Middle-income countries: Council affirms the EU's commitment to establishing tailored partnerships - Consilium (europa.eu)](#)
    - NDICI-Global Europe: final green light for the new financial instrument to support the EU's external action
    - The European Consensus on Development (54 pages)
- Council Conclusions (2021): Future Governance of the European Research Area– [Policy Agenda 2022-2024](#) (pages 14-21)
- [Council Conclusions on principles and values in international R&I cooperation](#) (2022) (7pages)
- [Relevance of international partnerships in the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals | Nature Communications (1page)](#)
- Equitable partnerships: Lessons from practitioners: [Six tips for ensuring partnerships in research consortia are equitable - UKCDR](#)
- [Equitable Research Partnerships A Global Code of Conduct to Counter Ethics Dumping (134 pages)](#)
- [Towards knowledge societies: UNESCO world report (200 pages)](#)
- [African Charter for Transformative Collaborations (12 pages)](#)
- The TRUST Code - A Global Code of Conduct for Equitable Research Partnerships

Topic 1:

- The Netherlands: https://www.nwo.nl/sites/nwo/files/documents/NACCAP%202004-2011%3A%20Lessons%20Learned.pdf
- UK: https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/equitable-partnerships-guide/21955
- Belgium: https://southernvoice.org/redefining-equitable-research-partnerships-a-southern-led-action-agenda/
- Brazil: https://www.if.ufrgs.br/~barbosa/Publications/Policy/pavan-SCIENTOMETRICS-2018.pdf
- Portugal:
    - https://www.cyted.org/web_redes.php?id_rede=509
    - https://www.cyted.org/index.php#
    - https://www.ciencialp.pt/en/homepage-2/
- NSF Global Centres: https://new.nsf.gov/funding/opportunities/global-centers-gc
- Translated versions of the TRUST Code: https://www.globalcodeofconduct.org/open-to-the-world/

Topic 2:

- UK: https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/toolkit_-_building_ethical_sustainable_partnerships.pdf and https://www.ethical-global-research.ed.ac.uk/toolkit
- UKCDR: https://www.ukcdr.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/UKCDR_ESSENCE_Equitable_Research_Partnerships.pdf
- NACCAP: https://www.nwo.nl/sites/nwo/files/documents/NACCAP%202004-2011%3A%20Lessons%20Learned.pdf
- Finland: https://helda.helsinki.fi/server/api/core/bitstreams/988c6d29-8bd7-47fa-97b4-d45067b90a81/content
- Redefining equitable Research Partnerships: a Southern led Action Agenda: https://southernvoice.org/redefining-equitable-research-partnerships-a-southern-led-action-agenda/
- South Africa:

  - Cape Town Statement: https://www.wcrif.org/guidance/cape-town-statement

  - African Charter: https://www.devstud.org.uk/2023/08/07/new-african-charter-on-transformative-research-collaborations/

- ARUA : ARUA Centres of Excellence under the GCRF programme

Topic 3:

- France: https://rfi.cohred.org/rfi-guides/
- Canada: https://idrc-crdi.ca/en/rqplus
- UK:https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/development-of-key-performance-indicators-for-the-newton-fund-and-gcrf
- Portugal:

  - https://www.fct.pt/en/sobre/politicas-e-estrategias/politicas-de-ciencia-aberta/acesso-aberto-a-publicacoes-cientificas/

  - CPLP Open Access Portal: https://rc.cplp.org/Content/about

Agenda

13:00-13:05	**Opening and welcome: the multilateral dialogue on principles and values in international R&I cooperation** Cristina Russo, Director for Global Approach & International Cooperation in R&I, DG R&I, European Commission
13:05-13:10	**Introduction to the workshop** Martin Penny, Head of Unit, International Cooperation, DG R&I, European Commission
13:10-13:30	**Policy context of the workshop** Play 1 minute clip: https://youtu.be/eCbsU8g0MbM Carlos Velasquez (Medellin, Colombia), Community representative - Institutional representative
13:30-14:15	**First round of breakout sessions** *During this first discussion round, three simultaneous breakout sessions will take place covering the following three topics:* *1. Key challenges in developing equitable partnerships in international research **before** the research begins* *2. Key challenges in developing equitable partnerships in international research **during** research implementation* *3. Key challenges in developing equitable partnerships in international research **after** the research is completed*
14:15-14:25	**Coffee break**
14:25-15:10	**Second round of breakout sessions**
15:10-15:25	**"Fairness, respect, care and honesty as the foundation for trust and equitable research partnerships"** Key note speaker: Michael Makanga, Executive Director Global Health EDCTP3 Joint Undertaking
15:25-15:55	**Plenary report by moderators of the break-out sessions** *Each moderator will report back the three main messages from the discussions in the breakout rooms.*
15:55-16:00	**Closing statement** Martin Penny, Head of Unit, International Cooperation, DG R&I, European Commission

Summary Report

This workshop under the Multilateral Dialogue on Principles and Values in International R&I cooperation of the European Commission took place on the 18 January 2024. It was the latest of the series of workshops supporting the Multilateral Dialogue. This workshop on "Encouraging equitable research and innovation partnerships with low- and middle-income countries" was co-organised by the European Commission together with The Guild, the German Commission for UNESCO, Euroscience, Institut de recherche pour le développement (IRD), TRUST project, Coimbra Group Latin America Working Group, Spain, France, Australia and South Africa, and gathered **123 participants from 35 countries and 16 stakeholders**. The aim of this workshop was to have an open discussion in order to establish an understanding of **the main commonalities, differences, challenges and best practices that exist in different countries (regions) of the world.**

Equitable and supportive R&I partnerships are generally defined as those in which, at all stages of the research process, there is mutual participation, trust and respect considering the asymmetries of research systems (e.g. in terms of research infrastructure, human resource development, or publication opportunities). This should also imply a common commitment to overcome possible inequities as part of the partnership's commitment to excellent research and innovation to which all should be enabled to contribute according to their ability, not their circumstances, and regardless of their role (as researcher, participant, beneficiary, funder, local community or other).

Maria Cristina Russo, **Director for Global Approach & International Cooperation in R&I at the European Commission:**
- Stated that in **May 2021 the EU strategy for international cooperation** in a changing world **was adopted** and that in **July 2022 the European Commission initiated the Multilateral Dialogue on principles and values** for international research and innovation (R&I) collaboration.
- Recalled the previous workshops and different topics discussed, and that the workshops have proven to be a valuable instrument of bringing together research organisations.
- Introduced the focus of this workshop on equitable research partnerships with low- and middle-income countries.
- Highlighted the importance of having this dialogue with all stakeholders from the Global North and Global South countries.
- Indicated that, given the global nature of the topic, the workshop invitation was extended to additional participants which allowed to bring on board new stakeholders and countries from the Global South.
- Encouraged all participants to actively share their experiences.

Martin Penny, **Head of Unit International Cooperation Policy at the European Commission**, introduced the context for the workshop and the two keynote speakers:

Carlos Velasquez, Community Leader in Comuna 8 (Medellin, Colombia):
- (Following a short video), provided a speech to understand the policy context of equitable partnership (concluding the two key elements for equitable partnerships are to strengthen trust and to align agendas).

- Presented the work he conducted in Comuna 8, a vulnerable neighbourhood in Medellin that has undergone a great urban and social transformation in recent years, working on concerted dialogues with the state, (local) communities, academia sharing scientific and academic knowledge.
- Presented the strategy for articulation with academies and universities for strengthening proposed solutions for the main problems in the community , highlighting the importance of the involvement of the local communities as they know best the local needs and potential solutions.
- Shared, based on his experience, the challenges encountered before, during and after this type of international partnerships:
  - BEFORE starting any research process, setting up a **common agenda and building community trust are key**.
  - DURING the process he referred to: the **commitment and contribution that each local partner could bring** (from the universities/ academia and the local communities); the **coordination of university representatives, communities and researchers** (e.g. universities to respect the calendar of the communities such as "vacation periods", etc.); **and the respect for community priorities.**
  - AFTER the process: he highlighted the importance of the continuity of the processes at the social and technical levels.
- Ended by mentioning that academia can strengthen the proposals and that it is important to recognise the communities not only as a beneficiary of the research but also as an active partner in the co-production of knowledge.

Michael Makanga, Executive Director Global Health EDCTP3 Joint Undertaking, co-author of the Trust Code:
- Presented the aim of the Trust Code[2] and the 4 pillars for an equitable partnership and as a foundation of trust which are "Fairness, Respect, Care and Honesty".
- Indicated three reasons ~~of~~ to explain the Trust Code's success:
  - The Trust Code is very short, precise and easily understandable.
  - The four values are understood around the world.
  - The Code was developed with highly vulnerable populations and a majority of partners from low- and middle-income countries.
- Highlighted that the Trust Code. has many institutional adopters, such as the European Commission (~~EU~~ August 2018), the European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) (August 2018) ~~and~~ the Netherlands and Poland ~~adopted the Trust Code on 28 September~~in ~~2021~~, NATURE Portfolio, and that further institutions and countries are currently in the adoption process.
- Answering a question on the collaboration with other initiatives such as the African Charter on Transformative Research Collaboration, Dr Makanga replied that **meetings such as the Multilateral Dialogue are the best place to foster this type of collaboration.**

After the introduction, participants discussed in ten parallel breakout sessions – following the Chatham House Rule –the following key topics: what are the key challenges **BEFORE,**

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[2] The TRUST Code - A Global Code of Conduct for Equitable Research Partnerships

DURING and AFTER the research begins. The discussion was structured and facilitated around a set of questions for each of the topics, as set out as well in the concept note:

Topic 1 – Before the research
- What are good examples of practices and behaviours that your country, your organisation or that you personally, apply to encourage equitable research partnerships before the research begins?
- How to improve the joint definition of overarching research topics in funding-lines to address unbalanced research agenda setting practices? Which stakeholders should be involved and how?
- How to operationalise equity in calls for proposals and in proposals? More concretely, how can research funding providers build sustainable equity considerations into their calls for proposals, and how to ensure that applicants do the same in their research proposals before the research activities start?

Topic 2 – During the research
- What are good examples of practices and behaviours that your country, your organisation or that you personally apply to encourage equitable research partnerships in the execution phase of research projects?
- How can research roles and responsibilities – from research design, data collection to publication and evaluation - be defined and distributed equitably, also ensuring mutual learning?
- How to ensure fair and beneficial involvement of marginalised (research) community members in the research team and research activities with, for example uneven access to (technology, research) infrastructure and digital resources?

Topic 3 – After the research
- What are good examples of practices and behaviours that your country, your organisation or that you personally apply, to encourage equitable research partnerships after the research has been completed?
- What are concrete examples of practices which funders could require from grant holders in order to foster a fair and inclusive sharing of research results and benefits to all stakeholders, including (local) society?
- What models are there for building up and sustaining collaborations with communities and enterprises during and after the research? How can (science) communication, dissemination and evaluation of research outcomes be undertaken so that all relevant research stakeholders are involved (including local communities in the Global South)?

Some general conclusions across the three topics that were highlighted in the discussions, are:

- Investing sufficient **time to meet** is essential in order to overcome potential cultural barriers, build trust, co-define priorities between research partners.
- **Establishing a set of rules for generosity** from the start (open data access, share results, empower local communities, etc.) is key for an equitable partnership
- **Long term funding and commitment** after the project ends, sharing responsibilities, aligning impact is essential

- Long-term partnerships beyond the project duration need maintenance for example by building an **"Alumni network"** (from PhDs and Masters) for former partners.
- **Joint design and evaluation, capacity building** to raise profile of researchers and institutions are all important elements in a project.

An overview of some key takeaways gathered for each topic of the breakout sessions are presented below:

<u>**Topic 1 – Before the research begins:**</u>

- **Ensure equity of power positions and responsibilities** according to partners capabilities and needs.
- **Set rules from the beginning when planning the action** and engage every actor to work in accordance with open science principles (e.g. acquiring data from communities, engage local community, empowering them in this open science).
- **Build in accountability mechanisms** and define well the quotas and targets (matchmaking to find partners).
- **Communication and building trust between key stakeholders** (early exchange between potential partners, early matchmaking in developing proposal, define the joint research interest, open pre-calls with small grants).
- **Agenda alignment** to ensure co-development: share alignments of priorities, support letters in proposal to mitigate potential misalignment on priorities and share posters presentations in advance to know potential partners before proposals.
- **Joint designing, programming and evaluation** with the need to be aware about the needs and interest of both sides.
- Synergy between research and innovation policy and instruments and other policies and instruments.
- **Tools and measures proposed**: pre-calls to build partnerships and fix stakeholders' agreement, align priorities through Clusters/Networks of (e.g. the alliance between ARUA/The Guild), support letters in proposal to mitigate misalignment, share and ensure **calls are understandable by non-EU members** to allow their participation.

<u>**Topic 2 – During the research**</u>

- **Bottom-up approach between researchers**, co-design research, when funding becomes more ad hoc.
- **Political change and instability can** affect relationships and cause interruption of projects.
- **Existing barriers for direct research funding to Global South**, due to (Global North) **funders' rules and perceptions or national laws.**
- Promoting bilateral research with the Global South by building a **multilateral community of mutual learning.**
- Sharing resources across the Global South (facilities and expertise), better adapted funding rates, cost-coverage and advanced payment conditions.
- Research to be **implemented on needs-based approach to meet** the needs of local communities.

- Examples of tools and measures proposed: first and last authors in a publication need to be from a Southern country, encourage publications by Global South countries only, inclusive decision-making procedures.

Topic 3 – After the research:

- **Equitable partnerships AFTER the research is not possible if it is not set up BEFORE and DURING** (example of fair contracting practices and co-creation of the research objectives and activities reflecting local needs to ensure adequate impact after).
- **Equitable sharing of the results** (open and multilingual access to results, avoid inequality when paying for access to results, such as publications).
- **Communication, dissemination, and involvement to share the knowledge** and learn to work with other sectors to boost exploitation of results.

The outcomes of this workshop will contribute to the Ministerial Meeting in Brussels, Belgium, on 16 February 2024.

Full Report

Encouraging equitable research and innovation partnerships with low- and middle-income countries

Introduction

The European Commission initiated a Multilateral Dialogue on Values and Principles underpinning international research and innovation (R&I) collaboration in July 2022. The eighth, of the online workshops making up this Multilateral Dialogue focused on **equitable research and innovation partnerships with low- and middle-income countries (LMIC)**.

The aim of this dialogue was to have an open discussion between EU Member States, partner countries and stakeholders to develop a shared understanding of these principles and values as a reliable basis for international research and innovation cooperation.

Equitable and supportive R&I partnerships are generally defined as those in which, at all stages of the research process, there is mutual participation, trust and respect. This involves reducing the asymmetries of research systems, for example in terms of access to research infrastructure, human resource development, or publication opportunities. This should also imply a common commitment to overcome possible inequities as part of the partnership's commitment to excellent research and innovation. All parties should be enabled to contribute according to their ability, regardless of their circumstances or role, whether it is a researcher, participant, beneficiary, funder, local community, or other stakeholder.

International collaboration undoubtfully strengthens R&I. However, inequities will continue to exist unless improvements are made. Equitable R&I partnerships recognise the power imbalances that exist within the global research ecosystem, and work to mitigate them.

Opening

Maria Cristina Russo, Director for Global Approach & International Cooperation in R&I, European Commission, reminded participants that the Global Approach[3], Europe's strategy for international cooperation in a changing world, was adopted in May 2021, and that the European Commission initiated the Multilateral Dialogue on the principles and values for international research and innovation (R&I) collaboration in July 2022. She mentioned that the previous workshops, each focusing on a key topic, had proven to be a valuable instrument to bring together countries across the globe, and European and international organisations to discuss the principles and values underpinning international R&I cooperation.

Introducing the focus on equitable research partnerships with low- and middle-income countries, she highlighted the importance of including relevant participants from the Global

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[3] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2021:252:FIN

North and Global South. Reflecting this, the workshop invitation had been extended to additional stakeholders and countries from the Global South. Maria Cristina Russo concluded her speech by encouraging all participants to actively share their experiences on this topic.

In the workshop, two keynote speeches were delivered by:

After a short video (https://youtu.be/eCbsU8g0MbM), **Carlos Velasquez**, **Community Leader in Comuna 8 (Medellin, Colombia),** showcased a participative approach in Comuna 8, a vulnerable neighbourhood in Medellin that has undergone great urban and social transformation in recent years. This involved dialogues with the state, communities and academia, including the sharing of scientific and academic knowledge.

He presented his 10 years of experience in building collaborations that propose more effective solutions to the community's main problems. He stressed that local communities are well placed to know local needs and how to solve them.

- Based on his experience, he outlined the challenges encountered before, during and after this type of international partnership: BEFORE starting any research process, setting up a **common agenda and building community trust are key**.
- DURING the process he referred to: the **commitment and contribution that each local partner could bring** (from universities/ academia and the local communities); the **coordination of university representatives, communities and researchers** (universities shall respect the calendar of the communities such as "vacation periods", etc.); **and respect for the communities' priorities.**
- AFTER the process: he highlighted the importance of the continuity of the processes at the social and technical levels.

Finally, Carlos Velasquez highlighted the importance of recognising communities not only as beneficiaries of research, but also as active partners in the co-production of knowledge.

Michael Makanga, Executive Director, Global Health EDCTP3 Joint Undertaking[4] , presented the Trust Code, which he co-authored. Subtitled a "Global Code of Conduct for Equitable Research Partnerships", the Trust Code was co-developed by all research stakeholders including highly vulnerable populations and driven by a majority of LMIC partners. It is built on the four values of Fairness, Respect, Care and Honesty.

Michael Makanga indicated three reasons to explain the Trust Code's success: it is short, precise and easily understandable. The four values are commonly understood around the world. He highlighted that many institutions around the world have already adopted the code, including the European Commission and his organisation (EDCTP) in August 2018. The Netherlands and Poland are currently the only EU Member States which have adopted the code at the level of their national funding bodies; other high-profile adopters include the NATURE group.

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[4] EDCTP stands for European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership. The EDCTP3 Joint Undertaking is built on the first and second EDCTP programme. It aims to reduce the burden of poverty-related infectious diseases in sub-Saharan Africa.

Answering a question on the collaboration with other initiatives such as the African Charter on Transformative Research Collaboration, Dr Makanga replied that meetings such as this Multilateral Dialogue are the best place to foster this type of collaboration.

Breakout sessions

The discussions that took place during the two breakout sessions were particularly rich and comprehensive. The following chapter summarises the main outcomes that emerged from the 2 discussion rounds, covering the three discussion topics.

The participating countries, organisations and stakeholders are indicated in Annex 1. The list of moderators and note-takers can be found in Annex 2.

Topic 1: Main challenges encountered for equitable partnerships BEFORE research begins

In international research programmes, it is important to build on existing alliances and to create new partnerships in order, for instance, to advance research, share knowledge and expertise, and better understand the local context. To understand all these dimensions, collaboration is crucial between researchers from the Global North and the Global South and should ideally be established before the research begins. However, setting up an **equitable and fair** partnership can raise some questions and challenges.

Discussions on this topic were guided by the following questions:

1) What are good examples of practices and behaviours that you, your country, or your organisation, apply to encourage equitable research partnerships before the research begins?
2) How to improve the joint definition of overarching research topics in funding-lines to address unbalanced research agenda setting practices? Which stakeholders should be involved and how?
3) How to operationalise equity in calls for proposals and in proposals? More concretely, how can research funding providers build sustainable equity considerations into their calls for proposals, and how to ensure that applicants do the same in their research proposals before the research activities start?

Mutual trust, time perspective and communication

Participants agreed on the importance of trust and more specifically mutual trust as a key value for equal partnerships. However, building trust requires time. It also requires the organisation of meetings and exchanges to help researchers from different countries to get to know each other.

Norway explained that for example "calls for pre-proposals" allow participants to carry out the planning and get all partners on board at the earliest stage, which facilitates the building of trust. Hungary mentioned that they had conducted a survey with researchers to learn which countries they were interested in cooperating with. Matchmaking activities also help in facilitating collaboration between researchers from different countries around the world.

In addition, some countries underlined that long-term commitments and perspectives beyond the end of the project are crucial for building trust among the researchers and stakeholders involved. It was also pointed out that the 'brain drain' from LMIC to high income countries is also an issue that needs to be considered.

Agenda alignment: equity of power and responsibilities, co-designing with local communities

The discussions underlined that the alignment of agendas, especially the design of a joint agenda, and mutual understanding, are key. These need to take into consideration both Global North and Global South's interests and criteria.

Participants stressed the importance of **sharing the agenda and co-designing activities** with **local communities**, as a means to ensure that project results and social impacts are useful for them. For a project to be successful and have the expected impact, it is crucial to estimate the **needs of the local population and communities**. In Brazil, for instance, projects related to Amazonia have to include regional communities as a prerequisite to be funded.

The discussions also addressed the **design phase of research project calls** as well as the integration of local priorities in funded projects. Involving local communities through **citizen science** is a way to include their needs and expectations before the project starts. It was also noted that during the design phase of research projects, difficulties related to local or national regulations and legislations can emerge and might have an impact on the way research is conducted.

Brazil shared some good practices of international research projects in Amazonia involving both foreign funding and active participation of local researchers and communities. Belgium pointed out the importance of defining **standards in calls and funding processes**, as well as considering the needs and realities of the different countries they collaborate with. This is true not only for research and innovation projects, but also for designing calls for grants. For example, numbers of selected postdoc or master students might vary widely between cooperating countries.

Accountability/ financial mechanisms and well-defined quotas, targets and funding

The disparity between funding mechanisms in the North and South was a key point that participants addressed in the breakouts. It is essential to build **accountability mechanisms** to reach goals related to equitable research and innovation. These should allow the empowerment of Global South partners as well as providing a clear awareness of current power relations, even if the power imbalance is sometimes accepted.

To limit such disparities, the Netherlands introduced a research funding programme which aims to generate equitable research projects. It does so by ensuring research questions are first discussed with, in this case, their African partners, who highlight their principal needs. The UK highlighted the development of an Equitable Partnerships Guide.

Funds for travelling, including the possibility of funding partners' travel to enable open discussion, can facilitate successful collaboration. However, bureaucracy, such as financial

reports, can be a hurdle for Global South countries, which often lack administrative officers to facilitate these processes.

EU calls can be complex to understand and translating them into an easy-to-understand version could be useful for LMIC.

There is also a need for funders, usually from the North, to act as 'listeners' and enter into a dialogue with researchers when developing new funding lines, to make them more accessible to LMIC.

In addition, capacity building instruments are necessary to increase scientists' awareness of funding opportunities.

Finally, the questions of '**balanced involvement of partners**' and '**level of commitment**' were also brought up by the participants as important considerations in building equitable partnerships.

Potential tools, measures and synergies

Participating countries and stakeholders shared examples of tools and measures to establish equitable partnerships. To avoid issues in the partnerships, such as misalignments in terms of co-development, some countries formalise partnerships **with a written document** such as a stakeholder's agreement (Japan). Partners must adhere to this agreement, which cannot be changed easily. Others use support letters in proposals (Luxembourg) or sign a protocol of cooperation (Belgium). South Africa mentioned a partnership between the African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA) and The Guild that was established through thematic clusters. Both networks have created 20 Clusters of Research Excellence that cover many priority areas of the EU's Global Approach to R&I.

Germany developed a tool to allow people more time to get to know each other before establishing a partnership, in the form of a booklet of posters outlining researchers and project profiles.

'Decentralisation' was also raised as a way to contribute to the equal development of communities, entities and researchers in regions and cities far from decision-making processes. To ensure the participation of researchers from such 'outer zones', Brazil has established a counting system with quotas that empowers both the areas far from the main cities, and the researchers that work there.

Finally, the discussion highlighted the need to build synergies between instruments, and more specifically between research and innovation policy and instruments.

Topic 2: Main challenges encountered for equitable partnerships DURING research

The discussions around this topic were guided by the following questions:

1) What are good examples of practices and behaviours that you, your country, or your organisation apply to encourage equitable research partnerships in the execution phase of research projects?
2) How can research roles and responsibilities – from research design and data collection to publication and evaluation – be defined and distributed equitably, also ensuring mutual learning?

3) How to ensure fair and beneficial involvement of marginalised research community members in the research team and research activities with uneven access to (technology, research) infrastructure and digital resources?

Promote bilateral research with Global South partners and share resources

The discussions showed the need to promote bilateral cooperation with Global South partners, building multilateral communities and mutual learning to create longer term relationships – and equity. Participants highlighted the importance of considering equity throughout the research process. This requires a bi-directional access to both infrastructures and data for the researchers involved, as well as the sharing of research results in an 'open access' format. Exploring ways to encourage mutual learning, participants raised the questions of mobility, training for researchers, and the development of a series of guidelines to be followed during research collaboration with the Global South.

Collaborative endeavours tend to be more equitable when they result from a bilateral agreement between funding agencies, rather than involving governments in the negotiation process. Drawing a common framework for donors might allow equitable involvement of researchers in decision-making processes, ideally before the awarding of funds. An example of good practice shared by the Netherlands included a funding programme and the promotion of the collaboration between Dutch researchers and their African counterparts in the area of Health, in EDCTP. All research questions were suggested by the African partners, with Dutch partners mostly involved in supporting roles. In addition, Belgium showed how their Ministry of Science and Ministry of Development Cooperation co-fund LMIC cooperations, based on a written agreement.

Participants stressed that a push for equity should be based on the needs acknowledged by Global South researchers, not only in the design phase, but also in the practical and publication steps of research. When an initial agreement sets out an equitable allocation of resources and responsibility among partners, disagreements rarely emerge between those involved in the project's implementation.

Japan raised four issues they consider when implementing equitable partnerships:
1. Even though capacity building efforts play a crucial role in improving equitable research partnerships, making cutting edge technology available for all involved parties increases the 'excitement' associated with performing research, which can boost the number and quality of future North-South research partnerships;
2. There is a need to create equitable contracts when initially engaging in research partnerships, as these can help assure an equity in access to resources, and in the participation of all those involved;
3. Young researchers from the Global South, including those who compose their diaspora in the Global North, should have access to local resources and opportunities, insofar as this promotes the inclusion of voices excluded from research;
4. Presently, there is limited support for coalitions being established between non-governmental institutions and national governments.

Young researchers have a role to play and must be mentored so that they can become future leaders in their field. Sharing equipment and material will help marginal communities to be

involved in research implementation and in the co-creation process. The 'no one left behind' policy could also enable a rethinking of how marginalised communities can be more involved.

Participants agreed that data is a central element in every international partnership, and should be discussed at the very beginning, in particular from whom data will be collected, how it will be used and how results and data will be shared.

Bottom-up approach between researchers, and a needs-based approach tailored to each local community

It was unanimously agreed that research must be based on local community needs, difficulties and interests, to ensure equity.

In Brazil for instance, some **university programmes are directly addressing local communities** to extend research areas, and researchers involve communities fully in research and the co-design of solutions. In Belgium, participation is fostered from both sides: it is important to engage in co-design at all stages of the process and take a bottom-up rather than top-down approach. South Africa stated that they often interact with their local communities, also via their research ethics office.

Discussions further revealed that a participatory approach involving marginalised communities should be at the core of research collaboration. Establishing contacts and exchanges on how to engage all relevant stakeholders in the research process brings real added value across the partnership. The 'no one left behind' policy may enable reflections on how marginalised communities can be more involved in the co-creation process.

Nevertheless, one major concern that was raised by countries and stakeholders is that **the language used to communicate with local communities needs to be simplified** for a better ownership of results. This includes the use of appropriate key messages. Language access, especially to scientific publications that are usually in English, can also be an issue. The Netherlands gave the reverse example of the high number of resources available in South American languages that are not being used because there is no translation in English.

Barriers encountered that can affect (sustainable) relationships and risk for interruption of projects

The participants engaged in detailed discussions about the various barriers, such as political changes and instability, that can directly affect relationships within research partnerships.

It was mentioned that weak institutions in the Global South compromise and impair the maintenance and establishment of research partnerships.

Research funds are typically granted to European researchers or to researchers from Global North, with funders very often expressing scepticism about the possibility of giving Southern partners the responsibility of managing funds themselves. Additionally, mobility barriers impede for example African researchers from entering, and remaining in Europe to conduct research, while the opposite appears not to be the case. Along the same lines, it was pointed

out that funding comes mostly from Global North funders and funding streams flow mostly from government to government, which may impact diplomacy and further hamper cooperation efforts in research between Global North and South. In addition to constraints related to funding, it was also mentioned that political instability has devastating impacts on sustaining ongoing research endeavours and building future collaborations. Funding capital often comes from national taxpayers and there are political obstacles deterring the direct funding of researchers in the Global South. They expressed the importance of exploring creative partnerships, for example with intermediary institutions to allocate research funds – and of reviewing national legislations that restrict funding streams.

Meanwhile, the USA highlighted an array of funding sources and opportunities, which are often dismissed but can significantly help to reduce inequity in research. In the USA, **philanthropic foundations and private entities** are common funders of research activities, including North-South collaborations. ARUA recognised an increased interest in philanthropic foundations in promoting research cooperation with Global South.

Topic 3: Main challenges encountered AFTER research is completed

While policymakers excel at initiating projects, managing the post project phase remains a challenging step. Governments are looking for new ways to improve post project management and refine strategies for collaboration.

The workshop addressed the following questions:

1) What are good examples of practices and behaviours that you, your country, or your organisation apply to encourage equitable research partnerships after the research has been completed?
2) What are concrete examples of practices which funders could require from grant holders in order to foster the fair and inclusive sharing of research results, and benefits to all stakeholders, including (local) society?
3) What models are there for building up and sustaining collaborations with communities and enterprises during and after the research? How can communication, dissemination and evaluation of research outcomes be undertaken so that all relevant research stakeholders are involved (including local communities in the Global South)?

Project collaboration – from the beginning through to long-term investment

A key aspect of a partnership is the collaboration agreement provided by the coordinator to be signed by all partners at the beginning of their joint work. Stakeholders need to be brought into the process early on.

Maintaining partnerships continuously is a challenge, and it seems easier at individual researcher level, rather than at the institutional level. Establishing a sound partnership at the outset makes relations easier to maintain throughout the project.

Communication, dissemination, inclusiveness and long-term perspective

Having good communication among partners and maximising the exploitation of project results after the project is completed are key success factors. Beyond publishing scientific

papers or articles, **outreach campaigns can help to reach a broader audience and the larger community**. Possible activities include end-of-project workshops. There is also a need for institutions to continue exploiting the results, as well as networking and relationship-building on the ground.

Looking at the **macro-level** and focusing on what was originally expected will help designing and assessing the overarching research and enable partnerships to produce results that are tangible and impactful.

With regards to the importance of communication, working with **the 'right agencies' in the LMIC** is crucial**. This can ensure that the research done** is **more impactful and inclusive**, as those agencies are assessing the impact of collaboration programmes, including doctoral programmes. They are monitoring the career of PhDs after completing their research project, as well as the impact of their work. Luxembourg for example initiated a new process, adding a short period to the end of research contracts, 'a 12-months period of dissemination', that includes costs for external events and conferences, the publication of results, and other activities to further disseminate about the project. They also prioritise stakeholder engagement, even after the projects end, to help disseminate results and foster collaboration.

Alumni networks were unanimously agreed to be very beneficial, as they help developing sustainable collaborations, and support capacity building. Several participating countries shared specific examples of building such a community:

- Belgium builds on diaspora networks. Certain universities are particularly strong in creating these alumni communities, so they can share knowledge and skills or keep them in the loop for new projects and dissemination activities. Maintaining this relationship is also a way to monitor their careers, enabling longer term collaboration impact.

- South Africa has an active alumni office with representations in different countries identifying alumni across the world. For instance, they invite alumni when the vice-chancellor is visiting a country or a city, allowing contact with other staff of the university.

- Canada built communities of practice, funding cohorts that bring together people who work on similar projects, a Global South-South exchange that is valued by Southern institutions to amplify their positioning and extend their network.

- Australia shared their example of a centre for agricultural research that built an alumni network to build skills through fellowships.

Equitable sharing of results

Participants agreed **that equitable sharing of results is both essential and beneficial**. Publications are valuable outputs and should be disseminated widely among local communities.

Enabling open access to science is of key importance to foster collaboration and ensure the transfer of skills and knowledge. It is the best way to make research more inclusive, and to include the as well local communities in research, in a citizen science approach. However, some academics still hesitate to open up their research and most industries limit the access to their journals and data for business purposes.

The challenge is also to support the LMIC in sharing their data in the global research infrastructures, and to go beyond single projects to maximise benefits and build on lessons learnt. In Australia for instance, various frameworks exist for research conducted with indigenous people that include codes of conduct and protocols for knowledge sharing. These could be used and applied in broader contexts.

There is a need for improved protocols to encourage data sharing, especially in countries without a tradition of formal data sharing. In addition, in order to share data efficiently, data harmonisation is another challenge that needs to be overcome.

Participants agreed that the competitive nature of research projects also has to be considered. Furthermore, the funding of open infrastructure, which is essential to enable open science and open access, adds another layer of complexity to the research landscape.

Another challenge relates to language barriers: promoting multilingualism and alternative communication methods, such as the use of non-verbal elements such as visuals and images, could help to overcome those barriers.

Participants raised the importance of planning the 'after project' already during the research and collaboration phase: the need to build and share strategies for sustaining partnership intentions. The focus is on empowering communities to organise themselves, establish sustainable processes, and negotiate with governments and institutions about their goals beyond the research phase. The key to succeed in the post-project scenario is to find ways for activities to continue seamlessly, and to encourage participants to imagine the next steps in this ongoing journey.

Monitoring evaluation of both the research and the learning can be very beneficial to promote the sustainability of partnerships and to enhance equity.

In addition, Ireland mentioned the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, MSCA Staff Exchanges programme, for capacity building. France shared its example of an 'international research laboratory', a tool for researchers to develop long-term collaborations in the Global South.

Efforts are made to inform both policymakers and researchers' agendas, recognising the need to understand evolving theories and narratives in different contexts and the useful iteration of discussion to build programmes.

ANNEX 1: Participants

Countries participating in the workshop:

Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Denmark, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, USA.

Stakeholders and international organizations present at the workshop:

OECD, Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD), UNESCO, The Guild, YERUN, International Science Council, The League of Research-Intensive Universities, EMBL, AKDN, UNA Europa, ALLEA, European Alliance for SSH, German Commission for UNESCO, African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA), AURORA, Coimbra group.

European Commission

DG RTD, DG INTPA

ANNEX 2: Moderators and Notetakers

With special thanks to the moderators and note-takers that volunteered for the workshop.

Moderators of the breakout groups:

- Isabel Diaz, CSIC, Spain
- Maximilian Müngersdorff, German Commission for UNESCO
- Géraldine Quetin, GAC
- Fadila Boughanemi, EC
- Sean Rowlands, The Guild
- Lutz Möller, German Commission for UNESCO
- Mihalis Kritikos, EC DG RTD
- Lisa Diependaele, EC DG RTD
- Matthias Girod, EuroScience
- Armela Dino, Spanish Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities

Note-takers of the breakout groups:

- Almudena Carrero, CSIC, Spain
- Luise Graw, German Commission for UNESCO
- Charlotte Alcouffe, GAC
- Anissa Zeroual, EC DG RTD
- Henrique Santos, The Guild
- Andy Ramorasata, IRD
- Hazel Partington, UCLan, UK
- Nadia Kornioti, UCLan, Cyprus
- Doris Schroeder, UCLan, UK
- Michelle Ruiz, CSIC, Spain

ANNEX 3 - Organising Team

This workshop was co-designed by The Guild, the German Commission for UNESCO, Euroscience, Institut de recherche pour le développement (IRD), TRUST project, Coimbra Group Latin America Working Group, Spain, France, South Africa and the European Commission. They were represented by:

German Commission for UNESCO

- Lutz Möller
- Maximilian Müngersdorff

SPAIN

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- Armela Dino, Spanish Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities

South Africa

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Coimbra Group Latin America Working Group

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- Soledad Garcia Ferrari, University of Edinburgh

Euroscience:

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The Guild

- Sean Rowlands

TRUST project

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France

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European Commission:

- Martin Penny
- Katrien Rommens-Notoglou
- Fadila Boughanemi
- Mihalis Kritikos
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