



Globethics.net Principles of Research Partnership

1. The Ethics of Knowledge-sharing

The Steering Committee of Globethics.net, at its meeting in Zurich (March 4-5, 2005), worked for the program 2005-2008 on Principles of Research Partnership. The principles in the "Guidelines for Research in partnership with Developing Countries" of the Swiss Commission for Research Partnership with Developing Countries CRPD were of great help. Research partnership is about the ethics of knowledge-sharing. It is imperative that there be common ownership, common responsibility and different roles for participants in the Globethics.net. This can be done through different modules, methods and instruments fitting multiple and diverse academic, social, cultural, and methodological research settings in different parts of the world. Research in Globethics.net is always focused on ethical issues.

Questions that are also relevant to this discussion are: What is knowledge? And what kind of knowledge/wisdom is worth disseminating? Where is knowledge produced and for what purpose and by which means is it disseminated? Thus, the questions of communication technology is of utmost importance, especially in countries that still lag behind others in terms of providing basic needs such as electricity, and those for which internet is still considered a luxury – or a dream. Choosing the means of communication and dissemination of research then becomes a way of inclusion or exclusion of research and beneficiaries of this research. For Globethics.net it is imperative that as an electronic network it must not exclude those who do not have access (or have little access) to electronic media. The electronic network must be supplanted by other modes and instruments such as publications, brochures, face-to-face meetings and local/regional/international seminars.

Impact of research and shared-knowledge is also a key factor if Globethics.net aims to produce knowledge that touches people and affects positive transformation, especially in base communities that grow wary of academically-oriented research projects that have little effect on them. As such, Globethics.net must work in ways that are participatory, transparent, that aim to build community, and ultimately engenders ethical means of researching, ethical use of outcome, and ethical ways of sharing this output with those from whom and by whom this research was extracted.

2. Twelve Principles of Research Partnership

The following "Globethics.net Principles of Research Partnership" are based on the general "Goals and Principles of Globethics.net".

1. Deciding on objectives together: is a key element for the participatory nature of Globethics.net. This was already done at the founding workshop in Bossey/Geneva in August 2004 and would continue. In terms of research, this means that research topics (and modes of output) would be highlighted, discussed and decided-upon by the participants. This would also imply setting priorities in topics and themes, and keeping abreast of regional and global developments that mandate certain research interventions by Globethics.net.

2. Building mutual trust: can come with the strengthening of the partnership and the ability to reach objectives for which the research is undertaken.
3. Developing networks: in terms of south-south cooperation, by encouraging young researchers to become active in research on ethics, and by providing modes, instruments, and forums for those who would not necessarily have access to them.
4. Sharing the responsibility: in formulating research topics, in disseminating the research results, in inviting new researchers to the Globalethics.net forum and in shared fundraising in order to get the necessary funds for the research. This would also be done by realistically designating and delegating tasks to members of the steering committee and the participants at large.
5. Creating transparency: encouraging transparency where it is needed. This is especially critical in exchanges between all members of the network if ethics is to be the base upon which the network is built. For research purposes, this is also a key element in conducting and disseminating research outcomes.
6. Evaluating the results: must adequately and fairly reflect the needs, means, and objectives of Globalethics.net in its planning, monitoring and evaluation. It must also challenge the network in order to develop without hindering and/or taxing its work with bureaucratic processes. At the same time, it must respond to the demands of partners and funders of the network.
7. Disseminating the results: by electronic and other means in order to reach all participants and interested circles outside the network.
8. Applying the results: must be done locally, and must become part of an overall system of advocacy for the network in that its research aims to positively effect and transform the communities from which the research was extracted. This would necessarily mean that there would be creative means of application of research using different modes and methods (seminars, books, training modules, seminars, workshops, etc...) alongside further on-line training.
9. Sharing profits: as in equally sharing the outcome of research and being at all times responsive to the differing and diverse needs of all members of the group. Sharing the burden of the cost would necessarily entail economic ways of publication, or meeting using a minimum cost approach, and being flexible enough to move for meetings and/or workshops to more economic locations that involve contributions by the members.
10. Increasing research capacity: of young researchers, especially in the South, by encouraging bilateral and multilateral exchanges, and by developing programs that further train, empower and build the capacity of young researchers and research organizations by addressing new forms and methods of research-action.
11. Building on the achievements: building the Globalethics.net capacity by accumulating knowledge, and by learning from our experiences and those of others rather than 'starting from scratch'.
12. Research cycle: as a means by which knowledge returns to benefit the base community in which it was conducted.

Globethics.net Steering Committee, March 2005