



The Association
of Commonwealth
Universities

FROM PRINCIPLES TO PRACTICE

Using the ACU Equitable Research
Partnerships Toolkit to action the Cape
Town Statement

Michelle R. Brear

Senior Researcher- Wits University (South Africa)

Michelle.brear@wits.ac.za

For the lives we can lead



BACKGROUND



The Association
of Commonwealth
Universities

EPISTEMIC (KNOWLEDGE) INJUSTICE

- Refers to:
 - People's ability to know and be seen by others to know:
 - Exclusion and silencing.
 - Distortion or misrepresentation.
- In international research partnerships:
 - Assuming expertise in the Global North.
 - Excluding or silencing Global South knowledge.



EPISTEMIC INJUSTICE

- Knowledge inequities in research partnerships:
 - Excluding Global South researchers from research design and planning.
 - Situating Global North researchers as experts
- Undermine integrity by:
 - Design not informed by local knowledge.
 - Trust and confidence undermined by scientific and cultural flaws.



TOOLKIT DEVELOPMENT



The Association
of Commonwealth
Universities

METHODOLOGY

- Informed by:
 - Stakeholder consultations:
 - 7 academics, including 6 from the Global South.
 - 10 senior stakeholders in equitable partnerships programming.
 - Literature on equity in partnerships:
 - 30 prominent resources reviewed.
 - Online survey:
 - 140 unique responses for researchers in 33 (mostly Global South) countries



FINDINGS

- Considerable inequity remains, despite principles and guidance
- No existing toolkit, and few existing tools, focused on addressing inequity in research partnerships.



TOOLKIT DEVELOPMENT

- Adaptation of existing:
 - Participatory learning tools.
 - Generic partnership tools.
- To focus on:
 - Equity.
 - International research partnerships.
- Reviewed by:
 - Original authors of partnership guidance and/or tools.



ABOUT THE TOOLKIT

<https://www.acu.ac.uk/our-work/projects-and-programmes/equitable-research-partnerships-toolkit/>



The Association
of Commonwealth
Universities

TOOLKIT CONTENT

- 20 tools and related text explaining:
 - Why and when to use the tool.
 - How to use the tool (step by step instructions).
 - Rapid and intensive use options.
 - Face-to-face and virtual implementation options.
 - Expected outputs and outcomes.



TOOLKIT PURPOSE

- Informed by dialogical learning theory.
- Each tool is designed to stimulate dialogical learning about:
 - Multiple dimensions of equity.
 - Factors that influence equity.
 - Actions that work to enhance equity.



USING THE TOOLKIT TO ACTION THE CAPE TOWN STATEMENT



The Association
of Commonwealth
Universities

DIALOGICAL LEARNING

- Dialogical learning- a process through which knowledge is socially created:
 - What is equity?
 - What actions are needed to enhance equity in our partnership?
- Before and during research partnerships.

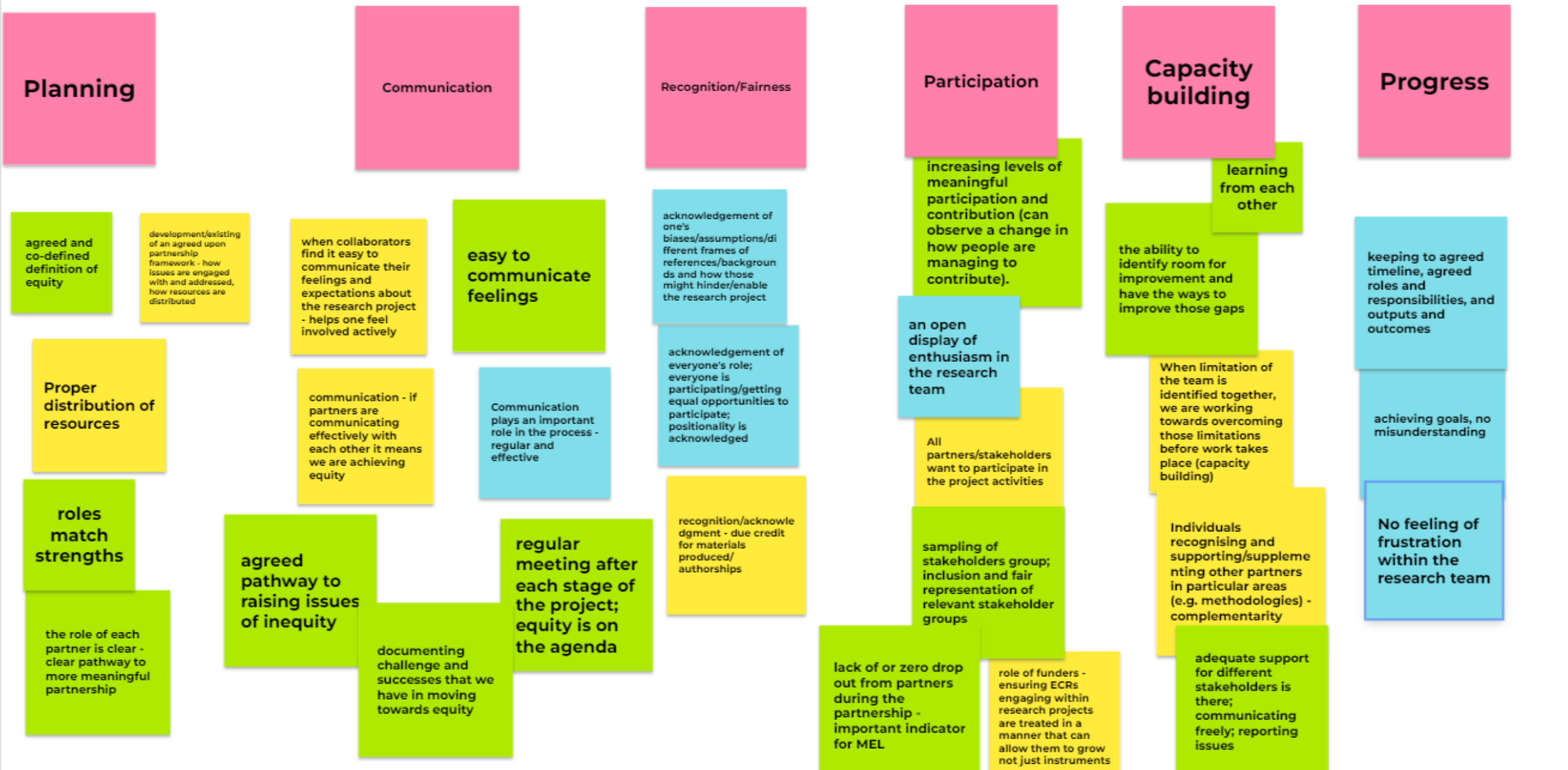


TOOL EXAMPLE: EQUITY CAFE

- A dialogue-based tool informed by the World Café method.
- Draws on the metaphor of a café, a space synonymous with friendly and informal, but often creative and critical, conversation.
- Designed to create a space for discussions about equity, including what equity means and might “look like” within a partnership.



How will I know if my research partnership is making progress towards equity?



PLANNING AND MONITORING PROGRESS TOWARDS EQUITY

- What people do is an important proxy for equity
 - Undervalued tasks
 - Time and emotion intensive
 - Receive little recognition or remuneration
 - E.g. participant recruitment, community engagement, data collection
 - Highly valued tasks
 - Holding a research grant
 - Designing research or analysing data
 - Being lead or last author of a scientific report



TOOL EXAMPLE: PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH CHECKLIST

(N) Aspect	Ugandan Partner		Vietnamese Partner		UK Partner	
	Any	Level	Any	Level	Any	Level
(1) Problem or topic definition	1		1		1	
1 Identifying the research problem or topic	0	0	0	0	1	2
2 Defining the research population	1	1	1	1	1	2
3 Conducting background research	0	0	1	1	1	2
4 Developing the research questions and/or aims	0	0	1	1	1	2
5 Obtaining community input on research topic	1	2	1	2	0	0
6 Obtaining policy input on research topic	1	2	1	2	1	1
(2) Study design	1		1		1	
7 Designing the methodology	0	0	1	1	1	2
8 Designing the sampling approach	0	0	0	0	1	2
9 Selecting the data collection method	0	0	0	0	1	2
10 Designing research measures or instruments	0	0	1	1	1	2
11 Translating research measures or instruments	1	2	1	2	0	0
12 Pilot testing research measures or instruments	1	2	1	2	0	0
13 Developing the research proposal	0	0	1	2	1	1
14 Applying for funding as Investigator	0	0	1	1	1	2
15 Applying for funding as non-investigator	1	1	0	0	0	0

Adapted from:

Brear, M. R., Hammarberg, K., & Fisher, J. (2018). Community participation in research from resource-constrained countries: A scoping review. *Health Promotion International, 33*(4), 723-733. doi:10.1093/heapro/dax010

Brear, M. R., Hammarberg, K., & Fisher, J. (2020). Community participation in health research: an ethnography from rural Swaziland. *Health Promotion International, 35*(1), e59-e69. doi:doi.org/10.1093/heapro/day121



The Association
of Commonwealth
Universities

TOOL EXAMPLE: FRONTLINE RESEARCH STAFF ETHICAL REFLECTION SESSIONS



On the frontline

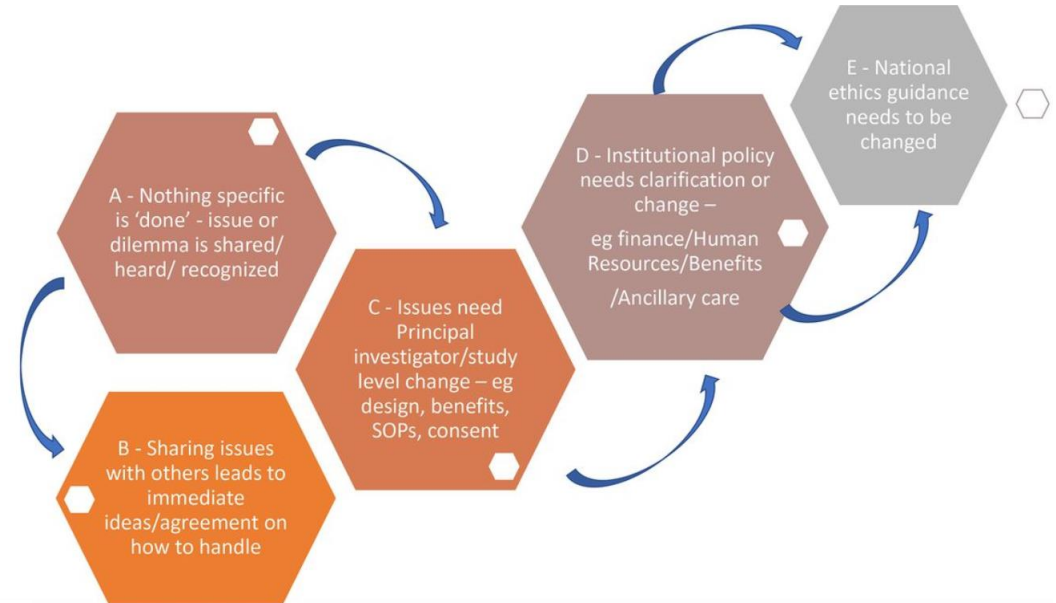
Oxford Population Health
1.52K subscribers

Subscribe

7 likes

Share

Save



HOW URGENT/SERIOUS? HOW RELATED TO RESEARCH (caused? revealed? background?)
 HOW MUCH CAPACITY FOR PERSON TO BE HELPED? FOR THE PERSON ACTING TO BE HARMED?
 WHO'S THE BEST PERSON TO HELP? (real) INTERVENTION IMPLICATIONS FOR STUDY/INSTITUTION?

Original research

BMJ Global Health

Model for developing context-sensitive responses to vulnerability in research: managing ethical dilemmas faced by frontline research staff in Kenya

Sassy Molyneux,^{1,2} Priya Sukhtankar,³ Johnstone Thitiri,¹ Rita Njeru,⁴ Kui Muraya,⁵ Gladys Sanga,¹ Judd L Walson,⁶ James Berkley,^{1,2} Maureen Kelley,⁴ Vicki Marsh^{1,2}



The Association of Commonwealth Universities

CREATING SOCIAL SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE

- Tools for qualitative and quantitative data collection about partners:
 - Perceptions and experiences of equity and related issues.
 - What different partners do.
 - What does or does not “work” to enhance equity and integrity.



CONCLUDING REMARKS

- Cape Town Statement- a call to action.
- ERP Toolkit a resource for facilitating equity and integrity enhancing actions through:
 - Dialogical learning
 - Monitoring and evaluation
 - Creating social scientific knowledge.



Acknowledgements- Association of Commonwealth Universities

Beate Knight- beate.knight@acu.ac.uk

George Lakey- George.Lakey@acu.ac.uk

THANK YOU



The Association
of Commonwealth
Universities