

# Institutionalizing Community University Research Partnerships



*A user's manual*

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



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# Preface

This manual on *Institutionalizing Community University Research Partnerships* is both a handy reference and a ready tool-kit for university and college administrators interested in establishing and improving Community University Research Partnership initiatives in their institutions. It provides practical guidelines and steps that will help deliver on policy commitments made to promote Community University Engagement/Community University Research Partnerships in higher educational institutions. These guidelines, supplemented with best practices (in boxes) from around the world, are intended to show a way forward, and are not necessarily prescriptive; they offer insights into how institutions can build and sustain Community University Research Partnership practices and structures. These best practices are a snapshot of current administrative structures and institutional policies that are facilitative of Community University Research Partnerships. A section on Frequently Asked Questions provides ready answers to questions that may arise in the process of institutionalizing Community University Research Partnerships. Resources and further readings at the end of the manual are an aid to further learning.

The content of the manual has been carefully drawn from available global literature, much of it culled from products of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) funded global study on ‘Mainstreaming Community University Research Partnerships’ conducted under the aegis of the UNESCO Chair on Community Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education. This global study documented case studies across 12 countries and a comparative analysis of the cases highlighted the practices and exemplars for institutionalizing Community University Research Partnerships.

This easy-to-use manual is an effort of the UNESCO Co-Chairs towards co-creating knowledge, capacities and partnerships between universities (academics), communities (civil society) and government (policy makers). We hope it will be beneficial to all universities, colleges and other higher educational institutions that are sensitive to the issue of social responsibility and the potential of community based research to provide local solutions to global problems for local communities. We look forward to your comments and feedback once you have started on the journey of institutionalizing Community University Research Partnerships in your institution.

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# Introduction

## COMMUNIQUE OF THE UNESCO WORLD CONFERENCE ON HIGHER EDUCATION, 2009

*'Higher Education Institutions, through their core functions (teaching, research and service to the community) carried out in the context of institutional autonomy and academic freedom should increase their interdisciplinary focus and promote critical thinking and active citizenship. This would contribute to sustainable development, peace, wellbeing and the realization of human rights .... [Higher Education] must not only give solid skills for the present and future world but must also contribute to the education of ethical citizens committed to the construction of peace, the defense of human rights and the values of democracy.'* (UNESCO, 2009)

Today, there are multiple reasons that indicate our civilization paradigm is in crisis. This juncture of human history is manifested in three distinct, yet, interrelated trends. The first trend is that although many households and communities have achieved unprecedented scales of material history, the latter coexists with widespread deprivations. Considering the amount of wealth and material well-being generated for a section of the population, it is worth wondering how it is that the same is not applied for the welfare of all? The second trend is manifested in the large-scale disturbance and irreversible changes in the larger ecosystem, in which humanity has thrived and civilizations built and nurtured. This becomes evident by the destruction of ecological systems due to over-exploitation of natural resources, threatening the existence of current human civilization. The third trend of the crisis can be seen in the growing disconnect between the aspirations of individuals and the responses of the institutions of governance in societies. Deficits in democracy and design and operation of governing institutions are gradually becoming visible with increasing aspirations of the people.<sup>1</sup>

The challenge is not small, and we need a new conception of human progress if we are to meet the qualitative and quantitative effects of the crisis. We need to realize that we must change our model of civilization, which cannot be built from the old paradigm of a system that has reached its limits. Therefore, the way in which the world will evolve in the long run will in turn depend on the responses that we will be able to articulate now and in the future. In this respect, knowledge emerges as a key

element and Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) assume a central role in its creation and promotion of social use.

However, in recent decades, changes in the context of education have been focused on short-term instrumental performance within a socio-economic system. There is a need to widen the scope of knowledge and move beyond creating socio-economic well-being towards a true knowledge-based society through engagement with citizenry at all levels to address day to day and global issues. Such creation and dissemination of knowledge can further contribute in transforming old paradigms and beliefs and help in moving forward and establishing creative and innovative ways of thinking and imagining new realities. In this way, knowledge can also help in developing ethical awareness and facilitate the civic commitment of citizens and professionals. Some of the practical way forward may include re-defining course structures, syllabuses, books, reading materials, etc. Research models and research areas must reflect the treasury of our thoughts, the richness of our indigenous traditions and the felt necessities of our societies. This must be aligned with facilitative learning environments in which students do not experience learning as a burden, but as a force that liberates the soul and uplifts society. Universities must retrieve their original task of creating good citizens instead of only good workers.<sup>2</sup>

HEIs as agents of knowledge creation, exchange and dissemination need to become more conscious of their importance and responsibility towards society. In today's context, as accelerated changes

<sup>1</sup> GUNi, 2014

<sup>2</sup> Escrigas et. al, 2014

pose challenges to them, they are obligated to address and redefine their traditional roles, to review their perspectives on social responsibility and to consider its implications. This cannot be accomplished with the help of an educational model which thrives on old ways of thinking. Thus, the time is ripe for reviewing and reconsidering the interchange of value between university and society; that is to say, we need to begin thinking on the lines of 'social relevance of universities'.<sup>3</sup>

Increasingly institutions will have to recognize that traditional extension and outreach programs, though important and necessary, are not sufficient to heal the rift between higher education and public life.

What is required is an approach that extends beyond service and outreach to actual 'engagement'. By this, we mean that there is a need to move from a model of 'public service' where universities do things for a 'passive and needy public', to one of 'public work that taps, engages and develops the civic agency, talents and capacities of everyone, inside and outside the academy'.<sup>4</sup> What we require today is an 'engaged model of university outreach' which is far more collaborative than the customary one. Therefore, higher education, which is generally organized into highly specialized disciplines, requires a paradigm shift towards a more systemic perspective, emphasizing collaboration, cooperation and partnership.

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3 GUNi, 2014

4 Cantor, 2012

# PART

# 1

## Understanding Engagement with the Community

### Who constitutes a community?

A particular university is located in a local setting and amidst a social community, comprising of people from different classes, castes, hierarchies and possessing various forms of practical/political/alternate/indigenous knowledge, which is most often outside the theoretical knowledge imparted in classrooms and universities. The term 'community' in the word 'community engagement' refers to this particular neighbourhood or locality where people reside, and to whom the university also owes its social responsibility. It can be defined as 'a group of people united by at least one common characteristic such as geography, shared interests, values, experiences, or traditions. Community is also a feeling or sense of belonging, a relationship, a place, or an institution'.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, the term 'community' may also be applied to one or more of the following:<sup>6</sup>

- (i) a defined geographic or political area such as a neighbourhood, town or region;
- (ii) a population that possesses certain common characteristics such as its race, ethnicity, age or gender;
- (iii) an entity that functions in society (and outside of the researcher's own institution) such as a business, civic organization, educational facility, religious group, or governmental agency.

Sometimes, the role of community in Community University Engagement (CUE) is also performed by a community partner. A community partner refers to individuals and/or entities within the community who may fairly represent their interests, needs and/or concerns because they are both knowledgeable about and empowered to represent that community. Community partners are sought for research based on this expertise and not simply because they control the resources to facilitate the desired study.

The term 'global community' is used for people or nations of the world who are closely connected and are economically, socially and politically independent. Being a member of a global community means that there is more power within the community to bring voices together to effect change.

Another term, which is of relatively recent coinage, is 'Community of Practice' (CoP). Communities of practice are formed by people who engage in a process of collective learning in a shared domain of human endeavour.<sup>7</sup> Communities of practice refer to 'groups of people informally bound together by shared expertise and passion for a joint enterprise'.<sup>8</sup> This definition challenges the boundaries between experts and non-experts, encourages work across organizational and disciplinary boundaries and runs counter to the structures and hierarchies often created and generated by HEIs.

5 Walker, n.d.

6 Yale, 2009

7 Wenger, 2012

8 Lall, 2011



The success of CoPs in supporting innovation and learning stems in part from their capacity to combine three essential elements that, when they function well together, create an ideal environment for harnessing tacit knowledge.<sup>9</sup>

- ✓ *Community*: a group of people who voluntarily come together and build relationships as they exchange knowledge and learn from one another. Their interaction results in a feeling of trust, belonging and mutual commitment.
- ✓ *Domain*: a topic upon which the CoP focuses. The domain represents a common interest or passion that provides an incentive for people to come together and share their ideas, knowledge and stories.
- ✓ *Practice*: practitioners engaged in a CoP learn through action and knowledge exchanged directly in relation to the shared domain of activity.

*The innovative application of CoP was demonstrated by the **Community University Partnership Programme (CURP)** at the **University of Brighton, UK**, where participation of students, faculty, practitioners, parents and service providers was enabled. CoP became the vehicle for co-production of knowledge, specially systematizing tacit knowledge (Tandon & Jackson, 2013).*

## The art of 'engagement'

*Engagement is the process of building relationships with people and putting those relationships to work to accomplish shared goals. The art of engagement centres on knowing when to invest in relationship building and when to tap relationships to get work done.*

Whenever a group of practitioners gathers to discuss 'what is engagement', a discussion about diversity of terminology usually emerges. Depending on the situation in which you are working, 'engagement' can cover consultation, extension, communication, education, public participation, participative democracy or working in partnership. Generally, 'engagement' is used as a generic, inclusive term to describe the broad range of interactions between people. It can include a variety of approaches, such as one way communication or information dissemination, consultation, involvement and collaboration in decision-making, and empowered action in informal groups or formal partnerships. For most projects, engagement means that the individual understands the purpose of the initiative, develops a sense of ownership,

commits to the process and the outcome, and works towards achieving success.<sup>10</sup>

The challenge for HEIs is to engage with society in an integral manner as a way of improving teaching and research, and collaborate in social transformation. This engagement is expressed by HEIs around the world in ways that are based in diverse perspectives and epistemologies of knowledge, as well as in different ways of obtaining feedback for learning and education purposes. Partnership, one of the most important forms of developing engagement that deals with people's issues, is a way of being and a way of working with others that implies mutual understanding, a common good, reciprocity, collaboration in decision making and transparency regarding outcomes.

<sup>9</sup> Paas and Parry, 2012

<sup>10</sup> Department of Sustainability and Environment, Victoria (Melbourne), 2005

## Engagement vis-à-vis higher education

Higher Educational Institutions relate to their surrounding communities in performing some of its functions. HEIs are mostly construed as serving its core missions of teaching, research and service, through the various functions it performs. Engagement of HEIs with communities is mostly viewed through the lens of service. It is important to note here that the engagement function of HEIs with respect to communities is not limited to its service function alone, and encompasses the other missions of teaching and research as well. When we talk about engagement vis-à-vis higher education, it signifies mutual exchange of knowledge between the universities and communities in an attempt to produce an output which is of benefit to the larger society. Such engagement is possible through the teaching and research function of the university, as much as it is through its service function.

This kind of engagement, where the institution and the community are involved in a common

enterprise, gives added depth and meaning to traditional concepts like 'service' and 'outreach' by making the community a partner in academic knowledge. Therefore, across the world, colleges, universities and academic associations are striving to make civic engagement an integral part of the way they do their work. This gives rise to the concept of 'engaged universities'.

*Engaged institutions can be defined as colleges and universities that work with their community as partners to discover new knowledge, promote learning, and apply it throughout their region. As partners, they work with public schools, community organizations, business and industry to meet mutual needs, drawing on the talents & resources of the college or the university (London, 2001).*

## What is Community University Engagement?

Community University Engagement (CUE) as a concept implies relationships between universities and communities, which is mutually beneficial and adopts a bidirectional flow of information between the two. This engagement between universities and communities can be at the local, regional, national or even virtual levels, and is aimed at the co-creation of knowledge, which is beneficial to society at large. Such engagement therefore deviates from normal outreach/extension functions to an approach which is more participative and committed to the creation and sharing of knowledge.

Community engagement is therefore a planned process with the specific purpose of working with identified groups of people, whether they are connected by geographic location, special interest or affiliation, to address issues affecting

their well-being. Linking the term 'community' to 'engagement' serves to broaden the scope, shifting the focus from the individual to the collective, with associated implications for inclusiveness, to ensure consideration is given to the diversity that exists within any community.

In general, 'community engagement', as defined by the Carnegie Foundation, 'is the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity...to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good.'<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> McIlrath, 2014

Community engagement can take many forms and covers a broad range of activities. Some examples of community engagement undertaken by government practitioners include:

- **Informing** the community of policy directions of the government.
- **Consulting** the community as part of a process to develop government policy, or build community awareness and understanding.
- **Involving** the community through a range of mechanisms to ensure that issues and concerns are understood and considered as part of the decision-making process.
- **Collaborating** with the community by developing partnerships to formulate options and provide recommendations.
- **Empowering** the community to make decisions and to implement and manage change.

Department of Sustainability and Environment, Victoria (Melbourne), 2005

### The Six C's of Successful Community Engagement

Capability	Members are capable of dialogue.
Commitment	Mutual benefit beyond self-interest.
Contribution	Members volunteer and there is an environment that encourages members to 'have a go' or take responsibility/risks.
Continuity	Members share or rotate roles and, as members move on, there is a transition process that sustains and maintains the community corporate memory.
Collaboration	Reliable interdependence. A clear vision with members operating in an environment of sharing and trust.
Conscience	Embody or invoke guiding principles/ethics of service, trust and respect that are expressed in the actions of the community.

Department of Sustainability and Environment, Victoria (Melbourne), 2005

## Why Community University Engagement?

It is an acknowledged fact that we are living in times troubled by complex societal problems, some of which are environmental degradation, rising unemployment, global economic crisis, and so forth. In such a situation, our universities as higher education providers are seen as crucial agents of change, having the potential to address and solve societal challenges. One of the means through which it can achieve the said goal is the practice of CUE, as it implies joint interventions to solve problems

that affect society. The combination of technical knowledge of the university and the indigenous or applied knowledge of the community offers a great opportunity for finding sustainable solutions, which neither could not have done alone.

Further, the CUE approach offers significant benefits to society, young people and participating institutions. Engagement of universities/colleges with different stakeholders is critical to the future

success of higher education and will act as an important tool in addressing societal problems. Universities/colleges have to connect different kinds and sources of knowledge and facilitate an understanding between different cultures, letting young people become aware of the social, cultural, economic and political relations that exist. This approach provides the means and resources

that let young people play a part in generating alternatives. It has also been observed that when communities are engaged in socially relevant interventions, they become more receptive to the outcome, have the capacity to implement change, and their ability to maintain long term partnerships improves.

## How is Community University Engagement different from outreach/extension?

During the 1990s, many universities used the term 'outreach' to signify their work that directly benefitted external audiences. The activities conveyed by the term were defined as scholarly, reciprocal and mutually beneficial. However, many felt that the term 'outreach' implied one-way delivery of expertise and knowledge, and suggested 'ownership' of the process by the university. Therefore, today there is a clear tendency for the term engagement either to replace or be paired with the

term outreach, as it is felt that it better conveys the idea of mutuality and sharing of leadership. In this view, universities move from the agenda of simply increasing the general education of the population and output of scientific research, towards a model in which university education and research works towards specific economic and social objectives by means of co-creating and exchanging knowledge and by sharing resources, skills and processes with the public good in mind.

Serial. No.	Outreach/Extension	Community Engagement
1.	This approach usually addresses a single problem area	Community engagement can address multiple issues at the same time, such as democratic governance, gender, environmental concerns, etc.
2	It does not involve partnership with civil society organizations	It is inclusive of the alliance with local civil society organizations in the search for solutions to common social problems
3	It leads to the development of passive citizens	It leads to the development of active citizens
4	It is not integrated into routine teaching and research	It is incorporated into daily teaching and research activities
5	It focusses on community benefits only	It focusses on both community and university benefits
6	This is mostly university driven	The process is co-governed by both universities and communities
7	Does not lead to any significant knowledge production	Joint research initiatives between universities and communities leads to the co-creation of mutually beneficial knowledge
8	Does not result in any particular knowledge enhancement for the students	This results in practical learnings for students by way of processes such as service learning
9	Not attached to academic credits	Attached to regular academic credits
10	Does not contribute towards fulfilling its social responsibility	Results in the university emerging as an 'engaged institution', producing 'engaged global citizens'

## Principles of Community University Engagement<sup>12</sup>

### ✓ *Mutual interest and needs*

Mutually agreed interests and needs of both communities and institutions must be articulated and respected

### ✓ *Multi-function focus*

Engagement must encompass all the three functions of institutions of higher education—teaching, research and outreach/practice

### ✓ *Faculty appraisal & performance*

Performance assessments of teachers, researchers and administrators in such institutions should include this dimension of community engagement

### ✓ *Cross-cutting engagement*

Institutional engagement cutting across disciplines and faculties should be mandated, including natural sciences, and not restricted to social and human sciences alone

### ✓ *Incorporation into course credits*

Participation in community engagement projects by students should earn them credits and partially meet graduation requirements, and it should be integrated into their evaluation systems

## How universities can engage with the community

The practice of CUE can take up many forms, and can be incorporated in the regular curriculum in universities in multiple ways.<sup>13</sup>

### Learning with the community

*In this approach, students and teachers apply their knowledge and skills in a chosen community to improve the lives of people in that community. This can be achieved through ‘adoption’ of a specific village or slum, and then providing engagement opportunities to students from various disciplines and courses to apply their knowledge to address the challenges of that specific community. This linking of ‘learning’ with ‘service’ is commonly known as service-learning. The basic objective is to put to use the ‘theoretical’ knowledge gained by students in the classrooms/universities in providing ‘practical’ service to the communities in the field.*

### Researching with the community

*In this approach, various faculties of universities and colleges devise joint research projects in partnership with the community. In this approach, the community’s own knowledge is integrated into the design and conduct of the research. New research by students/teachers gets conducted and students complete their thesis/ dissertation and research papers to complete their academic requirements (which can later be published), and at the same time the community’s knowledge is systematized and integrated in the research.*

<sup>12</sup> Tandon, 2014  
<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

## Knowledge sharing with the community

*Under this mode of engagement, the knowledge available with students and teachers in various disciplines is made available to the local community to realize its developmental aspirations, secure its entitlements and claim its rights from various public and private agencies. These can take the form of enumerations, surveys, camps, trainings, learning manuals/films, maps, study reports, public hearings, policy briefs, engagement with urban homeless shelters, teaching and health services in poor communities, legal aid clinics for under-trials, etc. The idea behind such initiatives is to transport 'knowledge' out of the hallowed portals of academic institutions and disseminate it within communities, who can then use it for their well-being and other activities.*

## Devising new curriculum and courses

*This form of engagement provides for consultations with local communities/students/community-based organizations, which are used by universities/colleges to design new curricula and courses that respond to specific needs of the community, such as short-term workshops, certificates and degrees as well. They are meant for community members as well as university/college students. This enriches the curriculum of existing courses through locally-appropriate subject-matter (which interests local students most), along with creating new, locally appropriate educational programs that will interest the new generation of students. Such courses augment the theoretical knowledge of learners with the help of practical experiences of community members/civil society organizations.*

## Including practitioners as teachers

*Local community elders, women leaders, indigenous peoples and civil society practitioners have enormous practical knowledge on a wide variety of issues—from agriculture and forestry to child-rearing, micro-planning and project management. This expertise can be tapped by inviting such practitioners inside the institution to co-teach courses both in the classroom and in the field. Such instructors should be duly recognized, compensated and respected for their knowledge.*

## Social innovation by students

*In consultation with student unions, associations and clubs, student initiated learning projects which have a social impact can be supported. Such social innovation projects by students can also have meaningful links to curriculum and courses.*

# PART

# 2

## Understanding Research Partnerships with the Community

Knowledge can be defined in several ways and is inclusive of facts, feelings or experiences of a person or a group of people, a state of knowing and awareness, and/or the consciousness or the familiarity gained by experience or learning. Along with this, knowledge can be created through the experience of the wise, through the act of surviving in the world, and is represented in text, poetry, music, ceremony, political discourse, social media, speeches, drama and storytelling.<sup>14</sup> In acknowledgement of such diverse and multiple nodes of knowledge generation, academic monopoly on knowledge creation, if it ever existed, has ended. Civil society organizations, global advocacy networks and social movement formations (linked to issues such as climate change, food security, homelessness, etc.) are being increasingly involved both in the co-creation of knowledge through partnerships with HEIs and in independent creation of knowledge. Therefore, HEIs are required to collaborate with these multiple nodes of knowledge to co-create new knowledge which is mutually beneficial and socially relevant.<sup>15</sup>

HEIs are expected to serve three missions: teaching, research and service. The mission of

‘service’ is viewed as being independent of teaching (or education) and research (or knowledge). In operational terms, primacy is attached to teaching and research functions of HEIs, and ‘service’ is undertaken afterwards. However, in the emerging new architecture of knowledge, engagement is approached in ways that accept the multiple sites and epistemologies of knowledge, as well as the reciprocity and mutuality in learning and education through engagement.<sup>16</sup>

Institutions that generate socially relevant knowledge have a fundamental role to play in the construction of society. Linking research agendas to collective challenges and the global development agenda make evident connections between academic activity and societal needs. Therefore, research should seek solutions to society’s problems and contribute to a great extent to describing, analyzing and improving the emerging world. HEIs are responsible for creating and spreading knowledge, and thus contributing to solutions to global issues. They should move forward to couple scientific research and political decision making related to collective well-being to inform decisions and create knowledge that affect large segments of the population.

<sup>14</sup> Escrigas et al, 2014

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Hall et al, 2013

## What is Community University Research Partnerships?

Profound changes taking place in communities and in universities are bringing new opportunities to researchers and community members for joint research endeavours to new problems that must be resolved. Communities and universities need to find ways how they will go forward in working together. Universities are in a period of rapid change, with increased emphasis on community partnerships, engagement, and outreach. Similarly, communities across the world are experiencing rapid changes that create new challenges and bring into question the viability of past practices. In light of this, research partnerships that will bring the resources of universities together with the most pressing issues facing communities are the need of the hour.

A research partnership between the university and the community is ideally part of a larger collaboration that includes the interests of each partner and spans a wide range of activities. The university and the community recognize that they often embody different cultures and missions. Nonetheless, the university and community realize that combining their unique resources and perspectives can further the goals of both parties. Community University Research Partnerships (CURP) is a joint research initiative between the university and the community, where both of them are equal partners and co-owners of the research process as well as the research output. CURP, for example, often involves powerful university scholars (e.g., researchers with international reputations, sizable grants, and extensive publications) with those in the community who are the most disempowered (e.g., newly arrived immigrants). The community contributes valuable in-depth understanding of community norms as well as concerns related to research participation held by members of the community. The community further brings knowledge of sources of data and potential application of the research findings to community settings. On the other hand, the university brings research resources and expertise to the partnership as well as the potential to attract additional resources. The university also provides opportunities for the community to gain experience and develop the capacity to plan and conduct

research independently. CURP largely but not exclusively, involves community-based research as a distinct methodology that is participatory. The term 'community-based research' encompasses a spectrum of research that actively engages community members or groups to various degrees, ranging from community participation to community initiation and control of research.

From a university perspective, community-based research refers to a wide variety of practices and is supported by several academic traditions: academic or scientific knowledge put at the service of community needs; joint university and community partnerships in the identification of research problems and development of methods and applications; research that is generated in community settings without formal academic links at all; academic research under the full leadership and control of community or non-university groups; and joint research, which was conceived as part of organizing, mobilizing or social advocacy or action.

From a civil society perspective, CURP can take many forms. This includes building and fostering partnerships with government, HEIs, and other civil society organizations in responding to a wide range of community needs and services and is often focused on capacity building, knowledge building, participatory research, citizen centric development and policy advocacy.

From the perspective of community, the Centre for Community-Based Research in Canada recognizes community-based research as research that begins in the community, involves the community and is used by the community. Community-based research often strives for social change that embraces equal collaboration and power relations between individuals, institutions and organizations.<sup>17</sup> Different cultures of knowledge use the CURP process to achieve different objectives. The main goals of HEIs are student training, co-creation of new knowledge, knowledge management and problem solving; the main goals for civil society organizations are co-creation of new knowledge, capacity building, social change and support community services.

<sup>17</sup> Tremblay et al, 2014



## Why Community University Research Partnerships?<sup>18</sup>

CURP offers multiple benefits to a number of actors, such as exploring themes of common interest by a variety of groups, including community and voluntary organizations, universities, public sector bodies and professional, academic and practitioner organizations. In particular, it can be used for disseminating information, working towards transformative social change and widening networks/broadening horizons as outlined below:

### 1. Information

The co-inquiry approach can be useful for gathering and sharing knowledge, expertise and experiences relating to a particular topic or issue. In this way, the research and the results themselves are useful in providing information about the approach and a topic/issue. This approach ensures that the research draws on a wide range of knowledge, which involves experts by experience, i.e., there is appreciation of people's experience and their life world, which is not tokenistic.

### 2. Transformation

The co-inquiry approach can be 'transformational'. This may comprise internal transformations of the individuals and/or groups involved, and/or external transformation of the broader community:

*Internal transformations:* The co-inquiry approach can be used as a way of developing empowerment amongst participants (as a group or individuals). It can change relationships by challenging

and reconfiguring participants' perceptions of themselves and others. It can help people gain an appreciation of their own knowledge, which can lead to greater self-esteem.

*External transformations:* The co-inquiry approach can help communities if there are positive outcomes for those involved. As the research aims are aligned with issues/topics of interest and importance to community groups, these can strengthen the practical and social change outcomes. This approach can also help in altering perceptions of university research, as it changes the way people do business – avoiding the 'big circus comes to town' research ethos. Therefore, it can improve the image and reputation of university students and staff.

### 3. Widening networks/broadening horizons

This approach can provide an opportunity to work with new people and organizations (or existing ones) in an innovative way. Thus it provides an opportunity for students and academics to widen the 'traditional' academic networks and share learning with a variety of sectors (e.g., voluntary, charitable, policy, local authorities, community groups). Common ground (shared interests and values) is an excellent starting point and this approach can lead to mutual benefits and expanded horizons for all parties involved.

*In South Africa, the farming communities which were a part of the partnership between the Department of Environment & Geographical Science, **University of Cape Town (UCT)** and a national environmental NGO **Biowatch SA**, both feel empowered from being equal partners in the joint project. 'Community members felt empowered because they had something to tell the University; it [was] empowering and motivating. [Community members felt that] even if UCT is far away, it is still in contact with the community and values the importance of their community work' (Mamashela, 2014).*

*In India, through its innovative add-on courses which integrate the concept of CURP effectively, **Bhagat Phool Singh Mahila Vishwavidyalaya (BPSMV)** provides an exceptional example of how a university-society nexus can do wonders for the betterment of humankind as a whole. Students are encouraged to undertake joint research projects in association with local communities with the aim of tapping indigenous knowledge present therein. As a result of this, BPSMV has been increasingly attracting attention not only in national academic circles, but has also gained prominence in international academia. At the national level, it is involved in a number of interventions in collaboration with civil society and the government.*

<sup>18</sup> Centre for Social Justice & Community Action, Durham University (2013)

## Principles of Community University Research Partnerships<sup>19</sup>

- ✓ *Co-operation: Idea of 'working with rather than on people'.*

This means some form of meaningful collaboration – a two-way conversation – between participants working together on a research issue that is of interest and importance to those involved.

- ✓ *Participation: A participatory worldview*

This means a worldview based on participation and cooperation rather than separation and competition. It is based on the idea that all aspects of life are connected and that humans are active subjects.

- ✓ *Equality: Equality in the research process.*

This entails mutual respect and appreciation between all participants and valuing all contributions, including expertise by experience.

- ✓ *Co-production: New research knowledge is 'co-produced'.*

This means that all participants work together on a research issue without privileging one type of knowledge over another, and they produce the research together.

- ✓ *Social change: The research has social justice outcomes.*

This means that the research is for a social purpose, has a real impact for those involved and goes some way in reducing inequalities and improving lives.

## How is Community University Research Partnerships different from Community University Engagement?

CURP can be considered to be a more concrete sub-function of CUE. CURP focusses on research partnerships with the community, while CUE encompasses a wide range of activities from service learning to knowledge dissemination, to devising new courses and social innovation by students. CURP embarks on the engagement agenda through research, where it addresses research questions, investigated jointly by the university and the community. Therefore, CURP can be considered to be one of the forms through which CUE can be manifested.

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<sup>19</sup> Centre for Social Justice & Community Action, Durham University (2013)

## Methods of research and co-enquiry

CURP activities are predominantly identified within the typology of community-based research, community-based participatory research, and engaged scholarship. Essentially, these approaches are different methods of research and co-enquiry within the larger domain of CURP, which are supported, systematized and legitimized for transforming research practices within and outside the university set-up.

### Community-Based Research

*It is research that draws upon the community's (however variously defined) resources in terms of subjects, data, personnel, material or other support. Here, people in the community, once subject to classification, experimentation, and regulation, are now viewed as owners of skills, knowledge and expertise that may be useful to researchers and policy makers. Therefore, community-based research is primarily community situated, collaborative and action oriented. It is often used as an umbrella term for other forms of participatory research.*

### Community Based Participatory Research

*Research with individuals and/or entities within the community who may fairly represent their interests, needs and/or concerns because they are both knowledgeable about and empowered to represent that community. Community partners are sought for research based on their expertise and not simply because they control the resources to facilitate the desired study.*

### Participatory Research

*It is an approach where the control over research is jointly shared by the researcher and the actors in the problem situation. While the former gives an absolute value to the minority of theorists in the society, the latter begins with trust in the knowledge which the common man possesses. It is an important means for building people's intellectual capacities. Participatory Research seeks to de-mystify traditional research, thereby making it an intellectual tool which ordinary people can use to improve their lives.*

### Engaged Scholarship

*Community engaged scholarship is the teaching, discovery, integration, application and engagement that involves faculty members in a mutually beneficial partnership with the community. It is characterized by: clear goals, adequate preparation, appropriate methods, significant results, effective presentation, reflective critique, rigor and peer-review.*

## Global scenario

CURP, supported by varying institutional structures, is being practiced in different forms throughout the world. There is large variation in the language, conceptualization and practice of CURP, from 'extension' to 'co-creation' of knowledge.<sup>20</sup>

The mindset in HEIs continues to negate community knowledge and practitioner expertise. Civil society too shies away from demanding greater responsiveness and accountability from HEIs and the system of higher education in various countries around the world. Institutionalization of practices and widespread systematisation of practitioner knowledge and sensitisation of next generation of researchers has good potential to make a difference.

### Global Trends for Support Structures in Community University Research Partnerships: Survey Results

- ✓ Over 95 per cent of all respondents believe that the co-creation of knowledge is a primary goal in CURP.
- ✓ However, less than 15 per cent of CURP originate in the community. These partnerships are still very much top down, initiated at the HEI level.
- ✓ Active participation in decision-making and distribution of funds in research projects is predominantly controlled by HEIs.
- ✓ In terms of the criteria most important in a CURP, overwhelmingly respondents agree that trust and mutual respect are essential, but also point to 'funding support for planning and partnership development'.
- ✓ 45 per cent of financial support for CURP comes from government; 30% from within the HEIs, as opposed to CSOs, which seem to be more self-funded.
- ✓ Just over 60 per cent of HEIs identified in this research have some form of structure created to support CURP within the last 10 years.

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<sup>20</sup> Tremblay et. al, 2014

# PART

# 3

## Institutionalizing Research Partnerships within the University

Institutionalizing research partnerships refers to the formalization of collaboration models/CURP methodologies into the institutional arrangements of a university set-up in a way which is mutually beneficial and accommodates the variations in knowledge systems in both universities and communities. This incorporation is by the means of an effective support structure, which plays a crucial role in instituting policies and programs that deepen, broaden, improve and sustain CURP. These systemic organizational structures functioning within a university work to intentionally engage university and communities/community partners in research for mutual benefit. Operating within HEIs, these structures function to streamline CURP within regular academic discourse, along with looking after other issues such as suitable policies, programs, funding, etc. They are meant to promote the growth of knowledge by collaboration, building collaborative networks and promoting 'technical and indigenous human capital'.

When it is recognized HEIs must do more than talk about engagement, they must make significant investments in the infrastructure that nurtures partnerships and optimizes benefits for all stakeholders, especially those in the community. For instance, universities can set up individual partnership projects with community partners,

which are mutually beneficial and operated in a transparent and respectful manner. When these projects are successful, they are frequently converted into more permanent partnership mechanisms, such as research centres, or service-learning, or field placement courses. Amongst these, some universities have further mobilized necessary leadership, will and resources to move from individual partnership projects to an institution-wide commitment to engaged and partnered research, teaching and operations.<sup>21</sup>

*An increasing number of universities such as the **University of Victoria**, Canada and the **University of Brighton**, England have committed to supporting community-university partnerships in their Strategic and Corporate plan, through policy and funding. They have also extended their commitment through their respective innovative institutional support structures for community university research partnerships: the **Institute for Studies and Innovation in Community University Engagement (University of Victoria)** and the **Community-University Partnership Programme (University of Brighton)***

<sup>21</sup> Jackson, 2014

## Ecosystem of institutional structures

It is not only universities which require institutional structures for effective CUE/CURP. A range of supportive policies, programs, infrastructure and funding is also needed inside and across community based, non-profit and other civil society organizations. A number of research intermediaries located outside the academy are also structured as stand-alone non-profit organizations, while some aboriginal governments in Canada operate their own research ethics board to assess and evaluate external research proposals to study their communities. Therefore, the architecture of institutional structures that support CURP is multi-level, complex and dynamic. As it consists of many moving parts, it is better to view all these parts as an ecosystem of organic, interdependent components. The several levels in the ecosystem of institutional structures that support CURP are:<sup>22</sup>

- System wide level of certification bodies and culture change organizations, grading councils, community foundations (private, corporate) and governments (national/sub-national) that are responsible for higher education
- At the institutional level, there are universities, colleges and other HEIs
- Within these institutions, there are other levels, such as, faculty, school, department, or research units
- Community level organizations (ranging from local ethics boards, municipalities, civil society organizations, to private and social enterprises, etc.
- In between HEIs and communities are intermediaries such as science shops, non-profit brokers and other partnership structures such as consortia, roundtables
- Networks that advance the theory and practice of partnership in the local, national and international spheres.

*In this manual, we will particularly focus on the institutional structures at the level of HEIs.*

## How is institutionalization different from mainstreaming?

The process of institutionalization, however, is different from what is known as mainstreaming CURP. Mainstreaming CURP implies complete saturation of the process across all structures, policies, priorities, and so on. CURP is then not treated as a beneficial extra factor to regular curriculum and is not relegated to a separate range of identifiable activities. It is regarded as a central overriding element of curricular processes, and is embedded across all teaching, learning and research actions. Institutionalizing CURP while it does include mainstreaming as one of its objectives, strives for a broader objective, which is constitution of an official institutional arrangement for supporting, mainstreaming, guiding and mentoring all CURP efforts within a university.

## Why is it essential to institutionalize?

Institutionalizing CURP within higher education is essential because sporadic efforts or individual demonstration of CURP is of limited value, if it is not supported by suitable institutional structures having validation and authority. Additionally, concerted efforts in the right direction receive a push when supported by validated authority/structures within the jurisdiction of university administration. It also becomes easier for staff/students to embark on such initiatives with ease.

## Proceeding with institutionalization

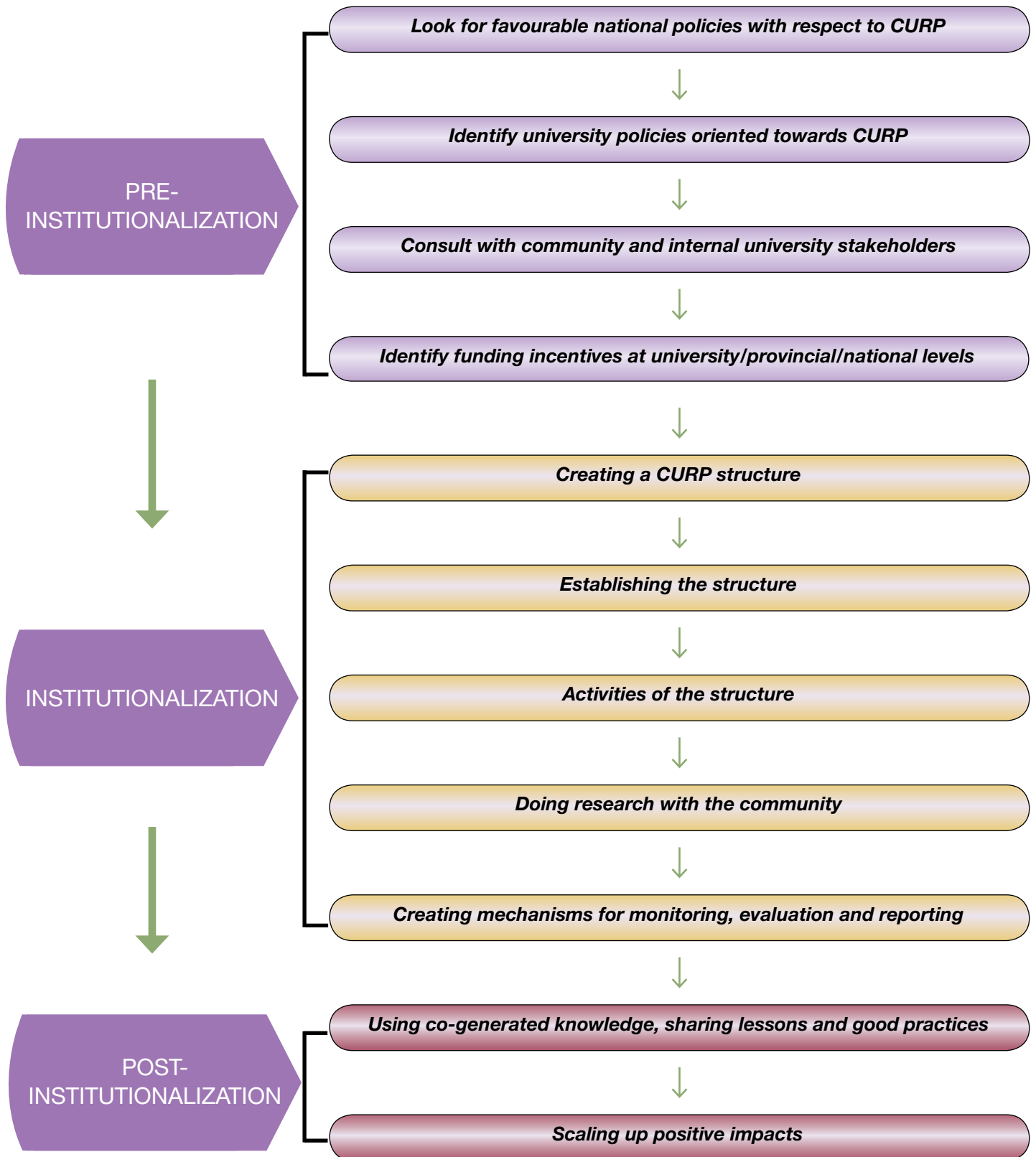
The institutionalization process within any HEI will certainly vary, but regardless of differences, there are certain steps that seem from our research to be common. These steps can be classified into pre-institutionalization phase, institutionalization phase, and post-institutionalization phase. These phases and the corresponding steps in each of them are detailed in the following section.

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<sup>22</sup> Jackson, 2014

## Institutionalization steps

The process of institutionalizing CURP in a university involves a multitude of steps. For ease of understanding, we have divided the entire process into three phases:



## ***A. PRE-INSTITUTIONALIZATION***

The pre-institutionalization phase covers all the necessary pre-requisites before the university embarks on the process of institutionalization. It covers studying national/provincial policies favourable of CURP, identifying university policies that are facilitative of such a process, consulting with both the community and various university stakeholders and finally identifying funding instruments or other incentives that would help the process get started and also ensure its sustainability in the long run.

## ***B. INSTITUTIONALIZATION***

The institutionalization phase is one in which the university actually sets out to establish a structure for CURP. Along with this, it involves operationalizing the structure, which includes aspects such as its governance, staffing, leadership, etc; clear demarcation of its functions; doing field work in association with the communities; and finally monitoring, evaluation and reporting processes.

## ***C. POST-INSTITUTIONALIZATION***

The post-institutionalization phase essentially covers aspects related to sustainability of the process. This involves proper use of the co-generated knowledge, along with sharing of good lessons and emerging best practices. It also covers efforts aimed at scaling up the positive outcomes, so that the benefits accrued can be multiplied and replicated at different locations across the world.



## Step 1 : Look for favourable national policies with respect to CURP

It is essential to first look for favourable national policies that endorse this school of thought or advocate such ideas. Therefore, one should be aware of the educational policies of his/her country, and cull out the articles/clauses that have the potential to support one's effort further. National laws/policies also function as a validating factor, with the help of which any particular university/university official can take his/her ideas forward towards institutionalizing CURP at the individual/university level.

A national policy supportive of such ideas may focus on the following areas

- *Role of higher education in overall socio-economic development*
- *Social responsibility of higher education institutions*
- *Need for teaching, research and extension that reaches beyond the boundaries of universities for holistic societal betterment*
- *Applied research aimed at community service and development*
- *Knowledge exchange aimed at enhancing participation, prosperity, sustainability*
- *Promotion of associative mechanisms to solve regional and national problems*
- *Providing scientific and technical assistance to the State and communities to contribute to their social development and transformation*

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

1. Study your country's national policies (general policies related to education/higher education, socio-economic development, etc.)
2. Look for any text, clause, section which refers to the holistic role of education in society. Scan through for text similar to the ones mentioned above
3. If successful in locating such a policy, carry out a detailed study of its scope, extent and nature of operationalization in the academic arena
4. Use this analysis to begin advocating for institutionalizing CURP in your university.

## SOME EXAMPLES OF NATIONAL POLICES (ALIGNED WITH CURP) IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES

### INDONESIA

*Indonesia is one country where there is strong governmental support for CUE/CURP, and it is made mandatory in all universities. Government promotes engagement through several supportive initiatives, such as the Community Engagement Grants (CEG) Program. It promotes and encourages HEIs to invest in community engagement initiatives. This grant is managed by the Directorate General of Higher Education, Ministry of Education and Culture. CEGs can be accessed for research based community engagement, problem based community engagement and curriculum based community engagement. The government, through the decree of the Ministry of Education and Culture, also provides that community engagement should be a contributing criterion in the credit score for promotion of faculty members, along with including it as credit for students.*

### SOUTH AFRICA

*The South African Council for Higher Education played a crucial role in conceptualizing CUE/ CURP in the country. The Higher Education Quality Committee responsible for applying criteria to community engagement expanded the nature and scope of engagement. Additionally, Department of Science and Technology (DST) and its research funding agency, the National Research Foundation (NRF), facilitate the creation of new knowledge by supporting innovative research and research students. NRF launched a community engagement funding program for advancing the scholarship of community engagement and related knowledge generation processes. The DST also launched a Community University Partnership Program, while the Ministry of Science & Technology advocated for the advancement of social innovation and creation of a social innovation fund.*

### BRAZIL

*The Brazilian Educational Law (1996) stipulates that for any higher education institution to be called a university, it has to develop extension activities alongside teaching and research. These extension services have been emphasized with the National Forum of Extension of Vice Chancellors of Brazilian Public Universities. The Forum has put extension in a prominent position, and has stressed its importance as part of the public university mission to meet its social role. Brazilian universities also deliver extension services as a primary function of providing practical experience to their students. The Citizen Constitution (1988) also directs HEIs to link teaching, research and services to the community (called, *extensão*). Brazilian Education Law (1996) also stipulates 'universities to develop extension activities, alongside teaching and research'.*

### UGANDA

*CURP finds place in the Ugandan educational policies under the Universities & Other Tertiary Institutions Act (UOTIA). Article 127 of UOTIA directs universities to 'include in its teaching and research programs, solutions to social and economic problems of the community... Universities shall endeavour to include in its teaching and research programs, solutions to social and economic problems in the community.' This policy does mandate Higher Education Institutions to include some attention to the community in relation to curriculum development and delivery. This is evidenced by the nationwide student field attachment policy that is being implemented by all private and public universities in Uganda.*

## Step 2: Identify university policies oriented towards CURP

The next step towards institutionalizing CURP practices in any university ought to be led and guided by appropriate and favourable university policies in this regard. The vision and mission of the university ultimately guides the practices therein, and therefore it is extremely important that they offer support for CURP, or are favourably inclined towards it. Backed by such policies, CURP enjoys validation, and is thus easily incorporated and integrated into curricular disciplines in line with the broad and general ideas endorsed by the university.

A policy facilitative of CURP and its integration into academia ideally has some of the following features:

- *Emphasis on establishing mutual relationship with society, for its well-being and for overall socio-economic improvement*
- *Social responsibility of universities as one of the primary areas of concern*
- *Mainstreaming and institutionalization of university's extension/outreach efforts*
- *Focus on participatory research/community-based research as important tools for engaging with communities*
- *Provision for grants/funding opportunities for CUE/CURP*

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

1. Look at the policy document of your university
2. Look for text that supports CURP
3. If yes, use it for further institutionalization efforts
4. If not, take cue from existing favourable policy statement elsewhere and have it integrated into university policies

## SOME EXAMPLES OF UNIVERSITIES HAVING FACILITATIVE POLICIES

In the **Federal University of Rio De Janeiro, Brazil**, institutional commitment to civic engagement in the Extension Plan (Article 3A) of the university aims to:

- (a) ensure the bidirectional relationship between the university and society,
- (b) prioritize practices for the care of emerging social needs
- (c) stimulating activities whose development involves multi relations, inter and/or trans-disciplinary and inter-sectors of the university and society
- (d) value inter-institutional extension programs, in the form of consortia, networks or partnerships, etc.
- (e) institutionalize university extension activities as one of the endpoints of the university; among others

**University of Indonesia's** Strategic Plan 2013-2017 emphasizes developing excellent research and community engagement clusters for contributing to human wellbeing. It aims to:

- (a) Realize and strengthen the implementation of research and community engagement focused on unique and multidisciplinary flagship areas
- (b) Provide research and community engagement funding priorities so as to achieve 20% of the total budget to improve the quality and quantity of basic and applied research in international journals
- (c) Create policies on applied research and community engagement that are multidisciplinary in nature and directed to solving the nation's problems

At the **University of Cape Town (UCT)**, South Africa, the University's Social Responsiveness (SR) Policy Framework outlines in detail the scope, forms and practices, as well as the institutional structures and incentives established to 'provide an enabling institutional environment for SR'. It tasks all heads of academic departments and directors of support services 'to ensure that an enabling environment is created for promoting social responsiveness in their areas of competence'. The University's SR conceptual framework, while acknowledging all forms of engagement with external constituencies, explicitly promotes engaged scholarship as 'the utilisation of an academic's scholarly and/or professional expertise, with an intentional public purpose or benefit (which) demonstrates engagement with external (non-academic) constituencies. It can help to generate new knowledge, promote knowledge integration, the application of knowledge, or the dissemination of knowledge.'

At the **Gulu University**, Uganda, community transformation through CUE is enshrined in its mission statement, which states, 'To provide access to higher education, research and conduct quality professional training for the delivery of appropriate service directed towards community transformation and conservation of biodiversity.' In particular, the university has a mission to serve groups that do not have positions of power within society. The strategic plan of Gulu University identifies Community Outreach Services as one of the ten major issues on which to focus its action. It is also one of the seven selected priority areas of the university. The university is also developing a policy for supporting CUE goals by providing guidance to individuals and academic units on how to appropriately integrate CUE into the academic and research programs of the university. The policy draft also provides for an institutional structure that is headed by a Director of Community University Engagement.

## Step 3: Consult with community and internal university stakeholders

This step is another important pre-requisite before embarking on the process of institutionalizing CURP. As it is important to study the surrounding environment, factors and stakeholders before initiating a project, likewise, it is essential to initiate a discussion or a consultation with the stakeholders involved in CURP before actually undertaking it. As evident from the term itself, the community and the university are two important stakeholders that have a lot of bearing on the successful execution of such partnerships. Therefore, it is important that both of them are brought on a common platform for an informal exchange of ideas and to seek respective perspectives on the scope of such a partnership. The university can take the lead in organizing and facilitating this conversation.

Faculty having good experience in field work can be nominated to moderate the conversations and also encourage eliciting of ideas from either side. This will help build a positive and facilitative environment towards CURP. While the community can put forth its concerns and issues, the university can look for means by which such partnerships can address the former. It is also important that representation in the consultation from either side is fairly representative and balanced. By this we mean that it needs to be ensured that all castes/groups in the community are offered representation, as also the various departments/faculties at the university who are interested in pursuing such partnerships as part of their core course work.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Disseminate the idea of the consultation between the communities and the university internally within all departments/faculties.
- Clearly articulate the broad idea behind the consultation.
- Nominate a faculty member for facilitation of the consultation. Along with facilitation, he/she will also choose the participants of the consultation.
- With the help of the nominated faculty, create an agenda for the consultation and devise steps to be followed.
- Supervise the process and ensure that the consultation achieves the purpose it is supposed to meet.

## **Step 4: Identify funding incentives at university/provincial/national levels**

Smooth and successful execution of CURP requires mobilization of resources for various activities such as training programs, project interventions, publication of reports, etc. For this, it is essential that the university authorities have sufficient resources at their disposal before embarking on the process. The potential sources for monetary assistance for CURP may be at the university level (in the form of departmental grants), or at the provincial/national level (in the form of governmental grants such as National Community Engagement Grant in Indonesia for research, socio-economic development etc., or from federal research funding agencies, such as SSHRC funding for social science research in Canada). The money at the university level is usually channelized through the appropriate procedures and sanctioned by the administration. The grants at the provincial/national level are usually acquired via an application duly supported by the letter of intent regarding the project at hand, its contextual importance, and subsequent societal impacts and outcome. However, this varies from situation to situation and depends on the country and the government in question. Funding can also be acquired from governmental/autonomous research funding agencies/councils who promote socially beneficial research.

### **WHAT YOU CAN DO**

1. Assess the financial instruments available for CURP in the context of your university (university/provincial/national level)
2. If available, chalk out a method to apply for such grants for assisting the institutionalization of CURP at the university
3. If not, survey local resources/options

## EXAMPLES OF MONETARY INSTRUMENTS SUPPORTING CURP AT THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL

In the **United Kingdom**, research in the field of public engagement is funded by the UK Research Councils (RCUK) and the Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF). While the RCUK funds projects like the Catalysts for Public Engagement, the HEIF funds universities to invest in infrastructure and activity to facilitate research. UK research funding is invested using a 'dual support' system: this involves regular retrospective assessment exercises conducted by the HE funding councils, who then provide institutions with a block grant on the basis of the performance in the last assessment period. In parallel, the Research Councils run competitive funding rounds to which universities can bid.

In **Canada**, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) is a federal funding agency, which promotes and encourages social science research through monetary assistance. The SSHRC Partnership Grant (and the previous CURA - Community University Research Alliance) window is one of the greatest funding supports in Canada for CUE/CURP. It receives proposals arising out of first time alliances between scholars based in universities and scholar intellectuals based in communities. The former CURA and now the Partnership Grants are some of the most successful of the SSHRC grants.

In The **Netherlands**, engagement activities between universities and communities are basically funded from universities' budgets. All universities are public and obtain their core funding from the government. Additional funds for research can be obtained from research councils and governments, companies and the European Union. Universities pay the salary and overhead costs for Science Shop and internship coordinators, and for supervising professors. For specific projects, a community contribution can be asked, if the costs of the project are larger than a regular student project. This depends on the financial status of the organization; in some cases subsidies could be obtained (either by the university or the community organization).

In **India**, the University Grants Commission (UGC), the apex body for regulating higher education in India, has rolled out a scheme for establishment of a Centre for Fostering Social Responsibility and Community Engagement (CFSRCE) in universities. The main objectives of the scheme include promoting community-university partnerships to develop knowledge for improving the lives of the people and to encourage participatory research, among others. It seeks to propagate integration of service, service-learning and experiential learning into curricular/co-curricular programs. The overall ceiling for the financial assistance to be provided under this scheme is up to half a million dollars per university, which is to be disbursed under different heads such as start-up costs, staff costs, yearly operational costs, etc.

## Step 5: Creating a structure

CURP structures can be defined as an *'institutional mechanism aimed at advocating, facilitating, encouraging and supporting community engaged research partnerships (which are mutually beneficial) between academic scholars and community practitioners'*. Such partnerships create, generate and produce knowledge collaboratively. In certain HEIs, efforts to create social change and positive impact, have given rise to CURP structures. Community university research partnership structures of all types engage within the context of organizations to work toward co-creating knowledge and co-producing policy and practice. Co-creating, co-producing, co-generating knowledge reflects some of the core principles, which are central to the work of institutional support structures for CURP. Institutionalizing of CURP in the form of structures reflects a systematic approach to CURP, and helps it gain visibility and recognition by researchers as a valid and legitimate approach to the co-creation and mobilization of knowledge.

Such partnership research has emerged as an approach that is particularly well-suited to learning new ways of conducting research that avoid the expert-subject dichotomies and de-contextualization often associated with 'lone-star' research conceived and conducted solely by academics.<sup>23</sup> It is within various types of partnership structures that different ways of knowing and different traditions of knowledge and expertise are actively valued.

The goals and activities of CURP structures include:<sup>24</sup>

- ✓ Supporting the development of research projects based on community requests
- ✓ Identifying appropriate university partners (students, staff, researchers) for joint CURP
- ✓ Co-designing appropriate research methods for the issues at hand
- ✓ Developing strategies for making sure that the co-constructed knowledge has impact on policy or mobilization as desired
- ✓ Supporting approaches to monitoring collective impact

Support structures for CURP take several different forms and have the potential to influence societal and systemic change through their impact on policy and practice, contributing to the public good at local, regional, national and international levels. It is also important to note that such institutional structures are not meant to be rigid. They are to be created and designed in a way so that it evolves with time and is in sync with the contextual requirements of the university at a particular point of time. Therefore, the aspect of flexibility needs to be integrated into the design of the structure, which allows for changes and further evolution with the passage of time and as the university faces new challenges.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Analyze and assess what kind of structure best suits the context and requirements of your university
- Select the structure that you believe will work best.
  - Initiate the idea of the structure for CURP within the university
  - Consult/brainstorm with different departments on the potential of the idea
  - Discuss the opportunities for operationalization
  - Design a draft proposal with respect to institutionalizing community engagement activities, as discussed in the consultation
  - Approach the university's executive/academic council with the proposal and the planned set of activities
  - Explain the concept and ideas. Seek approval

<sup>23</sup> Lall, 2011

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.



## SOME EXAMPLES OF FACILITATING INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES

### Office of Community Based Research (OCBR), Canada

*CURP at the **University of Victoria** was institutionalized with the creation of OCBR. It supports community engagement and research to create vibrant, sustainable and inclusive communities. It facilitates collaborative CURP and projects on issues that arise from the communities and matter most to them. Its steering committee includes an equal representation of both the university and community partners. OCBR serves as a model for universities to better organize themselves for productive partnerships with local and regional organizations. At present, a new research centre, the Institute for Studies and Innovation in Community-University Engagement (ISICUE), plays the role of a 'think-tank' to extend the work of OCBR, nurture innovation in community-based research and to study community engagement.*

### Centre for Society University Interface & Research (CSUIR), India

***Bhagat Phool Singh Mahila Vishwavidyalaya** in India institutionalized its community engagement initiatives through a formally operational structure known as CSUIR. It establishes student interface with the community through add-on innovative courses. The courses provide opportunities for engaging and working with the communities. CURP is facilitated in the form of joint projects with the community, thus combining the community's indigenous knowledge with academic expertise. This engagement is based on the theoretical learnings students acquire in the classroom, and then apply this knowledge at a practical level in the field. The university accords the responsibility of co-ordination of each course to a regular faculty member, along with three faculty members who function as field trips coordinators. The centre is funded by the university itself.*

### Science Shops, Europe

*Institutionalization of research partnerships in universities across most of Europe (such as **University of Belfast/Wageningen/Groningen**) is manifested in the form of Science Shops. It serves as an interface between university researchers and community partners, where the latter can bring in issues of concern and embark on joint research on the same with the university. Science Shops are open to the whole community. In one project they will work with one community organization, in the next project with another. The Science Shop works with undergraduates and postgraduates who are carrying out research as part of their degree including natural sciences, humanities, social sciences and law students. The Science Shop is headed by coordinators who are full time equivalent staff at the university.*

### Directorate of Research and Community Engagement, Indonesia

*Community engagement and CURP in **University of Indonesia** is managed by the Directorate of Research and Community Engagement. It is coordinated by the Vice Rector for Research and Innovation. The directorate coordinates community engagement and research projects on issues of poverty, health, environment, education, marginal groups, etc. Monetary support is provided in the form of a fund or grant, the highest in Indonesia for community engagement. Funds are also available through the Community Engagement Grant Scheme, which has community based research projects as one of its focus areas. The directorate also encourages faculty members/students to use their research results for the well-being of communities.*

### Area University Social Responsibility, Argentina

*The outreach activities at the **Universidad Católica de Córdoba (UCC)** were systematized and institutionalized with the creation of the Area of University Social Responsibility (AUSR), which got transformed into the Secretary of University Outreach and Social Responsibility (SUOSR) as it acquired a higher organizational status. SUOSR promotes training workshops for designing and outreach projects within the UCC, teacher training seminars for raising awareness about service-learning, and methodological training. SUOSR has its own annual budget, which is part of the general budget for the UCC. The Secretary also has the authority to seek external funding, apply for awards and competitions, and request donations of materials and supplies for service-learning projects. SUOSR uses its budget to provide monetary incentives to UCC teachers, staff and students who have successfully completed annual service-learning projects.*

### Multi-purpose Centres/Networks, United States of America

*Rather than a formal office for community engagement, the **University of Wisconsin-Madison** has developed multiple unique centres across campus with a focus on community based learning (CBL) or community-based research that supports faculty and graduate students. Some of them are: The CommNS (Community & Non-profit Studies Centre) and the Wisconsin Collaborative Education Research Network. CommNS facilitates engagement efforts between faculty members, students and community to meet critical community needs including health, social services, housing, education, environmental, and emergency assistance. The Wisconsin Collaborative Network facilitates relationships amongst educators, researchers, education leaders and community members to collaboratively create new pathways for innovative teaching and learning practices.*

## Step 6: Establishing the structure

Once the structure for promoting CURP has been chosen, the next step is to focus on how to operationalize it. Operationalizing the structure requires attention to be paid to governance, staffing, leadership and resources.

### 6.1 Governance

The university must decide what kind of governance structure it wishes to provide to the CURP initiative. The governance framework may be in the form of:

- ✓ co-governance by the university and the community, or
- ✓ solely the prerogative of the university (such as full time equivalent professors at the university overseeing its functions), with active participation from the community, or
- ✓ completely governed by the university (with professors and students overlooking the managerial and operational aspects).

Co-governance	University governance with community participation	Sole university governance
<p><i>The ISICUE at University of Victoria, Canada is jointly led by leaders from both academia and the community. This joint representation provides for a balance in the leadership framework, which also gives a sense of ownership and responsibility to community members. As a result, they participate in interventions with enthusiasm and interest.</i></p>	<p><i>Although the structure of a Science Shop is created and managed by the university, its design and operations provides for an equal space for incorporation of demands from community partners. Civil society organizations, which play a crucial role in identifying and planning projects, are treated as an integral part of the structure.</i></p>	<p><i>Structures like the CSUIR in India are completely governed and managed by the university. Here, professors take charge of its operations and the field work to be performed by the students. Although the students and the communities are an important part of the structure, the governance is solely managed by the university.</i></p>

### 6.2 Staffing

The CURP structure also needs a staff cadre who will be responsible for the execution of duties and broad functions. The university may take a call on the staffing it wishes to provide. It may be in the form of:

- ✓ Full time equivalent staff taking over the responsibilities holistically (as in the case of Science Shops, Europe; or CSUIR in India)
- ✓ Faculty and students together forming the staffing giving the structure a broader representation.

The number of staff recruited is not fixed and varies from university to university. Once the staffing is decided, other modalities such as fixed/variable responsibilities and contribution (number of hours) should be planned. A representative organizational chart may be made in this context.

Outreach Services Committee, Gulu University, Uganda (staffing includes faculty)

*CUE activities are part of the responsibilities of all academic staff, who undertake engagement activities under the premise of Community Outreach Projects (COP). The staff also formulates general CUE policies at the university under the guidance of the deputy vice chancellor, academic affairs.*

Centre for Urban Research and Learning (CURL), Loyola University, USA (staffing includes faculty, students, community)

*Research team at CURL comprises faculty, graduate students, undergraduates, and community partners. In association with community leaders/organizations, the research team at CURL completes research, starting from its conceptualization, to research design, data collection/analysis, report writing and dissemination.*

### 6.3 Leadership

Notwithstanding staffing, which may be contextualized as per the given situation and university, attention must be paid to the importance of inspiring leadership. Successful leadership understands the value of engaging communities in developing ideas, making decisions and implementing plans. Therefore, the university administration must take care that the person leading CURP at the university, apart from regular academic qualifications, must be a champion of CURP and has passion to pursue this work. This criterion is of utmost importance if the CURP centre is expected to function as per the aspirations and along the ideals of engagement.

Some expectations from a quality leader are:

- Convening group meetings to clarify and validate the vision
- Discussing and defining the initiative and the potential impact
- Setting up the purpose and goals of CURP
- Defining a community
- Knowing and respecting the community's characteristics
- Developing a relationship with the community, building trust, working with formal and informal leadership, finding the community gatekeeper, identifying the project champion, meeting with local organizations, and learning the assets and challenges for that community
- Finding common interests.

Professor Pankaj Mittal, India

*Pankaj Mittal, former principal, BPSMV, India has been a champion CUE/CURP. While at the university, she was instrumental in setting up CSUIR. She also mentored the activities of the centre personally, along with providing suggestions on how to improve the engagement agenda followed by the centre. With the kind of leadership she provided, CSUIR gradually emerged as an important instrument for promoting CUE/CURP, and the university as a whole received recognition for its socially responsible functions. As a member of the University Grants Commission (UGC), Dr Mittal has also been a key player behind drafting of the new scheme on community engagement.*

Professor Sunitha Srinivas, South Africa

*Sunitha Srinivas of the faculty of pharmacy, Rhodes University Community Engagement (RUCE) Office excels in using transdisciplinary approaches for community centered research. Her initiatives in establishing engagement with the local communities have been instrumental in the maternal and infant health initiative, jointly undertaken by RUCE and the Ubunye Foundation (non-profit community development organization). Therefore, her work has streamlined engagement processes at RUCE, for which she has also earned numerous awards, including the 'Vice-chancellor's Distinguished Community Engagement Award'.*

## **6.4 Mobilizing resources**

One of the primary requirements for the efficient functioning of the CURP structure is ample resources at its disposal. Potential sources of funding can be found inside and outside the university. Efforts should be aimed at accessing the same. Applications/proposals (in prescribed format) for grants/monetary incentives should be prepared for submission to suitable authorities at the university/provincial/national levels. Opportunities for obtaining funding from various trusts/foundations and other such agencies should also be explored. This is essential at this stage because once the staff is in, the Centre would be required to pay salaries, fixed and running costs, etc.

*Some potential sources for finding resources include:*

- *Governmental (nation/regional/provincial) grants (as part of facilitative schemes)*
- *Financial support from autonomous agencies*
- *University funds*
- *Donations from trusts/foundations/charities*
- *Private donations to universities*

## Step 7: Activities of the structure

After the structure is established, staff becomes operational and monetary assistance is acquired, the next step in the process is clear demarcation of the functions/activities the structure is expected to perform. Although the details will vary from university to university, some important functions that should feature in the structure's priority functions are:

### 7.1 Devising modes of integration of CURP within academia

The structure and the team should work out the various ways and means through which CURP could feature as an integral part of regular academic curriculum, so that it is not relegated as a mere extra-curricular intervention. The credits for engagement in CUE/CURP should be given to

both students and faculty, by way of adding on to their academic score and professional credibility and advancement respectively.

The facilitative structure should come up with ideas regarding how CURP can be integrated into the regular academic discourse. Some examples where CURP can be mainstreamed in the academia is through:

- Project work/field attachments (participation of students at undergraduate and postgraduate level)
- Thesis/dissertations/independent/allied research work (participation of PhD students/faculty)
- Add-on disciplinary courses (participation of various departments)

#### SOUTH AFRICA: Outreach programs, volunteerism

*CUE is highly mainstreamed at Rhodes University. This is reflected in its vision which outlines the university's commitment to social and individual transformation, sustainable community development, student civic responsibility and scholarship of engagement. Rhodes University Community Engagement (RUCE) Directorate encourages and supports service learning/outreach programs, volunteerism, etc. CUE at Rhodes is incentivized in various ways. In 2008, a major merit award along the lines of the annual distinguished teacher and distinguished researcher awards was established as the 'Vice-Chancellor's Distinguished Community Engagement Award'. The three runners up for the award are recognized with an 'Excellence Award in Community Engagement'.*

*Community partners, student organizations, and student researchers are honoured annually at the Community Engagement Gala dinner, where the community engagement awards for the year are announced in various categories, including 'Community partner of the year', 'Volunteer of the year', 'Engaged (Student) researcher of the year'.*

*For academic staff, community engagement has become one of the five criteria assessed in the promotion process (along with teaching, research, professional involvement, and leadership management).*

#### INDONESIA: Curriculum based research projects

*University of Indonesia emerges as a model example on integration of CURP within academia. The Directorate for Research and Community Engagement provisions and coordinates a number of curriculum based research projects, financed under the Community Engagement Grant (CEG) scheme. The unique point of such projects is that they are embedded in the curriculum through a particular subject. It not only involves all the students in a class, but also awards them academic credits for the work. University of Indonesia is also in the process of creating a holistic academic credit system for students involved in all types of community engagement work. The university also incentivizes faculty for engagement in CURP by awarding faculty members who show their dedication in serving and working with communities.*

## 7.2 Partnering with local civil society organizations

Since CURP places a lot of emphasis on community based interventions, networking with local civil society organizations becomes crucial. Since such organizations are rooted in the grassroots and have better community and field orientation, as compared to universities, having their experience on board proves to be a huge benefit. For this, efforts can be made to find such organizations which are working on fairly similar ideas to the ones which concern the university and community. Having shared objectives and mutual interests plays a big role in not only finding the right partner, but also in facilitating the partnership in the long run and ensuring its sustainability.

### INDIA: Partnership between Kurukshetra University & PRIA

*PRIA entered into a partnership with the Ambedkar Study Centre, Kurukshetra University to use participatory research as a tool for ushering social change. Twelve young girls from scheduled castes (marginalized communities) were encouraged to come forward and contribute to the participatory study on the 'status of primary education in scheduled castes in Haryana'. PRIA, being an organization which is rooted in communities, helped to bridge the divide between university researchers and the girls. As a result, the young girls not only conducted the study, but also analyzed the findings with the help of university researchers and PRIA facilitators. In the process, the girls acquired self-belief and became more confident and conscious of their potential.*

### JORDAN: Partnership between University of Jordan & various civil society organizations

*The Centre for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan engages with the community and civil society through workshops they frequently host inviting stakeholders, civil society leaders and political parties. An example of this is the center's star project for 2015, titled 'Jordan in 2030.' This project addresses Jordan's biggest challenges and national priorities that impact the country's future in economic, political, social and human development. It is led by the center but conducted with contributions from governmental institutions, the private sector and civil society, and fully supported by the university in an effort to bolster the university's role in the community as an active and engaged member.*

### BRAZIL: Partnership between Federal University of Rio de Janeiro & cooperative workers

*The 'incubator' model in Brazil involves the expansion of the academic educational mission from training individuals to educating organizations. The incubators have enabled universities and political groups to exercise their social objectives by creating cooperatives and solidarity organizations as a means to combatting poverty and inequality. This model has led to the cultural transformation of academia, so that it plays a more active role in society at several levels. The first Technological Incubator of Popular Cooperatives (ITCP) was established at the Graduate Engineering School (COPPE) Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ) in 1995 as a cooperative of workers from Manguinhos favela. The university was assisted in this effort by Comitê de Entidades Públicas no Combate à Fome e pela Vida-Coop (Committee of Public Entities in Action against Hunger and in Favour of Life), a social network, by the Banco do Brasil Foundation and by the National Innovation Agency (FINEP).*

### SOUTH AFRICA: Partnership between University of Cape Town & Biowatch

*The 'Seed and Knowledge' partnership between the University of Cape Town's (UCT) Bio-economy SARCHI Chair and the national environmental NGOs, Biowatch South Africa (SA) and the Mupo Foundation, strives for social and ecological justice through research, advocacy work and the development of training materials. In collaboration with UCT from 2011, Biowatch became a partner in research into farmers rights in South Africa and the extent to which existing policies, laws and practices support seed security and the conservation of agricultural biodiversity. The project is due to expand beyond South Africa in the course of 2015, enabled by a four-year renewable international funding grant, to involve more community-based NGOs, rural farming communities, as well as university-based partners in and beyond South Africa, including Zambia and Zimbabwe.*

### 7.3 Capacity building of students/teachers in Participatory Research/Community Based Participatory Research

Having outlined the exact functions of the centre, and before embarking on field activities, a university must adjudge if its students/faculties possess the necessary capacities/skill sets for pursuing CURP. As CURP is based on concepts like community-based research and participatory research, it is of utmost importance that students/teachers possess not only theoretical knowledge of related concepts, but also practical insights. The absence of background knowledge or clarity on the methodology may prove to be counter-productive, and will defeat the purpose and vision with which CURP is undertaken. Therefore, it is important that students/teachers are trained in community-based research methodology and associated concepts before pursuing CURP. Here, the structure can facilitate the conduction of capacity building programs for different stakeholders.

Capacity building is a conceptual approach to development and is an ongoing process through

which individuals, groups, organizations and societies enhance their ability to identify and meet development challenges. Capacity building for participatory research/community-based research refers to addition to the skill sets of concerned stakeholders through facilitation of learning processes in order to achieve the desired outcomes.

For this, the structure can partner with various civil society organizations who specialize in this area of work, and make use of their services for building capacities and providing research training and support. They can be asked to conduct/facilitate such programs for students/community/faculty. These programs can be in the form of seminars, workshops, training sessions, expert guidance, etc. As a result, the students, faculty and the community will get oriented towards the concept and process of CUE and CURP and as a result they will be in a better position to perform their roles meaningfully and efficiently.

#### PRIA's Capacity Building Programs

*PRIA has been instrumental in building the capacities of community based researchers on participatory training methodologies, and community based participatory research to learners ranging from academia, practitioners, government servants, etc. Further, capacity development support is provided through short term trainings/Training of Trainers, facilitated workshops, distance education, mentoring and coaching, technical support and study tours/exposure visits. PRIA's capacity building tools include participatory learning training methods, learning needs assessment, online interactive training, etc. The training programs are aimed at enhancing conceptual clarity on participatory approaches, practical insights and consolidating knowledge, experience, learning and applicable methodologies.*

#### Capacity Building at the University of Victoria

*ISICUE, in particular, engages in capacity building of students, faculty and communities in community-based research. Some of the efforts it has undertaken are:*

- *ISICUE coordinates annual community-based research institutes and training workshops for UVIC and VICRA involving 45 faculty, 65 NGOs, and community groups and numerous government, health authority, student and public participants.*
- *The CBR Learning and Teaching Series, co-hosted with the UVIC Teaching and Learning Centre (2009-2011) included 18 campus workshops sharing best practices from all UVic faculties in community engaged scholarship with over 350 participants.*

#### Capacity Building at Science Shops

*At the Science Shop, capacity building is a two-way process involving theoretical and practical experts. Practitioners demand useful and accessible research results on questions that are actually relevant to their work. When trying to work with research results, they identify areas not yet sufficiently investigated by researchers; they can find discrepancies between academic advice and its outcomes and/or barriers for putting theory into practice. Theoretical experts try to answer the questions posed by practitioners and increase the accessibility of relevant research results. (genSET, 2011)*



## 7.4 Building linkages with local networks promoting CURP

Emergence of national and/or thematic networks that promote community based participatory research, CUE and CURP is valuable in sustaining the engagement efforts at national and institutional levels. They provide collective voice, practical experience and shared solidarity, and are very effective in knowledge sharing and mutual learning by HEIs. It is clear that national or provincial networks on research partnerships and promotion of community based participatory research methodology can stimulate greater mutuality between communities and HEIs in designing and conducting research. Such networks act as platforms for influencing the practices of individual HEIs, thereby generating a pressure for, and providing exemplars of, good practices in co-

construction of knowledge in research partnerships. They also help generate greater momentum for CURP/CUE at national/provincial levels.

The universities through their facilitative structures should make efforts to reach out to these networks, which function as effective platforms for knowledge dissemination. Some such networks are Community Based Research Canada, Asia Engage, Service Learning Asia Network, COEP Brazil, Red de Comunidades Rurales, Argentina, etc. Since most are membership based, the structure at the university can initiate the process of acquiring membership of the local network by identifying similar institutions or academics who are already members.

### The Committee of Entities in the Struggle against Hunger and for a Full Life (COEP), Brazil

*In Brazil, the national mobilization network, The Committee of Entities in the Struggle Against Hunger and for a Full Life (COEP), having more than 1000 member organizations, is engaged in mobilizing institutional and public action in support of the popular movement against hunger and poverty. COEP engages with communities from the national to the state and municipal networks and brings them closer to the local realities of poverty in Brazil, thus allowing it to support community development initiatives with local presence, knowledge and credibility.*

### Red de Comunidades Rurales (RCR), Argentina

*In Argentina, the Red de Comunidades Rurales (RCR) is a 'network created in 2006 by a multidisciplinary group of professionals, with the goal of coordinating efforts and mobilizing resources to promote education and community development in poor rural areas'. It is engaged in activities aimed at addressing poverty, social exclusion and lack of basic services. RCR integrates and distributes private and public information; coordinates multidisciplinary teams to collect, analyze and disseminate socio-economic information; creates linkages and institutional relationships to channel resources; and builds participatory leadership.*

### Asia Engage, South Asia

*AsiaEngage is a regional, South Asian platform created to maximise the strengths of the Asia-Talioires Network of Industry and Community Engaged Universities (ATNEU), the ASEAN University Network (AUN) Thematic Network on University Social Responsibility and Sustainability (AUN-USR&S) and the ASEAN Youth Volunteer Programme (AYVP). All these networks/programmes under AsiaEngage are aimed at creating mutually beneficial partnerships between research, education and volunteerism missions of higher education with industry and community stakeholders across ASEAN and Asia.*

### Community Based Research Canada

*Community Based Research Canada (CBRC), a network of community and campus based researchers and institutions, was founded in 2008 in Victoria at the Community University Exposition Conference (CUEXpo), 2008. CBRC functions as a catalyst to the national movement sweeping across Canada, while putting research and knowledge to work. It has a membership of over 300 members, including academic institutions, community organizations and businesses, networks, researchers, practitioners, etc. It intends to build an inclusive and open network and engage already existing networks for CUE/CURP.*

## Uganda Adult Education Network

*Uganda Adult Education Network (UGAADEN), a network of adult education organizations in Uganda, has the capacity to work with all universities located in different parts of the country. It works closely with universities in the promotion of profession, teaching and practice of adult and community education. It engages with HEIs in a kind of joint partnership, where they work together on a number of community development intervention projects. The university provides the expertise for network members who are, for example, engaged in skills training and adult literacy education. They (UGAADEN and the University) engage in the promotion of a number of community livelihood projects, environmental sustainability projects and many other projects achieved through community education and training programmes.*

## Community Campus Partnerships for Health USA

*Community Campus Partnerships for Health (CCPH) is a non-profit membership organization whose mission is to promote health equity and social justice through partnerships between communities and academic institutions. It plays a crucial role in providing practical tools and inspiring stories, connecting people and promoting opportunities for advancement of authentic partnerships between academia and communities, so that community perspectives find an equitable voice in decision making in research and projects undertaken by the partnership. The CCPH annual awards typify and exalt a truly authentic collaboration model. For example, in 2008, the annual award was given to a partnership between the University of Pennsylvania and the Decatur Community Association, who undertook a community-based participatory research on environmental pollutants.*

## Living Knowledge Network Europe

*The Living Knowledge Network (LKN) in Europe (also known as the International Science Shop Network) is a membership based network. The members use the network and its tools for documentation and exchanging information, ideas, information and expertise on community-based research and science and society in general. The network engages strategic networking, training of individual skills, information and mentoring of old and new practitioners in public engagement with research. It is also involved with the Public Engagement in Research and Research Engagement in Society (PERARES) project, funded by European Community's 7th framework programme. This project aims to 'strengthen public engagement in research (PER) by involving researchers and civil society organisations (CSOs) in the formulation of research agendas and the research process.*

## Participatory Research in Asia, India

*Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) has been engaged in networking with academia in an attempt to further the cause of community engagement in HEIs. It undertakes a number of initiatives to promote engagement between HEIs and local communities to foster knowledge generation and mutual learning. By doing this, it has helped HEIs realize their social responsibility towards community's needs and aspirations. It has played an important role in bringing universities closer to communities, by playing the role of a facilitator, supporter, and partner in varied contexts. As a civil society organization, PRIA has been able to pioneer the approach of participatory research due to a combination of expertise drawn from practice and its commitment to participatory research. It has also played an important role in strengthening the network of civil society organizations engaged in similar initiatives both in India and South Asia.*

## 7.5 Planning and Budgeting

The structure should also prepare annual plans in line with the functions and activities it is expected to perform. Detailed and methodical planning not only helps streamline functions, but also helps keep pace with the timeline of activities. Annual planning also helps to align the institutional plan with the overall planning cycle of the university, so that both proceed in harmony and mutual interest.

Ideally, there are two kinds of plans which any institution should have handy for smooth operations and regularized functions. They are:

- Longer strategic plans, over a period of 3-5 years, which incorporate the broad vision and mission statements of the structure.
- Smaller annual plans, with detailed objectives, activities and expected outcomes.

It must also be ensured that this planning is aligned to the budget available. Therefore, a budget statement should also be drafted, so that the resources at hand are optimally utilized and for the desired purpose. The budget statement should also outline the financial cycles of the structure/ associated department, so that resource flow can be smooth and regular.

### PLANNING

*Planning should ideally cover (but is not limited to) the following aspects:*

- *Vision, mission and strategy*
- *Needs assessment vis-à-vis the research areas for CURP/activity mapping*
- *Research goals and objectives*
- *Work plan*
- *Activity schedule*
- *Program implementation*
- *Monitoring and evaluation*

### BUDGETING

*A budget statement outlines the financial resources commensurate with planned activities. There are several different ways of presenting a budget. As a first step in the exercise, it is generally useful to outline the entire budget, and not be limited to just external needs. The budget should be a statement of the totality of resources that will be needed to implement the research project as per the plan. Having done that, subsequently you will have to identify the resources the structure already has and ones it can raise from external sources, and then specify the kind of support it expects from the same.*

## Step 8: Doing research with the community

Finally, the university has to engage in field work in order to fulfill its CURP objectives. CURP can be manifested and executed in a number of ways, such as, joint research projects, service-learning assignments, student initiated research projects (in association with the community), etc. Although the mode and form of execution may vary, a broad roadmap on approaching communities and executing various activities is outlined below:<sup>25</sup>

### 8.1 Building a relationship

- (i) *Locating nearby communities/Finding a community partner:* The first step towards initiating field work in CURP is locating the neighbourhood communities in association with whom the research can be carried out. Such communities are usually geographically close to the university premises, and the issues they are confronted with offer potential areas of research. Alternatively, community partners may already be known to the university, as it may have an existing research relationship with or know someone or an organization with whom it would like to work collaboratively. Community partners may approach the university with research ideas. Individuals or units within the university that have a role to facilitate these links are useful for connecting the 'right' academic with community partners. This facilitation role might be performed by 'engagement leads' in departments or specialist research centres committed to community university participatory research partnerships.
- (ii) *Identification of a research topic:* Identify an area or issue of common interest that you want to research together. This could be a particular issue, for example, a local food network, older person friendly neighbourhoods, low-carbon communities or a range of issues around a common theme such as social justice.
- (iii) *Establish the research aims and objectives:* In collaboration with your

research partner(s), establish the research aims, objectives and possible outcomes early on. By being open and clear in the early stages (and throughout), it reduces the risk of ambiguity and overly high and ambitious expectations.

- (iv) *Identify beneficial outcomes:* Establish desired outcomes that are mutually beneficial to the community and university, ensuring these are designed to bring about positive change and are as realistic as possible.
- (v) *Establish clear roles for those involved:* It is useful to consider what the different areas of skills, knowledge and expertise are in the partnership, and how each role will add value to the research. It is usually helpful for one or two people to take on the role of chair(s) or facilitator(s) of the group to ensure smooth running. Having co-chairs (one from the university and one from the community) helps ensure greater collaboration. It can be useful for another person to take on the role of coordinating meetings, booking venues, catering and generally being the liaison person.

### 8.2 Doing the research

- (i) *Co-designing the research:* The research design should be agreed to by all parties and include agreement about who will manage and carry out the research.
- (ii) *Establishing regular progress meetings:* Set up processes to reflect periodically on the progress of the research and to establish action points collaboratively.
- (iii) *Analyzing and interpreting the data:* It is ideal if all participants are involved in analyzing and interpreting the data. It is helpful to have an experienced researcher to facilitate this and record the group efforts.
- (iv) *Writing up the findings:* Often it is easier for one person to write up the findings in

<sup>25</sup> Centre for Social Justice & Community Action, Durham University (2013)

the first instance and then circulate to all the participants for comments/editing. This process can be repeated as many times as necessary, so that all parties involved are happy with the final version. Another way is to divide up the sections so that those with the most experience in a particular area write up the findings and then circulate to all participants.

### 8.3 Maintaining momentum

Once the research is underway, there are a few ways to help sustain the momentum of all those involved. This is especially important if the research is meant to last for several years, but is equally important for shorter projects.

(i) *Keeping focused:* It is inevitable that participatory research partnerships involve a number of meetings in order to discuss progress and next steps. It is useful to produce an agenda for each meeting to

demonstrate clearly to all partners the focus and direction. This also ensures that each partner's input is acknowledged.

(ii) *Opening spaces for communication:* Maintain communication with and between all the participants by face-to-face meetings, e-mail and phone to keep the momentum going. For example, send written notes (including any action points) shortly after a meeting; ensure the venues suit most people; use online tools to arrange times (e.g., Google calendar, which is free); provide clear information about the venues; and include travel details as well as telephone numbers.

(iii) *Meeting expectations:* Establish what the participants' expectations are and at intervals during the research process reflect upon these to find out if they have changed. Keep promises.

## SOME EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL CURP INITIATIVES BY UNIVERSITIES ACROSS THE WORLD

### Yarmouck University, Jordan

*The Um Qays Community Based Tourism project is a wonderful example of CURP by Yarmouk University. This project is aimed at developing the Um Qays Cultural Heritage Site, in association with the local community. The approach was to utilize 'community-based tourism development' as alternatives to the failures of the government's centralized tourism development, by engaging the community in all activities and decisions. A feeling of interaction and mingling with the people is rewarding for both visitors and the community and is also part of the attraction of the site. The project convinced the community to take certain initiatives and by doing small projects, even souvenir shops, traditional products are sold. In this case, the people of the local community feel the benefits of tourism. Workshops were also organized which allowed exchange of ideas and featured open discussion about development plans for Um Qays, and the community expressed their concerns and provided feedback.*

### Queen's University, Belfast

*The Science Shop at Queen's University, Belfast works with civil society organizations to develop research projects based on their research needs that are suitable for students within the university to carry out as part of their degree programs. For instance, a group of undergraduate social policy students worked with the Forum for Action on substance abuse on potential links between substance abuse and suicide. Their report was brought to the Northern Ireland Assembly's enquiry into the prevention of suicide and self-harm. Another example is a group of MSc Environmental Management students working with Belfast Hills Partnership to examine options for restoring quarries while minimizing the impact on biodiversity. Their conclusions were used to prepare a funding case for restoring a quarry for mountain biking with potential for income generation. Such research projects are examples of co-created research, with civil society organizations bringing their specific needs and knowledge, and students bringing their research training and skills.*

## Step 9: Creating mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation and reporting

This step, which concludes an intervention, is usually not given the desired attention or consideration. However, we need to understand that we are engaging in CURP not to justify ourselves as socially responsible or engaged academics. We undertake these activities with a clear goal in mind: to encourage people so that they can change and bring about change, and to free them from stereotyped modes of thinking and behaving, towards willingness for transformative action.<sup>26</sup> Our commitment to change constantly impels us to check and assess our progress in the pathway of change we desire to bring about. In this context, monitoring, evaluation and reporting functions assume profound importance for assessing the relevance and impact of CURP activities.

Monitoring is a continuous internal management activity, whose purpose is to ensure that the program achieves its defined objectives within the prescribed time-frame and budget. In simple terms, it implies looking at what and how much has been achieved, when compared with the plans

*The **University of Indonesia** has adopted a rigorous monitoring and evaluation program for all CUE/CURP activity it undertakes. It conducts a yearly monitoring and evaluation program which is called 'site visit'. During this visit, the university talks with the people in the community in which a program was implemented and listens to their feedback. The beneficiaries of the Community Engagement Grant are required to write the progress and final reports followed by a session with reviewers to discuss the progress and evaluation of the program. During this discussion, members of the community and partners of the program are also invited.*

of the program. It follows a well-designed process, primarily to generate information to improve program implementation, and involves provisions of regular feedback on the progress of program implementation.

On the other hand, evaluation is the systematic process of collecting and analyzing information to determine whether and to what extent the objectives are being realized. Evaluation thus aims to examine the project in its entirety – the context, inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes. It aims to make recommendations that may lead to the revision of the program design or replacing it entirely. It may also recommend changes in the future course of action for the program.

Along with this, step by step reporting of program activities for documentation purposes is also an important area of concern. It must be ensured that there is systematic documentation of activities/interventions, which are then produced in the form of a formal report.

Therefore, you need to assess the nature of monitoring and evaluation functions that will best suit the requirements of your university with respect to CURP. Prepare an outline of how such monitoring will be carried out, and assign responsibilities for the same.

### Differences between monitoring and evaluation

- *The purpose of monitoring is to improve efficiency and adjust work plans, while evaluation improves effectiveness, assesses impacts and provide inputs for future programs*
- *The prime focus of monitoring is present inputs/outputs, process outcomes and work plans, whereas evaluation looks at effectiveness and relevance of programs*
- *Monitoring is a continuous process over a shorter period of time, while evaluation can be periodic efforts over long periods of time*
- *The process of monitoring involves regular meetings, preparation of reports, monthly/quarterly reviews. Evaluation processes, however, may require additional data-collection and surveys*

<sup>26</sup> PRIA, 2011

## Step 10: Using co-generated knowledge, sharing lessons and good practices

CURP, as the term indicates, is a partnership approach to research. Just as the research is co-designed and co-executed by both the university and the community, the products that emerge out from the research is co-owned by both stakeholders. The university is obligated to share the report and findings of the research with the community, who have the right to keep a copy of the same, for use in the future. Since the research product is co-owned, both the university and the community is entitled to use the same for individual benefit and purpose. While the university can use it for publications in journals and posting on websites, the community can keep it as an information resource, or use it as a database for further activities/interventions. It is important to note that due acknowledgement must be given to all contributing participants and authors in scientific papers/research articles related to CURP work.

Dissemination and sharing of knowledge and good practices is equally important. The university can either choose to keep the knowledge resource that has emerged as a result of CURP as open source, giving equal access to everyone across the world who is interested in the work. Else, it can opt to protect the work through copyrighting it, where it reserves the right to publish/disseminate the

reports/information, and may do it selectively, considering business/commercial interests. However, in case the university does opt for open dissemination of research outputs, it should work out the modalities of dissemination. Some mechanisms for sharing good practices include:

### ✓ *Online publication*

The university can publish the CURP research reports via online journals/university websites, departmental blogposts and social media channels, from where it can be accessed by academics, community partners/civil society organizations and governments from all across the world.

### ✓ *In-house publications*

The university can opt for in-house publication of research reports and dissemination within local circles and other universities. Such in-house publications can be via newsletters, magazines, bulletin updates, etc.

### ✓ *Journal publications*

Publication of research papers in leading journals is another means of effective communication and dissemination of ideas to scholars and practitioners far and wide.

*Research produced as part of CURP has the potential to be disseminated more widely than through the usual academic fora (although these are equally important).*

**Academic audiences:** *The traditional academic channels for disseminating research include conferences, journal articles, workshops and seminars. Where possible, these are also opportunities for non-academic participants to offer presentations – enabling the sharing of learning across boundaries and the hearing of voices that might otherwise be absent.*

**Non-academic audiences:** *The non-academic partners will have their own networks for dissemination in their particular field. This provides an opportunity to spread the research findings in a variety of formats, for example, case studies, short guides, reports, each written in an accessible style, perhaps published on the Web.*

## Step 11: Scaling up positive impacts

Post-dissemination, the final step is scaling up the positive impacts emerging out of CURP activities. This can be done through:

- ✓ Training/awareness programs for students/other universities for replication of CURP experiences elsewhere
- ✓ Networking/lobbying with local government for more visibility/monetary support

One can also take the help of other departments and their expertise in communication for new ideas to share experiences. Students can help by using the latest communication tools for better dissemination. Assistance from the university's management can be sought for lobbying at higher levels.



# PART

# 4

## Frequently Asked Questions

### A. At the institutional level

- (i) In what ways can community engagement/community-based research be included in the course curriculum?*

Community engagement/community-based research can be incorporated in the regular academic discourse in a number of ways. They can be made a part of dissertation, departmental projects, field attachments/practical work, service-learning assignments, etc.

- (ii) How to distribute 'academic credits' for community engagement activities?*

Academic course credits can be attributed to community engagement activities by according a fixed percentage of marks in any particular subject to the field research reports submitted by students. In this way, by marking the quality of such research reports, institutions can provide credits to students, which can then add on to their aggregate score. Universities can also use community engagement efforts by the faculty as a criterion for their professional advancement.

- (iii) What are the opportunities for promotion of service-learning/experiential learning?*

Service-learning should not be viewed as a novel component in regular curricula. It is only a modified version of regular field work carried out by students, but with more meaning and relevance attached to it. Students should be guided in the right direction to pursue such experiential learning activities, and in this process, they should be provided appropriate guidance and support and the opportunity for reflection on their learning.

- (iv) What is the ideal institutional structure that works best for the promotion of CURP?*

There is no ideal structure that works best across all universities/educational institutions. Considering the diversity of institutions and situations, universities need to brainstorm on their individual settings and accordingly zero in on a structure that will be best suited considering its policies, resources and local contexts.

*(v) What desired role can the university leadership play in the process?*

University leadership has a very crucial role to play in shaping and moulding the CUE/CURP agenda. The leadership should inspire, guide, mentor and support the engagement process by providing the right orientation to all efforts/activities.

*(vi) What are the modes of capacity building for students/teachers in community-based research/ CURP?*

Universities can invest in capacity building for students for community-based research/ CURP through training programmes/workshops facilitated by experienced practitioners, civil society professionals and senior academics well versed in field. The faculty can be trained via specifically designed refresher courses on community-based research, which enhances their knowledge and skill sets.

## **B. At the behavioural level**

*(i) In what ways can we increase the participation of practitioners in academia and for academic purposes?*

Practitioners can be encouraged to get involved in university activities by way of joint ventures or collaborative activities which are mutually beneficial. These can take the form of jointly organized conferences, joint research projects and other such interventions wherein both ownership and benefit is shared.

*(ii) What are the basic tenets of joint researching with the community?*

At the behavioural level, some of the basic attributes that need to be kept in mind for joint researching with the community is mutually agreed interests, mutually beneficial outcomes, and respect for alternate/indigenous knowledge systems. Communities are equal contributors in the research process, output and outcome.

*(iii) How can we build rapport with the local community for long term partnerships?*

As a university approaching the community, it is extremely important to first break the ice with the community, and bridge the divide that exists between the two. This can be done by informal group discussions, discussions aimed at understanding their aspirations and ways of thinking. Such an approach becomes essential for aligning the thinking of both parties to mutually beneficial associations.

## **C. At the community level**

*(i) How can we best approach a community?*

Seek help from faculty members who have a fair amount of experience in field work and are able to connect with local people quickly and wisely. Universities can also partner with civil society organizations who work at the grassroots and enjoy a good rapport with local communities, to act as a bridge between the communities and the university.

*(ii) How do we cope with structural imbalances within the community?*

The university needs to take initiatives to come to terms with the perceptions/practices/stratification that exists among different communities. This can be made possible through a fair amount of background research on the communities that the university desires to work with. This initial orientation will help understand the communities better, and you will then be in a better position to engage seamlessly with local communities for joint research.

*(iii) In what ways can we help build capacities of communities for community-based research/CURP?*

Capacity building efforts/initiatives for communities can be planned in an informal way, so that the communities are at ease during the process and relate to it more easily. Some methods can be hands-on training sessions, practitioner facilitated group discussions, brainstorming workshops, enactments, role-plays, etc.

## **D. Hierarchical issues**

*(i) Where do we place the component of CUE/CURP in the regular curriculum?*

CUE/CURP programs should be placed at par with any other academic discourse within the regular curriculum. Practice based research should be given due importance, considering the positive impacts it has on various stakeholders involved in the process.

*(ii) Should it be made part of every course in every department?*

Ideally, yes! CUE/CURP should be integrated across all discipline subjects at the university, and also be attached to official credits which add to the aggregate score attained by students.

*(iii) How can we bring community-based research on par with lab based traditional research?*

To bring community-based research on par with lab based scientific/traditional research, it is important to give visibility to the impacts arising from such a process. Therefore, impact statements and research reports arising from interventions should be published across various journals, academic magazines, websites, etc.

## **E. Leadership issues**

*(i) Should there be any specific academic qualification for a person heading the institutional structure/leading the initiative, or is it open to any faculty irrespective of his/her designation?*

There is no hard and fast rule about the qualification requirement for the person heading and leading CURP initiatives at an university. A diligent professor, irrespective of the scale he or she belongs to, having passion for the engagement agenda can be considered suitable for the leadership role. However, this should be in line with the university's policies and norms.

*(ii) Is it mandatory for the structure to have a vertical hierarchy of officials/staff?*

Not at all! In fact, the less the bureaucratization of the structure, the better will be its performance. However, again this entirely depends on the university administration, but it should focus more on the functions than the structure.

# PART

# 5

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# Institutionalizing Community University Research Partnerships: A User's Manual

A handy reference and tool-kit for university and college administrators interested in establishing and improving Community University Research Partnerships in higher education institutions

The UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education grows out of and supports the UNESCO global lead to play "a key role in assisting countries to build knowledge societies". The Chair uniquely has its home in two complementary but distinct institutions. It is co-located at the Community Development Programme in the School of Public Administration at the University of Victoria (UVic) in Canada and at Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) located in New Delhi, India. Dr. Rajesh Tandon, Founding President of PRIA and Dr. Budd L. Hall, Professor of Community Development at UVic serve as the first Co-Chairs.

The UNESCO Chair supports North-South-South and South-South partnerships that build on and enhance the emerging consensus in knowledge democracy. It co-creates new knowledge through partnerships among universities (academics), communities (civil society) and government (policy-makers) leading to new capacities; new solutions to pressing problems related to sustainability, social and economic disparities, cultural exclusion, mistrust and conflict; awareness among policy makers; enhanced scholarship of engagement; and modified pedagogy of community-based research.

Over the past four years, the Chair has contributed to mainstreaming the practice of community-based research in the teaching and research functions of higher education world-wide through:

- Supportive policies: through government support and research funding
- Trained professionals: researchers, scholars, students, practitioners
- Enhanced partnerships: between civil society, universities, North-South-South networks
- Supportive leadership: from academic councils, university administrations, vice chancellors and civil society leaders.

## UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education

