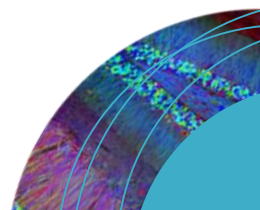


From HIV to Ebola, ethical reflection on health research in the Global South and propositions from Inserm and IRD

A joint note of the Inserm Ethics Committee
and the IRD Consultative Committee
of Deontology and Ethics (June 2015)

Reflection group:

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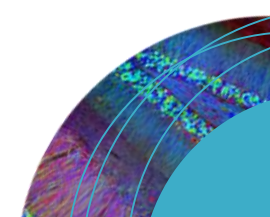


Basic and applied
biomedical research
Epidemiology

Interdisciplinary research
contributing to
development



ANRS Coordinated Action
« Developing countries »

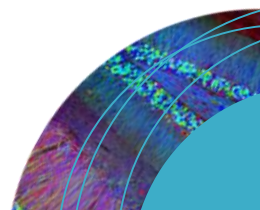


With the HIV epidemic, the ethics of health research has evolved in the North and in the South:

- Better understanding of contextual vulnerabilities and how to change them into capabilities
- Bigger community engagement in research process
- Increased collaborative research projects
- Recognition of the political dimensions of health research

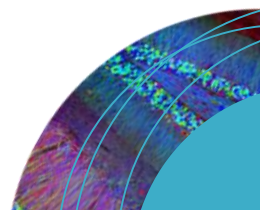
With the West African Ebola outbreak, research faced (more or less) new ethical challenges:

- Implementation during outbreak
- Weakness of health services and populations vulnerability
- Difficulties in communicating with the communities
- Sharing of research costs and benefits



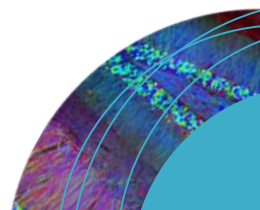
Recommendation 1: Support research projects on issues specific to the Global South

- Donors and research institutions should better support research projects on health issues affecting the populations of developing countries, such as neglected tropical infections (and also non communicable chronic diseases, on the rise in the South).
- Zoonosis with epidemic potential should be among the priority topics for evaluation bodies of research projects.



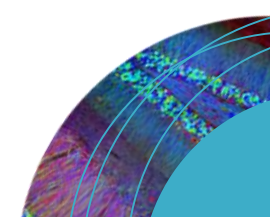
Recommendation 2: Promote multidisciplinary research

- Cultural values and systems have major effects on the populations' health. It is critical to understand them and the complexity of research in the South.
- Interactions between biomedical research and social sciences are thus necessary.
- Research in public health and health economics & politics, are equally important.



Recommendation 3: Foster reciprocity in the collaboration between researchers from the North and the South

- Expertise is distributed among researchers from the North and the South.
- Researchers from North countries have the duty to strengthen the capacities of researchers from South countries and to build local infrastructures. Researchers from the South must also contribute to training researchers from the North.
- Equitable sharing of results (databases, publications, patents...) shall be detailed in research agreements.

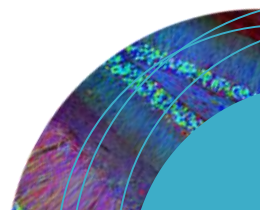


Recommendation 4: Be more attentive to gender aspects

- Clinical research must have data disaggregated by sex.
- All research in South countries should have a reflection on gender aspects.
- Equal access to research careers for men and women should be promoted in the North and the South
- The participation of women in ethical committees must be increased in many countries.

Recommendation 5: Develop the reflection on benefits for research participants and populations, co-producers of knowledge

- The projects must combine ethics of care and ethics of research and reflect on the medical needs of the study subjects.
- The continuity of care must be ensured for the participants in clinical research.
- Research must play a role in health promotion by advocating access of the populations to improved practices.



Recommendation 6: Maintain high ethical standard, even in outbreak situation and context of limited resources

- Clinical research against placebo may be unethical when the experimental treatment has evidence to provide greater chance of survival.
- The application of ethical standards, as defined in the protocols, and their adaptation to local context should be assessed.

Recommendation 7: Establish mechanisms for rapidly sharing scientific results during outbreaks and public health crisis

- New editorial rules for fast track publications should be discussed and adopted by the scientific community and the publishers at a global level, to allow the results of research to benefit as soon as possible to the people in need.

