

C16. DOES THE RESEARCH TAKE PLACE IN (OR WITH COMMUNITIES FROM) CONTEXTS OF INEQUALITY OR HISTORICAL OPPRESSION?

This question applies to studies conducted in or with communities from contexts characterized by high poverty, inequality, or historical oppression. These contexts include:

- Countries in the Global South, as defined by the OECD (please consult the OECD website).
- Communities, regardless of geographic location, that have experienced systemic exploitation or oppression, such as Indigenous peoples or marginalized groups.

Research in such contexts must address unique ethical concerns, such as:

- **POWER DYNAMICS:** How do relationships between researchers and participants reflect historical or systemic inequalities?
- **RECIPROCITY AND OWNERSHIP:** Who benefits from the research, and who has control over its design and outcomes?
- **CULTURAL SENSITIVITY:** Are local customs, norms, and values respected?

YES to question 16 = You work in or with communities from contexts of inequality or historical oppression. In this case, address the following:

1. **How was this project developed? Who was involved in drawing up the research agenda, design and implementation? Was this done on the initiative of or in collaboration with local scientists? In what way was equality built in?**
 - Was the research agenda created collaboratively with local scientists or community representatives?
 - Did local partners have equal input in shaping the study's design and implementation?
 - Collaborative planning builds trust and ensures the study addresses locally relevant issues.
2. **What is the potential ADDED VALUE of results from this study for the RESEARCHERS and institutions in the country where the study takes place?**
 - What benefits will the research bring to local researchers, institutions, or the broader academic community in the country or region?
 - Ethical research should provide value beyond publication, such as building local capacity or informing policy.
3. **What BENEFITS does the research offer to the different (non-academic) POPULATION GROUPS in the country where the research takes place?**
 - Are there tangible outcomes for participants or their communities (e.g., healthcare insights, economic benefits, or empowerment)?
 - Research should not extract information without offering meaningful contributions to the communities involved.
4. **How do you give local partners A SAY IN DECISION-MAKING?**
 - What mechanisms are in place to involve local partners in key decisions?
 - How do you ensure their voices are respected and heard throughout the study?
 - Equal partnership helps reduce exploitation and builds ethical research relationships.
5. **How do you guarantee EQUAL EXCHANGE OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS?**
 - Will you share findings, methods, or training with local researchers or communities?
 - How will knowledge flows benefit both sides equally?

- Ethical research avoids “one-way” knowledge extraction and promotes mutual learning.
6. How do you take into account the LONG-TERM consequences for all parties involved?
- Consider the study’s lasting impact on participants, communities, and researchers.
 - Will your findings create unintended harm or benefit certain groups disproportionately?
 - Ethical research evaluates the ripple effects of its outcomes.
7. How will you deal with UNCONSCIOUS PREJUDICES, assumptions, and possible power dynamics, such as 'savior syndrome' or feelings of superiority?
- Reflect on how unconscious prejudices, savior syndrome, or feelings of superiority could affect your interactions and results.
 - Include plans to mitigate these risks through cultural sensitivity training or other methods.
 - Addressing bias ensures respectful and fair treatment of all participants.
8. HOW DO YOU MONITOR, EVALUATE AND REPORT any ethical violations and power imbalances?
- Have you put systems in place to identify and address ethical violations or power imbalances during the study?
 - Will you report findings transparently to local communities and stakeholders?
 - Active monitoring ensures accountability and safeguards participants’ rights.

NO to question 16 = You don't work in or with communities from contexts of inequality or historical oppression.

For more information about question 16, please contact sebastian.vanhoeck@uantwerpen.be