Towards fair research collaborations at IHMT-NOVA

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SDG 17 aims at strengthening "the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development".





Research partnerships

- —involve the exchange of structures, the building of relationships, mutual cooperation and sharing tasks to attain common goals in order to enhance research capacity (Craveiro et al, 2017).
- are **fundamental** to attain research capacity in LMICs (Macfarlane et al, 2008; Farnman et al, 2015).
- —with experienced institutions from LMIC may foster processes of 'reverse innovation' from the South to the Global North (Crisp, 2014; Govindarajan and Ramamurti, 2011).





Guidelines, standards, recommendations & regulations

- The topic has generated an extensive academic debate (Bezanson, Narain and Prante 2004; Kitzi, 2002; Adams, 2012; Carvalho, Nunes and Hartz, 2017).
- Over the past twenty years, we have witnessed the development of guidelines, good standards of practice, ethical regulations and recommendations on how to establish transboundary research partnerships (ESSENCE, 2014; KFPE, 2014; CCGHR, 2016).
- Recently COHRED developed the RFI, an evidence based tool that operationalizes good practice standards related to three main dimensions of partnerships - fairness of opportunity, fair process and fair sharing of benefits, costs and outcomes (COHRED, 2017; Ijsselmuiden and Klipp, 2017; Carvalho et al 2017; Carvalho, Nunes and Hartz, 2017; Craveiro and Hartz, 2017).
- IHMT-NOVA was the first Portuguese language partner of COHRED's RFI.





Partnerships at IHMT-NOVA

- Currently, IHTM-NOVA is a key institution in Portugal and in the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries — Comunidade de Países de Língua Oficial Portuguesa - CPLP — in terms of health for development, infectious tropical diseases, education & training and capacity building.
- It is undergoing a process of revision of its management and laboratory processes and COHRED's RFI provided us with a tool to
 - go beyond talking about doing to actually doing it
 - review our partnership processes systematizing our ongoing efforts to establish fair partnerships with our collaborating institutions – INTERNAL positioning.
 - structure with our partners the dialogue about what should our partnerships look like – EXTERNAL positioning.





Vision

IHMT

- To function as part of networks
 in order to
- to produce the knowledge, information, instruments and systems
- needed by indivíduals, communities and countries

to

Improve their health and well-being equitably

and

 Responde to *glocal* health and tropical medicine threats and emergencies.

Research Centre on Global Health and Tropical Medicine - GHTM

- Our vision is to extend our expertise as a R&D institution in the specific field of global health and tropical medicine,
 - addressing present and future health problems,
 - bridging across CPLP R&D institutions in a worldwide context,
 - becoming a privileged partner for health & scientific cooperation and development,
 - respecting our national heritage of being in the forefront of new developments and societal challenges related with globalization
 - aligned with key-concepts of sustainable development goals.







Internal RFI Implementation

- Structured Interviews with key informants, based on the RFI script (Director, Deputy Directors, Full Professors and PIs) – recorded and fully transcribed;
- Informal conversations with other relevant staff (academic/admin)
- Analysis of already existing reports (annual reports; GHTM's 2013-2017 evaluation and strategy for 2018-2022);
- Synthesis of main answers/ideas/proposals;
- Identification of relevant examples related to RFI domains to include in the Report (case studies; research projects, etc.);
- Internal advocacy.







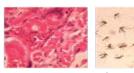
Internal RFI implementation

- praised by most of the interviewees some of them had longstanding concerns with issues of ethics, fairness and North/South unbalances
- seen as an opportunity to assess, outline and systematize individual and institutional approaches to transboundary research partnerships
- IHMT's approach relies mostly on tacit agreements and not on SOPs/written guidelines –interviewees believed that, in some cases, it wouldn't be helpful to develop SOPs
- It was often pointed out that the RFI questionnaire was too long and repetitive (interviews following the full RFI Reporting Guide took more than 3 hours).













External RFI advocacy/implementation will build on:

- Members from partner institutions from from the South belonging to the Administration Board, Advisory Council & Scientific Advisory Board
- Institutional partnerships with Universities in Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Mozambique and East Timor
 - IHMT incorporates academic staff from those Universities as Invited Professors
 - IHMT staff reciprocates by serving as Invited Professors at those Universities, participating in Scientific Councils and
 - delocalizing training programs from Portugal to Angola, Brazil and Cape Verde.

- Membership of several networks, namely
 - within the CPLP (Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries)
 - within the European Union , such as TropEd
 - globally, such as IANPHI













External RFI advocacy

- A dedicated special issue of IHMT's scientific journal – **Anais do Instituto de** Higiene e Medicina Tropical
- Translation of RFI guides into Portuguese.
- Advocacy with the Secretary General of the CPLP leading to debate during Ministerial (Health) during October 2017 in Brasilia with a CPLP Declaration to adopt the RFI.
- **Research projects** and initiatives focused on capacity building, knowledge translation and public engagement with science.

- **Editorial** Cooperation, research and health equity
- **Guest Editorial** Beyond Good Intentions The Research **Fairness Initiative**

Original Articles

- Implementation of the Research Fairness Initiative
- Knowledge Production, political action and equity: contributions of the observatory of political analysis in health (PAHO)
- Equity in Evaluative research focusing on health cooperation and development
- Best practices of Public Health research equity: examples from **Brazil and Portugal**
- Equity and governance: analysis of health research and innovation policy in Brazil
- Review Article Health for Development, research partnerships and fairness

Research Notes

- Strengthening Bioethics Committees from Portuguese **Speaking African Countries**
- Collaborative and innovative partnerships in knowledge management for sustainable development in the context of the Research Fairness Initiative (RFI): The MedTROP Project – IHMT/FIOCRUZ

External RFI Implementation: scaling up

- WIDENING-TWINNING project in partnerships with COHRED and SDU, will develop the field of 'fair research partnerships' and foster the implementation of standards and good practices related to the RFI. This project will:
 - Strengthen the **research agenda** on research partnerships.
 - Through training, auditing, mobility and internship mechanisms, IHMT/NOVA's students and staff members as well as members of the southern host institutions in mobility in IHMT/NOVA will acquire relevant experiences that will result in an increase in the quality and fairness of their research portfolios.
 - The creation of an optional teaching module on 'research partnerships.





