



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



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



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

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University of Victoria
School of Public Administration
Faculty of Human and
Social Development
PO Box 1700, STN CSC
Victoria, BC. V8W2Y2
Canada

T: +1 250 721 8062
Email: bhall@uvic.ca

Co-Director of Chair:
Prof. Budd L Hall

Society for Participatory
Research in Asia

PRIA, 42, Tughlakabad
Institutional Area,
New Delhi - 110062
Ph: +91-011-29960931/32/33
Fax: +91-11-29955183
Email: info@pria.org

Co-Director of Chair:
Dr. Rajesh Tandon

Based at the University of Victoria and the Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), this Chair is co-directed by Dr. Budd L Hall and Dr. Rajesh Tandon. The UNESCO Chair supports North-South-South and South-South partnerships that build on and enhance the emerging consensus in knowledge democracy. It strengthens recent collaboration between the Higher Education section in UNESCO, the Global University Network for Innovation (GUNI), Global Alliance on Community University Engagement and other regional and global networks. 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; and awareness among policy makers; enhanced scholarship of engagement; and of social responsibility in Higher Education.

Objectives

1. Capacity-Building
 - a) Facilitate North-South-South and South-South collaboration in building institutional capacity in both higher education and selective civil society research organisations in the theory and practice of community–university research partnerships
 - b) Training of a new generation of community engaged scholars and community-based researchers with special attention to Africa and Indigenous Studies.
2. Research on dimensions of knowledge democracy and the co-creation of knowledge. Identifying most effective practices in community–university research partnerships with special emphasis on vulnerable communities and less wealthy nations.
3. Policy development and knowledge mobilisation

Activities

In both streams of research (CBR and Social Responsibility), two types of activities would be carried out in an inter-related manner:

- (1) 'write-shops' as vehicles for systematization and
- (2) dissemination of new knowledge through books and Journals which can mainstream such ideas and practices in south & north.

Capacity Development

Both formal and non-formal channels of learning need to be supported. Formal channels would entail recruiting students at undergraduate and graduate levels to study CBR methodologies in formal Courses and distance education; once initial curriculum is developed and piloted in 3 different locations and languages (in 2013-14), then its scaling-up will be enabled through a system of accreditation (in 2015-16) such that many other institutions can conduct such learning programmes. Training workshops for cohorts of practitioners and researchers together would be conducted to pilot the curriculum and methods of learning for the non-formal channels in six different locations in the south & north during 2013-14. These learning materials then would be converted into manuals in open source formats (for print, CD and new media) and made available in a manner that they can be used, as well as new materials added and strengthened.

Institutional Capacity

Primary activity in this regard would be to co-convene short dialogues of leaders of institutions of higher education in different crosscutting contexts. The dialogues would have to be carried out in partnership with, and as part of, on-going conferences and meetings of leaders, ministers and professionals of higher education. Also envisaged is a special initiative to strengthen Pan African networking and linkages in the fields of CBR and Social Responsibility in Higher Education, through support to African leaders in these fields.