Community University Research Partnerships

The Association of Commonwealth Universities,
London

November 30, 2015

Dr Rajesh Tandon
Founder-President, Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA)
UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education

www.pria.org; www.unescochair-cbrsr.org
Rationale

- Times we’re In: Challenges before humanity
- HEIs knowledge functions in research & teaching de-linked
- Multiple & competing sites and modes of knowledge production
- Co-construction of knowledge provides leverage
Methods and Outputs:

- Global web based survey - 336 responses from 53 countries in 4 language
- Respondents from HEI, CSO, funding agencies, and policy makers.
- 12 Country case studies
- Products: an e-book and a set of practical guidelines
- Open Access policies
Key Findings

• Global South data difficult to obtain
• Institutional investment in structures to support CURPs
• Large variation in the language, conceptualization and practice of these engagements
• ‘Knowledge cultures’ of CSOs and HEIs vary tremendously
• Contradiction between professed commitment to co-construction and practice of doing CBR
Key Findings (Contd.)

• Situating HE in National development policy framework
• Providing explicit orientation to partnerships in HE policy
• Research financing incentives in partnerships
• Monitoring by national/provincial governments
Institutional Mechanisms

- Explicit structure for interface
- Leadership at the top
- Incentives for faculty in assessments, promotions
- Institution-wide, not ghettoised
- Co-governance with community
Challenges Ahead

- Synchronising student and faculty aspirations
- Building capacity for partnership creation & nurturance
- Resourcing & capacity in civil society
- Support for middle level leadership
- Platforms & networks for learning & advocacy