The Next Gen project: A Global Study on Training, Teaching and Learning Community-Based Research (CBR)

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Content and Goals

- The Next Gen project
- Lessons
- Next steps
**Objective:** to work with other global networks to support capacity building in the fields CBR and SR in higher education through South-South and North-South-South partnerships.

**Project IDRC:** Mainstreaming Community-University Research Partnerships

**Project SSHRC:** Building the Next Generation of Community-based Researchers ("The Next Gen project")
Motivation: High demand of CBR training but little research at a global level on the training opportunities within HEIs and CSOs.

Objective: to create new interdisciplinary knowledge on pedagogies of learning and teaching CBR in four thematic areas increasing access to high quality training at HEIs and CSOs.

Thematic areas: (i) asset-based community development, (ii) governance and citizenship, (iii) water governance, and (iv) Indigenous research methodologies.

Partners: Coady International Institute at SFXU (Canada), PRIA (India), IRES at UBC (Canada), ISICUE at UVic (Canada).

Data collection instruments to describe existing pedagogies and strategies for building capacities:

- Thematic literature reviews on CBR training
- Global web based survey
- Institutional case studies
**Goal**: to conduct online searches to identify, categorize and analyze:

i) academic and non-academic literature on TTL within CBR in global and local settings;

ii) pedagogies, strategies and materials for building CBR capacities (e.g., curricula, participatory video, photovoice, community theatre, community consultations, etc.);

iii) best practices related to each thematic area and lessons learned in several pilot studies on training CBR.

**Focus**: training modalities, content, pedagogy, and expected impacts
Systematic reviews – Next Gen

Findings:

1. Terminology
2. Location, length and type of training
3. Content
4. Underlying pedagogies

Limitations
Total 413 valid responses from 60 countries (Global South: 56%). 71.4% responses came from individuals working at HEIs and only 17.7% from CSOs. Over 90% of the respondents have had previous experience in CBR.
Key findings

- Most respondents have not had any formal training experience in CBR. The predominant ways of acquiring CBR capabilities are self-directed learning and on-the-job training. Among the formal opportunities: workshops (1 to 10 days) and university courses.

- The most effective training approach to CBR is participating in community actions (60%), 48% valued performing art-based activities (e.g., music, theatre, storytelling) as very or extremely useful for building capacities in CBR. However, over a third of students enrolled in HEIs (36.8%) have never taken community actions or performed art-based activities as part of their training in CBR.

- Almost a quarter of respondents (24%) have never received any CBR training using video materials.

- 9 out of 10 respondents manifested their interest in building capacities and receiving more training in CBR. 31.8% have considered intense short-term programs, such as workshops, as the preferred learning modality. Differences across geographical regions: Africa – short-term courses of 2 to 10 weeks duration, Asian – workshops, Latin America – university courses and online training.
Global Survey – Next Gen

Recommendations

1. Knowledge systematization and dissemination
2. Leadership and mentorship
3. Funding and incentives
4. Teaching and training
5. Community-university engagement and partnerships
Conclusions
There is a high demand for training and learning about doing CBR, but formal, structured training opportunities have been scarce.

CBR provided at HEIs usually offers little practical exposure to real life experience and community problems.

There needs to be a mix of training opportunities in every region.

Different dimensions have to be taken into account when providing CBR training: location; length; content; profile.

More training is needed not only on CBR methodologies and theories, but also on knowledge mobilization and dissemination, consultation and community engagement, research ethics and equity in interdisciplinary partnerships.

Importance of putting the emphasis on praxis and improving the existing CBR fieldwork. Field experience is the single most useful learning approach to CBR.
Selection of ‘good practices’ based on the findings of the thematic reviews and the global survey.

Objectives:
(i) state-of-the art in pedagogies and strategies for building capacities in CBR, accounting for the variety of approaches, regional differences, learners, training needs, etc.;
(ii) identification of potential partners for the creation of an international consortium on training in CBR.

Sample: 12 CSOs and 9 HEIs located in 14 countries. Canada (4), India (3), New Zealand (2), U.K. (2), Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, U.S., Italy, Egypt, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Philippines and Indonesia.
## Case Studies – Next Gen

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Case Studies – Next Gen

Key findings

Collaborative training efforts are still missing.

Most institutions emphasized a sense of respect for communities values & belief systems. E.g., ‘enculturation’ process to orient the researchers towards the practices and beliefs of the community, etc.

Much emphasis was on ‘partnership/relationship building’ with the community, through field exposures; rather than developing a deeper understanding of power differentials and structure present within a community.

HEIs appear to be in a better position with respect to balancing classroom sessions and field practice for CBR training. CSOs training researchers via project mode; limitations with respect to provision of a structured classroom component.
Lessons

Five common themes (i.e., 'pedagogical principles')

1. An orientation towards research ethics & values
2. The development of a deep understanding of power & partnerships
3. The incorporation of multiple modes of enquiry
4. Participation in learning CBR and balance between classroom /theory & field/practice
5. The role of the researcher as CBR facilitator
Five immediate questions:

1. What are the main strategies to strengthen fieldworks in HEIs settings and improve theoretical and analytical content provided by CSOs so as to co-create knowledge that would help them collectively address specific community problems?

2. How can international collaborations strengthen globally-relevant and locally-appropriate training opportunities and participatory research capacities at HEI and CSO level?

3. How can formal accreditation and certification in CBR help ensure training standards and quality for a variety of learners in different settings and regions of the world?

4. How do personal, social, professional and cultural contexts influence capacity building for the co-construction of knowledge at HEIs and CSOs?

5. How do university-community research partnerships and the pedagogies for training in CBR evolve over time and vary across local contexts?
Thank you!

Materials available at
Website: http://unescochair-cbrsr.org/
Open access repository:
http://dspace.library.uvic.ca/handle/1828/5949