

# FAIR RESEARCH CONTRACTING



## ABOUT THE INITIATIVE

In 2011 COHRED committed to launch its “Fair Research Contracting” initiative to support low and middle income countries (LMICs) where negotiating equitable research partnerships remains a central issue. The Fair Research Contracting initiative aims to identify best practices for the research contracting (negotiation) process that would be useful in the following three scenarios

- i) where there is no lawyer,
- ii) where there may be lay personnel who could be trained, and
- iii) where there is a lawyer or legal expertise.

The COHRED Group



Supporting research and innovation systems for health, equity and development



## THE CHALLENGE

The volume of research conducted in low and middle-income countries is rapidly growing. This development is welcome, but brings with it a number of new challenges for research institutions and government departments responsible for research in those countries. In particular, experience suggests that in some cases northern institutions proposing to either collaborate with or commission research from southern institutions, insist on a number of preconditions that disadvantage southern institutions. As a result, the necessity for LMIC institutions to have access to the legal resources and capacities to negotiate fair partnerships with their funding partners has become more important than ever.

## THE SOLUTION

COHRED, through its Fair Research Contracting initiative, is developing model contracts and contracting guidelines to support LMIC institutions and governments engaging in research for health with northern partners. These guidance documents will address the following issues: data and sample ownership, post-study benefit sharing, finance & administrative (indirect) costs, institutional frameworks and policies, intellectual property rights, capacity building/transfer and relevant legislation for governing contracts. The project will culminate in an interactive space on COHRED's Health Research Web (HRWeb) where guidance on process and content is available to countries and institutions negotiating research contracts.

## WHO BENEFITS AND HOW?

Many different stakeholder groups will benefit from more equitable research contracts.

- **Institutions** will share a greater proportion of the benefits that result from their work, enabling them to build a more effective research base;
- **Southern institutions** have the potential to become the primary recipients in securing research grants. The issue is then how to empower and capacitate them as the main contractor to negotiate fair sub-contracts with their northern partners, and to manage these contracts effectively;
- **Countries** will benefit from research that strengthens rather than weakens national systems;
- **Research sponsors** will benefit from the stronger research capacity available in countries in which they operate; and
- **Society in general** will benefit from more rapid access to new evidence based services and interventions that have the potential to avert morbidity and mortality.

<sup>1</sup> econ.worldbank.org

## SUCCESS STORIES

COHRED is proud to announce that the Rockefeller Foundation has awarded the Fair Research Contracting initiative with a fully funded "Bellagio Center Conference." The Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center's mission is to promote innovation and identify impact-oriented solutions to critical global problems. Bellagio conferences are small, focused, interactive gatherings designed to push creative and innovative thinking to address global challenges.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

To implement the decisions that will come out of the Bellagio Center meeting in October 2012 and to ensure that all low and middle-income countries have equitable access to information and tools for fair research contracting, COHRED seeks partners and donors to support the following activities within the initiative:

- **Communication** efforts to ensure that fair research contracting guidance documents are publicized and disseminated to relevant target audiences in each of the 43 "low income", 55 "lower-middle income" and 46 "upper middle income" countries as defined by the World Bank.<sup>1</sup>
- **Product enhancement** efforts to scale up the already developed tools.
- **Development** of an online, intellectual property rights consulting service for LMICs. These new online tools and services will create an interactive platform which countries can use to assist them in the contracting process.
- **Advocacy** efforts to ensure global adoption of fair research contracts.

COHRED is the Council for Health Research and Development. We support research and innovation for health, equity and development in low- and middle-income countries. COHRED promotes research for health and innovation that addresses the needs of the disadvantaged. COHRED works with countries to build the skills and systems required for such essential research. We partner with governments, research institutions and local communities, building on expertise from around the world.

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