

Rationale for Capacity Building Training for Ethics Research Committees in Low- Resource Settings

**Gudina Terefe Tucho
(Professor)**

**Faculty of Public
Health**

**Jimma University,
Ethiopia**

Roles of Ethics Research Committee (ERC)



The role of ERCs is crucial to ensure research adheres to ethical guidelines, and to prevent exploitation, harm, or unethical research practices to the study participants.



ERCs are responsible for reviewing research protocols, assessing risks to participants, ensuring informed consent is properly obtained, and monitoring ongoing studies.



Ensuring Public trust in research through adherence to international standards

Challenges in Low-Resource Settings (1)

1

Limited Resources:
Lack of funding, infrastructure, and technical support.

2

Training Gaps: Lack the necessary training in research ethics, mostly access to basic training

3

Contextual Complexities:
Cultural, social, and political factors influencing ethical decisions.

Challenges in Low-Resource Settings (2)



Investigators low understanding of the application processes and submission requirements



Limited expertise in reviewing advanced research such as clinical trials, studies on genetics, and traditional medicine



Lack of sufficient incentives and compensation, competing tasks



Lack of sufficient staffing and standardized review system.

Consequences of weak ERCs (1)



Unethical research practices, harm to participants, loss of trust and health benefits for communities.



Conflicts of interest leading to biased research outcomes



Approval of research quickly without thorough ethical review, due to resource constraints.



Lack of access to latest and advanced training opportunities, leading to outdated and biased decision-making practices

Consequences of weak ERCs (2)

1

Ethical Breaches:

Participant harm or exploitation.

2

Research Delays:

Inefficient review processes.

3

Poor Research

Quality: Impact on study validity and reproducibility.

Why Capacity Building is Essential?

Capacity building equips ERCs with tools and skills to handle complex ethical dilemmas, particularly in emerging research areas like genomics or clinical trials with vulnerable population

Ensures ethical standards are applied consistently across diverse settings, able to handle varying local contexts, make informed decisions.

Key Areas for Capacity Building (1)

Advanced training in research ethics going beyond basic principles and includes understanding emerging ethical issues and ethical implications of genetic research.

Legal and regulatory frameworks: ERC members need to be familiar with local laws, as well as international guidelines like CIOMS, Helsinki declaration etc.

Operational Efficiency: reorganizing ERC review processes, improving standardized operating procedures (SOPs) for reviewing research proposals and monitoring approved studies.

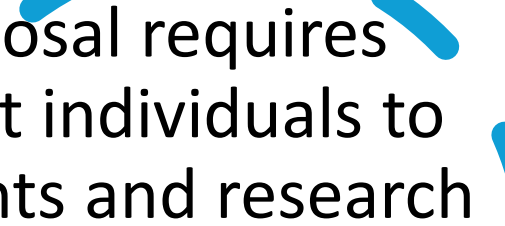
Technology and Documentation: Use of digital tools for better tracking of research protocols and its outcomes

Key Areas for Capacity Building (2)

- Cultural competency training to understand local beliefs and customs (Train-the-Trainer and mentorship)
- Establishing sustainable capacity building through provision of relevant training materials and ToT (Train-the-Trainer and mentorship)
- International collaboration to bring technical expertise, funding, and mentorship to ERCs



Conclusion and call for action

- 
- Reviewing research proposal requires professionally competent individuals to protect study participants and research integrity
 - Advanced training contextualizing local and technological aspects is needed
 - Streaming REC with a sufficient capacity and resources can foster the conduct of research up to standards

Thank you!

