



Online Ethics Center  
FOR ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE

# Community-Based Research Subject Aid

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## Description

A short guide to some key resources and readings on the topic of community-based research.

## Body

Community (or community based) and participatory research (CBPR) has historical roots in and incorporates approaches from participatory action research (PAR). PAR emphasizes engagement of communities of inquiry focused on a problem of significance to them for which they believe action is needed. This contrasts with many research orientations that emphasize objectivity and reproducibility in methods and findings. Mostly conducted in public or environmental health and social services, CBPR projects also require partnerships between communities, researchers and organizational representatives to develop knowledge and use the results towards changes in policies and practices that will improve the health and quality of life of community members. CBPR also takes a non-traditional approach in emphasizing the need to share project control and implementation with community members, including design of the research, and interpreting results and how they should be used. Equitable community participation at every stage is a major

emphasis. The process is iterative and cyclical, which poses difficulties for traditional research administration where the project design and expected outcomes are standardly delineated before support for a project is granted.

Information about this kind of research can be found in these open access articles of *Environmental Health Perspectives*:

**O’Fallon, Liam and Allen Dearry. 2001. “Community-Based Participatory Research as a Tool to Advance Environmental Health Sciences.” *Environ Health Perspect.* April 110 (Suppl2): 155-159.**

**<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1241159/?tool=pmcentrez>**

**Accessed on July 31, 2017.**

In this article, the authors highlight six key principles of CBPR and describe how these principles are met within specific NIEHS-supported research investigations.

**Shepard, Peggy M., Mary E. Northridge, Swati Prakash and Gabriel Stover. 2001. “Preface - Advancing Environmental Justice through Community-Based Participatory Research.” *Environmental Health Perspectives.* Apr 110 (Suppl2): 139.**

**[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/270632999 Preface Advancing Environmental Justice through Community-Based Participatory Research](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/270632999_Preface_Advancing_Environmental_Justice_through_Community-Based_Participatory_Research) Accessed on July 31, 2017.**

This preface reviews the development of the environmental justice movement and the coordination of this special issue of the journal as an outgrowth from a six-year collaboration between environmental justice and academic organizations.

Community-based research models have also emerged in natural resource management built upon the foundations of participatory research theory and management. The new paradigm of community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) is described below in abstracts of several references from this field. Various emphases of CBNRM are discussed with applications to case studies of natural resource management and conservation research.

## **Subject Overviews**

**Christopher, Suzanne, Vanessa Watts, Alma Knows His Gun McCormick, and Sara Young. 2008. "Building and Maintaining Trust in a Community-Based Participatory Research Partnership." *American Journal of Public Health* 98(8): 1398-1406. doi: [10.2105/AJPH.2007.125757](https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2007.125757)**

Although intervention research is vital to eliminating health disparities, many groups with health disparities have had negative research experiences, leading to an understandable distrust of researchers and the research process. Community based participatory research (CBPR) approaches seek to reverse this pattern by building trust between community members and researchers. This article highlights strategies for building and maintaining trust from an American Indian CBPR project and focuses on two levels of trust building and maintaining: (1) between university and community partners and (2) between the initial project team and the larger community. This article was co-written by community and academic partners; by offering the voices of community partners, it provides a novel and distinctive contribution to the CBPR literature.

**Training Power Point Slide Show: Community-Based Research and Environmental Justice Interventions: CBPR Best Practices and Intercultural Designs (Presentation of the Northeast Ethics Education Partnership-NEEP). Material found on the website**

**<https://www.brown.edu/research/research-ethics/teaching-materials-presentations/teaching-materialspresentations>.**

To access the free slide show requires filling out a materials request form of the Collaborative Initiative for Research Ethics, found at <https://www.brown.edu/research/research-ethics/materials-request-form>. Websites accessed on June 29, 2017.

Part one of this presentation covers: what is community-based research? Why is it valuable? What are the ethical benefits? The CBPR process and related benefits of partnerships and collaboration are examined, as well as the importance of community review boards (Slides 1-33). The second part provides best CBPR practices with case studies in environmental justice communities (Slides 34-77). [https://www.brown.edu/research/research-ethics/sites/brown.edu.research.research-ethics/files/uploads/CBPR%20Best%20Practices\\_AESS-RevOct11.pdf](https://www.brown.edu/research/research-ethics/sites/brown.edu.research.research-ethics/files/uploads/CBPR%20Best%20Practices_AESS-RevOct11.pdf)

**Minkler, Meredith and Nina Wallerstein. 2008. *Community-based participatory research for health : from process to outcomes*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.**

Minkler and Wallerstein have pulled together contributions from the leading researchers in the field. In addition to a fine collection of case studies, this book puts the key issues for researchers and practitioners in a historical, philosophical, and applied, practical context.

**Main, Deborah S, Stacey A McKenna. 2013. *The role and influence of key informants in community-engaged research: A critical perspective*. *Action Research*. 11: 2, 113-124.**

To enhance research with communities and improve research translation, conventional social science and health researchers will benefit from greater knowledge and skills in line with the underlying principles of collaboration and participation. One prominent competency is to ensure that researcher and community interests and priorities shape all stages of the research and dissemination process. This article reflects on the unique role and purpose of key informants in community-engaged research. Their selection and their perspectives about what is important and would work best for a community must be carefully considered. The article concludes with several recommendations for enhancing community engagement in translational research.

**Mountjoy, Natalie J., Erin Seekamp, Mae A. Davenport, Matt R. Whiles. 2013. *The Best Laid Plans: Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) Group Capacity and Planning Success*. *Environmental Management*, 52: 1547-1561**

As community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) increases in popularity, the question of the capacity of such groups to successfully manage natural resources becomes increasingly relevant. Few studies have quantifiably analyzed how the amount or type of capacity in a CBNRM organization directly affects the outputs or the environmental outcomes produced. Although concrete outputs vary widely, many efforts center on creating natural resource management plans (RMPs). The primary objective of this research was to explore the link between capacity and RMP implementation success, as

perceived by practitioners in CBNRM groups across Illinois, using a short online survey that drew on a literature review and findings from focus groups. The survey showed that capacity perceptions varied significantly among respondents in low, moderate, and high RMP implementation success groups, and that group capacity was predictive of the degree of perceived RMP implementation success. Further, the findings suggest that different elements of capacity distinguish degrees of success.

## **Policy and Guidance**

**Israel, Barbara A., Amy J. Schulz, Edith A. Parker, and Adam B. Becker. 2001. "Community-Based Participatory Research: Policy Recommendations for Promoting a Partnership Approach in Health Research." *Education for Health* 14(2): 182-197.**

Community-based participatory research in public health focuses on social, structural, and physical environmental inequities through active involvement of community members, organizational representatives, and researchers in all aspects of the research process. Partners contribute their expertise to enhance understanding of a given phenomenon and integrate the knowledge gained with action to benefit the community involved. This article presents key principles of community-based participatory research (CBPR), discusses the rationale for its use, and provides a number of policy recommendations at the organizational, community and national levels aimed at advancing the application of CBPR. While the issues addressed here draw primarily upon experiences in the United States, the emphasis throughout this article on the establishment of policies to enhance equity has relevant applications in a global context.

**Bixler, R Patrick; Taylor, Peter Leigh. 2012. [Toward a Community of Innovation in Community-Based Natural Resource Management: Insights from Open Source Software](#). *Human Organization; Oklahoma City* 71.3 (Fall): 234-243.**

Community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) is an environmental governance approach that deals with complex and interwoven ecological problems through a participatory environmental management framework. As

interest in this strategy rises, successful CBNRM organizations are experiencing pressures to help "transfer" their knowledge and experiences to other contexts and scales. If organized through the traditional top-down diffusion of innovation approach, many barriers to CBNRM transfer exist, beginning with organizational costs that may outweigh potential benefits. However, reframed as a more "open" and emergent process, the burdens of transfer may be reduced and benefits increased. These authors draw on an analogy from the Open Source Software (OSS) movement to suggest an organizational rationale for exchange and principles that can guide CBNRM and assist community-based organizations challenged to share their approach to conservation.

**Measham, Thomas, and Jared A. Lumbasi. [Success Factors for Community-Based Natural Resource Management \(CBNRM\): Lessons from Kenya and Australia](#). September 2013, *Environmental Management*, Volume 52: 3, pp 649-659**

Recent concerns over a crisis of identity and legitimacy in community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) have emerged following several decades of documented failure. A substantial literature has developed on the reasons for failure in CBNRM. In this paper, we complement this literature by considering these factors in relation to two successful CBNRM case studies. One focuses on the conservation of hirola in Kenya on community-held trust land and the other focuses on remnant vegetation conservation from grazing pressure on privately held farm land in Australia. Both CBNRM projects were initiated by local communities with strong attachments to their local environments. The intrinsically high level of "ownership" held by local residents has proven effective in surviving many challenges which have affected other CBNRM projects and provide some signs of hope among broader signs of crisis in CBNRM practice.

## **Bibliography**

**Collaborative Initiative for Research Ethics. The Northeast Ethics Education Partnership. Community Engaged Research (2009-2014) <https://www.brown.edu/research/research-ethics/community-engaged-research-2009-2014>. Accessed June 29, 2017.**

This annotated bibliography provides abstracts of journal publications that report findings on community engaged approaches to projects. The bibliography mainly focuses on public health issues and disparities.

**Collaborative Initiative for Research Ethics. The Northeast Ethics Education Partnership. Community-based Studies and the Environment: Natural Resource Management (2009-Present)**

<https://www.brown.edu/research/research-ethics/NEEP-bibliographies-CBPR-Articles-By-Category>

This annotated bibliography provides abstracts of journal publications that report findings on community based natural resource management (CBNRM). The bibliography mainly focuses on environmental and natural resource management/conservation research projects.

**Soeftestad, Lars T. and Chris D. Gerrard. The International Workshop on Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) Washington D.C., United States, 10-14 May 1998 Workshop Report World Bank Institute, World Bank.**

[http://www.academia.edu/7942912/Report\\_on\\_the\\_International\\_Workshop\\_on\\_Community-Based\\_Natural\\_Resource\\_Management\\_CBNRM](http://www.academia.edu/7942912/Report_on_the_International_Workshop_on_Community-Based_Natural_Resource_Management_CBNRM) Accessed on August 1, 2017.

Reviews ways to approach CBNRM as an alternative to market based or top-down approaches. Contains scenarios and cases.

**Training PowerPoint Slide Show: *Research Ethics for Community-Based and Culturally-Appropriate Research in Natural Resource Management, NEEP Presentation 2003.* Can be reached from**

<https://www.brown.edu/research/research-ethics/northeast-ethics-education-partnership/training-materials/training-materials> Accessed August , 2017.

This presentation discusses CPBR and culturally-based research in the context natural resource management. Part one reviews ethics concepts like beneficence, utility, and nonmaleficence. Part two then uses case studies like agriculture and fisheries studies to illustrate how these concepts can be applied when conducting research in environmental studies (39 slides).

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