
Gallery of Ideas

Breakout session 1:

What has the pandemic taught us about more ethical and effective ways of gathering data/conducting research/creating knowledge relating to development?

University of Canterbury - Christchurch hub

- Doing participatory research within a Covid context requires ethics to the extent that we are wondering if this is even possible unless you had previous (genuine) relationships to build on.
- Brings in the broader question of what would happen if this type of research is continuing in a post Covid-19/no travel because of Climate change world...?
- ...could organisations like DevNet be an asset for facilitating/creating new "field networks" for researchers?

Dunedin hub

- Pandemic has been very disruptive for field-based researchers.
- Responded by trying to pursue locally based research and build new networks, including with non University institutions. However, that is not something that can be done quickly because those relationships take time
- Pursuing non-traditional methods, internet based, for example social-media and photo-voice research including in our field-schools
- "Care-full" ethics are tricky in this environment



What do 'ethical research' and 'ethical data gathering' look like in the practice of our research?

- Exploring what we do not want research to be (i.e. extractive).
- Respect, honesty, full visibility of the process (i.e. process, purpose, outcomes).
- Who is involved and what are the drivers?

What do we mean by 'effectiveness' in research?

- Research that cares.
- Recognition of participants.

Researcher group 1

What has the pandemic taught us about more ethical and effective ways of gathering data/conducting research/creating knowledge relating to development?

- A need to pause and accept that we cannot do things in the same way. Not forcing it in ways that will damage relationships.
- Move through the change in ways that are respectful, ethical, careful and effective to researchers, practitioners and importantly to communities we engage with. Through flexibility, adaptability, creativity and doing things in non-traditional manner.

How did we practice our research prior to the pandemic?

- Participatory research

How has this changed the way we carry out research? (or not):

- Local researchers, locally based research
- Longer than planned
- Massively disruptive and problematic (taken away for 2 years)
- Influenced different modes of research that are more relational

Lessons and learnings from this change:

- Flexibility, adaptability
- Creativity and doing things in non-traditional manner.
- E.g. adaptability grounded in culture.

Researcher group 2

- students have different needs/constraints (limited time, scholarship demands, etc.) than established researchers who already have relationships (harder to “wait”)
 - ◆ Time to build relationships is a precious resource
- Different population groups have different facility with social media tools (by age, for instance)
- Collaboration - pandemic gives opportunity to empower and handover ownership of research to partners. (decentralizing research), but there are institutional constraints.

Policy/Practitioner group 1

Building on Tarcisius' idea of 'waiting for knowledge', we have a couple of case studies:

- Cook Islands Government yesterday released a development strategy that takes a 100-year view. Focusing on intergenerational progress helps us slow down!
- In the Mindanao Young Leaders Programme, researchers realised that even in the most difficult periods of the pandemic when face-to-face contact was impossible, they still needed to find a way to remain connected to strengthen the relationship for when research could resume.

What has the pandemic taught us about more ethical and effective ways of gathering data/conducting research/creating knowledge relating to development?

Policy/Practitioner group 2

- to think long term and about how we (in Aotearoa NZ) can be sustainable and work in partnership towards the de-centralisation and localisation of the creation of knowledge



Policy/Practitioner group 3

- Indigenous-led approaches to research that have been strengthened through the pandemic, must **remain empowered and enabled once borders open up**;
- people living in the context are best placed to do the research, ask the questions, and ask the right people, and this **needs to be incentivised, and coordinated throughout the power-laden development ecosystem**

What does 'ethical' look like in practice?

- Respect for different perspectives and positionality
- Collaborative decision-making
- Relationships
- Respect for different cultural and religious beliefs
- Protecting people's data privacy - e.g. encrypt data
- Ensure informed consent before recording, e.g. over phone
- Co-benefits (for communities/participants and researchers) - through codesign and cocreation

What does 'effective' look like in practice?

- Localised approach - opportunity for decision-making
- Indigenous knowledge
- Leaving no-one behind
- Collaborative approach

Policy/Practitioner group 6

What has the pandemic taught us about more ethical and effective ways of doing development research?

Key reflection:

Importance of working ethically - not to rush, how we go about research important, eg. , respect for cultural differences, importance of working collaboratively, including local communities, finding ways to connect when this was previously done fact to face, understanding that populations are under stress during research in Covid times

What happened before covid and what happens now? (stories)

- Hard to reach out to communities due to the pandemic - challenge to conduct activities and include people in research
- VSA - pilot project working with local volunteers in Timor Leste - finding new ways of working remotely
- Hard to get people together - challenge we've overcome - eg. educating local people in the community about WASH - help local people embrace new knowledge

What changed (or didn't change)? And what did we learn from this?

- Cultural/linguistic shift working through local partners - can hit the ground running (before had to train up NZ staff)
-

Postgraduate group 1

- Opportunities to do research in new ways and in new contexts and create new types of relationships: more local voices; capacity building
- Challenges of building relationships via distance (socio-cultural and infrastructural) and challenges even if in the field (for example, distrust in covid)
- Amplifies the usual PG pressures (time etc.)

Postgraduate group 2

- Relationship building. It is hard to build a relationship online via Zoom. From a theoretical level in an NZ context: high level of internet access, but there is still a digital divide. The more we switch engagement to an online space, the more it fuels inequalities. Not everyone has access to the same tools. Cautious with online engagement - it tends to be thinner engagement. This is opposed to face to face engagement which is thicker.
- Using talk-story as a way of collecting research. It is all about talking with people. Another challenging thing is making it work for the researcher, but at the same time, not making it extractive. Trying to value the knowledge. Acknowledging the holders of knowledge without just taking out of the community.

The logo features the word "devnet" in a bold, lowercase sans-serif font. "dev" is purple and "net" is olive green. Below it, "SYMPOSIUM 2021" is written in a smaller, all-caps sans-serif font, with "SYMPOSIUM" in olive green and "2021" in purple. The background consists of a light purple and light green grid with large, faint, overlapping circular shapes.

devnet

SYMPOSIUM 2021

25 November, 2021

**Rethinking development research & practice
in the time of Covid-19 and beyond**