

# Research Integrity in Africa

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# Presentation outline

- Introduction
- Research Integrity in context
- Towards enhancing Research Integrity
- Challenges and Opportunities
- Conclusion

# Introduction



*Honesty* in all aspects of research

*Accountability* in the conduct of research

*Professional courtesy and fairness* in working with others

*Good stewardship* of research on behalf of others

**DOING THE RIGHT THING**

# Introduction

- RI in Africa is uncommon
- Literature in RI in Africa does not exist
- There is little evidence of research misconduct in Africa
- Are there RI issues in Africa?

# **Research Integrity in Context**

# Research Integrity in Context

- **Research is alien**

- Mistrust
- Fears of the unknown
- Potential for exploitation



**BUILDING TRUST**

- **Ground realities**

- Theory verses application
- The role of frontline staff



**ETHICAL DILEMMAS**

- **Overreliance on external support**

- Power imbalances
- Lack of regulatory systems



**BIG BROTHER SCIENCE**

# Research Ethics Committees in Africa (2014)

COUNTRY	NO OF RECs ON HRWeb 2013	COUNTRY RANK BASED ON # OF RECs
*South Africa	30	1
Egypt, Nigeria	23	2
*Uganda	9	4
Cameroon	8	5
*Ethiopia, Sudan	7	6
Tanzania	5	7
*Botswana, *Burkina Faso, *DRC	4	8
Benin, *Ghana, *Kenya, Rwanda, *Zambia, *Zimbabwe	3	9
*Algeria, Republic of Congo, Liberia, *Madagascar, *Malawi, *Mauritius,	2	10
CAR, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, *Gambia, Libya, *Mali, *Namibia, Niger, Senegal, Togo, Tunisia	1	11
*Angola, Burundi, Chad, Eritrea, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Morocco, *Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Cape Verde, Comoros, Lesotho, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Swaziland, Western Sahara, Djibouti	0	0

**Total 165 RECs operating in 37 African Countries**

# Research Integrity in Context

- Institutional governance and regulatory systems are still evolving and weak
- There is lack of training and capacity for regulatory institutions to work independently and efficiently
- Look at RI holistically



# **Towards enhancing Research Integrity**



## **PROMOTING RESEARCH INTEGRITY IN AFRICA: AN AFRICAN VOICE OF CONCERN ON RESEARCH MISCONDUCT AND THE WAY FORWARD**

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### **Keyword:**

*scientific research  
misconduct,  
ethics review committees,  
research ethics,  
Africa*

### **ABSTRACT**

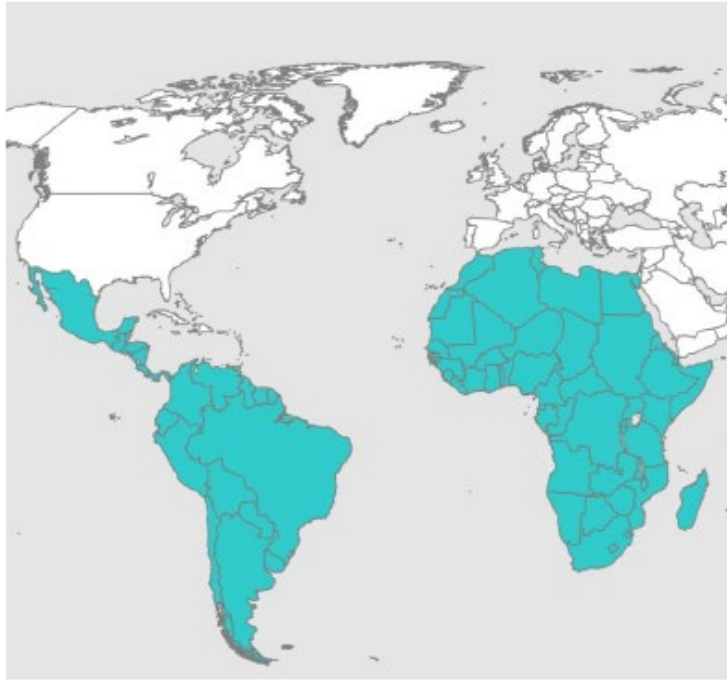
*African researchers and their collaborators have been making significant contributions to useful research findings and discoveries in Africa. Despite evidence of scientific misconduct even in heavily regulated research environments, there is little documented information that supports prevalence of research misconduct in Africa. Available literature on research misconduct has focused on the developed world, where credible research integrity systems are already in place.*

*Public attention to research misconduct has lately increased, calling for attention to weaknesses in current research policies and regulatory frameworks. Africa needs policies, structural and governance systems that promote responsible conduct of research.*

*To begin to offset this relative lack of documented evidence of research misconduct, contributors working in various research institutions from nine African countries agreed to share their experiences to highlight problems and explore the need to identify strategies to promote research integrity in*

# Research Ethics Web

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## ▪ Research Ethics Web

- 165 research ethics committees, in 37 African countries
- > 1100 RECs in Latin America and Caribbean region.
- 22 Medicine regulatory authorities in Africa
- Asian Pacific Region: Ongoing

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[www.cohred.org](http://www.cohred.org)



<http://www.researchethicsweb.org/>



- ★ Capital City    ★ Regional Capital City
- Significant City    • Important City - Town
- Attraction - Landmark    ■ River    ▲ Highest Point

Regional pages of relevance for your country: [Africa](#)

## Sections

- Governance and Policies
- National Priorities for Research
- Key Institutions / Networks
- Research Ethics Review
- Medicines Regulation
- Research Financing
- Civil Society Organisations
- Research Projects and Publications

# Standardized research review process

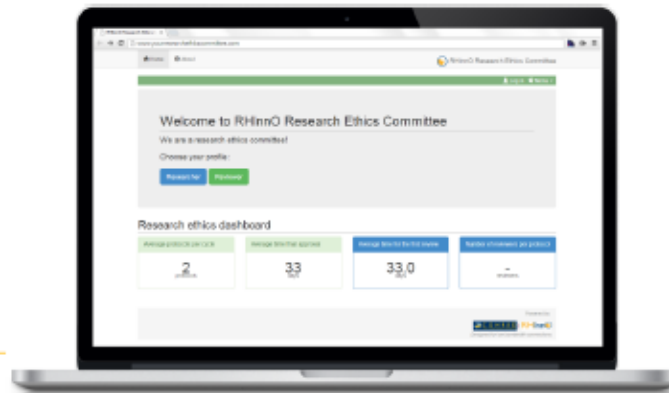
**RHInnO Ethics**

*Designed for low bandwidth connections*

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## RHInnO Ethics 1.0

**is an administration tool**  
a research information management software



# Enhancing Research Integrity

## Standard approach to review

- Aim: Provide ERC, governments, researchers and regulatory institutions with a web-based platform that can be used to monitor, evaluate and communicate.
- Includes facilities to train REC members and RO
- Provides a platform for interaction among REC within a country and regionally
  - Users: 3739
  - Countries: 8 (South Africa, Tanzania, Mozambique, Nigeria, Kenya, Swaziland, Malawi and Senegal)
  - 23 institutions
  - Submissions so far: 2508

RHInnO Ethics Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nZK1KyWQKlo>

**What challenges exist?**

# What challenges exist?

- Overreliance in external funding
- No input from Africa
- Lack of political good will by national governments
  - Research not part of national agenda
  - Corruption/power/Politicking/ insecurity



**What can be done?**

# What can be done?

## 1. **Developing enabling environment**

- Invest in development of governance and regulatory policies and structures at local and national levels to review, monitor and deal with undesirable research practices fairly and transparently
- Invest in technological and financial resources to empower local scientists, students and communities in RCR

# What can be done?

## 2. Capacity building

- Strong mentorship programmes
- Training in ethics and RCR using pedagogies that develops moral intuition
- Support supervision
- North to South technology transfer to strengthen local capacity in addressing research integrity issues-Development of competent regulatory mechanisms

# What can be done?

## **3. Establish and engage in equitable transnational partnerships**

- Respect local regulatory and governance systems
- Foster transparency, accountability and responsible conduct of research

## **4. Build local/regional networks that foster RCR in Africa**

- Develop harmonized approaches that bind researchers working anywhere on the continent

# Conclusion

- Lack of regulatory systems in Africa
- Slow and uneven progress in setting up policies
- Extensive dialogue with key stakeholders
  - =Promote Mutual Trust, Understanding, partnership and address misconceptions

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wellcome trust