How can we contribute to reduce social and economic disparities through research collaboration

Marcel Tanner
Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences
Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute

Zagreb, 19 October 2023
Content and Basics

- We live in one world – interdependencies of well-being
- Disparities – sociocultural tissue carries economic tissue and “no roots no fruits”
- Culture and social tissues shape us – particularly education, science…not regulations, quota
- Culture of science and partnership
- Achievements and learnings - the way forward

A personal of 45 years:
Management of science and (health) development
Swiss Tropical Institute Field Laboratory (STIFL) 1981

**STIFL – Core**
- Infrastructure
- Equipment
- Maintenance
- Logistics and Administration

**Basic and Applied Research**

**Teaching**
- MATC

**Partners:**
- Local and national: Public Parastatal, NGOs

**Funding:**
- Mainly Swiss: SDC, SNF, Swiss TPH, Foundations
CONTROL OF COMMUNICABLE
BASIC and HEALTH SYSTEMS

EDUCATION TRAINING SUPERVISION
RHO IN PHC and HEALTH SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT

- 1981: Tanzanian Centre
- 1988: MoH Evaluation
- 1990: SDC Evaluation
- 1994: 1st TZ Director
- 1996 IHI Trust

1981 onwards:
SC/Board of Trustees:
TZ- GoT: National/local
Swiss GoT: SDC
Swiss TPH
NGOs: intern./local
Funders: National/local

Funding:
International (bi- multilat),
Foundations, Domestic, Private,
Charities (Swiss: SDC, SNF, Swiss TPH)
FROM a trial site…

A product or interest drives a site

Partnership projects build a site

Core projects

Research projects

A pipeline/portfolio builds and sustains a centre capable of expanding:
- Clinical studies
- Intervention trials and Population health studies
- Health system studies

...to a project site...

...to a research center
FROM a trial site…

A product or interest drives a site

Partnership projects build a site

A pipeline/portfolio builds and sustains a cluster of excellence capable of expanding:
- Service provision
- Teaching/training and
- Science: basic to applied

...to a project site...

...to a cluster of excellence center
The KFPE Guidelines: 11 Principles – 24 years

1. Decide on the objectives together
2. Build up mutual trust
3. Share information; develop networks
4. Share responsibility
5. Create transparency
6. Monitor and evaluate the collaboration
7. Disseminate the results
8. Apply the results
9. Share profits equitably
10. Increase research capacity
11. Build on the achievements

https://kfpe.scnat.ch/en
- From diseases to interventions to systems
- From research projects to research programs
- From “field sites” to sustainable research centers
- From participation to real negotiated partnerships
- From bilateral partnerships to broader networks
- From curative and preventive actions to public health

As part of national and global health research systems and R&D priorities

Innovation – Validation - Application
Global challenges impacting health
Emerging and re-emerging diseases

1400 pathogens
800 in animals and humans

Zoonoses

Neglected diseases
Neglected people
Neglected health and social systems

Source: Dr. Anthony Fauci, 2005 / Nature 2004
Mutual learning for change decolonizes and reduces inequalities
Projects – Questions – Strategies – Institutions – Donors/Funders

Global Public health - context for science and action

The value chain: From Innovation to Application

Innovation
- Research, development, concepts & ideas

Validation
- Evaluate what works in field & real world conditions

Application
- Integration into health systems

---

Biomedical Sciences  Bed  Bench  Field  Communities  Health & Social Systems
Social Sciences      Bed  Bench  Field  Communities  Health & Social System

Research-driven  System-driven
From efficacy to community effectiveness – be effective
Reducing inequalities through locally rooted public science and actions

Efficacy: 80%

X Access: x 80%

X Targeting Accuracy: x 80%

X Provider Compliance: x 75%

X Consumer Adherence: x 75%

Equity effectiveness

= Effectiveness

29%
Principles and processes that work

- Adherence to ethical standards and principles (KFPE, RFI)
- Competence (less representation, no “excellence” or “heroes”)
- Expertise and Experience of real life «dirt on your boots»;
- Sensitivity to context, equity and diversity – “creative listening”
  - Common sense – Openness – Commitment
  - Way of life and transcultural views
  - No Helpers or help-line activists or therapy-searchers
  - No standardised consultants, experts…

- Know / live your role and responsibilities within ethical and socio-cultural context
- Communication skills
- Not “elite” of society but part of it
- Generate policy relevant statements and no prescriptions

Spirit and attitude of «Mutual Learning for change» will reduce inequalities and also decolonialize at all levels: «…we would not be what we are today….»
Periphery - Access
Decentralization
Local priorities
Equity

Services
Research

Teaching
Training

Systems thinking,
Policies, financing

Culture of Science
People in institutions
competence > representation

Application

Validation

Innovation
An attempt of a summary

Basis:

Culture of science (not research)

Partnership – mutual learning for change as principle in science

And then:

- We remain humble
- We would not be what we are today...
- We learn more than we can give...
- We are on a way...
It is not about creating great things, but mainly about seeing and doing the ordinary things with the conviction, appreciation and joy of and for their basic intrinsic values...
Thank you very much!

Mutual learning for change...across systems and cultures
I am deeply grateful to the stimulating and fruitful collaborations with all colleagues from:
Our institute, the Swiss and international scientific and public/global health community, our public and private partners and populations in Africa, Asia Australia, Europe, USA and the Pacific...