



The Canadian Coalition for
GLOBAL HEALTH RESEARCH

Promoting better and more equitable health worldwide
through the production and use of knowledge

CCGHR Gathering Perspectives Study Phase II
Collaborative Facilitation of a Pan-Canadian Framework for
Global Health Research

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Canadian Coalition for Global Health Research
P.O. Box 502, Wakefield, Quebec J0X 3G0

Prepared by: K. Plamondon, Interior Health & University of British Columbia Okanagan
with support from R. Lloyd and E. Kocsis, Canadian Coalition for Global Health Research

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Research Team

Principal Investigator (corresponding author)	Katrina Plamondon	Katrina.plamondon@interiorhealth.ca
Project Coordinator	Roberta Lloyd	ccghr@ccghr.ca
Core Research Team	Craig Janes	cjanes@uwaterloo.ca
	Jennifer Hatfield	Jennifer.hatfield@ucalgary.ca
	Ian Graham	igraham@toh.on.ca
	Kish Wasan	kishor.wasan@ubc.ca
	Dave Heidebrecht	researchofficer@ccghr.ca
Advisory Committee	Gary Aslanyan	aslanyang@who.int
	Peter Berti	pberti@healthbridge.ca
	Lisa Forman	lisa.forman@utoronto.ca
	Lydia Kapiriri	kapirir@univmail.cis.mcmaster.ca
	Charles Larson	clarson@cw.bc.ca
	Victor Neufeld	vrneufeld@gmail.ca
	Stephanie Nixon	Stephanie.nixon@utoronto.ca
	Shawna O’Hearn	Shawna.ohearn@dal.ca
	Pierre Ongolo-Zogo	Pc.ongolo@gmail.com

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Executive Summary

The Gathering Perspectives 2 (GPS2) project was launched in March 2014 as a response to direct calls for action from the first phase of the Gathering Perspectives Study (GPS1; funded by GHRI). The GPS1 invited people in the global health research community to imagine their ideal future for global health research. Participants in GPS1 called for a unified vision for global health research, including the elaboration of a set of professional and practical standards to guide the conduct of global health researchers and inform the work of funding agencies. They also expressed a need for supports as they respond to changes in funding policies in Canada.

The responsive objectives of the GPS2 were to: (a) engage the global health research community during a time of changing funding policies; (b) elaborate a set of guiding principles for GHR; and (c) accelerate momentum from GPS1 through engaged knowledge translation with global health researchers, funding agencies, and elected officials. GPS2 activities took place between March 2014 and December 2016, sparking engagement and inviting participation from partner countries through innovative use of online strategies and deliberative dialogue. The first six months (March – August 2014) of the project focused on laying a strong foundation for data gathering phases of the study, including completion of a policy analysis, preliminary environmental scan, and more detailed operational plans for each objective. The next fourteen months (September 2014 – October 2015) were research-intensive, with the research team simultaneously leading policy analysis and a dialogue-based study to create guiding principles for global health research (GHR). The remaining fourteen months (November 2015 – December 2016) were knowledge translation intensive, with efforts focused on creating readily adoptable tools and products to support learning and engagement with the outputs of research.

The methods used through the GPS2 reflect the CCGHR's commitment to participatory, engaged approaches that are grounded in a desire to foster learning in appreciative, inclusive environments. They are recognized as exemplary and innovative, and are now being considered by others outside of global health as a means of bringing diffuse communities together in authentic ways.

The GPS2 led to the creation of a set of important tools to support GHR in Canada, including a set of recommendations for equitable funding policies for GHR and the equity-centred CCGHR Principles for Global Health Research. Each of these outputs is reflected in a suite of products that support users' application into their own practice or policy setting. In particular, the CCGHR Principles for Global Health Research are gaining international recognition for their contribution to advancing a 'Canadian' kind of GHR that centres on *equity*. They are being looked to with optimism and hope as an aspirational standard to which we can hold ourselves accountable to as individuals, teams, organizations, institutions or agencies, networks, or even as a country.

Research Problem

In 2013, the CCGHR led a process of dialogue to gather diverse perspectives on the role of research in a Canadian vision for global health. Guided by appreciative inquiry, this first phase of the Gathering Perspectives Studies (GPS1 and GPS2) invited people to imagine a future for GHR in Canada. The methods used for this study were dialogue-based, illuminating normative values and fostering relationships within the global health research community (including academia, private sector, policy makers, non-government organizations, and community groups). Participants in this study called for action toward a cohesive, unified framework for GHR in Canada, pointing specifically to: (a) the need for a set of practice standards for ethical, equitable GHR; (b) capacity building supports and attentiveness to global health researchers' navigation of a changing funding landscape; and (c) active knowledge translation for both phases of the Gathering Perspectives Studies.

As we entered into the work of responding to these calls for action, it became increasingly clear that the concerns participants expressed in GPS1 were about gaps in *governance*. Governance, in this context, is about professional accountability and standards. Global health, and GHR, are academic fields that, since the year 2000, have grown exponentially in Canada. The rapid growth has been met with efforts to create frameworks (e.g., citations here) and tools (e.g., partner assessment tools, mentoring modules) for competencies in GHR; but the rapid growth has also created an environment of fragmentation and academic silos. Participants in GPS1 recognized the CCGHR as a facilitative, membership-driven body that could do something to bring this vast and diffuse community of people together—to create something that genuinely reflected 'Canadian' values and embraced the wisdom of partners from around the world.

Among the outcomes of the projects GPS2 is the creating of a uniquely Canadian 'brand' of GHR, reflected in the CCGHR Principles for Global Health Research. GPS2 is a demonstration of responsive, integrated knowledge translation—with each product of research reflecting the needs and interests of participants. This is evidenced by the team's creation of applicable, learning-focused tools (e.g., learning guide, videos, stories) before pursuing traditional academic publications. The GPS2 contributed an important foundation for governance in GHR that, ultimately, can improve the ways in which GHR is approached, talked about, taught, mentored, funded, used, and conducted.

Progress Towards Milestones

The GPS2 outlined a series of objectives to guide our work. Below, we describe each objective and offer a summary of how the objective was achieved.

Objective 1: Engage and support global health researchers' navigation of the Canadian funding landscape

This objective focused efforts on informing, monitoring, and supporting the global health research community through three activities: (a) completion of a policy analysis, identifying how existing policies support or relate to doing global health research; (b) collaboration with the CCGHR University Advisory Council (UAC) to enable an environmental scan of capacity across Canada; and (c) dissemination and dialogue on the experiences of impacts and effects by global health researchers.

The initial efforts related to this objective were tailored to an emergent shift in Canadian funding for research. The timing of this grant coincided with the launch of the Canadian Institutes for Health Research's Foundation Scheme. The research team initiated a communications strategy to encourage CCGHR members and others to be explicit in identifying their proposals as GHR. This campaign involved a series of targeted, concise email messages, newsletter posts, and social media posts (Twitter, Facebook).

The comprehensive policy analysis was completed over a year, comparing Canadian funding practices and policies to international comparators using the 3I (institutions, ideas, and interests) analytical framework. The analysis was presented to the CCGHR's UAC for discussion, with particular emphasis on the use of deliberative processes to strengthen a set of ten recommendations for strengthened investments in GHR. Over a series of dialogues, the UAC requested that the policy analysis be complemented by a series of stories that reflect the diversity of funding possibilities for GHR and offer people a means of strengthening their capacity to navigate this diversity. These stories were curated into a collection of five stories, now available on the CCGHR website (<http://www.ccgrr.ca/funding-learning-tools-2/stories-funding-2/>).

In addition to the progress on these milestones, we reached out to the Canadian Institutes of Health Research in an effort to open communication and improve awareness among the GHR community of the ways in which they might raise their profile and competitiveness in open competitions. We supported CIHR in identifying reviewers for the College of Reviewers and were able to identify more than fifty individuals who served as reviewers for Grand Challenges Canada. This support in identifying reviewers is anticipated to be an ongoing support offered by the CCGHR in service to both its members and to CIHR. We've also explored how the CCGHR might support universities to consider the ways in which their institutional practices or policies might affect issues of equity in grant administration. To this end, and outside the scope of funding for GPS2, we are working to create advocacy toolkits for individuals and institutions.

Objective 2: Develop and elaborate a code of conduct

This objective was framed around facilitating a process of dialogue to articulate a concise Code of Conduct and to review, build consensus, and package materials that enable learning and competency aligned with the same. We began working on this objective by convening a team meeting to elaborate the methodology and refine our research questions. We quickly discovered that the term ‘code of conduct’ carried legal implications that we, as a network rather than a recognized professional self-regulation body, would not be able to uphold, particularly in enforcement and oversight. We adapted the language toward something that could maintain the spirit of the initial call for action, inviting conversation and conveying a message that these were aspirational standards for GHR. Leaning on the lessons we learned from the use of dialogue-based methods in GPS1, we designed a study that used sequential dialogues to elaborate a set of *guiding principles* for global health research.

The study moved through iterations of synthesis and engagement, beginning with a dialogue among fifteen ‘expert witnesses’ whose expertise in ethics, global health research, and global health education made them particularly well suited to generating a starting point for continued dialogues across the country. This group articulated a beginning set of principles that was put forward for consideration in six other dialogues over a six-month period of time. We also opened an online forum to enable contributions from those who may not be able to attend an in-person dialogue because of timing or geographic location. We intentionally sought diversity in perspectives, including efforts to ensure that perspectives from lower-middle income countries were included in every dialogue.

Using an integrated analytical framework, and considering the results of both GPS1 and the data generated from the dialogues in this study, our research team used a deliberative process to identify six guiding principles.

Objective 3: Accelerate momentum from GPS1 & GPS2

This project involved a continuous effort to ensure that applied, accessible knowledge translation products were created throughout the study. The results of GPS2 have provided foundational guidance to the CCGHR in its strategic planning, in guiding dialogues among its institutional members, and in directing the work of its program and advocacy committees.

This work is exemplified in the suite of products that were developed for both objectives described above. The policy analysis was presented in a concise report, featuring a series of ten recommendations that target individuals, institutions, and agencies involved in GHR. The results of the policy analysis have been presented at conferences and are currently under review as part of a special series under the journal, *Health Research Systems & Policy*.

The CCGHR Principles for Global Health Research are presented in a one-page overview, a brief companion document, and an animated video series. These tools are accompanied

by a learning guide that is being used in courses and seminars across Canada and in Europe, was the foundation for a specialized training institute for GHR (the Ontario Coalition Institute, Sep/Oct 2016), and being used to inform the creation of training modules for the new College of Reviewers at CIHR. We've also created a case study on the innovative methodology used to create the principles. We are pursuing a series of publications in journals and an edited book that will feature applications of the principles in practice.

Synthesis of Research Results and Development Outcomes

This project contributed to innovations in methodology and outcome. In particular, the methods used to elaborate the CCGHR Principles for Global Health Research are being recognized for their potential application for other research problems that require a systematic process for engaging a community that is diffuse, or loosely connected. This fills a methodological niche, complementary to the approaches common in action or participatory action research without requiring a cohesive, connected ‘community’. The methods invited genuine and meaningful contribution of diverse perspectives toward the elaboration of a set of normative principles. People left dialogues saying that being part of the study had a profound impact on them. Some participants commented on the way that asking the question, *why global health research (and principles to guide it)* was, in and of itself, a valuable reflective exercise that would change the ways in which they partnered in GHR.

This study made two important contributions to knowledge. First, the policy analysis provided insight into the ways in which Canadian funding institutions are functioning in comparison to other donor countries internationally amidst a widely held desire for equity-centred practices among stakeholders involved in GHR. The insights extend beyond the formal policies of funding institutions by pointing to what individuals and universities can do to promote equity in GHR practices. Second, the CCGHR Principles for Global Health Research are unique in the world. They are the first research-based set of normative principles to guide GHR that we are aware of—though they complement other efforts to consider ethical issues in the conduct and partnering related to GHR. These principles are being looked to across Canada and around the world as an aspirational ideal that offers an optimistic, future-oriented tool for reflection, learning, and guiding GHR.

The policy influence and reach of this work is remarkable, extending beyond the expectations of our research team. The CCGHR Principles for Global Health Research are being used to inform training modules for the CIHR College of Reviewers. It is our hope that these modules will become a training requirement for all members of the College of Reviewers, reflecting an important ‘soft’ policy for members to be, at a minimum, aware of CIHR’s GHR policies and sensitive to the normative practice standards being used across the country. Because of the incorporation of the principles into the training of members of the College, we anticipate (and have already seen movement toward) that researchers will begin to use the principles as a framework for research proposals and evaluations. Two examples point to this reach: doctoral students are using the principles as a framework for designing studies and for retrospective reflection on their experiences; and two of the CCGHR’s harmonization initiatives (Tanzania and Zambia teams) are using the principles to guide evaluations of harmonization and partnership.

Importantly, and with impacts yet unknown, both the principles and the policy analysis are serving to influence policy at the university level—which was a barrier that was identified as we explored participants’ experiences with navigating funding. Sometimes,

the practices and policies of universities (including the individually competitive culture of academia) were a greater hindrance to equity-centred GHR than were the practices and policies of funding agencies. Beyond the explicit policy influence potential of this work, the outputs from both objectives are informing learning and training for the future of GHR. The Ontario Coalition Institute was the first of an anticipated six – eight regional institutes that will draw upon the CCGHR Principles for Global Health Research, the policy analysis, and stories of funding to support advanced training for emerging leaders in GHR. Among participants at the Ontario Coalition Institute were several participants from lower-middle income country settings who were studying at one of the four partner institutions. We believe this is an indication of the possibility of leadership development around these equity-centred resources.

Finally, the work of GPS2 has been instrumental in the CCGHR's outreach to elected officials. The CCGHR Policy & Advocacy Committee wrote an open letter to Ministers Philpott and Bibeau, requesting an audience with both as a means of raising awareness of the CCGHR and of the important contribution GHR makes to informing Canada's policy and action in health and international development. We were pleased to have a positive response from both ministers and recently were invited to meet with the leadership of their representative agencies (CIHR and IDRC). These conversations are ongoing, with the recommendations from the policy analysis and the principles serving as the guideposts for future actions.

Methodology

The methods used for the GPS2 were varied and are well described in the dissemination products generated from the project. We strived to use deliberative, inclusive methods in each of our initiatives.

For the first objective, related to supporting global health researchers in their navigation of a changing funding landscape, we used an accepted method for policy analysis to guide a review of publicly accessible literature outlining the policies and practices of major funding institutions. The analysis used the 3I framework, examining institutions, ideas, and interests to explore the ways in which the funding landscape in Canada was constructed and how it compared with other donor countries. Our team deliberated on findings, reached out for expert feedback, and adapted the recommendations in response.

To elaborate the CCGHR Principles for Global Health Research, we designed the study around sequential dialogues—with repeated cycles of synthesizing data and information and engaging people in deliberation around this synthesis. An integrated analytical framework (Plamondon, Bottorff, & Cole, 2015) guided our handling of dialogic data generated in each of the dialogues that were part of this initiative. The iterative nature of these methods supported the progressive articulation of the normative values underlying practices and engagement of Canadians in GHR. Woven throughout this work were opportunities for integrated knowledge translation, wherein the deliberative dialogue methods used to generate data were recognized strategies for knowledge translation. We also invited stakeholders to come together at pivotal moments in the study process to reflect on how to adapt our knowledge translation efforts in a dynamic political environment.

References

Plamondon, K. M., Bottorff, J. L., & Cole, D. C. (2015). Analyzing data generated through deliberative dialogue: Bringing knowledge translation into qualitative analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, doi: 1049732315581603.

Project Outputs & Dissemination

Efforts to share the outcomes of the GPS2 have been woven into every iterative step throughout the project. As reports became available they were circulated through our membership and posted on the CCGHR website. We also used social media to promote new products as they became available. In an effort to ensure that the outputs of the project were readily available and useful, we focused our energy on open-access reports or learning tools before pursuing traditional academic publications.

Key project outputs include:

- **Global Health Research: A Canadian policy perspective**
Brief report of policy analysis with 10 recommendations
- **Stories of Funding: A collection**
Five curated stories reflecting a diversity of experiences with different funding institutions
- **The CCGHR Principles for Global Health Research**
Six equity-centred principles to guide engagement in global health research
 - One page overview (English, French, Spanish)
 - Companion document (English, French, Spanish)
 - Video series (English)
- **Learning Guide Companion for the CCGHR Principles for Global Health Research**
An adaptable, flexible learning guide grounded in adult learning theory, used as a foundation for the Ontario Coalition Institute and a number of courses and seminars across the country.

Conference Presentations

Plamondon, K. & The CCGHR Gathering Perspectives Research Team. Equity-informed choices: Using the CCGHR Principles for Global Health Research to promote equity-centred choices for using, doing, and supporting global health research. Presentation at the Fourth Global Forum on Health Systems Research. Vancouver Convention Centre, Vancouver BC: 14-18 November 2016.

Brisbois, B., Davison, C., Hanson, L., Janes, C., Larson, C., Nixon, S., & Plamondon, K. Global health research and corporate funding sources: A decision-making tool for individuals and organizations. Workshop at the Fourth Global Forum on Health Systems Research. Vancouver Convention Centre, Vancouver BC: 14-18 November 2016.

Plamondon, K., Neufeld, V., Nixon, S., & Hatfield, J. Developing principles to guide global health research in Canada: Results and discussion of a participatory research project. Symposium at the Canadian Conference on Global Health. Bonaventure Hotel, Montreal PQ: 5-7 November 2015.

Plamondon, K., Oelke, N., Caxaj, S. (2014). Dialogue-based research for change: Methodological issues and considerations for data analysis. Symposium at the Advances in Qualitative Methods Conference. University of Alberta, Edmonton AB: 23-25 June.

Invited Presentations

Plamondon, K. (2017). Update on the CCGHR's response to the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences call to action: The Gathering Perspectives Study. Canadian Academy of Health Sciences Meeting. Webex: 27 January 2017.

Plamondon, K. (2016). The CCGHR Principles for Global Health Research: Considerations for equity-centred practices in public health research and knowledge translation. PHACTually Speaking Seminar Series: Public Health Agency of Canada. Ottawa, ON: 7 December.

Plamondon, K. (2016). Using the CCGHR Principles for Global Health Research to Promote Equity-Centred Research Practices. O'Brien Institute for Public Health Seminar Series, University of Calgary. Calgary, AB: 4 November.

Plamondon, K. (2016). Applying the CCGHR Principles for Global Health Research, 2-day Workshop Series. Ontario Coalition Institute. Waterloo ON: 30 September – 2 October 2016.

Publications (published, in press, or under review)

Plamondon, K. & Hatfield, J. (2016). Using Dialogue-Based Methods to Create Normative Principles for Global Health Research. Sage Research Methods Case. (Manuscript in press)

Walters, D., Plamondon, K., Campbell, S., & Hatfield, J. (2016). Promoting equitable global health research: A policy analysis of the Canadian funding landscape. Health Research Systems & Policy: WHO Special series. (Manuscript under review; 20 Oct 2016).

Brisbois, B. & Plamondon, K. (2016). The possible worlds of global health research: A discourse analysis of normative documents. Health Research Systems & Policy. (Manuscript under review; Nov 2016).

Plamondon, K. M., & Caxaj, C. S. (2016). Toward relational practices for enabling knowledge-to-action in health systems: The example of deliberative dialogue. *Advances in Nursing Science*. (Manuscript in press).

Brisbois, B., Davison, C., Di Ruggiero, E., Hanson, L., Janes, C., Larson, C., Nixon, S., Plamondon, K., & Stime, B. (2016). Corporate sponsorship of global health research: Questions to promote critical thinking about potential funding relationships. *Canadian Journal of Public Health*: 107(4).

Plamondon, K. M., Bottorff, J. L., & Cole, D. C. (2015). Analyzing data generated through deliberative dialogue: Bringing knowledge translation into qualitative analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, doi: 1049732315581603.

Social Media

Blogs

April 6, 2015 – “Proposed Principles to Guide Global Health Research”

June 3, 2015 – “Navigating Canada’s Global Health Funding Landscape: A Call for Expressions of Interest for Stories in Global Health Research”

October 30, 2015 – “In Pursuit of Hopeful Inquiry”

April 15, 2016 – “Keeping Equity at the Centre of Global Health Research”

Twitter & Facebook

December 10, 2014 - Looking for funding opportunities in global health research? Have a look at our funding roadmap

December 15, 2014 - Funding Opportunities in Global Health

April 10, 2015 - "Proposed Principles to Guide Global Health Research"

April 29, 2015 - We're developing principles to guide global health research. Interested in learning more?

May 15, 2015 - Have you had a chance to participate in our study about developing principles to guide global health research?

June 3, 2015 - How have you navigated Canada's global health research funding landscape?

June 4, 2015 - Tell us your story! - A Call for Expressions of Interest for Stories in Global Health Research

June 4, 2015 - We're seeking stories on how global health researchers are navigating the changing funding landscape in Canada

June 5, 2015 - How have you navigated Canada's global health research funding landscape?

June 8, 2015 - TELL YOUR STORY A Call for Expressions of Interest for Stories in Global Health Research

June 8, 2015 - Expressions of Interest for a casebook on stories of global health research - due July 15

June 9, 2015 - Do you want to be published in a casebook on stories of global health research?

August 2, 2015 - We're developing principles to guide global health research. Have a look and let us know what you think! <http://>

August 30, 2015 - We're collectively developing principles to guide global health research and we want to hear from you!

November 6, 2015- Thx 2 everyone who attended the 'Principles for GHR' symposium. Your reflections and insights will be a invaluable tool moving fwd

December 25, 2015 - We're developing principles to guide global health research. Interested in learning more?

January 25, 2016 - We're developing principles to guide global health research. Interested in learning more?

April 15, 2016 - We believe [#equity](#) should be at the core of [#globalhealth](#) research...you?Humility, inclusion, or partnering instead?

August 4, 2016 - We're developing principles to guide global health research. Interested in learning more?

September 30, 2016 - The CCGHR principles for global health research - no shortage of wisdom from our [#theOCI2016](#) participants [@KMPlamondon](#)

Nov 9, 2016 - INTRODUCING the STORIES OF FUNDING COLLECTION. Funding challenges, successes & surprises-these stories have it all!

Nov 10, 2016 - Happy to showcase the lessons learned around coordinating multi-national [#globalhealth](#) [#research](#) partnerships - a great read!

Nov 10, 2016 - "Double benefit" you say....read on to find out what this means for designing a global health research program!

Nov 28, 2016 - Shared [@Ccghr](#) principles for [#globalhealth](#) research today at [#HSR2016](#)

Impact

We believe that this project carries the potential for influencing practices and policies related to GHR in Canada and beyond. The high-level impacts we are seeing as a result of the GPS2 include:

- Improved collaboration among global health researchers, universities, and funders;
- People preparing proposals, evaluations, and policies are incorporating the CCGHR Principles for Global Health Research
- More global health researchers are identified as members of the CIHR College of Reviewers and are reviewing for Grand Challenges Canada
- Universities across Canada are incorporating the CCGHR Principles for Global Health Research into their curricula
- Better public understanding of the importance of global health research to Canada's role in the world.

Problems & Challenges

The GPS2, like most multi-year and multi-actor projects, involved a few unexpected shifts in focus and team members. One challenge was in finding ways to engage our large research team, a challenge compounded by the fact that we were spread across Canada and had team members or participants from around the world.

A few challenges that arose were out of our control as a research team. For example, delays in responses from journal editors made it impossible for us to redirect budget to anticipated open access fees that are likely to be assessed after funding from IDRC closes. Another challenge relates to the demand for products that exceeded our imagination for what it might be. This includes demand for the videos and CCGHR Principles for Global Health Research in more languages than we were able to accommodate for in our budget. This is particularly challenging because translation costs are high and because any translation of the videos includes re-animation.

Finally, we would like to note that all of the efforts involved in the GPS2 relied heavily on the in-kind contributions of the research team. The objectives and outputs for GPS2 were ambitious, and the budget quite modest. We believe GPS2 reflects a high value for investment; but we cautiously suggest that pursuing this caliber and scope of work would not have been possible without these in-kind contributions.