Research on Indigenous Data Governance Protocols (RIDAGOP)

Case study: Local Indicators of Climate Change Indicators (LICCI)

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What is the European Research Council?

- Established by the European Commission in 2007

- Budget was over €13 billion from 2014 – 2020

- Around 7,000 principal investigators funded.

- Grants range from multi-million EUR to hundreds of thousands EUR.

RIDAGOP: Proof of Concept Grant

July 2022 - November 2023

1) Understand **the gap between European research institution practices** and **Indigenous protocols** around consent and knowledge-sharing.

2) Create a **toolkit for improving Indigenous data governance** mechanisms.

Part 1: the gap

1. **Searched ERC Grant Portal** for projects funded (2012-2022) with key terms (e.g. Indigenous, IPLC, ethnic, local communities, livelihood, traditional knowledge…)

2. **Selected 50 ERC projects** to ask about their **data management plans**:

- Conducting research with, on, either **directly or indirectly** involving Indigenous peoples and local communities.

- Range from **biological sciences** and **environmental change** to **nutrition**, **literature**, **migration**.

- **23 projects responded**, more than **€45 million EUR in funding** (!)

Part 1: Survey questions

- Did project involve the **data collection?** If yes what **type?**

- Does data collection involve… **fieldwork**, use of Indigenous **records or archives**, **health metrics**, use of **tribal maps**, **geospatial** monitoring tools, **biocultural** data… etc

- Did/will you **publish or release the data?** If yes, **where** (repository, portal) – share link. If no, **why**.

- Did/do you have a **Data Management (DMP) or Ethics plan** regarding handling sensitive data? If yes, is it **publicly available**? If not public, **can you share it?**

- **If no DMP then why?** ERC ethics does not require? Other reason?

Part 1: Early ERC survey results

- **DMPs range from 1 paragraph to 80 pages**, with many scholars acknowledging not remembering what they contain or promised.

- **Plans prioritize low-barrier research** when working directly with communities (e.g. look elsewhere if too many constraints to work with X community).

- The only DMP trend is 1) **obtain FPIC**; 2) **adhere to EU's GDPR**

Part 1: Indigenous research protocols

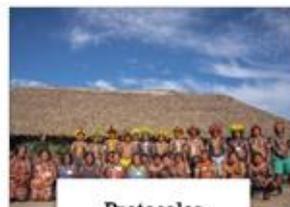Indigenous and traditional protocols & guidelines around consent & knowledge sharing (Africa, South America, Europe, Asia, North America, Oceania)

1) 10 Indigenous research guidelines (regional or international level)
e.g. San Code of Research Ethics, Sámi Research Guidelines, OCAP, CARE Principles, etc

2) 25 Indigenous and traditional community protocols around consent (local/community level)
e.g. FPIC protocols for most, biocultural protocols

Protocolos Indígenas

Protocolos Quilombolas

Protocolos de Povos e Comunidades Tradicionais

Protocolos Comunitários da

Protocolos em conjunto: Indígenas, Quilombolas

Observatory for Autonomous Protocols
https://observatorio.direitosocioambiental.org/

Part 1: Indigenous research protocols

1) Indigenous research guidelines (regional
or international level)

- **Well established** and require significantly more than ERC
  Research Guidelines.

- Based on aggregation of collective guidelines, values,
  perspectives, **fit for research and data collection.**

Part 1: Indigenous research protocols

**2) Indigenous and traditional community protocols
around consent** (local/community level)

- While communities <u>do</u> have formalized consent protocols via FPIC, these focus mostly on **consent related to plans that may affect them in an immediate or tangible manner** (e.g. development projects, land use change, etc), rather than research-related consent or less tangible impact.

- They often <u>do</u> **refer to international laws** and conventions that consider Indigenous rights to data or traditional knowledge. <u>But</u> the protocols generally **don't make this link explicit**.

- Result is that this creates a **space for ethical ambiguity**, research subordination, "I didn't know" syndrome, etc – to the researcher's advantage.

Part 1: Gap in research protocols

- Gap is not only between **ERC/university DMPs** and international/regional **Indigenous research guidelines**.

- There is also gap between those **international guidelines** and **community protocols around consent**, which should perhaps be closed.
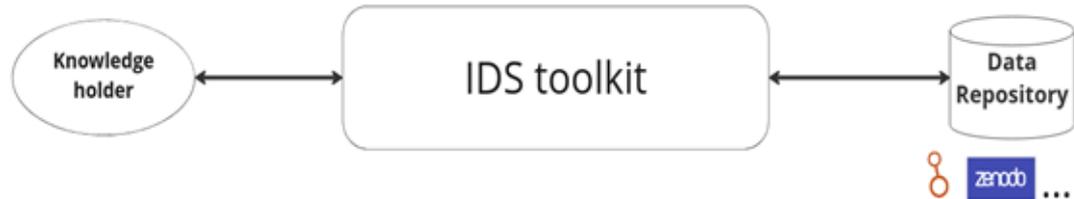
Part 2: The toolkit

The Problem

- Many different **processes** of data management practices.

- Current trend: Large centralized repositories, which can hardly integrate changes.

Part 2: Proof of concept

Demonstrate that it is possible to exercise data management processes on seemingly restricted data-infrastructures

A web-based tool, which can be used to create a user-interface and broker, *to facilitate* custom data management processes for many repositories.

Part 2: Dataverse

A competitive, open source research data repository software

- Support for FAIR Data Principles
- Custom licenses / metadata fields
- DOIs

    ...

⇒ Suited for data-management experimentation, which can be adopted by others.

⇒ A GIDA-Dataverse? (data can still be stored in remote places)

https://dataverse.org/

Part 2: Process examples

Showcase different practical processes and how they can function with a data repository (e.g. dataverse)

- Connect a Local Context Hub project to a dataset (or other type of metadata)

- Restrict data access / data access application process

- Protect data before sharing it

- Track individual contribution in order to allow restriction/ removal of data

Goal: Allow to simplify and unify processes

Conclusion: Possible outcomes...

Toolkit:
- **User-interface that facilitates custom data management processes** for many repositories.
- **GIDA-Dataverse Repository**: a sub-optimal and interim solution for research projects or communities that don't want or cannot store their data on public or institutional repositories.

Research Protocols:
- **Send results to ERC**, Indigenous organisations, public – highlighting these gaps. Follow up with **civil society pressure**.
- Create simple and **customisable research consent protocol templates** for communities to build on, or just insert into their existing protocol documents as annex, in the interim.

Thank you!

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