



Challenges of Ethical Committees in a resource-poor Setting

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Objectives

- To carry out a review of practices of Ethics Review boards/Institutional Review Boards
- To examine the plight of the vulnerable study participants
- To explore future trends and prospects for ethics committees



Methods

- A review of the operations of ethics committees in a resource poor setting
- Suggest ways of improving the situation



Results

- Many Ethical Review Boards (ERBs) in Africa face daunting challenges with regard to their mandate
- Many cannot monitor progress of ongoing research and are not proactive
- Do vulnerable groups get adequate protection from ethics committees and regulatory authorities



Discussion/Conclusion

- ICH-GCP guidelines require that Ethics committees conduct monitoring visits in investigational sites but this does not happen as often as it should
- Are the interests of vulnerable subjects and of society being protected by these Committees as per their mandate



Discussion/Conclusion

- How can governments in poor countries assist in making sure that the public interest is protected
- Can ethics committees still rely on external resources and still remain independent



Future Perspectives

- Ethics committees in an increasingly complex and demanding environment-
- Need to rely on permanent rather than temporary staff
- Need to Increase capacity to fulfill social/scientific obligations