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COST Action IS1201 (23/10/2012 - 30/05/2017)

Disaster Bioethics: Addressing Ethical Issues Triggered by Disasters

FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT (23/10/2012 – 22/10/2016)

This report assessing the full lifetime of the Action is submitted by the Rapporteur.

Confidentiality: This report, other than the Summary Assessment, is confidential to the Management Committee and the COST Association (including the Committee of Senior Officials, Scientific Committee and Administration). The Summary Assessment is non-confidential.

Summary assessment of outcomes and impacts (for publication):

The final assessment of the Action's work across its lifespan between 2012 to 2016 indicated that all of the objectives stated in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) were achieved by the end of the Action. The Action had over 130 members from 28 member countries and New Zealand as well as partnerships with research teams and networks in the US, Canada, and countries impacted by disasters such as Palestine, Jordan, Kenya, Senegal, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Pakistan, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka. The added value of this international network, which was fueled by numerous conferences, workshops and training schools, has also arisen from opportunities for early career researchers and participants from Inclusiveness Target Countries to benefit from the Action. The collaboration between Action members, non-member researchers, practitioners and policy-makers led to the development of several international standards, guidelines and manuals with respect to disaster bioethics. Some of the training manuals were used during field training of local responders. The wide range of publications of the Action clearly indicated that there was a scholarly discussion of and interest in research in this topic. Engagement of early career researchers and building research capacity through workshops and summer schools also stimulated proposal writing, fundraising and research activities further. Given the high number of qualified Action members and partners, the international network established by the Action holds the potential to be sustainable and continue stimulating its members to develop more proposals and publications in the future. The Action has made clear progress with the deliverables stated in the MoU and all of the deliverables were delivered by the time of the final evaluation. The Action's publications were considerable in both quantity and quality and there were a number of publications that were published in high impact journals or as publications of top international organizations in public and global health. The ethical guidelines developed by the Action will have a positive impact on how WHO, UNICEF, UNISDR and other organizations, as well as disaster responders respond to future ethical challenges in disasters. Impact on policy making and impact on a new generation of researchers in this field were among the most significant impacts of the Action. The Action's dissemination and exploitation approach was clear and valid, where the Action targeted various audiences by using a variety of tools for dissemination of new knowledge. The evaluation of how the Action was initially structured, how the network has expanded in time and how it made impact showed that the Action's overall management was effective. The final review of the Action's achievements throughout its lifetime indicated that the specific COST grant was spent in an effective and fruitful manner, giving strong promise for continued and sustainable collaboration among Action members and other partners in the future.



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Annex

Definitions:

COST Action Challenge (main aim)	“The research question addressed by the COST Action targeting scientific, technological, and / or socioeconomic problems”
COST Action Innovation	“The creation and / or development of new or improved concepts, products, processes, services, and / or technologies that are made available to markets, governments and society”
COST Action objectives	“COST Action objectives are the results that an Action needs to achieve in order to respond to meet its challenge. These are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timely) and twofold: research coordination objectives and capacity building objectives.”
COST Action research coordination objectives	“Achieving these objectives turns COST Actions from initially scattered teams into one transnational team and leverages the existing funded research. These objectives entail the distribution of tasks, sharing of knowledge and know-how, and the creation of synergies among Action participants to achieve specific outputs.”
COST Action capacity building objectives	“Achieving these objectives entail building critical mass to drive scientific progress, thereby strengthening the European Research Area. They can be achieved by the delivery of specific outputs and / or through network features or types and levels of participation.”
COST Action networking activities	“any activities organised by the COST Action (whether or not directly funded by COST) in order to achieve research coordination and capacity building objectives.”
COST Action networking tools	“instruments through which eligible activities can be funded”
COST Action outputs	“direct results from the COST Action activities. These can be codified knowledge, tacit knowledge, technology, and societal applications.”
COST Action impact	“the short- to long-term scientific, technological, and / or socioeconomic changes produced by a COST Action, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.”
COST Action deliverable	“a distinct, expected and tangible output of the Action, meaningful in terms of the Action’s overall objectives such as a report, a document, a technical diagram, a software etc. Action deliverables are used to measure its progress and success.”
COST Action milestones	“Control points in the Action that help to chart progress. They are also needed at intermediary points so that, if problems have arisen, corrective measures can be taken. A milestone may be a critical decision point in the Action where, for example, the MC must decide which of several technologies to adopt for further development (e.g. core group and MC meetings, mid-term reviews)”
Inclusiveness Target Country (ITC):	Current COST Member Countries targeted by the COST inclusiveness Policy (“Inclusiveness Target Countries” (ITC)): EU 13 (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Croatia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia), EU candidate countries (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Republic of Serbia, Turkey) and potential EU candidate countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina). In addition, to comply with the EC criteria for ‘Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation’, Portugal and Luxemburg are included.