

# JCPR: AfriComm Connect

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## Focus and Scope

The Journal of Community Psychosocial Research (JCPR) will now also serve as a platform for showcasing innovative and impactful community projects worldwide. With a focus on highlighting best practices, lessons learned, and successful interventions, JCPR aims to inspire collaboration, foster knowledge exchange, and promote positive social change.

Although this is an open call for all community projects worldwide, the name combines "Afri" to represent Africa and "Comm" for the community, emphasising connectivity and collaboration within the African community. "Connect" underscores the platform's purpose of facilitating connections and contributions from diverse community stakeholders. This is the first to introduce a meaningful contribution towards collective impact in the social sector in Africa.

## Inclusion of the Voice of the Community in Science

In the world of science, the voice of the community plays a crucial role in ensuring that research and interventions are relevant, ethical, and sustainable. Community engagement and participation enhance the quality and impact of scientific research and foster trust, transparency, and equity within the research process. The reciprocal relation between indigenous knowledge within the community and the world of academic knowledge can be found in the following key reasons why incorporating the voice of the community is essential in science:

1. **Relevance and Contextualisation:** Communities possess unique knowledge, perspectives, and experiences that enrich scientific inquiry and inform research questions, methodologies, and interpretations. By engaging with community members, scientists can ensure that their work is relevant to the needs, priorities, and cultural context of the communities they serve.
2. **Ethical Considerations:** Involving communities in the research process helps to ensure the nurturing of research integrity, enabling ethical and responsible processes.
3. **Empowerment and Ownership:** Community involvement empowers individuals and groups to participate actively in decision-making processes that affect their lives. By valuing and amplifying the voices of community members, scientists can promote ownership, agency, and empowerment within the research process, leading to more sustainable and impactful outcomes.
4. **Trust and Collaboration:** Building trust and fostering collaborative relationships between scientists and communities is essential for the success of research initiatives. Transparent communication, mutual respect, and shared decision-making contribute to trust-building and long-term partnerships, enabling effective knowledge exchange, co-creation of solutions, and collective action.
5. **Equity and Social Justice:** Community inclusion promotes equity and social justice by centering the voices and needs of marginalised or underrepresented populations. By actively seeking input from diverse community members, scientists can address systemic inequalities, reduce disparities, and advocate for inclusive policies and practices within the scientific community and beyond.

Incorporating the community's voice is not only a moral imperative but also a strategic imperative for showcasing success in social change and collective well-being. The mutual benefit might contribute to the following:

1. **Visibility and Recognition:** An NPO can gain increased visibility and recognition within the African community and beyond. This exposure can help raise awareness of their organisation's mission, initiatives, and impact.
2. **Networking Opportunities:** AfriComm Connect is a platform for connecting with other NPOs, community organisations, potential donors, volunteers, and stakeholders. Participating in the showcase can facilitate networking opportunities, collaborations, and partnerships that amplify the NPO's reach and effectiveness.
3. **Knowledge Sharing and Learning:** AfriComm Connect provides a space for sharing best practices, lessons learned, and innovative approaches to community interventions and social impact. By showcasing work, an NPO can contribute to collective learning and inspire others to adopt effective strategies and interventions.
4. **Funding and Support:** Presenting community work on AfriComm Connect can attract potential funders, sponsors, and supporters interested in investing in impactful projects and organisations. The platform catalyses securing funding, resources, and in-kind support to sustain and scale the NPO's initiatives.
5. **Amplified Impact:** By participating, an NPO can strengthen the impact of their community work by reaching a broader audience and mobilising support for the cause. The platform provides a centralised hub for sharing success stories, mobilising volunteers, and advocating for social change, thereby maximising the NPO's influence and effectiveness.

## Submission Criteria

Please note this section is not empirical in nature but serves as a voice to link science and community using a publication platform. For scientific journal submissions, please get in touch with the scientific journal section.

To be considered for a community publication in AfricComm Connect, community projects must meet the following inclusion criteria:

1. **Alignment with JCPR Scope:** Submissions should demonstrate clear relevance to the scope of JCPR, which includes but is not limited to community-based initiatives, service-learning projects, participatory action research, and community development interventions. Projects should address social, economic, environmental, or health-related issues within communities.
2. **Demonstrated Impact:** Projects should have a demonstrable impact on the target community or population. Submissions should provide evidence of outcomes achieved, such as improvements in community well-being, changes in behaviour or attitudes, increased access to resources or services, or sustainable development outcomes.
3. **Innovative Approaches:** JCPR seeks submissions that showcase innovative approaches, strategies, or methodologies employed in community projects. Projects demonstrating creativity, adaptability, and effectiveness in addressing complex community challenges are encouraged.
4. **Collaboration and Partnerships:** Submissions should highlight collaborative efforts and partnerships formed between academic institutions, non-profit organisations, government agencies, community groups, or other stakeholders. Projects that engage diverse stakeholders and leverage collective expertise are preferred.

5. **Reflective Practice:** Submissions should include reflective insights and critical reflections on the project implementation. Authors are encouraged to discuss challenges faced, lessons learned, and recommendations for future practice or research.

6. **Ethical Considerations:** Projects should adhere to ethical principles and guidelines for community-based research and practice. Submissions should provide details on ethical considerations, including informed consent, confidentiality, participant protection, and community engagement practices.

### Submission Process

Authors interested in showcasing their community projects in JCPR: AfriComm Connect are invited to submit a manuscript following the journal's submission guidelines, clearly stipulating that the submission is intended for AfriComm Connect. Manuscripts will undergo a review process to ensure quality, relevance, and rigour.

Accepted submissions will be published in JCPR and made freely accessible to the public to maximise impact and dissemination. Submissions to AfriComm Connect will not earn income and will not be included in the Metrics of the Scientific Journal component.