



# Challenges in international collaboration: a South African perspective

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# Disclosure

- CS Minnie & SJC van der Walt hereby confirm that we do not have any conflict of interest as we did not receive any sponsorship or commercial support to advance the interest of anybody.





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# Objectives

The learner will be able to

understand the challenges South African academics experienced in their collaboration in various international projects;

Learn from the lessons we learned and

- reflect on his/her own collaborative experiences.



# North West Province / University



# International projects

- Teasdale Corti
- ICM Scientific and professional programming committee for 2011 congress
- MCNNLA SA & Africa (STTI)
- COST
- New projects





# Teasdale Corti (Prof Nancy Edwards)

- "Strengthening Nurses' Capacity in HIV Policy Development in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean"



# International Confederation of Midwives



Scientific and professional  
programming committee for  
2011 Congress







# MCHNLA SA PILOT



Liaison between  
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# COST (Prof Soo Downe)



European Cooperation in Science and Technology

**Action IS0907 2010-2011**  
**Childbirth Cultures, concerns and consequences**  
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Participating countries: BE, CH, DE, DK, EL, HR, FI, IE, IS, LT, NL, NO, PT, SE, UK  
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Babies born better  
(B3) survey

# Background

- Carr et al. (2013) Establishing and maintaining international collaborative research teams: an autobiographical insight. *The Journal of Transdisciplinary research in Southern Africa*, 9(1):94-112.
- Article focuses on ICRT – this presentation add experiences from other types of international collaboration projects





# Benefits of international collaboration

- Project specific benefits
- Sharing resources, knowledge
- Higher research productivity
- Expanding professional networks
- Enhancing global understanding
- Enhancing professional & academic career





# Challenges encountered

- Communication
  - Limited face-to-face contact
  - Language
  - Technology (teleconference, Skype, Elluminate, others)



# Challenges (cont.)

- Relationship building
  - Recruitment and retention
  - Capacity building
  - Working styles



# Challenges (cont.)

- Practical aspects
  - Multiple time zones
  - Different academic / financial years



# Lessons learned

- Positive attitude
  - Interest & motivation
  - Honest and realistic commitment
  - Resourcefulness & braveness – risk taking
  - Perseverance
  - Respect & acknowledgement



# Lessons learned (cont.)

## ■ Leadership

- Dedication,
- Role model,
- Shared leadership
- Share the vision: purpose
- Project management skills





# Lessons learned (cont.)

- Clear communication
  - Regular meetings: agenda, minutes, action items
  - Early and continuous negotiation - authorship



# Lessons learned (cont.)

- Support
  - Employer
  - IT support
  - In-kind support



Your experiences?





# Thank you

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