



FEMINIST RESEARCH ETHICS: SUMMARY FOR DOWNLOAD

*GenUrb Research Training Modules:
Feminist Research Ethics*

This training module introduces you to:

- The role of ethics in research
- The key principles and strategies of a feminist approach to research ethics
- The ability to identify ethical issues and reflect on possible ethical strategies to address them.

Research ethics refers to principles and guidelines for the conduct of research to avoid harm to participants and ensure the integrity of the research process.

Research ethics apply to all stages of the research process from conception to publication of results.

Basic ethical principles in conducting research with humans include:

- Respect
- Concern for welfare, and
- Justice.

These principles are applied through strategies such as:

- Obtaining the voluntary and informed consent of participants
- Protecting the confidentiality and privacy of research participants, including through preserving their anonymity.

Different countries and institutions may have their own ethics policies. It is important to become familiar with the ethics policies that apply to the context you work in and their requirements.

Feminist research ethics address:

- the exercise of power in research,
- the nature of relationships between different parties in the research process, and
- the context in which research is conducted and knowledge is produced.

Feminist research has been guided by a number of ethical commitments including the following.

Reflexivity: critical awareness of your own positionality and the way in which it shapes your worldview, your research agenda and approach, and your relationships with your research participants and field; and, an ability to evaluate how your research may need to be changed to respond to emerging ethical issues.

Ethics of care: critical awareness of the distribution of power in the research process, and care about the impact of research on participants and communities, with particular attention to vulnerable populations.

Transformation: contributing to achieving social justice and improving the lives of participants and communities, including through political action and engagement with policy-making processes.

Empowerment: creating opportunities for participants to have a voice, engage in reciprocal learning and work towards changing the conditions of their lives.

Decolonizing knowledge production: shedding light on the enduring operation of racial and ethnocentric frameworks of colonial knowledge systems; building research practices and relationships that incorporate concepts and methodologies from intellectual traditions that have historically been excluded or marginalised in colonial knowledge frameworks; and, contributing to the self-determination of colonised peoples.

Key strategies used to apply the principles of feminist research include:

- Exercising reflexivity and self-reflexivity
- Taking into account the standpoint of women
- Collaborating with and enabling those who are being researched to actively participate in the knowledge production process.
- Engaging in transnational collaborative and comparative dialogues, and alliances that seek to challenge dominant epistemologies (or ways of knowing about the world) and work towards an ethics of transformation.

The principles and strategies of feminist research ethics discussed in this module will be relevant and continue to be elaborated across the remaining training modules in the Gen-Urb Research Training program.