



# 1 Chapter 8

## 2 Realizing Benefit Sharing: Is there a Role

### 3 for Ethics Review?

4 **Doris Schroeder, Eugenijus Gefenas, Roger Chennells, Veronique Fournier,**  
5 **Dafna Feinholz and Giorgio Sirugo**

6 **Abstract** The donors of human genetic resources deserve benefits in return for their  
7 contribution to scientific research. In the context of developing countries this claim  
8 holds as a matter of justice. But how can this demand be realised and implemented?  
9 This chapter looks at the role of ethics review as a possible benefit sharing mech-  
10 nism. In particular the promising role of research ethics committees in monitor-  
11 ing the Declaration of Helsinki's post-study obligations is considered. However, a  
12 range of obstacles are identified, which would have to be overcome before ethics  
13 review could reliably achieve justice for the donors of human genetic resources in  
14 developing countries. These issues are addressed in specific recommendations. The

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- A1 D. Schroeder (✉)  
A2 UCLAN, Centre for Professional Ethics, Brook 317, Preston PR1 2HE, UK  
A3 e-mail: dschroeder@uclan.ac.uk
- A4 E. Gefenas  
A5 Department of Medical History and Ethics, Medical Faculty of Vilnius University, M. K.  
A6 Čiurlionio str. 21/27, LT-03101 Vilnius, Lithuania  
A7 e-mail: eugenijus.gefenas@mf.vu.lt
- A8 R. Chennells  
A9 Chennells Albertyn: Attorneys, Notaries and Conveyancers, 44 Alexander Street,  
A10 Stellenbosch, South Africa  
A11 e-mail: scarlin@iafrica.com
- A12 V. Fournier  
A13 Centre d'éthique Clinique, Hôpital Cochin, 27 rue du Fbg Saint Jacques, 75014 Paris, France  
A14 e-mail: veronique.fournier@cch.aphp.fr
- A15 D. Feinholz  
A16 Bioethics Section, Social and Human Sciences Sector, UNESCO, 1, rue Miollis, 75732 Paris  
A17 15, France  
A18 e-mail: d.feinholz@unesco.org
- A19 G. Sirugo  
A20 Centro di Ricerca, Ospedale San Pietro Fatebenefratelli, Via Cassia 600, 00189 Rome, Italy  
A21 e-mail: sirugo.giorgio@fbfrm.it



15 chapter concludes that the provision of health care, however extensive, in return for  
16 the donation of human genetic resources does not represent undue inducement, but  
17 rather fair benefit sharing.

18 **Keywords** Benefit sharing • Research ethics • Developing countries • Post-  
19 study access • Declaration of Helsinki

## 20 8.1 Introduction

21 ‘The arc of the universe is long, but it bends towards justice.’ This is how Martin  
22 Luther King Jr. expressed his hopes for the future. Of course, justice does not  
23 arrive of its own accord. Four years after receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964  
24 for his non-violent work to advance civil rights King was assassinated. Today,  
25 there is a black President of the United States, giving an indication that some of  
26 King’s dreams of justice have been realized. However, when we turn to interna-  
27 tional justice, we note that the US is one of a handful of countries<sup>1</sup> that are not  
28 parties to the international Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). In the pre-  
29 vious chapter, an expansion of the CBD was suggested in order to achieve justice  
30 for donors of human genetic resources.<sup>2</sup> This chapter will explore the potential for  
31 utilizing the existing, well-established system of ethical review to advance benefit  
32 sharing.

33 How does one protect human research participants from harm and exploitation?  
34 Four basic markers for the occurrence of harm in the research context can be dis-  
35 tinguished (see [Chap. 2](#)).

- 36 1. Unfavourable risk-benefit ratio
- 37 2. Breach of confidentiality or privacy
- 38 3. Invalid consent
- 39 4. Lack of access to the benefits of research.

40 Exploitation is mainly relevant to the fourth marker and equates to ‘a failure to  
41 benefit others as some norm of fairness requires’ (Mayer 2007: 142) (see [Chap. 2](#)).  
42 Ethics committees have increasingly taken on the responsibility of preventing such  
43 exploitation. They appear in two main varieties: clinical ethics committees have  
44 been in existence since the early 1960s, mostly to support staff, patients and fami-  
45 lies in making end-of-life decisions, while research ethics committees have been  
46 in existence since the late 1960s (see below) to govern research involving human  
47 participants (Aulisio 2003: 841).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Two exceptions at the time of writing are Andorra and South Sudan.

<sup>2</sup> By human biological resources, we mean human biological samples collected for genetic studies and related data.

<sup>3</sup> For more on clinical ethics committees see McGee et al. (2001), Kuczewski (2004), Slowther (2007) and ASBH (1998).



48 Research ethics committees are most relevant to this chapter. Their primary role  
49 is to decide whether a particular research project is ethical or not by reviewing  
50 its study protocol. Such committees usually comprise scientists, professionals and  
51 lay people supported by an administrator. Standard questions for such a committee  
52 would be:

- 53 • Are the research participants appropriately informed?
- 54 • Is the balance of risks and benefits posed by the research fair and reasonable?
- 55 • Are the research participants likely to be worse off for participating in research?  
56 If so, does their consent represent a sufficient protection of their interests (or are  
57 they being exploited)?
- 58 • Is the research likely to be useful and informative? (Ashcroft 2007: 684)

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59 Ethical review generally follows a particular pattern. Study protocols are  
60 received from researchers, and are then reviewed by a single member, a small con-  
61 sultation team or the full ethics committee. Applications may be approved at that  
62 point; if not, they are returned to the applicant with queries before being reconsid-  
63 ered and finally approved or rejected. The legitimacy of ethics committees derives  
64 from the fact that they are lawfully established and adhere to a process of deliber-  
65 ation as a diverse group of experts (including lay people) who reach consensus  
66 after discussion (Garrard and Dawson 2005: 423). While review requirements dif-  
67 fer between (and sometimes within) countries, Fig. 8.1 shows the most basic steps.

68 In assessing whether a protocol is ethically acceptable, research ethics com-  
69 mittees refer to international guidelines (e.g. the Declaration of Helsinki), national  
70 guidelines (e.g. UK Medical Research Council guidelines) and national law (e.g.  
71 National Health Council of Brazil resolutions). A research ethics committee there-  
72 fore seeks to protect the interests of research subjects by ensuring compliance with  
73 ethical guidelines. Many countries (e.g. the US and the UK) have made it a criminal  
74 offence to start medical research without ethical approval from the relevant research  
75 ethics committee. This, de facto, gives ethics committees the role of a regulatory  
76 authority, a position with ‘immense power over the research that is carried out’  
77 (McGuinness 2008: 695).

78 The Nuremberg Code (1949)<sup>4</sup> and the World Medical Association’s Declaration of  
79 Helsinki: Ethical Principles for Medical Research Involving Human Subjects (1964)  
80 placed responsibility for safeguarding research participants on the investigator. In  
81 1975, however, the Tokyo revision of the Declaration of Helsinki introduced ethics  
82 committee review of research as its second basic principle (Levine 1995: 2312):

83 The design and performance of each experimental procedure involving human subjects  
84 should be clearly formulated in an experimental protocol which should be transmitted to  
85 a specially appointed independent committee for consideration, comment and guidance  
86 (WMA 1975).

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<sup>4</sup> The Nuremberg Code of 1949 is a set of principles and rules to be observed when undertaking research with human participants. It was developed after the Nuremberg trials in 1946 and 1947 of Nazi doctors who had committed atrocities against concentration camp internees as part of medical research. It was superseded by the Declaration of Helsinki in 1964 (see Chap. 3).

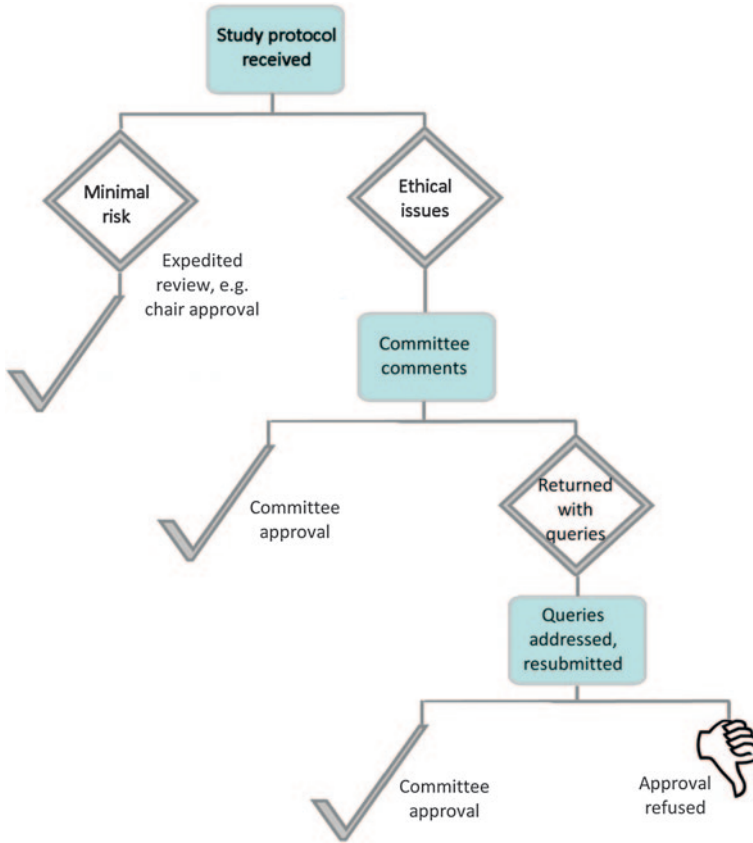


Fig. 8.1 Simplified Ethical Review Process

87 Since 1975, repeated revisions of the Declaration of Helsinki have specified in  
88 increasing detail what is implied by ethics committee review. Principle 15 of the  
89 current (2008) declaration reads:

90 The research protocol must be submitted for consideration, comment, guidance and  
91 approval to a research ethics committee before the study begins. This committee must be  
92 independent of the researcher, the sponsor and any other undue influence. It must take into  
93 consideration the laws and regulations of the country or countries in which the research  
94 is to be performed as well as applicable international norms and standards but these must  
95 not be allowed to reduce or eliminate any of the protections for research subjects set forth  
96 in this Declaration. The committee must have the right to monitor ongoing studies. The  
97 researcher must provide monitoring information to the committee, especially information  
98 about any serious adverse events. No change to the protocol may be made without consid-  
99 eration and approval by the committee (WMA 2008).

100 Until the end of the twentieth century, ethics committee review concentrated  
101 on pre-start approval, but nowadays it is increasingly seen as a process that does  
102 not stop until the research has been completed. For instance, funding bodies such



103 as the Economic and Social Research Council in Britain see monitoring as a mini-  
104 mum ethics requirement. The council's Framework for Research Ethics includes  
105 the following:

106       Procedures for institutional monitoring should be in place. Universities and other research  
107       organisations should establish appropriate procedures to monitor the conduct of research  
108       which has received ethics approval until it is completed, and to ensure appropriate contin-  
109       uing review where the research design anticipates possible changes over time that may  
110       need to be addressed (ESRC n.d.: 5).

111       It would therefore be feasible for ethics review of a research project to con-  
112       tinue up to the point at which it may be possible to determine whether vulnerable  
113       research participants, especially in developing countries, have benefited from tak-  
114       ing part in research. To complement the [Chap. 7](#), which recommended expanding  
115       the provisions of the CBD to include access and benefit-sharing arrangements for  
116       human biological resources, we will ask:

117       Could research ethics committees ensure compliance with post-study obligations (a form  
118       of benefit sharing), in order to avoid burdening medical research with further governance  
119       structures?

120       Before answering this question, it is worth revisiting and strengthening a claim  
121       made earlier (see [Chap. 2](#)), namely that the developing world should be treated  
122       differently from the developed world when it comes to the governance of human  
123       biological resources. The alleged altruism shown by European DNA donors, for  
124       instance, cannot be expected of donors from developing countries without perpetu-  
125       ating exploitative relationships.

## 126 **8.2 Benefit Sharing Versus the Altruism or Solidarity** 127 **Model**

128 For decades human tissue has been provided voluntarily by individuals for  
129 research purposes, in most cases without any expectation of benefit. The case of  
130 blood donation in the United Kingdom for blood transfusions and research pur-  
131 poses is a case in point (Keown 1997). This altruism is also apparent among  
132 research participants in developing countries. In interviews undertaken with sex  
133 worker participants enrolled in long-term HIV/AIDS research in Majengo, Nairobi  
134 (see [Chap. 5](#)), one respondent said:

135       On my faith ... they can get a cure from my blood and it can help the whole world. So  
136       that is why I gave myself. Even if I am infected...I am ready because I agreed to collabo-  
137       rate in the research.<sup>5</sup>

138       This respondent donated her blood to help the whole world. However, interna-  
139       tional ethics guidelines (see [Chap. 3](#)) now *require* benefit sharing with research

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<sup>5</sup> Interview with Majengo participant in GenBenefit project, April 2007.



140 participants. To recap, paragraph 14 of the Declaration of Helsinki (WMA 2008)  
141 requires as follows:

142 The protocol should describe arrangements for post-study access by study subjects to  
143 interventions identified as beneficial in the study or access to other appropriate care or  
144 benefits.

145 Hence, every research project which is presented for ethics approval must out-  
146 line in its protocol how it will deal with post-study obligations. This is particularly  
147 important in the case of vulnerable populations, which is why the Declaration of  
148 Helsinki (WMA 2008) adds in paragraph 17:

149 Medical research involving a disadvantaged or vulnerable population or community  
150 is only justified if ... there is a reasonable likelihood that this population or community  
151 stands to benefit from the results of the research.

152 The question arises: why should humans not be able to simply donate their  
153 tissue for the good of the world, without requiring burdensome and bureaucratic  
154 arrangements for post-study access to benefits? It seems that most people who pro-  
155 vide blood or samples for research in the developed world are content to do so  
156 purely on the assurance that the tissue supplied will be utilized for the betterment  
157 of humankind. Why then should individuals from the developing world expect any  
158 more from the same transaction? No work is involved in producing DNA, nor do  
159 donors incur significant risks in donating samples. One could say that we need to  
160 draw upon the altruism of humankind to ensure the provision of resources that are  
161 so important for health research (Berg and Chadwick 2001: 320).

162 Altruism, which in its broadest sense means promoting the interests of another  
163 (Scott and Seglow 2007: 1), is an interesting concept. Under scrutiny it reveals  
164 complex questions about morality. For example, to donate one's blood or organs  
165 with the proviso that they can *only* be given to those of one's own race would  
166 be altruistic, but morally questionable. A UK government investigation found it  
167 'abhorrent' that a hospital had accepted an organ donation on condition that it ben-  
168 efitied a white patient (BBC 2000). Hence, acts of altruism might not always be as  
169 morally pure as they appear at first sight.

170 The eighteenth-century political economist Adam Smith maintained that ego-  
171 ism or self-interest would lead to general welfare, stating that it was not 'from  
172 the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer or the baker that we expect our din-  
173 ner, but from their regard to their own interest' (Smith 1976: 26f). On the other  
174 hand, French philosopher Auguste Comte, who coined the term 'altruism' in the  
175 early nineteenth century, believed that promoting other people's interests meant  
176 that morality triumphed over egoism (Scott and Seglow 2007: 15). Immanuel  
177 Kant provided useful guidance on the motives behind altruism. He distinguished  
178 beneficence (*Wohltun*), which is understood as doing good, from benevolence  
179 (*Wohlwollen*), which is understood as wishing well. Beneficence is then benevo-  
180 lence in action; acting in accordance with a 'maxim of making others' happiness  
181 one's end' (Kant 1996: 452). While this might appear noble in essence, the motive  
182 Kant provided for beneficence is actually close to self-interest. He claimed that  
183 one would not want to live in a world where those in need were not supported or



184 assisted, simply because one might require similar assistance from others in the  
185 future.

186 This scenario of individuals mutually acknowledging their human needs and  
187 subsequent duties has been called the duty of mutual aid (Herman 1993). In this  
188 context, reciprocity and expectations are important. Such reciprocity protects the  
189 altruist, even though it might provide a less than perfectly noble motive for her  
190 good deeds. Reciprocal altruism is performed in the hope of obtaining a future  
191 reward, for instance in the form of assistance, and is therefore something of a  
192 hybrid between altruism and self-interest.

193 Reciprocity was examined by Marcel Mauss in his classic 1950 anthropologi-  
194 cal study *The Gift* (2002). Mauss examined gift-giving in ancient times and in  
195 more recent Roman, Jewish, Germanic and other Indo-European societies. The  
196 seemingly ubiquitous practice of gift-giving existed separately from commer-  
197 cial transactions in all these societies. He defined a gift as 'a voluntary, unre-  
198 quited surrender of resources' (Mauss 2002: 3). The apparent generosity of the  
199 gifting practices seemed to indicate very high levels of solidarity, charity and  
200 trust. However, Mauss famously concluded that in all such societies there were  
201 no free gifts. The giving of gifts engaged the giver and the receiver alike in finely  
202 woven, if implicit, obligations and commitments that reflected and resonated  
203 with the institutions of the day. Morality did not seem to enter the transaction,  
204 and the society's (unwritten) norms and expectations framed what was required  
205 in certain circumstances. Mauss established that the entire notion of a free gift  
206 was based upon a misunderstanding of the nature of such a transaction, and con-  
207 cluded that a gift that expected no return, that did nothing to enhance solidarity,  
208 was a contradiction in terms (Mauss 2002: xii). His work encourages us to con-  
209 sider that material items, whether sold or given, always retain something of the  
210 identity of the giver, and often require reciprocation in some form.

211 The work of Richard Titmuss added significantly to the understanding of altru-  
212 ism. In his book *The Gift Relationship* (1997) he attempted to counter policies that  
213 promoted the commodification of human blood. His primary aim was to advocate  
214 voluntary blood donation, which allowed people the moral choice to give blood as  
215 a 'symbolic gift of life to an unnamed stranger' (Titmuss 1997: 140). What might  
216 be regarded as particularly altruistic was that the gift of blood was to unknown  
217 individuals. Hence, it was not given to those in close relationships to whom, in  
218 Mauss's societies, one might turn in times of need. The only reward for the donors  
219 was the knowledge that they had contributed to the public good.

220 One of Titmuss's most powerful arguments was that the opportunity to behave  
221 altruistically was an essential human right. He believed that specific instruments  
222 of public policy were able to harness and encourage that crucial element of altru-  
223 ism in opposition to the 'possessive egoism of the marketplace' (Titmuss 1997:  
224 59). His plea was that people should be enabled to choose to give to unnamed  
225 strangers, and not be 'constrained by the market' (Titmuss 1997: 310). However,  
226 whether the donation of blood is a true gift that expects no return, or instead cre-  
227 tive altruism that fosters a sense of belonging to a community of assistance, is dif-  
228 ficult to establish (Scott and Seglow 2007: 111).



229 Titmuss's plea has been echoed in more recent appeals for altruistic donation  
230 (or solidarity) in the context of genetic research. Kåre Berg and Ruth Chadwick  
231 talk about a 'duty to facilitate research progress and to provide knowledge  
232 that could be crucial to the health of others' (Berg and Chadwick 2001: 320).  
233 Solidarity and equity are suggested as frameworks or paradigms in which the  
234 emphasis is on the duty of individuals and communities to participate in health  
235 research for the benefit of others. This approach might, however, contradict the  
236 post-study obligations outlined in paragraphs 14 and 17 of the Declaration of  
237 Helsinki (WMA 2008), as quoted above, given that these require benefit sharing.

238 Berg and Chadwick give two main reasons for preferring a solidarity frame-  
239 work over benefit sharing. First as noted above, no work is required to produce  
240 DNA or blood:

241 The populations, families and individuals, whose samples have formed the basis for new  
242 products and revenue, have not themselves done anything to make their samples 'valu-  
243 able'... If anything, their samples have become valuable because of work conducted by  
244 scientists (Berg and Chadwick 2001: 320).

245 Second, 'the emphasis on distribution of benefits might be seen not as an exer-  
246 cise in ... justice, but as an attempt to buy people off' (Berg and Chadwick 2001:  
247 321). The implication of 'buying people off' is that providing specific benefits to  
248 donors would entail the risk of unduly influencing individuals to participate in  
249 research. Such undue inducement is prohibited by almost all ethics guidelines,  
250 as is the commodification of the body (i.e. the possibility of obtaining money in  
251 return for body parts or bodily tissue).

252 It is difficult to see how the first point could be justified morally. At first it appears  
253 as if it might be based on John Locke's widely accepted labour-desert theory. He  
254 argued in the seventeenth century that ownership can be achieved if one mixes one's  
255 labour with otherwise unowned objects. In the *Second Treatise on Civil Government*  
256 he writes: 'As much land as a man tills, plants, improves, cultivates, and can use the  
257 product of, so much is his property' (Locke 1690: Chapter V, 'Of Property', sec-  
258 tion 32). For instance, if one looked after raspberry bushes on unowned land, one  
259 might be able to declare ownership of the bushes after a period of time. But the  
260 basis for Locke's theory is his belief that we all own our individual bodies. Hence,  
261 the labour of geneticists is not mixed with *unowned* objects. Besides, if the sam-  
262 ples were not valuable in themselves, there would be no interest in obtaining them.  
263 Assuming that value is only added later is reminiscent of debates prior to the adop-  
264 tion of the CBD. Vandana Shiva (2005: 15) wrote in this context:

265 [It is assumed] that prior to prospecting, the resources of desire were unknown, unused  
266 and without value. Using terminology derived from earlier 'prospecting' for minerals and  
267 fossil fuels, 'bioprospecting' obscures the fact that living resources are not non-renewable  
268 and are not without value prior to exploitation by global commercial interests for global  
269 markets.

270 Hence, to assume that value is only created through doing something with a  
271 resource, as scientists might, risks falling back into pre-CBD exploitative practices  
272 in relation to accessing the resources of developing countries. With the adoption of





273 the CBD, it has been legally accepted that natural resources in developing coun-  
274 tries are not unowned, only to become valuable with added (Western) labour. The  
275 fact that nobody has ‘made’ their own DNA is not therefore in itself an objection  
276 to benefit sharing.

277 The objection to benefit sharing which arises from prohibitions against undue  
278 inducement and commodification of the body is more serious. At the same time, it  
279 must be understood that benefit sharing does not mean handing over cash for DNA  
280 samples, which could be regarded as straightforward commodification. The CBD’s  
281 Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable  
282 Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (see [Chap. 2](#)) lists considera-  
283 bly fewer monetary than non-monetary benefits. The latter include collaboration  
284 in scientific research, collaboration in education and training, institutional capac-  
285 ity-building, access to scientific information, contributions to the local economy,  
286 research directed towards priority needs, such as health and food security, liveli-  
287 hood security benefits and social recognition.

288 This brings us to an important point that helps us explain why research par-  
289 ticipants in the developing world should be treated differently from those in devel-  
290 oped countries in relation to the governance of human biological resources. DNA  
291 donors from Northern countries generally benefit automatically from education  
292 and livelihood security benefits. Those contributing to medical research in the  
293 North can usually rest assured of (see [Chap. 2](#)):

- 294 • Access to ever-increasing numbers of medical interventions to achieve and  
295 maintain health, which are tailored to local health needs and (in principle)  
296 accessible to all
- 297 • Increased knowledge about human health, which is made available to citizens  
298 through general education or health campaigns.

299 Hence, the ‘altruistic’ donor in the North could be regarded as part of a com-  
300 munity which offers a fair exchange model to such donors. People experience a  
301 tangible form of reciprocity for their participation in the complex social and eco-  
302 nomic network encompassed by the health care system, reminiscent of a Maussian  
303 society, ensuring the fairness of the entire exchange. Assured of far more than the  
304 mere cup of tea and biscuit traditionally received by blood donors since Titmuss’s  
305 time, individuals from affluent countries might appear to be acting out of solidar-  
306 ity with their group, but their ostensible altruism is strongly bolstered by the fact  
307 that their contribution is virtually risk-free, and reciprocation is provided through  
308 the assurance of fair compensation via the health care system.

309 It is still the case that others may free-ride (type 1 exploitation, see [Chap. 2](#))  
310 on the willingness of research participants to donate their time or even take risks.  
311 In this regard, Berg and Chadwick (2001) are right to appeal for more solidarity  
312 within communities. But it would be highly exploitative to demand such solidar-  
313 ity from donors who are outside the fair exchange model and who contribute their  
314 DNA without receiving *any* benefit in return. Participants from an impoverished  
315 developing country are assured of none of the above benefits, and the use of their  
316 donated genetic material for the benefit of affluent, distant strangers deserves



317 critical attention, which returns us to the question: could research ethics commit-  
318 tees ensure compliance with post-study obligations (a form of benefit sharing), in  
319 order to avoid burdening medical research with further governance structures?

320 As African bioethicist Godfrey Tangwa notes:

321 In medical research the principle of justice demands fairness in the treatment of individu-  
322 als and communities and the equitable distribution of the burdens and benefits of research.  
323 This has important implications for such issues as ... post-study benefits, and long term  
324 access or distribution of the benefits of the study. These are the issues, which preoccupy  
325 every research ethics committee sitting to review a health research protocol in Africa  
326 today (Tangwa 2009: S5).

327 When assessing the question of how justice might be secured within current  
328 regulatory frameworks, it is essential to distinguish between two types of benef-  
329 it-sharing arrangements which have different compliance challenges associated  
330 with them. First, we shall consider obstacles to enforcing post-study obligations  
331 which aim to provide a successfully tested health care intervention to research  
332 participants after the study has been concluded. We term this duty ‘post-study  
333 access’. Second, we shall analyse obstacles to enforcing the provision of benefits  
334 not directly linked to the study, such as access to health care, support for the local  
335 health infrastructure or health information campaigns. These will be referred to as  
336 ‘other benefits’. We shall discuss first the challenges that apply to both benefit-  
337 sharing types, and then those that apply exclusively to either type.

### 338 **8.3 Post-study Access and Other Benefits**

339 The following challenges to implementing a benefit-sharing framework of post-  
340 study obligations apply both to giving research participants access to successfully  
341 tested interventions and to the provision of ‘other benefits’.

#### 342 **8.3.1 Whose Duty?**

343 The Declaration of Helsinki does not specify whose obligation it is to discharge  
344 post-study obligations. Is it the duty of individual researchers? After all, they are  
345 the interface between sample donors on the one hand and research studies on the  
346 other. They are also the ones with the most to gain, aside from research partici-  
347 pants. Unlike physicians, whose prime duty is the promotion and safeguarding of  
348 patient health, researchers have potentially competing obligations to their spon-  
349 sors, as well as aspirations to achieve scientific progress.

350 While the Declaration of Helsinki clearly stipulates that ‘[i]n medical research  
351 involving human subjects, the well-being of the individual research subject must take  
352 precedence over all other interests’ (WMA 2008: paragraph 6), such ‘other interests’  
353 cannot be ignored altogether. What is, however, identical in the two relationships – that



354 between doctor and patient and that between researcher and research participant – is  
355 that trust plays a major role and the relationship is often highly personal.

356 The breaking off of a relationship between researcher and research participant  
357 can be very difficult, even traumatic. If, as is frequently the case in the developing  
358 world, participation in a research study is the only way to access health care, then  
359 the end of a study implies the end of health care. In particular, researchers work-  
360 ing with AIDS patients often find it difficult to withdraw in the knowledge that  
361 those patients are likely to die from a treatable disease (Shapiro and Benatar 2005:  
362 45). Needless to say, the sense of abandonment for the research participant is even  
363 stronger, especially when the study provided the only access to health care. In the  
364 worst cases, the end of the research results in death.

365 It is in this context that post-study obligations to research participants are advoc-  
366 ated. Focus group research conducted among patients, clinical researchers and  
367 research administrators in Kenya showed that all stakeholders believed strongly  
368 that researchers had a long-term obligation to participants. ‘The rationale behind  
369 this belief – whether fear of death, inability to continue therapy, or an ethical  
370 obligation – warrants attention’ (Shaffer et al. 2006: 55). Focusing on the ethical  
371 obligations, one would argue that research participants, having contributed to the  
372 advancement of knowledge, deserve some benefit in return. This aligns with the  
373 argument for non-exploitation as advocated throughout this book.

374 Importantly, though, a number of participants in the focus groups noted spec-  
375 ifically that the loss of access to health care would result in a general loss of trust  
376 between research participants and researchers, potentially making the community  
377 unwilling to participate in research at all (NBAC 2001: 59). Both sides consider  
378 it unacceptable to abandon, at the end of a study, research participants who are in  
379 dire need of medical attention.

380 In terms of who has how much invested in the relationship, it might there-  
381 fore make sense to allocate post-study obligations to researchers. However, these  
382 could also be among the duties of research funders and sponsors, who, one would  
383 assume, are best placed to find the resources to discharge such obligations.

384 One of the few countries with binding national law on post-study obligations  
385 is Brazil (see Chap. 3). In 1997, a resolution by that country’s National Health  
386 Council set the following stipulation:

387 Access to the medicine being tested must be assured by the sponsor or by the institution,  
388 researcher, or promoter, if there is no sponsor, in the event its superiority to the conven-  
389 tional treatment is proven (National Health Council 1997: article IV.1(m)).

390 The Declaration of Helsinki lacks a similarly clear assignment of duties to a  
391 specified group. One might argue that this allows the flexibility needed in guide-  
392 lines that must apply all over the world. In practice, however, this flexibility is  
393 partly responsible for the ineffectiveness of the guideline and the concomitant lack  
394 of good practice examples for post-study obligations. If the commitment to benefit  
395 sharing re-emphasized in the 2008 Declaration of Helsinki is to be effective, then  
396 research ethics committees need to know whose duty it is to provide access to suc-  
397 cessfully tested interventions or ‘other benefits’ in order to ensure compliance.



### 398 **8.3.2 Insufficient Capacity for Review**

399 Concerns about workload and personnel resources are factors that detract from  
400 the effectiveness of research ethics committees even in affluent settings (Schuppli  
401 and Fraser 2007). It is therefore not surprising that ethics committees in develop-  
402 ing countries often lack the resources to give adequate attention to ethical review.  
403 A study published in 2009 that examined the effectiveness and training needs of  
404 African research ethics committees concluded that the ‘major constraints identi-  
405 fied are shortage of resources and inadequate training of the ERC [ethical review  
406 committee] members’ (Nyika et al. 2009: 193). The study also summarized the  
407 constraints hindering the adequate review of study protocols in African settings.  
408 Table 8.1 lists the constraints in order of perceived gravity: that is, the first con-  
409 straint is the one noted by the highest number of respondents.

410 Other studies have also shown that ‘the capacity to conduct ethical review in  
411 developing countries needs to be developed or enhanced’ (Hyder et al. 2004).  
412 Evidently, insufficient resources, lack of expertise and so on can render the protection  
413 of human research participants unreliable or even non-existent. Under these circum-  
414 stances, it is unlikely that research ethics committees in developing countries would  
415 be in a position to enforce the requirement of benefit sharing. In order to carry out  
416 this task, they would need investment in both infrastructure and training. As the next  
417 subsection will show, this issue is particularly problematic when research ethics com-  
418 mittees in the country of the research funder or sponsor are likely to ignore the obli-  
419 gation. Encouragingly, though, a funding stream from the European and Developing  
420 Countries Clinical Trials Partnership is successfully funding the establishment of new  
421 ethics committees in Africa and capacity-building for existing committees.<sup>6</sup>

### 422 **8.3.3 US Withdrawal from Post-study Obligations**

423 The previous chapter suggested that an expansion of the provisions of the CBD to  
424 include human biological resources would close an important gap in the interna-  
425 tional legal framework. It would establish an *inclusive* approach to biodiversity,  
426 both human and non-human, bring legal clarity to a contentious area and, most  
427 importantly, provide a way forward when a spectrum of genetic resources are used  
428 by various industries (e.g. when a product is developed using plant and human  
429 genetic resources).

430 As noted in the beginning of this chapter, the US is virtually the only country  
431 that is not a party to the CBD. At the same time, the US is the leading innovation  
432 economy in the world. For instance, the 2011 *World Intellectual Property Indicators*  
433 showed that 24% of all patents world-wide were granted by the US Patent and  
434 Trademark Office (WIPO 2011). In 2008, however, the US government effectively

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<sup>6</sup> See the partnership’s website at <http://www.edctp.org>.

**Table 8.1** Constraints on African Research Ethics Committees

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Insufficient resources
Expertise on ethical review lacking
Pressure from researchers
Lack of active or consistent participation by members
Lack of recognition of importance of committee functions
Lack of support from institute concerned
Insufficient independence
Pressure from sponsors
Unequal treatment of applicants in review

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Source Nyika et al. (2009) (modified)

435 opted out of the Declaration of Helsinki when the US Food and Drug Administration  
436 discontinued its reliance on the declaration and issued independent Guidelines for  
437 Good Clinical Practice. The new guidelines omit the two standard benefit-sharing  
438 principles of the Declaration of Helsinki, namely post-study access to successfully  
439 tested interventions and the requirement that research, particularly in developing  
440 countries, must benefit local communities and be responsive to local health needs  
441 (Kimmelman et al. 2009). This means that US government requirements for the treat-  
442 ment of research participants are now in direct conflict with the prescriptions of the  
443 Declaration of Helsinki (aside from the fact that the US is not a party to the CBD).

444 This development could mean that US research ethics committees (or institutional  
445 review boards) will in general put less pressure on researchers to describe compliance  
446 with post-study obligations in study protocols than their international counterparts  
447 that fully subscribe to the Declaration of Helsinki. While this is a serious concern,  
448 resource provider states are not entirely powerless in relation to compliance where  
449 they rely on ethics review. US researchers, like any others, require local ethics review  
450 in order to access human genetic resources. Such local ethics review (for instance  
451 in Kenya, Thailand or Bolivia) can, if well informed and decisive enough, provide  
452 approval only on condition that benefits to research participants and local communi-  
453 ties are explicitly articulated. This strategy presents a distinct advantage over CBD  
454 expansion. In fact, strong ethics committees or national legislation in developing  
455 countries (see for instance Brazil's benefit-sharing legislation as outlined in Chap. 3)  
456 can enforce benefit-sharing compliance *now*, without additional legal frameworks.

### 457 8.3.4 Timeliness of Research

458 A related advantage of utilizing ethics review to achieve benefit-sharing compli-  
459 ance is that the procedure needs to be undertaken by researchers in any case. For  
460 instance, informed consent documentation and risk-benefit ratios will always be  
461 checked by an ethics review committee whether or not benefit sharing is *also* regu-  
462 lated through independent mechanisms. Adding benefit-sharing information to that



463 already required in the protocol in terms of the Declaration of Helsinki puts only a  
464 limited extra burden on the existing approval process.

465 Assuming that benefit-sharing requirements for human research participants  
466 were to be regulated through the CBD framework, another approval process would  
467 have to be added. According to Laird and Wynberg (2008), '[t]he negotiation of  
468 consent and benefit sharing agreements between those who access and those who  
469 provide non-human genetic resources takes on average 1–2 years and sometimes  
470 longer' This would be a significant additional burden with considerable impact on  
471 the timeliness of research. Especially in health research, such delays can be highly  
472 detrimental to global public health and individual patients.

## 473 **8.4 Post-study Access**

474 The constraints we have listed so far concern enforcing the provision of post-study  
475 access to successfully tested interventions and 'other benefits'. However, some  
476 challenges are limited to ensuring post-study access.

### 477 ***8.4.1 Unrealistic Timeframe for Post-study Access***

478 By the time a post-study obligation becomes relevant, some of the researchers  
479 involved are likely to have left the study site and even the country. In 'helicopter  
480 research' (flying in and out of locations, for instance in a current epidemic),  
481 researchers leave as soon as the data is obtained. Many research units have long-  
482 standing collaborations with host countries, but some do not, leaving research eth-  
483 ics committees with no recourse to researchers after the completion of their study.  
484 In any case, it takes on average a decade to bring a drug to market (Trade and  
485 Industry Select Committee 2002). To be required to return to participants a decade  
486 after the study to see whether they are in need of the developed intervention is  
487 rather unrealistic and cumbersome to say the least. More importantly, for the pur-  
488 poses of this chapter, it would be highly unrealistic to expect research ethics com-  
489 mittees to ensure compliance ten years after a project's completion.

### 490 ***8.4.2 Inbuilt Unfairness in Post-study Access: The Research*** 491 ***Participant***

492 Research ethics committees aim to protect *all* human research participants from  
493 exploitation, not just some.

494 Failure rates in drug development are extremely high. Of those developments  
495 that make it into clinical trials, 38% fail Phase I (safety), 60% of the remainder fail



496 Phase II (basic efficacy), 40% of the rest fail Phase III (comprehensive efficacy)  
497 and 23% of those still in the running will not be approved by the relevant health  
498 agency (Lowe 2004). As a result, the chances for any individual participant that  
499 the particular research she or he was involved in will actually lead to a marketable  
500 product are very slim, particularly for donors of biological materials in the early  
501 phases of research, and participants in Phase I and II drug trials.

502 Even if post-study access could be assured a decade after a study's completion,  
503 it would only benefit those research participants lucky enough to have been part of  
504 bench-to-bed research which overcame all hurdles smoothly. But since those whose  
505 participation shows that a product is unsafe or not efficacious contribute as much to  
506 medical research as their luckier counterparts, one cannot argue that only the latter  
507 are entitled to benefit sharing – and there is no way to predict which participants  
508 will fall into which category. By the time a research ethics committee can establish  
509 which participants will not have an option of post-study access, it is likely to be too  
510 late to ensure any other benefits either. The committees are therefore restricted in  
511 their ability to provide equitable protection for *all* research participants.

512 A related problem is that of involvement in basic research, which is not likely  
513 to lead directly to any new medical interventions. In this case, however, research  
514 ethics committees could opt for the choice of 'other benefits' from the start.

### 515 **8.4.3 *Inbuilt Unfairness in Post-study Access and Possible*** 516 ***Side Effects***

517 It has been argued that imposing post-study obligations on researchers or their spon-  
518 sors could mean that developing country research focused on local health needs  
519 would not be undertaken due to prohibitive costs (Brody 2002: 2857; McMillan  
520 and Conlon 2004: 206). One could respond with Solomon Benatar that '[r]equiring  
521 greater sensitivity to the plight of the poor and some degree of solidarity with them  
522 is not an excessive moral requirement' (Shapiro and Benatar 2005: 42).

523 However, this could mean that attempts to achieve compliance with the ben-  
524 efit-sharing regulations of the Declaration of Helsinki in order to achieve justice  
525 for resource providers in line with the CBD might be self-defeating. Currently,  
526 the demand to provide post-study access to successfully tested interventions  
527 applies equally to researchers who are using charitable funds to develop drugs  
528 for neglected diseases that only exist in, say, South East Asia, and pharmaceuti-  
529 cal companies running clinical trials in developing countries for diseases that are  
530 prevalent and widespread in the North. However, the former is arguably not a case  
531 of exploitation, whereas the latter could be. Benefit sharing is intended to be an  
532 instrument to mitigate such exploitation. Yet if the mechanism is so coarse that it  
533 makes valuable (and arguably non-exploitative) research prohibitively costly, then  
534 enforcing benefit sharing through ethics review could undermine global efforts to  
535 realise access to locally tailored health care. In this case, the global injustice in



536 terms of access to health care could deepen rather than lessen, and concentrating  
537 on smaller details could cause the bigger picture to be overlooked.

538 Based on the three challenges to post-study access discussed above, one could  
539 venture that ‘other benefits’ may be a more promising and consistent benefit-shar-  
540 ing tool for research ethics committees to require.

## 541 8.5 Other Benefits

542 In practice, when benefit sharing is addressed through ethics review, ‘other ben-  
543 efits’ are generally thought to be a more realistic arrangement than post-study  
544 access. The most common example of this type of benefit sharing is access to  
545 health care during a study, as was and is the case for the Majengo sex workers (see  
546 Chap. 5). However, there are two problems here.

547 First, the latest (2008) Declaration of Helsinki may inadvertently have  
548 restricted the use of ‘other benefits’ as a benefit-sharing mechanism. The 2004  
549 declaration required study protocols to include information on post-trial access or  
550 ‘other benefits’, and imposed no restrictions on what might constitute ‘other ben-  
551 efits’. It did not exclude, for example, health care during or after a study. By con-  
552 trast, paragraph 33 of the 2008 declaration states:

553 *At the conclusion of the study, patients ... are entitled ... to share any benefits that result*  
554 *from it, for example, access to interventions identified as beneficial in the study or to other*  
555 *appropriate care or benefits’ (WMA 2008: paragraph 33) (our emphasis).*

556 This formulation aligns with the general usage of terms, as one usually speaks  
557 of *post*-study obligations. However, it means that comprehensive health care deliv-  
558 ered *during* a study, even a longitudinal study, is no longer included under ‘other  
559 benefits’ as a benefit-sharing mechanism.<sup>7</sup> Yet many of the Nairobi sex workers  
560 interviewed in the course of our research indicated that access to health care was  
561 an important benefit they received in return for donating samples (see Box 8.1).

562 Box 8.1 Comments from sex workers in Majengo on the provision of free  
563 health care<sup>8</sup>

- 564 • I don’t pay for the medicine, I don’t do anything with respect to them, but  
565 they give me medicine. When I get some little ailment, they help me.  
566 • I came and joined the clinic and I have been helped a lot. I used to have

<sup>7</sup> Of course, one could argue that comprehensive health care during a study offers too little in terms of benefit sharing. However, where comprehensive health care is offered to study participants and their families, sometimes for decades, as is the case with some Nairobi sex workers, the fair exchange model available to donors from affluent countries is being approximated.

<sup>8</sup> Interviews with Majengo research participants, GenBenefit, April 2007.





- 567 bad headaches, you know when your immunity goes down you get other  
568 ailments and they are worse than normal ... but once you know your sta-  
569 tus you can come and be treated quickly before it gets worse... So I'm  
570 grateful to this clinic, it has done us a lot of good.
- 571 • Yes, treatment. I get it for free; if they want to carry out some research  
572 and they need blood they give us bus fare because the appointed day may  
573 come to take your blood or urine sample and you may not be able because  
574 you don't have bus fare.
  - 575 • I expected treatment, free of charge. Every time I fall sick I come for  
576 treatment and it's free.
  - 577 • They just passed by telling people on the streets, and I learned there is  
578 a clinic for helping people to detect diseases and in return they use your  
579 blood for research. We agreed that it is OK.
  - 580 • You see, they usually check us down there to see how we are getting on;  
581 you could be developing something. So you get to know about it early  
582 enough and save yourself. That for me is a benefit.
  - 583 • No, I did not expect money or such things, just treatment.
  - 584 • They give us free medicine because of the nature of our work. If you have  
585 a problem they help you.
  - 586 • Because that is what I need. That is what is important, they give me what  
587 I would otherwise not be able to get [treatment].
  - 588 • I was told I would get benefits of [testing for and treatment of] communi-  
589 cable diseases. If I am found with them, I would be treated, there is a doc-  
590 tor here, and there is medicine...
  - 591 • Yes, I am satisfied because when I come here I get a cheerful doctor who  
592 I can confide in without fear and tell her about my pains, and when I have  
593 problems there is a counsellor I can go and talk to and [s]he counsels me  
594 until I am satisfied... I like this clinic because since we realized the ben-  
595 efits of the clinic, we try to bring many people so that they too can ben-  
596 efit. And the benefits I get from this clinic have also helped me in doing  
597 my work. I can protect myself against infections according to how we are  
598 advised at the clinic and I also teach others so that they can protect them-  
599 selves too.
  - 600 • We have a very nice doctor, sisters, they all welcome us in the clinic.
  - 601 • For me I see that the benefits I would expect is treatment because what-  
602 ever kind of sickness I get I am treated. So this clinic has a lot of benefits.
  - 603 • I don't think there should be any other kind of benefits ... we are given  
604 free medicine, free treatment.
  - 605 • I think it's forever, because there are some women I have heard saying  
606 they have been here since 1986. So it can go on forever, that is so long as  
607 you are going to sponsor it [Interviewer: So you will be getting these free  
608 services forever?] Yes, hopefully! God willing. [Laughter].
  - 609 • I don't know what I will do if they close down.



610 If the emphasis in the Declaration of Helsinki is on *post*-sharing of benefits,  
611 some of the challenges of securing post-study access (for example, the unrealistic  
612 timeframe) would now also apply to ‘other benefits’. In other words, if only those  
613 benefits delivered *after* a study is completed count towards benefit sharing, seek-  
614 ing compliance through an ethics review committee could become difficult, as the  
615 committee usually ceases its monitoring work once the research is complete.

616 Second, offering access to health care as a benefit to participants could violate  
617 undue inducement prohibitions, a topic we have considered before (see [Chaps. 2](#)  
618 and [5](#)). When undertaking research on economically disadvantaged or otherwise  
619 vulnerable populations possibly suffering from hunger or malnutrition, and lack-  
620 ing access even to elementary health care, any prospect of health care (for exam-  
621 ple, a general check-up as part of being enlisted in a study) can be regarded as  
622 an undue inducement. It is no surprise that UNESCO’s Universal Declaration on  
623 Bioethics and Human Rights includes two requirements of benefit sharing: first,  
624 that ‘[b]enefits resulting from any scientific research and its applications should be  
625 shared with society as a whole and within the international community, in particular  
626 with developing countries’, but, secondly, that those ‘[b]enefits should not consti-  
627 tute improper inducements to participate in research’ (UNESCO 2005: article 15).

628 Some international guidelines, such as the International Ethical Guidelines  
629 for Biomedical Research Involving Human Subjects issued by the Council for  
630 International Organizations of Medical Science (CIOMS), accept that research  
631 participants may receive free medical services. However, CIOMS also notes that  
632 these services should not be ‘so extensive as to induce prospective subjects to con-  
633 sent to participate in the research against their better judgment’ (CIOMS 2002:  
634 guideline 7). And research has shown – unsurprisingly – that the need to access  
635 medical services can amount to pressure to join research studies in developing  
636 countries. One cannot reliably determine how many participants actually take part  
637 ‘against their better judgement’, but it is clear that many feel they effectively have  
638 no choice. As one of the Majengo research participants said, ‘I don’t know what I  
639 will do if they close down.’

640 When 347 Ugandan parents with children enrolled in a malaria study were  
641 asked whether they had felt coerced to join, more than half said they had ‘felt  
642 pressure to enrol their children because of the child’s sickness’ (Pace and Emanuel  
643 2005). As Annas and Grodin (1998) have formulated it,

644 in the absence of health care, virtually any offer of medical assistance (even in the guise  
645 of research) will be accepted as ‘better than nothing’ and research will almost inevitably  
646 be confused with treatment.

647 Ironically, strict prohibitions against undue inducement lead to a rather para-  
648 doxical result. The poorer a community is, the smaller the benefits that can be  
649 offered without potentially exercising undue influence on the decision to par-  
650 ticipate. The conflict here occurs because participants are meant to be protected  
651 against undue inducement on the one hand and exploitation on the other. Yet limit-  
652 ing benefit-sharing possibilities gives research sponsors who outsource research to  
653 developing countries a convenient ‘ethical’ argument for limiting the benefits to



654 study participants (Ballantyne 2008: 190). As long as this paradox remains unre-  
655 solved, ethics committees will not be in a position to decide definitively whether  
656 the ‘other benefits’ in a given case constitute benefit sharing or an undue induce-  
657 ment. This makes it extremely difficult for committees to play their governance  
658 role successfully.

659 The authors of this chapter are continuing their research on the potential ten-  
660 sion between benefit sharing for human genetic resources and undue inducement.  
661 They are already satisfied, however, that it is possible to provide benefit sharing  
662 while avoiding undue inducement. The commodification of the body can indeed  
663 open up further opportunities for exploitation, especially in developing coun-  
664 tries. An example would be paid surrogate pregnancy, when Indian mothers, for  
665 instance, carry babies for affluent mothers in the North (Taneja 2008). But such  
666 commodification can be avoided by prohibiting one-to-one financial gain from a  
667 research transaction. If individual donors for DNA were given no cash except for  
668 legitimate expenses, the risk of undue inducement would be much reduced.

669 What, then, might legitimate benefit sharing that avoids undue inducement look  
670 like? Here it is important to look at two of the main reasons for legislating against  
671 undue inducement (see Chap. 2): namely, that research participants might accept a  
672 risk (usually to their health) that would not otherwise be acceptable, and that they  
673 would then participate in research against their better judgement.

674 It has already been noted that the donation of human genetic resources carries  
675 minimal risk and imposes a minimal burden.<sup>9</sup> Hence, the foundation of the undue  
676 inducement principle does not apply to access to genetic resources in the same  
677 way as it applies to enrolling in Phase I clinical trials. If risk reduction can only be  
678 achieved by restricting benefits to research participants (as, for instance, in bur-  
679 densome, risky trials involving healthy volunteers), minimal risk studies can con-  
680 centrate more on benefit sharing than misplaced concerns about undue  
681 inducement. Access to health care for research participants and their local commu-  
682 nities is therefore the ideal benefit to be shared with the donors of human biologi-  
683 cal resources. Through such benefit sharing, they would come one step closer to  
684 the fair exchange model that exists between medical researchers in the North and  
685 their research participants. Global research without borders would then contribute  
686 to global justice without borders when it comes to access to health care. At least  
687 *some* additional access to health care, *some* new health care facilities and *some*  
688 health care training and education could be achieved this way.

689 At the same time, it is essential to note that benefit sharing cannot resolve deep-  
690 seated issues of distributive injustice or human rights issues that render national  
691 governments unable to respect, protect, and fulfil the human right to access to  
692 health care. For this reason, we shall present in Chap. 9 an example of a reform  
693 plan that provides a way forward for increasing the availability of life-saving medi-  
694 cines for the poor, with the potential to close the health care gap between develop-  
695 ing and developed countries.

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<sup>9</sup> Some exceptions, as outlined in Chap. 2 xx, would have to be dealt with separately, for instance where blood might have sacred meaning.



696 **8.6 Conclusion**

697 Can compliance with benefit-sharing obligations as outlined in the Declaration of  
698 Helsinki be achieved through ethical review? As we have seen, the obstacles are  
699 manifold. In particular, post-study access does not seem to be a promising sce-  
700 nario, given the unrealistic timeframes and the potential for injustice. ‘Other benef-  
701 its’ are a more realistic option, in particular the provision of comprehensive health  
702 care during long-term studies. In order to strengthen the capacity of ethics review  
703 to ensure benefit sharing, we submit the following recommendations:

- 704 • Research ethics committees and other parties need to know whose duty it is  
705 to discharge post-study obligations. This could be specified in the Declaration  
706 of Helsinki, Specification in national law (as in Brazil) is another possibility.  
707 Solutions should be integrated with local health systems in developing countries  
708 so that research sponsors and local authorities understand their specific roles in  
709 providing health care to populations.
- 710 • Effective research ethics committees require adequate resources, training and  
711 time to fulfil their important roles. As studies have shown, this cannot be taken  
712 for granted in developing countries. There is already a pressing need to facilitate  
713 innovative ways of offering training and education in research ethics. As well as supporting  
714 and enhancing current training programmes it will be essential to build up a cadre of trainers  
715 located in developing countries, as well as establishing a process of mentoring for local eth-  
716 ics committees (Bhutta 2004).
- 717 • In addition, further ways of providing financial support to ethics committees in  
718 developing countries need to be found.
- 719 • Applying post-study obligations to all types of research without further refine-  
720 ment would be unlikely to achieve broad acceptance of the duties entailed and  
721 may even lead to new injustices, in particular if valuable publicly funded  
722 research tailored to Type III diseases<sup>10</sup> were abandoned in developing countries.  
723 Such research could attract exemptions or waivers from post-study obligations,  
724 as they already comply with fairness requirements.
- 725 • The tension between benefit sharing and undue inducement needs to be resolved  
726 for developing countries. The ideal solution would be the global success of the  
727 fair exchange model between the health care industry, human research partici-  
728 pants and national governments: human research participants show solidarity  
729 with others (Knoppers 2000; Berg and Chadwick 2001) by taking part in medi-  
730 cal research and are rewarded, like their fellow citizens, with the fruits of medi-  
731 cal progress, generated through industry and partly funded through national  
732 governments. In such circumstances, concerns about undue inducements would  
733 be restricted to substantial monetary rewards and other excessive remunerations.
- 734 • However, as long as this ideal solution remains no more than an aspira-  
735 tion, ways must be found to avoid the exploitation of research participants in

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<sup>10</sup> Type III diseases are those that occur exclusively or overwhelmingly in poor countries.



736 developing countries. One such way is to promote access to health care, as well  
737 as health care training and education, as a standard and legitimate means of  
738 sharing benefits for research involving minimal risk. To substantiate this recom-  
739 mendation, one could argue that CIOMS supports it indirectly.

740 When research interventions or procedures that do not hold out the prospect of direct  
741 benefit present more than minimal risk, all parties involved in the research – sponsors,  
742 investigators and ethical review committees – in both funding and host countries should  
743 be careful to avoid undue material inducement (CIOMS 2002: guideline 7, commentary).

- 744 • In other words, concerns about undue inducement – which essentially aim to  
745 avoid a situation where participants take risks with their health, against their  
746 better judgement, in order to qualify for a benefit – are much less problematic  
747 when a research intervention poses only minimal risk (for example, sample  
748 donation). In such cases, the provision of health care (however extensive and  
749 for however long) should not count as an undue inducement. On the contrary, it  
750 should count as desirable benefit sharing.
- 751 • Overall, it is important not to lose sight of the bigger picture when discussing  
752 benefit sharing. Research sponsors and funders are, after all, not the main duty  
753 bearers for providing health care to those who cannot afford it. It is essential  
754 to support and strengthen the capacity of national governments to discharge  
755 their duties with regard to the right to health. Such support efforts should go  
756 far beyond the monitoring of post-study obligations through research ethics  
757 committees and concentrate on other factors, for instance the fact that – with  
758 reference to the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property  
759 Rights (TRIPS) and free trade agreements (FTAs) – ‘TRIPS and FTAs have had  
760 an adverse impact on prices and availability of medicines, making it difficult for  
761 countries to comply with their obligations to respect, protect, and fulfil the right  
762 to health’ (Grover 2009: paragraph 94). The next chapter will introduce a reform  
763 plan which aims to contribute a part-solution to this problem.
- 764 • Last, but not least, Martin Luther King’s country of birth, the United States,  
765 should be put under pressure for opting out of the benefit-sharing frameworks of  
766 the CBD and the Declaration of Helsinki.

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