

Blog 1 – PDF Version:

"Introduction to the PIRL Project"

September 2019

Welcome to the PIRL project and the PIRL Team and to the growing PIRL Network.

We are so excited about this project! I am immensely grateful for the opportunity to work with this amazing group of people from around the world.

We hope that you will explore our website, share suggestions, projects, and resources to learn more about what we are doing together and to grow our community of practice.

We are thinking a lot these days about what research in disability-inclusive development is all about, and why it is important. Here are some ideas about what it is:

- **Participatory** – The people who are impacted most by the research are included at all stages of the research process – from conceptualizing and designing a project to collecting and analyzing data and information, to sharing and using the results. It means looking for ways to make participation possible.
- **Inclusive** – Strives to find ways to include people who learn and work in a variety of ways. DID research provides opportunities for people in different stages of their career and with diverse reasons for engaging in research to be part of the research
- **Relevant** and **Action-oriented** – Focused on issues and topics that matter in everyday life in our communities. This is research that aims to improve situations, especially for those who have been marginalized.
- **Equity seeking** – These research processes and teams think about how to collaborate across huge differences in access to resources and situations where research is highly valued or less valued, in addition to the topic being researched.
- **"Slow research"** – Just as there is a 'Slow movement', we are increasingly thinking about this kind of approach to research as being 'slow research' – not that it goes as slowly as possible but that

research is better when we appreciate that our work is better when we do it at the right pace. It means not just doing things as quickly as possible. It means asking: *What is a reasonable timeline for this project?* DID research is not research that can be quickly done. Inclusive research takes time: to build relationships, to get enough funding, and to work out the best possible strategies. We are not saying we always get it right, but we are trying.

How can the PIRL Project and Network help you?

I really hope that you will learn from and contribute to this project. What kinds of learning opportunities and resources are you and your team looking for?

Where ever you are in the world (our goal is to get people on all continents involved in the PIRL Network), or whatever stage of learning about DID research you are at (just starting or well experienced or somewhere in between), we would love to hear from you.

We welcome your ideas and suggestions.

Write to pirl@utoronto.ca or contact any of the PIRL team members.

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Lynn Cockburn, PhD, is an occupational therapist, educator, and researcher in the Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy at the University of Toronto. Her research interests focus on public health, community development, diversity, and interprofessional education in occupational therapy, rehabilitation, disability in Canada and Cameroon. In addition to her work at the University of Toronto, Lynn is Chair of ICDR-Cameroon of the International Centre for Disability and Rehabilitation. She has been involved in social inclusion, education, and research in the North West Region of Cameroon for over 15 years, collaborating with a number of organizations in the region.