

# **Sustainability, Scholarly Ethics, and North-South Divide: A Search for Connections**

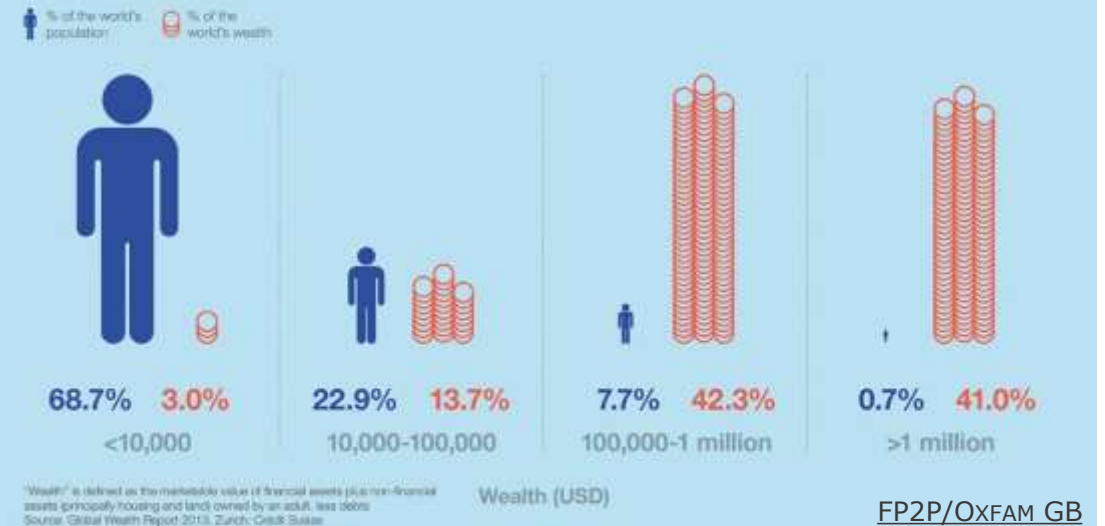
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**Session: Working towards a more ethical information community | NISO Plus 2022 | 15 February 2022 | Virtual**



# How is the **world's wealth** shared amongst its population?

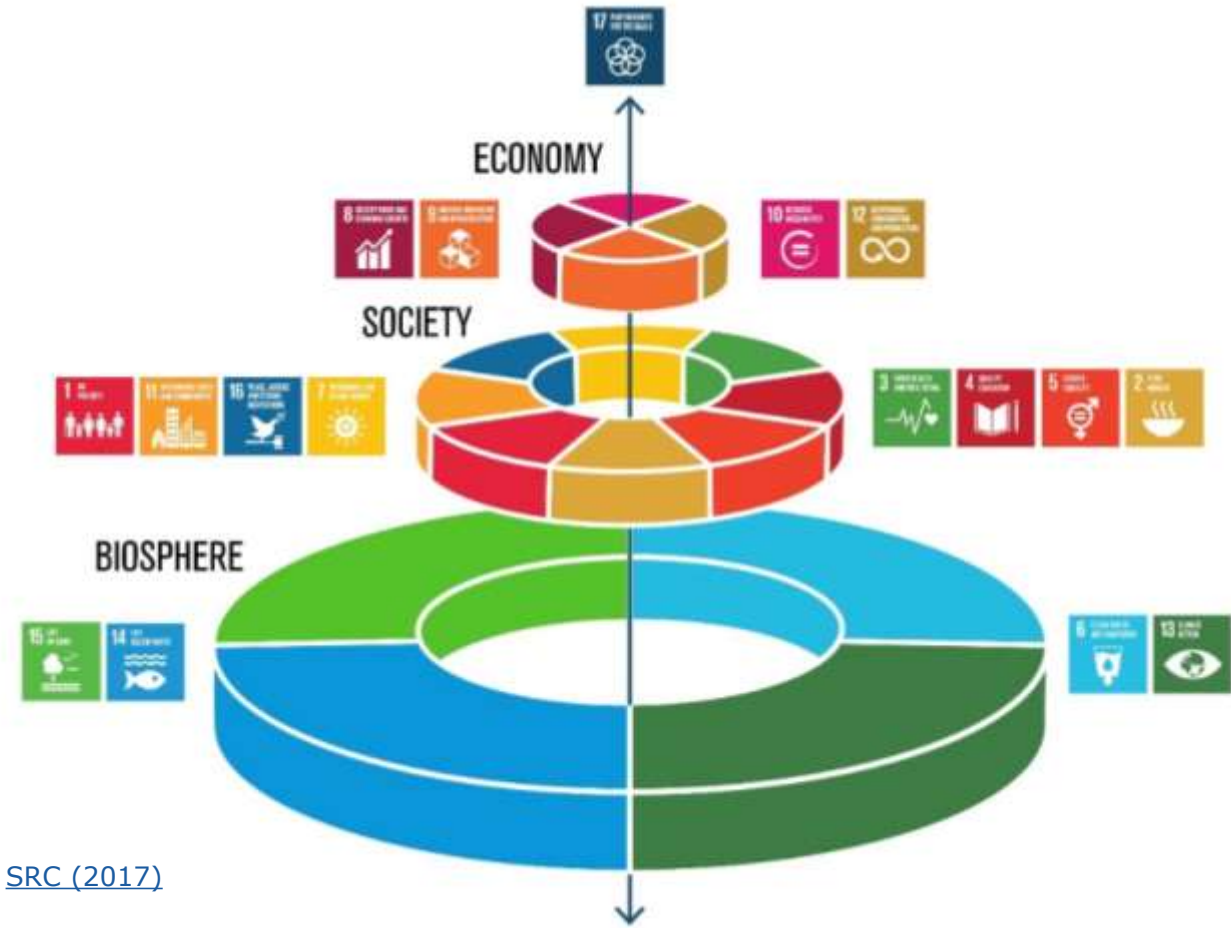




# United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Framework

A framework that connect a wide range of our social, economic, and environmental **concerns** and **aspirations**!

Research and access to information are core to **attaining** and **measuring** that effort.



# Research System



Access	Conduct
Use	Communicate

## Research Communication has different Ethical Dimensions (e.g., COPE Guidelines)

- **Authorship** – Disputes | Malpractices
- **Editorial process**
- **Peer review** – Anonymization | Open | Community | Payment for reviewers | Exploitation | Predatory
- **Editorial Board** – Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility
- **Relationships** among Society, its journal, publisher
- **Research integrity** – Roles of journals and host institutions
- **Retraction**
- **Misconduct investigation**

Access	Conduct
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## Progresses — Reducing North-South Divide

- **In accessing research** – E.g., Research4Life giving access to those, who couldn't access otherwise (LMICs). Many subscription journal publishers joined in.
- **In publishing research** – OA publishers giving APC waivers & discounts to researchers of LMICs
- **Regional OA journals** – Enhancing geographical equity

# But, do they sound ethical?

Access	Conduct
Use	Communicate

## Peer-review System

Scholarly publishing asks peer-reviewers to be the guardians of quality assurance of research **for free** in the name of academic or scholarly responsibility. But, **charging** readers/institutions thousands of dollars to read a journal OR authors thousands of dollars to publish an article

### Peer-reviewer

I peer-reviewed an manuscript, but I **don't have access** to that article when it is published.

### Accessing Information

A research was done on my country, on my people, but my country **doesn't have access** to that published article.

## Change in Country Status

Under a programme, my LIC country is accessing thousands of journals for free, and waiver on APCs. All will change when it becomes MIC in 2030. But, the change in economic status **doesn't mean a change** in country's research system and investment.

Access	Conduct
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**Can we have an ethical information or research community without reducing the North-South divide while meeting the SDGs?**

**Are we contextualizing the ethical considerations of the North for the South?**



# Are we ready to respond .....

Access	Conduct
Use	Communicate

1

Researchers of a LMIC say – *we will access global research, but will publish only locally.* **Can you say it is unethical because it exploits free access to global literature?**

4

Southern researchers become authors only by supplying research materials. **Shall we appreciate it in the name of scholarly inclusion?**

5

Southern governments are reluctant to evidence-guided policy and practice change. **How will it jeopardize the role of research in achieving the SDGs?**

2

High APCs are also creating “nationalistic scholarly isolation”. **Can you blame the South for this?**

3

Southern institutions demand – their researchers must publish 50% of their research in local/regional journals. **Will it deprive researchers from enjoying their freedom to publish?**

6

**Can we expect Southern researchers to abide by the ethical guidelines articulated by the North without helping them to change their systems?**

## So, to become a more ethical scholarly society, we need to .....

- 1) Create a **collective narrative** of scholarly ethics with regional and international partners to contextualize the South's issues and concerns.
- 2) Work with the South to support its **understanding and capacity** of scholarly standards, needs for structural changes, and evidence-guided actions for the SDGs.
- 3) Look beyond our current networks in the North. We need to learn from, capitalize on, and harness a diverse pool of regional and international **perspectives and expertise**.

IRFANULLAH (DEC 2021)

We need to change the narrative of ethics  
in scholarly communication!

We – the North and the South – need to  
**meet in the middle!**

IRFANULLAH (SEP 2021)

# Thank You

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