



Strategic Business Plan

September 2021

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1. CONTEXT

EthiXPERT aims to build responsible and ethical research capacity in and for Africa. Research Ethics is fundamental for health, quality of life, and social development. To this end, EthiXPERT is devoted to building capacity in responsible conduct of research by providing training and developing relevant tools to facilitate knowledge and skills development to health and social research stakeholders in Africa, including research institutions, institutions of higher learning, researchers, research integrity officers, research ethics committees and research administrators, among others. We acknowledge that research is dynamic, expensive and competitive. As such, no single individual, organisation, or government can single-handedly realize the desired optimal health standards, quality of life, and social development without the support of other institutions and society. EthiXPERT, therefore, wishes to partner with relevant role-players, including decision-makers, research institutions, implementing agencies, and funding organisations to identify significant research gaps and to develop and deliver sustainable and culturally acceptable evidence-based solutions.

2. VISION

VISION STATEMENT

Inspiring responsible and ethical research capacity in and for Africa.

3. MISSION

MISSION STATEMENT

Build institutions in Africa's capabilities to deliver responsible and ethical research to address existing health and social challenges facing Africa.

4. COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

African formation for Africa: Enhancing Ethical research capacity in and for Africa.

Ethical Research Expertise: Qualified strong core team from Africa

Unique: No one like EthiXPERT in Africa to provide African ethical research solutions

Non-Profit Organization: Best Ethical research practices are at the core of EthiXPERT than profit maximization and self-interest.

Strategic Alliances: Strong collaboration links with the Council on Health Research for Development (COHRED), which helps build the capacity of low and middle-income countries in research and innovation

Unique and Responsive Product: Owns RHInnO *Ethics* online platform, facilitating an efficient, ethical review clearance of clinical research involving human subjects. It aims to speed up the review process by improving the quality and efficiency of ethics reviews. The system provides research ethics committees with a secure, web-based solution for tracking research applications throughout the entire life-cycle of the research project.

5. CORE VALUES

- Botho
- Care
- Integrity
- Collaboration
- Fairness

6. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals specify the expected outcome while the objectives indicate which factors contribute towards it.

GOAL 1: Building responsible and ethical research capacity in and for Africa by:

- Objective 1.1: Collaborate with similar organisations in Africa and Globally
- Objective 1.2: Assist relevant institutions to develop and build capacity for responsible and ethical research
- Objective 1.3 Provide capacity development courses and other interventions to build the capacity of researchers in Africa
- Objective 1.4: Provide training to research ethics stakeholders on best practice in ethics review, protection of research participants and responsible conduct of research

GOAL 2: Securing funding and maintain financial sustainability in pursuit to fulfil the organisational mission

- Objective 2.1: Create and manage a funding mechanism to intensify the implementation of the Company's core objectives in Africa;

GOAL 3: Brand Awareness and Market Recognition

- Objective 3.1: Have an up-to-date Marketing Plan
- Objective3.2: Create a presence on Social Media Platforms (Instagram and Facebook)
- Objective 3.3: Have an up-to date website
- Objective 3.4: Attend and present at relevant research ethics conferences

GOAL 4: Good governance and accountability

- Objective 4.1: Adhere to principles of good governance that will be reflected in the operations of EthiXPERT and culminate in an annual integrated report
- Objective 4.2: Ensure sustainability of EthiXPERT through sound financial systems, performance and clean audits
- Objective 4.3: Attract, develop and retain talented staff
- Objective 4.4: Provide quality service to clients/users of products

7. STAKEHOLDERS

- Governments and/or government departments
- People active in the field of research
- Those actively involved in promoting research ethics through research and research administration
- Decision makers in academic institutions
- Policymakers working in the field of research, research ethics and responsible conduct of research
- Decision makers can also include research managers (not only in HEIs by also elsewhere)
- Research Ethics Committees, its Chairs and its Administrators

- Research Directors, Executive Directors, Vice-Principles
- SARIMA, REASA, ARESA and other organisations in support of research management
- SARIMA's sister organisations: WARIMA, CARIMA, EARIMA, CabRIMA
- COHRED
- Research Funders and Regulatory authorities

8. STRATEGY EXECUTION

The goals and objectives in section five are supported by the Strategic Plan, which specifies what needs to be achieved and are supported by the key players above. Each entity's plan identifies how these will be achieved.

| STRATEGIC GOAL 1 | | | | | |
|---|--|---------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| Build responsible and ethical research capacity in and for Africa by: | | | | | |
| PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE [STRATEGY] | PERFORMANCE MEASURES | BY WHO | TARGET | | |
| | | | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| 1.1 Collaborating with similar organisations in Africa and Globally | The number of Memorandums of Agreement (MoA) signed | CEO | 1 | 3 | 5 |
| | Number of joined activities emanating from MoAs. | | - | 2 | 4 |
| 1.2 Supporting relevant institutions to develop and build capacity for responsible and ethical research | Number of Training Sessions, Workshops and Webinars | CEO | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| | Number of Capacity development courses developed | | - | 0 | 1 |
| | Number of institutions supported with Capacity development courses offered | | - | - | 2 |
| 1.3 Providing capacity development courses and other interventions to build the capacity of researchers in Africa | Number of Training Sessions, Workshops and Webinars | CEO | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | Number of people participating in Capacity development courses offered | | 350 | 50 | 100 |

| STRATEGIC GOAL 2 | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| Secure funding and maintain financial sustainability in pursuit to fulfil organizational mission: | | | | | |
| PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE [STRATEGY] | PERFORMANCE MEASURES | BY WHO | TARGET | | |
| | | | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| | Number of new grants awarded per year | CEO | 1 | 1 | 1 |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---------------|---|---|----|
| 2.1 Creation and management of a funding mechanism to intensify the implementation of the Company's core objectives in Africa; | Number of subscriptions for RHInnO Ethics | HMB (Support) | 0 | 7 | 10 |
| | Number of Training Sessions and Workshops offered / delivered at a Cost | CEO | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| STRATEGIC GOAL 3 Brand Awareness and Market Recognition by: | | | | | |
|--|---|--------|--------|------|--------|
| PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE [STRATEGY] | PERFORMANCE MEASURES | BY WHO | TARGET | | |
| | | | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| 3.1 Having a Marketing Plan | Marketing Plan Developed (Annually revisited and updated) | CEO | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | Proactive stakeholder engagement | | 0 | 2 | 3 |
| 3.2 Create presence on Social Media Platforms (Instagram and Facebook) | Monthly news briefs | COO | 0 | 3 | 12 |
| | Presence on Facebook and Instagram | | 1 | 12 | 12 |
| | Visible Profile in the Marketplace | | 0 | 12 | 12 |
| | Quarterly/biannual newsletter | COO | 0 | 1 | 2 or 3 |
| 3.3 Up to date website | | COO | 0 | 12 | 12 |
| 3.4. Research Ethics Conferences | Participation and presentations in various conferences | CEO | 0 | 1 | 2 |

STRATEGIC GOAL 4
Good governance and accountability

| PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE [STRATEGY] | PERFORMANCE MEASURES | BY WHO | TARGET | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| | | | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| 4.1 Adhere to principles of good governance that will be reflected in the operations of EthiXPERT and culminate in an annual integrated report | Quarterly reports that will culminate in an annual integrated Board report | CEO, COO, all directors – linked to specific roles and responsibilities | 4 One Comprehensive CEO report | 4 Adherence to deadlines | 4 Adherence to deadlines |
| | Policies and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) developed, approved and operational – revised every third year | CEO, COO | | Policy Manual | TBC |
| | Adherence to EthiXPERT MOI – annual revision to ensure alignment of stipulations and business practices | CEO, COO | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Ensure sustainability of EthiXPERT through sound financial systems, performance and clean audits | Financial reports submitted quarterly | CEO, COO, external accountant | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| | Policies, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) developed approved, and operational | | | 1 | |
| | Compliance with legislation (Companies Act) | | No negative audit findings, adherence to GAP, adherence to deadlines | No negative audit findings, adherence to GAP, adherence to deadlines | No negative audit findings, adherence to GAP, adherence to deadlines |
| Attract, develop and retain talented staff | Recruitment and staff development plan developed, approved and operational | CEO, COO | 1 | 3 | 3 |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|----------|---|---|---|
| | Development of an attachment and volunteer policy | CEO, COO | | 1 | 0 |
| | Applying for admission to the SA attachment and skills building scheme | CEO, COO | | 1 | 0 |
| | Admitting students for attachment/volunteers | CEO, COO | | | 2 |
| Provide quality service to clients/users of products | QA systems in place; client/user satisfaction survey – at least annually | CEO, COO | 1 | 1 | 1 |