



CHARTER

QUALITY OF PARTNERSHIP

ESTHER is a Development Cooperation Initiative. The European ESTHER Alliance main mode of action is the twinning between hospitals, Universities, National laboratories, Research Institutions and their counterparts in partner countries. It supports North-South and South-South partnerships to strengthen individual and institutional capacities, reduce north/south inequalities in health and improve quality health care in low income countries. Quality of partnership is key to reach these goals. The ESTHER Charter for Quality of Partnership is a guiding document for any stakeholders willing to support twinning arrangement and implement quality interventions through ESTHER alliance twinings.

Successful hospital and Institutional twinings contribute to health system strengthening and sustainable development of human resources for health. Twinning, as a Development Cooperation instrument, is a mechanism that provides a real added value to accompany a public health policy deployment in low income countries. ESTHER experience indicates that respect of key principles and rules strongly optimize the quality of partnership.

Current and future ESTHER partners aim at following these Charter principles to ensure the quality of partnerships and increase impact of interventions in country partners

1. Adherence to national policies and strategies

- *Partnership follows a country partners' demand driven process.*
- *ESTHER strategy in country partners is validated by national health authorities before starting operations.*
- *ESTHER should be included in the bilateral Cooperation arrangements between European country members and country partners.*

2. Formal agreements between twinned institutions

- *Institutional commitment is key for success.*
- *General Director of the partner institutions ratifies an agreement to formalize the cooperation between their institutions. This agreement mentions the ESTHER Initiative and commits the signatory parties to facilitate the realization of the project.*
- *The partnership is equally rooted among the management and implementation teams in each partner institution and not only based on individuals.*
- *Partner institutions concretely contribute and support the initiative, notably by providing essential human resources to fulfil the projects.*

3. Reciprocity

- *Partner institutions are equally involved in the whole project development, implementation and review process.*
- *Both institutions equally contribute to the identification, documentation and priority definition of the needs. On these bases, project design and writing is jointly realized.*
- *Both North and South partners realize their objectives on the basis of capacity building and expertise exchange.*

4. Joint and equal responsibility

- *Partner institutions are equally responsible for project follow up and implementation.*
- *Partner institutions are equally responsible to carry out a joint and objective approach for any project evaluation.*
- *North and South partner institutions, together with other involved stakeholders, are accountable for the partnerships outcomes.*

5. Capability

- *Partner institutions have capacity to send and receive individuals, either to provide training session or host internships.*
- *Partner institutions commit for sustainable exchanges and have the capacity to follow a jointly decided program of work.*
- *Partner institutions commit to sustainable interventions.*

- *Partner institutions have the capacity to communicate on regular basis and promote communication means, ideally face to face meetings, as an inherent part of the partnership.*

6. Equity and respect

- *Partnership is built and based on trust and confidence between partners.*
- *There is no hierarchical relation between North and South institutions.*
- *North and South Individuals fully respect their counterpart and work with them on an equal basis. Exchanges based on ethical attitude and behaviour are key to the quality and sustainability of the partnership.*

7. Transparency

- *All partnership related activities and outcomes must be made public or accessible to any interested stakeholder or donor.*
- *Annual narrative and financial reports are produced.*
- *Regular evaluation is carried out to assess the impact of the partnership and monitor the respect of these Charter principles by the involved stakeholders.*

8. Ethics

- *Ethical principles are scrupulously respected by all stakeholders involved in the partnership (information, confidentiality, anonymity, consent of the patients, data ownership).*
- *Any diagnosis and care provided within the framework of the partnership match with ethical rules and imply information and consent of the patient, particularly if the testing and lab analysis are produced for research activities.*
- *Any data produced and/or collected in the country partners is the ownership of the countries. The use of data (exportation in Europe, publication, information sharing, etc.) is clearly stipulated in the agreements or project documents established between partner institutions.*
- *Data collected for research purposes should be cleared in advance by an ethical committee.*
- *Partner institutions and individuals commit to declare any conflict of interest.*