**COPR ROLE OF THE PUBLIC IN RESEARCH WORK GROUP
PRESENTED TO NIH DIRECTOR, OCTOBER 31, 2008**

I. DEFINITION OF "PUBLIC PARTICIPATION"

Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process. Public participation is the process by which an organization consults with interested or affected individuals, organizations, and government entities before making a decision. Public participation is two-way communication and collaborative problem solving with the goal of achieving better and more acceptable decisions.

Sources:
International Association for Public Participation. (2007*). IAP2 Core Values*. [On-line], Available: http://www.iap2.org/ .

Creighton & Creighton, Inc. (2008). *What is Public Participation?* [On-line], Available: http://www.creightonandcreighton.com.

II. DEFINITION OF "COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT"

Community engagement is a dimension of Public Participation. In research, community engagement is a process of inclusive participation that supports mutual respect of values, strategies, and actions for authentic partnership of people affiliated with or self-identified by geographic proximity, special interest, or similar situations to address issues affecting the well-being of the community of focus.

Community engagement is a core element of any research effort involving communities. It requires academic members to become part of the community and community members to become part of the research team, thereby creating a unique working and learning environment before, during, and after the research.

OPERATING PRINCIPLE FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is a process that requires power sharing, maintenance of equity, and flexibility in pursuing goals, methods, and time frames to fit the priorities, needs, and capacities within the cultural context of communities. Community engagement in research is often operationalized in the form of partnerships, collaboratives, and coalitions that help mobilize resources and influence systems; change relationships among partners; and serve as catalysts for changing policies, programs, and practices.

Sources:
Jones L, Wells K. Strategies for academic and clinician engagement in community-participatory partnered research. *JAMA* 2007;297:407–410. p. 408.

Fawcett SB, Paine-Andrews A, Francisco VT, Schultz JA, Richter KP, Lewis RK, Williams EL, Harris KJ, Berkley JY, Fisher JL, Lopez CM. Using empowerment theory in collaborative partnerships for community health and development. *Am J Community Psychol* 1995;23:677–697