



UK Research and Innovation



Safeguarding and equitable partnerships



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Safeguarding in the international development research context



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Safeguarding in the international development research sector



- **Safeguarding** – protecting research participants, communities (children, young people, vulnerable adults), research staff and volunteers
- From all forms of exploitation, violence, abuse, harassment and harm including sexual exploitation, psychological abuse and physical harm arising from association with the project or project staff or associated personnel
- **It is about how research is conducted and how research staff and associated personnel/visitors/advisors etc conduct themselves**

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Safeguarding in the international development research sector



Safeguarding is a broad term which includes:

- the ethical conduct of research to ensure that no harm comes to research participants or communities as a result of their involvement in a research project
- the health and safety of researchers and associated personnel involved in research projects in particular when conducting field work in developing countries
- the conduct of researchers, associated personnel or visitors involved in research projects towards research participants, the broader community with which they engage while conducting field studies and/or other members of the research team.

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UKRI's commitment to safeguarding



- International safeguarding summit October 2018
- UKRI co-signature to International Development Research Funders' statement of commitment on safeguarding

"We take a zero tolerance approach to harm and abuse to any individual employed through or associated with our programmes in all contexts; whether in humanitarian or fragile and conflict-affected settings, in other field contexts, or within the international or UK research and development community which we fund".

"We will introduce, following consultation, specific clauses into our contracts and terms and conditions, including requirements that organisations report, at an aggregate level, on incidents occurring and actions taken. We will reserve the right to terminate individual research funding contracts and grants if a breach of safeguarding practice is proven and to review the eligibility of organisations to receive major awards".

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UKCDR Safeguarding activities



- UK Collaborative for Development Research (UKCDR) - developing Safeguarding principles and good practice guidelines for the international development research sector (UKRI, Wellcome Trust, DfID, DHSC)
- UKCDR commissioned an evidence review to inform the development of principles and good practice guidance – June 2018
 - <https://www.ukcdr.org.uk/news-article/ukcdr-publishes-draft-briefing-paper-and-evidence-review-on-safeguarding-in-international-development-research/>
 - Commissioning a consultation with the sector on the guidelines/principles – autumn/winter 2019/2020

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Safeguarding - Dimensions of vulnerability



Multiple dimensions

- Gender, age, disability, sexuality, religion, ethnic background etc

Not unique but exacerbated by context and research topics relevant to ID research

- Resource poor settings
- Fragile/conflict effected contexts
- Displaced people/refugees
- Repressive regimes
- Politically sensitive topics/ gendered violence
- Power imbalance
 - Between researchers and research participants/communities
 - Inequalities within North - South research teams
 - Research team hierarchies or gatekeeper functions



Safeguarding evidence review - Safeguarding examples



- Experiences (mainly among women) of sexual harassment, intimidation and assault during research, from gatekeepers, acquaintances, peers, superiors or strangers
- UK-based Italian PhD researcher, tortured and murdered in Egypt, suspected involvement of members of the Egyptian national security agency, arising from his research on trade unions in Egypt. (2016)
- French researcher accused of sexually assaulting two boys in Togo in the early 1990s. Reported over 10 years later, and the case was brought to trial in 2007. One survivor reported that the researcher had promised to adopt him and send him to study in France, and that he frequently 'exchanged' money, food, and medication for sexual favours.



Safeguarding evidence review - Safeguarding examples



- Reports that ease of access to vulnerable populations in fragile/conflict effect states means that researchers do not always maintain ethical standard expected in the UK
- Reports that research participants can be placed at risk of violence or targeting by security forces as a result of research participation to due gathering of incriminating data, increased visibility or failure to ensure confidentiality
- French researchers in Guyana - accused of 'biopiracy' when they patented an antimalarial molecule after 'pillaging' community knowledge and biological resources

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UKRI Safeguarding Action Plan



- New term and condition on all UKRI grants – RGC 3.5 Safeguarding
- Based on the guidelines/principles
 - Developing internal UKRI Safeguarding policy - for head office, institutes and centres
 - Developing external UKRI Safeguarding funding policy - for organisations receiving funding
 - Develop new funding assurance requirements
 - Develop a new reporting process
- Additional requirements as part of the application process
 - Actual requirements likely to be tiered and determined using a risk-based approach

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Equitable partnerships



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Equitable partnerships



Equitable partnerships underpin the aims of GCRF and Newton Fund

Equitable partnership are promoted by

- Joint agenda setting – co-design
- Regular communication – avoid assumptions - mutual agreement on meaning and purpose of the work
- Fair recognition of interests and incentives of all partners
- Clarity of roles and responsibilities
- Build mutual trust – transparency and accountability - decision making processes and budgets
- Invest time in the partnership – building relationships is a long term process – build time into the project and request funds for face to face meetings
- Regular reviews of health of the partnership
- Dispute resolution process

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Collaboration Agreements



Collaboration agreements help to provide clarity, provide a framework for equitable partnership and promote transparency and accountability

Collaboration agreements should include details on:

- Transparent budgets and payment schedules to each partner
- Roles and responsibilities of each partner, communication and leadership structure
- Description of the contribution of each partner to the project
- Authorship and use of findings including intellectual property
- Data management plan for accessing and sharing data by partners
- How the project will resolve any problems
- Adherence to the grant Terms and Conditions