RESEARCH AND ETHICS PROTOCOL

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<th>Lead</th>
<th>Program Director</th>
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<tr>
<td>Version Number</td>
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<td>1 January 2020</td>
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Implementation of this policy
The Borneo Initiative will ensure that this policy is widely disseminated to all relevant persons. It will be included in the staff regulations and posted online on The Borneo Initiative website. All new employees must be informed on the content of this policy as part of their introduction into the organization. It is the responsibility of every manager to ensure that all employees are aware of this policy.
This policy forms an integral part of the (sub)contracts drawn up by The Borneo Initiative.
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General conduct during fieldwork and ethical considerations

This protocol sets out general norms of behavior when working in a research/survey area and aims to make sure that our research is both ethical and accurate. The research and ethics protocol also applies to all parties that are (sub)contracted by The Borneo Initiative.

- Be clear about your role. Seek fully informed consent. Answer questions openly. Ensure confidentiality.
- Community members and research participants must not feel offended or demeaned by anything we do, say or ask, or by our behavior in their community. We are in their community and must respect them accordingly.
- Expectations of community members and research participants must not be raised by anything we do or say during the research.
- Potential respondents must also feel under no explicit or implicit pressure to participate, either from the research team or from those we ask to help us gather participants (e.g. village heads, community elders or - leaders, etc.).
- The research will be more accurate if participants see no reason or pressure to adjust their responses in any way and if they feel comfortable during the interview.

We will be engaged in research that might appear very strange to many members of the community. We will ask several personal questions, and we will select many respondents at random. Even if this type of research has been conducted in the community before, it is very likely that many people will ask you questions about what you are doing. It is important to explain very clearly what we are doing, and to answer questions about the research patiently, clearly and honestly to everyone that asks.

Ethical considerations

The below points set out some key ethical considerations to be made in carrying out participatory research with vulnerable groups:

- Avoid any deliberate exclusion because of, for example, access or stigma.
- Ensure that permission is sought for the focus groups to go ahead, through consultation with the local community.
- Set and communicate clear parameters for the focus group – this means clearly stating the purpose, the limits and what the follow up will entail. It also means ensuring that demands on participants’ time are not excessive and that they are aware of their right to not participate or withdraw at any time.
- Set up focus group discussions and interviews at a time and in places that are convenient to respondents (e.g. after working hours).
- Recognize that participants are possibly vulnerable and that the exercise is carried out with full respect – power differentials will exist between community members and researchers and these need to be purposefully mitigated in planning and implementation.
- Ensure the safety and protection of participants – this means ensuring the environment is physically safe, that there are at least two facilitators present and, if possible, that a local stakeholder group is involved in monitoring activities. Facilitators should also be supervised.
- Ensure that people understand what is happening at all time. Is appropriate language being used (language, dialect, community terminology, etc.)? This needs to be carefully planned.
- Ensure the right to privacy – this includes ensuring anonymity and confidentiality, in record keeping and report writing and making sure participants understand that what they do and say in the group session will remain anonymous. In addition, respondents should be made to feel at ease and encouraged to also ask questions.