

Research Ethics

Research and evaluation should at all times adhere to the highest standards of integrity and ethics. In order to facilitate this Tana has drawn up Principles on ethical practice in research and evaluation process. All research and evaluation conducted by Tana (wholly or partially) is therefore expected to uphold these principles. At the core, these principles emphasize the need to produce good research and evaluation, and in the same time avoiding doing any harm to the participants as well as the consultants.

“Research” refers to any action or method to seek information from participants, such as interview, focus group discussion, survey, etc.

PRINCIPLES

1. **Ethical approval and research permit.**

Consultants are responsible for identifying any requirements and obtaining any necessary ethical or research approval for the assignment they are undertaking. This is for example official research permit from national or local authorities in targeted countries, formal approval or confirmation from other stakeholder institutions and formal (or possibly informal depending the context) approval from local community leaders.

2. **Quality of research.**

Research must be relevant, high quality and clearly in accordance with Term of Reference. It must be undertaken to a sufficiently high standard that the findings can be reliably used for their intended purpose. Research should only be undertaken where there is a clear gap in knowledge.

3. **Do no harm.**

Consultants should avoid doing harm to participants in research. This includes (but not limited to) physical harm, psychological distress and discomfort, social disadvantage, harm to participants’ financial status and an invasion of participants’ privacy and anonymity. Consultants should ensure that the basic human rights of individuals and groups with whom they interact are protected. This is particularly important with regard to vulnerable people. The wellbeing and safety of consultants working in the field should also be considered and any harm or discomfort should be minimized to the extent necessary.

4. **Informed consent.**

It means that (a) participants of research or evaluation should understand that their participation is voluntarily and without having been coerced and/or deceived, and (b) they are clearly informed what the research and evaluation require from them. Information given to participants may include the organisation conducting the research, the purpose of the research, the methods being used, the possible outcome of the research and evaluation, as well as associated demands and all foreseeable discomforts, inconveniences and risks that the participants may encounter during and after their participation. Any material information that might influence participants’ willingness to give consent should not be withheld from participants.

5. **Right to Withdraw.**

Participants should always have the right to withdraw from research or evaluation process and withdraw any data concerning them at any point without fearing any consequences. When a participant chooses to withdraw from the research process, they should not be pressured or coerced in any way to try and stop them from withdrawing.

6. **Confidentiality, data protection and privacy.**

Consultants should ensure confidentiality of information, privacy and anonymity of research participants at all times. They should abide to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016/679 ensuring data protection and privacy for all individuals providing information.

Consultants should clearly explain the limits to confidentiality to prospective participants. Consultants should also explain that if they hear or see something that gives cause for concerns, they have a duty to act. That might mean that consultants first encourage the person to talk to someone who could help, or agree that the consultants can talk to someone else on their behalf. In exceptional circumstances such as encountering a serious wrong-doing (e.g. corruption or abuse), it may be necessary for the consultants to breach confidentiality without first talking to the participant considering the ethical need to prevent harm to vulnerable people

7. **Commitment to Human Rights.**

Consultants should conduct the research in accordance with international human rights conventions and covenants to which Denmark is a signatory, regardless of local country standards. They should also take account of local and national laws.

8. **Culturally Sensitive Research.**

Consultants should adopt culturally sensitive approach thus mutual understanding and trust can be fostered and eventually optimal outcome can be obtained. This means, from planning the research until communicating findings, consultants should take account and respect differences in culture, local behaviour and norms, religious beliefs and practices, sexual orientation, gender roles, disability, age and ethnicity and other social differences such as class.

9. **Transparency, Openness and Fairness.**

Tana is fully committed to transparency and openness in publication, communication and dissemination of all evaluations and research. Transparency includes, but not limited to, reporting: (a) full methodological details and (b) information on who has undertaken the research, and (c) material and financial resources supported the research. By fairness, Tana aims to communicate the research fully and fairly reflect the findings. Tana is also open to the sharing of scientific resources, such as methods, measures and (non-personal) data in order to further social science advances. Where possible, and respecting confidentiality requirements, primary data should be kept in files within Tana to allow secondary analyses.

10. **Equal Participation.**

In conducting research, consultants should be inclusive in selecting participants. Consultants shall not exclude individuals as potential participants on the basis of attributes such as gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, disability and sexual orientation, unless there is a valid reason for the exclusion. Consultants should ensure participation of women and socially excluded groups when relevant. Consideration should however be given to how barriers and risks to participation can be removed.