CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH INFORMED CONSENT IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

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RESEARCH IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES – INFORMED CONSENT

Outline

• The work of the Brooke
• Types of research undertaken by The Brooke
• Challenges associated with informed consent in our context
• Addressing these challenges
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The work of the Brooke

- Species covered
- Where and how we work
- Research origination at The Brooke
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Types of research undertaken by The Brooke

- Animal based – non-invasive examination, equipment evaluation, human-animal interaction
- Human based – questionnaire or focus group
  - documenting knowledge, attitudes, practices of equid owners
  - eliciting contribution of equids to daily life and livelihoods of owners and users
Challenges associated with informed consent in Brooke context

Potential issues arise as a result of several factors [1]
- Person/people involved
- Ongoing parallel activities
- Nature of field research environment and prevailing local conditions
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What needs to be explained to gain informed consent [2]

• Purpose of research and anticipated outcome
• What data will be used for
• Possible benefits/harms affecting participants and/or their equids from participating or not participating
• Data recording (e.g. tape, paper or electronic) and storage arrangements
• Anonymity, withdrawal and confidentiality
• Feedback process
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Capacity to give consent – legal status

• For animal-based research, is the human party an owner or a user?
• If the latter, how to obtain access to the owner?
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Capacity to give consent – explaining the research

- Educational background
- Literacy
- Ensuring consistency of oral explanation in the field
- Verifying understanding
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Independence of research from ongoing activities

- Free service provision
- Community engagement activities and participatory owner/user involvement in issues identified as needing to be researched
- Feedback mechanism for research findings
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Nature of field research environment

- Practicalities of field work in developing countries
- Community attitudes to documentation/officialdom
- Literacy issues re proof of consent
- Is written proof required? See ASA guidelines [3]
- Local country ethical review regulatory framework
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Addressing these challenges

- Research framework and associated policies
- Stage at which research approval framework includes ethical review (both animal and human involvement)
- Dissemination of policy and good practice guidelines
- Engagement with staff on ethical issues
- Supporting staff capacities on data recording and analysis
Any questions?
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References


REFERENCES...cont

3. Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and Commonwealth (2011)
   Ethical guidelines for good research practice