

# OCI Foundation International

*Sponsors of the: (i) Cyfed Undergraduate Scholarships (ii) CBH Scholarships (iii) IFOMSSA Junior Awards (iv) IFOMSSA Senior Awards and (v) Annual JAMB Awards (vi) ArOF Health Campaign (vii) LAMS Initiative (viii) The Gynocular Project*



## Policy on Context Research and Ethics in Stakeholder Engagement and Inclusion OCI Foundation (March 2025)

### Introduction

This document offers a template that guides the OCI Foundation's commitment to promoting and supporting improved developmental practices in the research and evaluation of our activities. It helps increase awareness among our members and associates of ethical and professional issues that will ensure that research decisions are well considered and justified at all times.

### A. Context And Stakeholder Analysis

The plannings within the OCI Foundation are generally contextualised, and our practices are constantly informed by evidence and research that invites, considers and includes the perspectives and knowledge of the primary stakeholders involved in our programs.

To achieve the above, the OCI Foundation:

- 1) Constantly seeks to understand the context of our programs before they are initiated or implemented. Such contexts include the potential impact(s) at national and community levels. They also include the politico-cultural, socio-economic, and environmental implications of the OCI Foundation initiatives.
- 2) Considers the potential enablers and the barriers to our programs.
- 3) Actively seeks the perspectives and experiences of primary stakeholders that our programs would impact.
- 4) Also seeks the perspectives of all potential beneficiaries (including vulnerable or marginalised groups like people with disabilities, women, children, and so on) where protection and safeguarding of risks associated could be optimised.
- 5) Carries out research or related analysis of the key relationships that can impact our projects. We always explore how positive engagements can be actualised and sustained.
- 6) Trains our staff on how to carry out power analyses as a basic step in preparing the development activities they oversee.
- 7) Periodically monitors, reviews and evaluates our activities with the aim of adopting and integrating positive findings into our present and future programs.

- 8) Ensures that our program guidelines outline the need to identify and embrace expectations and potential differences in our key stakeholders' interests and points of view.
- 9) Always identifies marginalised and vulnerable groups and ensures that their interests are protected in our programs.
- 10) Conducts relevant research to identify the enabling factors and barriers to the participation of local people.
- 11) Invests in creating opportunities for local organisations and/or primary stakeholders to discuss and agree on their own development priorities and fully contribute to the design and planning of initiatives that affect them.

## **B. Risk Assessment and Management in Our Humanitarian Initiatives.**

This section provides the OCI Foundation's framework for managing, assessing and addressing risks associated with its initiatives. We state as follows:

- 1) The OCI Foundation commits to assessing and managing risks in all its programs.
- 2) We uphold criteria for protecting and safeguarding beneficiaries and research participants and ensure that we do no harm at any time.
- 3) Our officers and project managers are required to complete the risk management analyses before all program implementations. We adopt the ACFID-promoted risk management matrix called "Risk Management Guide and Health Check: Guide for Not-for-Profits and Social Enterprises." All members and associates of the OCI Foundation can access it [HERE](#).
- 4) Specifics of our approach, as contained in the matrix above, include that we:
  - Share outcomes from our risk assessments, analyses, and management strategies with the governing body and periodically review them.
  - Have a designated staff person who is responsible for regular risk assessments.
  - Undertake targeted risk analysis or frameworks for our specific initiatives. For instance, we have separate policy documents on child protection and other vulnerable persons like women and the disabled
  - Communicate our commitments to risk analysis and management amongst our staff, governing body and partners.
  - Work with partners to develop risk management capabilities and procedures.

## **C. Principles Underlying OCI Foundation Research Ethics**

All research undertakings by the OCI Foundation adopt the four key principles promoted by ACFID. These include (i) the respect for human beings, (ii) beneficence, (iii) research merit and integrity, and (iv) justice. For clarity, the exact ways that each of these principles relates to the OCI Foundation will now be summarised:

- 1) **Respect for Human Beings:** The OCI Foundation recognises the intrinsic value of each human being and, therefore, commits to the autonomy and welfare of participants involved in our research ahead of our own goals. We aim to gain prior knowledge of their preferences and pay due respect and regard for their individual and collective culture, values, customs, beliefs and practices. As part of this process, we always seek to obtain informed consent before all our research activities and seek to honour the rights, privacy, dignity, entitlements and diversity of all those contributing to research.
- 2) **Beneficence:** This signifies that an action is taken for the benefit of others and necessitates that the expected benefits to participants or the wider community justify any risks of harm or discomfort to them. To achieve this, the OCI Foundation always ensures that our research work benefits our participants and their communities. We also consider and seek to minimise potential harms (with respect to their safety, trauma and culture shock) to our own researchers and provide emotional support for them where necessary.
- 3) **Research Merit and Integrity:** We achieve this by ensuring that our research undertakings are justified at all times and that the relevant quality criteria are always met. We also ensure that researchers of sufficient experience and competence are engaged. Our research programs are designed to ensure alignment between their aims, questions and methodology with the research context and cultural values of the participants.
- 4) **Justice:** This relates to “equity”, and implies that a fair process for recruitment of research participants is entrenched. The OCI Foundation promotes and embraces this. We ensure a fair distribution of, and access to, the benefits of participation in our research projects. There is no exploitation of participants in the conduct of any OCI Foundation research, and we actively seek the protection of our participants and their well-being. Participants are treated with dignity regardless of their gender, age, race, ethnicity, ability, religion and culture. We also make our findings accessible to all participants in a timely and meaningful manner.

## Review of Policy Document

This policy is subject to review in March 2028, three years after its implementation. Our appraisal tool will be used as part of that review. However, if legislation or other events warrant it, it can be sooner.

## Feedback

If you have any feedback on the OCI Foundation on this document, please contact us immediately via the link [HERE](#).