

Ethical Practice in One Health Research

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ILRI's One Health work



Ethical Practice in One Health Research

Overview

1. Important (universal) ethical principles:

Respect for Persons

Beneficence

Justice

2. Informed consent

3. Animal Welfare & Environmental Health



Ethical Principle 1 - Respect for Persons

Two elements:

1. Recognise every person's right to autonomy
2. Protect vulnerable groups who might not have the agency to exercise this right.

Belmont Report (1974): *“An autonomous person is an individual capable of deliberation about personal goals and of acting under the direction of such deliberation.”*

Discussion: Give some examples of vulnerable groups and explain why you think they could be vulnerable?

Informed Consent

Elements of informed consent (Declaration of Helsinki, 2013):

1. The aims of the study and
2. The methods to be used
3. The sources of funding and possible conflicts of interest
4. The institutional affiliations of the researcher
5. The anticipated benefits and potential risks
6. The discomfort it may entail/the time it will take
7. Any post-study provisions
8. The right to abstain from participating, or to withdraw from it at any time, without reprisals
9. The opportunity to ask questions
10. The way in which the study will be reported and shared
11. The person to report any concerns about the study to - Someone from the research team and someone from the ethics committee.

Informed consent

Considerations:

- Does the participant have the ability to exercise their right to autonomy?
- Is a once-off signing of a form enough?
- Has the participant *comprehended* what is involved in the study?

Example: Study of comprehension in Tanzania



Informed consent



*Assessment of comprehension
& engagement*

*Providing feedback & talking
through any
misunderstandings*



A note on coercion...



Ethical Principle 2 - Beneficence

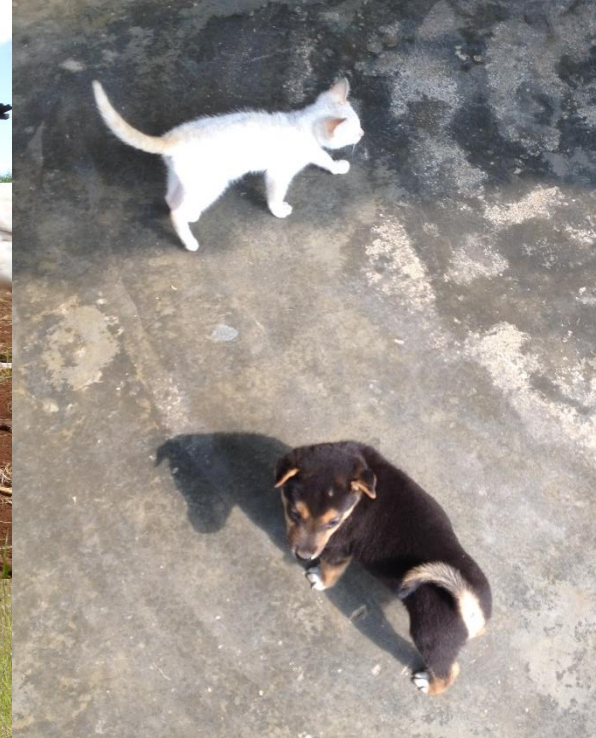
Two main elements:

1. Do no harm
2. Maximise possible benefits and minimize possible risks

There is increased complexity in One Health, where sometimes decisions need to be made around the relative value of human, animal and environmental health.

Discussion: Is research into control of zoonotic disease through mass culling of animals, ethically justifiable?

Discussion...



Ethical Principle 3 - Justice

Should all people be treated equally?

Considerations:

- Selection/exclusion of subjects – Also important for good external validity of data!
- Distribution of risks/benefits
- Listening to strong vs. weaker voices

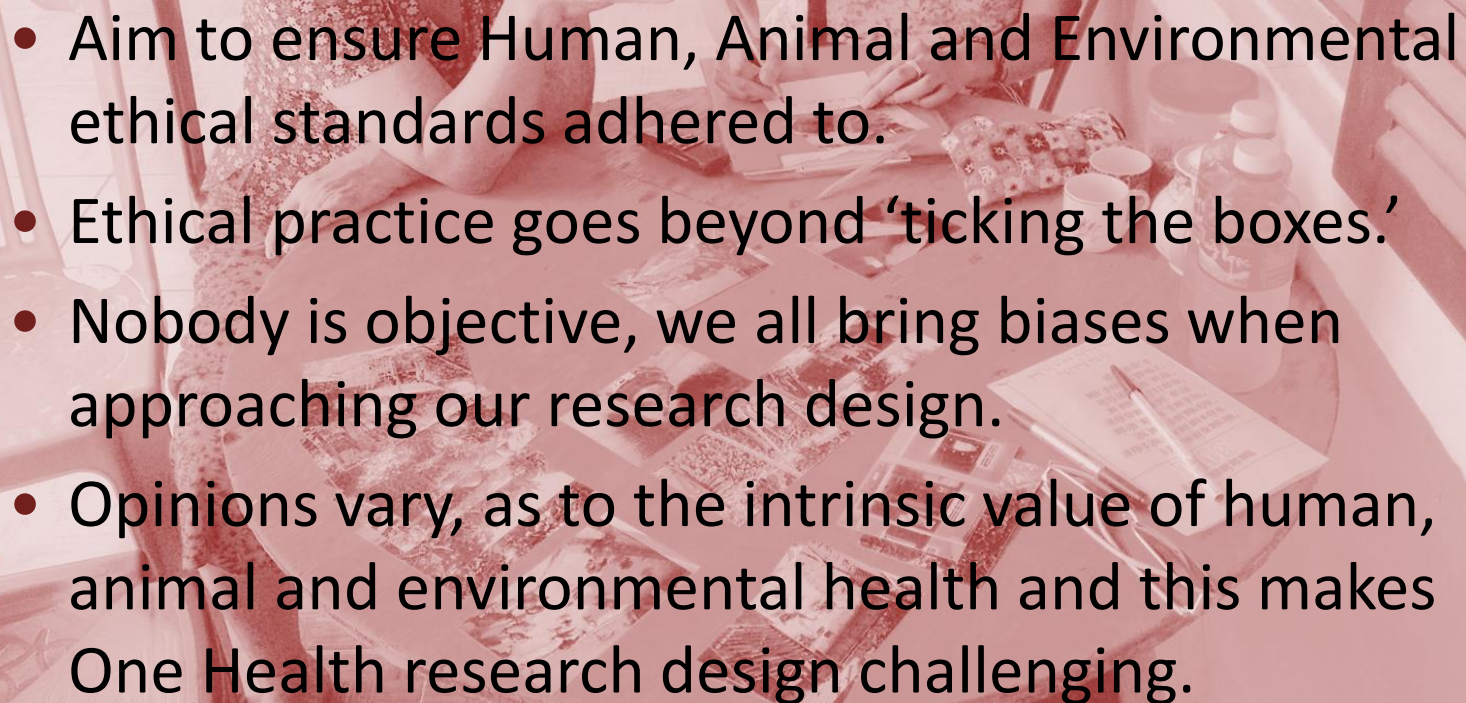
Story from the field: *The Maasai chief and his wives*

Beyond Human Welfare: Animal Welfare and Environmental Health

ILRI Research Ethics Committee (IREC):

- Diverse professions from ILRI (representative of transdisciplinarity) plus external observers and a community representative.
- Different processes depending on whether animals or plants involved. Humans always involved, even if just researchers themselves.

In Summary: Ethical One Health Research

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- A photograph showing two women sitting at a table, engaged in a discussion. The woman on the left is gesturing with her hand while speaking. The woman on the right is looking at a document on the table. The table is covered with various items, including papers, a notebook, and a water bottle. The background shows a window with wooden shutters and a bicycle parked nearby.
- Aim to ensure Human, Animal and Environmental ethical standards adhered to.
 - Ethical practice goes beyond ‘ticking the boxes.’
 - Nobody is objective, we all bring biases when approaching our research design.
 - Opinions vary, as to the intrinsic value of human, animal and environmental health and this makes One Health research design challenging.

Additional Reading

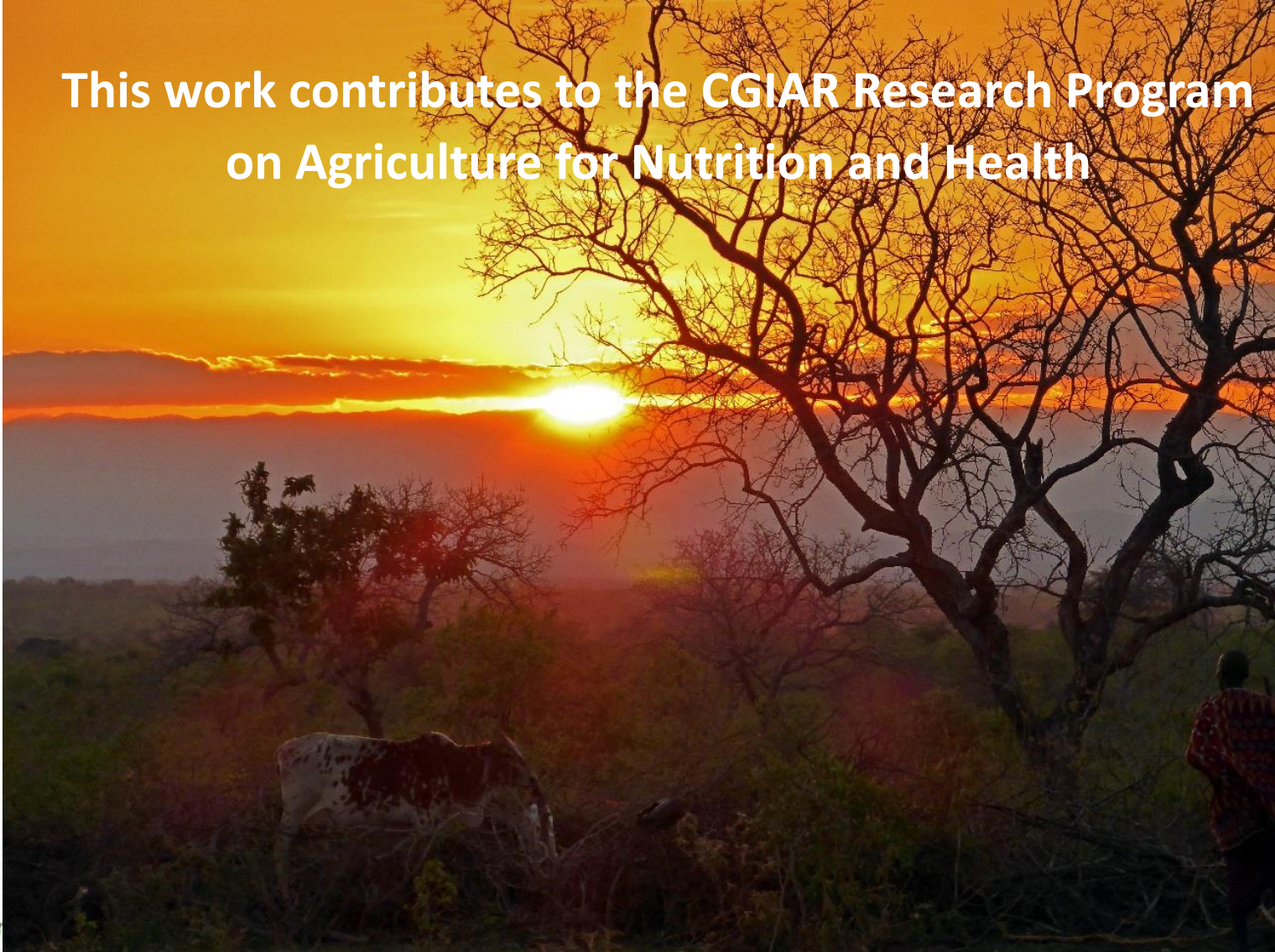
- The Belmont Report:
<http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/belmont.html>
- The Declaration of Helsinki:
<http://www.wma.net/en/30publications/10policies/b3/>
- British Sociological Association Ethical Standards:
www.britisoc.co.uk/media/27107/StatementofEthicalPractice.pdf
- O'Leary, Z. (2010) *The Essential Guide to doing your research project*. SAGE publications, London.
- Johansen, M., Penrith, M. (2009) 'Has Culling Been Properly Assessed as a Valid and Justified Control Intervention Measure for Zoonotic Diseases?' *PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases*. 3(10): e541 – Open Source

A Maasai girl in Morogoro, Tanzania, allows the calf to suckle before she milks the cow



Acknowledgements

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