

**Title:** Ethical research and evaluation – everyone’s accountable

Australia has a reputation for delivering high-quality development assistance. As we adapt to the global impact of COVID-19 and deliver the Australian Government’s [Partnerships for Recovery: Australia’s COVID-19 Development Response](#), encouraging ethical practice and a culture of ethical inquiry within the sector is key to realising priorities such as health security, economic recovery and stability.

In partnership with the [Research for Development Impact Network \(RDI Network\)](#) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), an [Ethical Research and Evaluation Guidance Note and Checklist](#) has been developed.

The [Guidance Note](#) specifically sets out the requirements for ethical practice in research and evaluation. It aligns and reinforces DFAT’s existing policies related to international development management, conduct and risk management, and embeds the existing international and national codes and frameworks set within the four Ethical Principles.

These principles ensure research and evaluation activities at a minimum adhere to the fundamental principle of ‘do no harm’. The principles and how they can be implemented are set out in the [Guidance Note](#):

- Research for human beings;
- Beneficence;
- Research merit and integrity; and
- Justice.

The [Guidance Note](#) applies to all DFAT-funded activities, both Official Development Assistance (ODA) and non-ODA investments, that involve research or evaluation with human participants (excluding internally with only DFAT staff). It applies regardless of value of the investment or the specific funding mechanism and encompasses all DFAT-funded activities implemented by or through:

- Other Australian Government and public sector agencies; and
- Private sector and civil society organisations.

All relevant DFAT funded partners implementing research and evaluations, including managing contractors, sub-contractors, NGOs, universities, and consultants, will need to be aware of the new [DFAT Ethical Research and Evaluation Guidance](#).

There are a range of training resources freely available to meet requirements including:

- [DFAT ‘Research’ webpage](#) for an overview of the changes.
- The [RDI Network website](#) for the [updated Principles and Guidelines \(Aug 2021\)](#), [case studies](#), and [online training for individuals](#). [Training for organisations](#) is also available for booking.