

Ethical considerations applied to the Violence Against Children and Youth Surveys (VACS)

GEAS-Save the Children Scan on Ethics in Research and Programming with Adolescents Globally Webinar

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Friday, April 8th, 2022

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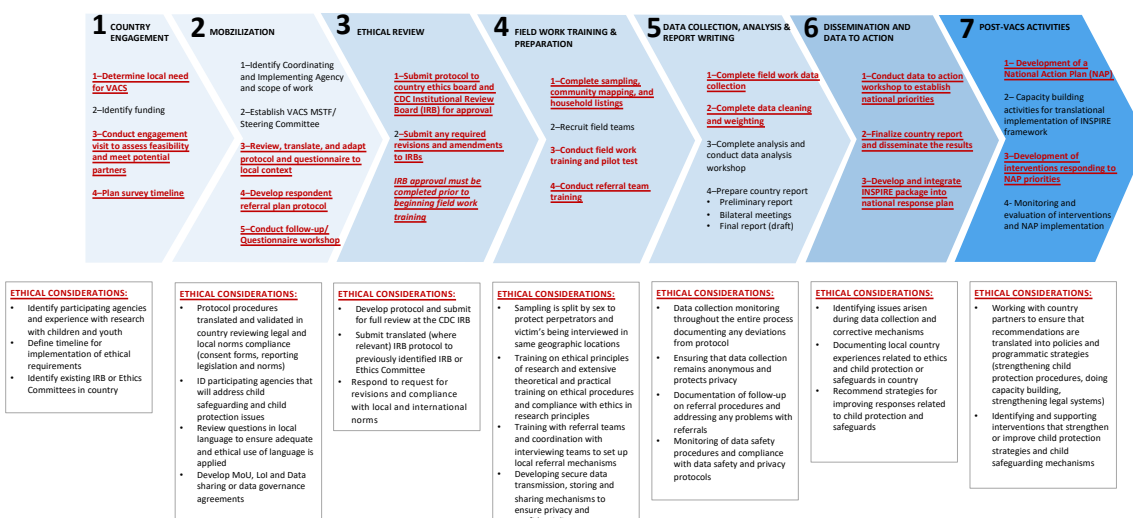
Ethics and VACS

Overall considerations

1. Protecting and supporting children and young adults who have experienced or are experiencing violence and request help must be a central consideration.
2. The highest possible ethical standards must also be upheld during the preparation and implementation of the VACS.

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VACS implementation process chart – Ethical considerations



Adapted from: <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/vacs/country-process.html> (2022)

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Experiences of work in different countries (ethical approaches and procedures)

1. CDC IRB compliance and thorough review process
 - I. MoU, letter of intent, and Data Governance or Data sharing agreements
 - II. Identification of most relevant local IRBs
 - III. Sequence for review between CDC and local IRBs
 - IV. Local requirements (e.g., verbal versus written consents)
 - V. Providing all necessary documentation required by CDC and local IRBs
2. Local country norms and procedures and local review process
 - I. Review of existing legislation related to reporting child violence, abuse, exploitation, etc. (e.g., are there research or statistical exemptions?)
3. Linguistic and legal adaptation of tools
 - I. Ensure that language complies with existing legislation (e.g., abortion, LGBTQI questions)

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Challenges encountered in conducting research

Selected examples:

1. A country where IRBs do not exist
2. A country with internal conflict or very high levels of community violence
3. Considerations of religious practices and local beliefs
4. Community engagement procedures (avoiding disclosure of research purpose)
5. Documented problems with child referral mechanisms (personnel issues, communication issues, infrastructure issues, lack of institutional capacity)

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Research and programming goals to ensure that ethics is working globally

1. Thorough documentation of entire implementation process
2. Rapid correction and reporting of protocol deviations and ethical problems throughout data collection and referrals
3. Ensuring that recommendations are addressed and incorporated into country practices
4. Addressing human capacity in institutions in charge of protecting children
5. Ensuring that recommended interventions incorporate child safeguarding
6. Contributing to strengthening of norms and legal system

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Questions?

Violence Against Children and Youth Surveys

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/vacs/index.html>

Thank you!

The findings and conclusions in this presentation are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



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