

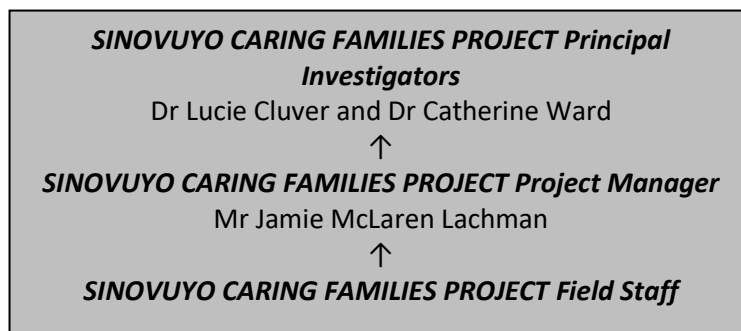
# SINOVUYO CARING FAMILIES PROJECT RESEARCH STUDY

## APPENDIX E. SAFETY PROTOCOL

### Overview:

This document aims to outline a general procedure that will be implemented to ensure the safety of all *SINOVUYO CARING FAMILIES PROJECT* staff. All staff should read this document and sign the declaration included. The structure for the reporting and documenting of any safety issues that might arise is outlined in the diagram below (contact details for the Principal Investigator and all *SINOVUYO CARING FAMILIES PROJECT* Project Managers are included at the end of this document). Appended to this document are also procedures put in place regarding personal safety, driving safety, fire and floods (and other natural disasters), as well as climate safety.

### Hierarchy for the reporting and documenting of any safety concerns



### Procedure:

1. Any staff safety concerns should be raised with the Project Manager immediately. The Project Manager will make a decision about whether to deal with this immediately, to discuss with the Principal Investigators, or to discuss in the weekly staff meeting at each provincial site
2. If a safety procedure is decided upon, the initial concern and the proposed procedure should be documented (using a copy of the attached Safety Documentation Form). This form should be sent to the Principal Investigators. If the Principal Investigators have any suggestions, recommendations, or concerns these will be communicated directly to the Project Manager.

If a safety procedure cannot be decided upon the Principal Investigators should be informed and a conference call will be arranged so that the issue can be discussed between the Principal Investigators and the Project Manager

3. Once the safety procedure has been approved by the Principal Investigators the Safety Documentation Form should be appended to the office copy of the safety protocol (this document), this way a record of all safety concerns and staff responses is maintained.

“I declare that I have read and understood this document. I am aware of the procedure that has been put in place to ensure the safety of *SINOVUYO CARING FAMILIES PROJECT* staff”

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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### SINOVUYO CARING FAMILIES PROJECT– Safety Procedures

Many of these safety procedures involve common-sense and are relevant across all safety domains

#### *Personal Safety:*

- Staff should carry a well-charged cell phone at all times in case of accident or emergency
- Where there is an immediate emergency and the PM is not on field or easily contactable, staff (eg RAs) should inform their field coordinators, who will inform the PM
- Always inform another member of the *SINOVUYO CARING FAMILIES PROJECT* team about your destination and estimated time of return
- If requested, all *SINOVUYO CARING FAMILIES PROJECT* staff will be provided with a personal safety alarm
- Staff should carry ID cards and safety alarm where they are easily accessible (e.g. around neck)
- Staff should know the closest location to the local authorities to seek refuge if danger arises
- If possible, never leave a team member behind. It is best to intervene as a team
- If interviewing in a community in which you feel unsafe:
  - Inform your Project Manager
  - Form ‘Interviewer Groups’ (and include a male field worker if possible)
  - If necessary a CPF escort can be arranged
- If needed, staff should discuss emergency sms code for help with team members or PM
- Staff should work in teams of two (preferably with a male RA on each team) and within viewing distance of each other
- Staff should be carrying maps of the areas in which they work to facilitate orientation and giving directions

#### *Dealing with Participants:*

- Violent Participants:
  - Staff should **not** solve the matter independently
  - Staff should **not** respond violently (*so as not to promote escalating emotions*)
  - Do not confront a mob
  - Walk away and ignore the accusations
  - Inform PM as soon as possible
  - If violent accusations result in physical harm, PM should open an assault case at the police station
- Unhappy Participants:
  - RAs should be aware of escalating emotions
  - When possible, re-address the objectives of the study, privacy guidelines for disclosure, and remind the participants that authorities in the areas are aware of the project study
  - If participant is not satisfied with the explanation, offer to make appointment with the project manager
  - Appease the unhappy participant by ensuring that their concerns will be heard and handled
  - Contact and inform project manager of the encounter

#### *Driving Safety:*

- Extreme caution should be used at all times when driving and all rules of the road should be obeyed
- In rural areas there may be a significant number of cattle on the road and drivers should be wary of this

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- If requested, any person who will be driving a *SINOVUYO CARING FAMILIES PROJECT* project car will be provided with defensive driving training
- Using a mobile phone while driving (texting or calling) is a criminal offence in South Africa
- Staff should carry a well-charged cell phone at all times in case of accident or emergency
- Always get enough rest before you drive the car to avoid falling asleep behind the wheel
- When using the car for work purposes, another member of the *SINOVUYO CARING FAMILIES PROJECT* team should always be informed about your destination and estimated time of return
- Valuables should never be left in the car
- Your personal safety is more important than the car!

### *Climate:*

- Heat: fieldworkers will be provided with sun screen, water bottles, and hats during the summer months
- Rain: fieldworkers will be provided with umbrellas and/or rain jackets

### *Fire, Floods, and Natural Disasters*

- In any case of environmental hazard, consider your own safety and that of your team first
- The Project Manager and Principal Investigators will make a decision, in consultation with the fieldwork team, about how best to deal with these

### *Medical Conditions of staff members*

- All staff with chronic medical conditions such as epilepsy or diabetes are requested to wear medical alert bracelets
- All staff are responsible to carry their medication with them at all times and show their team members where it is kept and how to administer it in an emergency

### *Taxi wars, riots, political violence*

In the event of taxi wars, riots, or political violence discuss any safety issues with Project Managers, but in any case where there is risk to staff, fieldwork will suspend or move to another area

### *Miscellaneous:*

In various sites fieldworkers have been accused of being Satanists

- This is being addressed through: addressing concerns that have lead to negative impressions of the project (e.g. that we're taking away legitimate/fraudulent grants), praying with the people who have accused fieldworkers of Satanism, working with local religious leaders to prevent any confusion about our affiliation
- All staff members are requested to register a telephone number of a relative or friend which can be contacted in case the member of staff is involved in an accident at work. Emergency numbers are to be kept on box.net so they are easily accessible for all members of the project.

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### *For Project Managers*

- PM's should make sure all field staff have a copy of documented safety procedures amongst field protocols and ask staff to sign for confirmation of having read and accepted adherence to them. Staff should also be encouraged to provide suggestions or highlight guidelines that are not working at team meetings.
- If re-addressing the objectives of the study has not always worked to calm down violent participants:
  - Inform the Indunas and ward councillors about the encounter and request another community meeting (with Indunas and local authorities -Community Development Forum staff, CDFs present)
  - Address some of the issues encountered and explicitly and patiently explain the **reason** for each questions (i.e. Who lives in my home) if necessary
  - Prior assessments of communities is crucial (get information on safety, crimes, witchcraft, etc.), and know the village and culture
  - Monitor your RAs, violent encounters can be traumatic. Offer psychological counselling (with local psychologists in hospitals) or debrief team members
  - If necessary, give RAs crisis prevention training or safety training.

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**Safety Concern – Documentation and Response Form**

Date concern raised: \_\_\_\_\_

1) Safety Concern:

2) Proposed Response:

Response approved by PI: Yes/No

Signed by Project Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

## SINOVUYO CARING FAMILIES PROJECT RESEARCH STUDY

### SINOVUYO CARING FAMILIES PROJECT – Contact Details

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