

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

MISSION OF HOPE INITIATIVE

(MOHI)

2023

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@2023



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1 INTRODUCTION

Safeguarding is the responsibility that an organization has to ensure that their employees and volunteers, partners, vendors, operations, and programs do not harm children, young people, or vulnerable adults (together referred to as ‘vulnerable people’ under this policy); that they do not expose them to the risk of discrimination, neglect, harm, and abuse; and that any concerns the organization has about the safety of vulnerable people within the communities in which they work are dealt with and reported to the appropriate authorities. It is also the responsibility that the organization to protect its employees and volunteers when they are vulnerable, for example, when ill or at risk of harm or abuse.

Child protection is a central preorganization separate from safeguarding. It is the process of protecting individual children by identifying programs that do not harm them at risk of significant harm as a result of abuse or program of work. It also includes measures and structures designed to prevent and respond to abuse.

Over recent years, there has been increasing recognition by organizations that children, young people, and vulnerable adults can be at risk of discrimination, neglect, abuse, and exploitation by those who are in positions of trust and power over them, including programs intended to develop activities.

As a consequence, there has been a significant increase in the efforts made by development organizations to ensure that no harm results from the contact their employees, volunteers, and other representatives have with their target populations or communities.

Through their work, MOHI employees, employees of partner organizations, and volunteers may engage with young people and vulnerable adults either directly or indirectly.

MOHI recognizes it must put in place all reasonable safeguarding measures to ensure, as far as possible, the safety and protection of children, young people, and vulnerable adults, including those with whom we work and those in the communities where MOHI work is undertaken.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy and associated procedures is to provide clarity to **ALL** on how they should engage with children, young people, and vulnerable adults when working for, on behalf of, or in partnership with MOHI. It is also to help us make sure that employees, volunteers, and other representatives are protected.

It is intended to help us to have a common understanding of safeguarding issues, develop good practice across the diverse and complex areas in which we operate, and thereby increase accountability in this crucial aspect of our work.

This policy constitutes MOHI’s global policy. Whilst it is recognized that local legislation may vary from country to country, this policy identifies our minimum standards and may exceed the requirements of local legislation.

Any breach of this policy will be treated as a disciplinary matter, which may result in immediate termination of employment or contract, withdrawal of volunteer status, and reporting to the police, relevant regulatory authority, or other body.

1.2 Definitions

Abuse - a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person from persons. It can take the form of physical, psychological, financial, or sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the health, survival, development, or dignity of a child, young person, or vulnerable adult.

Abuse can be a single act or repeated acts and can be unintentional or deliberate. Abuse often involves criminal acts.

Discriminatory abuse – abuse motivated by a vulnerable person's age, race, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or other personal characteristic.

Financial or material abuse - including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property, or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits.

Neglect - the persistent failure to meet a vulnerable person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of his/her health or development. Examples include failure to provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter, failure to protect them from physical or psychological harm or danger; failure to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a vulnerable person's basic emotional needs.

Physical abuse – includes hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions.

Psychological abuse - includes emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation, or withdrawal from services or supportive networks. Examples include not giving a vulnerable person the opportunity to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on a vulnerable person, which may include interactions that are beyond a vulnerable person's developmental capability. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), or the exploitation or corruption of a vulnerable person.

Sexual abuse - involves forcing, enticing, or coercing someone to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the vulnerable person is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-

penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving a vulnerable person in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse can be carried out by adults or other children.

Child – MOHI regards a child as anyone under the age of 18 years, irrespective of the age of majority in the country in which the child lives or in their home country. It is widely recognized that children are generally more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation due to factors such as age, gender, social and economic status, developmental stage, and dependence on others.

Vulnerable person/people – for this policy this is an umbrella term that covers children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

Vulnerable adult - a person, 18 years and above, who because of disability, age, gender, social and economic status, or illness, the context they are in, may be unable to take care of or to protect him or herself against abuse, harm, or exploitation.

Youth or young people - individuals aged 15 to 25 (15 to 35 in some countries) – MOHI recognizes that this group spans the categories of ‘children and ‘adults’ but regards young people as having particular safeguarding needs and requiring distinct consideration aside from younger children and older adults.

2 Scope

This policy is mandatory for all MOHI employees worldwide. For this policy, ‘employee’ is defined as anyone who works for or on behalf of MOHI, either in a paid or unpaid capacity. This, therefore, includes directly employed staff, trustees, contractors, employees and volunteers of subcontractors, agency workers, consultants, volunteers, interns, and all visitors to MOHI work programs and offices.

It also covers implementing partners whom we fund, and who we expect to work under the policy as a condition of their involvement with MOHI.

This policy demonstrates how MOHI will meet its legal obligations and reassure volunteers, employees, partners, and members of the public:

- a) On what they can expect MOHI to do to protect and safeguard vulnerable people.
- b) That they can safely voice any concerns through an established procedure.
- c) That all reports of abuse or potential abuse are dealt with seriously and effectively.
- d) That there is an efficient recording and monitoring system in place.
- e) That employees, volunteers, subcontracted agencies, and partners receive appropriate induction on safeguarding.
- f) That a robust ‘safe’ recruitment procedure is in place.

There are additional procedures in place that apply to those who work or have contact with, either directly or indirectly, children, young people, or vulnerable adults who live in communities alongside them.

3 Policy Statement

MOHI has zero tolerance for the abuse and exploitation of vulnerable people. MOHI also recognizes that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that it must put in place reasonable measures to ensure, as far as possible, the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable people with whom we work and those in the communities in Which we live.

MOHI works to the following key principles to protect vulnerable people:

- Everyone has an equal right to protection from abuse and exploitation regardless of age, race, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or having a child, gender reassignment, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.
- The best interests of the vulnerable person are paramount and shall be the primary consideration in our decision-making.
- MOHI will take responsibility to meet our obligations regarding our duty of care towards vulnerable people and take action where we believe that a child, young person, or vulnerable adult is at risk or is harmed.
- MOHI will ensure that employees and volunteers are inducted in our Safeguarding Standards (Appendix and procedures as a key part of the recruitment and onboarding process.
- MOHI will ensure that all partners are informed and in compliance with our Safeguarding Standards.
- When working with or through partners or subcontracted agencies, MOHI will ensure that their safeguarding procedures are consistent and in line with the principles and approaches set out in this policy.
- MOHI recognizes that an element of risk exists, and while we may never be able to remove this, we need to do all we can to reduce it or limit its impact.
- MOHI respects confidentiality and has a responsibility to protect sensitive personal data. Information should only be shared and handled on a *need-to-know basis*, that is, access to the information must be necessary for the conduct of one's official duties. Only individuals who have legitimate reasons to access the information are allowed to receive it.
- MOHI commits to monitoring the implementation of the safeguarding policy. This policy will be reviewed every three years and earlier if necessary.
- Cultural sensitivity; MOHI seeks always to work in ways That are culturally sensitive and that respect the diverse nature of the people we work with. We recognize that there are many different ways of thinking and taking care of vulnerable people and making sure they are protected. It is acknowledged that protecting these groups of individuals and

being culturally sensitive can be a difficult balancing act, especially given the situation in many of the countries where we work. As an international organization, we endorse the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child general principle, that all the rights guaranteed by it must be available to all children without discrimination; and article 19 which accords equal rights to protection for children from abuse. Every child matters everywhere in the world. Culture must not be used as an excuse to abuse children, young people, or vulnerable adults.

Your People Business Partner representative is available to give guidance on how to interpret the policy and its application to the local context.

4 Responsibilities

All

All employees, volunteers, consultants, agency staff, subcontractors, partner organizations, and visitors are obliged to follow this policy and maintain an environment that prevents exploitation and abuse and encourages reporting of breaches of this policy using the appropriate procedures.

All people working with MOHI will:

Read, understand, and adhere to the MOHI Global Safeguarding Policy and MOHI Global Code of Conduct

Policy

- Strive to promote a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, sexual harassment, and abuse in all working environments
- Strive to develop relationships with all stakeholders That are based on equality, trust, respect, and honesty
- Place the safety and welfare of children and vulnerable people above all other considerations
- Report any concerns they may have about the welfare of a child or vulnerable person
- Report any concerns they may have about the behavior of a MOHI representative regarding safeguarding
- In a one-to-one situation with a child or young person, where privacy and confidentiality are important, try to make sure that another adult knows the contact is taking place and why. If possible, ensure another adult is in sight and that the child or young person knows another adult is around

4.1 All people working with MOHI will not:

- Sexually harass, assault, or abuse another person
- Physically harass, assault, or abuse another person
- Emotionally abuse another person, such as engaging in behavior intended to shame, humiliate, belittle, or degrade
- Condone, or participate in behavior That is abusive, discriminatory, illegal, or unsafe

- Develop, encourage, or fail to take action on relationships with children or other vulnerable people which could in any way be deemed sexual, exploitative, or abusive
- Act in ways that may be violent, inappropriate, or sexually provocative
- Agree with a child to keep a secret that has implications for their safety or the safety of other young people.

4.2 Managers

Managers at all levels are responsible for ensuring employees, volunteers, consultants, visitors, and partner organizations are aware of the policy and are supported to implement and work by it, as well as creating a management culture that encourages a focus on safeguarding. They must ensure that they are responsive, acting immediately if they become aware of any safeguarding concerns and supportive towards employees or volunteers who complain about breaches in this policy.

4.3 Designated Safeguarding Officers

Designated safeguarding officers are responsible for handling reports or concerns, about the protection of vulnerable people, appropriately and by the procedures that underpin this policy. Your People Business Partner will act as your designated safeguarding officer. The lead designated safeguarding officer is responsible for:

- monitoring and recording safeguarding concerns
- ensuring referrals to the relevant authorities happen without delay
- updating safeguarding training for all staff
- ensuring this policy is reviewed every 3 years or earlier if necessary
- ensuring it is implemented throughout the organization and safeguarding training given
- ensuring monitoring and recording procedures are implemented

4.4 MOHI Executive Board

The MOHI Executive Board is responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of this policy and associated procedures and ensuring that everyone linked with MOHI is equipped and supported to meet their responsibilities.

4.5 Trustees

The Board of Trustees holds ultimate accountability for this policy.

5 Procedure Overview

5.1 Recruitment and Selection:

- Safe recruitment and vetting processes are followed for all volunteers, employees, consultants, and partners (For more detailed guidance, refer to the Global Recruitment and Selection Policy)
- Where an employee, volunteer, or partner is engaged in ‘regulated activity’ (direct work with vulnerable individuals), a criminal background check will be undertaken as part of the recruitment process. (For more detailed guidance, contact your People Business Partner, Country Director or functional lead.)
- All MOHI employees and volunteers must sign and abide by this safeguarding policy and the Code of Conduct. The code sets out the standards of practice we expect of employees and volunteers - in terms of professional competence, integrity, acting as a representative, and safeguarding - Which support our vision, mission, and values. (For more detailed guidance, refer to the Global Code of Conduct).

5.2 Induction and Support

Advice support and training on safeguarding will be provided to all employees and volunteers on:

What they should do in the event of a disclosure

What to do if they have concerns about the welfare of a child

How to recognize signs of abuse

What to do if they have concerns about a MOHI employee, volunteer, or employee of a partner organization

Where to go for advice and support within the organisation

Ensure that clear processes for reporting and dealing with safeguarding concerns and incidents are widely communicated, regularly reviewed, and consistently applied. Where allegations are made about an employee, careful consideration must take place about the appropriateness of the person continuing to work with MOHI. (For more detailed guidance, refer to the Global Disciplinary Policy)

6 Data Protection

Ensure that personal information is kept confidential unless we have the agreement of the individual and/or their parent/guardian, except where it is necessary to pass this to a specialized child welfare or law enforcement agency about a safeguarding incident. (For more detailed guidance, refer to the Data Protection Policy and Statement).

7 Minimum Standards

Where employees or volunteers are contracted by other employers, or when working with partners, or subcontracted agencies, MOHI will brief them on our safeguarding policy and ask for information on how the organization works to protect vulnerable people and ensure that they meet our Safeguarding Standards.

8 Social Media

MOHI has a policy regarding the media and the use of actual names, and images, including photographs and recordings (the 'Social Media Policy'). This should be applied in all situations. Specifically relating to the protection of children, young people, and vulnerable adults, we will:

- Use names and images of children, young people, or vulnerable adults that are respectful and do not expose them to further vulnerability (not degrading or showing sexual images of children naked or partially clothed).
- Reproduce images and use names of children only where we have the written permission of their parents/guardians using a consent form (Appendix 2).
- Reproduce images and use names of young people and vulnerable adults only where we have their written permission or that of their parents/guardians, whichever is the most suitable.
- Make clear to vulnerable people and their families that agreement to provide information or images is not a condition of involvement in MOHI activities and programs.
- Inform employees, volunteers, and partners about the MOHI policy about the use of technology (the IIT Policies), and understand that they must not use this technology to access, produce, or distribute any information or violent or sexual images that are harmful to vulnerable people. This includes adult pornography.

Ensure that MOHI has a format for carrying out and implementing risk assessments at all levels of the organization.

Train and support the designated safeguarding officers in their work and any action, they may need to take to protect vulnerable people.

9 Raising and responding to concerns

MOHI places a *mandatory obligation* on all employees, volunteers, contractors, and partners to report concerns, suspicions, allegations, and incidents that indicate actual or potential abuse or exploitation of vulnerable people which suggests this policy may have in any other way been breached. It is not the responsibility of the employees to decide whether or not abuse has taken place, however, concerns should be raised with an individual's line manager, functional lead, or a designated safeguarding officer who will initiate the procedure for dealing with suspected or actual incidents of abuse. (For details refer to the Safeguarding Management Pathway for reporting concerns).

Designated Safeguarding Officers are responsible for ensuring that the reporting procedure is followed so that suspected or actual cases of abuse are responded to appropriately and consistently, and referred to the relevant statutory authority.

To ensure that all such situations are handled appropriately and effectively:

- Reports must be made, and decisions and actions taken (For details, refer to Managing Safeguarding Concerns)
- MOHI is not an investigative authority. Referrals must be made to the relevant law enforcement agency to ensure that appropriate protection and support are given to the vulnerable individual and that any evidence is collected by the law.
- All sensitive and personal data must be kept confidential (including the names of anyone who makes a report of abuse), and be shared on a strictly *'need-to-know basis'*, that is, access must be necessary for the conduct of one's official duties.
- Where an MOHI employee is the subject of an investigation, the lead designated safeguarding officer will lead the case.

10 Appendix 1: MOHI Safeguarding Standards

This standard framework is from the Keeping Children Safe “Child Safeguarding Standards” and adapted for use for MOHI. Each standard can be met in whole, in part, or not met.

Standard		Potential evidence of standard being met
1. Policy	1.1 The organization has a clear safeguarding policy that seeks to prevent harm to children, young people, and vulnerable adults	➤ A copy of the policy, signed by the management board or trustees ➤ For program or recruitment partners, that
	1.2 Policies are publicized to staff, beneficiaries, and wider communities	➤ Policy or summary translated into local languages ➤ Examples of ways the policy has been promoted, including to children, young people, or other community members as necessary
2. People	2.1 The organization places clear responsibilities and expectations on its staff and associates and supports them to understand and act in line with these	Clear responsibilities for a Designated Safeguarding Officer at the appropriate level
	2.2 Key staff are designated at different levels with clearly defined roles and responsibilities.	➤ Job descriptions with clear expectations for those with contact with vulnerable people ➤ Job descriptions for MOHI long-term volunteers include details of any contact
	2.3 There are written guidelines for appropriate and inappropriate behavior	A written code of conduct; evidence of this being shared with staff and volunteers
	2.4 There are appropriate	

	learning opportunities to develop and maintain the necessary attitudes, skills, and knowledge to keep vulnerable people safe.	➤ A copy of training plans, course attendance records, and course evaluations. ➤ Evidence of induction for MOHI volunteers
3. Procedures	3.1 Organisations carry out local mapping exercises Which provide information on the legal, social welfare, and child protection arrangements.	Legal requirements are included in policies
	3.2 Safeguarding risks and mitigation strategies are incorporated into existing risk assessment processes at all levels.	➤ Risk assessments include appropriate and relevant risks ➤ Evidence of mitigation strategies implemented ➤ Risk assessments shared with MOHI
	3.3 Safeguarding issues are integrated into program design, delivery, and evaluation	Evidence of safeguarding issues in project proposals, plans, and needs
	3.4 There are procedures for responding to safeguarding concerns that arise	A copy of a concern/allegation management
4. Accountability	4.1 Implementation of safeguarding policies and procedures are monitored	➤ Copies of reporting to boards, donors, etc ➤ Copies of minutes of meetings to review practice
	4.2 Learning from issues captured and informed future policy and procedure reviews	Incident reports produced
	4.3 Policies and procedures reviewed at least every three years	Evidence of review in annual plans / strategies

11 Appendix 2

11.1 Sample Parental Consent for Photographic/Film Use of Children under 18 years of age/vulnerable adult:

I, (adult's name)

Of (address)

— Being the child/children's/ parent or legal guardian, hereby permit for

(Organization name)

(Organization address)

To take and use publicity photographs/film of

(Child/ children's name/s)

Age of child

Age of child

Age of child

I also consent to the use of the photos for publicity, marketing, and advertising for MOHI projects. I agree that the photos/film may be combined with other images, text, and graphics and be cropped, altered, or modified in any way that MOHI deems appropriate.

I consent to the provision of this form and the details within it to MOHI, and to their storing these on a database.

I understand that the child's/children's name/s will not be given to the press or public without my consent. I also understand that I may cancel this permission in writing and that MOHI will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the photograph/film is withdrawn from future use.

I further understand that I shall receive no remuneration for this assistance.

Signed:



Date

22nd October, 2023

Dr. Jeremiah Mugisha

Chairman Board of Directors

For further information, please contact

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