




AGENCY FOR ACCELERATED REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

# SAFE GUARDING POLICY

Revised December 2024





# **SAFE GUARDING POLICY**

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# SAFEGAURDING POLICY FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Agency for Accelerated Regional Development (AFARD)'s safeguarding Policy is the revised version of the child protection policy that was used between 2019 and 2022 to safeguard children from all kinds of harm that could result from AFARD's work in various communities. While we maintain a heavy focus on safeguarding children, we have expanded the scope of this policy to include safeguarding of adults at risk, which could be our staff, adult beneficiaries and other stakeholders at risk that come into contact with AFARD programmes and operations.

It is within the International and National legal frameworks to ensure that children and vulnerable adults that AFARD works/interact with are protected from all forms of abuses (physical, emotional, sexual, neglect and exploitation). It is, therefore, mandatory that all our staff and volunteers read this policy and adhere to these standards at all times and promote the rights and dignity of the vulnerable children and adults, empower them and reduce vulnerability.

In this policy a child is defined according to UNCRC, as "any individual under the age of 18, irrespective of local country definitions of when a child reaches adulthood." while a Vulnerable Adult/Adult at risk: Is any person aged 18 or over and has particular care, support or special needs or is dependent / reliant on others for the provision of basic services (not limited to: safety, shelter, water, food).

## 1.2 PRINCIPLES

This safeguarding policy is based on keeping children and vulnerable adults safe in line with international safeguarding standards; the convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (UN CRPD) and its related UN conventions; the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979, the UN convention on the rights of the child, 1989 (and its optional protocols); the UN statement for the elimination of sexual abuse and exploitation; Uganda's orphan and other vulnerable children policy- 2004, Uganda national child protection policy - 2020; international good humanitarian practice; the ILO convention No.138 on the minimum age for admission to employment (1973); the ILO Convention No.182 on the prohibition of the worst forms of child labour (1999); African Union Charter on the Rights and welfare of child 1999; Constitution of the Republic of Uganda 1995 Article 34; and other International, Regional and National laws on the rights and welfare of the vulnerable children and adults.

The following principles are upheld by this policy:

- 1. All children and vulnerable adults have equal rights to protection from harm.**
- 2. Everybody has a responsibility to safeguard children or/and vulnerable adults.**
- 3. Organizations have a duty of care for children, vulnerable adults with whom they work, are in contact with, or who are affected by their work and operations.**
- 4. If organizations work with partners, churches, CBOs, CSOs they have a responsibility to help them meet the minimum requirements on safeguarding.**
- 5. All actions on safeguarding are taken in the best interests of the child or vulnerable adult, which are paramount.**

### **Non-negotiable principles**

1. No exploitation or relationships that are exploitative as a result of your position within AFARD.
2. No actions that bring the AFARD into disrepute.

### **1.3 AIMS OF THE POLICY**

Broadly, this policy is aimed at creating an environment in which children and adults at risk that come into contact with AFARD programmes, through AFARD staff, volunteers, consultants, Contractors, partners, and Donors are protected from all forms of abuse and exploitation.

Specifically, this policy aims at:

- Protecting the children and adults at risk from being abused by people who come into contact with them through AFARD.
- Protecting the staff and the organization from risks associated with abuse of children and vulnerable adults.
- Guiding decisions relating to protection of children and adults at risk within AFARD.

### **1.4 SCOPE OF THE SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

AFARD 's safeguarding policy is binding to all staff (regardless of type of employment contract), Volunteers, Consultants, Contractors and Interns and any other entity AFARD is engaged with both at workplace and their private life. It applies to all environments of AFARD's work, including offices both headquarters and field offices, field activities and all AFARD programs. The adherence to the policy will be reviewed as part of staff performance management (appraisals) and internal audits. The responsibility of all staff to adhere to the policy shall lie with the board while its implementation will be overseen by the Human Resources unit and senior management.

### **1.5 OTHER POLICIES LINKED TO THIS SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

This policy is in tandem with other AFARD's existing policies, procedures / guidelines, employee code of conduct and specifically relates very closely to the following policies.

1. AFARD Human Resource policy
2. AFARD Complaint and Feedback management guidelines
3. AFARD Communication and visibility strategy

### **1.6 REVIEW/UPDATING OF THE POLICY**

This document is meant to serve as a dynamic and practical guide to the management of AFARD. It is therefore recommended that a review and/or update of this policy be carried out every 5-years to reflect changes resulting in the organization or government and donor policies.

# 02

## KEY DEFINITIONS

### 2.1 SAFEGUARDING

Refers to the responsibility that an organization has internally to ensure that their employees and volunteers, partners, vendors, consultants, operations, and programmes do no harm to children and adults at risk.

### 2.2 CHILD PROTECTION

Refers to the measures and structures used to prevent and respond to abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence affecting children and vulnerable adults.

### 2.3 PERSON AT RISK

Any person who stands to be abused as result of being vulnerable for example, Children, the elderly, women, persons with disability, the poor etc.

### 2.4 ORPHAN AND VULNERABLE CHILD (OVC)

Any person below the age of 18 that: -

1. Has particular care, support or special needs and as a result abuse occurs when a vulnerable child at risk is mistreated, neglected or harmed by any person who holds a position of trust e.g. they may be in custody or secure accommodation etc.
2. The child is dependent / reliant on others for the provision of basic services (not limited to e.g. safety, shelter, water, food), because of their context, such as: The child is in contact with an adult who seeks to misuse their position of authority or trust to control, coerce, manipulate or dominate them.

### 2.5 VULNERABLE ADULT/ADULT AT RISK

Any person aged 18 or over, and if:

- i. The adult has particular care, support or special needs and as a result abuse occurs when a vulnerable adult/ adult at risk is mistreated, neglected or harmed by another person who holds a position of trust e.g. they may be in custody or secure accommodation, or she is an expectant or nursing mother; and/or
- ii. The adult is dependent / reliant on others for the provision of basic services (not limited to e.g. safety, shelter, water, food), because of their context, such as:
  - In a refugee camp or a recipient of as part of an NGO relief distribution, and are potentially vulnerable to exploitation or abuse as a result of their status or their lack of power and control; and/or
  - The adult is in an unfamiliar country and location
  - The adult is in a relationship (work or social) or in contact with another adult who seeks to misuse their position of authority or trust to control, coerce, manipulate or dominate them.

**‘Do no harm’** refers to organizations’ responsibility to ‘do no harm’ or minimize the harm they may be doing inadvertently as a result of inappropriate programming.

## 2.6. DEFINITIONS OF HARM

AFARD regards the following as harm.

### 2.6.1. Physical Abuse

Actual or potential physical harm perpetrated by another person, adult or child. It may involve corporal punishment, hitting, shaking, poisoning, drowning, pushing, pinching, burning and forcing a child to carry heavy loads. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of or deliberately induces illness in a child or vulnerable adult. Possible risks of physical abuse in the context of AFARD include:

- Being injured while playing in compounds that have ditches or sharp objects
- Being injured or even die while being transported on boda-boda or vehicles in poor mechanical condition to participate in programme activities.
- Those participating in livelihood programmes could be injured while working /learning with machines.
- Vulnerable adults and children could be injured because of corporal punishment used to discipline them.
- Sacrifice, the ritualistic killing of vulnerable adults and children in order to please or appease a deity, supernatural beings, or sacred social order, tribal, group or national loyalties in order to achieve a desired result.

### 2.6.2. Emotional abuse

Persistent emotional maltreatment that impacts on mental wellbeing and mental health. Emotionally abusive acts include restriction of movement, rejecting, degrading, humiliating, bullying (including cyber bullying), threatening/scaring, discriminating, ridiculing, or other non-physical forms of hostile treatment.

Possible risks of emotional abuse in the context of AFARD include:

- Pictures taken without consent.
- Subjecting one to any other form of abuse including physical, sexual, neglect and exploitation.
- Discrimination
- Being verbally abused, ashamed, nicknamed or addressed using harsh language.
- Exposing confidential information (pictures, text /stories) to the public or other party especially when they are in vulnerable situations leading to stigma and low self-esteem.
- Not being given space to express yourselves as a vulnerable adult or child
- Not providing basic needs (including food, play and attention).

### 2.6.3. Neglect and negligent treatment

Allowing for context, resources and circumstances, neglect and negligent treatment refers to a persistent failure to meet basic physical and /or psychological needs, which is likely to result in serious impairment of a child's and vulnerable adults physical, spiritual, moral and mental health and development. It includes the failure to properly supervise and protect children and vulnerable adults from harm and provide for nutrition, shelter and safe living/working conditions. It may also involve maternal neglect during pregnancy as a result of drug or alcohol misuse and the neglect and ill treatment of a disabled child.

Possible risks of neglect in the context of AFARD include:

Children and vulnerable adults could be exposed to other forms of abuse and deprivation if their needs are not adequately met as a result of participating in AFARD programmes. For example, children and vulnerable adults may be required to participate in activities that take a long time, without being given food/refreshments or they might be denied time to play because play time was not planned for.

#### **2.6.4. Sexual abuse**

Forcing or enticing a child or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities that he or she does not fully understand and has little choice in consenting to or is not developmentally prepared for. This may include, but is not limited to, rape, oral sex, penetration, exposing a child to private parts or sexual acts, defilement, sexual assault/bad touches and exposing a child to pornography or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching. It may also include involving children and vulnerable adults in looking at, or producing sexual images, watching sexual activities and encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Possible risks of sexual abuse in the context of AFARD include:

- Vulnerable adults and children could be exposed to pornography in videos, text, audio or actual sexual acts by AFARD representatives and stakeholders, while watching television or communicating to sponsors.
- Vulnerable adults and children could be defiled or sexually assaulted while participating in activities without adequate supervision.
- Vulnerable adults and children could be defiled or sexually abused by staff and volunteers while participating in activities in secluded places.
- Vulnerable adults and children could be sexually abused by AFARD staff, volunteers and other stakeholders if allowed to go to their residences unaccompanied.
- Vulnerable adults and children could be sexually abused if expected to share accommodation or sanitary facilities with adults or fellow children.
- Vulnerable adults and children could be sexually abused by people in the community when released late to go back home after participating in project activities that take long.

#### **2.6.5. Sexual exploitation**

A form of sexual abuse that involves children or vulnerable adults being engaged in any sexual activity in exchange for money, gifts, food, accommodation, affection, status, or anything else that they or their family needs. It usually involves a child being manipulated or coerced, which may involve befriending children, vulnerable adults or any beneficiary, gaining their trust, and subjecting them to drugs and alcohol. The abusive relationship between victim and perpetrator involves an imbalance of power where the victim's options are limited. It is a form of abuse that can be misunderstood by children and adults as consensual.

Sexual exploitation manifests in different ways. It can involve an older perpetrator exercising financial, emotional or physical control over a young person. It can involve peers manipulating or forcing victims into sexual activity, some- times within gangs and in gang-affected neighborhoods. It may also involve opportunistic or organized networks of perpetrators who profit financially from trafficking young victims between different locations to engage in sexual activity with multiple men or women.

#### **2.6.6. Sexual Harassment**

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that tends to create a hostile or offensive work environment. While such conduct can be harassment of women by men, many laws around the world which prohibit sexual harassment and recognize that both men and women may be harassers or victims of sexual harassment

#### **2.6.7. Commercial exploitation**

Exploiting a child or a vulnerable adult in work or other activities for the benefit of others and to the detriment of their physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development. It includes, but is not limited to, forced labour.

# 03

## POSSIBLE RISKS OF ABUSE IN THE CONTEXT OF AFARD AND POLICY COMMITMENTS

Policy statement. Zero tolerance aimed to create a safeguarding culture where all are sensitive to safeguarding children and adults at risk.

- During community trainings, participants come along with their other older children or vulnerable adults to help them as nannies to younger siblings, thus missing school, or play.
- Children and vulnerable adults could be exploited by project participants and or staff as labourers during the buying season.

From the above risks, abuse is not only detrimental to the life of a child and vulnerable adults but also the image of the staff and AFARD in general. It can lead to death; dropping out of the programme; indiscipline; negative coping mechanisms such as drug abuse; and slows down the implementation of programme activities as AFARD shifts attention to investigate abuse concerns.

The above risks identified are not exhaustive but are intended to present a picture of the possible risks that may face children and vulnerable adults as they participate/benefit from AFARD programmes. From time to time, AFARD shall conduct a risk assessment to update the list of possible risks in accordance with the changing context of AFARD work.

# 04

# AFARD'S COMMITMENT AND POLICY POSITION SAFEGUARDING

- Recognizing the power dynamics within the team and between staff and child or adult-at-risk beneficiaries.
- Ensuring that all in AFARD are aware of safeguarding and have competence to incorporate safeguards in their areas of work.
- That AFARD will implement this policy, learn from implementation, and review the policy periodically to reflect the changing programmatic and its operation context.
- AFARD will take proactive steps to prevent abuse of children and adults at-risk in her programs and operations and respond appropriately when abuse occurs.

## 4.1 CODE OF CONDUCT

AFARD Board members, managers, staff, partners and all stakeholders governed by this policy will observe the following code of conduct

- a) Treat all vulnerable adults and children fairly, and with respect and dignity, regardless of race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic, or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.

Always seek to care for and protect the rights of the vulnerable adults and children, and act in a manner that ensures that their best interests shall be the paramount consideration

- b) Create and maintain a safe and equitable organizational culture that prevents and opposes sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse.

- c) Uphold the integrity of AFARD, by ensuring that his/her personal and professional conduct is, and is seen to be, of the highest standard.

Demonstrate integrity, truthfulness, dedication, and honesty in their actions. Be patient, respectful and courteous to all persons with whom they deal in any capacity, including children and vulnerable adults.

Refrain from inappropriate behavior both in professional and private lives that may be compromising or detrimental to AFARD and the people that interact with AFARD programmes and operations.

Address challenges or disagreements in a respectful non-violent manner.

- d) Safeguard and make responsible use of the information and resources to which he/she has access by reason of employment with AFARD.

The employee shall:

- Exercise due care in all matters of official business, and not divulge any confidential information about a vulnerable adult or child and other work-related matters in accordance with the staff regulations and rules and current guidelines.
- Protect, manage, and utilize AFARD human, financial and material resources appropriately.
- Never use AFARD resources to exploit or harass vulnerable adults, children or access pornography.

- e) Always ensure that for work-related purposes when they photograph or film a child or vulnerable adult, they
- Comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images
  - Obtain informed consent from the child and parent or guardian of the child or vulnerable person before photographing or filming them. As part of this staff must explain how the photograph or film will be used
  - Ensure photographs, films, videos and DVDs present children and vulnerable adults in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Children and vulnerable adults should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive
  - Ensure images are honest representations of the context and the fact
  - Ensure file labels, meta data or text descriptions do not reveal identifying information about a child or vulnerable adult when sending images electronically or publishing images in any form.

- f) Refrain from any involvement in criminal/unethical activities, activities that contravene human rights or compromise the image and interests of AFARD.
- The employee shall neither support nor take part in any form of illegal, exploitative, or abusive activities, including, for example, child labor, child pornography and trafficking of human beings and commodities.
  - Shall not engage children under the age of 18 and vulnerable adults in any form of sexual activity including paying for sexual services and drug abuse.
  - Shall not physically assault a child or other vulnerable adults participating in AFARD programme.
  - Will not display anger, violent or aggressive behavior towards a colleague, beneficiary or other persons who comes into contact with AFARD programmes and operations.
  - Shall not use Ignorance or mistaken belief of the child's age or some one's vulnerability as an excuse or a defense.
  - Understands that failure to report abuse/ exploitation of a vulnerable adult and children that he/she is aware of could lead to disciplinary action against him/her.

- g) Board members, staff, partners and volunteers of AFARD shall observe the following dos and don'ts to uphold safeguarding commitments by AFARD.

<b>Dos</b> <b>Board members, Partners, staff and volunteers shall:</b>	<b>Don'ts</b> <b>Board members, Partners, staff and volunteers shall not:</b>
Dress decently while working/interacting with children and vulnerable adults.	Discipline children and vulnerable adults using corporal punishment means.
Treat all children and vulnerable adults with fairness, dignity and respect regardless of their social or other background.	Use abusive/derogatory or demeaning language while communicating to children and vulnerable adults.

Model to children and vulnerable adults' exemplary behavior, teach them how to respect each other as well as elders.	Hold, kiss, hug, or touch children and vulnerable adults in an appropriate or culturally insensitive way.
Maintain professional distance while working/ interacting with children and vulnerable adults.	Hire children and vulnerable adults as house help.
Ensure that all activities involving children and vulnerable adults are properly supervised and guided.	Stay with/invite children and vulnerable adults in own residences unless permitted by management.
Ensure that all spaces where children and vulnerable adults congregate or interact are safe and friendly.	Employ children and vulnerable adults as labour on farms/activities for own benefit especially if it affects their education and other rights.
Promptly report any suspicion or actual abuse that you get to know of.	Work with children and vulnerable adults for more than stipulated hours and in non-designated places.
Provide space and empower children and vulnerable adults to express themselves.	Expose children and vulnerable adults to pornography of any form
Ensure that all information allayed to children and vulnerable adults is age appropriate, communicated in a manner that children understand and is free from pornography.	Show preferential treatment to some children and vulnerable adults, while excluding others.
Ensure that children and vulnerable adults are not sharing sanitary facilities with adults and children of the same sex.	Don't act in any way that intends to embarrass, shame, humiliate/degrade children and vulnerable adults.
Treat with confidence all information regarding children and vulnerable adults.	Spend excessive time with children and vulnerable adults than stipulated or visit them in their homes unless it is part of the project activities.

## 4.2. PRACTICAL STEPS TO ACHIEVE THE COMMITMENTS ON SAFEGUARDING

### 4.2.1 Safeguarding at level of Human Resources management (Employment Cycle)

- Safeguarding requirements clearly included in job adverts and job descriptions where all our new staff and the existing shall undergo periodic and targeted safeguarding trainings.
- Assessment of knowledge and record on safeguarding shall be incorporated into selection, interview and contracting during recruitment.
- Ongoing training of staff on safeguarding (prevention, identification, and management).
- Safeguarding shall form critical part of our staff induction
- Every staff receives policy on Safeguarding and signs commitment to implement the policy
- Review of adherence to safeguarding policy is part of performance reviews
- Offenses of abuse / harm among staff expressly investigated and punished accordingly.

#### **4.2.2 Safeguarding at the Level of Programming**

The objective is to ensure safer programming environment that impacts positively on children and vulnerable adults:

the following shall be taken into consideration.

- All programs shall be assessed for safeguarding, thorough risk assessment, which shall be conducted for all the projects and the activities to identify possible risks and incorporate mitigation measures in planning and budgeting.
- All programs shall be sensitive of safeguarding concerns and no program shall cause harm to children and vulnerable adults.
- All our partners including visitors shall be made aware of this policy
- Program activities will be carried out in a way that promote the rights, dignity of the children and vulnerable adults as well as empower them on their rights to education, health, safety, shelter, protection and care.
- Staff implementing programs shall be oriented on their policy and given necessary support by programme leads to incorporate safeguarding in their day-to-day work. Activities.
- There shall be a well-established complaint mechanism for beneficiaries and other stakeholders to raise their concerns on safeguarding.
- Beneficiaries (children and adults at-risk) shall be informed about their rights and are made to actively participate; and raise concerns regarding to their protection.
- Decisions on vulnerable adults and children shall be made with their participation as far as possible.
- Vulnerable adults and children shall not be engaged in program activities that expose them to harm by project staff and contractors.

#### **4.2.3 Safeguarding in working with Others (Donors, Contractors; - consultants, suppliers, vendors, & Visitors).**

The objective is to ensure that other stakeholders who work with AFARD observe safe guarding: the following shall be taken into consideration.

- Assessment of safeguarding history shall form part of contracting
- Partners shall be expected to demonstrate safeguarding in their works
- This policy shall be part of MOU with our partners
- Where a partner does not have safeguarding policy and has gaps in the same, AFARD shall provide training on safeguarding for her partners.
- Partner staff working with AFARD shall sign to AFARD safeguarding policy
- Any safeguarding concerns among partner staff shall be investigated according to this policy
- Partners shall be expected to exhibit minimum safeguarding standards such as safety, protection of dignity and right.
- No contractor shall use a vulnerable adult or a child to accomplish his / her assignment where the amount of work to be done qualifies to be classified as harmful labour.
- Contractors shall make sure their work environment does not expose vulnerable adults and children to any form of abuse.
- Partners shall agree to share information and knowledge with AFARD to improve safeguarding. Including reporting on safeguarding concerns that they might have noticed during their work with AFARD.

# 05

# IDENTIFICATION, REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION OF SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

All staff and partners of AFARD are obliged to identify, report: -

- a. A staff and any person involved in abuse of a child or vulnerable adult.
- b. A vulnerable adult or child that is experiencing abuse whether the perpetrator is known or not.
- c. Investigate cases of abuse. Therefore, staff are expected to be aware of obvious indicators of being abused;

this includes.

## **a) Physical Signs:**

Bruises, burns, fractures, irritability, frequent hunger, unexplained weight loss, any sexually transmitted infections and poor hygiene. Multiple bruises, Bruises of various stages of healing, bruises located on unusual parts of the body (face, neck, ears buttocks, back, chest etc.) etc.

## **b) Behavioral Signs:**

Showing little or no emotion when hurt, being withdrawn, anxiousness, wariness, Alcohol and or drug misuse, age-inappropriate sexual behavior, stealing food, extreme apprehensiveness or vigilance; avoiding touch or flinching easily, excessive friendliness to strangers; fear of going home etc.

## **c) Disclosure**

If the child or vulnerable adult tells you they have been abused.

## **5.1 REPORTING MECHANISM**

Any person who has a concern about the safety of children and adults at-risk in AFARD programmes and operations should report to Internal (within the organization), safeguarding focal person, supervisor, HR unit, executive director and external (outside the organization to relevant local authorities) reporting systems. All staff at field level shall report suspected cases of abuse to the project manager or his/her designate safe guarding focal persons.

## **5.2 ESCALATING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS**

Suspected case of abuse that falls outside the mandate of AFARD for example abuse not related to AFARD staff, abuse of a child or vulnerable adult by a parent or any person outside AFARD shall be reported to the local authority, e.g. Local councils and police. It will be the responsibility of the project Manager or his/her designate to report suspected abuse by non-AFARD staff to the local authority with the knowledge of the safeguarding focal person who shall keep the records of all the cases reported.

Project manager or any other person to whom a concern is reported should refer the concern to the safeguarding focal person immediately in not more than 24hours after getting to know the concern. The safeguarding focal person shall document the concern and escalate it to appropriate authority (within or outside AFARD).

The safeguarding focal person shall also assess the needs of the affected person and make an appropriate plan to ensure they are met through AFARD or by referral to other actors. Cases of abuse shall be reported using retrievable means i.e. by writing as a report, short text messages, emails etc.

### **5.3 NON-REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CASE OF ABUSE**

Any staff that does not report any member of staff, contractor, consultant, volunteer, intern, any person outside the organization (member of community, community leader, a parent etc.) and or does not report about any child or vulnerable adult experiencing abuse is in contravention of this policy and is liable to disciplinary proceedings

### **5.4 INVESTIGATION OF SUSPECTED CASES OF ABUSE**

- Project manager shall constitute a team to conduct preliminary investigation of suspected case of abuse involving staff and shall update the focal person of the proceedings.
- Confirmed cases of abuse shall be referred to the focal person for further management.
- Suspected cases of abuse involving AFARD contractors, donors and other significant partners shall be referred to focal person for appropriate investigation.
- In investigating cases of suspected abuse, AFARD with the approval of Executive Director and at the request of focal person may seek the assistance of an expert in investigating cases of abuse.
- Response to confirmed cases of abuse will be provided.
- The minimal punishment of abuse in AFARD shall be summary dismissal unless otherwise advised by the Board of Directors.
- Where the abuse is grave e.g. Sexual abuse such as defilement; child slavery, child sacrifice, child trafficking, the dismissed staff shall be handed over to relevant authority for further reprimand

### **5.5. MANAGEMENT OF ABUSED CHILDREN OR VULNERABLE ADULTS**

Since AFARD has limited expertise in management of abuse outside AFARD mandate, referral to appropriate professionals and organizations will be ideal so that victim gets appropriate support which may include; Counseling, legal and medical support. Where possible AFARD may offer material and financial support as part of the management

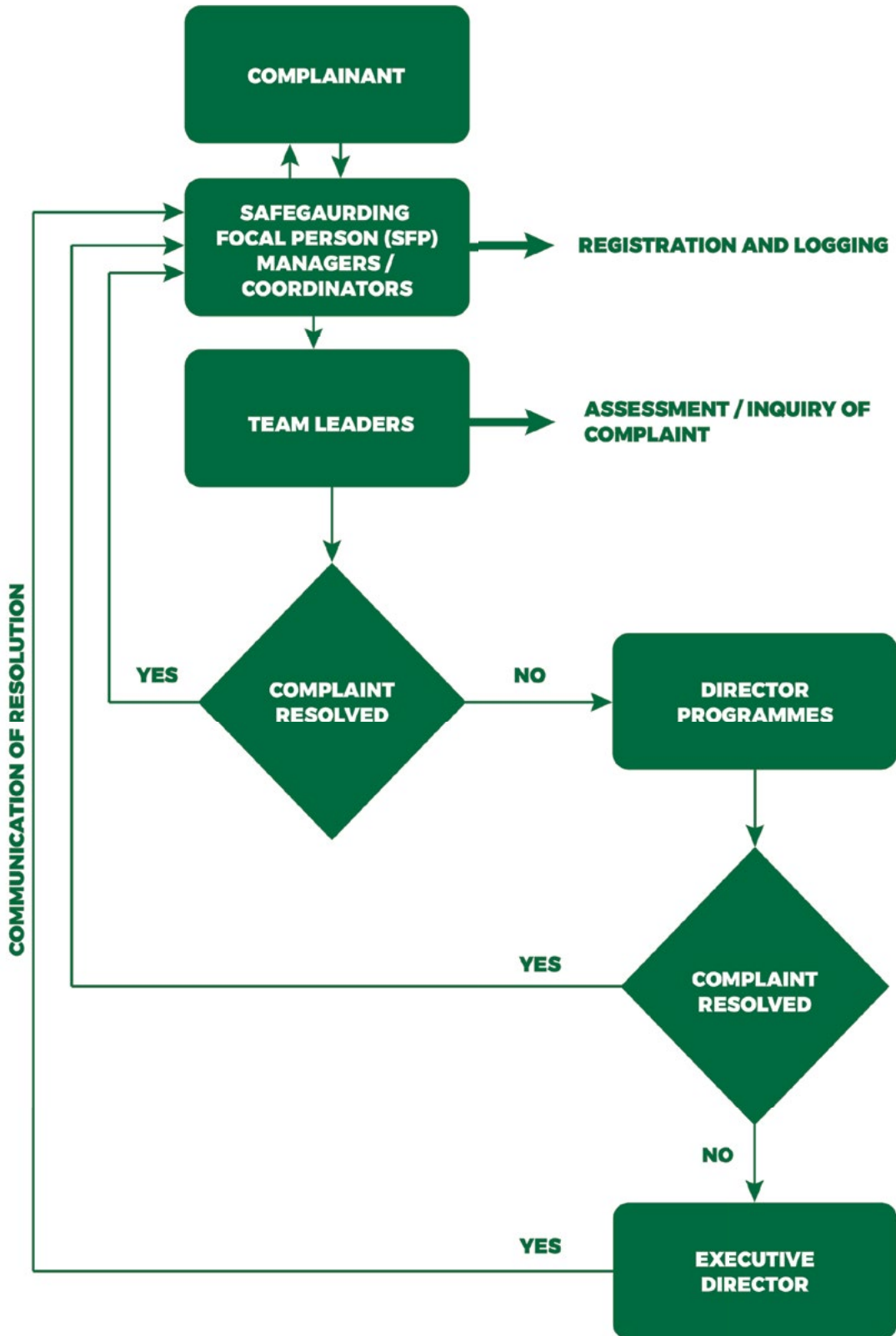
### **5.6. MALICIOUS ALLEGATION OF ABUSE**

Any staff that bring against a colleague or any person malicious allegations of abuse shall be liable to disciplinary proceeding; such malicious allegations shall be punishable by warning, or dismissal from the organization.

### **5.7 REGULAR SAFEGUARDING COMPLAINTS**

Regular safeguarding complaints relates to program design and implementation/service delivery.

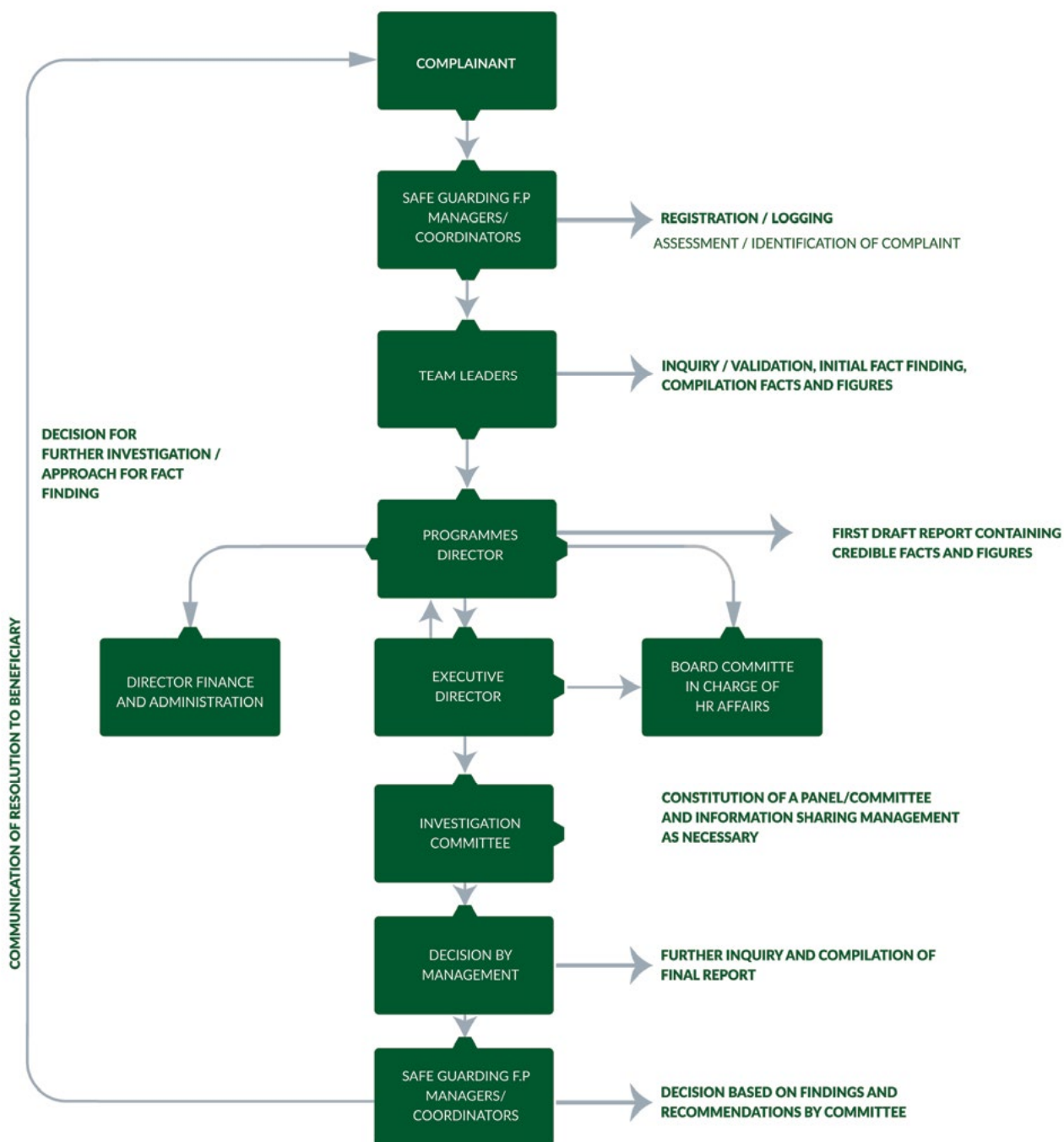
## Flow Chart for Dealing with Gross Safe Guarding Complaints at AFARD



## 5.8 GROSS / SERIOUS SAFEGUARDING COMPLAINTS

Serious safeguarding complaints includes issues related to: Derogatory/Immoral behavior with beneficiaries involving verbal abuse/physical assault; Harassment of beneficiary/ Or any act that might harm AFARD’s reputation; Discrimination of beneficiaries on the basis of race, gender, creed or religion; Any other complaint judged as serious by AFARD management.

### Flow Chart for Dealing with Gross Safe Guarding Complaints at AFARD



**NB:** The dotted lines depict that the draft report is also copied to the “Director Finance and Administration” and “Board Committee in charge of HR issues” while being sent to the “Executive Director”.

# 06

## RESPONSIBILITY IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY. (ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SAFEGUARDING)

This section provides guidance on policy implementation monitoring and review

### **Safeguarding team:**

This team shall compose a member of the Board, Executive Director, safeguarding focal person, Safeguarding committee, HR unit, Managers/Supervisors.

### **6.1 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The safeguarding focal person on the board will supports the safeguarding team at the secretariat. The board will be responsible for approving the policy and ensuring that it is an integral part of the organizations' processes; it will also sanction review of the safeguarding policy with recommendation of the senior management team.

### **6.2 SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM (LED BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR)**

The team will do the following in regard to the safe guarding policy:

- Recommend review and revision of the policy
- Responsible for overall implementation of the policy, ensuring its application in human resources practices, programming and contracting and outsourcing of services
- Provide the enabling environment for the implementation of the policy

### **6.3 FOCAL PERSON (HR UNIT)**

The HR unit will do the following in regard to this safe guarding policy:

- Training of staff, partners and visitors on the policy
- Ensure each staff signs and receives a copy (either in hard or soft) of the policy
- Day to day implementation of the policy
- Publicizing the policy in workplace including extracts from the policy displayed in offices, notice boards and other relevant places
- Ensure availability of updated tools to aid implementation of the policy e.g. risk assessment tool, checklists to assess history of abuse in interviews, checklists to assess programs for safeguarding, etc.

### **6.4. PROJECT MANAGERS**

- Provides the enabling environment at program / project level for policy implementation

- Applying the policy in programming; in planning, execution, and evaluations
- Program staff adhere to the policy
- Day to day implementation at program and field level
- Training of program staff

## **6.5. STAFF**

- Adhere to the policy
- Recommend improvement
- Participate in review and improvement of the policy

## **6.6. CONTRACTORS, CONSULTANTS, VOLUNTEERS, INTERNS, SUPPLIERS**

- Adhere to the policy
- Recommend improvement to the policy

## **6.7. DONORS AND GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES**

- Adhere to the policy
- Recommend improvements on the policy based on their own safeguarding policies and experiences
- Can participate, contribute, and guide in the review process
- Sponsor review process

## **6.8. BENEFICIARIES**

- a. Adhere to the policy
- b. Identify any gaps in the policy and propose improvements

# 07 ANNEXES

## AnnexI: Safeguarding complaints handling mechanism (DOs and DONTs)

Nature of Complaint/ Feedback	What to Do	What not to Do
Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greet the caller.</li> <li>• Log basic information and the feedback of the caller.</li> <li>• Ensure that the caller is informed that his/her feedback has been recorded.</li> <li>• Thank the caller for their feedback.</li> <li>• Record feedback in Feedback and Complaint Tracking Database and Close the feedback.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not create or communicate false expectations.</li> <li>• Do not make any promises.</li> <li>• Do not behave rudely with the complainant/ feedback provider.</li> <li>• Do not ask people not to call again.</li> </ul>
Request for Need Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greet the caller.</li> <li>• Log basic information and the request of the caller.</li> <li>• In case of invitation for need assessment compile a list and send to program team.</li> <li>• Ensure that the caller is informed of the steps taken.</li> <li>• Close the feedback.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not entertain complaints/ feedbacks on issues which are not related to our programs. In case of calls from staff members regarding staff grievances, redirect them to HR.</li> </ul>
Regular Complaint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greet the caller.</li> <li>• Log basic information and the complaint of the caller.</li> <li>• Verify if the complaint is about AFARD interventions. [If it is not and the complainant knows the name of the other organization then PROJECT MANAGERS/COORDINATORS may ask field program manager to reach the other organization and let them know. However, after passing on the complaint no further follow up is necessary]</li> <li>• Request and record the details of the problem, the program and the geographical area.</li> <li>• Ask what action complainant is suggesting, though do not promise this will be done.</li> <li>• Assure the complainant about his/her confidentiality and transparent inquiry.</li> <li>• Process the complaint with the support of relevant sector(s)/ Person(s).</li> <li>• Seek permission from complainant to visit him/her if required.</li> <li>• Call the person back and inform him/her about resolution of complaint.</li> <li>• Ask him/her whether she is satisfied with the response or not.</li> <li>• Record above mentioned all information along with beneficiary's satisfaction response.</li> <li>• Thank him/her for reaching us.</li> <li>• Close the complaint.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not turn off your phone or move your phone to any inaccessible.</li> </ul>

Nature of Complaint/ Feedback	What to Do	What not to Do
	<p><b>Note:</b> In case a complaint of similar nature belonging to the same program in the same locality is received thrice refer the complaint to specific IP who will hold an investigation visit in coordination with the program team.</p>	
Serious Complaint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greet the caller.</li> <li>• Log basic information and the complaint of the caller.</li> <li>• Verify if the complaint is about AFARD's interventions. [If it is not and the complainant knows the name of the other organization then PROJECT MANAGERS/ COORDINATORS may ask field program manager to reach the other organization and let them know. However, after passing on the complaint no further follow up is necessary]</li> <li>• Request and record the details of the problem, the program and the geographical area.</li> <li>• Ask what action complainant is suggesting, though do not promise this will be done.</li> <li>• Assure the complainant about his/her confidentiality and transparent inquiry.</li> <li>• Probe for further evidence from the caller if required.</li> <li>• If there is no evidence found, call back the person to inform about decision being made or action taken (It should be communicated by PROJECT MANAGERS/COORDINATORS, CC or TAs).</li> <li>• In case of enough evidence for further probing are available then ask PROJECT MANAGERS/COORDINATORS to contact complainant.</li> <li>• Seek permission from complainant to visit him/her.</li> <li>• If complaint proved true, inform the complainant about actions taken on his/her complaint.</li> <li>• Ask the complainant if he/she is satisfied with the response.</li> <li>• Thank the complainant and close the complaint.</li> </ul>	

## Closing Complaints

- All types of complaints received by any channel needs to be entered into Complaint and Response Database
- All the complaints and feedback received need to be closed in a certain manner. The resolution of a complaint must be reached as soon as possible (within maximum 15 days).
- If the caller's complaint/resolution could not be acted upon due to reasons such as budget/program constraints or if enough evidences could not be found, he/she is informed accordingly.
- In case of regular complaints and feedback the safeguarding focal person/ Managers/ Coordinators must inform the caller of the resolution and decision on the complaint by calling him /her.
- In case of serious nature complaints that have proceeded till the investigation stage, the safeguarding focal person/ Project Managers/ Coordinators must convey the resolution to the complainant.
- All complaints must be closed within 15 days. In some cases, if, due to unavoidable circumstances a decision has not been reached the caller still needs to be called and updated on the progress within the specified time frame.

## Confidentiality and Information Protection

- All complaints must be dealt with in confidence.
- Feedback and complaints records should be treated as confidential to safeguard sensitive information, upholding the principle of confidentiality.
- The complainant should be assured of not disclosing his/her information.
- The name and personal details of the complainant should not be disclosed while sharing the complaint database with other departments.

## ANNEX II: STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO ABIDE BY THE POLICY

I, ..... acknowledge that I have received and duly read the safeguard- ing policy of the Agency for Accelerated Regional Development (AFARD) and commit to comply with the provisions of the policy and Guidelines herein.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Designation: \_\_\_\_\_

Date & Place: \_\_\_\_\_

*In the presence of:*

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

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

## ANNEX III: CONCERN REPORTING FORM

### ***A: Personal information (of the person reporting the concern)***

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

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship with the affected person: \_\_\_\_\_

contact details: \_\_\_\_\_

### ***B: Information about the affected person***

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

Sex: \_\_\_\_\_

Age (child or adult): \_\_\_\_\_

Guardians (if a child or person with a disability): \_\_\_\_\_

**C: Information about the concern:**

How did you know about this concern? (Indicate concern is based on suspicions, if witnessed, or if disclosed) give details of the disclosure, observation, or suspicion

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Name and alleged perpetrator: \_\_\_\_\_

Title and Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Comment on the situation of the survivor and the actions taken: \_\_\_\_\_

*In the presence of:*

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

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

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

**ANNEX IV: INCIDENT RECORDING FORM**

**To be completed by the Safeguarding Focal Person following up and documenting the incident)**

Concern/case number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/time \_\_\_\_\_

Reported by \_\_\_\_\_

Means of reporting \_\_\_\_\_

Report received by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/time \_\_\_\_\_

**Part A: Reporting concern**

**Details of the case**

Description of the incident (what happened, where It happened, what time, who else knows about the incident) include the victim's words if possible, and all other details you witnessed or have been told.

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**Details of the alleged perpetrator**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ sex \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ relationship with the victim: \_\_\_\_\_

**Details of the survivor**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ sex \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and contact details of parent/ legal guardian - if minor (physical, telephone):

\_\_\_\_\_

Other relevant details: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Report compiled by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part B: The well-being of the survivor**

The physical and psychological state of the survivor

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What is the immediate protection needs of the survivor?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Services already accessed and by whom

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Services still needed

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Services provided through the organization

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Part C. Escalating the concern**

*Persons/authorities to whom the case was escalated / referred to.*

Authority 1: \_\_\_\_\_ By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Authority 1: \_\_\_\_\_ By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Authority 1: \_\_\_\_\_ By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part D. Report handling**

*Inquiries, assessments, and planning*

Details of the decision on the nature of the case and actions to take (by whom and dates)

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Details of the Investigation

By whom and how was the case investigated?

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What were the outcomes/recommendations?

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Details of the decision made by management

What decisions were made? (who made the decision? who and how were they communicated? dates)

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**Part E. Review and Learning**

Details of the review (who was involved in the review? and on what dates?)

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What were the outcomes of the review? what learning?

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The person completing this report

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

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

## ANNEX V: SAFEGUARDING SELF-AUDIT TOOL

**Source: Interagency standing Committee: United nations Implementing Partner PSEA Capacity Assessment tool**

This self-audit tool aims at providing baseline information for assessing and tracking the organisation's progress towards becoming a safe organisation. The tool is based on 8 core PSEA standards. Organisations are encouraged to use the findings to develop an action plan that reflects identified areas for improvement on safeguarding, that they can revisit at regular intervals (i.e. every 3, 6 or 12 months).

The assessment also helps your organisation to identify areas where external support is needed, such as trainings, technical advice, funding or increased coordination with other like-minded organisations. It can be filled by staff at all levels from a particular organisation. There should be consensus on the scores that appear in the final tool as well as the gaps identified and measures to sustain or improve safeguarding action.

The more honest you are in identifying the gaps, the better the chances that you will identify the real gaps and the more motivated you will be to improve the safeguarding situation in your organisation.

### Process

**Step 1:** Complete the self-assessment tool by answering yes or no to each your organisation's compliance with each safeguarding standard.

**Step 2:** If you answered yes in step 1, indicate the means of verification in the evidence column.

**Step 3:** Rank your organisation's progress in meeting the standards, based on the evidence that exists (1 = not in place, 2 = partially in place, 3 = in place)

**Step 4:** Sum up the total scores. The number of standards met provides the basis for your organisation's "SEAH Risk Rating" and reflects your current capacities in Preventing and responding to SEAH.

**Step 5:** For each standard identify specific gaps and suggest actions your organisation could take to meet the standards or improve/sustain progress already made

Score	PSEA Organisational Capacities
20-24	Your organisation meets all the standards (Adequate capacity) the organisation needs to continuously learn to maintain the standards
14-19	Meets most standards (Progressive). The organization has made some progress towards applying the standards. Certain aspects need to be improved.
8-13	Does not meet the minimum standards (Low capacity). Immediate action needed to build/ strengthen PSEA/ safeguarding capacity

Core Standard (fully met 3, partially met 2, not met 1)	Proof/evidence	Rating In place = 3 Partially in place = 2 Not in place = 1	Specific gaps	Suggested measures to meet standards/improve status
<p><b>1. Organization's Safeguarding Policy</b></p> <p>An organization's safeguarding policy exists and describes organisation's commitment to safeguarding, appropriate stand- ards of conduct, preventive measures, reporting, monitoring, investigation, corrective measures and accountability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguarding policy that reflects the current context of your organisation and is endorsed by a relevant authority.</li> <li>• Updated safeguarding risk profile detailing risks of SEAH and other forms of abuse and appropriate mitigation measures</li> <li>• Signed declarations of commitment by staff to abide by the policy.</li> <li>• Policy implementation plan and budget</li> <li>• Measures to track and document policy implementation</li> <li>• Other (specify)</li> </ul>			
<p><b>2. Organizational Management</b></p> <p>The organization's contracts and partnership agreements include a standard clause requiring subcontractors, to adopt policies that prohibit SEA and to take measures to prevent and respond to SEA to children and adults at risk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contracts/partnership agreements for partners and sub-contractors detailing safeguarding commitments.</li> <li>• Due diligence processes in place</li> <li>• Minutes of discussions on safeguarding with partners.</li> <li>• Knowledge and uptake of safeguarding of SEAH policies and use of knowledge</li> <li>• Other (please specify):</li> </ul>			
<p><b>3. Human Resource Systems</b></p> <p>There is a systematic vetting procedure in place for job candidates through proper screening. This must include, at minimum, reference checks for sexual misconduct and a self-declaration by the job candidate requesting that they confirm that they have never been subject to sanctions (disciplinary, administrative or criminal) arising from an investigation in relation to SEA, or left employment pending investigation and refused to cooperate in such an investigation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment procedure with evidence of communication on safeguarding commitment and reference check with questions related to SEAH/safeguarding)</li> <li>• Documentation of reference checks from referees and signed self-declaration forms</li> <li>• Other (specify)</li> </ul>			

Core Standard (fully met 3, partially met 2, not met 1)	Proof/evidence	Rating In place = 3 Partially in place = 2 Not in place =1	Specific gaps	Suggested measures to meet standards/improve status
<p><b>4. Mandatory Training</b></p> <p>The organization holds mandatory trainings for all personnel on safeguarding and relevant standards and procedures. The training raises awareness on safeguarding concepts, foundations of safeguarding and actions staff are required to take to prevent and respond to SEAH and other forms of abuse with- in the context of the organisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minutes/reports of awareness raising sessions/trainings.</li> <li>• Annual Training Plan</li> <li>• Training Agenda, modules/ materials</li> <li>• Safeguarding materials/messages</li> <li>• Attendance Sheets</li> <li>• Staff aware of SEAH and other forms of abuse, the policy standards and procedures.</li> <li>• Communications about the training</li> <li>• Other (specify)</li> </ul>			
<p><b>5. Reporting</b></p> <p>The organization has mechanisms and procedures for personnel, beneficiaries and communities, including children and adults at-risk, to report safeguarding concerns (SEAH and other forms of harm) that comply with core standards for reporting (i.e. safety, confidentiality, transparency, accessibility) and ensures that beneficiaries are aware of these.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal feedback and complaints mechanism.</li> <li>• Reporting forms (including evidence of filed reports).</li> <li>• Communication materials on reporting procedures</li> <li>• Description of reporting mechanism</li> <li>• Witness protection mechanisms</li> <li>• Other (please specify)</li> </ul>			
<p><b>6. Assistance and Referrals</b></p> <p>The organization has a system to ensure safeguarding incidents where children and adults at-risk have been abused, receive immediate professional assistance, referring them to qualified service providers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List of Service Providers in specific localities</li> <li>• Description of Referral Process</li> <li>• Guidance on support to survivors</li> <li>• Referral form for safeguarding incidents</li> <li>• Other (please specify)</li> </ul>			
<p><b>7. Investigations</b></p> <p>The organization has a process for investigation of allegations of safeguarding cases and can provide evidence that it has appropriately dealt with past safeguarding incidents (both internally and incidents that required referral to external authority</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written process for review of safeguarding incidents allegations</li> <li>• Dedicated resources and structures for investigation(s)</li> <li>• Documentation of past investigations done including lessons learned from the process.</li> <li>• Case logs/registers</li> <li>• Other (please specify):</li> </ul>			

Core Standard (fully met 3, partially met 2, not met 1)	Proof/evidence	Rating In place = 3 Partially in place = 2 Not in place = 1	Specific gaps	Suggested measures to meet standards/improve status
<b>8. Corrective action</b>  The organisation has taken appropriate corrective action in response to SEA allegations, if any.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Description of sanctions for SEAH and other forms of harm/breach of safeguarding policy.</li> <li>Documentation of past corrective action taken</li> </ul>			
<b>Total rating (i.e. 1s + 2s + 3s...)</b>				
Safeguarding organizational capacities				
Safeguarding risk rating				

Safeguarding Self-Audit of [Name of the Organisation]: \_\_\_\_\_

Audit completed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



