



Policy Title	Safeguarding Policy
Author	Programmes Coordinator
Oversight	Executive Director
Approver	Board
Purpose and Description	<p>This policy describes Ntengwe for Community Development's (Ntengwe) commitment to Child Safeguarding. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that Ntengwe is safe for children, youths and adults by promoting awareness and mitigating the risk of or actual harm that may come to children and young people by employees, volunteers, partners, representatives, programming, vendors or operations.</p> <p>Furthermore, children, young people and adults may be vulnerable and at risk due to, for example, reasons of gender, disability and age or illness. Ntengwe is fully committed to do no harm to children, young people or vulnerable adults.</p> <p>This policy is to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all who work for and engage with Ntengwe are skilled, confident, understand, and are well supported in meeting their responsibilities to safeguard children, young people and adults from violence and engage positively during programs and operations in manner that is safe for the children with whom Ntengwe is in contact; • Ntengwe has in place procedures to prevent and deal with the actions/behaviour of staff, associates, visitors that result in violence against children, young people, adults, and/or places them at risk; • 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.

1. Introduction

Safeguarding is the responsibility that an organization has to ensure that their employees and volunteers, partners, vendors, operations and programmes do no harm to children, young people or vulnerable adults 1 (together referred to as ‘participants’ 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

Accountability and safeguarding policy seek to protect all persons involved in Ntengwe’s work against risks of exploitation and abuse to ensure that the behavior of all those working with Ntengwe’s programmes and projects meet appropriate standards. In formulating this policy, an effort was made to conform with the provisions of the international principles and standards provided for in the Universal Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Sustainable Development Goal (5) of Promoting Gender Equality, SADC Gender Protocol, National Gender Policy of Zimbabwe and Constitution of Zimbabwe (section 16). In addition to the above, other policies that should be referred to when implementing this policy include the Child Protection Policy, Ntengwe Code of Conduct, HIV and AIDS policy, Protection from Sexual Abuse and Exploitation by staff policy. Ntengwe commits to ensuring that the human rights and their rights to dignity of the programme participants, staff, stakeholders and consultants are prioritized by ensuring that practical steps are followed to prevent their violation and to effectively respond to such cases when they occur.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Minimise the risks of any exploitation and abuse of programme participants
- To raise awareness amongst employees and volunteers about the dangers and impacts of exploitation and abuse
- Protect programme participants from any form of abuse or exploitation by anyone who is in contact with Ntengwe Programmes e.g. Consultants, Government stakeholders and Enumerators
- Ensure complaints and feedback channels are received and responded to in an effective manner.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all Ntengwe employees, volunteers, part-time employees and consultants. Ntengwe will ensure that the above-mentioned individuals are provided with this policy before they interact with programme participants and stakeholders and these will be required to sign off that they have read and understood the policy and they commit themselves to abide by it.

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

- a) On what they can expect Ntengwe 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 are 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 that work or have contact with, either directly or indirectly, children, young people or vulnerable adults or who live in communities alongside them.

4. Definition of terms

Abuse - a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or 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 another 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 care-givers); 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 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.

Sexual exploitation - any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, threatening or profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another

Adult safeguarding – Protecting an adult right to live in safety, free from Abuse and neglect is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect and as a result of those needs is unable to protect him/herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it

Child – Ntengwe regards a child as anyone under the age of 18 years, respective 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 adults at risk- Those aged 18 years and over who are unable to safeguard their own well-being, property rights or other interests. Everybody has the right to be safe and well-looked after.

Safeguarding children and adults

Ntengwe staff members, volunteers, consultants and part-time employees have to ensure that children and adults are protected from any forms of harm and abuse taking note of the following:

- i. Working closely to promote the best interest of children and adults
- ii. Working in line with Ntengwe’s Safeguarding Programme Participants policy and other organizational policies (Code of conduct, Disability and Child Protection)
- iii. Encouraging children and adults to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes and behaviour they do not like
- iv. Recognise that caution is required in one to one situation, particularly in sensitive situations such as dealing with programme participants including children who may be upset or traumatized.

5. Commitment statement

Ntengwe is committed to protecting programme participants (primary stakeholders) by ensuring that the programmes being implemented do not expose them to risks. Therefore, efforts shall be made to ensure that programmes do not accelerate or increase the vulnerabilities of programme participants. In this respect, Ntengwe will ensure that everyone regardless of age, gender, disability or ethnic origin has the right of being protected from any form of harm, abuse, exploitation or neglect. Ntengwe commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work through the three pillars of prevention, reporting and response.

6. Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation

Ntengwe for Community Development prohibits sexual exploitation and abuse and is committed to preventing it in our workplaces and operations. Sexual Exploitation and abuse violates universally recognized, international legal norms and standards. Ntengwe considers such acts as serious misconduct which may constitute grounds for disciplinary measures including summary dismissal and criminal prosecution. Ntengwe is committed to ensuring that programme participants are safeguarded from all forms of abuse, harm, exploitation and neglect. This will be achieved by:

- Ensuring all staff members, consultants, volunteers and part-time employees are familiar with and are aware of their responsibilities within the policy
- Ensuring all programmes and activities implemented to protect people from any risks of harm
- Implementing stringent safeguarding when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and associated personnel
- Training staff members on safeguarding and accountability

Activities to minimize risks:

- Ensure inclusivity in all categories of employees, volunteers and consultants (gender and disability)
- Programme participants informed of the provisions of the safeguarding policy and complaints handling procedures (Help desks, contact numbers of staff members to be contacted).
- Ensure programme participants are aware of their entitlements to assistance without any form of discrimination, abuse, exploitation or payment in cash or kind.
- Procedures took to raise a complaint or provide feedback to Ntengwe or partners
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process.
- Cultural sensitivity; Ntengwe seeks always to work in ways which 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 communities where we work. Everyone matters everywhere in the world. Culture must not be used as an excuse to abuse children, young people or vulnerable adults.

Preventive procedures during recruitment and selection

- It is always better to prevent than to cure, hence the need for Ntengwe to take the following steps aimed at promoting the thrust towards zero tolerance to sexual abuse and exploitation. To augment the Ntengwe HR policy efforts shall be made to screen out unsuitable candidates to work for the organisation by practicing the following procedures:
 - i. Appropriately questioning the candidate during interviews
 - ii. Making reference checks with previous employers or person familiar with the candidate
 - iii. Requesting police clearance before contracting the person

- iv. Asking every potential employee or volunteer to fill in a Self Declaration form that seeks to get voluntary disclosures about specific aspects of the person especially pertaining to their criminal history.

7. Responsible Authority

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 which encourages reporting of breaches of this policy using the appropriate procedures. *Ntengwe Executive Director or her/his appointee shall oversee the implementation of this policy by ensuring that every employee, volunteer or consultant has:*

- Read and understood and signed the safeguarding policy
- Fully inducted and made aware of the consequences of not complying with the policy.
- All employees have a mandate to report all safeguarding issues.

8. Reporting

All Ntengwe employees, volunteers, consultants and part-time employees are urged to report all forms of suspected cases of exploitation, abuse, harm or neglect of any individuals that directly or indirectly work with Ntengwe. Such reports should be made immediately to the Programmes Coordinator or Finance and Administration Manager or as outlined in the feedback trackers. *NB: depending on the context, some complaints can be solved at the district level by Project Officers.* Ntengwe will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies. Ntengwe will ensure Staff reporting concerns are protected and dealt with confidentiality. Staff members shall immediately report their complaints relating to safeguarding to the Safeguarding Focal Point Person (SFPP) and if the staff member is not comfortable with reporting to the SFPP, he/she may then report to the Programmes Coordinator/Finance and Administration Manager/ Executive Director and or Board member.

Contacts for Safeguarding Focal Person are:

Mr Innocent Isaac: 0774871130 Email: innocent.isaac@ntengwe-dev.org or
Mrs Meliga Kuseka 0772621718 Email: meliga.kuseka@ntegwe-dev.org

Complaints at district level: These are collected from the field from programme participants, non-programme participants and or from stakeholders through face to face communication, community meeting, social media platforms (WhatsApp, text messages). These are recorded in the feedback collection form and entered in the safeguarding tracker and sent to the Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning Officer who will then forward them to the Programmes Coordinator. For complaints concerning government departments or other development partners, these will be referred to relevant departments concerned and then follow up within a period of two weeks and give feedback to those communities.

Organisational complaints: Staff members shall report their complaints to the District Projects Officers either verbally, WhatsApp or by Email. District Project Officers should then

solve if possible or forward them to the Programmes Coordinator or the Finance and Administration Manager. However, if the complaint involves District Project Officers, complaints shall then be reported to the Programmes Coordinator. If the staff member is not satisfied with the response from the Programmes Coordinator, the complainant can then either contact the Finance and Administration Manager or the Executive Director (Ms Elisabeth Markham).

NB: ALL STAFF MEMBERS, CONSULTANTS, VOLUNTEERS/VOLUNTEERS OR PARTTIME EMPLOYEES ARE TO REPORT ALL SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS (ANY FORMS OF ABUSE OR EXPLOITATION) OF PROGRAMMES PARTICIPANTS OR STAFF MEMBERS OR PARTTIME EMPLOYEES TO MANAGEMENT OR RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS

9. Responding

Ntengwe will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff, consultants, volunteers and part-time employees found in breach of policy. Feedback to complaints raised shall be provided either through direct communication, telephone calls or text messages within a period of not later than two weeks.

Designated Safeguarding Focal Persons 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 are taken.
- Ntengwe is not an investigative authority. Referrals must be made to the relevant law enforcement agency to ensure that appropriate protection and support is given to the vulnerable individual and that any evidence is collected following 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. This will be achieved through having password, protected files which are also kept under lock and key. In addition, the organizational server, with access protection will be used to store highly confidential information.
- Where a Ntengwe employee is the subject of an investigation, the lead designated executive director, or board member will lead the case.

COMPLAINANTS SHALL BE RESPECTED AND TREATED WITH DIGNITY AND ALL STAFF MEMBERS/ VOLUNTEERS/CONSULTANTS NEED TO MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY OF ALL COMPLAINTS RAISED

Date created: August 2020

Date of next update: August 2024

Responsible owner: Ntengwe For Community Development, Executive Director

Annex 1: Statement of Commitment to the Ntengwe for Community Development Safeguarding Policy

I, _____, have read and understood the standards and procedures outlined in this Safeguarding Policy. I agree with the provisions contained therein and accept the importance of keeping children, youth and vulnerable adults safe by promoting awareness and mitigating the risk of actual harm that may come to children and young people, inflicted by myself. I further understand and accept that complying to the Ntengwe for Community Development Safeguarding Policy will involve undergoing a Police record checks, signing a Character reference form stating any criminal convictions, declaring any previous investigations or allegations against me with respect to abuse issues and providing two-character references.

Full name and Surname

I.D/Passport Number

Contact Numbers

Job Title/Role

Signature

Date

Annex 2: Character Reference Form

Please provide the name, address and contact details of two-character references you have known professionally for no less than 2 years excluding your family members.

Referee Name: Organization/Department Capacity in which you know referee Address Contact Numbers Email address	Referee Name: Organization/Department Capacity in which you know referee Address Contact Numbers Email address
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Declaration of Criminal Convictions

Have you ever been convicted of a crime? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please provide details of all criminal convictions including those considered you have already completely served sentence, and declare any previous investigations or allegations made against you. These will be kept confidential by Ntengwe for Community Development but will be assessed to see if they pose any risk or not in relation to any abuse or sexual harassment.

Annex 3: Approval

Approved By:

Board Chairperson: Executive Director:

.....

(Please Print Name)

.....

(Please Print Name)

Date:

Date:

Annex 4. Content

Does the policy contain the following content?	Yes/No
Is the purpose of the policy clear?	Yes
Does the policy include a statement of your commitment to safeguarding, including a zero tolerance statement on bullying, harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse?	Yes
Does the policy state what is not covered in the Safeguarding Policy but is covered in other policies (such as sexual harassment) *To note, sexual harassment now falls under the remit of Safeguarding at Christian Aid where previously it was dealt with by our Anti-Bullying & Harassment policy	Yes it explains
Does the scope of the policy cover all staff and 'representatives' of the organisation? (Scope means who the policy applies to)	Yes it does
Does the policy state that everyone has equal rights to protection regardless of their race, gender, age, religion or disability, sexual orientation, social background or culture.	Yes it does
Is the policy reflective of the local context/type of work of the organisation?	Yes

<p>Does the policy contain a section on the organisations responsibilities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ensuring all representatives of the organisation are made aware of the policy * Ensuring that the program activities the organisation undertakes protects people from a risk of harm that may arise from coming into contact with the organisation * Ensure safer recruiting practices such as taking of references and police checks (where applicable and where available) * Ensure staff receive training on Safeguarding * Respond to Safeguarding concerns promptly 	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Does the policy include a section on staff responsibilities, including behaviours staff must not undertake towards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Children * Adults 	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Does the policy define the terms used or have a glossary?</p>	<p>Terms are clearly defined.</p>
<p>Does the policy define that a child is anyone under the age of 18 years old, regardless of local definition?</p>	<p>Yes it has been defined</p>
<p>Does the policy define vulnerable adults (at risk adults/adults at risk)?</p>	<p>Yes it defines</p>
<p>Does the policy clearly define types of abuse that are unacceptable? (Physical, Sexual, Emotional, Neglect)</p>	<p>Yes it does</p>
<p>Does the policy contain a section on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (PSEA)</p>	<p>Clearly defined</p>

<p>Does the policy contain a section on 'how to report a safeguarding concern'? Optional - this can be a step by step guide. This should be accessible, practical and relevant to the organisations context.</p>	<p>Yes, it does</p>
<p>Does the policy explain how all of the organisations representatives have a responsibility to report safeguarding concern (actual or suspected)?</p>	<p>Yes, there is</p>
<p>Does the policy explain how it will respond to safeguarding concerns?</p>	<p>Yes, it does</p>
<p>Does the policy clearly state how it will maintain the confidentiality of safeguarding concerns at all points of the process?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Does the policy explain how safeguarding information will be kept securely, both physical information (anything on paper) and electronically (anything on a phone/computer)?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Does the policy clearly state who is responsible for receiving and managing safeguarding concerns within the organisation and provide their contact details?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Does the policy clearly state the organisations responsibility to report safeguarding concerns to relevant stakeholders?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Does the policy state how concerns will be investigated and state if found to be fake appropriate disciplinary action will be taken? (if made by a staff member).</p>	<p>Yes, it is there</p>
<p>Does the policy state the personal security of survivors and/or witnesses will be protected?</p>	<p>No</p>

Does the policy contain a section on Safer Recruitment Practises?	No
<p>Does the policy provide a list of associated polices, such as but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Code of Conduct * Complaints Policy * Whistleblowing Policy 	No
Is the policy in a language that is easily understandable by all representatives of the organisation?	Yes
Does the policy state the date it was written and/or the date it was last reviewed and the date it will next be reviewed?	Yes
Optional - Is the policy signed by all staff?	Yes