



Support for Sustainable Development

SAFEGUARDING

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

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ADDIS ABABA**

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I. Background

The projects and programs budget that SSD received from grants address the needs of vulnerable communities and groups work with. There is potential for abuse to take place in the context of these projects and programs. Through its mission, SSD is well positioned to promote and ensure good practice by its staff and by with those of its partners who directly or indirectly work with vulnerable persons. The aim of this policy is to promote and ensure the safeguarding of vulnerable persons directly served by SSD and to ensure that any abuse of vulnerable persons that occur in the context of SSD's projects and programs is reported and addressed.

Thus, this safeguarding Manual is deals with SSD's coordinated and standardized safeguarding measures to be taken in its respective organization. The contents of this safeguarding policy and procedure manual are adapted from the SSD's Code of Conduct and existing policy documents, additional contents were added from literature to expand the scope of the policy to include the issues of minorities and socially marginalized/ out casted groups.

II. Definition of Terms

Terms	Definition
Safeguarding	In the context of this policy document, safeguarding refers to promoting and protecting people’s health, well-being and human rights, and enabling them to live free of harm, exploitation and abuse through identifying and minimizing the risk of harm to children and adults such as vulnerable women, disabled people, marginalized groups etc. that might arise from coming in contact with representatives. Safeguarding also entails protecting everyone in our organization at all times, including protecting staff from inappropriate behavior such as bullying and harassment. Safeguarding is therefore, a set of policies and procedures focusing on developing standards and mitigation measures to target and reduce risk.
Child/Children	Anyone under the age of 18 years
Abuse	A violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. This can take a 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, women or other vulnerable adults. These include the following: a). discriminatory abuse: abuse motivated by a vulnerable person's age, race, nationality, sex, disability or other personal characteristics. b). neglect: the persistent failure to meet a vulnerable person's basic physical and/or psychological needs such as adequate food, clothing, shelter, supervision, medical treatment etc. c). physical abuse: includes beating, throwing, shaking, burning and all other inappropriate physical harm and sanctions d). Psychological abuse: such as blaming, humiliation, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation etc. e). Sexual abuse: such as forcing, enticing someone to engage in sexual activities including inappropriate physical contact, penetration, masturbation, kissing, touching. Other forms of sexual abuse also include sexually motivated inappropriate eye contact or body gesture.
Vulnerable People	Children, women and girls, at risk adults
Exploitation	Actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, power differential, or trust for the benefit of the person leveraging his or her position, power, privilege, or wealth via enticement, coercion or deception) to engage children, vulnerable women or other groups in labor (work in factories or agriculture), crime (pick pocketing, begging, drug movement, domestic servitude (cleaning, childcare, cooking) organ harvesting, soldering etc. for social, economic and political gains.
Child Protection	Ensuring that children are protected from harm, including procedures for handling situations when problems arise, as well as caring and sensible practices for avoiding trouble in the first place.
GBV	GBV refers to any act that is perpetrated against a person's will and is based on gender norms and unequal power relationships. It includes threats of violence and coercion which can take a form of physical, emotional, psychosocial, or sexual. Denial of resources or access to services on the basis of gender differences is also considered GBV.

Terms	Definition
Representatives:	Employees, volunteers, interns, consultants, board members, partners and those who directly work with children, women and girls, as well as marginalized and vulnerable groups on behalf of the organizations, visit programs or have access to sensitive information about these groups
Sexual Harassment/ Assault	<p>Sexual harassment involves a continued, unwelcome sexual advance, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature made by a representative to another representative or project beneficiary against his or her wishes. Sexual Harassment can take place in the form of words or actions, including circulating or displaying written or pictorial material that is sexually offensive or belittling. Sexual harassment involving a physical violent and/or coercive component such as physical molestation or assault, persistent following or annoyance, indecent exposure or communications, are considered sexual assault and possible criminal offence. Sexual harassment may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Actual or attempted rape or sexual assault; - Unwanted pressure for sexual favors; - Unwanted deliberate touching, leaning over, or cornering; - Unnecessary sexual looks or gestures; - Unwanted letters, telephone calls, or materials of a sexual nature; - Unwanted pressure for dates; - Unwanted sexual teasing, jokes, remarks, or questions; - Sexual comments; - Turning work discussions to sexual topics; - Sexual intimation or stories; - Asking about sexual fantasies, personal questions about sexual life, preferences, or history; - Sexual comments about a person's clothing, anatomy, or looks - Telling lies or spreading rumors about a person's personal sex life; - Touching an employee's clothing, hair, or body
Sexual Exploitation	Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes. Includes profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from sexual exploitation of another. Under UN regulations it includes transactional sex, solicitation of transactional sex and exploitative relationship.
Sexual Abuse	The actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. It includes sexual assault (attempted rape, kissing / touching, forcing someone to perform oral sex / touching) as well as rape. Under UN regulations, all sexual activity with someone under the age of 18 is considered to be sexual abuse, regardless of the age of majority or consent locally. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defense.

III. Safeguarding Statement

SSD is committed to conducting its programs and operations in a way that is safe for children, women and girls, as well as other marginalized groups it serve and to helping protect those their staff members come in contact. All SSDstaff are explicitly prohibited from engaging in any activity that may result in any form of abuse or violations of the rights of marginalized and vulnerable groups.

Therefore, the organization's staffs are expected to behave themselves in a manner consistent with policy commitment and obligations. To this end, the management of SSD will also make the commitment and obligation in this policy document known to its staff through proper induction and training. Hence, any breach of this policy will be treated as a serious offense which may result in disciplinary action including immediate termination of employment or contract, withdrawal of volunteer status, and any other applicable legal action such as reporting to the police, relevant regulatory authority or any other legal body. By doing so, SSD hereby declare that it has zero tolerance against abuse and exploitation of vulnerable people.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the development activities of SSD are implemented in a safe and protective environment where harm, exploitation and abuse are effectively prevented as much as possible and addressed.

IV. Policy Objective

A). Overall Objective

To create and proactively maintain an environment that aims to prevent and deter any actions and omissions, whether intentional or unintentional, that places children, women and girls, as well as other marginalized groups at risk of any kind of abuse or exploitation.

B). Specific Objectives:-

- i. To keep beneficiaries, including both children and adults, and organization's staff safe.

- ii. To ensure the reputation of the organization, including guarding their representatives and staff from false allegations or from operating within an unclear framework.
- iii. To ensure the highest standards of behavior from representatives and staff and minimizing the risk of abusers entering the organization.

V. Principles

- Valuing people: human life in its many forms is valuable and people are at heart of everything we do
- Human Potential: every person is filled with potential that should be unleashed
- Empowerment: people needs to be supported and encouraged to make their own decisions
- Prevention: it is always better to take action before harm occurs
- Protection: everyone has the right to be protected from abuse, exploitation. However, there should be support and representation for those in greatest need such as children, vulnerable girls and young women etc.
- Partnership: there should be a strong collaboration and partnership with local communities and stakeholders who have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
- Accountability: there should always be accountability in delivering the commitments of safeguarding

VI. Scope of the safeguarding Policy

SSD will take every reasonable step to ensure that children, girls and young women, and vulnerable adults are protected where:

- i). SSD staffs are directly involved in a programs and projects. SSD brokers the relationship between a school/ young person's setting/community venue and an associate/ organization.
- ii).SSD contract an associate/ organization to work with a community or communities.

iii). SSD work in partnership with other organizations or stakeholders.

VII. Roles and Responsibilities

i). The Board:

As the highest governing body of the organization, the board will hold the ultimate accountability for this policy.

ii). The Executive Organ:

The Management of SSD led by General Manager is responsible for overseeing the effective implementation of the safeguarding policy and procedures including the responsibility to ensure that everyone associated with its organization are aware of the policy and fully comply with the standards.

iii). Safeguarding Focal Persons:

SSD will have a focal person responsible for safeguarding. He or she will have a vice who will take over responsibilities in the absence of the lead focal person. The roles and responsibilities of the safeguarding focal person include:-

- a). Provide orientation, induction or training to staff on safeguarding policy. Establish contact with relevant body responsible for child protection in SSD intervention areas.
- b). Be point of reference for board, staff, partners and associates in relation to safeguarding.
- c). Be aware of local statutory safeguarding procedures and networks.
- d). Gather information and facilitate decisions on safeguarding matters
- e). Handle reports or concerns, about the protection of vulnerable people, appropriately and in accordance with the procedures that underpin this policy.
- f). Report the issue to concerned body in the organization or places where the events take place.
- g). Make a formal referral to a statutory child protection agency or the police without delay.

- h). Record the concern and action in safeguarding log.
- i). The focal person is not responsible to decide whether abuse has taken place or not; his/her responsibility is to ensure that concerns are shared and appropriate actions are taken.

iv). SSD Representatives:

All representatives, including employees, consultants, partner organizations, visitors etc. are expected to fully abide by this policy including the responsibility to maintain a safe environment that prevents exploitation and abuse as well as the duty to report breaches of this policy using the appropriate procedures.

v). Everyone Working with the Organization:

People who have any working relationship with the organization who may come in contact with children, women and vulnerable people in their intervention areas are obliged to:

- a). Read, understand and adhere to this policy
- b). Put the safety and welfare of children, women and vulnerable people above all other considerations
- c). Ensure a zero tolerance approach to discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse in all its engagements
- d). Report any concerns it may have about the safety a child or vulnerable person
- e). Report any safeguarding concerns it may have about the behavior of any SSD representatives
- f). Strictly refrain from involving in any one of the following acts: sexual, physical and emotional harassment of another person, involving in or overlooking of discriminatory, abusive and violent acts, establishing secret relationships with children and/or failing to take action of relationships with children or other vulnerable people which could in any way put their safety and wellbeing at risk
- g). Perform their duties on the basis of equality, trust, respect and honesty

VIII. Human Resources: Recruitment, Selection and Training

A). Advertisement

- An appropriate length of time will be required to place advertisements in local newspapers, to give applicants time to prepare for interview, to conduct background checks and to take up references.

B). Selection

- Consent must be obtained from an applicant to seek reference check from previous employer.
- Three confidential referees should be contacted. These referees must be taken up and confirmed through telephone contact.
- Evidence of identity (passport or driving license photograph), supported by original birth/marriage certificate, utility bill to confirm address and documents

C). Interview and Induction

All SSD employees and volunteers are required to undergo an interview (written and/or oral) carried out to acceptable protocol and recommendations.

All employees and volunteers should receive formal or informal induction, during which:

- Their qualifications should be substantiated.
- The job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified.
- They are made aware of the safeguarding policy and procedures
- Training needs (if any) are identified
- All staff must be registered with the HR Unit and signed safeguarding policy before they are confirmed in the position

D). Training

In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process includes training of staff after recruitment to help to:

- Ensure their good practice is likely to protect them from false allegations.
- Recognize their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse.
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

- Work safely and effectively with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

IX. Responding to Allegations or Suspicions

If staff member/associate has any reason to suspect that a child, young person or vulnerable adult is being subjected to physical, emotional or sexual abuse, then these steps must be followed:

- Reporting the matter to the safeguarding focal person;
- Assessing the nature of the suspicions or the disclosure;
- Consulting the relevant body at the venue where the incident occurred.

SSD staff must not attempt to investigate the matter themselves. This is the responsibility of police. If an allegation is made against staff /associates of the organization, the SSD management will act swiftly and there will either be a criminal investigation, a child protection investigation and / or a disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

X. Images and Documentation

The collection of images for promotional purposes by the organization employees, or those authorized to do so on behalf of SSD is acceptable provided that permission has been granted by individuals who will be photographed/videoed.

Adults (including parents / guardians of children below the age of consent) and young people (over the age of consent) should be aware of:

- The purpose for which the images will be used.
- The length of time that they will be used for or if the use may be for an indefinite period.

The experience is that permission is not requested for any period longer than two years.

Images should not be stored on hard drive of PCs or laptops beyond the duration of the project. Even during this period, it is recommended that they are stored on removable storage devices such as pen drives / CDs.

The images should be dated and archived at the end of the project. They should be stored in a locked cabinet or drawer and should be deleted as soon as there is no further use for them.

XI. Code of Conduct

All SSD staff are required to understand their responsibility to keep children and vulnerable adults safe, and to sign and abide by workplace code of conduct which includes but not limited the below listed standards. The code of conduct of SSD lists acceptable and unacceptable behavior, primarily designed to safeguard others but also serves to guard the name and reputation of SSD staff and from false accusations. All SSD staff are responsible for encouraging and promoting the implementation of the Code of Conduct. The adherence to this code is mandatory for all staff and representatives. Any violation of the Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary procedures in line with the HR policies of the organization.

a). Professionalism:

Personal and professional behaviour of employees shall confirm to a highest level of professional standards including integrity and honesty in everything we do, in our interactions with co-workers and encounters we have with the people we serve. This includes, treating everyone with respect and listen to people who want to express concerns. All staff and representatives have the responsibility to support their organization in creating an open and mutually supportive work environment as well as the responsibility to share information and willingly engage in activities aligned to organizational visions and missions.

b). Non-Discrimination:

SSD is committed to the principles of non-discrimination. As such, people will be employed, paid, trained and promoted only because of their skills, abilities, and how they perform their jobs. SSD must ensure that people are not discriminated based on their ethnic background, religious beliefs, marital status, age, sex, disability status etc.

c). Harassment:

Harassment of any form (physical, sexual, psychological, and verbal) on account of age, physical disability, marital status, and sex is completely unacceptable. Instead, the organization should strive to create a workplace environment in which people are valued, respected and nurtured in order to unleash their innate potentials. Therefore, harassment of any form whether that is based on the persons' sex, age or disability is considered a gross misconduct punishable by disciplinary or administrative measures including dismissal.

d). Bullying:

All employees of SSD have the right to dignity at workplace in an environment free from bullying. The organization does not accept behaviours that are violence, aggressive and hence considered bullying. Such behaviours include using invalid criticisms, fault finding, excluding and isolating others, treating people differently, shouting at and humiliating people.

e). Alcohol and Substance Abuse:

The use and possession of alcohol, illegal drugs or other controlled substance in the workplace and being under the influence on the job and during working hours is strictly forbidden.

f). Fraud:

The act of cheating, deceiving or lying are all dishonest practices and are considered fraudulence. Some of these behaviours include false reporting and forging that are completely unacceptable and punishable by the coalition member organization's HR policies. Therefore, all SSD representatives (staff, volunteers', visitors) should be transparent in their work, never accept, solicit or promise any payment or favour, never steal, misuse or misappropriate funds or properties as well as never deliberately destroy, falsify or alter or conceal evidences.

g). Sexual Relationship with Children and other Program Participants:

Sexual relationships between SSD staff and a child under age 18 is strictly forbidden and an act which cannot be pardoned. Similarly, sexual relationships between Staff and project participants are highly discouraged.

XII. Whistle Blowing

SSD will be responsible to design a mechanism through which representatives (staff, volunteers), beneficiaries or any other person could confidentially report suspected abuse or irregularities on their operations without fear of fraud, malpractice or mismanagement. The organization will guarantee the anonymity of the whistle-blower while effectively responding to and handling the matter. SSD is expected to inform the representatives (staff, volunteers) regarding the whistleblower procedure and publicly display contact address/points.

XIII. Implementation Measures

To ensure effective implementation of this policy, the organization will take the following key steps.

i). Staffing:

Assign relevant staff to be a focal person for safeguarding.

ii). Prevention:

Prevention measures including taking the necessary precautions during recruitment, providing adequate induction and training to representatives including staff on safeguarding policy and code of conduct, undertaking awareness raising activities as well as integration of safeguarding issues in all programs will be the key measure to be taken by the organization.

iii). Reporting and Responding:

Alerting and reporting any safeguarding concerns, investigating and managing cases through assigned staff or safeguarding focal persons.

iv). Implementing and Reviewing Policy:

Regular strengthening of staff capacity, reviewing reports and monitoring implementation will be carried out. Based on synthesized information, the management of SSD will amend the policy and present to the board for approval.

v). Budget:

Allocate budget for training and implementation.