



## **Safeguarding Policy**

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## **Safeguarding Policy**

### **Introduction**

Partners for Change Ethiopia (Pfc Ethiopia) is a UK registered charity, (Charity Number 297391).

Pfc Ethiopia works for the empowerment of community-based organisations in developing sustainable approaches to reducing child poverty in deprived areas. This work is carried out in Ethiopia itself by our partner organisation, the Jerusalem Children and Community Development Organization (JeCCDO).

Our strategy is set by a board of trustees, which also commissions business plans, monitors performance against them and manages risks. The board is supported by an executive committee and a fund-raising group.

We make payments to bodies working in Ethiopia and neighbouring countries. Our priorities are predominantly informed by our partnership with JeCCDO and by the Sustainable Development Goals promulgated the United Nations.

Pfc Ethiopia affirms that it is unacceptable for a child or adult at risk to experience abuse of any kind. It recognises that abuse has many forms. It also recognises that all children (deemed anyone under 18 years of age) and adults at risk regardless of gender, disability, racial or ethnic origin, nationality, religious beliefs, class, culture or sexual orientation has the right of protection from abuse and exploitation. We also expect the partner organisations with which we work in other countries to have an equivalent policy and be able to demonstrate that it is adhered to.

We will make sure such organisations understand our policy.

This policy is based on the principles contained within UK and international legislation and government guidance and have been designed to complement Local Safeguarding Children Board's procedures and take into consideration the following:

- UK Charity Commission's guidelines for Keeping Children Safe 2017
- The Children Acts 1989 and 2004
- The Protection of Children Act 2012
- The Police Act 1997 and 2022
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- UNICEF's Child Protection Policy

- UN Convention to Eliminate all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- UN Secretary General's Bulletin of 2003 'Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse'
- Human Rights Act 1998

This policy applies to and must be adhered to by all those working with and for the charity, including the board of trustees, staff, volunteers, consultants, students, or anyone visiting Ethiopia on a trip organised by PFC Ethiopia.

The procedures recognise that child and adult abuse can be a difficult subject for workers and volunteers to deal with. PFC Ethiopia is committed to the protection of children and adults at risk from harm: abuse is everybody's responsibility and the aim of these procedures is to ensure that all trustees of the organisation, staff and volunteers act appropriately in response to any concern around abuse.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure the welfare and protection of children, and adults at risk with whom PFC Ethiopia comes into contact.
- Ensure the charity's trustees, staff, consultants, volunteers and partner organisations understand the commitments, principles and standards of conduct that guide our approach to safeguarding and the processes we follow to ensure we all act appropriately in response to any concern around abuse.
- Commit to complying with our procedures in practice, monitoring and reporting on this.

## **Definitions**

Children are defined as those under 18 years of age.

Adults at risk are defined as a person aged 18 years and over who is unable because of circumstances beyond their control to protect themselves against significant harm or serious exploitation.

Abuse includes:

- physical abuse: including hitting, slapping, punching, burning, misuse of medication, inappropriate restraint.
- sexual abuse: including rape, indecent assault, inappropriate touching, exposure to pornographic material.
- psychological or emotional abuse: including belittling, name calling, threats of harm, intimidation, isolation.
- financial or material abuse: including stealing, selling assets, fraud, misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- neglect and acts of omission: including withholding the necessities of life such as medication, food or warmth, ignoring medical or physical care needs.
- discriminatory abuse: including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.
- institutional or organisational: including regimented routines and cultures, unsafe practices, lack of person-centred care or treatment.
- Human trafficking and modern slavery
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Abuse may be carried out deliberately or unknowingly. Abuse may be a single act or repeated acts.

People who behave abusively come from all backgrounds and walks of life. They may be doctors, nurses, social workers, teachers, staff members, volunteers or others in a position of trust. They may also be relatives, friends, neighbours or people who use the same services as the person experiencing abuse.

### **Principles for Safeguarding**

The following principles will underpin our approach to safeguarding:

- Everyone is responsible for safeguarding and accountable for their actions;
- Everyone shall be treated equally, irrespective of race, ethnicity, gender, religion/or none, sexual orientation, disability or socio-economic disadvantage.
- Do no harm.
- Prevent harm, exploitation or abuse by recognising signals of risks and taking effective action before they can occur.
- Investigating concerns and sharing information relating to concerns must be approached with utmost sensitivity, as there is a real risk that abuse can escalate when it is challenged.

### **The Policy**

Partners for Change Ethiopia is committed to putting in place safeguards and measures to reduce the likelihood of abuse taking place within the services and activities it participates in, and all those involved within and working with PFC Ethiopia will be treated with respect.

The charity will seek to safeguard by:

- Ensuring all trustees, staff, volunteers and partners understand safeguarding and are aware of their responsibilities to safeguard during the course of their work.
- Fostering a culture which promotes respect for basic human rights and care for the dignity and well-being of each individual, with zero-tolerance for any behaviour that causes harm, exploitation or abuse in any form to any individual or groups.
- Valuing, listening to and respecting children, young people and adults at risk.
- Recruiting staff, trustees and volunteers safely. This may include DBS disclosures or international equivalents for staff and volunteers; ensuring references are taken up; and adequate training on safeguarding is given..
- Requiring the highest standards of ethical behaviour from our leaders and staff to act with integrity in the best interests of those we serve, to be transparent and accountable and to report harmful acts.
- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Lead (contact details for this person are given below) and ensuring that all staff and others are fully trained and aware of the safeguarding policy and code of conduct.
- Following our safeguarding procedures, and using our procedures to manage any allegations against trustees, staff or volunteers relating to our work appropriately.
- Ensuring that all communications and publications related to the charity are sensitive to adults at risk and child protection issues.
- Following our procedures when identifying and sharing concerns and relevant information with agencies that need to know, and involving children, adults at risk, parents and carers appropriately.
- Sharing information about our safeguarding policy and complaints procedure with service users including adults at risk, children, parents, guardians and volunteers.
- Recording and storing personal information relating to any children and adults at risk professionally and securely.

- Ensuring that when we work through partners, they have met minimum standards for safeguarding in their programmes.

The organisation will work within the current legal framework for reporting staff or volunteers who are abusers as appropriate to the country of relevance.

The majority of the charity's work takes place within Ethiopia. While abiding by local laws, PfC Ethiopia will promote an understanding of safeguarding, child protection issues and children's rights based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Where possible we will work to strengthen local systems for addressing abuse.

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead**

PfC Ethiopia has appointed individuals who are responsible for dealing with any safeguarding concerns in the UK and in Ethiopia.

The Designated Named Person(s) for Safeguarding within PfC Ethiopia are:

Designated Safeguarding Lead in the UK: **Christine Brown**

Mobile Number: **+44 7812 488065**

Other Contact Route: **c\_randellbrown@hotmail.com**

Designated Safeguarding Lead in Ethiopia:            Mobile number:

Other Contact Route:

Should any of these named people be unavailable then the Chair, or a trustee will be available for workers to consult with.

The roles and responsibilities of the named person(s) are:

- to ensure that all staff including volunteers and trustees are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they have concerns that a child or adult at risk may be experiencing, or has experienced abuse or neglect.
- to ensure that concerns are acted on, clearly recorded and referred to a relevant team where necessary.
- to follow up any referrals and ensure the issues have been addressed.
- to consider any recommendations from the safeguarding children and adults at risk process.
- to reinforce the utmost need for confidentiality and to ensure that trustees, staff and volunteers are adhering to good practice with regard to confidentiality and security.
- To ensure all staff and volunteers working directly with service users who have experienced abuse, or who are experiencing abuse, are well supported and receive appropriate supervision.

## **2. Safeguarding Procedures**

### **Communications and using images involving children and adults at risk**

PfC Ethiopia understands the sensitive issue around the publishing of information and images of children and adults at risk. Our external communications must be accurate, ethical and respectful, presenting communities and people as dignified human beings. Permission

is sought from all people photographed during the work of PfC Ethiopia for their image to be used in the documentation and promotion of its work.

In using personal stories and images of children and adults at risk PfC Ethiopia is committed to respecting their dignity and identity by:

- The responsible use of images and stories and an assurance that all images used do not impinge on a child's or an adult's dignity and privacy;
- Minimising identity information in published stories, for example only using first names or changing the name for the publication;
- Wherever possible, obtaining permission from a parent/guardian and adult at risk for any public use of information;
- Respecting confidentiality and anonymity when requested and when necessary for the protection and well-being of a child or adult at risk.

### **Safe Recruitment**

In the recruitment of staff and volunteers PfC Ethiopia will take all reasonable measures to ensure that those people recruited will maintain a high standard of safeguarding. Candidates will:

- Attend a face-to-face interview, and for permanent staff appointments there will be more than one trustee present;
- Provide two non-familial references to be checked prior to engagement;
- Complete the highest level of DBS check (or international equivalent) available for their work, or international equivalent, to disclose any criminal convictions;
- Be required to review and sign that they have read and understand the safeguarding policy and the code of conduct.

Trustees will be required to provide two references and complete the highest available level of DBS check (or international equivalent) to disclose any criminal convictions. All Trustees are required to sign a declaration to confirm that they are not disqualified from acting as a charity trustee. They will be required to review and sign that they have read and understand the safeguarding policy and the code of conduct.

All PfC Ethiopia overseas volunteers will be required to provide two non-familial references and complete the highest available level of DBS check (or international equivalent) to disclose any criminal convictions. They will be required to review and sign that they have read and understand the safeguarding policy and the code of conduct.

Volunteers in the UK will be required to review and sign that they have read and understand the safeguarding policy and the code of conduct.

### **Code of Conduct**

All those working with the charity will be expected to adhere to a Code of Conduct when it comes to dealing with children directly or indirectly.

This code outlines what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and will be shared with all people, including partners who engage in work with the charity.

### **Responding to people who have experienced or are experiencing abuse**

Partners for Change Ethiopia recognises that it has a duty to act on reports, or suspicions of abuse or neglect. It also acknowledges that taking action in cases of abuse is never easy.

How to respond if you receive an allegation:

- Reassure the person concerned;
- Listen to what they are saying;
- Record what you have been told/witnessed as soon as possible;
- Remain calm and do not show shock or disbelief;
- Tell them that the information will be treated seriously;
- Don't start to investigate or ask detailed or probing questions;
- Don't promise to keep it a secret.

If you witness abuse or abuse has just taken place the priorities will be:

- To call an ambulance if required;
- To call the police if a crime has been committed;
- To preserve evidence;
- To keep yourself, staff, volunteers and service users safe;
- To inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead in your organisation;
- To record what happened in safeguarding children and adult at risk concerns log.

All allegations/concerns should be recorded in the log where safeguarding concerns will be recorded. The information should be factual and not based on opinions, record what the person tells you, what you have seen and witnesses if appropriate.

All situations of abuse or alleged abuse will be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If a member of staff, a trustee or volunteer feels unable to raise this concern with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, they can raise it with the Chair, or concerns can be raised directly with the relevant legal authorities. The alleged victim must be told that this will happen. This stage is called the alert.

If it is appropriate, and there is consent from the individual, or there is a good reason to override consent, such as risk to others, a referral (alert) will be made to the relevant legal authorities without that person's consent, in their best interests.

### **Managing allegations made against a member of staff or volunteer**

PfC Ethiopia will ensure that any allegations made against a member of our team will be dealt with swiftly.

Where a member of staff, trustee, volunteer or anyone visiting Ethiopia on a trip organised by PfC Ethiopia is thought to have committed a criminal offence the police will be informed. If a crime has been witnessed the police should be contacted immediately.

The safety of the individual(s) concerned is paramount. A risk assessment must be undertaken immediately to assess the level of risk to all service users posed by the alleged perpetrator. This will include whether it is safe for them to continue in their role or any other role within the service whilst the investigation is undertaken.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will liaise with the relevant social care authorities to discuss the best course of action and to ensure that the PfC Ethiopia's disciplinary procedures are coordinated with any other enquiries taking place as part of the ongoing management of the allegation. If the incident occurs outside the UK, the guidance of the British Embassy will be sought immediately and their guidance will be followed with respect to reporting the incident locally.

PfC Ethiopia will report to Charity Commission if the Designated Safeguarding Lead considers the concern to be a “Serious Incident” (as per Section 15(2) of the Charities Act 2011).

### **Recording and managing confidential information**

PfC Ethiopia is committed to maintaining confidentiality wherever possible and information around safeguarding issues should be shared only with those who need to know.

The information that is recorded will be kept securely and will comply with data protection.

This information will be secured in a locked filing cabinet or in a protected area online in the organisation. Access to this information will be restricted to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Chair.

### **3. Disseminating and Reviewing the Safeguarding Policy**

This Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy and Procedure will be clearly communicated to staff, trustees, volunteers, service users, parents and carers. The Designated Named Person will be responsible for ensuring that this is done.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees including a review of Safeguarding training requirements. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be involved in this process and can recommend any changes. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will also ensure that any changes are clearly communicated to staff, trustees and volunteers. It may be appropriate to involve service users in the review and service users and parents/carers need to be informed of any significant changes.

<b>Record of Revisions</b>				
<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Revised by</b>	<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Next Revision</b>
1	12.04.2024		Trustees	April 2025