



Safeguarding Policy

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1/ Introduction

This safeguarding policy guides and promotes good practice in keeping people, and particularly children, safe from harm. It aims to mitigate the risk that employees, contractors or volunteers from C4C Community Interest Company (“The Company”) and / or Citizens 4 Change themselves either deliberately or inadvertently cause harm to others.

People’s wellbeing is the highest priority. It is everyone’s responsibility to promote a safe, inclusive environment where their rights are realised, and they are able to thrive.

We hope that these standards will help people associated with the Company make decisions that are in the best interests of our members and beneficiaries (with a particular focus on making decisions that are in children’s best interest) and will deter potential abusers from joining the Citizens 4 Change community.

This policy

- Describes how we seek to prevent harm occurring.
- Puts in place fair, secure and transparent reporting channels for concerns.
- Informs decision-making in response to any safeguarding issue that may arise.

Citizens 4 Change (C4C)

Citizens 4 Change is a Community Interest Company registered in the UK. We aim to demonstrate that there is a critical mass of East Africans who take prosocial action; to tap into their wisdom; and to use that to advocate for an investment in community-based protection.

Our mission is to widen the circle of care around children and young people in East Africa; so that every child has a trusted, supportive adult in their lives, and is protected from harm.

The context in which C4C work with children

Citizens 4 Change are individuals who consent to receive information and surveys from us because they self-identify as a citizen who wants to do the right thing. However, many take action to protect children with insufficient knowledge, tools or relationships that would help them make decisions that are in children’s best interest.

Members of C4C live and work in communities where physical violence is prevalent, and where threats of violence as a disciplinary tool are normalized. They come into contact with children in their communities who may have experienced violence abuse or

exploitation at the hands of adults they trust. They live in communities where children experience violence in public spaces and where children's voices are often overlooked in decision making.

2/ Scope

This safeguarding policy provides the minimum that needs to be in place to keep people safe and applies to staff, interns, freelancers, volunteers and members of the C4C community.

We actively promote an informed approach to safeguarding amongst all Citizens 4 Change. We do so because widening the circle of care around children is our core mission, because most C4C community members are in daily contact with children, and because C4C community members have varying experience in child safeguarding.

We will take any concerns about the conduct of members seriously. However, because of our unique set-up we cannot guarantee that all members sign and uphold the principles contained herein and C4C as an organization cannot take responsibility for the actions of individual members.

3/ Safeguarding principles

This safeguarding policy is based on best practice, international and regional protocols and conventions; including but not limited to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989 (and its protocols); The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, the relevant National Laws and Regulations governing child protection in the UK and East Africa.

1. **Safeguarding is a priority** because we have a duty of care to children.
2. **All children have equal rights** to protection from abuse and neglect, regardless of their age, ability, gender, nationality, faith, sexual orientation, identity or any vulnerability.
3. **The best interests of the child are the central** consideration in determining all actions taken.
4. **Everyone is responsible** for safeguarding, identifying concerns and sharing information.
5. **Transparency and sensitivity** will inform our safeguarding response. Concerns or allegations with regards to safeguarding will be taken seriously and managed sensitively. We work in an open and transparent way, recognizing that abuse and harm flourish when people do not feel able to raise their concerns.

4/ Defining harm

Safeguarding is the responsibility that organizations have to make sure that their staff, operations, and programmes do no harm to people. This includes not exposing children to the risk of harm and abuse and reporting any concerns about children's safety within the communities in which they work to the appropriate authorities (Keeping Children Safe, 2014).

Physical abuse includes actual or potential physical harm perpetrated by another person, adult or child. It may involve hitting, punching, shaking, poisoning, drowning and burning.

Sexual abuse includes forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities that he or she does not fully understand and has little choice in consenting to. This may include, but is not limited to, rape, oral sex, penetration, or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching. It may also include involving children in looking at, or producing sexual images, watching sexual activities and encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse that involves children being engaged in any sexual activity in exchange for money, gifts, food, accommodation, affection, status, or anything else that they or their family needs. Child 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, sometimes within gangs and in gang-affected neighbourhoods. 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.

Neglect and negligent treatment. Allowing for context, resources and circumstances, neglect and negligent treatment refers to a persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and /or psychological needs, which is likely to result in serious impairment of a child's healthy physical, spiritual, moral and mental development. It includes the failure to properly supervise and protect children 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.

Emotional abuse includes persistent emotional maltreatment that impacts on a child's emotional development. Emotionally abusive acts include restriction of movement, degrading, humiliating, bullying (including cyber bullying), and threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.

Commercial exploitation involves exploiting a child in work or other activities for the benefit of others and to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development. It includes, but is not limited to, child labour.

5/ Code of Conduct

Citizens 4 Change believes that if every adult protects a child, we can collectively build safe and inclusive societies for everyone in Africa.

As a member of the C4C community, a volunteer or a staff member,

1. I will treat everyone, and especially all children, with respect.
2. I will not harass, threaten or humiliate any person or child.
3. I will not engage in any form of sexual activity with a child.
4. I will not physically punish a child.
5. I will uphold my legal duty to keep children safe from harm & will report concerns to the appropriate authorities.

This code of conduct is on our website and all individuals are asked to sign a commitment to it upon becoming an employee &/or when registering as a Citizen 4 Change.

6/ Response

The guiding principle in responding to any safeguarding concern is that the safety and welfare of the child &/or adult victim should always come first. No one should be put at greater risk by any action that is taken. This section explores the mechanisms that are in place to respond to concerns of abuse that are raised.

Identifying situations that should raise concern

Indicators of abuse give us important clues to what might be happening to a child or young person. They should not be seen in isolation from the rest of the child's life and experience. It is essential that individuals who work closely with children receive training to help them identify behaviours that may be an indicator of a child experiencing harm.

Responsibilities on safeguarding

Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a responsibility towards keeping them safe and has a role to play in sharing information and identifying concerns. National laws on the protection of children place a duty to every person who comes into contact with a child to report any suspicion that the child may be at risk of harm to the authorities. Further, the laws place a statutory duty on frontline workers

(teachers, health workers, social workers, police) to take action when they receive information of a child at risk in their jurisdiction or area of work.

C4C may receive reports of safeguarding concerns from our community members. We are not a direct service provider to children, and our role and immediate action is to receive the incident report and then to connect the individual reporter to the appropriate service provider in their area.

Upon receiving a report of safeguarding concern

The priority is always the safety and best interests of the child. When a child safeguarding concern is brought to your attention ACT

- Act on your concern.
- Child centred – the protection of the child is of utmost importance.
- Timely – Ensure you act in a timely, effective manner.

If the issue is criminal in nature, C4Cs Director has a duty to ensure that it is reported to the relevant authorities (police/social welfare).

If C4C employee receives a direct report it is expected that they follow these steps. If a C4C member receives a report it is strongly recommended that they follow these steps.

1. Listen to and accept what the adult, child or young person who is reporting the concern says, but do not press for information.
 - a. Listen without judgement
 - b. Let the child or young person know what you are going to do next, who you need to report to and what will happen next
2. Do not investigate and do not inform, question, or confront the alleged abuser.
3. A C4C staff member is expected to complete the [incident report](#), which will be submitted to the Director for further action.
4. If the risk of harm is considered to be criminal or life threatening, the individual who has been approached (whether C4C team or member) must act immediately to ensure the safety of that (and other children) child and report to their local social welfare department +/- or police.

Investigation of an allegation of abuse

The Director should determine if the concern is as a result of the organization's staff, programs or processes (internal) or whether the concern is harm occurring in the community (external). Allegations of abuse that are criminal in nature (subject to criminal laws of the Country) must be reported to police and social welfare department. C4C will collaborate with their investigation.

If the allegation is about a C4C staff member or freelancer the suspect will be suspended from work during the investigation period. Any abuse of a child is considered a gross

misdemeanour and if found guilty staff or freelancers will be immediately fired without benefits.

If the allegation is found to be baseless or false, appropriate steps will be taken to minimize damage to the reputation of the individual accused.

7/ Prevention

Safe recruitment

Recruitment processes have safeguarding checks in place. C4C applies the highest standards in its recruitment and vetting of personnel.

- Adverts, interviews and contracts outline a commitment to safeguarding.
- Clear role descriptions include a statement on the responsibility to meet our safeguarding policy.
- All interviews include a discussion on safeguarding, the candidate's understanding of this, and C4Cs commitment to it.
- Protection checks, such as disclosure of previous convictions or police checks, covers individuals with whom we have an employment relationship. If police checks are impossible, other checks are put into practice and noted.
- Evidence of identity and the authenticity of qualifications, and a minimum requirement of at least two references are carried out in all cases.
- Contract offers for those whose work will bring them directly into contact with children, or gain them access to children's information, will be dependent on suitable references and criminal record checks.

See Annex A: Recruitment guidelines

Communicating our commitment to keeping children safe

Policies and procedures put in place by organisations to keep children safe are only effective if people are aware of them, can contribute to their development and express their views on how they are working

- Information on our safeguarding commitment and processes is visibly displayed on our website, and as part of our SMS messaging to all of our audience.
- Attitudes to safeguarding, knowledge of safeguarding concepts and tools to respond are discussed during staff orientation, member onboarding and more regularly through a safeguarding training and community connect meetings
- The C4C website has easy access to procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns.

- In communicating information and images, both photographic stills and video, our overriding principle is to maintain the respect and the dignity of children, families and communities; and to seek their consent for the sharing of their images.

See Annex B: Communication guidelines

Assisting C4C members to better support the child

There is an expectation placed on C4C community members to take action to keep children in their community safe from harm and to report concerns they may have about a child who is at risk to the appropriate authorities.

C4C provides platforms for its members to learn about child development and safeguarding and to share their dilemmas and experience. We do so via SMS messages, online courses, webinars, and community meet ups, that provide a safe and open space to encourage communication and learning on child protection.

We support C4C community members to uphold their duty of care towards children by:

- Sending them a set of SMS messages and fact sheets that are informed by the protective behaviours methodology and that give advice on how to support the child.
- Onboarding members into child safeguarding by offering training that includes information on indicators of harm, how to report a concern and the response protocol.
- Encouraging C4C members to directly reach out to C4C, by emailing safeguarding@citizens4change.net for advice and support.
 - In Tanzania, C4C members who have safeguarding concerns are encouraged to reach out to the Child Helpline 116, with whom C4C has a partnership, &/or directly to C4C who can then refer the individual to their local child protection professional.
- C4C members are also invited to pose their protection dilemmas at monthly Community Connect meetings to seek out ideas, support and insights on how to support children affected by violence.

8/ Accountability

Ultimate responsibility for monitoring safeguarding risks and responding to safeguarding concerns lies with the Director and Business owner.

9/ Managing risk

Risk is intentionally and systematically managed on an ongoing basis. Safeguarding risks are a key concern. A quarterly team meeting is conducted to identify all risks from

our interventions, projects and operations; along with the risk category; likelihood and impact. We then agree mitigation measures. The results are recorded in a risk register and dashboard.

Every quarter C4C's risk register is updated with emerging safeguarding risks; their likelihood and potential impact; and the appropriate mitigation or contingency plan. Risk assessments are conducted before any training or fieldwork. These are documented in C4Cs risk log and next to the related milestones in Salesforce.

Safe programs and interventions

C4C intentionally designs and delivers programs that are safe for children, that increase safety and reduce harm.

- Strategies to minimize the risk to children are incorporated into the design, delivery and evaluation of programs, operations and activities that involve or impact upon children.
- Safeguarding is considered at every stage of the project design and is considered and recorded in our risk register. If the risks identified may cause significant harm to children and cannot be mitigated against, we will not implement the project or activity.
- We ensure that children and families are informed about C4Cs commitment to child safeguarding and what to do if they have concerns about a child or the conduct of a member of C4C.

10/ Policy review

The policy is reviewed annually by conducting a child protection audit using the Keep Children Safe audit, which is based on the International Child Safeguarding Standards. Based on that audit workflows and the policy are updated as appropriate.

Policy review and risk analyses inform the programme of safeguarding training is conducted for new staff, interns or freelancers; and a programme of safeguarding education is offered to C4C via SMS and Community Connect webinars.

11/ Key forms

[Consent form](#)

[Code of conduct](#)

[Incident Report](#)

12/ Guidelines

Annex A: Recruitment guidelines

- When designing the job description, analyse the role and think about the issues of child safeguarding and risk in that job:
- What contact with children will the job involve?
- Will the employee have unsupervised access to children, or hold a position of trust?
- What other sort of contact may the person have with children?
- Develop clear job descriptions, terms of references and role briefs for all posts including short-term contracts for consultants.
- Ensure that the selection criteria outline the relevant experience needed if the post involves direct work with children.
- Ensure that the commitment to keeping children safe is included in details of any post sent to prospective job candidates.
- Develop application forms that ask for consent to gain information on a person's past convictions and pending disciplinary proceedings.
- Ask for documentation to confirm identity and proof of relevant qualifications.
- Have a well-planned interview process and ensure the interviewers have the relevant experience of and knowledge about child safeguarding.
- Include some specific questions in the interview that draw out people's attitudes and values in relation to the protection of children.
- Contact the referees indicated in the application, including some from previous employers.
- Consider the use of probationary periods of employment to ensure suitability once in post.

Annex B: Communication guidelines

In our use of visual images, both photographic stills and video, our overriding principle is to maintain respect and dignity in our portrayal of children, families and communities.

This document sets out the principles CCR employs to regulate our use of images of children and their families.

Principles

We respect the dignity of the subject: We always seek permission when taking photographs, audio or video footage of individuals. Consent for taking and using photographs and case studies is sought from those with parental responsibility, or from children directly when they are of sufficient age and understanding. Wherever possible, we will explain to the subject the likely use of the images. We will never take pictures of people who say they don't want to be photographed.

We do not exploit the subject: We do not manipulate the subject in a way that distorts the reality of the situation. Children and families' names and contact details are not published.

We aim to provide a balanced portrayal of reality in the developing world: We avoid stereotypes and aim to show people helping and working for themselves, not as victims.

We use images truthfully: We will not use an image in a way that deliberately misinterprets the true situation. Case histories are not fabricated, although they may be adapted or edited to preserve the dignity and confidentiality of the subject. We do not use an image of one thing and describe it as, or imply it is, an image of another. Where possible, we use a balance of images to reflect the reality of a situation. If an image represents an exceptional situation, we will not use it in a way which suggests it is generally true.

We maintain standards of taste and decency: We will not use images that are erotic, pornographic or obscene. We will not make gratuitous use of images of extreme suffering.

Ethical use of data collected for research purposes: Researchers obtain informed consent of participants and make their involvement anonymous so that individuals cannot be identified from the data.

We maintain high technical standards: We aim to use only high-quality images. We may use digital manipulation of images for creative or iconic effect, but not in a way that deliberately and misleadingly distorts the reality of the situation depicted.

We maintain a suitable photo library: Images will be current and appropriate. All images taken in the field are sent first to the Communications consultant to ensure checks on suitability and quality prior to being used in reports or social media posts. All images will be kept centrally and fully documented.

Guidelines for obtaining communication and research materials

- We will endeavour to tell empowering stories of the children and communities we work with
- Discuss the use of communication materials at the beginning of a project with children and communities. Do not wait until the material is needed.
- In the case of research, C4C will ensure we seek and receive permits from the relevant authorities
- Obtain consent in writing for the gathering of communication and research materials at the beginning of a project
- Obtain and save images, audios and videos, and any other private information for publication purposes in a safe and confidential manner.
- All children must be appropriately dressed.
- Recorded images should focus on an activity, and where possible feature groups of children rather than individuals

- Permission for the taking of photographs should be sought from guardians prior to events
- Any complaints or concerns about inappropriate or intrusive images should be reported and recorded, as with any other child safeguarding concern. Guidelines for publishing information
- Only use the first names or aliases of children.
- Be careful not to reveal details that would reveal where they live.
- Where the risk of harm and stigma is high, take mitigating steps; for example, by concealing faces.
- Take images that represent a broad range of children – boys and girls of various ages, abilities and ethnic groups.
- On websites, make sure any images you use are not tagged with the location of the child.