

**PARTNERSHIP POLICY:
Child and Adult Safeguarding**



APPROVED BY:	WVI Board	RESPONSIBILITY:	Ministry Strategy
POLICY OWNER:	Chief Field Operations Officer	POLICY DELEGATE:	Senior Director, Safeguarding
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I. OVERVIEW

I.1. Purpose

To establish high level requirements for the World Vision Partnership regarding protecting all children anywhere from harm caused by WV employees and affiliates, and protecting adults from harm caused by WV employees or affiliates as part of WV programme presence.

I.2. Scope

This policy applies to all World Vision entities, including microfinance entities.

I.3. Effective Date

The effective date of this Policy is 18 November 2021

I.4. Retired/Related Policies

None

I.5. Contextualisation - Contextualisation of policies is addressed in the Contextualisation Guidelines available on [WVCentral](#)

2. POLICY

World Vision's safeguarding principles are grounded in our commitment to build community capacity and strengthen local and national systems that protect children and vulnerable adults. All people working for, or affiliated with, World Vision have a responsibility for safeguarding.

World Vision is committed to the following:

- 2.1 As a Christian child-focused organisation, World Vision emphasises the unique vulnerabilities and special protection requirements for children. We also emphasise the importance of preventing sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), in particular, among other forms of abuse of adults.

- 2.2 Safeguarding children and the adults we serve is foundational to all WV activities, programmes, and lines of ministry (relief, development, and advocacy). Central to everything we do is our commitment to first do no harm to children nor to adults living where World Vision has a programming presence. We uphold the best interests¹ of children as a primary consideration in all actions and decisions.
- 2.3 World Vision has zero tolerance toward incidents of violence or abuse against children or adults, including sexual exploitation or abuse, committed either by employees or others affiliated with our work. WV takes necessary actions to respond to any suspected or known instances of abuse. Incident responses are centred on the child or adult survivor, prioritising their interests.
- 2.4 World Vision establishes and maintains safeguarding policies and systems to protect all children as well as adults living where WV has a programming presence from abuse, exploitation or harm by World Vision employees or affiliates. Safeguarding requirements are reviewed regularly at national, regional and global levels, and are subject to internal audits. Each WV entity maintains a process to document safeguarding incident reports and responses, and provides required data into the global system.
- 2.5 World Vision promotes continuous improvement of safeguarding efforts which emphasise prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) and other forms of violence or harm. We abhor any misuse of power, status, or trusted position for any sexual or other exploitative purposes. We endeavour to tackle this root cause of abuse in our prevention and training efforts.
- 2.6 World Vision ensures that safeguarding requirements are integrated throughout the recruitment and employment cycle, by ensuring strong checks are in place at the start of employment and by regular training and performance management—reinforced by robust codes of conduct and standards.
- 2.7 World Vision recognises the unique risks associated with Sponsorship and Disaster Management programming which require additional measures to prevent abuse by World Vision employees and affiliates, and takes action to put context-specific protections in place.
- 2.8 World Vision ensures that when engaging external parties (e.g., partners and contractors) who will have access to children and adult programme participants, rigorous processes are in place to apply appropriate safeguarding standards to them.
- 2.9 World Vision implements and supports rigorous reporting and complaints mechanisms to ensure accountability and address any misconduct that occurs under the banner of World Vision. Concerns are taken seriously and acted upon, through confidential reporting mechanisms (including a whistleblowing process) which protect reporters' safety. Retaliation against good faith reporters is not tolerated. World Vision actively promotes and advertises its reporting

¹ Convention on the Rights of the Child, General Comment 14:
http://www2.ohchr.org/English/bodies/crc/docs/GC/CRC_C_GC_14_ENG.pdf

mechanisms to staff, affiliates, community members, and people affected by emergencies.

- 2.10 Boards and Advisory Councils will be engaged in the safeguarding process of the office they govern, monitoring progress against key gaps in the safeguarding system and providing appropriate oversight of risks and mitigating measures.
- 2.11 WVI management is authorised to develop Partnership Management policies and guidelines as required to give effect to this Partnership Policy.

3. DEFINITIONS

Child: Any person below the age of 18. This Policy covers interactions by WV employees and affiliates with all children anywhere (not only programme participants).

Child protection: All measures taken to prevent and respond to abuse, neglect, exploitation and all other forms of violence against children. Child Protection is a World Vision global sector, together with child participation.

“Community with whom World Vision works” or “living in a World Vision Programming Area”: World Vision uses a broad working definition of these terms to ensure that any individuals who may be subject to power imbalance with World Vision staff, affiliates, or programming are protected through this policy.

Contractor: WV regularly contracts with non-employee individuals and organisations to perform services for WV. These non-employee individuals and organisations may also be referred to as 'independent contractors', 'consultants,' or 'vendors', and are referred to in this document as 'Contractors'. Contractors are distinguished from organisations with which WV partners to carry out programme activity (including subgrantees). See Partner, below.

Partner: A partner organisation, for safeguarding purposes, is a Non-Governmental Organisation, Community-Based Organisation, for-profit enterprise, or other entity that has a written agreement with WV to implement a programme or activity on WV's behalf or in collaboration with WV. The partner may or may not receive funding from WV.

Safeguarding: Preventing, reporting, and responding to harm or abuse by WV employees and affiliates, of any children anywhere and of any adults living where WV has a programming presence. Externally to WV, there is often no distinction made between child and adult safeguarding.

Child safeguarding: Preventing, reporting, and responding to harm, abuse or exploitation of any child (< age 18) by a WV employee or affiliate.

Adult safeguarding: Preventing, reporting, and responding to harm, abuse or exploitation of an adult living where WV has a programming presence (age 18+) by a WV employee or affiliate. Includes Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), a frequently cited subset of safeguarding.

Safeguarding incident: Harm or risk of harm resulting from safeguarding misconduct or violations of this policy toward any child or to any adult living where WV has a programming presence,

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA): The term “sexual exploitation” means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the

sexual exploitation of another. The term “sexual abuse” means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA): A term used by the United Nations and International Non-Governmental Organisation community to refer to measures taken to protect vulnerable people from sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian aid workers.

Volunteer: A person who is neither employed by WV nor legally obliged to work for WV, but who on free will and without expectation of payment or other remuneration, contributes their time, skill, knowledge, efforts and expertise to WV’s work. ‘Volunteer’ includes a ‘business volunteer’ in a WV office or affiliate; a ‘supporter volunteer’ without physical contact with sponsored children or their records; ‘community volunteer’ who volunteers on behalf of their community to fulfil the community’s responsibilities in an ongoing WV project; and volunteers or ‘incentive workers’ from groups or communities targeted for humanitarian assistance.

WV employees and affiliates: Refers to the full range of people accountable to WV’s Safeguarding policies and protocols, including all employees, interns, volunteers, and Board/Advisory Council members, as well as external parties, including visitors, community volunteers, contractors, partners, and others affiliated with partners or contractors.

Optional Provision: (to be used as needed)

4. BACKGROUND

The *Partnership Management Policy on Child and Adult Safeguarding* previously has been issued under the authority of the Partnership Policies on Child Well Being and Code of Conduct. This *Partnership Policy on Child and Adult Safeguarding* provides additional authority for that Partnership Management Policy and other WVI management actions to implement the requirements herein.