

Title:	SAFEGUARDING POLICY (protecting Children and adults at risk) External version
Policy statement	<p>Tearfund is committed to promoting the security and well being of the communities we serve, our volunteers, and our staff, and ensuring that children and adults at risk¹ are protected from all forms of harm and abuse, and able to live a life with dignity, respect and security. This is an expression of Tearfund’s Christian belief that all people are created by God in His image (likeness) (Genesis 1:26,27) and therefore, every adult and child should be treated with respect and dignity. Tearfund actively encourages a culture of ‘Zero tolerance’ towards all forms of harm and abuse, and seeks to ensure that staff and representatives ‘Do no harm’ while working for or with Tearfund. Further information on expected behaviour is set out in Tearfund’s Personal Conduct Policy. We are committed to a survivor centred approach.</p> <p>This policy applies to all staff and representatives who work for or with Tearfund:</p> <p>Staff includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All staff, national and international ● All volunteers, secondments, interns <p>Representatives includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All contractors, including consultants, journalists, photographers, external Media ● All board members, ambassadors, guests, visitors, Church Groups, and Supporters visiting Tearfund funded projects ● All agents: an agent means any individual, including a director, an officer, or an independent contractor, authorised to act on behalf of Tearfund <p>Staff and representatives must ensure that their behaviour promotes and allows children and adults at risk to live free from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Harm and Abuse, (Physical, sexual (including sexual harassment) and emotional (including the abuse of power / trust and coercion) ● Bullying and Harassment ● Exploitation - (physical and sexual) ● Neglect ● Discrimination ● Human Trafficking <p>Tearfund adheres to the core principles set out by the UN Inter Agency Standing Committee Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian</p>

¹ The term ‘adult at risk’ describes adults at risk of harm and adults at risk.

Crises and operates a survivor centred approach. This means that:

- Sexual exploitation and abuse by Tearfund staff or representatives constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment.
- Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defence.
- Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour is prohibited. This includes exchange of assistance that is due to a member of a community we work with.
- Under no circumstances should staff or representatives enter into a sexual relationship with a member of a community that we work with since there are inherently unequal power dynamics. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of humanitarian aid work.
- Where a member of staff, agent or representative develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual exploitation or abuse by a fellow worker, or any representative, whether working for Tearfund or another humanitarian aid agency they must report such concerns via Tearfund's safeguarding incident reporting or whistleblowing channels: and
- Tearfund staff, and representatives are obliged to create and maintain an environment which prevents sexual exploitation and abuse and promotes the implementation of Tearfund's Personal Conduct Policy. Managers at all levels have particular responsibilities to support and develop systems which maintain this environment.

A more detailed list of 'abuse' is available [here](#)

Tearfund is aware that harm and abuse can happen:

- 1) between an adult/adult at risk (being the abuser) and another adult/adult at risk,
- 2) between an adult/adult at risk (being the abuser) and a child,
- 3) between a child (being the abuser) and another child,
- 4) between a child (being the abuser) and an adult/adult at risk.

This policy provides guidance to all Tearfund staff and representatives located anywhere in the world, to understand the importance of safeguarding children and adults at risk, both in person and online and their responsibilities to do so at all times, by:

- upholding the dignity and respect of children and adults at risk.
- taking preventative steps to ensure a safe environment for children and adults at risk.
- responding quickly and appropriately to concerns raised.
- acting with integrity, being transparent and accountable.
- ensuring that all activity is done in the best interests of the child/adult at risk.

Tearfund actively encourages a culture where:

- issues and concerns about safeguarding are raised and discussed
- a sense of accountability between staff/representatives can and must challenge potentially poor or abusive behaviour
- it is mandatory to report abusive allegations or concerns that directly relate to a child or adult at risk.
- we provide a safe environment, including the online environment, for all people that the organisation engages with.

Any allegation or concern regarding the abuse of a child or adult at risk must be treated seriously. **Reporting concerns regarding the abuse of children or adults at risk is mandatory** and can arise when abusive behaviour is observed or suspected; or when an allegation is made or disclosed or there are indicators (signs and symptoms) of suspected abuse on the survivor. Failure to report is a breach of the safeguarding policy and can result in serious sanctions including termination of agreements and termination of employment.

Any allegation of abuse or harassment of a sexual nature must be reported by Tearfund staff through Tearfund's Incident Management System (TIMS), even if the allegation does not involve a child or adult at risk. Specifically:

- If you witness an incident which you believe amounts to abuse, bullying or harassment of a sexual nature, you must report it without delay through TIMS (Tearfund staff) , by following the instructions on the system, including as many details as possible and selecting 'Safeguarding' as the *Primary Incident Type*. Non Tearfund staff should report via email to safeguarding@tearfund.org .
- If an individual, who is not a child or adult at risk, makes a confidential disclosure to you of an allegation of abuse or harassment of a sexual nature, and neither they or another person is at immediate risk of serious harm, you should only make a report with that individual's consent. In this situation, advice and guidance may be sought from safeguarding@tearfund.org without disclosing the names of individuals affected or other identifying information, and we would encourage you to seek such advice.

There are three types of concerns that can be reported:

- **Category 1** - This concern relates directly to a staff member or representative. Tearfund has a duty of care and will respond by initiating an investigation
- **Category 2** - This concern relates to a Tearfund Partner staff member. Tearfund has a shared duty of care and will require the Partner to initiate an investigation, if

	<p>appropriate, in line with their Safeguarding policy. Tearfund would expect the Partner to share the final report with Tearfund</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Category 3 - This concern relates to abuse in a community in which Tearfund or our Partner is working. While Tearfund or the Partner will not have a formal responsibility to investigate, Tearfund or the Partner may have some influence in the community and will pass on information to the relevant local authorities. In each case an assessment should be made of what is in the best interest of the child or adult at risk in relation to reporting the allegation to the authorities. <p>All Safeguarding reported issues are recorded on a Safeguarding Incident Tracker which is reviewed quarterly by Tearfund’s Safeguarding Committee. Any key safeguarding risks are also shared with the Executive Team and the Audit Risk and Finance Committee. This is to ensure that Safeguarding measures and processes are reviewed and effective.</p> <p>We are committed to reporting any incidents to the appropriate regulatory bodies (including the Charity Commission) and government departments, as required. Where there is evidence that criminal activity may have taken place we will report to the relevant police and/or child protection authorities of the country where the incident occurred and/or the country of origin of the Subject of Complaint as appropriate. We will do this provided that it is in the best interests of the child or adult at risk concerned to do so and taking into consideration their wishes.</p> <p>This policy will be reviewed every year.</p>
<p>Information Links</p>	<p>Tearfund staff have access to an Internal version of this Safeguarding Policy which provides links to the relevant policy or guidance document. These documents are not available to non Tearfund staff.</p>
<p>Actions to take when made aware of an allegation or concern</p>	<p>All allegations or concerns about the abuse of a child or adult at risk must be taken seriously and reported on TIMS. Partners can report by emailing safeguarding@tearfund.org within 24 hours of the allegation or concern being raised.</p> <p>On hearing of an allegation or concern, the first action is to ensure that the survivor is safe and has access to appropriate care. The safety and care of the alleged survivor/victim is critical within the first 24 hours immediately following an incident. Tearfund’s Protocol for handling sexual and violent physical assaults provides a step by step guide on how to respond to an incident and identifies the roles of Accompanier, Survivor Liaison Officer, Line Manager and Country Director as the key officers responsible for supporting the survivor and ensuring that their needs are met. Staff travelling to high risk areas should familiarise themselves with the Guidelines for the survivor which provide the safety measures to follow in the event of an incident.</p> <p>All allegations or concerns should be recorded immediately on TIMS. Partners should</p>

	<p>record details of the incident on the Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form and email directly to safeguarding@tearfund.org. The Safeguarding Officer will inform the relevant Group Director as appropriate.</p> <p>A flowchart is available to staff which explains the process of reporting and follow up. Details are available on request. More detail about the actions that can be taken against grantees and suppliers who commit exploitation, sexual abuse, child abuse, and child neglect of any person or who fail to take reasonable steps to prevent or report it are set out in our partnership agreements and contracts and include the ending of the relationship and the blocking of any further funding or payment. More detail about the actions that can be taken against staff, and representatives are set out in the personal conduct policy and other agreements and include suspension from work, disciplinary action and reporting to authorities. The Safeguarding Review Team follows a Safeguarding Governance and Oversight Protocol when managing a safeguarding incident and a copy of this can be provided on request. The Safeguarding Officer, with the support of the Safeguarding Review Team, will decide if the Subject of Complaint, if a staff member, should be suspended based on the suspension guidelines.</p>
<p>Key information which relates to this policy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Definitions of Terms - This document provides an explanation of the words you will find in the policy ● Criminal records check- It is important for staff to have a criminal record check prior to employment. Where Police checks are not available or unreliable, Sterling will provide background record checks. ● Types of Abuse - This document lists all forms of action, inaction or interaction with a child/children or adult at risk that could result in the harm (or risk of harm) to a child or adult at risk ● Indicators of Abuse - It is important to be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect so that concerns can be raised based on observations. ● Acceptable and Unacceptable Behaviour - This list of behaviours are designed to protect children or adults at risk and to protect Tearfund staff and representatives from false accusations. ● Disclosure of Abuse - During any disclosure it is important to manage the process well so that the welfare of the child or adult at risk is protected. ● Non-staff Safeguarding declarations (for consultants, contractors and volunteers only): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Safeguarding Declaration - a mandatory personal declaration to acknowledge understanding and agreement by a non-staff Tearfund representative, to follow Tearfund's safeguarding policy and standards of personal conduct.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Self Declaration of unspent convictions - A confidential statement with regards to a person’s suitability to work with children or adults at risk. This requires an individual to disclose any unspent criminal convictions to enable Tearfund to assess their suitability to work with children or adults at risk ● Consent - Consent should be obtained before material information about a child or adult at risk can be used / shared with others. Further information on how to collect consent can be found in the Quick guide to Consent. ● Safeguarding Risk Assessment - A risk assessment should be done when starting any project, event (whether face to face or online), or trip in order to assess the risks of harm or abuse when working with children or adults at risk and other non-members of staff ● Terms of Reference for Safeguarding Officer ● Community Friendly Safeguarding Policy ● Child-Friendly Safeguarding Policy
<p>Procedures which relate to other teams activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Working on safeguarding with partners and alliances - Staff and representatives together with all partners, alliances and other agencies, working with Tearfund, are monitored to check that they consistently apply good safeguarding practice in all activities within the communities in which we work.. ● Safer recruitment and Selection - In the process of recruitment and selection a range of procedures and actions should be taken to ensure children and adults at risk are safeguarded and abuse is prevented. Our policies provide information on hiring, screening, and employment practices, including on rehiring or transfer and referencing for subsequent employers. The aim of the recruitment and selection procedures are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To deter and discourage applications from unsuitable people, who may wish to gain access to children or vulnerable adults at risk. ● To ensure successful applicants are, as far as it is possible to ascertain, safe to work with children or vulnerable adults at risk. ● To ensure that appointed staff understand that Tearfund has a policy of zero tolerance towards abuse. ● Safeguarding in our Communications and the Media - At all times, the dignity of children and adults at risk must be respected. Therefore all personal information and details of children or adults at risk, which may identify them or may increase the potential risk of harm or injury to their name or reputation or their families should not be used.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fundraising with Adults in Vulnerable Circumstances Policy - It is inevitable that we will come into contact with people who may be in a vulnerable circumstance, or need additional support to make an informed decision as we carry out day to day work in the Global Fundraising Group. This Policy has been developed to guide staff on how to deal with adults at risk. These policies are trained to all relevant staff and volunteers alongside tailored Safeguarding training.
<p>Other related Policies and Procedures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Personal Conduct Policy and the Misconduct Procedure will then be used if necessary. This policy sets out in further detail the expected behaviours of all staff. ● Protocol for handling sexual and violent physical assaults - detailed guidance on how to support and manage communications with a member of staff who survives a sexual and violent physical assault and ensure their needs are met. ● DBS and international criminal records checks - guidance on eligibility and procedure for obtaining criminal record disclosure checks. Tearfund staff and representatives will be required to undertake criminal record checks based on the activity and level of contact they will have with children and adults at risk through their role. ● Whistleblowing Policy - An important aspect of accountability and transparency is a mechanism to enable staff and other people associated with Tearfund to voice concerns in a responsible and effective manner. ● Complaints procedure -Where someone has a complaint about an issue related to their employment with Tearfund and it cannot be resolved informally, they are able to make a formal complaint under this policy and its related procedures. ● Appeals Procedure - Where a member of staff feels that a decision or action taken against them has been unfair, the Appeals Procedure provides the means by which they can request that the decision or action be reviewed and if appropriate changed.
<p>Useful background information</p>	<p>Tearfund has identified a number of areas of unacceptable behaviour (see the Personal Conduct Policy or the Code of Conduct), which are incompatible with Tearfund’s Values, in upholding our core values we stand against all forms of exploitation and abuse, fraud, bribery and any other conduct which is incompatible with these values.</p>
<p>Why the policy is needed</p>	<p>Tearfund is committed to the safeguarding of those we work with, particularly children and adults at risk. All community members, Tearfund staff and representatives, without exception, have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion/beliefs, pregnancy/maternity and gender reassignment. Many of the people we work with experience increased vulnerability as a result of natural</p>

	<p>disasters and conflict and it is therefore vital that staff and representatives of Tearfund work with people respectfully and in a way which maintains their safety, dignity and security.</p> <p>Standards</p> <p>Tearfund is committed to ensuring that the adult at risk or child’s best interest and well being is at all times of paramount consideration. In this regard this policy is based on frameworks and principles encapsulated within:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Bible - Biblical principles are foundational to our commitment to a strong safeguarding culture: we believe that all people are created by God in His image (likeness) (Genesis 1:26,27). Galatians 3:28 also says that all people are equal in Christ Jesus. This means every adult and child should be treated with respect and dignity. As a Christ-centred organisation, we have a responsibility to protect vulnerable adults and children from harm and to ensure our behaviour is an expression of our obedience to a God who deeply cares for the vulnerable (Matt.18, 19; Mark 10; Luke 18). 1 Peter 2:16-17 says we must not use our faith as a cover for evil deeds. ● All relevant national laws of England and Wales as Tearfund is a registered charity within this jurisdiction, particularly the Children Act 1989 (and its various amendments), the Protection of Children Act 2004 and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 among others. ● All relevant national laws of each of the countries that Tearfund works in through its partners and/or alliances. ● The UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), the UN Secretary-General’s Bulletin on Special measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13) to which Tearfund is a signatory. ● The Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS), against which Tearfund is certified. ● Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office: Enhanced Due Diligence: Safeguarding for External Partners. ● The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the Convention came into Force in the UK in 1992, its Optional Protocols. ● The internationally-accepted safeguarding standards of the Keeping Children Safe Coalition.
<p>Who must follow this policy</p>	<p>This policy applies to anyone who represents Tearfund in any capacity - this includes all ‘staff’ and ‘representatives’ (see Policy Statement above for definitions).</p>

	Partners and their staff are bound by the principles in the Partnership Agreement which make Safeguarding Children and adults at risk mandatory. Partners must either have their own Safeguarding policy or abide by Tearfund's Safeguarding policy for the duration of the Partnership agreement.
Communication of this policy	<p>Tearfund is committed to communicating this policy to all staff and representatives and to communities (including any parents/carers) as appropriate.</p> <p>Trustees are required to complete Tearfund's mandatory e-Learning course on Safeguarding upon joining, and then every 3 years. All staff are required to complete Tearfund's mandatory e-Learning course on Safeguarding upon joining and annually thereafter. Tearfund's Misconduct Policy and Procedure will be applied if staff do not complete the training as required, unless there are extenuating circumstances.</p>
Person responsible	Director of People and Culture
Version	Final Version
Visibility	Public
Approved by	Originally approved by ET and the Board in August 2010 and reviewed in July 2014, March 2018 and then in subsequent years. This version was approved by the Tearfund Board as E-business in February 2024 and has been adapted for external use
Approval date	February 2024
Next formal review	March 2025