



TERRA FOR BUILDING RESILIENCE

SAFEGUARDING and CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

March 2023

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy and 'TERRA''s approach to safeguarding and child protection, these definitions apply:

- 1.1 **Child:** in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is defined as any person – girl, boy, young woman, young man, and children of other gender identities - under the age of 18 years (UNCRC Article 1). For the purposes of this policy, all children are considered vulnerable persons.
- 1.2 **Vulnerable (Person/Group):** 'TERRA' define vulnerability broadly to include:
 1. A child
 2. A person who is or may need care by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.
 3. A person who is or may be vulnerable because of their circumstances. For example:
 - a. Victims of gender-based violence, including rape, sexual assault or sexual harassment
 - b. People with very limited education
 - c. People with learning difficulties
 - d. Victims and survivors of manmade or natural disasters
 - e. People who are living in extreme poverty or who are financially isolated.

Throughout the document the term "Vulnerable" applies collectively to define those groups.

- 1.3 **Safeguarding:** The procedures and practices employed to safeguard children's and any other "PoC" who come into contact with 'TERRA' and all those associated with the delivery of our work from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence.
- 1.4 **Children's rights:** (As defined in the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child) Children rights, like human rights, come from the idea that all people have fundamental rights that they are born with. These rights cannot be taken away because of a person's gender, age, religion, race, ethnicity, or other factors. It is recognized that special protection must be given to children to ensure full, happy, and healthy development without fear of harm or exploitation.
- 1.5 **Child Protection:** The prevention of and response to significant harm, abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence against children. Child Protection programming is an activity or initiative designed to protect children from all forms of violence. This includes the integration of child protection into all thematic areas of programming to enhance the protective environments for children in the community.

- 1.6 **Child Abuse:** Child abuse involves the abuse of children's rights and includes all forms of violence against children: physical, emotional and sexual abuse, neglect, family violence, sexual exploitation and child labour as defined below.
1. **Physical Abuse:** is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. It also includes cultural practices which can alter physicality in ways that cause distress and/or illness in a child.
 2. **Emotional Abuse:** A persistent attack on a child's self-esteem. Examples include, but are not limited to – name-calling, threatening, ridiculing, shaming, intimidating or isolating the child. It may also involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger.
 3. **Child Sexual Abuse:** When a child is forced by another child, adolescent to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Sexual abuse involves contact and non-contact activities which encompasses all forms of sexual activity involving children, the activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).
 4. **Child sexual exploitation:** is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.
 5. **Neglect:** The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs to the extent that the child's health and development is placed at risk. Neglect may involve failing to: provide adequate food, clean water, clothing and shelter; protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision; or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
 6. **Family violence:** Includes verbal, physical, sexual or emotional violence within the household or family, which the child witnesses, usually on a regular basis.
 7. **Child Marriage:** A formal or informal marriage before age 18, is a reality for both boys and girls, although girls are disproportionately the most affected. Child marriage is widespread and can lead to a lifetime of disadvantage and deprivation.
 8. **Child Labour:** Often defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development. It refers to work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally

dangerous and harmful to children and interferes with their schooling and recreation. In its most extreme forms, child labour involves children being enslaved, separated from their families and exposed to serious hazards and illnesses.

1. INTRODUCTION

Safeguarding is at the heart of what we do and fundamental to our existence as an organization. We take very seriously our responsibility and duty to ensure that we, as an organization, and anyone work and/or engage with us believes that all forms of violence, abuse and exploitation are an affront to any of our “Vulnerable” dignity as human beings. We believe that all “Vulnerable” has a right to be safe at all times, and that all have equal rights to protection from all forms of abuse, neglect, and exploitation, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, nationality, age, religious or political beliefs, family background, economic status, legal status, ability, physical or mental health or criminal background, and that any form of abuse or exploitation is unacceptable.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set out the organization's approach to safeguarding any “Vulnerable” at risk. It applies to everyone working and volunteering for the organization or acting on their behalf and provides the framework to help us safeguard a “Vulnerable” with commitment and confidence. It describes some corporate and directorate safeguarding responsibilities so that you know who to ask for decisions or advice when you need to.

3. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all staff in Terra for Building (further referred to as “TERRA”), or anyone working on behalf of “TERRA”. Throughout the document the term “staff” applies collectively to define those groups.

4. COMPLIANCE

“TERRA” expects “staff” to follow the requirements of this policy and procedure, and to promote a safe environment in which the welfare of a “Vulnerable”'s at risks is protected and promoted. Failure to follow this policy and procedures may not constitute abuse but is nonetheless a matter of concern for “TERRA” and may lead to disciplinary action. If members of the organization are concerned that the guidance and procedures are not being followed, they should raise it with their line managers and/or the human resources department.

5. RESPONSIBILITY

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the [Chief Executive Officer](#) and the [Board General Director](#).

6. POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be formally reviewed [every three years](#) by the [board of trustees](#), when there is a change in local law or good practice, or when an incident occurs that highlights a need for change – whichever occurs first.

7. PRINCIPLES

Our approach to safeguarding is driven by a number of principles which are informed by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, relevant legislation and guidance, and by the organization values and understanding of best practice.

- 7.1 Principle 1:** "TERRA" has a zero-tolerance approach to any "Vulnerable" abuse and exploitation. This is enacted via robust prevention and response work, offering support to survivors and holding those responsible for harm and intolerable behaviour to account. "TERRA" will ensure all those associated with the delivery of our work have access to information about how to report concerns or allegations of any "Vulnerable" exploitation, abuse or other breaches of this policy and will take immediate action upon report of any suspected breach. "TERRA" will not knowingly engage personnel to be in direct or indirect contact with any "Vulnerable" or access communities whom we work with if they pose a risk to a "Vulnerable" safety or wellbeing.
- 7.2 Principle 2:** "TERRA" is committed to confidentiality in sharing sensitive information in relation to a "Vulnerable" safeguarding incidents reported to us. Information that identifies individuals will only be shared with due consideration to the safety of the "Vulnerable", witnesses or subject of complaint, or to protect the integrity of an investigation.
- 7.3 Principle 3:** Any "Vulnerable" have a right to protection from harm and abuse, regardless of age, ability, gender, racial heritage, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, identity or additional vulnerabilities.
- 7.4 Principle 4:** The best interests of any "Vulnerable" are paramount in all considerations about their welfare and protection, including when to maintain confidentiality and when to share information about them.
- 7.5 Principle 5:** Any "Vulnerable" have a right to participate in decisions about their lives. Their views, wishes, feelings and experiences are evident in our work with them.
- 7.6 Principle 6:** Concerns or allegations that "TERRA" staff or volunteers have abused or neglected a "Vulnerable" will be managed sensitively and fairly in accordance with these policies, relevant legislation and local procedures.
- 7.7 Principle 7:** Working together with children, their parents and other agencies is essential to promoting children's welfare/wellbeing and ensuring their protection. In some limited circumstances, it will not be appropriate to engage with parents to protect the child.
- 7.8 Principle 8:** Ensuring all staff adhere to policy, and all managers ensure the policy is an integral part of meeting agendas.

This policy should be read in conjunction with local legislation (where possible), however local legislation will take precedence over this policy in the event of a conflict. This policy does not address workplace harassment, employee grievances or non - safeguarding related reports of misconduct. For these matters, please refer to "TERRA"

Complaints Policy and Procedures, Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures and Procurement Ethical Code and the Organization Code Conduct.

8. PERSONAL CONDUCT

“staff” are always expected to maintain professionalism in their conversations and conduct and must never:

1. Sexually or commercially abuse or exploit any person, or subject a person to physical, emotional or psychological abuse or neglect or act in ways that could place that person at risk of abuse from others.
2. Develop a relationship with any person that is—or could reasonably be viewed as—emotionally exploitative or abusive, or engaging in behaviour that is shaming, threatening, humiliating, belittling, coercive or otherwise emotionally harming or manipulative.
3. Condone or participate in illegal, unsafe or abusive behaviour, especially towards children or vulnerable people.
4. Develop a physical or sexual relationship with a child or other vulnerable person or engage in inappropriate or sexually provocative behaviour.
5. Spend excessive time alone with children away from others.
6. Invite a child or other vulnerable person to his/her home, share personal contact details with them or communicate with them via personal social media or similar personal online messaging sites.
7. Make suggestions or offer advice that is inappropriate or offensive, particularly towards children or other vulnerable people.
8. Discriminate against, show differential treatment or favour an individual (including a child or other vulnerable person) to the exclusion of others.
9. Expose children to hazardous work.
10. Exploit children through child labour, sex work, or domestic work.
11. Neglect children.
12. Involve children in harmful practices.

The best way to protect a “Vulnerable” is to empower them to protect themselves by:

1. Being a good role model of how to behave with them, both in the home and in the workplace
2. Being sensitive to acts of abuse, being aware of their concerns and complaints as well as taking appropriate and expedient action as necessary
3. Respecting their dignity in homes, workplaces, and institutions
4. Listening carefully to them
5. Offering them appropriate advice and guidance

9. DESIGNING AND DELIVERING SAFE PROGRAMS

We strive to avoid harm to all people we interact with. Working with vulnerable groups in a responsible, ethical way requires care and planning.

When designing and carrying out projects (particularly those that include or could involve interactions with children or other vulnerable people), we expect staff and

associated personnel who are responsible for the project to plan ahead and take appropriate steps to reduce potential risks of harm. As needed, senior managers or directors within the organization can be involved in this assessment and planning process.

10. MANAGING A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN

All measures taken to respond to a safeguarding concern should take into account the best interest of the “Vulnerable” and be sensitive to their differing gender and other identities ensuring they are kept safe and protected. Response measures should be appropriately risk assessed and endeavor to ensure no further harm comes to the “Vulnerable” as a result of any actions taken by the organization staff members.

“TERRA” follows the following procedures to protect a “Vulnerable” who are suffering harm or at risk of suffering harm as a result of physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse or neglect.

A. Procedures to Follow

1. If you are told of any incident or have a strong suspicion of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect occurring, you must report this the same day to the following email Terra-Compliance@Terra-Resilience.org.
2. Staff must not investigate reports of abuse themselves. Alleged victims, perpetrators, those reporting abuse and others involved should not be interviewed by staff beyond the point at which it is clear that there is an allegation of abuse.
3. If someone tells you about an allegation of physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect you must follow the procedures on the **next page (the ‘Six Rules’)**. You should record in writing all concerns, discussions and decisions (together with reasons) made under these procedures. This record should include the date, time and place of the conversation and detail of what was said and done by whom and in whose presence. The record should be signed by the person writing it.
4. Do not assume another colleague or professional will take action. Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility. If you are worried about a person or have any suspicions, however small, talk to line manager immediately. You do not have to wait for proof of your concerns. **Do not attempt to investigate the issue yourself.**
5. Members of the organization should remember that sometimes the “Vulnerable” may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or they may not recognize their experiences as harmful.

B. 'The Six Rules'

READY

- A "Vulnerable" may wish to talk to you at any point - if this involves safeguarding you must be prepared to listen immediately.
- Do not ask the person to come back later or to make an appointment

RECEIVE

- The "Vulnerable" has chosen you - you are in a position of trust.
- Listen carefully
- Do not show shock or disbelief
- Take what they are saying seriously

REASSURE

- Tell the person that they have done the right thing by speaking out.
- Do not promise confidentiality - you have a duty to refer. You can, however, state that information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis
- Alleviate guilt - the person is not to blame and they did the right thing in coming to you.

RESPOND

- Avoid asking detailed or leading questions, but try to confirm basic information about who, when, where, what, but not why
- Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator.
- Do not ask the "Vulnerable" to repeat the matter to another member of staff.
- Do not investigate the matter yourself.
- Explain that you need to talk to your line manager.

RECORD

- Make brief notes if you can during the meeting, or if not, immediately afterwards.
- Keep your original notes
- Prepare a written record of: Your name and position, name of alleged victim and perpetrator and how they are related to the organization, description of the incident (including date, time and location)
- Record statements and actions rather than your interpretation.

REPORT

- Immediately report to the e - mail: Terra-Compliance@Terra-Resilience.org
- Do not seek to investigate safeguarding complaints or suspicions. The report should be made as soon as possible and no later than 24 hours after being informed or becoming aware of the concern

11. HOW WE WILL RESPOND

The organization will respond to safeguarding reports and concerns according to its policies, and its legal and regulatory obligations. See **TERRA COMPLAINTS POLICY and PROCEDURES** for our process for investigating, reporting and resolving safeguarding concerns.

As a registered organization, we may need to report incidents to donors, government departments or authorities. All decisions to report to external bodies must be fully risk-assessed to avoid further harm to the dignity or safety of the survivor or similar negative consequences. The organization will never avoid reporting on the basis that it may harm the organization's reputation or give rise to litigation. Similarly, data protection concerns will not act as a barrier to reporting but will be carefully considered in connection with any report.

The Chief Executive Officer and Board **General Director** will have oversight of safeguarding and will receive reports of relevant incidents that arise. He or She will ensure the **board of trustees** is regularly updated on safeguarding matters.

12. SUPPORT FOR SURVIVORS

The organization is committed to providing appropriate support to survivors of harm caused by staff or associated personnel at all stages of the reporting and investigation process. Decisions regarding support will be made on a case-by-case basis but should always be led by the survivor.

APPENDIX A
Statement of Commitment

For TERRA Staff

I, have read and understood the standards and guidelines outlined in this Policy. I agree with the principles contained therein and accept the importance of implementing safeguarding and child protection policies and practice while working with TERRA.

NAME: -----

SIGNED: -----

DATE: -----

Please return this page to Human Resources