



PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to protect people, particularly children, at risk adults and beneficiaries of assistance, from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with the Poverty Reduction Forum Trust. This includes harm arising from:

- The conduct of staff or personnel associated with the Poverty Reduction Forum Trust
- The design and implementation of the Poverty Reduction Forum Trust's programmes and activities

The policy lays out the commitments made by The Poverty Reduction Forum Trust, and informs staff and associated personnel¹ of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

Personal Responsibility

It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent and report the physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect of any member of our community. The welfare of these people is paramount. All our community without exception have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or belief.

This policy does not cover:

- Safeguarding concerns in the wider community not perpetrated by the Poverty Reduction Forum Trust or associated personnel

DEFINITIONS

What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding means taking all reasonable steps to prevent harm, particularly sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment from occurring; to protect people, especially vulnerable adults and children, from that harm; and to respond appropriately when harm does occur. In our sector, we often use this to apply to the safety and welfare of people involved in the participatory research and engagement undertaken by the Poverty Reduction Forum Trust personnel.

Vulnerability

¹ See 'Scope' for definition of associated personnel

As defined by the Core Humanitarian Standard people may be vulnerable because of individual factors such as age (particularly the very young and the very old), disability or illness or because they are caring for others who are vulnerable.

Child

A child is defined as anyone under the age of 18 years in line with the Constitution of Zimbabwe, irrespective of local definition.

Adult at Risk

Sometimes also referred to as vulnerable adult. A person who is or may be in need of 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.

Types Of Abuse

A person may abuse someone by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Abuse may include, but is not limited to:

Physical abuse or physical injury, such as evidence of hitting, kicking or shaking where there is definite knowledge or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

Emotional abuse where harm is done by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection, such as degrading punishment, threats and not giving care and affection, resulting in adverse effects on behaviour and emotional developments of a person.

Sexual abuse where exploitation of a person occurs. This includes rape, incest and all forms of sexual activities including pornography. Exchanging of benefits, for example goods, food and money in exchange of sexual favours.

Neglect where basic needs such as food, warmth and medical care are not met, or when there is failure to protect a person from exposure to any kind of danger, resulting in serious impairment of a person's health or development.

Sexual Harassment is unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature which: violates your dignity, makes you feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated or creates a hostile or offensive environment. Sexual harassment can include:

- Sexual comments or jokes;
- Physical behaviour, including unwelcome sexual advances, touching and various forms of sexual assault;
- Displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature;
- Sending texts or emails with sexual content.

Sexual Exploitation 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.

Survivor The person who has been abused or exploited. The term 'survivor' is often used in preference to 'victim' as it implies strength, resilience and the capacity to survive, however it is the individual's choice how they wish to identify themselves.

Beneficiary of Assistance Someone who directly receives goods or services from The Poverty Reduction Forum Trust's programme.

Scope

- All staff contracted by the Poverty Reduction Forum Trust
- Associated personnel whilst engaged with work or visits related to the Poverty Reduction Forum Trust, including but not limited to the following: consultants; volunteers; contractors; programme visitors including journalists, celebrities and politicians
- This is a local organizational policy and while it is an internal policy, the Poverty Reduction Forum Trust expects all partners and others working on behalf of the Trust to act in accordance with the key principles contained within it.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Poverty Reduction Forum Trust believes that everyone we come into contact with, regardless of age, gender, disability or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. The Poverty Reduction Forum Trust will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by staff or associated personnel.

This policy will address the following areas of safeguarding: child safeguarding, adult safeguarding, and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. These key areas of safeguarding may have different policies and procedures associated with them (see Associated Policies: Code of Conduct, Gender Policy).

The Poverty Reduction Forum Trust commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the three pillars of prevention, reporting and response.

PREVENTION

The Poverty Reduction Forum Trust Responsibilities

The Poverty Reduction Forum Trust will:

- Ensure all staff have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy
- Design and undertake all its programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with The Poverty Reduction Forum Trust. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programmes is gathered and communicated
- Implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and associated personnel
- Ensure staff receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organization
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process

Staff Responsibilities

Child safeguarding

The Poverty Reduction Forum Trust staff and associated personnel must not:

- Engage in sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18
- Sexually abuse or exploit children
- Subject a child to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect
- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children including child labour or trafficking

Adult safeguarding

The Poverty Reduction Forum Trust staff and associated personnel must not:

- Sexually abuse or exploit at risk adults
- Subject an at risk adult to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect

Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse

The Poverty Reduction Forum Trust staff and associated personnel must not:

- Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual activity. This includes any exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries of assistance.
- Engage in any sexual relationships with beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics.

Additionally, The Poverty Reduction Forum Trust staff and associated personnel are obliged to:

- Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy.
- Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by any Poverty Reduction Forum Trust staff member or associated personnel to the appropriate staff member.

Enabling reports

The Poverty Reduction Forum Trust will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to staff and the communities we work with.

Any staff reporting concerns or complaints will be protected by The Poverty Reduction Forum Trust.

The Poverty Reduction Forum Trust will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies.

HOW TO REPORT A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN

Staff members who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to their line manager. If the staff member does not feel comfortable reporting to their line manager (for example if they feel that the report will not be taken seriously, or if that person is implicated in the concern) they may report to any other appropriate staff member. For example, this could be a senior manager or a member of the Board of Trustees. Safeguarding concerns could be reported directly to the Executive Director or Board Chairperson

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The need to respond arises in the following instances:

- Abuse is observed or suspected;
- An allegation of abuse is made;
- Someone discloses abuse.

No representative of the Poverty Reduction Forum Trust will prejudice their own position or standing with the Poverty Reduction Forum Trust by responsibly reporting or suspecting potential or suspected abuse.

It is important to note that where representatives report concerns, it is not their responsibility to decide if abuse is taking place but it is their responsibility to pass the concerns on. Where PRFT can not deal with the safeguarding concerns raised or there are legal obligations, such concerns shall be reported to the responsible stakeholders e.g Police.

Response

The Poverty Reduction Forum Trust will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure (see Procedures for reporting and response to safeguarding concerns in Associated Policies e.g Code of Conduct).

The Poverty Reduction Forum Trust will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff found in breach of policy.

The Poverty Reduction Forum Trust will offer support to survivors of harm caused by staff or associated personnel, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out (such as an internal investigation). Decisions regarding support will be led by the survivor.

Recruitment

It is the Poverty Reduction Forum Trust policy that no-one shall work within the Trust who:

- Has been convicted of or has received a formal police caution concerning an offense against children, or
- Has been convicted or has received formal police caution concerning sexual offenses against adults; or
- Is notified to us as having a red flag in relation to safeguarding by a former employer.

Confidentiality

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need to know basis only, and should be kept secure at all times.

Board of Trustees Signatures:

1. Chairperson:Signature..... Date.....

2. Trustee:.....Signature..... Date.....

3. Trustee.....Signature..... Date.....

4. Trustee.....Signature..... Date.....

5. Trustee.....Signature..... Date.....