

**SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

**Version 1.0**

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# PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

The Safeguarding policy is meant to protect all persons who are involved in Abundance’s work, including beneficiaries, staff and any persons coming in contact with them. The policy addresses any harm arising from:

• Abundance’s staff, volunteers or personnel’s conduct

• Abundance’s project design and implementation

The policy lays out the commitments made by Abundance and informs staff and associated personnel of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

This policy is not covering Safeguarding concerns in the wider community not perpetrated by Abundance or associated personnel.

# What is safeguarding?

For the purposes of this policy we define “Safeguarding” as “ *the act of putting policies, procedures, training and appropriate people in place to minimise the possibility of abuse and to deal appropriately with concerns when they arise*” (Cambridge International, 2017[[1]](#footnote-1)).

# Scope

* All staff contracted by Abundance
* Related personnel whilst engaged with activities, projects or visits related to Abundance, including but not limited to the following: volunteers; programme visitors including journalists, consultants; contractors; celebrities and politicians.

# Policy Statements

* 1. Abundance upholds human rights and equality. Abundance believes that everyone has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin. Abuse and exploitation by staff or associated personnel of Abundance will not be tolerated.

3.2 This policy will address child[[2]](#footnote-2) safeguarding, adult safeguarding and affirms adherence to protection from sexual exploitation and abuse according to Malawian laws.

* 1. Abundance will use the three pillars of prevention, reporting and response to address safeguarding throughout its work.
  2. Prevention

Abundance will

1. Make certain that all volunteers, contractors, staff have access to this policy and know their responsibilities within this policy
2. Ensure that all programmes and activities are designed and undertake in a way that protects people from any risk of harm[[3]](#footnote-3) that may arise from their coming into contact with Abundance. This can include activities related to research, training, workshops, community activities and activities related to how information is gathered and shared.
3. Implement stringent safeguarding procedures during recruitment, management and deployment of staff and associated personnel
4. Provide training on safeguarding for all members according to their role in the organization
5. Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process

3.4 Staff responsibilities on Child safeguarding

Abundance’s staff and associated personnel must not:

1. Engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children including child labour or trafficking
2. Engage in eve teasing or any attention giving behaviour that makes a child uncomfortable
3. Engage in sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18
4. Sexually abuse[[4]](#footnote-4) or exploit children
5. Subject a child to physical, emotional or psychological[[5]](#footnote-5) abuse, or neglect

3.5 Staff responsibilities on Adult safeguarding

Abundance’s staff and associated personnel must not:

1. Sexually abuse or exploit vulnerable[[6]](#footnote-6) adults
2. Subject a vulnerable adult to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect

3.6 Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse

Abundance’s staff and associated personnel must not:

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

Additionally, Abundance’s staff and associated personnel are obliged to:

1. Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy
2. Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by an Abundance’s staff member or associated personnel to the appropriate staff member

3.7 Enabling reports

1. Abundance will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to staff and the communities we work with.
2. All reports will be archived for five years if issue is reported and resolved within five years, or for a period until issue is resolved if longer
3. Abundance will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies.

3.8 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 or Executive Director. 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.

3.9 Response

Abundance will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligations.

Abundance will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff found in breach of policy. This may include dismissal and reporting to Government authorities such as Police.

Abundance will offer support to survivors[[7]](#footnote-7) 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.

4.0 Confidentiality

It is essential that confidentiality in 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.

1. https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/Images/358415-safeguarding-document.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. A person below the age of 18 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Psychological, physical and any other infringement of an individual’s rights [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The term ‘sexual abuse’ means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Emotional or psychological abuse, including (but not limited to) humiliating and degrading treatment such as bad name calling, constant criticism, belittling, persistent shaming, solitary confinement and isolation [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Sometimes also referred to as “at risk”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. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)