PROTECTION FROM ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION
Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy

February 2018
PROTECTION FROM ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy

1.1. Purpose

Caritas Rwanda recognizes the right of children and vulnerable adults to protection, regardless of gender, race, culture and disability. Caritas Rwanda recognizes the power dynamics inherent in working with children and vulnerable adults and the potential for abuse and exploitation by staff of people we work with.

Caritas Rwanda is committed to creating and maintaining an environment which promotes its core values and prevents abuse and exploitation of all people. Caritas Rwanda’s staff and associates are expected to uphold the dignity of all people with whom they come into contact by ensuring that their personal and professional conduct is of the highest standards at all times. They are equally expected to serve with integrity and promote the right relationships while taking their responsibilities. Caritas Rwanda recognizes the unique needs of children and vulnerable adults and, therefore, commits itself to creating and maintaining an environment that protects these individuals.

1.2. Scope

This policy applies directly to the following categories:
1. All staff and associates
2. Those deployed through Caritas Rwanda mandated support mechanisms
3. All volunteers and internees

1.3. Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults

Caritas Rwanda prohibits all forms of exploitation and abuse, namely:

• Caritas Rwanda staff and associates are prohibited from engaging in sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18, regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally). Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defense.

• Caritas Rwanda staff and associates are prohibited from causing any physical or emotional harm to children or vulnerable adults.
Caritas Rwanda staff and associates are prohibited from the exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favors.

- Caritas Rwanda staff and associates are prohibited from any form of humiliating, degrading, or exploitative behavior toward children, women, and vulnerable adults.
- Caritas Rwanda staff and associates are not to use their power or position to withhold assistance or services, or to give preferential treatment.
- Caritas Rwanda staff and associates are prohibited from using their power or position to request or demand payment, privilege, or any other benefit.
- Caritas Rwanda staff and associates are prohibited from engaging in trafficking in human beings, in all forms.

In the same spirit, Caritas Rwanda staff and associates are strongly discouraged to engage in sexual relationships with people they work with since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics. Such relationships are contrary to Caritas Rwanda principles and values and undermine the credibility and integrity of its work.

1.4. Responsibility to report

Caritas Rwanda staff and associates are obliged to report any concern or suspicion of exploitation and abuse of a child or vulnerable adult. Failure to report may put the victim and Caritas Rwanda at risk and is a breach of this Safeguarding Policy and of the Caritas Rwanda Code of Conduct.

Caritas Rwanda staff and associates should report concerns through established reporting mechanisms.

1.5 Prevention

Caritas Rwanda is adhering to the highest human resource and recruitment standards to safeguard people we work with against exploitation and abuse. This includes:

- Safe recruitment – referencing and vetting prospective applicants with emphasis on impeccable track record in carrying out their work in conformity with the Code of Conduct. Caritas Rwanda is adhering to the sector-wide referencing scheme called “inter-agency misconduct disclosure scheme”.
- Induction – all staff have completed an induction on the Caritas Rwanda Code of Conduct, Complaints and Handling Policy and Procedures, Caritas Rwanda Child and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy and Standards of Behavior Toward Children and Glossary of Terms.
• Acknowledgment – all staff have read, understood and signed the Child and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy and the CI Code of Conduct.

1.6 Data protection

Caritas Rwanda is committed to apply the highest levels of protection in the processing of personal data. Personal information acquired during investigations related to the breach of the Caritas Rwanda Code of Conduct and the Caritas Rwanda Child and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding.

Approved by the Secretary General of Caritas Rwanda Rwanda

Fr. TWAGIRAYEZU Jean Marie Vianney
Annexes:

Annex I - Glossary of Terms
Annex II - Standards of behavior towards children
Annex III - Acknowledgment form Annex IV - Reporting form

Annex I-

Glossary of Terms

• CHILD
Any person under the age of 18. National law or local customs may use different definition; however, Caritas Rwanda’s position is all persons under the age of 18 should receive equal protection regardless of local age limits.

• VULNERABLE ADULT
Vulnerable adults are individuals aged 18 years and over who are at greater risk of significant harm due to factors such as gender, age, mental or physical health, or as a result of poverty, inequality or experience of displacement or crisis.

• SAFEGUARDING
The responsibility that organisation has to make sure its staff and programmes promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and do not expose them to the risk of harm and abuse. PSEA (Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse) and child protection come under this umbrella term.

• PROTECTION
The responsibility and measures taken to prevent and respond to abuse and exploitation of a child or vulnerable adult. This includes building awareness, promoting training, identifying and responding to all complaints, monitoring and evaluating protection structures, and taking personal responsibility.

• CHILD PROTECTION
Child protection is about preventing and responding to violence, exploitation and abuse against children - including sexual exploitation and abuse, trafficking, child labour and harmful traditional practices. It is part of the broader area of work known as Safeguarding.
• **PSEA (Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse):**
  All measures that protect people from crisis affected communities from sexual exploitation and abuse by staff (e.g. of NGOs, the UN and other actors). ABUSE: Any action or inaction that causes harm to another person. It can include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. It also includes abuse online and/or through mobile technology. There are various types of abuse including:

  1. **Sexual abuse:**
     Any actual or threatened sexual act of violence perpetrated against a child or adult, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. Examples of sexual abuse include rape, abusive sexual contact like unwanted touching and non-contact sexual abuse such as sexting and verbal or behavioral sexual harassment.

  2. **Physical abuse:**
     The actual or likely physical injury to a child or adult, such as hitting, kicking or shaking, where there is definite knowledge, or reasonable suspicion, that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

  3. **Emotional abuse:**
     Harm done by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection, such as degrading punishments, threats, bullying, and not giving care and affection.

  4. **Neglect:**
     When basic needs such as food, warmth and medical care are not met, or when there is a failure to prevent exposure to any kind of danger.

**Annex II –**

**Caritas Rwanda Standards of Behavior towards Children**

Caritas Rwanda staff and associates must remain aware of perceptions and appearances in their language, actions, and relationships to children and safeguard them from harm. Staff and associates should be aware at all times to uphold the dignity of each child and treat all children with respect.

The following outline provides behavioral expectations of all Staff and Associates when interacting with children (any person under 18 years of age).

Caritas Rwanda staff and associates:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MUST</th>
<th>MUST NOT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Conduct themselves in manner consistent with values of Caritas Rwanda, including complying with the Caritas Rwanda Internationalis Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics</td>
<td>1. Hit and physically abuse children (even if culturally acceptable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Emotionally or verbally abuse a child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Treat all children and their families with respect, regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status</td>
<td>3. Be harsh toward a child. If a child expresses discomfort, stop the behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Listen to children</td>
<td>4. Have sex or engage in any sexual activity with a child including inappropriate touch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Provide welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for children that prevents all forms of abuse and exploitation.</td>
<td>5. Send degrading or harmful written or verbal messages to a child, such as sextexting, pornography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Be sensitive when they are around children (i.e. language, conversations, touch, gestures)</td>
<td>6. Use any computers, mobiles, video cameras or social media to exploit or harass children, or access, download or share child exploitation material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Respect cultural differences which do not harm children</td>
<td>7. Hire a child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Be transparent in actions and whereabouts</td>
<td>8. Encourage a child to meet with them outside of work-related activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Have at least one other adult present</td>
<td>9. Take a child to their homes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. Find themselves alone with a child (there may be exceptions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. Do things for child of a personal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
when they are with a child. Care and discretion must be used on all one-on-one situations.

9. Ensure that an adult caretaker is present when transporting a child; and if not possible, obtain appropriate permission.

10. Report any concerns of child abuse or exploitation.

11. Disclose all charges or convictions if they relate to child exploitation.

12. Comply with relevant country legislation.

13. Ensure contact with children is supervised, accompanied or at least in sight of other adults.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nature that they are able to do for themselves</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12. Show favouritism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Be intoxicated or under the influence of drugs when with children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex III - Acknowledgment Form

Acknowledgement

All Caritas Rwanda staff and associates must read, sign, and abide by the Caritas Rwanda Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy which prohibits abuse and exploitation of a child or vulnerable adult.

I understand Caritas Rwanda commitment to protect the rights and dignity of children and vulnerable adults and to safeguard them from abuse and exploitation as defined in the Caritas Rwanda Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy.

I have read the Caritas Rwanda Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy in its entirety and understand the following:

- The definitions of abuse and exploitation;
- That I am required to report abuse and exploitation of a child or a vulnerable adult;
- How to report, in accordance with Caritas Rwanda reporting procedures, maintaining confidentiality;
- That I am required to uphold the standards of behavior described in the Caritas Rwanda Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy and Caritas Rwanda Code of Conduct;
- That I am required to complete an induction on the Caritas Rwanda Code of Conduct, Caritas Rwanda and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy, the Caritas Rwanda Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures and familiarize myself with related documents including:
  - Caritas Rwanda Code of Conduct
  - Caritas Rwanda Complaints Handling Policy and Procedure
  - Annex I - Glossary of Terms
  - Annex II - Standards of behavior towards children
- That if I have any questions, it is my responsibility to ask my supervisor or designated staff at Human Resources;
- That breach of the Policy and failure to report may lead to disciplinary action including termination or dismissal.

__________________________  ________________________  EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE  DATE
Annex IV-Report Form

Suspicion of Abuse or Exploitation of a Child or Vulnerable Adult

Instructions

Any suspicion or concern of abuse or exploitation of a child or an adult involving Caritas Rwanda staff and associates must be reported as required in the Caritas Rwanda Complaint Handling Policy and Procedure and Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy. If you are unable to complete all of the sections, fill in what you do know. If there is more than one victim, please complete a separate report for each victim. The reporter’s identity will not be disclosed except on a “need-to-know” basis. If the reporter believes danger is imminent to themselves or anyone involved, you should alert the Caritas Rwanda Secretary General at once. Caritas Rwanda is committed to addressing and responding to all reports.

If an immediate threat to life exists or if emergency assistance is needed, please contact your local authorities and alert local senior management at once. The purpose of this Report Form is to report any suspicious activity of abuse or exploitation for Caritas Rwanda to assess and determine next course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REPORTED BY:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the Reporter wish to be identified?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Yes · No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, Reporter name and contact information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Name: __________________________________ Last Name: __________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone Number: __________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: ____________________________Name of Organization: ____________________________ Job Title: ____________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VICTIM:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is the victim a child or an adult?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Child · Adult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim Identity: First Name _____ Last Name _____ Nick Name _____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown ·</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(If you are unable to provide the victim’s identity, check Unknown.)
Approximate age ______ Gender ______
Child refers to all persons under the age of 18
Provide any additional information

Caregiver/Guardian/Relative:
First Name _______ Last Name _______
Unknown ☐
(If you are unable to provide the caregiver/Guardian/Relative's identity, check Unknown.)
Physical Address: _______________ (Examples include: name of village, street name, city, house, building)
Phone Number Include the area code or country code (Preferred) ______ (Alternative) ______
Email _____ Approximate age ______ Gender ______

INCIDENT DETAILS
Type of Incident:
(Check all that apply)

☒ Sexual Abuse (e.g., fondling, kissing, non-contact sexual activity, rape)
☒ Exploitation (e.g. sex trafficking, forced prostitution, survival sex, child labor)
☒ Emotional Abuse (e.g. intimidation, threats, humiliation, bullying)
☒ Physical Abuse (e.g. hitting, kicking, shaking)
☒ Other (Define other)
Location: Address/Physical location of incident: ______ Country
(Examples include: name of village, street name, city, house, building)

Dates:
Approximate Date of Incident:
Month _____ Date _____ Year _____
Date Reported:
Month _____ Date _____ Year _____

Physical and Emotional State:
Physical and Emotional state of victim (Check all that apply)
☐ Cuts, bruises, welts, scratches
☐ Behavioral changes (e.g., angry, crying, acting out, withdrawn, sudden illness)
☐ Other Please further describe the physical and emotional state of the victim.

Impairment or Disability:
Does the victim have a physical impairment or disability?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Do Not Know
If yes, describe the impairment or disability. ---------------------------------------------

Become Aware:
How did the reporter become aware of this incident?
☐ Witnessed it
☐ Other
(Define other) ---------------------------------------------

Safety of Victim:
Was the victim in immediate danger prior to completing this form?
☐ Yes ☐ No
Were the proper authorities and senior management contacted (as appropriate)?
☐ Yes ☐ No
Please provide any additional information.
SUSPECT:

First Name .......................... Last Name

Unknown ☐ (If you are unable to provide the suspect's identity, check Unknown.)

Phone Number (Include the area code or country code (Preferred).............. (Alternative) .........

Email........................................ Approximate age

Sex ........................................

Physical Description of Suspect:

Physical Address: ......................... Unknown ☐

(Examples include: name of village, street name, city, house, building)

Name of Organization .......................... Job Title

MORE INFORMATION: Are there any other persons with more information?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, provide details: