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### Policy Review Schedule:

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Safeguarding Focal Point. A complete review of the relevance and effectiveness will be done and approved by the World Vision Ireland Senior Management Team and Board at least every three years.

# World Vision Ireland: Child and Adult Safeguarding Policy 2019

Reviewed and Approved by World Vision Ireland Board on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2019

## I. Policy Statement

World Vision Ireland is committed to creating an environment where the potential risks are identified, there are clear responsibilities and easily accessible processes and procedures in place to ensure that in all areas of our work, the risks are considered and minimised. World Vision Ireland accepts that steps must be taken to protect families from those who might seek to gain trust and access to young children or vulnerable adults through a development agency's work. The possibility of staff, donors or partners abusing children or adult beneficiaries is one which World Vision Ireland takes seriously and is committed to working to prevent. This Policy seeks to reduce risk to children and vulnerable adults in World Vision Ireland programmes.

This Policy expands upon World Vision's Child Protection Standards, to cover all vulnerable populations, especially women and children, in one integrated policy. This Policy continues to emphasise the unique vulnerabilities and special protection requirements for children, along with the importance of preventing sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), in particular, among other forms of adult beneficiary abuse.

Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults we serve is foundational to all World Vision Ireland activities and programmes. At World Vision Ireland, we believe that all children have a right to be safe and to be protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence as defined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989. Central to everything we do is our commitment to first do no harm to children or adult beneficiaries, to respect the rights of all beneficiaries, and to uphold the best interests of children as a primary consideration in all actions and decisions. This Policy is grounded in World Vision's broader ministry mandates—particularly Child Protection, which builds community capacity and strengthens local and national systems that protect children.

World Vision Ireland has zero tolerance towards incidents of violence or abuse against children or adults, including sexual exploitation or abuse, committed either by employees or others affiliated with our work. World Vision Ireland takes necessary actions to respond to any suspected or known instances of abuse. Incident responses are centred on the child or adult survivor and put their interests first.

World Vision Ireland is committed to continuous improvement of safeguarding efforts which emphasises prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) and other forms of violence or harm. We abhor any misuse of power, status, or trusted position for any sexual or other exploitative purposes. We endeavour to tackle this root cause of abuse in our prevention and training efforts.

## 2. Scope

This Policy is focussed on protecting all children anywhere from harm caused by World Vision Ireland employees and affiliates and protecting adults from harm caused by World Vision Ireland employees or affiliates as part of World Vision Ireland programme presence. This Policy applies equally in emergency relief and development aid programmes.

### 3. Roles and Responsibilities

Child and adult safeguarding is a corporate and an individual responsibility. All World Vision Ireland staff, interns, volunteers, partners, contractors, and Board Members will be made familiar with the need for considering safeguarding in all that we do. Associations with anyone found to be engaging in abusive and exploitative relationships with children or adults will be broken.

#### Awareness

All World Vision Ireland employees, volunteers, interns, and Board Members sign an acknowledgement that they know, understand and will follow this Policy. Signed agreements are kept on file by World Vision Ireland's P&C department.

- **World Vision Ireland's CEO** has overall responsibility for ensuring that safeguarding procedures are in place and are followed. The CEO in, conjunction with Senior Management, will also give guidance on exceptions to policies and procedures designed to protect children and adult beneficiaries, including applications from sponsors to visit World Vision projects.
- **Line Managers** are responsible for identifying the specific risks that occur within their own teams and areas of responsibility and for taking advice from relevant experts, determining appropriate processes and procedures.
- **Everyone** within the organisation including World Vision Ireland staff, interns, volunteers, and Board Members are responsible for ensuring they and anyone under their supervision are aware of and follow the advice and guidance contained in the policy and procedures and that they identify and deal appropriately with safeguarding issues.
- **External parties**, such as contractors , engaged in situations where they—or their employees or subcontractors—may have access to children or adult beneficiaries in World Vision programmes, or may have access to personal data about such children or adult beneficiaries, require the safeguarding language below in their contract with World Vision Ireland. They must acknowledge in writing the receipt, understanding and compliance with the Safeguarding Behaviour Protocols and Contractor Agreement (as well as the Child Safe Digital Engagement Guidelines, if applicable). These requirements apply whether the Contractor is being paid for the services or is providing them for free ('pro bono'), and is irrespective of the duration of the contract.

'In the course of performing this contract, Contractor and Contractor's employees will ensure that:

- i. Any of their interactions with children or with adult beneficiaries, or with personal data about such persons, will comply with the attached World Vision Safeguarding Behaviour Protocols, and with any other reasonable safeguarding measures that World Vision may specify;
- ii. Any incidents of harm or risk of harm to children or to adult beneficiaries will be reported immediately to World Vision;
- iii. Any individuals with access to children or adult beneficiaries, or to personal data about such persons, will have a current clean criminal background check for offenses against children or abuse of adults, to the extent permitted by law (evidence of which will be provided to World Vision upon request); and
- iv. These safeguarding obligations will be clearly communicated to, and acknowledged by, all employees who may have access to children or to adult beneficiaries, or to

personal data about such persons, and will be extended in identical form to any subcontractors (if any are authorised) engaged to perform this contract.’

World Vision Ireland exercises diligence to assure the above contractual commitments are carried out.

- When engaging a **partner agency** for implementing a programme or activity on World Vision Ireland’s behalf or in collaboration with World Vision Ireland, the agreement (whether referred to as an ‘agreement’, ‘subgrant’, ‘Memorandum Of Understanding’, or any other term) specifies that before the Partner begins any work on the project, the Partner’s safeguarding policy and procedures must be provided to and approved as appropriate by World Vision Ireland for the programme at issue. Alternatively, the partner and their employees and volunteers implementing a programme or activity can agree to follow this Policy and acknowledge in writing the receipt, understanding, and compliance of World Vision Ireland’s Child and Adult Safeguarding Policy. The agreement must ensure that any of the Partner’s personnel working in the project, will have a current clean criminal background check for offenses against children or abuse of adults, to the extent permitted by law (evidence of which will be provided to World Vision Ireland upon request, where possible).

World Vision Ireland exercises diligence to assure the Partner is implementing the relevant safeguarding requirements.

## 4. Safer Recruitment

### Screening

- i. All prospective employees, volunteers, interns and Board Members will be informed of World Vision Ireland’s Child and Adult Safeguarding policy. Recruitment adverts must clearly state that applicants will be required to go through safeguarding vetting procedures and all applicants must be made aware of the disclosure process.
- ii. Safeguarding screening measures are applied to all candidates for employment, Board Members, volunteers, interns and individual contractors who will have access to children or adult beneficiaries, or to their personal data. During the interview process, applicants are asked about previous work with children and vulnerable adults. For references supplied by applicants, questions are asked regarding the suitability of the candidate to work with vulnerable adults and children, or for a child focused agency. Documentation relating to the receipt of references is kept on file.
- iii. People with a prior conviction for any crime against children or sexual exploitation or abuse against an adult are not hired or engaged by World Vision Ireland, to the extent permitted by law, and in any case will not be placed in a position with access to children or adult beneficiaries, or to their personal data.

### Identity and Background Checks

- i. All staff, Board Members, interns and volunteer applicants will need to satisfy the following in order to commence work within the organisation:
  - a. A full employment history verified, with any gaps in employment history explained and references taken up.
  - b. As required, relevant qualifications may be checked and verified.
  - c. In line with Garda Vetting, an ID check is completed which includes verification of photographic identification and proof of address.

- d. Answer questions that relate to safeguarding elements of their role and their previous work with children and vulnerable adults within the interview process.
- ii. All partner agencies or groups must ensure that no personnel for whom contact with children, adult beneficiaries, child or adult beneficiary images or data is inappropriate are assigned to work on World Vision projects. Partners should ensure that background and ID checks should be in place for employees working on World Vision Ireland projects with safeguarding screening taking place during the recruitment process.
- iii. All violations of this policy should be reported to World Vision Ireland's Safeguarding Focal Point including but not limited to suspicions of harm or abuse to a child or adult beneficiary involving a staff, volunteer, contractor, consultant, donor, sponsor, visitor, partner, Board Member, or other person formally affiliated with World Vision.
- iv. During employment (permanent, fixed term or probationary period) with World Vision Ireland, should an employee display unusual behaviour giving rise to concern, this should be investigated and reported to by the safeguarding focal point to World Vision International (WVI)'s Safeguarding Unit. In the case of Level 2 and Level 3 incidents, this should be reported within 24 hours of first notice. Response is implemented in collaboration with the WVI Safeguarding Unit (see Section 8).
- v. Volunteers with World Vision Ireland will be monitored by Line Managers to whom they are assigned to ensure that confidential information concerning sponsorship projects, sponsored children, etc is not misused. Where there are concerns managers should inform the safeguarding focal, who will investigate if a Level 1-3 incident level has occurred. The Safeguarding Focal point, will report to WV Ireland CEO and/or WVI's Safeguarding Unit, as required.
- vi. Any member of staff, volunteer, intern or Board Member travelling abroad for the first time, for whatever reason, will be interviewed by the Programmes Director, to ensure his or her suitability for the trip.

## Training

- i. All staff, volunteers, interns and Board Members will receive training about World Vision Ireland's Child and Adult Safeguarding Policy. They will be given a copy of this Policy and the relevant Line Manager is responsible for ensuring they have received and understood it. For staff, interns, volunteers and Board Members this must be within their first month of joining the organisation. No staff, intern, volunteer or Board Member will be allowed to travel to World Vision projects without completing their Safeguarding Training first. Basic Safeguarding training must be renewed every 2 years.
- ii. All staff, volunteers, interns, and Board Members involved in sponsor contact will be given training relating to:
  - security of information
  - procedure to report safeguarding incidents
  - cultural appropriate behaviour



## Safeguarding Staffing

World Vision Ireland has appointed a Safeguarding Focal Point (Clodagh McLoughlin, [clodagh.mcloughlin@wveu.org](mailto:clodagh.mcloughlin@wveu.org)) to provide leadership to the implementation of this Policy. Emergency responses which are declared a global response appoint their own Safeguarding Focal Point. The Focal Point has a mandate for direct access to the CEO, and to the WVI Safeguarding Director, should he/she feel that safeguarding issues are not being addressed adequately.

## 5. Safeguarding Behaviour Protocols

World Vision employees and affiliates behave in ways that protect children and adult beneficiaries, prevent sexual exploitation and abuse, and prevent any other intentional or unintentional harm to the people World Vision serves or works amongst. Rules of behaviour are based on local and culturally appropriate interactions (provided these meet or exceed the minimum protocols below) with children, members of the opposite sex, and other vulnerable adults. All World Vision Ireland employees and affiliates abide by these protocols in their activities with World Vision, for all children anywhere and for all adult beneficiaries.

### Acceptable Behaviour – World Vision employees and affiliates:

- i. create and maintain an environment which prevents sexual exploitation and abuse of children and adult beneficiaries and promotes the implementation of these Behaviour Protocols;
- ii. are careful about perception and appearance in their language, actions and relationships with children and vulnerable beneficiaries. Their behaviour—including in person and on digital platforms, both online and offline—demonstrates a respect for children and adult beneficiaries and their rights;
- iii. ensure that all physical and online contact with children and beneficiaries is appropriate in the local culture;
- iv. use positive, non-violent methods to manage children’s behaviour;
- v. accept responsibility for personal behaviour and actions as a representative of the organisation;
- vi. are always accountable for their response to a child’s behaviour, even if a child behaves in a sexually inappropriate manner; adults avoid being placed in a compromising or vulnerable position with children;
- vii. where possible and practical, follow the ‘two-adult’ rule while conducting World Vision work, wherein two or more adults supervise all activities that involve children, and are visible and present at all times;
- viii. comply with safeguarding related investigations (internal and external) and make available any documentary or other information necessary for the completion of the investigation;
- ix. comply with available data privacy laws and with relevant World Vision data privacy and information security policies, including World Vision digital child safeguarding protocols, when handling any personal data about individual children or adult beneficiaries, noting in general that collecting or using such data must be limited to the minimum necessary, and that such data must be maintained and transferred in a secure, confidential manner;
- x. immediately report through established reporting mechanisms any known or suspected safeguarding incident or breach of this Policy by a World Vision employee or affiliate, or a humanitarian aid worker from any other agency.

### Unacceptable Behaviour – World Vision employees and affiliates do not:

- i. behave in an inappropriate physical manner or develop a sexual relationship with a child (under 18 years old), regardless of the country specific legal age of consent or age of majority. This also includes consenting or condoning the above behaviour (including fostering or condoning child marriage (under 18 years old));

- ii. develop or seek a sexual relationship with any beneficiary of any age; such relationships are not acceptable and will not be tolerated since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of World Vision's humanitarian aid or development work;
- iii. sexually exploit or abuse any beneficiaries (adult or child); such behaviour constitutes an act of gross misconduct;
- iv. exchange money, employment, goods, or services for sex (including sexual favours, other forms of humiliating, degrading, or exploitative behaviour, or hiring sex workers) or other exploitative demands is strictly prohibited. This includes exchange of assistance that is already due to beneficiaries;
- v. fondle, hold, kiss, hug or touch children or adult beneficiaries in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way;
- vi. use language, make suggestions or offer advice to a child or adult beneficiary which is inappropriate or abusive, including language that causes shame or humiliation, or is belittling or degrading;
- vii. spend excessive or unnecessary time alone with a child or adult beneficiary, away from others or behind closed doors or in a secluded area;
- viii. condone or participate in behaviour with children or adult beneficiaries which is illegal, unsafe or abusive; including harmful traditional practices, spiritual or ritualistic abuse;
- ix. hire children in any form of child labour (including as "house help") unless it is within the best interest of the child and in alignment with local law and international standards ('Child labour' is work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children, or that interferes with their schooling. 'Child work' in contrast may be beneficial if permitted by International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions and puts the child's interests ahead of any benefits gained by adults<sup>3</sup>.);
- x. hit or use other corporal punishment against a child while the child is in World Vision care or the WV employee or affiliate is conducting World Vision work;<sup>4</sup>
- xi. take a child alone in a vehicle for World Vision work, unless it is absolutely necessary, and with parental/guardian and managerial consent;
- xii. misuse or be careless with personal data about individual children or adult beneficiaries;
- xiii. communicate with a child in World Vision's program areas via digital platforms (e.g. Facebook, Twitter), via mobile technology (e.g. texting, Whatsapp, Skype), or online without consent and knowledge of his/her parents. Further, World Vision employees or affiliates never communicate on mobile, digital or online platforms with children or adult beneficiaries in ways that are inappropriate or sexual;
- xiv. stay silent, cover up, or enable any known or suspected safeguarding incident or breach of Safeguarding Policy by a World Vision employee or affiliate.

Any World Vision affiliate not required to sign this policy must at minimum acknowledge in writing the receipt and understanding of these Safeguarding Behaviour Protocols.

### **Disciplinary Action**

Failure to follow these World Vision Safeguarding Behaviour Protocols, failure to follow any other part of this Policy, other inappropriate behaviour toward children or adult beneficiaries, or failing to report a known or suspected safeguarding incident committed by a World Vision employee or affiliate, is grounds for discipline, up to and including termination of the employment or other affiliation with World Vision.



## 6. Visits to World Vision Projects

Visitors subject to this Policy include people to a World Vision field programme or meeting with a World Vision beneficiary child(ren). This includes sponsors, donors and other delegations such as bloggers, celebrity supporters or journalists invited by World Vision. Government officials or institutional donors (government, multilateral) based in the hosting country do not require safeguarding clearance but are accompanied by a World Vision employee(s).

### Visit Preparation

Visits by all sponsors and private donors, and other international visitors are pre-approved by both World Vision Ireland and the field office. World Vision Ireland conducts police background checks on potential sponsor or donor visitors prior to any field visit. Unannounced visits to sponsored children or World Vision project communities are not permitted.

In order to screen and monitor visits, all guests must complete the following:

- i. Sign and commit that they have received, read and understood the World Vision Ireland Child and Adult Safeguarding Policy and are prepared to abide by it.
- ii. Provide a photocopy of their current passport.
- iii. Complete a telephone, video call or face-to-face interview with the Programmes Director.
- iv. Complete Garda Vetting procedure.

### Visitor Orientation to Safeguarding

The following requirements apply to visitors who visit a project or who have direct contact with community members in World Vision programme areas:

Visitors from other World Vision offices who are employees or Board Members:

- i. The field office provides a brief orientation to any distinctive Safeguarding Behaviour Protocols that apply in that context, as well as local customs regarding adult interaction with children.

Visitors who are not World Vision employees or Board Members:

- ii. All such visitors are briefed on World Vision's Safeguarding Behaviour Protocol and Prevention of Harm in Communications prior to the visit.
- iii. Upon arrival, visitors receive a brief written or oral orientation and sign acknowledgement of receipt of the protocols. The signed acknowledgement is kept on file by the field office.
- iv. Non-employee or Board visitors are accompanied by a World Vision employee when visiting projects.

### Additional Considerations for Visits

- i. Parents/guardians of minors who are travelling with guests are responsible for ensuring information regarding World Vision Ireland's Child and Adult Safeguarding Policy is conveyed to the minor in an age appropriate manner.
- ii. If a guest chooses not to comply with the requirement to complete this screening, the visit will be cancelled. The relevant National Office staff will be informed if World Vision Ireland has any suspicions about a guest wishing to visit their country through World Vision Ireland. World Vision Ireland also reserves the right to take additional action, which may include terminating the sponsorship arrangement and sharing information with other agencies as appropriate.
- iii. For in situ journalists, who either make contact with World Vision Ireland from a field context, or in an information context with a member of the communications team while they are travelling, enough information must be captured relating to the journalist so that if a concern is later raised, this can be reported effectively. The staff member must log the

journalist's name, contact details and then either a valid passport number or date of birth and current address/employer details. The individual whose data is recorded must be informed and consent to this procedure – failure to consent would limit access to WV projects and information.

- iv. Sponsors should only be allowed to visit our projects every two years to ensure the relationship between the sponsored child and their family and community is maintained at an appropriate level. Sponsors will need to complete the screening process including background check prior to each visit.
- v. Other guests may travel more regularly providing travel is approved by the Programmes Director and CEO.

## **7. Communications, Social Media and Digital Technology**

### **Dignity**

World Vision Ireland takes care to ensure local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images are adhered to before photographing or filming a subject, and World Vision Ireland is committed to ensuring images are honest representations of the context and the facts. In all forms of communication, children and adult beneficiaries are treated and portrayed with dignity and not as helpless victims or in sexually suggestive poses.

### **Consent**

Children or adult beneficiaries who are primary subjects of text, photo and/or video resource gathering by World Vision Ireland employees must provide informed consent. Informed consent means the subject has a general understanding of the purpose of the reporting or photography and gives verbal or written permission thereof. If the primary subject is a child, written consent is also collected from the parent, guardian, or other legally required entity or individual. In the following situations, written consent is collected from the child (as appropriate for age) or adult beneficiary:

- i. a child/adult beneficiary could be personally identified or
- ii. the sensitive nature of their personal disclosure or situation could possibly cause damage
- iii. to their privacy, dignity, safety or reputation, or
- iv. where otherwise required by applicable law.

### **Digital Awareness**

World Vision is committed to actively supporting Registered Children and their parents/caregivers—as well as any children participating in World Vision organised Information and Communication Technology (ICT) activities—to understand how to safely and appropriately utilise social media and digital technology, while avoiding risks and appropriately responding to threats or incidents.

### **Prevention of Harm in Communications**

World Vision Ireland is committed to storytelling that raises awareness of and promotes solutions to ending violence and abuse against children and adult beneficiaries. World Vision Ireland takes the following steps to prevent harm through communications, social media and digital technology (including photographs/videos/audio clips, stories, articles, or any other communication materials):

- i. Personal child and adult beneficiary information that is captured, stored or sent through electronic, on-line or mobile devices is password protected. In addition, data is handled in

accordance with World Vision Ireland's current information security standards for personal data, which may include encryption and other requirements.

- ii. Wherever possible, measures are taken to prevent electronic copying of photographs without World Vision Ireland's permission (utilising digital water-marking and right-click disable functions in accordance with the World Vision Partnership Minimum Standards for Internet Presence).
- iii. Recognising the special vulnerability of children, material posted on social media or digital technology does not contain a child's family name, sponsorship ID number, or child's personal location/address.
- iv. Material with a child or children is not geo-tagged to precise locations if it contains any part of the child's name.
- v. World Vision Ireland discourages direct, unfacilitated, undocumented communication through social media without World Vision Ireland's knowledge between: a sponsor/donor/visitor and registered/non-registered children and between employees/volunteers/other World Vision affiliates and registered/non-registered children.
- vi. World Vision Ireland provides reporting and response options so that sponsors, donors, visitors, children or their caregivers can report any incident(s) where either party feels uncomfortable or threatened.
- vii. Sponsorship welcome kits, World Vision Ireland websites, domains and social media platform profile pages contain reporting options for child protection concerns or incidents.

## **Reporting Communications, Social Media and Digital Technology Policy Violations**

All violations of this policy should be reported to the Safeguarding Focal Point, Regional Safeguarding focal point or WVI Safeguarding Director. Responses are based on the magnitude of risk and its severity to children or adult beneficiaries.

## **8. Safeguarding Incidents and Response Protocols**

### **Responding to Child Protection Incidents**

World Vision Ireland will investigate and respond to reports of abuse to children and adult beneficiaries in World Vision Ireland programmes in ways which are consistent with local law. World Vision uses a three-tiered system to determine World Vision's response, which is based on World Vision's potential responsibility and risk of liability.

### **Level 1 Child Protection Community Incidents:**

Abuse of or harm to a child, in a community where World Vision has programme operations and that is *not* committed by World Vision employees or affiliates, is a Level 1 Incident. Field offices report Level 1 Incidents to the WVI Safeguarding Unit in cases of serious harm that threaten the child victim's survival, safety or development. Field Offices and Support Offices with domestic programming include in their Safeguarding Incident Preparedness Plans specific and practical guidance on responsibilities, actions and limits which are consistent with local law, for local team responses to Level 1 incidents.

### **Level 2 Safeguarding Incidents:**

Level 2 Incidents are defined as any violation of this Policy which puts children or adult beneficiaries in direct risk of potential harm, but where no actual harm is believed to have occurred. World Vision entities reports Level 2 Incidents to WVI Safeguarding within 24 hours of first notice. Response is implemented by the national entity with oversight by and accountability to the WVI Safeguarding Director and support from the Regional Safeguarding focal point.

### Level 3 Safeguarding Incidents:

A Level 3 Incident is an allegation or accusation of harm or abuse to a child or adult beneficiary by a World Vision employee or affiliate. If a child is involved, two additional types of incidents qualify: death or serious injury of a child while participating in or at a World Vision activity or caused directly by a World Vision-related person, and/or a road traffic accident involving a World Vision vehicle or driver affiliated with World Vision in which a child is injured or killed. World Vision entities reports actual or alleged Level 3 Incidents to WVI Safeguarding within 24 hours of first notice. Response is implemented by the national entity with oversight by and accountability to the WVI Safeguarding Director and support from the Regional Safeguarding focal point. Where mandated by applicable law, grant requirements, or agreements with WVI, World Vision Ireland is informed immediately in coordination with WVI Legal.

### Reporting

All World Vision Ireland employees and affiliates are responsible and obligated to report any suspicions of child or adult beneficiary abuse (or other safeguarding concerns, including any violations of this Policy) that is connected to World Vision Ireland or its programmes.

In addition, any credible concern or suspicion of sexual abuse or exploitation by a humanitarian aid worker outside World Vision is immediately reported. Where interagency mechanisms are established, these are utilised to report the incident, in consultation with the World Vision Safeguarding Focal Point for the Field Office or Global Response.

### Procedures for reporting concerns of abuse or suspected abuse

- i. Any individual knowing or suspecting that these protocols or regulations are being broken are obliged to report that behaviour to the Safeguarding Focal Point (Clodagh McLoughlin, [clodagh.mcloughlin@wveu.org](mailto:clodagh.mcloughlin@wveu.org)) or the CEO (Niall McLoughlin, [niall.mcloughlin@wveu.org](mailto:niall.mcloughlin@wveu.org)). On being informed of an incident, the Safeguarding Focal Point and/or CEO will assess the risk according to stated World Vision International (WVI) thresholds described above and inform the WVI's Safeguarding Unit (with a copy to the WVI Legal department) as appropriate.
- ii. If the individual feels unable to disclose directly, or there is a concern over the conduct of the Safeguarding Focal Point or CEO, they can contact their line manager, or the World Vision 'whistleblower' hotline which is anonymous: <http://worldvision.ethicspoint.com>
- iii. Where the incident concerned implicates a supporter (sponsor, donor, ambassador) or non-World Vision Ireland staff or affiliate, the incident will be internally investigated, documented and passed on to the appropriate authorities to follow up.
- iv. Should World Vision Ireland identify or suspect a supporter requesting a visit to be a sex offender, permission for the visit will be cancelled or refused. Details will be forward to the relevant national office in case the guest attempts to visit the child independently. Details will also be shared with the appropriate authorities.
- v. Should a national office identify a case of actual or suspected abuse by a visiting guest or World Vision Ireland staff member, this should be reported as a matter of urgency to the World Vision Ireland Safeguarding Focal Point in as much detail as possible. This action is in addition to following local reporting procedures for criminal offences against children and adults and as a minimum must include removing the child/children/adult from danger and alerting local police authorities.

- vi. In line with the World Vision Ireland Whistleblowing Policy, staff will not be disciplined or dismissed for reporting suspicious behaviour even if those suspicions are not found to be justified so long as those reports are truthful and reported in good faith.
- vii. If there are any suspicions of actual or potential abuse, World Vision Ireland reserves the right to notify appropriate authorities including the Garda Síochána, and other sponsorship agencies. The World Vision Ireland safeguarding Focal Point will contact the relevant authorities within Ireland.
- viii. Information relating to concerns is shared on a 'right' and 'need to know' basis as deemed necessary by appropriate management. All information concerning the incident and investigation is documented confidentially in writing held by the safeguarding focal point.
- ix. If internally investigating a concern may compromise later criminal investigations, the matter will be passed onto the relevant authority for investigation immediately and WV will work with that authority to bring a conclusion.
- x. Abuse of a child or adult beneficiary is considered gross misconduct; an employee accused of child or adult beneficiary abuse will be temporarily suspended during the course of the investigation. The employee will be informed of the charges that have been made against him or her and given an opportunity to respond. At the conclusion of the investigation, the employee should be informed of the results of the investigation and what corrective action, will be taken.
- xi. For serious or unusual cases, a learning review will be undertaken to enable World Vision Ireland to learn from practical experiences, improve practice and to identify training needs.

## Disclosure

Whilst World Vision Ireland maintains appropriate confidentiality for individuals in Safeguarding Incidents, World Vision Ireland may disclose information about incidents, when lawfully permitted, in order to support prosecution of suspected criminal activity, meet donor and regulatory requirements, support learning and accountability, advocate to prevent future incidents, or as required by law.

Information in ongoing investigations of Safeguarding Incidents, and information about past incidents, is shared only with those on a 'need-to-know' basis, as deemed necessary by the national office or regional office or WVI Safeguarding Unit. If it is likely that sensitive information about survivors or about violence against children or adults will not be kept confidential and would put people at risk if accessed by unauthorised parties, such information is not collected.

## Reporting to Authorities

World Vision Ireland shall evaluate reporting safeguarding violations to appropriate legal authorities, assessing any legal obligations to report, as well as the interests of the survivor(s). Generally, reports are made, unless a report is judged likely to cause greater harm to existing victims or potential future victims.

# 9. Programming considerations for safeguarding

## Safeguarding Essentials in Programming

In all programmes, World Vision Ireland seeks to do no harm to children or adult beneficiaries, to keep the interests of community members—especially children—at the centre of our activities, and to utilise opportunities to help children be safer within their families and communities. World Vision Ireland is committed to ensuring consideration is taken during programme design of local child protection threats and issues and influencing local actors and groups to be safer organisations for

children and adult beneficiaries. In emergency programme designs, World Vision Ireland is committed to ensuring humanitarian protection threats are considered in addition to child protection threats.

### **Community Feedback and Complaints Mechanisms**

World Vision Ireland seeks to ensure that children, parents, and other adults are aware of established complaint mechanisms in World Vision Ireland projects and their right to be safe from abuse and exploitation. World Vision Ireland strives to ensure that every community-based programme:

- i. works with children and adults in the community to help them recognise inappropriate conduct by World Vision employees or affiliates, and to develop safe and contextually appropriate community feedback mechanisms by which community members can report both general suggestions and any serious incidents of misconduct by World Vision employees or affiliates.
- ii. provides information on how to report child abuse, sexual exploitation and abuse, or other breaches of Behaviour Protocols by World Vision employees or affiliates.

### **Institutionalisation and Adoption**

World Vision Ireland does not facilitate the adoption of children or support programming within long term institutions in ways that perpetuate the institutionalisation of children.

## **10. Sponsorship**

### **Prevention of Harm in Sponsorship**

At World Vision Ireland sponsorship is implemented in a manner that keeps the safety of children as the top priority. This includes the review of all sponsor correspondence, supporting training of staff and child monitors to recognise and respond to abuse, constructive interaction with parents and children, implementation of child protection programming interventions, the secure handling and storage of personal information, and gathering only the minimum elements of personal information necessary for the programme.

### **Responding to Abuse**

World Vision Ireland is committed to ensuring that sponsorship child monitors promote appropriate follow-up action or referrals if child safeguarding needs are observed or reported, as stipulated in national Safeguarding Incident Preparedness Plans and consistent with local law.

## **11. Safe Child Participation**

### **Prevention of Harm in Child Participation**

World Vision Ireland works to empower children as citizens and participants in their own well-being, and to minimise any risk of harm or negative consequence resulting from participation in activities promoted by World Vision. World Vision Ireland's is committed to ensuring that:

- i. child participation programmes and activities are based on context analysis with clearly identified needs and expected results, along with how the project will measure progress towards achievement while mitigating risks through risk assessments.
- ii. child participation activities are designed and implemented to adhere to principles and ethics which keep the best interests of children as the top priority.



- iii. child participation activities are voluntary and inclusive (especially of the most vulnerable children), and both children and parents/caregivers make informed decisions regarding participation, including due consideration of the benefits and risks that could be associated with the activity.

### **Child Travel**

When it is in the best interests of children, World Vision sometimes helps children travel to events, activities or other opportunities. In such cases the parents or caregivers, or other legally required entity or individual, give informed consent prior to the travel. The child's health, safety, well-being, and meaningful participation are the most important priorities during travel supported by World Vision. World Vision does not facilitate visits of children outside of their country to their sponsor.

Should World Vision Ireland be required to support child travel, it must first receive the approval of the Programmes Director, Chief Executive and safeguarding focal point.

## Definitions

- **Beneficiary:** In regard to safeguarding, World Vision uses a broad, working definition of 'beneficiary' to include not only direct beneficiaries of a particular project, but also any child or adult who might suffer harm caused by World Vision employees or affiliates as part of World Vision programme presence.
- **Child:** Anyone under the age of 18 in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This Policy covers all children anywhere (not only beneficiaries).
- **Child protection:** All measures taken to prevent and respond to abuse, neglect, exploitation and all other forms of violence against children.
- **Contractor:** World Vision Ireland regularly contracts with non-employee individuals and organisations to perform services for World Vision Ireland. These non-employee individuals and organisations may also be referred to as 'independent contractors', 'consultants,' or 'vendors', and are referred to in this document as 'Contractors'. Contractors are distinguished from organisations with which World Vision Ireland partners to carry out programme activity (including subgrantees). See *Partner, below*.
- **Partner:** A partner organisation, for safeguarding purposes, is a Non-Governmental Organisation, Community-Based Organisation, for-profit enterprise, or other entity implementing a programme or activity on World Vision Ireland's behalf or in collaboration with World Vision Ireland, and which has a written agreement with World Vision Ireland. The partner may or may not receive funding from World Vision Ireland.
- **Safeguarding:** Preventing, reporting, and responding to harm or abuse of adult beneficiaries and any children by World Vision staff and affiliates. Externally to World Vision, there is often no distinction made between child and adult safeguarding.
  - **Child safeguarding:** Preventing, reporting, and responding to harm, abuse or exploitation of any child (< age 18) by a World Vision employee or affiliate. This Policy also requires reporting/ referring child abuse cases affecting any child in World Vision programmes, even if not committed by World Vision employees or affiliates.
  - **Adult safeguarding:** Preventing, reporting, and responding to harm, abuse or exploitation of an adult beneficiary (age 18+) by a World Vision employee or affiliate. Includes Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), a frequently cited subset of safeguarding.
  - **Safeguarding incident:** See Section 8.
- **Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA):** 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. The term "sexual abuse" means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.
  - **Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA):** A term used by the United Nations and International Non-Governmental Organisation community to refer to measures taken to protect vulnerable people from sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian aid workers.

**Volunteer:** A person who is neither employed by World Vision nor legally obliged to work for World Vision, but who on free will and without expectation of payment or other remuneration, contributes their time, skill, knowledge, efforts and expertise to World Vision's work. 'Volunteer' includes a 'business volunteer' in a World Vision office or affiliate; a 'supporter volunteer' without physical contact with sponsored children or their records; 'community volunteer' who volunteers on behalf of their community to fulfil the community's responsibilities in an ongoing World Vision project; and volunteers or 'incentive workers' from groups or communities targeted for

humanitarian assistance. All categories of volunteers are subject to applicable Safeguarding Management Policy, *except* community volunteers for whom the following apply:

- i. The community volunteer does not have physical contact with sponsored children or their records as part of their volunteer activities; AND
- ii. Beyond basic training, World Vision does not specify how to complete the relevant activities; AND
- iii. The community does not perceive or consider this person as ‘part of World Vision’s work’ due to their volunteer activities, and if they were to harm a child or adult, would not be expected to hold World Vision responsible.

**World Vision employees and affiliates:** Refers to the full range of people accountable to World Vision Ireland’s Safeguarding policies and protocols, including all employees, interns, volunteers, and Board Members, as well as external parties, including visitors, community volunteers, contractors, partners, and others affiliated with partners or contractors.