



**World Vision Ireland's Child and Adult Safeguarding Policy 2022
Amendments made to 2019 Safeguarding policy**

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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 2022

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 any child or any adults living where World Vision Ireland has a programming presence is one which World Vision Ireland takes seriously and is committed to working to prevent. This Policy seeks to reduce risk to any child or any adults living where World Vision Ireland has a programming presence.

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 adults living where World Vision has a programming presence.

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 any child or any adults living where World Vision Ireland has a programming presence, 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 centered on the child or adult survivor and put their interests first.

Scope

This Policy is focused 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. We ensure that staff may have "Do Not Rehire" put on their personnel file for safeguarding violations. Contractors or vendors may have "Do Not Reengage" put on their file to ensure they are not reemployed within the organisation or humanitarian field.

Roles and Responsibilities

Child and adult safeguarding are 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 adults living where World Vision has a programming presence, 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 is 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 any child anywhere 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:

1. Any of their interactions with children or with adults living where World Vision has a programming presence, 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.
2. Any incidents of harm or risk of harm to children or to adults living where World Vision has a programming presence will be reported immediately to World Vision.
3. Any individuals with access to children or adults living where world vision has a programming presence, 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
4. These safeguarding obligations will be clearly communicated to, and acknowledged by, all employees who may have access to any child or any adults living where World Vision Ireland has a programming presence, 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.

Behaviour Protocols

World Vision employees and affiliates behave in ways that protect any child or any adults living where World Vision Ireland has a programming presence, 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 meets 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:

1. create and maintain an environment which prevents sexual exploitation and abuse of children and adults living where World Vision has a programming presence and promotes the implementation of these Behaviour Protocols.
2. are careful about perception and appearance in their language, actions and relationships with children and the community with whom World Vision works. Their behaviour—including in person and on digital platforms, both online and offline—demonstrates a respect for children and adult beneficiaries and their rights.
3. ensure that all physical and online contact with a child and any child anywhere is appropriate in the local culture.
4. use positive, non-violent methods to manage children's behaviour.
5. accept responsibility for personal behaviour and actions as a representative of the organisation.
6. 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.
7. 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 always visible and present.
8. comply with safeguarding related investigations (internal and external) and make available any documentary or other information necessary for the completion of the investigation.
9. 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 any child or any adults living where World Vision Ireland has a programming presence, 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.
10. 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**:

1. 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)).
2. 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.

3. sexually exploit or abuse any child or any adults living where World Vision Ireland has a programming presence; such behaviour constitutes an act of gross misconduct.
4. exchange money, employment, goods, or services for sex (including sexual favors, 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.
5. fondle, hold, kiss, hug or touch children or adults living where World Vision has a programming presence in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way.
6. use language, make suggestions, or offer advice to any child or any adults living where World Vision Ireland has a programming presence which is inappropriate or abusive, including language that causes shame or humiliation, or is belittling or degrading.
7. spend excessive or unnecessary time alone with any child or any adults living where World Vision Ireland has a programming presence, away from others or behind closed doors or in a secluded area.
8. condone or participate in behaviour with any child or any adults living where World Vision Ireland has a programming presence which is illegal, unsafe, or abusive, including harmful traditional practices, spiritual or ritualistic abuse.
9. 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 adults³).
10. 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,⁴
11. take a child alone in a vehicle for World Vision work, unless it is absolutely necessary, and with parental/guardian and managerial consent.
12. misuse or be careless with personal data about any child or any adults living where World Vision Ireland has a programming presence.
13. 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 any child or any adults living where World Vision Ireland has a programming presence in ways that are inappropriate or sexual.
14. 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 any child or any adults living where World Vision Ireland has a programming presence 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.

Individuals who have been found to have breached this policy may have “Do Not Rehire” placed on their personnel file. Partners and Contractors may have “Do Not Re-engage” placed on their file, based on the nature of the case.

Safer Recruitment

Screening

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.

Safeguarding screening measures are applied to all candidates for employment, Board Members, volunteers, interns,

and individual contractors who will have access to any child or any adults living where World Vision Ireland has a programming presence, 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.

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 adults living where World Vision has a programming presence, or to their personal data.

Identity and Background Checks

All staff, Board Members, interns, and volunteer applicants will need to satisfy the following in order to commence work within the organisation:

A full employment history verified, with any gaps in employment history explained and references taken up.

As required, relevant qualifications may be checked and verified.

In line with Garda Vetting, an ID check is completed which includes verification of photographic identification and proof of address.

Answer questions that relate to safeguarding elements of their role and their previous work with children and vulnerable adults within the interview process.

All partner agencies or groups must ensure that no personnel for whom contact with any child or any adults living where World Vision Ireland has a programming presence, 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.

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 any child or any adults living where World Vision Ireland has a programming presence involving a staff, volunteer, contractor, consultant, donor, sponsor, visitor, partner, Board Member, or other person formally affiliated with World Vision.

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).

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.

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.

Visits to World Vision Projects

Visitors subject to this Policy include people to a World Vision field programme or meeting with a World Vision 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:

1. 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.
2. Provide a photocopy of their current passport.
3. Complete a telephone, video call or face-to-face interview with the Programmes Director.
4. 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:

1. Visitors from other World Vision offices who are employees or Board Members:
2. 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.
3. Visitors who are not World Vision employees or Board Members:
4. All such visitors are briefed on World Vision's Safeguarding Behaviour Protocol and Prevention of Harm in Communications prior to the visit.
5. 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.
6. Non-employee or Board visitors are accompanied by a World Vision employee when visiting projects.

Additional Considerations for Visits

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. Other guests may travel more regularly providing travel is approved by the Programmes Director and CEO.

Communications, Social Media and Digital Technology

Dignity

World Vision Ireland takes care to ensure cultural sensitivity and restrictions for reproducing personal images are adhered to before photographing or filming a subject, and WV ensures images are honest representations of the context and the facts. In all forms of communication, children and adults are treated and portrayed with dignity and not as helpless victims or in sexually suggestive poses.

Consent

Children and adults who are primary subjects of text, photo, video, audio and/or data gathered on behalf of World Vision Ireland must provide informed consent and have the right to withdraw their consent at any time for any reason. World Vision Ireland must be able to demonstrate that informed consent has been given and have systems in place that allow World Vision Ireland to show that a request to withdraw consent has been respected.

Informed consent means the subject has a general understanding of the purpose of the content and gives verbal or written permission thereof. If the primary subject is a child, informed consent is also collected from the parent, guardian, or other legally required entity or individual.

In the following situations, verbal consent is not acceptable and written consent is collected from the adult or the child's legal guardian:

1. the sensitive nature of their personal disclosure or situation could possibly cause damage to their privacy, dignity, safety, or reputation, or
2. where otherwise required by applicable law

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 adults. World Vision Ireland takes the following steps to prevent harm through communications, content gathering and marketing (including digital or offline photographs/videos/audio clips, stories, articles, or any other communication materials):

1. Personal information on children and adults 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.
2. World Vision Ireland ensures that relevant requirements for safeguarding are clearly communicated to all staff, sponsors, vendors, and partners at the point of access to photographs, videos or data, and that appropriate measure are taken for child-safe usage of the content once it has been shared.
3. Recognising the special vulnerability of children, material posted on social media or digital channels mention's only the child's first name and country name, and does not contain a child's family name, sponsorship ID number, or child's personal location/address. In cases of sensitive subjects such as unaccompanied children or child sex workers among others, World Vision Ireland conceals the child's identity in images and uses a pseudonym.
4. Material with a child or children is not geo-tagged to precise locations if it contains any part of the child's name. An acceptable alternative is to retag photos with the child's first name only to the Area Programme or project office location.
5. World Vision Ireland discourages direct, unfacilitated, undocumented communication through social media without World Vision Ireland's knowledge between a sponsor/donor/visitor and registered/nonregistered children and between employees/volunteers/other World Vision Ireland affiliates and registered/non-registered children.
6. Where World Vision Ireland facilitates communication between children and external parties, controls are put in place to protect children's safety and well-being.
7. 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. Sponsorship welcome kits, World Vision Ireland websites, domains and social media

platform profile pages contain reporting options for child protection concerns or safeguarding incidents.

8. Use of platforms to share marketing or communications content with no ability to track back evidence of informed consent and/or platforms that lack the ability to withdraw consent is forbidden. Only platforms that have been vetted by global or local WV IT are permitted for sharing content between offices or with donors/external parties. (e.g., Horizon, RMT, Story Hub, etc.)

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 any child or adults living where World Vision has a programming presence.

Safeguarding Incidents and Response Protocols

Responding to Safeguarding Incidents

World Vision Ireland will investigate and respond to reports of abuse to any child or adults living where World Vision has a programming presence 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 adults living where World Vision has a programming presence 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 living where World Vision has a programming presence 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 Incidents:

All World Vision Ireland employees and affiliates are responsible and obligated to report any suspicions of Level 2 or Level 3 incidents as soon as it is discovered. As stated earlier, failure to report by one of the mechanisms below is breach of this policy and is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of

employment.

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 Lead/Focal Point for the Field Office or Disaster Management Response.

Reports can be made by World Vision Ireland employees or affiliates in the following ways:

1. At World Vision Ireland any individual knowing or suspecting that these protocols or regulations are being broken are obliged to report that behaviour to the Safeguarding Investigations Focal Point our Head of HR or the CEO.
2. Contact Field/Support office or MFI Safeguarding Focal Point (who then reports on IIM system).
3. Contact Regional Safeguarding focal point (who then reports on IIM system).
4. Contact WVI Safeguarding Unit by email at safeguarding@wvi.org
5. Staff can use Incident Reporting form in WV's Integrated Incident Management (IIM) system: www.worldvisionincidentreport.ethicspoint.com

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>

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Abuse of any child or adults living where World Vision has a programming presence 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.

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.

No Retaliation for Reporting:

World Vision does not tolerate any harassment, retaliation, or adverse action whatsoever by any employee, director, contractor, or other affiliate as a result of any safeguarding report provided in good faith to World Vision, law enforcement or other recognised reporting mechanism.

- a. No employee shall be adversely affected because they refuse to carry out a directive that could reasonably be construed as likely to create abuse or neglect of a child or an adult programme participant.
- b. If an employee believes that they are being retaliated against, the employee should immediately contact People and Culture or report it through the Whistle-blower hotline.

Anyone who retaliates against an employee for making a good faith report will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. WV's commitment to antiretaliation does not prevent a reporter from appropriate disciplinary action if they are found to have engaged in unethical behaviour or misconduct.

Safeguarding Investigations:

Safeguarding investigations meet minimum standards and follow the core principles of investigating allegations of harm, exploitation, or abuse to any child &/or adult living where World Vision has a programming presence: thoroughness, confidentiality, safety, competent investigators, impartiality, objectivity, timeliness, accuracy, and documentation.

- a. Investigations follow a survivor-centred approach and investigators conduct the process in accordance with sector best practice to prevent further harm to the survivor. World Vision prioritises the safety, physical and psychological health and welfare of all survivors while upholding and promoting their rights of confidentiality, equality, and access to justice.
- b. World Vision may deploy internally trained investigators or retain the services of an external investigator to manage an incident. Oversight of investigations takes place according to the protocols of the incident level.

Notification of Safeguarding Incidents

The WVI Safeguarding Unit informs Support Offices and Multilateral donors of safeguarding incidents according to contractual obligations and regulatory requirements. Additionally, Support Offices may be notified if an incident has potential reputational issues.

1. The WVI Safeguarding Unit can provide a copy to the field office for the purpose of notifying local donor offices if appropriate.
2. In line with the principle of "need to know", no identifying information on survivors, witnesses or subjects of complaint are shared in these notifications.
3. Only basic information is provided to a) ensure the privacy and safety of those involved in the incident and b) provide assurances that World Vision is appropriately managing the case.
4. Support Offices notify their national donors according to contractual/regulatory requirements using the information provided by the WVI Safeguarding Unit's notification.

All WV employees and affiliates are responsible and obligated to report any suspicion of Level 2 or Level 3 incidents as soon as it is discovered. As stated in section 2.2.3(d), failure to report by one of the mechanisms below is breach of this Policy and is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

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

Reports can be made by WV employees or affiliates in the following ways:

1. Report to line manager or P&C manager Contact Field/Support office or MFI Safeguarding Focal Point (who then reports on IIM system)
2. Contact Regional Safeguarding focal point (who then reports on IIM system)
3. Contact WVI Safeguarding Unit by email at safeguarding@wvi.org
4. Staff can use Incident Reporting form in WV's Integrated Incident Management (IIM) system: www.worldvisionincidentreport.ethicspoint.com
5. If the above options are not available or appropriate for whatever reason: Use WV Integrity and Protection Hotline (also known as Whistle-blower Hotline): Phone numbers and online reporting options available at <http://worldvision.ethicspoint.com>.

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.

No Retaliation for Reporting:

World Vision does not tolerate any harassment, retaliation, or adverse action whatsoever by any employee, director, contractor, or other affiliate as a result of any safeguarding report provided in good faith to World Vision, law enforcement or other recognised reporting mechanism.

1. No employee shall be adversely affected because they refuse to carry out a directive that could reasonably be construed as likely to create abuse or neglect of a child or an adult programme participant.
2. If an employee believes that they are being retaliated against, the employee should immediately contact People and Culture or report it through the Whistle-blower hotline.
3. Anyone who retaliates against an employee for making a good faith report will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. WV's commitment to antiretaliation does not prevent a reporter from appropriate disciplinary action if they are found to have engaged in unethical behaviour or misconduct.

Online safety in programme activities:

WV actively supports Registered Children (RCs) and their parents/caregivers—as well as any children participating in WV-organised digital activities—to understand how to utilise social media and digital technology safely and appropriately, while avoiding risks and appropriately responding to threats or incidents.

Institutionalisation and Adoption:

As a Christian organisation, World Vision values the family as the primary social unit and basis of civil society. Children grow and thrive best in a family-based environment, not in institutional care.

1. WV therefore does not support programming within long-term institutions in ways that perpetuate the institutionalisation of children. World Vision supports community-based care options for children which allow the child to remain with family members. If remaining with the family is not in the best interests of the child, WV supports the family, community, and local authorities to find community-based solutions. WV does not facilitate the adoption of children.
2. Short-term or interim care is sometimes needed for girls and boys to ensure their protection whilst longer-term community care is arranged. For example, short-term care may be appropriate for girls and boys who have been seriously abused or trafficked, have been associated with fighting forces, in conflict with the law, or living on the streets. World Vision only supports interim care facilities that are family-like in their design. An interim care facility is not always needed: safe community care options are preferred if they are available.
3. World Vision responds to risks and situations of children deprived of parental care by strengthening families to care for children, reducing risk of separation from their immediate and extended family, strengthening systems that provide alternative community-based options to institutionalisation, and supporting transition and deinstitutionalisation processes.

Humanitarian Responses:

Because of the special vulnerability of children and adults during humanitarian responses, safeguarding measures take on additional importance. Category 3 Responses must meet the standards outlined in this Policy in addition to other industry standards.

1. Humanitarian protection and child protection are anticipated and planned for in programme designs, ensuring that World Vision does not expose programme participants to greater harm through participation.
2. All Category 3 Responses must complete a safeguarding self-assessment.
3. All Category 3 Responses must have an assigned Safeguarding Focal Point who has direct access to response management and who has responsibilities as expressed in this Policy.
4. Some aspects of this Policy may be addressed through accepted industry mechanisms, such as the cluster system or PSEA network.

Programming considerations for safeguarding

Safeguarding Essentials in Programming

In all programmes, World Vision Ireland seeks to do no harm to any child or adults living where World Vision has a programming presence, to keep the interests of community members—especially children—at the center 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 any child and adults living where World Vision has a programming presence. 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:

1. 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.
2. 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.

Sponsorship

Prevention of Harm in Sponsorship:

Because of the close relationship built between World Vision employees and affiliates, especially volunteers, with registered children and their families, unique safeguarding considerations must be put in place to reduce risk of abuse and exploitation. The Child Sponsorship Standards outline this behaviour. Sponsorship is implemented in a manner that keeps the safety of children as the top priority. This includes:

1. The facilitation and review of all sponsor correspondence and all other types of connection, such as videos, between the sponsor and child to ensure appropriate interaction and safety of all parties.
2. Training of staff and child monitors to recognise and respond to abuse, including linking child monitors to the local Child Protection Committee and/or Child Protection Reporting and Referral Mechanism.
3. Constructive and respectful interaction with parents and children.
4. The secure handling and storage of personal information.
5. Gathering only the minimum elements of personal information necessary for the programme.

As stated in above, WV actively supports Registered Children (RCs) and their parents/caregivers—as well as any children participating in WV-organised digital activities—to understand how to utilise social media and digital technology safely and appropriately, while avoiding risks and appropriately responding to threats or incidents.

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.

Child Protection Minimum Standards:

All Area Programmes with child sponsorship ensure the following minimum package of Child Protection Minimum Requirements (interventions) are included in their programming:

1. Conducting a child protection context analysis to understand and address the community child protection issues and their root causes.
2. Supporting or strengthening community-based reporting and referral mechanisms that enable boys and girls, caregivers, and other community members to report child protection violations with confidence and receive help in addressing them.
3. All adolescent RCs (aged 12 to 18) are directly participating in interventions that strengthen their well-being. Interventions that strengthen life skills and protective skills are prioritised and used to the extent that it is feasible.

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.

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:

1. 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.
2. child participation activities are designed and implemented to adhere to principles and ethics which keep the best interests of children as the top priority.
3. 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.

Board and Advisory Council Safeguarding Governance

1. **Accountability:** National Boards and Advisory Councils hold World Vision offices accountable to fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities as outlined in the Board-level Partnership Policy for Child and Adult Safeguarding as well as the Partnership Management Policy for Child and Adult Safeguarding.
2. **Risk appetite:** Boards and Advisory Councils ensure that local risk appetite statements for Child and Adult Safeguarding set the risk area/category as Risk Averse.
3. **Committee oversight:** The Board/AC mandates one of its committees to provide oversight (or in the case of an Advisory Council committee, advice) to safeguarding. Given the heightened level of importance of safeguarding oversight, the full Board/AC receives periodic reports and is informed as well as engaged on safeguarding issues.
4. **National Office reports provided to the full Board/AC:** The National Office provides a copy of the Annual Safeguarding Update Report to the Board/AC. The National Office also provides the associated Safeguarding Action Plan outlining how they will maintain and improve safeguarding controls as outlined in the Annual Safeguarding Update Report.
5. **Training of Board/Advisory Council members:** At inception, the entire Board/Advisory Council are given training by the local Safeguarding Focal Point or by the WVI Safeguarding Unit where it is not practical for the local Safeguarding Focal Point to do so.
 - (5.1) Every new member to the Board/Advisory Council are given this training at orientation and sign an acknowledgement of having reviewed the Partnership Management Policy on Child and Adult Safeguarding. This acknowledgement is kept on file by the NO.
 - (5.2) Board/Advisory Council members re-elected to serve another term repeat the training they received at orientation to refresh their knowledge.

Definitions

Child:

Any person below the age of 18. This Partnership Management Policy on Child and Adult Safeguarding covers interactions by WV employees and affiliates with all children anywhere (not only programme participants).

Child protection: All measures taken to prevent and respond to abuse, neglect, exploitation, and all other forms of violence against children. A World Vision global sector, together with child participation.

“Community with whom World Vision works” or “living in a World Vision Programming Area”: World Vision uses a broad working definition of these terms to ensure that any individuals who may be subject to power imbalance with World Vision staff, affiliates, or programming are protected through this Policy.

Contractor: WV regularly contracts with non-employee individuals and organisations to perform services for WV. 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 WV 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 that has a written agreement with WV to implement a programme or activity on WV's behalf or in collaboration with WV. The partner may or may not receive funding from WV.

Safeguarding: Preventing, reporting, and responding to harm or abuse by WV employees and affiliates, of any children anywhere and of any adults living where WV has a programming presence. Externally to WV, there is often no distinction made between child and adult safeguarding.

Child safeguarding: Preventing, reporting, and responding to harm⁴, abuse or exploitation of any child (< age 18) by a WV employee or affiliate⁵. The Partnership Management Policy on Child and Adult Safeguarding also requires reporting/referring child abuse cases affecting any child in WV programmes, even if not committed by WV employees or affiliates.

Adult safeguarding: Preventing, reporting, and responding to harm, abuse, or exploitation of an adult living where WV has a programming presence (age 18+) by a WV employee or affiliate. Includes Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), a frequently cited subset of safeguarding.

Safeguarding incident: Harm or risk of harm resulting from safeguarding misconduct or violations of this Policy to any child or to any adult living where WV has a programming presence,

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 WV nor legally obliged to work for WV, but who on free will and without expectation of payment or other remuneration, contributes their time, skill, knowledge, efforts, and expertise to WV's work. 'Volunteer' includes a 'business volunteer' in a WV 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 WV project; and volunteers or 'incentive workers' from groups or communities targeted for humanitarian assistance. All categories of volunteers are subject to the contextualised Policy on Safeguarding, except community volunteers for whom the following apply:

1. The community volunteer does not have physical contact with sponsored children or their records as part of their volunteer activities, AND
2. Beyond basic training, WV does not specify how to complete the relevant activities; AND
3. The community does not perceive or consider this person as 'part of WV's work' due to their volunteer activities, and if they were to harm a child or adult, would not be expected to hold WV responsible.

WV employees and affiliates: Refers to the full range of people accountable to WV's Safeguarding policies and protocols, including all employees, interns, volunteers, and Board/Advisory Council members, as well as external parties, including visitors, community volunteers, contractors, partners, and others affiliated with partners or contractors.

BACKGROUND

This Partnership Management Policy is authorised by the Partnership Policy on Children’s Well Being and Partnership Policy on Code of Conduct. This Policy is grounded in WV’s broader ministry mandates— particularly Child Protection, which builds community capacity and strengthens local and national systems that protect children.

This Policy replaces and subsumes the Partnership Child Protection Standards approved January 2000 (and updated 2012 and 2016), and the Provisional Standards on Child Protection in Social Media approved May 2011.

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 abuse of adults living where WV has a programming presence.

The former policy on Children Deprived of Parental Care has been incorporated into this Policy.

4 Includes injury or death of a child while participating in a WV activity or when involved in a road traffic accident with a WV driver or WV vehicle.

5 Includes WV employees, volunteers, interns, Board members, visitors, contractors, or partners—as well as employees or subcontractors of partners and contractors.

6 Ibid.