Terre des Hommes
International Federation

SAFEGUARDING
POLICY



Terre des Hommes International Federation | Chemin du Pré-Picot 3, 1223 Cologny-Geneva, Switzerland
Phone +32 2 503 64 88 | www.terredeshommes.org | coordinator@terredeshommes.org

TABLE OF CONTENT

1. PURPOSE AND BASIC PRINCIPLES 1

1.1. Purpose **1**

1.2. Scope **2**

1.3. Policy Statement **2**

1.4. Key Principles **3**

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES 4

2.1. The International Federation **4**

2.1.1. Safeguarding Working Group 4

2.2. TDH International Federation and Member Organisations **4**

2.2.1. All Employees and Related Personnel 4

2.2.2. Senior Management 4

2.2.3. Human Resources Managers (or responsible person for HR) 5

2.2.4. Country Directors/Representatives 5

2.2.5. Safeguarding Focal Points 5

2.3. Partner Organisations **5**

3. REPORTING A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN 6

4. REPORTING CHANNELS 6

4.1. Reporting to the TDH International Federation **6**

4.2. Reporting to a TDH Member organisation **6**

5. OUR STANDARDS 7

5.1. The model **7**

5.2. Standard 1: Accountable, Respectful and Inclusive Organisational Culture **7**

5.3. Standard 2: Safe People **8**

5.3.1. Staff recruitment 8

5.3.2. Staff training ad Awareness-Raising 8

5.4. Standard 3: Safeguarding in Programmes **8**

5.5. Standard 4: Partnerships **9**

5.6. Standard 5: Reporting and Response **10**

5.7. Standard 6: Safe Media, IT and Communications **11**

6. APPENDIX 12

6.1. Appendix A: Related Documents and materials **12**

6.2. Appendix B: External Standards and Legislation **12**

6.3. Appendix C: Definitions **13**

1. PURPOSE AND BASIC PRINCIPLES

1.1. Purpose

Terre des Hommes International Federation (TDHIF) is a global non-governmental organisation comprising a network of seven (7) independent member organisations headquartered in Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Spain, and Switzerland.

TDHIF believes all people have a right to live self-determined lives, free from harm and abuse and that safeguarding is fundamental to its identity as a humanitarian and development organisation.Safeguarding is the responsibility of organisations to ensure staff, operations, and programmes do no harm to children, young people, or vulnerable adults, employees, or related personnel and community members.

This Safeguarding Policy is a recognition of TDHIF's responsibility and demonstrates our commitment to put in place all reasonable measures to prevent and respond to all forms of abuse, including sexual exploitation, (sexual) harassment, sexual, physical and emotional abuse, and neglect.

The Policy and its annexe set the minimum standards, ensuring a unified and harmonized approach to safeguarding across the Federation and its member organisations. It has been endorsed by the International Board of TDHIF, ratified by the General Assembly and it is in line with the international child safeguarding standards of Keeping Children Safe as well as international human rights instruments (see Appendix B).

The Safeguarding Policy enables TDHIF to meet its commitment to safeguard and protect all people, do no harm to others, and ensure zero tolerance to abuse and exploitation. It outlines clear responsibilities and easily accessible processes and procedures to ensure potential safeguarding risks are identified, considered and minimized across all areas of our work.

The TDHIF and all its member organisations' policies must comply with the standards set by the TDHIF's Safeguarding Policy. TDHIF member organisations can also adopt the Policy directly. In the following we will use the acronym TDH to cover all member organisations, unless otherwise mentioned.

<u>The Safeguarding Policy includes as annexes:</u>
Safeguarding Code of Conduct: It represents minimum standards for code of conduct. It applies to and must be signed by the International Federation Staff and can be used by TDH Member Organisations that have not developed their own code.

1.2. Scope

This Safeguarding Policy applies directly to:

- All employees of the International Federation.
- All employees of any TDHIF member organisations and all offices under their responsibility (i.e. regional/sub-regional offices, country offices, fundraising/advocacy offices) that do not have their own safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Related personnel of the above including board members, volunteers, interns, consultants, and incentive workers. Related personnel also include non-TDH members, their employees and individuals who have entered a contractual relationship with TDH and visitors where it concerns them.

It also sets the minimum standards that any TDH is required to follow in designing their own policies and procedures.

A Safeguarding Policy must apply always during working hours, in-person and online. Actions taken by TDH employees and related personnel outside of working hours that are seen to contradict this Policy will be considered a violation of this Policy.

1.3. Policy Statement

TDH has zero tolerance of all forms of abuse and exploitation and is committed to taking all reasonable measures to ensure the safety and wellbeing of anyone involved in or connected to our work, particularly children.

Everyone who represents TDH is responsible for creating a safe environment for people who participate in all our activities, people with whom we work and our staff and representatives.

TDH operates in many different countries and contexts, and while local laws and customs may differ, overarching legal instruments inform this Policy (See Appendix A). Regional and national laws differ in each country where TDH operates, so international human rights conventions including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and EU legislation, provide minimum standards. When there is an irregularity between these minimum legal standards and context-specific regional or national laws regarding the application of the TDHIF Safeguarding Policy, the more stringent legislation will be applied.

TDH believes that everyone has an equal right to protection from abuse and exploitation regardless of age, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil status, pregnancy or having a child, gender reassignment, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic, or social origin or status, property, disability, birth, or other status.

TDH recognizes that children – defined as anyone under the age of 18 – have increased vulnerabilities to violence, abuse and exploitation due to their dependence on others and unequal power with adults. As a child rights organisation, safeguarding the welfare of children is our priority, to this end all staff and representatives must always promote the safety and welfare of children and ensure that TDH is a child-safe organisation.

TDH acknowledges that some groups are more vulnerable to abuse than others due to social inequality vulnerabilities and require additional protection. TDH recognizes that vulnerability may change over time due to environmental, political, economic and social crisis and that violence in all its forms, can and does have significant life-long consequences.

1.4. Key Principles

In all programmes and activities, those working for, in partnership with, or on behalf of TDH must adhere to the following guiding principles:

- **Duty of care**. TDH must take all appropriate steps to ensure the safety and well-being of all people who we support, with whom we work and our staff and representatives.

- **Do no harm**. Any actions intended to safeguard children or adults from harm must not cause further harm or distress to the child or adult (for example, by re-traumatizing them).

- **Accountability**. TDH is accountable to both prevent safeguarding incidents and concerns from arising and to respond when incidents occur to ensure that all those we serve and who work with us, experience non-discriminatory and respectful behaviour from each other, are given room to be heard and meaningfully participate -where harmful behaviour is not accepted, and where power is not abused. Regular reporting on the status of safeguarding measures and monitoring and evaluation activities will take place to ensure transparency and accountability.

- **Survivor–centred approach**. When working with children and adults who have experienced violence in any form, TDH must put the needs and rights of the survivor at the centre of decision making. Survivors have the right to be heard, believed and supported in a way that respects their wishes and choices and considers their needs and experiences. Survivors must be treated with dignity and respect and approached in a trauma-informed way. The rights of survivors to privacy and support are prioritised. When the survivor is a child, we will take a child-centred approach. We will also learn from the experiences of survivors to inform our strategies and practices to prevent abuse from happening again.

- **Non-discrimination and inclusion**. Staff and others working for or on behalf of TDH must not discriminate against any child or adult based on their race, colour, sex or gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status. Where appropriate, additional measures must be taken to ensure the safety and well-being of groups of children or adults who may be particularly vulnerable to abuse in the specific context (for example, girls, children with disabilities, etc.).

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. The International Federation

TDH International Federation assumes the vital role of ensuring that all members adhere to the highest standards of safeguarding practices and fostering a culture of vigilance and accountability. It will

- **Coordinate and oversee the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy through the TDHIF Working Group** comprising TDH member organisation's safeguarding focal points, in collaboration with their affiliates.
- **Review and update the Safeguarding Policy** according to the timeframe agreed and specified.
- **Monitor and report progress against the implementation of the standards outlined in the Safeguarding Policy.**

2.1.1. Safeguarding Working Group

While each TDHIF member organisation operates independently, TDHIF undertakes the crucial task of overseeing and monitoring compliance with these standards across the Federation.

The mandate of the Safeguarding Working Group includes:

- Ensure common and high standards on safeguarding among TDH organisations;
- Develop tools and procedures to strengthen safeguarding within member organisations;
- Strengthen skills and knowledge of safeguarding focal points;
- Provide an annual report to the GA on the application of the safeguarding policies;
- Review the annual reporting of the MOs on safeguarding and their plans of action;
- Exchange and learn from experiences and safeguarding cases;
- Make recommendations to the MOs and to the TDHIF International Board.

2.2. TDHIF and Member Organisations

2.2.1. All Employees and Related Personnel

- **Read and abide by the Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct applicable to their TDH member organisation** and undertake training and refresher courses on safeguarding.
- **Report all incidents of abuse**, including sexual exploitation, abuse, harassment, physical and emotional abuse, and neglectperpetrated by TDH employees or related personnel using the appropriate channels. **Reports should be made within 24 hours or as soon as reasonably possible**. No investigative action should be taken until guidance has been received from the investigation manager.
- **Uphold their respective Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct, and maintain a respectful environment** that supports the dignity and rights of all individuals.

2.2.2. Senior Management

- **Model respectful behaviours and embed an accountable organisational culture** of zero tolerance of abuse and harm.

- **Demonstrate commitment to safeguarding** by regularly highlighting the importance of safeguarding to staff and peers and fostering a respectful working culture and environment where personnel and communities feel able to raise concerns.
- **Ensure that the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy is supported by human, technical and financial resources** - within core business and for specific pieces of work (projects etc) - and monitor its implementation and impact.
- E**nsure employees, interns, volunteers, consultants, visitors, and partner organisations understand the importance and binding effect of the Safeguarding Policy** and are supported to implement and work in accordance with it.
- **Be responsive, act immediately if made aware of any safeguarding concerns** and be supportive towards staff who report breaches of the Safeguarding Policy.
- **Ensure that employees with specific safeguarding duties have appropriate experience**, training, resources, and support available to them and that these duties form part of their job description and performance deliverables.

2.2.3. Human Resources Managers (or responsible person for HR)

- **Ensure robust safer recruitment procedures are in place.**
- **Include specific responsibilities for safeguarding in relevant job descriptions** and performance appraisals, including those of senior managers and country directors.
- **Ensure employees have a thorough orientation**, and ongoing awareness and sensitisation to the Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct.

2.2.4. Country Directors/Representatives

- **Be accountable for safeguarding within the country office** and plan and provide clear guidance and resources for implementing, and reporting performance on, the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy.
- **Identify and support Safeguarding focal points** who can help coordinate and implement the Safeguarding Policy and related procedures, and who report on progress to internal and external stakeholders.
- **Lead or follow-up or participate in the execution of disciplinary action following investigations** if it is determined that there was a violation of the Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct.
- **Ensure that safeguarding is sufficiently resourced** to ensure the operationalization of the Safeguarding Policy through programmes and within the country office.
- **Lead the completion of safeguarding self-assessments** and use the findings to develop annual action plans to address gaps and strengthen safeguarding implementation across all areas of work.

2.2.5. Safeguarding Focal Points

- **Raise awareness, train staff, and promote best practices for safeguarding.**
- **Provide support to prevent and respond to safeguarding incidents.**
- **Case Management**

2.3. Partner Organisations

- **Uphold TDH Safeguarding standards** and work with TDH to co-create and jointly strengthen shared safeguarding capacity, knowledge and skills to prevent and respond to abuse and harm.
- **Have a Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Policy** in place which is in-line with TDH safeguarding standards.
- **Apply the principles of the TDH Safeguarding Policy to staff** and downstream partners with whom we collaborate.

3. REPORTING A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN

All those working for or on behalf of TDH must report all safeguarding concerns and/or suspected or actual violations of the Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct, including suspicions and rumours, **within 24 hours or as soon as possible**. Staff must never conduct their own investigations.

There are several pathways for reporting safeguarding incidents or concerns. Employees, related personnel, children, and at-risk adults can choose the reporting option that feels the safest and most appropriate to them.

It is recommended that staff report following the channels provided by their own TDH organisation and line with the principles and processes outlined in their policies covering **whistleblower protection and incident report handling and investigation procedures.**

However, it is always possible to report to the TDH International Federation, if reporting within the organisation is considered unsafe.

4. REPORTING CHANNELS

4.1. Reporting to the TDHIF

Confidential Reporting Email: reports can be sent to **concern@terredeshommes.org**. The reporter will receive a notification that the email has been received, and a trained staff member will respond to the report. Reporters have the right to remain anonymous.

4.2. Reporting to a TDHIF Member Organisation

Every TDH member organisation establishes a centralised and safe reporting channel in line with national and EU laws. A designated focal person for safeguarding shall receive the reports of breaches of the safeguarding policy and handle them according to the procedures of the respective TDH organisation following key principles as outlined in the Internal Reporting and Whistleblower Protection Policy of TDHIF. Information about the reporting channel shall be made available on the respective TDH homepages.

5. OUR STANDARDS

5.1. The model

A standards-based model ensures TDH takes a comprehensive approach to its commitment to staff and communities right to be protected from harm and abuse. Safeguarding standards also provide a means of benchmarking and comparing TDH's current and potential capabilities. The standards are designed to raise the bar on safeguarding and ethical behaviour by helping identify strengths and areas for development and progress towards best safeguarding practice.

To ensure the successful implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, TDH member organisations and partners must ensure the following standards are in place.

1. Accountable, Respectful, and Inclusive Organisational Culture
2. Safe People
3. Safeguarding in Programmes
4. Partnerships
5. Reporting and Response
6. Safe Media and Communications

5.2. Standard 1: Accountable, Respectful and Inclusive Organisational Culture

1. **TDH recognizes that no organisation is immune from safeguarding misconduct and will ensure high-level oversight and accountability around safeguarding** and demonstrate its zero-tolerance approach to all forms of harm and abuse. TDH is committed to continuous learning and improvement to prevent and respond to all safeguarding incidents. This will be achieved through monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of our safeguarding strategies and seeking feedback from TDH employees and related personnel, programme participants and communities we work with. TDH will be transparent about incidents of misconduct, which breach the Safeguarding Policy and be accountable and transparent in communicating our safeguarding efforts and learning to internal and external audiences.
2. **TDH will ensure its values, beliefs and codes of practice are conducive with an organisational culture that is committed to preventing harm and abuse**. Those in leadership positions, will model and advocate for shared values that help prevent abuse of power, setting the standards and modelling behaviours that reflect those values positively.
3. **TDH will make every effort to create and maintain a respectful and inclusive organisational culture** where all those who work for and with TDH including our partners, and the communities and programme participants we work with are treated with dignity and their rights and voices are heard and respected.
4. **TDH is committed to ensuring staff have the opportunity and capacity to discuss, challenge and report** attitudes, behaviours, organisational policies, and practices and 'norms' that underpin safeguarding and related issues.

5.3. Standard 2: Safe People

5.3.1. Staff recruitment

1. **TDH is committed to recruiting and retaining employees and related personnel who are aligned with our vision, mission, and values.** We will ensure robust safer recruitment practices are in place including, but not limited to, obtaining suitable references, providing evidence of identity, completion of pre-engagement/appointment checks (e.g. pre-screening using Criminal History Checks or similar) appropriate to the level of contact with children or vulnerable people in an individual's role, and assessing candidates' values during the recruitment interview.
2. **TDH's recruitment processes will include steps to prevent any perpetrators of exploitation and abuse from being engaged or re-engaged by TDH** or other organisations working with vulnerable people. This will include a commitment to procuring and providing accurate references and reporting cases to statutory agencies.
3. **TDH's commitment to zero-tolerance of all forms of abuse,** and the responsibilities of all employees to safeguarding, will be included in all job advertisements, position descriptions and employment contracts/agreements(s), including a termination clause. Our leadership and management roles will also have defined specific safeguarding responsibilities.
4. **TDH will ensure all new employees and related personnel are committed to and sign up to the respective Safeguarding Policies and Codes of Conduct.** This will be included in contracts, agreements and induction processes. The Safeguarding Code of Conduct sets out the standards of practice we expect of employees and related personnel concerning the prevention and reporting of safeguarding incidents.
5. **TDH will include safeguarding in performance management/feedback processes.** All employees will demonstrate their commitment towards safeguarding as part of their annual performance review. Leadership and management will demonstrate their efforts in creating and maintaining a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment as part of their performance reviews. Other employees and related personnel who have specific duties relevant to the Safeguarding Policy will have these tasks included in their performance management.

5.3.2. Staff Training and Awareness-Raising

1. **All TDH employees and related personnel will complete safeguarding training** as part of their induction and safeguarding refresher training annually thereafter.
2. **Safeguarding focal points will complete additional safeguarding training** relevant to their role and responsibilities.
3. **TDH will raise awareness with all employees and related personnel** of the Policies, Codes of Conduct, safeguarding procedures, and reporting mechanisms.

5.4. Standard 3: Safeguarding In Programmes

1. **Embedding Safeguarding in the Project Cycle** - In all programmes (including development, humanitarian response, and advocacy), TDH seeks to do no harm to children or adult programme participants, to keep the interests of community members—especially children—at the centre of our activities, and to utilize opportunities to help children be safer within their families and communities. This includes incorporating safeguarding measures into programmes and throughout the project cycle. This will be achieved through resourcing safeguarding and embedding risk mitigation into design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

2. **Safeguarding country risk assessments will be undertaken** to understand the safeguarding risks present in the external environment and the specific vulnerabilities and needs of affected groups. We will collaborate with, listen to, and use the knowledge of local people whose situation makes them most vulnerable to abuse and harm, and of survivors when possible. Programmes and activities will be based on the context analysis, which will clearly identify how the environment causes or exacerbates safeguarding risks.
3. **Safeguarding programme risk assessments will be completed** and reviewed throughout all phases of projects, programmes, and campaigns –their development, implementation and termination of activities-, to identify potential risks of abuse and harm posed by employees and related personnel or that may be caused or exacerbated by programme activities. The risks will be recorded and activities will be designed to remove or reduce them. Participatory methods will be used to enable the communities and others impacted by our programmes, to have a voice in identifying safeguarding risks and designing safeguarding approaches to mitigate them.
4. **Participation** - TDH will foster an environment whereby children, young people and vulnerable groups are empowered as citizens and participants. TDH will promote their wellbeing by assessing and minimizing any risk of harm or negative consequences resulting from participation in TDH activities. All programmes and projects will be designed to ensure inclusive, meaningful, and safe participation of children and vulnerable groups. Participation activities will be voluntary and inclusive (especially of the most vulnerable children). Information will be provided on the activities to enable potential participants to make informed decisions regarding participation, including about the risks that could be associated with the activity.
5. **Community Awareness Raising** - TDH will raise community awareness of expected behaviours of employees and related personnel, how to make a safeguarding report, what happens if they report, their rights and what support is available to them. Awareness raising activities and materials will be created in collaboration with communities. They will take into consideration local contexts and cultures and will be accessible to all groups impacted by the programme.
6. **Feedback and Accountability Mechanisms** - In all programmes, TDH will ensure that community Feedback and Accountability Mechanisms (FAMS) are in place. Through FAMs, participants can make general suggestions and also report about incidents of misconduct by TDH employees or related personnel. These mechanisms will be safe and inclusive, child-friendly, contextually appropriate and designed in consultation with the community. Anyone responsible for receiving sensitive reports will be trained on how to respond, in a safe and confidential manner. TDH will be transparent with survivors concerning obligations or actions that may need to be taken in response to their report, including referral to third parties. All actions will be informed by a survivor-centred approach and will include an assessment of risk to all those involved.
7. **Collaboration with Other Networks** - TDH will participate in safeguarding networks and coordination efforts, and collaborate with peers and partners to make safeguarding approaches efficient, building when possible on existing structures to be accountable to affected populations, and to prevent and respond to safeguarding incidents.

5.5. Standard 4: Partnerships

1. **TDH will carry out due diligence to assess the safeguarding capacity of partners.** This assessment will include standards, which demonstrate commitment to preventing exploitation and abuse in line with the standards set out in this policy. When partners do not have their own safeguarding policies and procedures, or do not meet TDHIF standards, they must formally agree to implement TDHIF safeguarding standards. Capacity support will be provided, if necessary, to ensure safe recruitment, staff training, safe programme implementation, and efficient responses and follow-up to reports of abuse. Partners will also be monitored to ensure adherence to the safeguarding standards.

2. **Contracts and agreements between TDH and its partners will contain a provision mandating their adherence to the standards of the Safeguarding Policy.** They will include the requirement to implement preventive measures against abuse and harm, conduct investigations into any reported incidents, and take corrective action if safeguarding incidents occur. All partnership agreements will also include terms that allow for any failure of the Partner to do all they can to prevent, report and respond appropriately to safeguarding allegations, to constitute grounds for TDH to terminate their partnership.

5.6. Standard 5: Reporting and Response

1. **TDH will encourage reporting of allegations of sexual harassment, exploitation, sexual, physical and emotional abuse, and neglect committed by TDH employees and related personnel.** TDH staff must cooperate fully with investigations. Staff members must not conduct their own investigations regarding breaches of the Safeguarding Policy. The assigned case management team will take forward the investigation, in line with the procedures.
2. **TDHIF member organisations will establish safe,** confidential reporting channels in line with GDPR, EU Whistleblower Protection Directive and national laws.
3. **TDH recognises that reporting can be challenging and difficult for those who have been subject to abuse or exploitation.** TDH will seek to ensure that the reporting of safeguarding incidents is a process that will not create additional distress for survivors. While TDH staff and representatives are obligated to report safeguarding concerns, nothing in this policy should be read as compelling or requiring a survivor of violence to disclose their own experiences of violence or exploitation against their wishes.
4. **Confidentiality** - Regardless of how a report is made, it is essential that confidentiality in maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent incident management will be shared on a need-to-know basis only and must be kept secure. A breach of confidentiality related to a safeguarding incident is a breach of the Safeguarding Policy and may result in disciplinary action.
5. **All reports will be taken seriously, and appropriate action taken** in line with procedures, regulations, and guidance. TDH will respond to and investigate cases in a timely, fair, confidential, safe, and trauma-informed manner, which is centred on the dignity, needs and rights of survivors.
6. **Safeguarding investigations will be carried out by trained and experienced safeguarding investigators**. When children are involved, investigations will only be conducted by a person trained and experienced in conducting child centred safeguarding investigations.
7. **TDH will take timely and appropriate disciplinary action if safeguarding incidents are proven** or if there is retaliation against those who report concerns or participate in investigations.
8. **When cases meet the definition of a crime, TDH will refer to the appropriate jurisdiction or law enforcement agency** if to do so does not risk placing the survivor at further risk of harm.
9. **TDH will provide support and assistance** to anyone who has experienced sexual harassment, exploitation, physical and emotional abuse, or neglect caused by TDH programmes or perpetrated by a TDH employee or related personnel. All TDH offices will map support services and referral pathways, which include access to medical treatment, legal assistance, and psycho-social support. Support and assistance will be informed by a survivor-centred approach, feasibility, and an assessment of risks for all those involved. Psycho-social support will also be available, if needed, to anyone who reports misconduct.
10. TDH has a **zero-tolerance approach to retaliation** towards any person who reports misconduct in good faith. Those reporting are protected from retaliation, even if the allegations reported are determined not to constitute wrongful conduct. Anyone who believes they have been retaliated against for making a report of wrongful conduct should immediately report it to the country director or human resources staff member or through one of the reporting channels. An employee who retaliates against a person who has made a report is subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

11. **TDH will collect anonymised safeguarding case data (for example, case numbers and outcomes, feedback, surveys) to monitor and evaluate the impact of safeguarding approaches.** TDH will also use data to track progress, learn from experience, including when things have gone wrong. Besides, data may be shared to help build the global evidence-base on safeguarding and to show transparency and accountability.

5.7. Standard 6: Safe Media, IT and Communications

1. **TDH is committed to ensuring all media and communications are undertaken with sensitivity to safeguard each person's right to dignity**, privacy, and confidentiality. In all forms of media and communications, TDH will only portray programme participants with dignity and not take or use images of children or vulnerable adults which are exploitative or risk exposing them to further vulnerability. Media interviews with children will be carried out in line with TDH child safeguarding guidelines for journalists, and after conducting an appropriate risk assessment.
2. TDH will make clear to programme participants and their families that agreements to provide information and/or images are **not conditions to join and be involved in TDH activities** and programmes.
3. **TDH will not take or reproduce identifying images of programme participants or communities without their informed consent** or consent from parents / guardians. Informed consent means the individual has a general understanding of the purpose and the risks of the reporting or photography and gives verbal permission to use them.
4. **Written consent must always be obtained from the individual or from the parent, primary caregiver, or guardian in the following situations:**
    a. When they could be identified, or
    b. When the sensitive nature of the personal disclosure of their situation could cause a risk to his or her privacy, dignity, safety, or reputation, or
    c. When otherwise required by applicable legislation
5. **When written consent is not possible to obtain, the reporter, photographer or video maker must confirm in writing that they explained "consent"**-using local language- and that it was verbally obtained from the individuals involved, beforehand.
6. **TDH is committed to protecting information about programme participants and their communities, complying with GDPR and national laws.** We will not share information that is of sensitive nature, such as health status or cause of death, unless we have been granted informed consent to do so.
7. **TDH will inform employees and related personnel about IT policies and procedures**, and ensure they understand that they must not use this technology for the purpose of accessing, producing, or distributing any violent or sexual information or images. This includes adult pornography.
8. **TDH will actively support children and their parents/primary caregivers/guardians to understand how to utilise social media and digital technology safely** and appropriately, while avoiding risks to their safety and dignity and responding immediately to threats.

6. APPENDIX

6.1. APPENDIX A: Related Documents and materials

Type of Document	Supporting Documentation
Policies	• Safeguarding Policy • Internal Reporting and Whistleblower Protection Policy • Code of Conduct
Procedures/processes	• Safeguarding Self-Assessment • Procedure for Safe Engagement of children and youth in TDH events(2019) • Child Safeguarding Standards for Safe Recruitment (2019)
Training	• TDH IF Introduction to Safeguarding • TDH IF Safe Recruitment • TDH IF Safe Communication • TDH IF Adult Safeguarding

Policies and safeguarding courses can be found at: https://terredeshommes.org/who-we-are/

6.2. APPENDIX B: External Standards and Legislation

TDH adheres to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Six Core Commitments on PSEA, and in 2019. TDH's approach to Safeguarding draws on these, in addition to International Humanitarian law, Human Rights Law, UN IASC guidance, the Core Humanitarian Standards and the Humanitarian Principles. This includes:

- Agreed conclusions of the 57th Commission on the Status of Women (2013)
- Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (2014)
- OECD DAC Recommendation on Ending Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance (2019)
- Geneva Convention (International Humanitarian Law) – protections for civilians in conflict (1949)
- International Labour Organisation (ILO): Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No.189)
- Inter-Agency Standing Committee Commitments on Accountability to Affected Populations (2017)
- Inter-Agency Standing Committee Minimum Operating Standards: Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by Own Personnel (2012)

- Inter-Agency Standing Committee Six Core Principles Relating to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (2019)
- UNSG Bulletin on preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (2003)
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and optional protocols (Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, Optional Protocol ona Communications Procedure),
- UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1984)
- UN Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women (1991)
- UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000
- The Four Humanitarian Principles (Humanity, Neutrality, Independence, Impartiality) (2012)
- UN convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (A/RES/61/106) (2006)

6.3. APPENDIX C: Definitions

Abuse - The physical, sexual, emotional, or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviours that frighten, intimidate, terrorise, manipulate, hurt, humiliate, blame, injure, or wound someone. It also includes abuse online and/or through mobile technology.

Abuse of power - The abuse of a position of influence, power, or authority at the expense of others. It can consist of creating a climate of hostility or harassment, intimidation, threats, blackmail, or coercion. The abuse of power is an aggravating factor in discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment.

Child - A person below the age of 18, even if they have reached the age of majority under the law applicable to them.

Child abuse - The universal categories of child abuse (see The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child article 19) are defined as follows and act as a reference for local environments:

- **Physical abuse:** Actual or likely physical injury to any child or a failure to prevent physical injury or suffering;
- **Sexual abuse:** Actual or threatened sexual violence towards a child including all forms of sexual activity such as rape, incest, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and child sexual abuse material; Sexual abuse includes sexual assault, but also inappropriate acts or situations which are not understood by the child or for which they cannot legally give informed consent, or for which the child's development has not yet prepared them.
- **Emotional abuse**: Persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection. All abuse involves emotional ill-treatment;
- **Neglect:** The failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger;
- **Exploitation**: 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.

Child labour - the use of a child for commercial or other purposes, in the context of a relationship of trust or power, with real or potential consequent damage to their health, survival, dignity or development at mental, physical, educational, and moral level.

Sexual exploitation - Sexual exploitation means profiting or attempting to profit from someone in a position of vulnerability, unequal power, or trust for sexual purposes, including but not limited to financial, social, or political gain.

Consent - The act of giving one's free and informed consent. A child can never give consent for sexual acts.

Discrimination - Discrimination includes language or actions directly or indirectly intended to treat someone differently, less favourably or disparage them because of their origin; sex characteristic; age; language; social status; way of life; religious, gender, sexual orientation, philosophical or political beliefs or because of a physical, mental, or psychological disability.

Dignity - Innate right to be valued and receive ethical treatment.

Gender - Refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/ time-specific and changeable.

Harassment - is unwanted, unwelcomed, and uninvited behaviour that demeans, threatens, or offends and results in a hostile environment. Harassment can be targeted at an individual, or a particular group of individuals, with or without protected characteristics.

Harm - Psychological, physical and any other infringement of an individual's rights.

Inappropriate - That which is not within the bounds of propriety and best practice. That which is indecent.

Misconduct - Unacceptable or improper behaviour by a member of staff. Breach of the Code of Conduct, values, policies, and internal regulations, national law, and external regulations in countries where TDH operates.

Other forms of abuse - "Other forms of abuse" include bullying, coercion, harassment, limitations on the freedom to act, threats of serious harm or psychological pressure.

Safeguarding - The responsibility of organisations to make sure their staff, operations and programmes do no harm to children and vulnerable adults, and that they do not expose them to the risk of harm and abuse.

Sexual harassment - Any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Trauma-informed approach - Recognising the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledging the role trauma may play in an individual's life.

Vulnerable person - A person seen as an easy target for potential abuse or exploitation due to their gender, race, sexual orientation, sex characteristic, age, maturity, their social and economic environment and/or their physical or mental state.

Whistleblower - A person who makes a protected disclosure. The whistleblower is a reporting party. He/she is not an investigator or factfinder, nor does he/she determine the appropriate corrective and remedial action that may be warranted.

Youth - In line with UN definitions, TDH understands a 'young person' or 'youth' to include individuals aged 15 to 24 years old.

Approved by the International Board of TDHIF: 22 November 2024

Revised in October 2026

Terre des Hommes
Chemin du Pré-Picot 3
1223 Cologny-Geneva, Switzerland
+32 (0) 2 503 64 88
www.terredeshommes.org
coordinator@terredeshommes.org

Report writer and editor: Terre des Hommes International Federation team and members.

Designer of this guide: Gail Rego