FAROF

Freehearts Africa Reach Out Foundation

Saving Lives One @ a Time

www.farof.org

Child Protection Policy

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Contents

1.0. INTRODUCTION 3
1.1. Preparation of this policy 3
Code of Conduct 3
2.0. PROTECTION POLICY, PROCEDURES AND GUIDANCE 4
3.0. POLICY STATEMENT 5
4.0. PURPOSE 5
5.0. SCOPE 6
5.1. Recruitment & Training 6
1. Board members, staff, interns and volunteers will be carefully and properly screened during their recruitment period. This will include: 6
5.2. Behaviour Protocols 6
6.0. PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED OR ACTUAL ABUSE OF CHILDREN 7
7.0. RISK ASSESSMENT 8
8.0. COMMUNICATIONS ABOUT CHILDREN 9
9.0. PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS 9
10.0. SUPPORTING POLICIES 9
11.0. SURVIVAL RIGHTS OF THE CHILD; BASIC HEALTH AND WELFARE 10
12.0. RIGHTS TO FREEDOM 10
Review of policy 11
Annexes 11
APPENDIX 1- FAROF's Child protection mechanism and/or Working Tools (Child safe guarding toolkits) 11
ANNEX A-Child Safe guiding tools 11
ANNEX B- ORGANIZATION CHILD PROTECTION SELF-ASSESSMENT CPSA
ANNEX C- CHILD PROTECTION SELF-ASSESSMENT (CPSA)
ANNEX D- CODE OF CONDUCT
ANNEX E-GUIDELINE FOR PREVENTING HARM TO CHILDREN IN PROGRAM/PROJECT ACTIVITIED
ANNEX F-GUIDELINE FOR RESPONDING TO AND REPORTING CHILD PROTECTION CONCERN AND VIOLATIONS
ANNEX G-CONSIQUENCES FOR MOSCONDUCT
ANNEX H- MONITORING AND EVALUATION (IMPLEMENTATON STRATEGIES TO ENSURE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURE IS PUT INTO PRACTISE
ANNEX I-STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO FAROF'S CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1.0. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Preparation of this policy

This policy is the outcome of concerted effort summed up from staffs of FAROF and identified stakeholders for Child Rights promotion and protection in Nigeria to ensure that all the relevant sections of the child rights law are responded to from a CSOs perspective. The following process was adopted in the development of this Policy:

- Broad-based online consultation
- Desk review

FAROF was also selected as the representative for Kaduna state, Nigeria to participate for the production of a complimentary report on status of Implementation of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) in Nigeria

1.2. Definitions

Definition of a Child

1.2.1. Child

For the purposes of this policy, a "child" is defined as anyone under the age of 18, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the Child Right Act of the Federal Government of Nigeria.

The Child's Right Act 2003 defines a child as a person who has not attained the age of eighteen years. Art. 2 of the Children and Young Persons Act (CYPA), however, defines a child as: [a] person under the age of 14years, while 'young person' means a person who has attained the age of 14years and is under the age of 17years." p.21-22); The Immigration Act views a person below 16 years as a minor; while the Matrimonial Causes Act regards the age of maturity to start at 21 years; the Penal Code states: "No act is an offence which is done by a child under 7years of age; or by a child above seven years of age but under twelve years of age who has not attained sufficient maturity of understanding to judge the nature and consequence of such act." (Art. 50).

1.2.2. Child abuse

Child abuse consists of anything which individuals, institutions or processes do or fail to do which directly or indirectly harms children or damages their prospect of a safe and healthy development into adulthood

Commission of Inquiry into the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (UK) 1996 , later the Children 's Act 2004

Child Protection: Child Protection within the scope of this policy is defined as the responsibilities, measures and activities that FAROF undertakes to safeguard children from both intentional and unintentional harm.

Code of Conduct

A set of behavioral guidelines for working with children are outlined in the FAROF Code of Conduct

2.0. PROTECTION POLICY, PROCEDURES AND GUIDANCE

The definition point to five types of abuse:

- **Physical abuse:** This is actual physical harm and may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child including fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately causing, ill health to a child.
- **Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development, such as failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, or neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
- **Emotional abuse:** persistent or emotional ill treatment of a child that adversely affects their development. May involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, and inadequate, there only to meet the needs of another; or where inappropriate expectations are imposed upon them. In addition it includes children who are regularly frightened, exploited or corrupted.
- **Sexual abuse:** is the involvement of a child in sexual activity. It may involve forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. This may also include involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- **Exploitation:** trafficking, sex trade, child labour, drugs smuggling, child soldiers, exchanging sex for other favours

FAROF believes that all forms of abuse and exploitation suffered by children are unacceptable. FAROF aims to ensure that all children who come in contact with FAROF is safe from all forms of abuse and exploitation. The organization is committed to protecting children and seeks to ensure that children we work with are not harmed or abused as a result of our actions. The possibility of staff, donors or partners abusing children is one which the management of FAROF takes seriously and is committed to working to prevent.

The child protection/safeguarding policy is vital to the organization and it is expected that all staff and representatives understand why it is important and how to implement it. Child protection is a corporate and an individual responsibility. This policy extends beyond professional role in the workplace to conduct on one's personal life.

FAROF has zero tolerance to child abuse and staff. All staff will be made familiar with the need for a child protection concern in all that we do. Associations with **anyone** found to be engaging in abusive and exploitative relationships with children will be broken.

OUR VISION:

Envision serving as a source to humanitarian excellence, where every child and women's right are protected with improved quality health care, illiteracy and better living standard.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

FAROF mission is committed to creating a healthy community for the most disadvantaged children and women through quality health care, education,

protection against violence and exploitation, and community development that are sustainable, replicable and appropriate for hard-to-reach-areas.

CORE VALUE:
Our core values are: **Excellence** (quality in service delivery), **Humanitarianism** (care for our target individuals), **Transparency** (Openness in our dealings), **Accountability** (responsible and answerable), **Commitment** (dedicated to our service) and **Resourcefulness** (value addition).

3.0. POLICY STATEMENT

FAROF takes its responsibility for protecting children and young people extremely seriously and therefore requires ALL its staff to report suspicions of ALL forms of abuse and neglect.

FAROF staff must comply with:

1. *The requirements of the* **Children's Rights Act 2003 (CRA)**

   This is the law in the ACT relating to the care and protection of children and young people. Section 356 of the Act makes it ***mandatory*** for certain groups of people (including certain staff of FAROF) to make a report to Care and Protection Services when they believe on reasonable grounds, during the course of their work, that a child or young person has experienced or is experiencing sexual abuse or non- accidental physical injury.

   The *Children and Young People Act 2008* also has other sections that refer to prenatal reporting (Section 362) and voluntary reporting (Section 354).

2. ***FAROF requirement to*** report suspicions of all other forms of abuse, including neglect and emotional abuse. These obligations arise as a condition of employment and must be complied with regardless of whether or not the employee is mandated under the Act to report such suspicions.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the:

- Child Protection Standard Operating Procedure (SOP); and
- Child Protection Practice Paper.
- Child Right Act
- And other SOP that protect a child at federal and state level

4.0. PURPOSE

This policy establishes the guiding principles, responsibilities and legislative basis for FAROF staff to protect unborn children, children and young people aged 0 and up to 18 years and even to 24 years of age

This policy aims to improve the protection of children by promoting both education and health interventions and ensure FAROF staffs understand and fulfil their responsibilities in relation to child protection.

Guiding principles for protecting children include:

- The best interest of the child is paramount;
- Child abuse and neglect is a crime;

- Child abuse and neglect will not go away without intervention;
- Children are vulnerable and need members of the community to support, advocate and protect them, even if their parents or carers cannot or do not do so;
- Listening to children and advocating on their behalf is an important role for FAROF staff;
- Protecting children is a shared community responsibility;
- Supporting children and families and intervening early improves long-term outcomes for children;
- FAROF staff are mandatory reporters and are legally bound to report suspicions of child physical and sexual abuse.
- FAROF staff are also required to report suspicions of all other forms of abuse, including neglect and emotional abuse.
- It is mandatory for all FAROF staff to attend child protection training.

5.0. SCOPE

This *Child Protection Policy* and related SOP applies to all FAROF staff.

5.1. Recruitment & Training

1. Board members, staff, interns and volunteers will be carefully and properly screened during their recruitment period. This will include:

- asking the candidate to sign a declaration of criminal convictions as part of the application process;
- obtaining a police check where possible;
- obtaining a reliable character and professional reference, with particular attention given to any area of concern relating to child protection;
- During the interview, questions bordering on child protection and the candidates attitudes, perceptions and knowledge about keeping children safe would be asked

2.All prospective employees, interns, volunteers, partners and board members will undertake induction and training on the organization's Child Safeguarding policy which is relevant and appropriate to their position. Staff will sign the Child safeguarding Policy at the time they are given their induction or at the same time they sign their contract, agreeing to uphold its principles and values, and to comply with its rules.

3.Individuals who are hired as independent contractors will be briefed and given a copy of the organization's Child Safeguarding Policy and required to sign a declaration that they have received and understood it.
4. Volunteers with the organization will be monitored by the Team Leaders to whom they are assigned to ensure that confidential information concerning children is not misused. Where there are concerns, managers should inform the (Head Human Resource Dept), who will investigate further.

5.2. Behaviour Protocols

Behaviour protocols are rules of appropriate and proper behaviour, which are designed to protect children but are also intended to protect adults from false accusations of inappropriate behaviour or abuse. These protocols apply to employees, volunteers, board members, contractors, sponsors and any visitors to the organization's projects.

- FAROF personnel and visitors must not spend unnecessary time alone with children, including in the following situations: in a car, overnight in your home, or the home of a child, in office, in a camp, at activity sites etc. or sleep with beneficiaries in the same house without prior approval by the line manager. Such approval can only be given if there is concern that not doing so might put the children at risk of abuse or exploitation and if there are no other suitable options.
- FAROF personnel and visitors should not hire children as "house help" or promote any form of exploitative child labor.
- FAROF personnel and visitors must not fondle or kiss children. They must also not hold, hug or touch children in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way. To avoid misunderstanding, it is recommended that a child be asked for permission before touching him/her in a culturally appropriate way, for example holding hands.
- Where possible and practical, the "two-adult" rule, wherein two or more adults supervise all activities where children are involved and are present at all times, should be followed. If this is not possible, FAROF staff members are encouraged to look for alternatives such as being accompanied by community members on visits to children. In addition, gender should be considered in the "two-adult" rule, for example an adolescent girl should never be in a situation where she is alone with 2 male staff.
- FAROF staff or representatives must never physically assault or physically abuse children.
- FAROF staff or representatives must never have sexual intercourse, or engage in any sexual activity, with anyone under 18 years of age, regardless of the age of consent locally. Mistaken belief in the age of the child is not a defense.
- FAROF staff or representatives must never discriminate against, show unfair differential treatment to, or favour particular children to the exclusion of others.
- FAROF staff or representatives must not develop physical/sexual relationships with children or develop any form of relationship with children which could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive.
- FAROF staff or representatives must not exploit their own position vis-à-vis the beneficiaries by making them run errands, do domestic work, exchange sex for favours, or carry out other forms of economic or sexual exploitation.
- FAROF staff or representatives must not act in ways intended to shame, humiliate or degrade children, or otherwise perpetuate any form of emotional abuse.
- FAROF staff or representatives must not be aware of these and not do anything about it.
- FAROF personnel need to be aware that they may work with children who, because of the circumstances and abuses they have experienced, may use a relationship to obtain "special attention". The adult is always considered responsible even if a child behaves seductively. Adults should avoid being placed in a compromising or vulnerable position.
- FAROF is committed to creating a child friendly environment and to ensure that how we work is safe and doesn't put children at risk of harm.
- Inappropriate behaviour towards children is grounds for discipline.

6.0. PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED OR ACTUAL ABUSE OF CHILDREN

1. Should a member of FAROF receive any information about, or observe actual or suspected child abuse by a staff, volunteer, visitor or any other representative he or she must immediately inform the designate Child Protection focal person. If the concern involves the CP focal person, the concern must be reported to the organization's Director of Human Resources. If the concern involves the Director of HR, the concern should be reported to the

CEO, President, Coordinator (or any such top placed positions as available in the organization) and when the concern involves this person, it should be reported to the board.

> Note: The reporter is not required to investigate or try to find "more proof" before making the report. They must just make the report, and the process of investigation will be handled confidentially by trained senior staff member.

2.Reporting of child abuse is a requirement of the organization and should be undertaken by staff, volunteers and other representatives. Non-reporting is considered to be a breach of the Child Safeguarding Policy.

3. FAROF team work with fragile communities to develop local mechanisms and action plans to address SBVAG in their communities. In doing this local community peer representatives will be organised into Community based Child protection watch groups and empowered to develop action plans to protect and respond to sexual based violence against girls (SBVAG). They will also be supported in developing referral mechanisms that will link survivors in their communities to the required SBVAG state and non-state actors in and around their locality who can provide; shelter and protection, medical, legal and psychosocial support services. Female mentors and Girls in the community would also be empowered as part of the solution to address sexual violence in both communities.

7.0. RISK ASSESSMENT

All FAROF's staff, volunteers and interns must conduct and document a risk assessment when planning a new activity or event that would involve the participation of children. Taking children out of their primary environment e.g. for excursions, state level activity etc. in particular is considered to be a high risk activity.

A Risk Assessment Matrix is provided and should be completed well in advance of the activity or event.

Use this Matrix to identify any risk to the safety and wellbeing of children, assess the level of risk, and develop strategies to reduce this risk. See **Risk Assessment Matrix**

To do a risk assessment one must:

1. Consider any risk factors in the program or activity taking into account:
    - The age, race, social background, gender, skin color, disability, religion, beliefs, citizenship or sexual orientation of the children
    - The setting or environment (e.g. is it outdoors, in a Shelter Home, one-on-one, at night, etc.)
    - What is involved in the program or activity (e.g. workshops)
    - The level of supervision and ratio of adults to children
    - Any other risk factor you can identify

2. Evaluate the level of risk of each of the identified factors as HIGH, MEDIUM or LOW.

3. Prioritise the factors according to their level of risk.

4. Develop strategies to minimise the risk in order to reduce the likelihood of harm or abuse occurring.

If a child will be physically present at an activity the child as well as her or his parents/guardians must complete: **a Parental / Child Consent form.**

8.0. COMMUNICATIONS ABOUT CHILDREN

- Photographs or videos of children must be decent and respectful, and not presenting them as victims. Children should be adequately clothed and poses that could be interpreted as sexually suggestive must be avoided. Language that implies a relationship of power should also be avoided. However, we also recognize there are times when children are in reality victims, for example, of famine. In such cases the child's dignity should still be preserved whilst presenting the reality.
- No FAROF staff or partners is allowed to scan images of children onto Web sites nor can any child's photo or video be used for promotional materials without formal permission of the organization responsible for the project, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child, and where the child is old enough (e.g. over the age of 5 or 6 years), the child must also give his/her permission. This permission should be in writing.
- Child's personal and physical information that could be used to identify the location of a child within a country should not be used on FAROF web sites or in any other form of communication about a child.
- Individuals or organizations requesting the use of FAROF's resources such as videos or photographs should be required to sign an agreement with the organization as to the proper use of such materials, in line with the Child Safeguarding Policy. The agreement will include a statement that any use of such materials for purposes other than what is agreed upon could subject the borrowing individual or organization to legal action. Furthermore, failure to adhere to the agreed upon use of the material will result in the immediate termination of the organization's permission to use the subject materials and/or require immediate return of all materials provided by the agency as well as any copies of such materials.

9.0. PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Any agreement between FAROF and partners which provide services to children will require assurance that child safeguarding policies and procedures are in place, acknowledging that lack of such policies can place children and the agency at risk.

10.0. SUPPORTING POLICIES

Other policies and laws that support the FAROF child protection policies in Nigeria include: The Nigerian Constitution 1999 as amended; the National Health Policy (2016); the National Priority Agenda for (OVC) 2013-2020; the Trafficking in Persons Prohibition Enforcement and Administration (TIPPEA) Act 2015; the Universal Basic Education Act 2003 (amended 2005, 2014); the Birth, Death (Compulsory Registration) Act 1992; the National Human Rights Commission Act 1995. The Administration of Criminal Justice Act 2015, Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act (VAPP, 2015). The 2015 TIPPEA Act renamed NAPTIP to the 'National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons', thus streamlining NAPTIP's mandate to increase its efficiency, with 6 specialized departments and reinforced

powers including for co-ordination purposes and enforcement of all other laws on TIP and other related offences such as the VAPP 2015 Act. The TIPPEA Act 2015 also tightens penalty provisions and reduces the discretion of judges to offer the option of fine in lieu of prison term.

Non-discrimination - Section 42 of the 1999 Nigeria Constitution provides for freedom from discrimination on the grounds of ethnic group, origin, gender, religion, circumstances of birth, disability, or political opinion.

Best Interests of The Child – ***FAROF works in the best interest of a child, w***here there are inconsistences in the age of a child, the issue will be resolved in favour of the child. In line with the CRA, sections 1 and 2 states that:

> *"In every action concerning a child, whether undertaken by an individual, public or private body, institutions or service, court of law, or administrative or legislative authority, the best interest of the child shall be the primary consideration……."*

11.0. SURVIVAL RIGHTS OF THE CHILD; BASIC HEALTH AND WELFARE

- **FAROF protects Against Harmful Social and Cultural Practices that affect every child, be** victims of harmful cultural/religious practices: Female genital mutilation, body-parts burning and beating of alleged child witches, child marriage, child-bride kidnapping, wife inheritance, bride price and dowry related violence, virginity test etc. (www.stopvaw.org).
- **FAROF is concerned about Handicapped Children, through partnering with other** organizations or government in sensitizing parents who have children with special needs. FAROF promote Free education to be given to physically challenged children in hard to reach communities.
- FAROF is concerned that children are relegated from participating in activities related to the rights stated in Article 38 subsection 1 of the Nigerian constitution 1999 as amended which provides for freedom of thought, conscience and Religion. Cultural, traditional, and religious norms and assumptions are impediments to the implementation of these rights as well as limited knowledge and information to parents and community members on the child's rights.
- FAROF has keyed into the Education for All (EFA) goal. Section 15 of the Child Rights Act also states that every child has the right to free and compulsory education. FAROF will raise resources to increase basic education for children through, the Universal Basic Education Act 2004 and its strategic policies in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.
- FAROF and her staffs will ensure treatment and protection of refugee children and provisions of relief materials including livelihood trainings and empowerment programmes.

12.0. RIGHTS TO FREEDOM

Freedom of Association

Section 6 of the CRA states that *"Every child has the right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly in conformity with the law and in accordance with the necessary guidance and directions of his parents or guardians".* FAROF will continue to support this provision through practical approaches that aids children in exercising their freedom of association through the formation of clubs like the Girls' Guides, Boys' Brigades, Boys' Scouts, Child Rights and Debating Clubs.

Review of policy

This policy will be reviewed every reviewed every 4-years or earlier, as soon as practicable, if there is a material change in any matter referenced.

Annexes

This policy is signed and approved by:

Chairman Board of Trustees:	***Chief Executive Officer***
Date: 17th July 2023	*Date: 17th July 2023*
	Signature:
Signature	

Next Scheduled Policy Review June 2027

APPENDIX 1- FAROF's Child protection mechanism and/or Working Tools (Child safe guarding toolkits)

ANNEX A-Child Safe guiding tools for Emergency or conflict environment

This is a stand alone documents, kindly ask FAROF Admin to provided you with this document or visit www.farof.org/resource-center to access this tools

ANNEX B: ORGANIZATION CHILD PROTECTION SELF ASSESSMENT (CPSA) TOOL

This self-assessment tool can be used to measure if FAROF is meeting key child protection standards. The tool will assist the organization in identifying improvements in six areas:

1) children and the organization,
2) policies and procedures,
3) preventing harm to children,

4) implementation and training,
5) information and communications, and
6) monitoring and review.

Each of the areas of improvements have six standards which need to be rated by 3 grades:
1: in place 2: partially done 3: not in place
Check 1, 2, or 3 for each statement depending on your organization's progress in each area
Organization Name: ----------
Date: ----------
Completed by: ----------

Children and the organization		1	2	3
1	The organization is very clear about its responsibility to protect children and makes this known to all who come into contact with it.			
2.	The way staff and other representatives behave towards children suggests that they are committed to protecting children from abuse.			
3.	There is good awareness of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) or other children's rights instruments and this is seen as a basis for child protection in the organization.			
4	Managers and senior staff ensure that children are listened to and consulted and that their rights are met			
5	The agency makes it clear that all children have equal rights to protection.			
6	The agency manages children's behavior in ways that are non - violent and do not degrade or humiliate children.			
Policies and procedures that help keep children safe				
7	The agency has a written child protection policy or has some clear arrangements to make sure that children are kept safe from harm.			
8	The policy or arrangements are approved and endorsed by the relevant management body (e.g. , senior management board, executive, committee).			
9	The policy or arrangements have to be followed by everyone			
10	There are clear child protection procedures in place that provide step - by - step guidance on what action to take if there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare			
11	There is a named child protection person/s with clearly defined role and responsibilities			
12	The child protection procedures also take account of local circumstances.			
Preventing harm to children				
13	There are policies and procedures or agreed ways of recruiting staff and for assessing their suitability to work with children, including where possible police and reference checks			
14	There are written guidelines for behavior or some way of describing to staff and other representatives what behavior is acceptable and unacceptable especially when it comes to contact with children			

15	The consequences of breaking the guidelines on behavior are clear and linked to organizational disciplinary procedures			
16	Guidance exists on appropriate use of information technology such as the internet, websites, digital cameras etc. to ensure that children are not put at risk			
17	Where there is direct responsibility for running/providing activities, including residential care, children are adequately supervised and protected at all times.			
18	There are well - publicized ways in which staff/representatives can raise concerns, confidentially if necessary, about unacceptable behavior by other staff or representatives			
Implementation and training				
19	There is clear guidance to staff, local partners and other organizations (including funding organizations) on how children will be kept safe.			
20	Child protection must be applied in ways that are culturally sensitive but without condoning acts that are harmful to children			
21	There is a written plan showing what steps will be taken to keep children safe.			
22	All members of staff and volunteers have training on child protection when they join the organization , which includes an introduction to the organization's child protection policy and procedures where these exist			
23	All members of staff and other representatives are provided with opportunities to learn about how to recognize and respond to concerns about child abuse.			
24	Work has been undertaken with all partners to agree good practice expectations based on these standards			
Information and communication				
25	Children are made aware of their right to be safe from abuse			
26	Everyone in the organization knows which named staff member has special responsibilities for keeping children safe and how to contact them			
27	Contact details are readily available for local child protection resources, safe places, national authorities and emergency medical help			
28	Children are provided with information on where to go to for help and advice in relation to abuse, harassment and bullying			
29	Contacts are established at a national and/or local level with the relevant child protection/welfare agencies as appropriate			
30	Staff members with special responsibilities for keeping children safe have access to specialist advice, support and information.			
Monitoring and review				
31	Arrangements are in place to monitor compliance with child protection measures put in place by the			

	organization .			
32	Steps are taken to regularly ask children and parents/ guardians their views on policies and practices aimed at keeping children safe the effectiveness of these.			
33	The organization uses the experience of operating child protection to influence policy and practice development			
34	All incidents, allegations of abuse and complaints are recorded and monitored			
35	Policies and practices are reviewed at regular intervals, ideally at least every three years			
36	Children and parents/ guardians are consulted as part of a review of safeguarding policies and practices.			

ANNEX C: CHILD PROTECTION SELF-ASSESSMENT

The tool can be completed by:

1. Reading the Principle statement and 'What might this look like?' examples.
2. Marking whether the statement is true 'always', 'most of the time', 'sometimes', 'rarely', 'never'. Mark 'other' if you're unsure.
3. Recording any practices that are currently in place in the 'Scoring Comment' section.
4. Completing the 'Next Steps' section, focusing on Principles for which you've selected 'rarely', 'never' or 'other'.
5. Determine and record who is responsible for completing each next step and expected completion dates. You should include in the 'Next Steps' section what evidence will demonstrate that action has been taken.
6. Use the information recorded in the 'Next Steps' section of each Principle to complete the priority action list on the final page, and schedule regular reporting within the organization (for example, at committee or council meetings).

Organization Name: ----------
Date: ----------
Completed by: ----------

Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.	
1) Everyone in the organisation **understands their responsibilities** and **models attitudes and behaviours** that show they are committed to child safety and wellbeing. What might this look like? • Everyone prioritises the best interests of children. • Leaders model behaviour that promotes the organisation's commitment to child safety and wellbeing. • Volunteers and staff are informed about child safety and wellbeing. • The organisation's commitment to child safety is reiterated through policy, practice, and messaging. • The organisation integrates child safe commitment into everyday work practices. • The organisation makes a public commitment to child safety and wellbeing.	
Score	**Scoring comment**

☐ Always ☐ Most of the time ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never ☐ Other (don't know)	

Next steps	By whom	By when

Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
2) The organisation **values** children's views and invites children and young people to **participate in decision making**. What might this look like? • Children and young people are informed about, and understand, their rights, can speak up about their concerns and know how to seek help. • Children and young people have opportunities to give their opinion on what makes them feel safe and unsafe in the organisation. • Children and young people have opportunities to give their opinion about how things are done, and what could be done better. • The organisation encourages child participation in decision-making, listens to children and considers their views when developing activities and processes. • The organisation provides age-appropriate platforms for children and young people to communicate and participate e.g. through games, creative activities and group discussion.

Score	**Scoring comment**
☐ Always ☐ Most of the time ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never ☐ Other (don't know)	

Next steps	**By whom**	**By when**

Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

3) The organisation **involves and communicates** with **families and communities** about child safety and wellbeing.

What might this look like?

- The organisation informs families and communities of their child safe policies and procedures e.g. through website, newsletter, or open days
- The organisation invites families and communities to have a say about the development and review of policies and procedures
- The organisation actively invites feedback from families and communities about its activities and processes e.g. at meetings, surveys and informal discussions

Links to resources that support child safeguarding improvements in this area:

Score	**Scoring comment**
☐ Always ☐ Most of the time ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never ☐ Other (don't know)	

Next steps	**By whom**	**By when**

Equity is upheld, and diverse needs respected in policy and practice

4) The organisation **encourages and supports** children and young people to participate, regardless of their circumstances, backgrounds, and diverse needs.

What might this look like?

- Policies and practices recognise and respect diversity and promote equitable participation by all children.
- Volunteers and staff learn about circumstances and experiences that increase a child's vulnerability to harm.
- Volunteers and staff take the concerns and needs of children seriously and respond meaningfully when issues are raised.
- The organisation considers how safety and wellbeing, and communication and participation, might differ for children and young people from diverse backgrounds and circumstances.

Score	**Scoring comment**
☐ Always ☐ Most of the time ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never ☐ Other (don't know)	

Next steps	**By whom**	**By when**

People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice

5) Volunteers and staff are **carefully selected,** and mandatory screening is completed.

What might this look like?

- Child safety is prioritised in the recruitment of volunteers and staff.
- Responsibilities of volunteers and staff to uphold child safety and wellbeing are reflected in position descriptions and advertisements.
- Volunteers and staff have current Working with Children Checks and necessary background checks if required (e.g. national police clearance).
- Volunteers and staff receive an appropriate induction and are aware of their responsibilities to protect children and young people from harm.
- The organisation verifies applicants' identity, qualifications, professional registration and relevant background/Working with Children/police checks.

Links to resources that support child safeguarding improvements in this area:	
Score ☐ Always ☐ Most of the time ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never ☐ Other (don't know)	**Scoring comment**

Next steps	**By whom**	**By when**

Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focussed

6) The organisation has **child friendly and accessible** processes for raising concerns and making complaints and **takes all concerns and complaints seriously**. Employees respond promptly and effectively when receiving complaints, concerns, and disclosures of abuse.

What might this look like?

- A clear complaint handling policy and process that outlines roles and responsibilities, approaches to managing a variety of complaints, and what action to take after a complaint has been made.
- The complaint handling process is understood by, and accessible to, children and young people, volunteers, staff, and families.
- Complaints are taken seriously and responded to promptly and thoroughly.
- The organisation has procedures in place to report complaints and concerns to relevant authorities when necessary and within appropriate timeframes.
- The organisation uses learnings from feedback and complaints received to improve their policy and practice.
- Information about raising and responding to concerns and complaints is in easy English for individuals with different levels of English literacy and cognitive ability.
- Information about raising and responding to concerns and complaints is available in child-friendly formats, such as the use of visual aids.

Score	**Scoring comment**
☐ Always	

☐ Most of the time ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never ☐ Other (don't know)	

Next steps	By whom	By when

Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training

7) The organisation provides **continuous support** to volunteers and staff to meet the needs of children and young people and **information and training** on child safety and wellbeing, including how to **respond** to complaints, concerns, and disclosures of abuse.

What might this look like?

- Volunteers and staff are trained and follow the organisation's policies, procedures and processes when responding to a complaint or disclosure of harm or abuse.
- Training resources and tools are consistent, accessible, easy to use and updated regularly with current process and practice requirements.
- Regular training and supervision sessions are provided to volunteers and staff

Score	Scoring comment
☐ Always ☐ Most of the time ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never ☐ Other (don't know)	

Next steps	By whom	By when

Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
8) The organisation's **risk management plan** addresses both physical and online risks. What might this look like? • The organisation has a risk management plan that identifies, assesses, and takes steps to minimise the risk of children being harmed. • A risk management plan is outlined in policies and procedures and volunteers and staff are aware of the plan and their role in its implementation. • A risk management plan considers increased risk with specific roles and activities, and children with heightened vulnerability.

Score	**Scoring comment**
☐ Always ☐ Most of the time ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never ☐ Other (don't know)	

Next steps	**By whom**	**By when**

Implementation of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations is regularly reviewed and improved

9) The organisation **regularly reviews** and **improves** their child safe practices.

What might this look like?

- The organisation regularly reviews child safe practices and completes this self-assessment tool annually for continuous improvement.
- The organisation creates a plan for future action (see action plan at the end of this document) on child safety and wellbeing with timeframes that are committed to and met.
- The organisation reports on the findings of child safety reviews to volunteers and staff, families, communities and children and young people.

Score	**Scoring comment**
☐ Always ☐ Most of the time ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never ☐ Other (don't know)	

Next steps	**By whom**	**By when**

Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people			
• The organisation has **policies and procedures** on child safety that are **easily accessible**. Volunteers and staff know how to apply policies and procedures. What might this look like? • Child safety policies and procedures are easily available on the organisation's website and are accessible to people with diverse needs. Where appropriate, hard copies of documents are made available. • Volunteers and staff understand their roles and responsibilities in implementing the policies and procedures. • Volunteers and staff support children and young people, families, and community members to access and understand the policies, procedures, and processes. Organisations display child safe messages and materials where appropriate.			
Score ☐ Always ☐ Most of the time ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never ☐ Other (don't know)	**Scoring comment**		
Next steps		**By whom**	**By when**

ANNEX D: CHILD SAFEGUARDING CODE OF CONDUCT

When working with children, I agree that:

• I will treat all children with respect and equality irrespective of sex, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, (dis)ability, social status, religion, language or any other factors.

• While treating all children equally, I will do my best to ask the opinion of the child on the matters which concern them and are related to my role and zone of responsibility.

• I will prioritize my personal contribution to building age- and gender-responsive, inclusive, barrier-free space for children and their caregivers within the zone of my responsibility.
• I will not use any such language or behaviour towards children that is inappropriate, stereotypical, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate.
• I will not engage in any form of sexual activity with children regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally.
• I will not use a child or adult to procure sex for others.
• I will not exchange money, employment, goods, assistance or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour, including paying for sexual services.
• I will not engage in any sexual relationship with a person benefitting from assistance I provide that involves improper use of rank or position.
• I will not participate in any sexual activity that is forced upon another individual.
• I understand that sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment.
• I will, whenever possible, ensure that another adult is present when working near children. I will never allow myself to be in a situation where I am alone at partnership implementation site with only one child and no other adults.
• I will not invite unaccompanied children into private residences unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger.
• I will never use my computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras of social media to exploit or harass children, or access child exploitation material through any media.
• I will not use physical, psychological, economic, sexual violence against children either in online or offline settings.
• I will not hire children for domestic or other labour, which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage; which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities; or which places them at significant risk of injury or psychological trauma.
• I will comply with all relevant national and local legislation, including legislation on preventing and combating domestic violence, on preventing and combating discrimination, on ensuring equal rights and opportunities of women and men, and law in relation to child labour.
• I will not engage in or facilitate children's participation in illegal activities or exposing children to a situation that may foreseeably and unreasonably endanger them.
• I will immediately and in good faith report any concerns, suspicions, or allegations regarding sexual exploitation and abuse and policy noncompliance by a fellow worker, whether in the same site or not, via one of the FAROF reporting mechanisms: Emailing: whistle@farof.org, or call the FAROF hotline; +2347081333335
• I will respect confidentiality regarding SEA or other misconduct cases and cooperate with the investigation.
• I will immediately disclose all charges, convictions, and other outcomes of an offence that relates to child exploitation and abuse to the investigating officer in charge.
• I will ensure that the site where I serve has posters/brochures on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), provided by FAROF, and information on gender-based violence (GBV) referrals.
• If I identify signs of abuse in a child, I will immediately refer them to appropriate services (community-based Child Affairs Services or Police) to get support using an up-to-date area specific violence against children referral mechanism, which must be available at each site.
• I will be aware of behaviour and avoid actions or behaviours that could be perceived by others as child exploitation and abuse.

When photographing or filming a child or using children's images for work-related purposes:

• I will obtain informed written consent from the child (older than 14 years old) and a parent or guardian of the child (younger than 14 years old) before photographing or filming a child. An explanation of how the photograph or film will be used must be provided.

• I will ensure photographs, films, videos present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive.
• I will ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts.
• I will ensure fair and non-stereotypical visibility of girls, boys, women and men from diverse groups in a way that not only depict their equal representation but also doesn't perpetuate gender stereotypes and allows boys, girls, men and women to be presented on equal footing and in their diverse roles.
• I will ensure file labels, meta data, and text descriptions do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically or publishing images of any form.

With this Code of Conduct, I acknowledge that I understand everything that is written here. I understand that this Code of Conduct is mandatory for me to follow all the time (not just during working hours) when working with or around children. This list of behaviours is not exhaustive; in general, I must avoid any actions or behaviours which may put children at risk of any harm.
I understand that it is mandatory for me to report any misconduct committed by another staff or volunteer. This includes anything of concern that I see, hear about, or am told about. When in doubt, I will always inform the relevant person (my supervisor, FAROF designated staff/Child Protection focal point/PSEA focal point). I understand it is not my role to investigate anything, but to report anything that concerns me, without delay.
SIGNATURE: ----------
DATE: ----------

ANNEX E: GUIDELINES FOR PREVENTING HARM TO CHILDREN PROGRAM/PROJECT ACTIVITIES

FAROF shall ensure safeguarding measures will be applied by all FAROF personnel and partners, contractors, and suppliers who interact with children. Safeguarding measures include:

- systematically checking with prior employers to ensure potential hires do not pose a threat to children.
- having personnel confirm that they have not harmed children in the past.
- creating awareness of child safeguarding for all personnel
- conducting risk analyses of all FAROF programmes
- developing action plans for programmes to improve child safeguarding.
- Moreover, it encompasses ensuring children participate in decisions that affect them to the fullest extent possible, and systematically adopting child friendly approaches that are easily understood by and accessible to children.

Working with children

FAROF may carry out activities that may include the direct involvement of children and/or contact with them. In planning such activities, FAROF may consider:
• the nature of the information FAROF accesses or gathers, including personal information, photos, videos, text and audio recordings
• whether participation in the activity may have harmful consequences or lead to intimidation, reprisals, or the fear of such
• whether some children may face additional vulnerabilities and require specific measures to ensure their safe participation in the activity.
FAROF shall create a safe environment for children's involvement in activities it organizes by mitigating any specific risks identified, and by ensuring the following:
• Children's contributions, images and other personal information shall be presumed to be confidential unless FAROF has received written consent for the use of such material or information as part of its activities.

• FAROF shall refrain from sharing children's personally identifiable information, such as their full name, postal address, name of their school, email address, phone number and details for their social media accounts.
• FAROF shall not undertake any activities or produce any written, visual or audio content that exploits children, stigmatizes them or exposes them to harm.
• At public events where children are involved and in which other parties participate, FAROF will remind all participants of the need to respect children's privacy and protect them from harm, for example in relation to other parties taking photographs or sharing details of the event on social media.
• During online events that involve children, FAROF shall consider the use of technical tools and methods of interaction to keep children safe, including:

- using the event registration function to identify participants under the age of 18
- sharing safeguarding information and the Code of Conduct before the event and reminding participants of the main points at the start of the event
- inviting children to display their first names only on the online platform
- reminding children not to share any personally identifiable information
- disabling the chat function and/or video for participants under the age of 18
- filtering questions through a moderator.

ANNEX F: GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO CHILD PROTECTION AND CONCERNS

All Staff who have reason to believe that a child may have experienced violence, abuse, exploitation, or neglect, or that the safety or well-being of a child may be at risk, as a result of an action or abstention of a FAROF personnel, partners, contractors, or suppliers shall have the obligation to report it as soon as possible.
Reports can be made through the relevant authority in the FAROF:
• Human Resources Department; or
• to the personnel's own line manager(s); or
• any Senior Manager; or
• FAROF's confidential hotline: +2347081333335
It is important that all relevant information is shared when making a report. Relevant information can include what happened, who was involved, where, when, and how you were informed. When making a report it is essential to respect the principle of confidentiality. FAROF will ensure data protection systems are in place to protect data.
FAROF is committed to protecting individuals who report a suspicion of breaches under this Policy from any form of retaliation. This includes the provisions outlined in the FAROF's Whistleblower Protection Policy. All reports and concerns raised by both personnel and individuals in the community will be properly considered, documented, and treated seriously, with care, discretion and in a reasonable timeframe. Any information shared concerning an allegation will be treated confidentiality by the relevant authorities listed above. FAROF shall ensure that appropriate action is taken to support and protect children where concerns arise regarding possible violence, abuse, exploitation, or neglect. This includes implementing effective investigation processes, supporting survivors as appropriate, and holding people accountable.

Actions to Be Taken When Concern Is Raised

- Make sure that all employees understand the role of the designated safeguarding lead, and know who this person is and how to contact him or her.
- Contact the relevant local agencies and organizations and keep a directory of all contact information readily available should the safeguarding lead need to pass concerns on. At minimum, this should include the police, other statutory agencies (e.g., social services), relevant charities and support organizations, and information on how to contact country embassies.

- Ensure there is an internal system in place for making safeguarding decisions (referred to as the 'safeguarding committee' in this toolkit). The committee needs to include individuals who can support the safeguarding lead in making decisions about the best course of action for any incidents as they arise. The group should include senior personnel (e.g., the line manager) and have access to legal advice when it is needed. A contingency plan should be in place for situations where allegations or concerns involve someone from the safeguarding committee (e.g., protecting the identity of the person who reported).
- Develop a standard safeguarding incident form (or equivalent) for recording the details of any concerns raised, and a system for storing this form securely and confidentially. When relevant, ensure there are also policies for unattended and missing children to manage these types of incidents.

Safeguarding concerns may arise and be reported to the safeguarding focal point in a variety of ways, including a report by a colleague or a member of the public, information coming to light through safe recruitment processes, or statutory agencies making contact as part of an ongoing investigation. The following flow chart offers an overview of steps to take and decisions to make after a concern is raised.

Incident/concern report Form

General Information		
Project:	Location:	
Child's name:	Gender:	Age:
Language spoken:	Any disability:	Date of birth:
Child's details		
Name of parent/caregiver:	Contact information: Phone number:	
Language spoken:	Any disability:	
Type of adverse event (tick)		
Child or adult discloses physical, sexual, emotional abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a child Staff member suspects physical, sexual, emotional abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a child Child safeguarding concern arises Other forms of violence towards study participants or staff (e.g. violent attack against the staff) Hospitalization (suicidality, frequent seizure, violent behaviour [i.e. harm to others]) Injuries/accidents on way to/from program Death of participant		
Information on steps taken to ensure safety of child (where applicable)		

Recent changes in child's behavior (where applicable)
Details of concern: what, who, where, when (including child's words where possible):
Other relevant information (including immediate actions taken and steps forward):
Alleged Perpetrator's details (if known, and if relevant):

Name:	Address:
Age:	Employment details:
Current location of alleged perpetrator:	Relationship, if any to child:

Current safety of child including location:	
Has emergency medical attention been required?	
What: Provided by:	
Who else knows?	
Witnesses:	Family members or any individual:
Actions taken to date: e.g. report to police, social welfare, other. Give contact details and date and time of action.	

Report details:		
Time:	Date:	Place:

Reporter's details:	
Name:	Contact:
Position:	Relationship to child:
Report taken by:	
Name:	Date:
Position and location:	Signature
This section is to be completed by Child Safeguarding Focal Point following receipt of the report:	
Action to be taken	

Name:	Position:
Location:	Date and time report received:

ANNEX G: CONSEQUENCES FOR MISCONDUCT

- Disciplinary measures are applied to FAROF staff who are found to have engaged in acts of misconduct at FAROF or in connection with a FAROF managed activity. Such acts are considered serious acts of misconduct and can be ground for summary dismissal.
- Sanctions such as immediate termination of contract are imposed by the sanctions committee against individuals holding a work contract with FAROF who are found to have engaged in acts of misconduct against children.
- Disciplinary measures are also applied to FAROF staff or individuals holding a work contract with FAROF who fail to reports acts of misconduct against children in a timely manner or who encourages or condones such acts.

Where FAROF may have believed that the laws of the country have been violated, the CEO may decide to refer cases regarding misconduct against children to national authorities for purpose of criminal proceedings as appropriate. In this case, the CEO may decide to waive the functional immunities of the implicated staff member or other persons or records relevant to the investigation

ANNEX H: MONTORING AND EVALUATION AND REPORTING (IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES TO ENSURE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY IS PUT IN PLACE)

Regular open discussions with the organisation's staff, volunteers, partners and stakeholders will be held to evaluate the implementation of the Child Safeguarding Policy throughout the implementation period of the project

• Use of child-friendly tools to evaluate and assess with children the compliance of the project staff/partner to the child safeguarding standards at planned intervals

• Project monitoring visits to include a quarterly formal child safeguarding check supported by a standardized template

• Head office monitoring visits to include check on project- and country-level child safeguarding progress on plans/actions.

Reporting

Quarterly and annual reports to summarize progress made on all reports made regarding child safeguarding (both project and non-project related), including lessons learned that will inform future projects

• Incidents to be reported following the child safeguarding reporting procedures and generically summarised in quarterly reports without identifying any parties involved. This process should include follow-up actions both taken and pending.

• Every four, eight and 12 months a Child Safeguarding incident log will be collated by FAROF. This will support the organization in identifying child safeguarding trends and thereby strengthen our prevention and response mechanisms.

ANNEX I-Statement of Commitment to FAROF's Child Safeguarding Policy

Statement of Commitment to FAROF's Child Safeguarding Policy

1. I, _____ have read, have been given a briefing or induction and **understand** the standards and guidelines outlined in this Child Protection Policy.

2. I agree with the principles contained herein and accept to conduct myself, and my work, in line with the standards and rules laid out in the Child Safeguarding Policy. I agree to do so both in my professional and private life. I understand that these rules include a mandatory requirement for staff to report all concerns.

3. I have not been accused or convicted of any offence involving any form of abuse or exploitation of children.

4. I understand that if a complaint is brought against me regarding a breach of the Child Safeguarding Policy while engaged by FAROF, the allegation will be thoroughly investigated in cooperation with the appropriate authorities;

5. I agree to co-operate with any investigation that involves an allegation of a breach of the Child Safeguarding Policy, whether that allegation has been made against me or against another representative of the organization.

(*Print name)*

_____

(*Job title/role)*

_____

(*Signature)*

_____

(Date)

Disclaimer: *This document has been developed by FAROF, specifically for its own use. Use of this document and any reliance on the information contained therein by any third party is at his or her own risk and FAROF assumes no responsibility whatsoever.*

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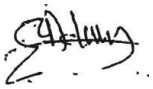

Ambassador Eunice Adams
CEO