



Subject	Child Protection Policy		
Responsibility	Head of Human Resources	Date	Sept 2021
Sponsor	Chief Executive	Page	Page 1 of 4

1 Policy Statement

This policy sets out Farm Africa’s approach and practices around child protection in order to keep the people we work with, including the most vulnerable people – children, safe. Farm Africa acknowledges it is our duty to act appropriately to ensure that the children we come into contact with are safe, and feel safe.

Farm Africa considers that a ‘child’ is everyone below the age of 18; this is in accordance with the UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child). We believe that children have a right to protection from abuse or exploitation. We will not tolerate any child abuse and this policy sets out the principles, values and practices that Farm Africa’s staff, Board Members, contractors, consultants and volunteers must follow when working with children.

Farm Africa has a policy that defines our position on safeguarding more generally, whilst this policy focuses specifically on Child Protection.

Farm Africa’s project portfolios change over time, however, we may have projects where we work directly with children. Children are also likely to be present in the farm setting in projects where we work directly with adults.

It is vital to have a Child Protection policy and procedures in place so that staff, including senior managers, volunteers, consultants, agency workers, trustees and partners recognise abuse and know what actions to take to prevent it.

The policy statement and procedures have been drawn up in order to enable Farm Africa to:

- Promote good practice and work in a way that can prevent harm, abuse and coercion occurring
- To ensure that any allegations of abuse or suspicions are dealt with appropriately and the child and their family receive support from us and the appropriate authorities
- To stop the abuse occurring.

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers, volunteers, consultants, agency workers, trustees, partners and anyone working on behalf of Farm Africa.

In order to implement the policy and ensure children’s welfare, Farm Africa will protect a child’s right to:

- Live free from abuse and coercion to enable them to achieve their full potential
- Have their health, safety, well-being and best interests considered as paramount
- Farm Africa managing our work in a way that values, respects children, promoting safety

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and preventing abuse

- Have their needs identified within the context of their culture, family, religion and ethnicity
- To recruit staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all appropriate employment references are obtained
- To ensure that all staff, volunteers, consultants, agency workers, trustees, partners and anyone working on behalf of Farm Africa are aware of our Code of Conduct and this policy
- To provide effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision and training

In order to respect these rights, Farm Africa's Code of Conduct requires anyone working on behalf of Farm Africa to:

1. Treat people with dignity and respect
2. Ensure their personal and professional conduct is of the highest standard
3. Take responsibility for their own safety, health and welfare and for those they manage and work with
4. To act with the upmost financial integrity
5. To protect Farm Africa's reputation in how they behave
6. To steward (use) Farm Africa's assets wisely
7. To make a commitment to report any incident or concern of a breach of the Code of Conduct

2 Child Protection Processes

Farm Africa has a duty of care to put measures in place that reduce the likelihood of abuse happening within our work, and ensuring that all children that come into contact with Farm Africa are protected from harm.

When in contact with children you must:

- Be aware of situations that may present a risk of abuse and manage these
- Plan and organise work and the workplace to minimise risks to children
- Be, wherever possible, visible to others when working directly with, or around children
- Be open and create culture in which concerns and issues can be discussed, where children understand what is acceptable, what is unacceptable and what they can do if there is a problem
- Create a culture of mutual accountability to ensure that abusive behaviour can be challenged

When in contact with children you must not:

- Spend excessive time alone with a child
- Take children to your home, especially where they will be alone with you
- Hit or otherwise physically assault or abuse children
- Develop any kind of physical or sexual relationship with children
- Develop a relationship with children that could be in any way be deemed as exploitative or abusive
- Act in ways that may place children at risk
- Use language, make suggestions or offer advice that is inappropriate, offensive or abusive
- Behave physically in a manner that is inappropriate or sexually provocative
- Have a child or children that you are working with stay overnight at your home
- Sleep in the same room or bed as a child or children you are working with
- Do things of a personal nature that the child can do for themselves

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- Condone or participate in behaviour that is illegal, unsafe or abusive to children
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, degrade or belittle
- Discriminate, show different treatment to, including showing favour to a particular child to the exclusion of others

When in contact with children you must encourage children not to:

- Hit or otherwise physically assault or abuse fellow children
- Say abusive words
- Show disrespect to other children

3 Recognising Signs of Abuse

Farm Africa believes that child abuse may include any of the following:

- Physical Abuse, include beating causing actual body harm e.g. bruising, burns, or injury to the child.
- Sexual Abuse, involving the child in sexual activities e.g. rape, defilement, oral sex, exposure to sexually explicit material or acts, or any other act which could be considered to be of a sexual nature
- Psychological or emotional abuse, including belittling, name calling, threats of harm, intimidation, isolation, creating continuous or sporadic fear
- Neglect or negligence, the failure of parents, or others, to fulfil their responsibilities towards children e.g. failure to feed, clothe, educate or provide medical care
- Discriminatory abuse, including racism, sexism, discrimination based on a child's disability or any other form of harassment, slur or similar treatment
- Abuse may be a single act or repeated acts

4 Responsibilities

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers, volunteers, consultants, agency workers, trustees, partners and anyone working on behalf of Farm Africa and managers must ensure that everyone working in connection with Farm Africa is made aware of it.

Country Directors, the Director of Programmes and the Head of Human Resources are responsible for ensuring the implementation of all aspects of the Child Protection Policy in the areas of the business for which they are responsible. The Chief Executive holds overall responsibility for implementation of the policy.

Any member of staff found breaching this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Others breaching this policy will be subject to appropriate action such as ending a relationship with a volunteer relationship, termination of a contract.

Farm Africa will also report concerns to the relevant local authority and the police.

5 Transportation

The transporting of children should be carefully considered. Resources such as child safety harnesses and travel seats must be used if children are being transported to ensure their safety.

6 Communication about children

In its communication and fundraising strategy, Farm Africa may at times use images and recordings of children. Farm Africa has a responsibility towards the children that are portrayed and should ensure that children are treated with dignity as humans with rights by avoiding the following:

- Inaccurate representation of children through words and images.
- Communication that shames degrades or victimizes children.

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- Taking pictures or statements from children without informed consent of care-givers.
- Depicting children in sexually provocative poses
- No personal and physical information to identify the location of a child that could put them at risk, to be put on website or used in communications.
- The purpose for which images or information on children is to be obtained must be clearly explained and understood, and informed consent must come from the child or person able to give valid consent. In the UK there are systems in place in most institutions to gain and record consent. Outside the UK the Farm Africa Project Coordinator (or other senior staff member) should complete the 'FA Media Consent Form' to show that this has been verbally obtained.
- A copy of the 'FA Media Consent Form' shall be retained by Farm Africa, and use of the personal data shall be carefully monitored and kept secure and within the control of Farm Africa.

7 Reporting Concerns

Farm Africa believes that everyone has a responsibility to prevent harm and abuse. Anyone who has concerns can discuss their concerns with either their line manager, or where they feel this is not appropriate their country or department director, or if they prefer they can raise their concerns anonymously using our confidential reporting address: confidential@farmfrica.org

Full details of reporting concerns and whistle blowing can be found in the Whistle Blowing/ Protected Disclosure policy.

Farm Africa will respond to allegations of harm or abuse by:

- suspending the member of staff accused, pending the disciplinary process
- immediately reporting the accusation to the appropriate local authorities
- where appropriate conducting a thorough investigation, as part of our disciplinary policy
- supporting any criminal investigation

Single or repeated incidents of harm or abuse will be considered as gross misconduct and will result in dismissal without notice.

The Head of Human Resources will be responsible for ensuring that all reports of harm or abuse are logged and reported in line with this policy.

All incidents will be reported to the board of trustees

All incidents will be reported to the local authority and the police

Where an incident is proven and meets the definitions of a serious incident, it will be reported to the Charity Commission, through its serious incident reporting process

8 Procedure and Timing for Review of this Policy

This policy will be reviewed as a minimum every three years. Comments or suggestions on how this policy is operating should be sent to the Head of Human Resources.