

# Global Safeguarding Policy

## Document control

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## Version control

Date	Version	Reason for change	Author
January 2021	1.0	New policy	Leigh Heale, Global Head of Safeguarding
December 2021	2.0	Addition of Principles of Child Safeguarding and Global Disclosure Policy	Leigh Heale, Global Head of Safeguarding

# Global Safeguarding Policy

## 1 Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to protect all individuals who come into contact with WaterAid through its work, including children, vulnerable adults, and staff/ associated representatives from any form of harm or abuse. It confirms the contractual and moral responsibilities of staff, contractors, partners and volunteers to safeguard children, young people, and vulnerable adults in all areas of WaterAid's work as outlined in more detail in WaterAid's [Global Code of Conduct](#), which all staff sign up to.

This includes harm arising from:

- The conduct of staff or representatives associated with WaterAid.
- The design and implementation of WaterAid's programmes and activities.

This policy does not cover:

- Safeguarding concerns in the wider community not perpetrated by WaterAid or associated representatives.

## 2 Scope

2.1 This is a global policy and applies to all staff across the WaterAid federation and to representatives whilst engaged with work or visits related to WaterAid's work, including but not limited to the following: consultants; volunteers; contractors; partners; programme visitors; and trustees.

## 3 What is safeguarding?

- 3.1 Safeguarding is the responsibility that organisations have to ensure their staff, associated representatives, and programmes do no harm. Safeguarding people includes, but is not limited to, safeguarding against harassment, sexual harassment, bullying or cyber bullying, discrimination, exploitation or abuse, safeguarding children, safeguarding vulnerable adults, and health, welfare, safety and security.
- 3.2 WaterAid defines a child as anyone under the age of 18 in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child definition.

## 4 Policy Statement

4.1 At WaterAid we are committed to the safeguarding and wellbeing of all individuals who we come into contact with, including the people in communities in which we work, staff, volunteers, contractors, and partners. WaterAid will not tolerate its employees, volunteers, consultants, partners or any other representatives associated with the delivery of its work engaging in, or being subjected to, any form of exploitation or abuse.

4.2 In accordance with WaterAid's Global Code of Conduct WaterAid staff and representatives will not:

- Engage in any form of sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18 including online offending.
- Sexually abuse or exploit children or vulnerable adults.
- Subject a child or vulnerable adult to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, neglect or harassment.
- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children or vulnerable adults including child labour or trafficking in persons.
- Exchange money, employment, goods or services for any form of sexual activity. This includes any exchange of assistance that is due from WaterAid to communities.
- Engage in any sexual relationships with individuals receiving assistance since there are inherently based upon unequal power dynamics.
- Put a child or vulnerable adult at risk as a result of WaterAid's activities, either through individual action, inaction, events, or programme design and implementation. This includes the way in which we gather and communicate information about individuals in our programmes, since there are inherently unequal power dynamics.

4.3 WaterAid staff and associated representatives are obliged to:

- Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of WaterAid's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- Report any concerns or suspicions to WaterAid regarding safeguarding violations by a WaterAid staff member or associated

representative using the reporting mechanisms in place. See Section 5 and 6 for reporting mechanisms.

#### 4.4 WaterAid will:

- Design and implement programmes and projects which ensure that children and vulnerable adults are protected from risk of harm.
- Seek assurance and conduct robust due diligence on all of WaterAid's partners in respect of their safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Operate strict safer recruiting practices to ensure all staff, contractors and volunteers are appropriate for their roles and do not pose a risk to others in line with WaterAid's Global Disclosure Policy.
- Comply with all statutory reporting requirements such as the UK Charity Commission, and donor safeguarding responsibilities.

## 5 Reporting a concern

5.1 WaterAid will ensure that safe, appropriate, and accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to all staff, associated representatives, partners and the communities in which we work.

5.2 WaterAid's [Reporting Malpractice and breaches to the Global Code of Conduct](#) document details how complaints and concerns can be raised including details of our independent external reporting line.

5.3 Any member of staff who raises a concern is protected under our Reporting Malpractice and Breaches to the Global Code of Conduct document.

5.4 WaterAid will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies. These should be sent to [safeguarding@wateraid.org](mailto:safeguarding@wateraid.org).

## 6 How to report a concern

6.1 As detailed in our Reporting Malpractice and breaches of the Global Code of Conduct procedure, staff members who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to their Safeguarding Focal Point, or line manager. If the staff member does not feel comfortable reporting to their Safeguarding Focal Point or line manager (for example if they feel that the report will not be taken

seriously, or if that person is implicated in the concern) they may report to any other appropriate staff member. For example, this could be a senior manager or directly to the Global Safeguarding Team. Concerns can also be reported to [safeguarding@wateraid.org](mailto:safeguarding@wateraid.org) or to our external independent partner Protect.

## 7 Response

- 7.1 WaterAid operates a zero-tolerance approach towards inaction and will follow up on all safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy, procedure, and legal and statutory obligations where applicable. Our safeguarding procedures are set out within our [Global Safeguarding Internal Operating Procedures](#) and [Principles of Child Safeguarding](#).
- 7.2 WaterAid will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff, volunteers and contractors found in breach of this or any related policy.
- 7.3 WaterAid will offer support to survivors of harm caused by staff or associated representatives, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out (such as an internal investigation).
- 7.4 WaterAid is committed to taking a survivor centred approach in its responding and handling of incidents and concerns. This is detailed within our Global Safeguarding Internal Operating Procedures.

## 8 Accountability

- 8.1 Safeguarding is a shared responsibility, and all staff and representatives will be held accountable. Ultimately each federation member's Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring effective safeguarding measures are in place and are fit for purpose. This responsibility is delegated by the Boards of Trustees to the Chief Executives of each member. WaterAid employs a professional Global Safeguarding Team who support safeguarding on a day to day basis across the federation ensuring awareness and consistency of safeguarding measures and policies.

## 9. Confidentiality

- 9.1 It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the

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concern and subsequent case management will be shared on a need to know basis only and will be kept secure at all times.

- 9.2 Any breaches of confidentiality will be dealt with seriously and could result in disciplinary actions in line with the Reporting Malpractice and Breaches to the Global Code of Conduct procedures.

## 10. Supporting policies and documents

Safeguarding	Other departments
Global Safeguarding Policy	Global Code of Conduct
Global Code of Conduct definitions	Reporting Malpractice and Breaches to the Global Code of Conduct
Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults at WaterAid (Code of Practice)	Ethical Image Policy (Member specific)
Global Safeguarding Internal Operating Procedure	Research Policy (Member specific)
Global Safeguarding Standard	Data Protection Policy (Member specific)
Global Child Safeguarding Standard	Global Policy for Obtaining and Providing References
Global Safeguarding Strategy	Global Disclosure Policy