



PADF

Safeguarding Children and Communities Policy

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Purpose and scope

This policy forms part of our Safeguarding Policy suite. It is designed to ensure PADF treats all participants in our projects and host community members with respect and dignity and never engage in conduct that could be perceived as abusive, exploitative, or harassing.

This policy also covers any contact that PADF Employees and Others may have with children or at-risk adults within or outside the workplace. Definitions of a child and at-risk adult can be found in Glossary Annex A of the Safeguarding Policy.

This policy aims to:

- Raise awareness of the different types of unacceptable behavior between PADF and the communities with whom we work.
- Increase understanding of employee rights, roles, and responsibilities in preventing such unacceptable behavior from occurring in the first instance.
- Ensure that occurrences of unacceptable behavior are taken seriously and dealt with promptly and with due care and sensitivity.

This policy applies to all PADF Employees and Others in all locations, both during and outside of normal working hours.

- **Employees:** full-time, part-time, international, and national employees engaged by PADF in any location as well as advisers, consultants, interns, volunteers, Board members and trustees engaged by PADF
- **Others:** employees in partner agencies, sub-grantees or sub-awardees; and any other individuals, groups or organizations that have a formal or contractual (but not employment) relationship with PADF.

Definitions of Harm

This policy covers harm that might arise from PADF's interactions with children and communities or because of the work being delivered. This includes emotional, physical, sexual, and neglect. Definitions of these forms of harm can be found in the Glossary Annex A of the Safeguarding Policy. Included in this Policy is a reference to adults who may be deemed "at risk". This acknowledges that adults may need particular safeguards to be in place because of their circumstances.

PADF has also developed a Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH) Policy in recognition of the seriousness of this issue and the priority of focus on this in the aid and development sector. Forms of SEAH that are experienced by children and communities, perpetrated by PADF Employees, and is described more fully, along with how to prevent and respond to this, in that Policy.

Principles for Safeguarding Children and Communities

These are as stated in the Safeguarding Policy Framework.

Roles and Responsibilities

These are as stated in the Safeguarding Policy Framework.

Prevention

The Safeguarding Policy Framework states the key measures that are taken to prevent harm and abuse to individuals.

Standards of Behavior

Behaviors which are prohibited include any and all sexual or romantic activity with children (persons under the age of 18) as outlined in the PSEAH Policy. The PSEAH Policy also prohibits PADF Employees and Others from engaging in romantic or sexual relationships with program participants.

The minimum requirements for all Employees and Others, to safeguard children are:

- Avoid working alone with a child and plan your work so that at least two adults are present at any time. If working alone is unavoidable, you should move to an area/workstation where you and the child can both be seen by other adults.
- Avoid inappropriate physical contact with a child. If a child is hurt or distressed, do your best to comfort or reassure her/him without compromising her dignity or doing anything to discredit your own behavior. Aim to understand local norms around physical contact between children and adults and ensure that any appropriate physical contact, such as holding hands, is initiated by the child
- Avoid spending excessive time alone with a child.
- Avoid taking children to your home. Do not have a child with whom you are working, stay overnight at your home unsupervised.
- Behave appropriately; ensure that language is moderated in their presence and refrain from adult jokes or comments that may cause discomfort or offense. Do not use language, make suggestions, or offer advice that is inappropriate, offensive, or abusive.
- Be sensitive to local norms and standards of behavior towards children. Do not hit or otherwise physically assault or abuse them, and do not develop physical/sexual relationships or any relationships that could be deemed exploitative or abusive.
- Listen to what the children are saying and respond appropriately.
- Plan activities in advance to ensure they take into account the age range and ability of all participants. Supervision should take account of the age, gender, nature of the activity, and any special needs of the individuals.
- Do not do things for a child of a personal nature that they can do for themselves.
- Be aware of situations that may present risks and manage these.
- Be familiar with the procedures for reporting concerns or incidents at PADF and make sure you know how to contact the Safeguarding Focal Point.
- Immediately report any concerns relating to the welfare of a child to the local

Safeguarding Focal Point. You should do this whether your concerns are based on allegations from the child or from your own suspicions.

- Maintain confidentiality.
- Do not condone or participate in behavior towards children or communities that is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
- Do not act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle, or degrade children or communities.
- Do not discriminate against or show deferential treatment or favor for particular children or community members.
- Similar standards of behavior as described above also apply when working with adults who are deemed to be 'at risk'.

Recruitment and screening

Enhanced screening practices for positions with direct or indirect contact with children and communities are:

- Position descriptions to be categorized for contact with children and communities, or access to their information;
- Interviews for these positions should be conducted by a panel that includes at least one person with child/adult safeguarding expertise.
- Where possible, successful candidates for these positions will undergo enhanced criminal records checks and these will need to be renewed every two years.

PADF will not knowingly employ any individual with a criminal conviction related to children, vulnerable groups or other such offenses related to their prospective position.

Capacity building of staff and others

PADF employees who will, or do, have contact with children and communities have opportunities to understand how to interact with children and adults at risk, identify concerns, receive disclosures appropriately and report within the timeframe required to ensure the child or adult at risk is not put at further risk of harm.

Safe programs and research

All programs and projects are assessed for the risk of harm to program participants and host communities. Reasonable risk mitigation measures are incorporated into the design and delivery of the program.

With regard to children:

- The safe design of programs involving adult participants must take account of whether those adults have children and the potential impact on them of their parent(s) involvement in the project e.g. childcare arrangements during project activities.
- Children's involvement in programs and project activities must be accompanied by informed consent from the child (if over 16 years) and the child's parents.
- Particular care must be taken on involving children in activities or events that involve

traveling away from home or otherwise present specific risks e.g. advocating on sensitive issues.

Similarly, programs or enterprises involving adults who might be deemed “at risk” (e.g. they have particular disabilities, or are in circumstances, that might increase their risk of harm and abuse) should ensure that the adults (or their carers) understand what participation in the program or enterprise involves, consent to it and have the necessary care or support arrangements in place to be able to participate safely.

Each program or project will conduct community awareness raising sessions with communities on PADF commitments to safeguarding and protecting them from harm. This should be done using language and content-appropriate messaging and include explicit reference to acceptable and unacceptable behaviors by PADF staff.

Reporting

The mechanisms for reporting are described in the Safeguarding Policy Framework. In addition, each program will establish Community-Based Reporting Mechanisms.

Community-Based Reporting Mechanisms

PADF will work with communities to establish Community-Based Reporting Mechanisms (CBCMs) which enable children and communities to feel comfortable and confident to report concerns.

These will be in addition to the routes available for employees and others to report concerns (described in the Safeguarding Policy Framework).

All reports of misconduct that come through CBCMs will be reported immediately to the General Counsel’s Office.

Survivor support and referrals will be done according to the services and support mappings available in each area of operation.

Support and care

This is as stated in the Safeguarding Policy Framework.

Response and accountability

This is as stated in the Safeguarding Policy Framework.

Concerns or reports of harm and abuse of children that are not perpetrated or caused by PADF will be reported to national or local formal authorities. PADF will determine whether these avenues are safe to use and explore alternatives as necessary.

Concerns or reports of harm and abuse of adults in communities that is not perpetrated or caused by PADF will prompt PADF to discuss with the adult, or person making the report, how to support

the adult through signposting national or local referral and reporting routes so that the adult can obtain the support he or she requires.