



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY 2009

As an organization working with and for women, children and youth, mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS in our working communities, we must continuously strive to create and sustain protective, safe, healthy and stimulating environments. Further, we must find ways to let women, children and youth express their opinions and give them a voice to actively participate in addressing challenges that face youth all over the world.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Children (1989) sets out to secure children's rights through 42 amendments, of which we want to highlight the following; best interest of the child, freedom of expression, freedom of information and the right to play and recreational activities. It is also of an utmost importance that Good Samaritan Women's Group Project has a Child Protection policy in place to safeguard our children and youth from any type of abuse as far as possible. Our youth coordinator is in regular contact with the children and the youth, and is important in identifying situations and cases where they will need protection.

The UN Convention states that all children have the right to be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse. A child is here defined as a young person under the age of 18 years of age. UNICEF uses the term `child protection` to refer to preventing and responding to exploitation, abuse and violence against children. Abuse and exploitation of children unfortunately happens in all countries and societies around the world. The Good Samaritan Women's Group Project regards any abuse as unacceptable and also as nearly always preventable, and we therefore aim to set out common values in meeting our commitments towards protecting our children and youth. Key principles for the Good Samaritan Women's Group Project and examples on guidelines for good practices and practices to be avoided will be outlined in the Code of Conduct.

Our mission

is to improve the quality of life of people affected by HIV and AIDS through working with communities in the areas of care, support for orphans and vulnerable children and HIV/AIDS Prevention especially among youth and widows.

Policy aims

- To ensure that we provide our children and youth with protective, safe, healthy and stimulating environments
- To ensure that the youth coordinator responds adequately to child protection issues
- To ensure that our working communities meet minimum standards of child protection in all that they do.

Code of conduct

The safety and the welfare of the child should always be our priority. We should aim to empower children by involving and discussing with them; about their rights, what is acceptable and what is not acceptable and how they can respond if there is a problem.

We find the following key principles as essential in our work with children:

- + Children should always be treated with respect
- + Children should be free from any physical or mental abuse
- + Children should be offered the opportunity to participate in sport activities regardless of gender, race, culture, language, age, sexual orientation, HIV status, religious beliefs and (dis)ability
- + Children should experience an open environment where they can express themselves and be listened to.
- + Children should be informed that they are free to report any kind of abuse to the authorities without fear of any repercussions
- + Children should experience the continuous promotion of fair play
- + Children should participate in Good Samaritan Women's Project activities and events of their own free will
- + Children should be provided with appropriate education on HIV and AIDS

Procedures and responses

All staff and volunteers of Good Samaritan Women's Group Project must make a common commitment to the protection of children and youth. And all instances of abuse, or suspicions of abuse, must be reported and responded to. The implementation of reporting and responding will need to be within the responsibility of each individual, but with the support of the management team. The responsible staff must develop a plan for the follow-up on awareness, prevention, reporting and responding to issues.

All staff member and volunteers are obliged to sign the Good Samaritan Women's Group Project Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct, and are thus also obliged to adhere to its contents. They need to ensure that information about child protection and the applicable procedures are circulated to the rural women leaders and peer educators.

Good Samaritan Women's Group Project considers the acceptance of the content in this policy as a pre-condition for working with the organization. The policy needs to be dated and signed before commencement of duty. Good Samaritan Women's Project will keep the Declaration of Acceptance on each staff and volunteer file.

Declaration

On behalf of _____, I, the undersigned, hereby declare that I have read and understood the Good Samaritan Women's Group Project Child Protection Policy. I agree to abide by its conduct, oversee the implementation and take the necessary steps to ensure that it is at the forefront of our practices in the organization.

Date: _____

Place: _____

Signature: _____

Witness: Witness:

Appendix 1 Code of conduct – A guideline

This appendix lists common examples on how to create the healthy and stimulating environments that we aim towards. Such list cannot be exhaustive or exclusive. We must strive towards always putting the needs of the children first, and to avoid all actions and behaviors that could harm the safety and the welfare of our children.

The following examples will also serve as a guideline on what our organization should address in its training on the Code of Conduct.

Good practices:

- Build relationships based on mutual trust
- Be a good role model, whatever position you are in
- Involve the children and youth in decision making and planning of the sporting activities
- Foster the learning and developing processes of the children in a manner that is suitable for their needs and interests
- Make sport fun and enjoyable for everyone
- Give motivating and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- Strive to ensure a culture of openness where the children are free to raise any issues or concerns
- Try to work in partnership with parents / guardians in the everyday activities and in the education of children's rights
- Be aware of situations that may present risks for the children
- Report (and respond to) any abuse that you may be aware of
- During tournaments, there should always be a female coach / leader staying together with the girls
- Always treat information about children (also photos) and their families with discretion and respect

Practices to be avoided:

- Take children for any kind of HIV testing against their will or informed consent of their parents / guardians
- Use inappropriate language, or allow the child to use inappropriate language, that is discriminating, derogatory or disrespectful to other people
- Smoke or drink alcohol in the company of children and youth
- Hit or physically hurt a child
- Occupy a room alone with a child (without very good reason)
- Make sexually related comments to a child, even in fun
- Allowing, or engaging in, inappropriate touching
- Develop physical or sexual relationship with children (mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defense)
- Exchange favors / advantages / services for sex