

CODE OF CONDUCT CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct - Summary

Purpose of the policy

Terre des Hommes Netherlands considers child abuse unacceptable (zero tolerance) in all circumstances and is committed to ensure that in all its work and that of its partners, all necessary steps are taken to protect the rights of children and to ensure their wellbeing. The Child Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct and Principles for Ethical Reporting are to be known and adhered to by all those who work for or on behalf of Terre des Hommes Netherlands, including staff, consultants, volunteers, and partners, and those visiting projects for whatever reasons, including reporting or journalism, and other representatives.

By agreeing to work with/for the organisation, it is implied that the terms and conditions of the Safeguarding Policy have been accepted as a condition of involvement. In the event of behaviour incompatible with the Child Safeguarding Policy of Terre des Hommes Netherlands, the organisation will take measures against the staff member. These measures can be administrative (for example a press release) and/or legal. The organisation also reserves the right of terminating the labour contract or other contracts.

Terre des Hommes Netherlands' Child Safeguarding Policy serves as minimum standard within its projects. The Policy describes the measures we take to safeguard children include proactive actions to prevent situations of abuse and harm occurring and reactive actions to respond to situations where a child is, or may be, suffering abuse.

Our definition of child safeguarding and child abuse

Child Safeguarding refers to:

- the responsibilities we have to make sure TdH-NL staff, operations, and programmes do no harm to children;
- the actions we take to ensure ALL children are safe from harm when involved in activities where Terre des Hommes has a responsibility;

For the purposes of this policy and reporting procedure, a child is any human under the age of 18 as stipulated by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989.

The violations to be reported under this protocol include any behaviour that is incompatible with the Code of Conduct that includes but is not limited to the following:

- *Physical abuse*: Actual or likely physical injury to any child or a failure to prevent physical injury or suffering.
- *Sexual abuse*: Actual or threatened sexual violence towards a child including all forms of sexual activity such as rape, incest and pornography.

- *Emotional abuse*: Persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection. All abuse involves emotional ill-treatment.
- *Neglect*: The failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger including cold or starvation, failure to carry out important aspects of care resulting in the impairment of the child's health or development.
- *Exploitation*: Using a child for economic purposes, or performing work that may be hazardous or that interferes with the child's development. This includes educational programs that are focused on production rather than the acquisition of skills, asking children to perform excessive chores and tasks, asking children under the minimum labor age to perform paid labor, and keeping a child out of an educational facility to perform other tasks.

The Code of Conduct: acceptable and unacceptable behaviour

All those working for or on behalf of Terre des Hommes Netherlands must follow these rules to prevent, stop and report any and all abuse to children in our work. The Code of Conduct must be signed by all staff and standing volunteers before commencing duties.

By signing the Code of Conduct it is explicitly agreed that:

I will always:

1. Treat children with respect regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, disability or other status.
2. Be aware of children's vulnerability – generally, the children in projects that Terre des Hommes Netherlands supports are extra vulnerable or already a victim – to being abused and be aware of my position.
3. Be aware of situations which may present risks (for example being alone with children at therapy session, take film/photo or interview for work purpose/reporting). I may only proceed if the situation is within the boundaries of this policy and after obtaining clearance from local project management and the child.
4. Plan and organise the work, workplace or visit to manage risks.
5. As far as possible, be visible in working with children or visiting children.
6. Participate in achieving a culture of openness to enable any issues or concerns to be raised and discussed.
7. Ensure that a sense of accountability exists between staff so that poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour does not go unchallenged.
8. Talk to children about their contact with staff or others and encourage them to raise any concerns.
9. Empower children - discuss with them their rights -, inform them about what is acceptable and unacceptable, and what they can do if there is a problem.
10. Report concerns or incidents of child abuse to the designated person(s) and authorities.

I will never:

1. Develop physical or sexual relationships with children or one that could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive.
2. Act in ways that may be abusive, exploitative, physically or emotionally harmful or act in ways which places a child at risk of this.
3. Spend time alone with children away from others including taking a child away from the project alone or having meetings alone. If privacy is needed, other staff member(s) must be aware and a door must be left open.
4. Condone, or participate in, behaviour of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
5. Behave physically in a manner that is inappropriate (for example fondle, hold, hug, kiss or touch children in a culturally insensitive way) or behave sexually. I will not sleep in the same room or bed as the children.
6. Use corporal punishment or otherwise physically assault children.
7. Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse.
8. Discriminate against, show unfounded differential treatment to, or favour particular children.
9. Let children do domestic or other labour which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage, which interferes with their education, or which places them at risk of injury.
10. Allow a child to be systematically neglected and fail to protect a child from any harm that I am aware of.
11. Abandon my professional distance by taking on a personal caring role such as by becoming a personal donor or a godfather.

Attention: Although many situations that can cause harm have been covered, above mentioned list will never be exhaustive. In the case of situations which are not covered by the Code of Conduct, the paramount principle is to consider *the best interest of the child*. When in doubt, contact a manager or other responsible staff.

Principles for ethical communications around children

Communicating about children has its special challenges. In some instances the act of communicating (whether these are written stories, pictures or videos) places them or other children at risk of retribution or stigmatisation. The Principles of Terre des Hommes Netherlands help media to cover children in an age-appropriate and sensitive manner. The Principles are meant to support the best intentions of ethical reporters¹: serving the public interest without compromising the rights of children. For practical guidelines on interviewing and reporting on children, please see the full Child Safeguarding Policy.

¹ Where in the principles and guidelines 'reporter' is being used, it also applies to any other visitor that has no formal role as a reporting, e.g. a corporate sponsor.

Principles for ethical communications

1. The dignity and rights of every child are to be respected in every circumstance. Children must never be presented as passive victims, submissive or in an inappropriate manner.
2. In interviewing and reporting on children, special attention is to be paid to each child's right to privacy and confidentiality, to have their opinions heard, to participate in decisions affecting them and to be protected from harm and retribution, including the potential of harm and retribution.
3. The best interests of each child are to be protected over any other consideration, including over advocacy for children's issues and the promotion of child rights.
4. When trying to determine the best interests of a child, the child's right to have their views taken into account are to be given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity. This includes ensuring informed consent from every child and guardian before collecting stories, photographs and/ or videos.
5. Those closest to the child's situation and best able to assess it are to be consulted about the political, social and cultural ramifications of any reportage.
6. Do not publish a story or an image which might put the child, siblings or peers at risk even when identities are changed, obscured or not used.
7. Do not make promises to the child in return for anything (e.g. images or an interview)

What to do when you suspect a child safeguarding concern?

All TdH-NL staff members have a duty to create and maintain a safe environment for children by reporting any behaviour that harms children. This requirement to report is mandatory. All reports by staff members should be made within 24 hours² after the incident occurs or when the person reporting becomes aware of it.

If you are concerned about the safety and welfare of a child, please report immediately, because a child may be at risk of serious harm if you don't. Concerns or incidents should be reported at the following points:

The Netherlands:

- Head of Programmes or Director of Stichting Terre des Hommes Nederland, Zoutmanstraat 42-44, 2518 GS The Hague Phone number: +31703105037 (secretary)

Asia:

- Country Manager or Regional Representative Terre des Hommes Netherlands, House 55, Street 348, Tuol Svay Prey I, Chamkarmorn, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Tel Office: +855 89 262 562 | +855 23 222 553. Mail: childsafeguarding.asia@tdh.nl

East Africa:

- Country Manager or Regional Representative Terre des Hommes Netherlands, P.O. BOX 76340, 00508 Nairobi, Kenya. Tel Office: +254 20 3870595. Mail: childsafeguarding.africa@tdh.nl

² In case the report is not made within the 24 hours, a reason should be given as to what caused the delay

If, for whatever reason, you have concerns about informing the country manager or regional office, you can contact the head office of Terre des Hommes Netherlands.

When child abuse occurs in a project implemented through a project partner of Terre des Hommes Netherlands, the reporting procedures of the project partner should be followed. If for some reason, reporting to the management of the project partner is not possible, concerns can also directly be reported to Terre des Hommes Netherlands.

The following reporting principles should always be respected:

- Always report seriously and take any concern raised seriously
- Take steps immediately to ensure the protection of the child who is the subject of the concern
- Support children, staff or others who raise the concern
- Act appropriately and effectively. Staff and others should not start an investigation or question anyone after an allegation or concern has been raised. This is the job of the management or the local authorities. Staff should just record the facts and report these to the management as soon as possible.
- Treat reports and information confidential.

More information

The full Child Safeguarding Policy can be found on the Drive: [Drive \(General\) > \(TdH\) - General > Child Safeguarding Policy](#). This folder also includes additional documentation, including a general Safeguarding presentation, Reporting Forms and Child Consent Forms.

For additional questions please contact the Child Safeguarding Focal Points in the region (Regional Operations Coordinator / Manager) or at head office (Child Rights officer).

Voor gezien:

Datum:

Naam medewerker:

Handtekening