

# **THIRD WORLD NETWORK BERHAD**

## **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

This document lays out the commitments made by Third World Network Berhad (TWN) in relation to safeguarding. It informs staff and any person representing TWN, including volunteers, partners, consultants, suppliers or contractors, of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

Safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect and exploitation and applies to everyone regardless of age, gender identity, disability, religion, sexual orientation or ethnic origin.

The purpose of these commitments is to protect all people, especially children, at risk adults and beneficiaries of assistance, from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with TWN.

This includes harm arising from:

- The conduct of staff or personnel associated with TWN;
- The design and implementation of TWN's programmes and activities.

### **1. GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

**Beneficiary of Assistance** – A person who directly receives goods or services from the implementation of TWN's programmes.

**Child** - A person below the age of 18.

**Psychological harm** – Emotional or psychological abuse, including (but not limited to) humiliating and degrading treatment such as bad name calling, constant criticism, belittling, persistent shaming, solitary confinement and isolation.

**Sexual abuse** – The term 'sexual abuse' means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

**Sexual exploitation** – The term 'sexual exploitation' means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. This definition includes human trafficking and modern slavery.

**Survivor** – The person who has been abused or exploited. The term 'survivor' is often used in preference to 'victim' as it implies strength, resilience and the capacity to survive, however it is the individual's choice how they wish to identify themselves.

**At risk adult** – Sometimes also referred to as vulnerable adult. A person who is or may be in need of care by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

## **2. PREVENTION**

### **2.1 TWN's responsibilities**

TWN will:

- Ensure all staff have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy.
- Design and undertake programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of intentional and unintentional harm that may arise from their meeting TWN. This includes the way in which information about individuals in programmes is gathered and communicated.
- Ensure our recruitment practices are robust enough to ensure we never recruit anyone who poses a known risk.
- Ensure staff receive training on safeguarding at a level appropriate to their role and involvement in TWN projects so all staff can contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy.
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process.

### **2.2 Staff responsibilities**

TWN staff and associated personnel must not:

- Engage in sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18 (regardless of local laws or customs).
- Sexually abuse or exploit children or adults.
- Subject a child or adult to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect.
- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children including child labour or trafficking.
- Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual activity.
- Engage in any sexual relationships with beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics.

## **3. ENABLING REPORTS**

TWN will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to all stakeholders in particular staff and the communities we work with.

Any staff reporting concerns or complaints through formal whistleblowing or other channels will be protected and they will not be at risk of losing their jobs or suffering any form of retribution as a result. TWN will not tolerate the harassment or victimisation of anyone raising a concern.

### **3.1 How to report a safeguarding concern**

3.1.1 Staff members who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to their line manager.

3.1.2 If the staff member does not feel comfortable reporting to their 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 the Executive Director or Head of Administration in TWN's headquarters in Penang, Malaysia.

3.1.3 If the staff member does not feel comfortable reporting to the Executive Director or Head of Administration for the same reasons as in Sub-paragraph 3.1.2 they may report to an external person as appointed by the TWN Board of Governors.

### **3.2 Response**

TWN will:

- Follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligations.
- Apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff found in breach of this policy.
- Offer support to survivors of harm caused by staff or associated personnel, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out (such as an internal investigation). Decisions regarding support will be led by the survivor.

### **3.3 Confidentiality**

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns or breach of code of conduct. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need to know basis only and should be kept secure at all times.

## **4. CODE OF CONDUCT**

TWN staff are expected to uphold local law wherever they operate, except where the Code of Conduct is more stringent, in which case the Code applies. This Code of Conduct is to be read with the associated policies of TWN listed below in Paragraph 5.

### **Declaration by each employee**

The following declaration will be endorsed by each employee of TWN.

'I understand the provisions in this document and will uphold the integrity and reputation of TWN by ensuring that my professional and personal conduct is consistent with TWN's values and standards.

- I will treat all people fairly with respect and dignity;
- I will be observant of all local laws and be sensitive to local customs;
- I will seek to ensure that my conduct does not bring TWN into disrepute and does not impact on or undermine my ability to undertake the role for which I am employed;
- I will not work under the influence of alcohol or use, or be in possession of, illegal substances on TWN premises or accommodation.

**Not engage in abusive or exploitative conduct**

- I will not engage in sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18 regardless of local definition). Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defence;
- I will not exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour, is prohibited. This includes any exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries of assistance;
- I will not engage in sexual relationships with beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics;
- I will not engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children or vulnerable adults including child labour or trafficking;
- I will not physically assault a child or vulnerable adult;
- I will not emotionally or psychologically abuse a child or vulnerable adult.

**Ensure the safety, health and welfare of all TWN staff members and associated personnel (volunteers, partners, suppliers and contractors)**

- I will adhere to all legal and organisational health and safety requirements in force at my location of work;
- I will comply with any local security guidelines and be pro-active in informing management of any necessary changes to such guidelines;
- I will behave in a manner such as to avoid any unnecessary risk to the safety, health and welfare of myself and others, including partner organisations and communities with whom we work.

**Be responsible for the use of information, assets and resources to which I have access by reason of my employment with TWN**

- I will ensure that I use TWN assets and resources entrusted to me in a responsible manner and will account for all money and property;
- I will not use TWN IT equipment, software or e-mail and social media platforms to engage in activity that is illegal under local or international law or that encourages conduct that would constitute a criminal offence. This includes any material that intimidates or harasses any group based on protected characteristics, or encourages extremism;
- I will not use TWN IT equipment to view, download, create, distribute or save in any format inappropriate or abusive material including but not limited to pornography or depictions of child abuse.

## **5. ASSOCIATED POLICIES**

The above Safeguarding Policy is to be read and applied together with the following associated policies of TWN:

- TWN Operating Policies and Procedures Manual
- Policy on Corruption and Fraud
- Whistleblowing and Protection Policy
- Policy on Conflict of Interest
- Policy and Procedures on Risk Management
- Policy on Sexual Harassment
- Policy on Non-Discrimination