



Faith in Action

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

Date approved: May 01, 2021

Approving Body: *Faith in Action - Executive committee*

Rational: Being a learning and emerging development and humanitarian organization to comply with the real time need by the global development and humanitarian community, Faith in Action has decided to develop a Safeguarding Adult Policy besides all other policies e.g. code of conduct, child protection, gender, anti-corruption, feedback complaints and response mechanism (FCRM). The rationale of the initiative is to ensure the safety and comfort of the vulnerable adult and hold us to account that will improve the quality of live to the vulnerable adults. This guideline will set out the procedure for receiving, recording, and handling/response to the needs and complaint from the vulnerable adult to ensure a joyful environment for them for quality participation in all FIA project interventions. FIA's commitment to fairness and transparency toward vulnerable people is central to establishing confidentiality, accessibility, transparency, participation, contextualization and appropriateness and safety and non-retaliation in the vulnerable adult Policy.

Our Belief:

- We believe all human being are created in the image of God
- God has given potentiality to every human being and if they are given opportunity and environment, they can be a good human resource and a good contributor to His creation.
- Every human has equal rights to live, participate and raise voice and dignity in the eyes of the laws.
- Not relief but release
- Be inclusive and respectful
- Be changed to change

Our Philosophy: Not to be served but to serve

Our Vision: Abundant Life for all.

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to protect vulnerable adults and beneficiaries of assistance, from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with Faith in Action. This includes harm arising from:

- The conduct of staff or personnel associated with Faith in Action
- The design and implementation of Faith in Action's programmes and activities

The policy lays out the commitments made by Faith in Action, and informs staff and associated personnel¹ of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

¹ See 'Scope' for definition of associated personnel

This policy does not cover:

- Sexual harassment in the workplace – this is dealt with under Faith in Action’s Gender Policy.
- Safeguarding children (people under 18 years of age). This is covered in Faith in Action’s Safeguarding Children Policy
- Safeguarding concerns in the wider community not perpetrated by Faith in Action or associated personnel

Scope

- All GC & EC members and staff contracted by Faith in Action
- Associated personnel whilst engaged with work or visits related to Faith in Action, including but not limited to the following: consultants; volunteers; vendors; visitors, donors and any stakeholders.

Policy Statement

Faith in Action believes that everyone we come into contact with, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. Faith in Action will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by staff or associated personnel.

Faith in Action commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the three pillars of **prevention, reporting and response**.

Prevention

Faith in Action responsibilities

Faith in Action will:

- Ensure all staff have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy
- Design and undertake all its programs and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with Faith in Action. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programs is gathered and communicated.
- Implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and associated personnel. For staff who will be in contact with vulnerable adults, this will include referee and appropriate criminal background checks to identify any former misconduct.
- Ensure staff receive training on safeguarding at a level in line with their role in the organization.
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process and share the feedback to the respective concerns.

Staff responsibilities

More details refer to Faith in Action Code of Conduct, gender and child protection policy, feedback and complaint mechanism and whistleblowing policy.

Adult safeguarding

Faith in Action staff and associated personnel must not:

- Sexually abuse or exploit other adults

- Subject another adult to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect

Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse

Faith in Action staff and associated personnel must not:

- Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual activity. This includes any exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries of assistance
- Engage in any sexual relationships with beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics
- Non-national staff involved in Faith in Action's humanitarian responses shall not fraternise with local people while undertaking such humanitarian relief work.

Additionally, Faith in Action staff and associated personnel are obliged to:

- Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy
- Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by an Faith in Action staff member or associated personnel to the appropriate staff member

Reporting

Faith in Action will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to staff and the communities we work with. Faith in Action will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies.

How to report a safeguarding concern

The same procedure of Feedback and complaint mechanism will be used to report safeguarding concerns.

Response

- Faith in Action will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligations.
- Faith in Action will apply appropriate disciplinary measures, including the possibility of termination of employment, to staff found in breach of policy.
- Faith in Action will 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 of harm caused by staff or associated personnel.

Confidentiality

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. 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.

Associated Policies

Code of conduct, child protection, gender, anti-corruption, feedback complaints and response mechanism, whistleblowing policy, anti-corruption and HR Policy.

Glossary of Terms

Beneficiary of Assistance

Someone who directly receives goods or services from Faith in Action's programme. Note that misuse of power can also apply to the wider community that the NGO serves, and also can include exploitation by giving the perception of being in a position of power.

Child

A person below the age of 18

Harm

Psychological, physical and any other infringement of an individual's rights

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

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

The term used by the humanitarian and development community to refer to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse of affected populations by staff or associated personnel. The term derives from the United Nations Secretary General's Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13)

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.

Vulnerable adult

Sometimes also referred to as "at risk" adult. A vulnerable adult is defined as a person over the age of 18: who is:

- temporarily or permanently unable to manage his/her personal affairs or his/her property because of an impairment or insufficiency of his/her personal faculties, and/or has physical or mental disabilities

- forced to live in unsafe place and/or depends on others and/or is potentially vulnerable to exploitation or abuse as a result of his/her status or his/her lack of power and control. Examples include recipients of NGO relief distributions
- one who may be in a relationship (work or social) or in contact with another adult who seeks to misuse his/her position of authority or trust to control, coerce, manipulate or dominate them.

Fraternise

Fraternise means to develop close relationships with local people that could be seen as the non-national staff using the power inherent in their position to ultimately gain sexual favours, even if no sexual relationship actually occurs.