



SAID Nigeria 's Child Safeguarding Policy 2017

Introduction

SpringAid International Development (SAID), Nigeria in addition to its Human right advocacy, Youth and Women Empowerment, fight against poverty and social inequality, is committed to ensuring the safety of children and protecting their right in all our activities and programs.

This is in recognition of the fact that children are much more exposed to abuse and right violation, and in most cases are defenseless on their own.

This document sets out SAID Nigeria's Policy and Standard to protect the rights of children and to ensure their safety.

Our Child Safeguarding has been developed and recently updated based on a review of relevant international and national protection policies and related documents which includes:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Keeping Children Safe: Child Safeguarding Standards and how to implement them

The Concept of a Child

Unless otherwise stated by a clause in a legal policy document, a child is any person under the age of 18 years or a minor. Therefore, standards and policies outlined herein is intended for the age 0-18 years, unless otherwise stated.

SAID Nigeria's Commitment to Child Safeguarding

The Board & Management of SpringAid International Development (SAID) is fully committed to the safeguarding of children that come in contact with us, our programs and activities.

The Board is ultimately accountable for ensuring that children are safeguarded across the span of SAID Nigeria's work and for the implementation of the SAID Nigeria Child Safeguarding Policy throughout the organization. The Board carries out a review of the foundation's Child Safeguarding Policy every three years. SAID's Board expects all staff, volunteers CAGs, contractors, and partners to fully comply with the policy unless otherwise agreed in writing.

Staff and Others

- SAID Nigeria has safe recruitment practices including appropriate recruitment screening e.g., criminal records checks (or equivalent where these are available), verbal referee checks, self-disclosure forms and behavioural questions at interview.
- All staff and others covered by the policy are made aware of, and are familiar with, the safeguarding policy and receive induction, training and / or briefing as required.
- SAID Nigeria has a clearly articulated code of conduct that must be adhered to and where appropriate signed by all staff, volunteers, board members, contractors, and sub-contractors.

- Employment contracts and disciplinary procedures contain provisions for dealing with anyone who breaches the safeguarding code of conduct.
- SAID Nigeria designates staff as Safeguarding Officer/s (or equivalent) with clearly defined roles and responsibilities including: receiving reports of any child safeguarding issues, allegations or concerns; supporting implementation of the policy; and keeping informed of best practice developments in child

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Monitoring

- Monitoring the effectiveness of child safeguarding measures is built into existing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms both at organizational and project levels.
- The SAID Nigeria's policy and associated procedures and practice are reviewed every 2 - 3 years or at times of changes in law, policy, or organizational arrangements.
- The Board of HDF encourages its grantees working with children to share with HDF case studies which are based on best international standards and practice of child safeguarding to improve knowledge and learning in this area.
- SAID assesses and actively manages the risks of all child-related activities, and evidence of such risk management activity is available.

Goal and objectives

The board of SpringAid International Development, being aware of the danger's children are exposed to in relation to their disability, gender, religion have as its objectives the protection of children from all forms of abuse - physical, sexual, emotional, neglect, exploitation, and the like. (see Annex 1 for definitions of abuse) in the process of conducting SAID

Nigeria's legitimate operations. The objectives of the policy are to ensure that:

- Children who come in contact with SAID Nigeria are protected from any form of abuse.
- SAID Nigeria and its partners are committed to protection of children and that their policies and behaviour reflect this commitment;
- SAID Nigeria's staff volunteers, consultants and board members are fully cognizant of child protection issues.

Guiding principles

- Every child has a right to freedom from abuse and exploitation.
- We believe that children are best protected in the context of a loving family and a vigilant community, and through the inclusion of children's voices in programming with partners supported by HDF's grant-making.
- SAID Nigeria does not accept any form of abuse or exploitation of children as defined in (Annex 1.) or infringement on their right as defined by law (Annex)
- SAID Nigeria is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children who come in contact with SAID Nigeria and its Partners.
- SAID Nigeria will not, engage in any type of Project\program, partnership or contract whose implementation, show the potential to endanger the wellbeing of children.

Golden rules

- Never abuse or exploit children or act in a way that places them at risk.
- Report any abuse or protection concerns to relevant authorities in accordance with relevant country legislation.
- Cooperate fully and confidentially in any investigation of concerns or allegations.

Dissemination of the policy

SAID is committed to ensuring that all relevant parties are informed about its policy and understand the importance of safeguarding children and that they consent to observance of this policy

SAID Nigeria 's Child Safeguarding Policy is:

•• displayed on HDF's website and a signed hard copy stored in its registered offices;

•• shared and discussed with all current and future SAID Nigeria employees, volunteers, partners, contractors and consultants;

•• shared and discussed with all current and future board members;

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Preventive Procedures

Recruitment and selection

SAID Nigeria takes particular care in its recruitment and selection practices to ensure that all staff and voluntary members are committed to SAID 's Child Safeguarding Policy. All potential staff undergo a thorough reference

check including two written references with a clause stating that, to the best of the referees' knowledge, the candidate has neither committed nor failed to disclose any abuse of children.

All potential staff and contractors sign the following before commencing employment / contracted work:

1. Declaration of understanding and commitment to SAID Nigeria's Child Safeguarding Policy (part of standard HR contract)
2. Code of Conduct (Annex 2)
3. SAID Nigeria's Self-Disclosure Form (Annex 3)

Grant-making

Travel

SAID Nigeria recognizes the protection risk associated with business travel of its staff, board members and contractors. Every non-staff member travelling on behalf of SAID Nigeria must read the Travel Policy pre- departure and sign the External Travel Authorization Form which includes a clause on SAID Nigeria's Child Safeguarding Policy

Reporting & Investigative procedures

Designated Protection Officer

SAID Nigeria's Programme Officer acts as the Designated Protection Officer (DPO); her / his role is to:

- act as a focal point to receive, record and assess relevant information in relation to child protection - consult with others including local protection agencies, and local authorities etc.
- ensure that protection risks across all SAID's projects are assessed by all POs;

- ensure that SAID's policies and procedures are effective and in line with recommended best practice.

Reporting

- Concerns in relation to a witnessed, suspected, reported or potential abuse by SAID or its partners /contractors must, as soon as possible but within 24 hours of the incident occurring, be reported to:

a) SAID Nigeria- Designated Child Protection Officer or the Executive Director and

b) Partner - Child Protection Officer or most appropriate senior member of staff.

- If for any reason it is not possible or appropriate to inform any of these persons (because of unavailability or in some way implicated in the alleged abuse) another senior manager or appropriate person should be contacted.

- Safety of the child should always be the priority. If urgent action is required to protect the child then this should be given priority over the reporting procedure. REMEMBER: CHILDREN FIRST.

- All information relating to the concerns should be recorded by the DPO using the Pro Forma at Annex 5; the report should include as far as possible only facts - any opinions expressed must be clearly identified as such. In the case of a direct disclosure of alleged child abuse, the language used by the person disclosing should be recorded as closely as possible.

Investigation procedures

- When there is a suspicion / disclosure of an abuse allegedly committed by SAID's staff / contractor / board member, SAID will

consider immediate referral to the statutory authorities, where it appears an incident of child abuse may have been committed. Where the nature or details of the concern are unclear, SAID will conduct an internal investigation and, should information on an incident of abuse emerge, will then report the abuse to the relevant authorities.

A written record of actions will be made.

- In the event of an allegation of abuse by a SAID staff member, an investigative committee will be formed which will consist of the Director of operations, one other management staff and a non-member/staff of SAID. This committee's role is to fully and objectively investigate the case. A written report, including recommendations, will be submitted to SAID's board. The DPO, as a staff member herself / himself, may not be involved in such an internal investigation.

- When there is suspicion / disclosure of an abuse committed by staff /contractor / board member of SAID's partner (s), in relation to our SAID's activities the partner (s) will address it in accordance with its own protection policy and national laws; the partner will fully inform SAID on the outcome of this process.

- In the event of an allegation of abuse involving a SAID partner(s) or contractors, it is expected that the partner/contractor will clearly document details of the case and the actions taken, will keep this information safe and confidential, and will fully inform SAID on the outcome of the process in a timely manner.

Decision-making

- The outcomes and recommendations of any SAID internal investigation will be reported by the investigation committee to the SAID Board which, in turn, will be responsible for deciding on further action.

- All allegations will be handled equitably and transparently (with due regard to confidentiality) irrespective of whom they are made against and taking into account the rights of the parties involved.

- SAID will respond to all allegations of abuse and will, if requested, support grantees to do the same in accordance with national protection laws.

Implications of non-compliance

- Should any staff / contractor / board member of SAID be accused of abuse she/he will be suspended from relevant duties pending the outcome of an internal investigation by the organization, or the relevant, statutory authorities.
- If a partner/contractor or its staff or a volunteer is accused of violation of a child's right or breache(s) of this child policy such will be subject to disciplinary action and / or censure by SAID up to and including dismissal / termination of contract depending on gravity of the offense.

Staff Training & Education

SAID employees, consultants, partners etc. and board members who may come in contact with children will receive appropriate training to:

- recognize abuse and respond to concerns expressed by a child;
- recognize their responsibilities and how to report any concerns about suspected poor practice and / or abuse;
- analyze their own practice against what is deemed good practice and ensure their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations;
- recognize protection risks in associated with projects/programs.

Media & Communications

- All SAID Nigeria communications comply with the Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages² and all staff / board members / contractors are made aware of this code.
- Any complaints or concerns about inappropriate or intrusive images should be reported and recorded as a child safeguarding concern.
- HDF will take care in not revealing identifying details of children that may feature in its publications or in other materials.
- All images and stories featuring children will be obtained with their informed consent or that of their parents / careers.
- The issue of confidentiality is secondary to the need for the safeguarding of children. Information in relation to safeguarding concerns will be shared with the relevant authority when deemed necessary.

Information & Communication Technology

- Use of ICT to access child pornography is illegal and should be reported in accordance with national laws.
- Pictures, materials, and personal information regarding children will be held in a secure place, whether physical or online.

Annex 1 – Definitions of abuse³

Abuse or neglect of a child is caused by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet basic physical and / or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer purposely failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, basic emotional needs.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child or vulnerable adult such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the emotional development of a child. It may involve conveying to a child / young person that they are worthless, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on a person. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving a child in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Commercial or other exploitation of a child refers to use of the child in work or other activities for the benefit of others. This includes, but is not limited to, child labour and child prostitution. These activities are to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development.

3 Definitions of abuse are adapted from NSPCC.

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Annex 2 –

Code of Conduct

As a member of SAID staff or as a SAID Nigeria contractor (delete as appropriate), I agree to:

1. Be respectful of children's rights, background, culture, and beliefs.
2. Conduct myself in a manner consistent with my role as a representative of the Human Dignity Foundation.
3. Follow organizational policy and guidelines concerning the safety of children as outlined in SAID Nigeria's Child Safeguarding Policy.
4. Not hit, physically harm, or mistreat anyone.
5. Refrain from any sexual act or behaviour towards children, young people and children, including using sexually suggestive language.
6. Make every attempt not to spend unnecessary or excessive amounts of time alone with a child or children.
7. Refrain from inappropriate physical contact with children.
8. Refrain from developing relationships with a child or children that could be deemed exploitative or abusive in any way.
9. Respect the confidentiality of a child's p
- 10 Refrain from photographing children without permission.
- 11 Refrain from using photographs for communication or other purposes unless they comply with the Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and messages.

12 Never let allegations by a child go unnoticed, unreported, or unrecorded.

13 Report any possible or actual breaches of this Code of Conduct by SAID Nigeria staff, representatives, or associates to the Executive Director (or Chairperson) as soon as I become aware of the situation.

Signature:

Name:

Date:

Witness:

The Code of Conduct's guiding principles stipulate that "choices of images and messages will be made based on the paramount principles of:

- Respect for the dignity of the people concerned.
- Belief in the equality of all people;
- Acceptance of the need to promote fairness, solidarity, and justice.

Accordingly, in all our communications and where practical and reasonable within the need to reflect reality, we strive to:

1. Choose images and related messages based on values of respect equality, solidarity, and justice.
2. Truthfully represent any image or depicted situation both in its immediate and in its wider context to improve public understanding of the realities and complexities of development.
3. Avoid images and messages that potentially stereotype, sensationalize, or discriminate against people, situations or places;
4. Use images, messages and case studies with the full understanding, participation and permission of the subjects (or subjects' parents/guardian);

5. Ensure those whose situation is being represented have the opportunity to communicate their stories themselves;
6. Establish and record whether the subjects wish to be named or identifiable and always act accordingly.
7. Conform to the highest standards in relation to human rights and protection of the vulnerable people.

A summary of Child's rights

8. [Article 1](#) (definition of the child) Everyone under the age of 18 has all the rights in the Convention.
9. [Article 2](#) (non-discrimination) The Convention applies to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background.
10. [Article 3](#) (best interests of the child) The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.
11. [Article 4](#) (implementation of the Convention). Governments must do all they can to make sure every child can enjoy their rights by creating systems and passing laws that promote and protect children's rights.
12. [Article 5](#) (parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities) Governments must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents and caregivers to provide guidance and direction to their child as they grow up, so that they fully enjoy their rights. This must be done in a way that recognizes the child's increasing capacity to make their own choices.
13. [Article 6](#) (life, survival and development). Every child has the right to life. Governments must do all they can to ensure that children survive and develop to their full potential.
14. [Article 7](#) (birth registration, name, nationality, care) Every child has the right to be registered at birth, to have a name and nationality, and, as far as possible, to know and be cared for by their parents.
15. [Article 8](#) (protection and preservation of identity) Every child has the right to an identity. Governments must respect and protect that right, and prevent the child's name, nationality, or family relationships from being changed unlawfully.
16. [Article 9](#) (separation from parents) Children must not be separated from their parents against their will unless it is in their best interests (for example, if a parent is hurting or neglecting a child). Children whose parents have separated have the right to stay in contact with both parents, unless this could cause them harm.

17. **Article 10** (family reunification) Governments must respond quickly and sympathetically if a child or their parents apply to live together in the same country. If a child's parents live apart in different countries, the child has the right to visit and keep in contact with both of them.
18. **Article 11** (abduction and non-return of children) Governments must do everything they can to stop children being taken out of their own country illegally by their parents or other relatives or being prevented from returning home.
19. **Article 12** (respect for the views of the child) Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. This right applies at all times, for example during immigration proceedings, housing decisions or the child's day-to-day home life.
20. **Article 13** (freedom of expression) Every child must be free to express their feelings
21. thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.
22. **Article 14** (freedom of thought, belief, and religion) Every child has the right to think and believe what they choose and to practice their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights.
Governments must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents to guide their child as they grow up.
23. **Article 15** (freedom of association) Every child has the right to meet with
24. other children and to join groups and organizations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.
25. **Article 16** (right to privacy) Every child has the right to privacy. The law
26. should protect the child's private, family and home life, including protecting children from unlawful attacks that harm their reputation.
27. **Article 17** (access to information from the media) Every child has the right to reliable information from a variety of sources, and governments should encourage the media to provide information that children can understand.
Governments must help protect children from materials that could harm them.
28. **Article 18** (parental responsibilities and state assistance) Both parents share responsibility for bringing up their child and should always consider what is best for the child. Governments must support parents by creating support services for children and giving parents the help, they need to raise their children.
29. **Article 19** (protection from violence, abuse, and neglect)
Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.

30. [Article 20](#) (children unable to live with their family) If a child cannot be looked after by their immediate family, the government must give them special protection and
31. assistance. This includes making sure the child is provided with alternative care
32. that is continuous and respects the child's culture, language, and religion.
33. [Article 21](#) (adoption) Governments must oversee the process of adoption to make sure it is safe, lawful and that it prioritizes children's best interests. Children should only be adopted outside of their country if they cannot be placed with a family in their own country.
34. [Article 22](#) (refugee children) If a child is seeking refuge or has refugee
35. status, governments must provide them with appropriate protection and assistance to help them enjoy all the rights in the Convention. Governments must help refugee children who are separated from their parents to be reunited with them.
36. [Article 23](#) (children with a disability) A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community. Governments must do all they can to support disabled children and their families.
37. [Article 24](#) (health and health services) Every child has the right to the best
38. possible health. Governments must provide good quality health care, clean
39. water, nutritious food, and a clean environment and education on health
40. and well-being so that children can stay healthy. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.
41. [Article 25](#) (review of treatment in care) If a child has been placed
42. away from
43. home for the purpose of care or protection (for example, with a foster
44. family or in hospital), they have the right to a regular review of their
45. treatment, the way they are cared for and their wider circumstances.
46. [Article 26](#) (social security) Every child has the right to benefit from
47. social security. Governments must provide social security, including
48. financial
49. support and other benefits, to families in need of assistance.
50. [Article 27](#) (adequate standard of living) Every child has the right to a
51. standard of
52. living that is good enough to meet their physical and social needs and
53. support their development. Governments must help families who cannot
54. afford to provide this.

49. [Article 28](#) (right to education) Every child has the right to an education.
50. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education
51. must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.
52. [Article 29](#) (goals of education) Education must develop every child's personality, talents, and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.
53. [Article 30](#) (children from minority or indigenous groups) Every child has the right to learn and use the language, customs, and religion of their family, whether these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live.
54. [Article 31](#) (leisure, play and culture) Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.
55. [Article 32](#) (child labour) Governments must protect children from economic exploitation and work that is dangerous or might harm their health, development, or education. Governments must set a minimum age for children to work and ensure that work conditions are safe and appropriate.
56. [Article 33](#) (drug abuse) Governments must protect children from the illegal use of drugs and from being involved in the production or distribution of drugs.
57. [Article 34](#) (sexual exploitation) Governments must protect children from all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation.

[Article 35](#) (abduction, sale, and trafficking) Governments must protect children from being abducted, sold, or moved illegally to a different place in or outside their country for the purpose of exploitation.

58. Article 36 (other forms of exploitation) Governments must protect children from all other forms of exploitation, for example the exploitation of children for political activities, by the media or for medical research.
59. Article 37 (inhumane treatment and detention) Children must not be tortured, sentenced to the death penalty, or suffer other cruel or degrading treatment or punishment. Children should be arrested, detained, or imprisoned only as a last resort and for the shortest time possible. They must be treated with respect and care and can keep in contact with their family. Children must not be put in prison with adults.
60. Article 38 (war and armed conflicts). Governments must not allow children under the age of 15 to take part in war or join the armed forces. Governments must do everything they can to protect and care for children affected by war and armed conflicts.
61. Article 39 (recovery from trauma and reintegration) Children who have experienced neglect, abuse, exploitation, torture or who are victims of war must receive special support to help them recover their health, dignity, self-respect, and social life.
62. Article 40 (juvenile justice) A child accused or guilty of breaking the law must be treated with dignity and respect. They have the right to legal assistance and a fair trial that takes account of their age. Governments must set a minimum age for children to be tried in a criminal court and manage a justice system that enables children who have been in conflict with the law to reintegrate into society.
63. Article 41 (respect for higher national standards) If a country has laws and standards that go further than the present Convention, then the country must keep these laws.
64. Article 42 (knowledge of rights) Governments must actively work to make sure children and adults know about the Convention.
65. The Convention has 54 articles in total. Articles 43–54 are about how adults and governments must work together to make sure all children can enjoy all their rights, including:

66. Article 45

67. UNICEF can provide expert advice and assistance on children's rights.

68. Optional Protocols

69. There are three agreements, called Optional Protocols, that strengthen the Convention and add further unique rights for children. They are optional because governments that ratify the Convention can decide whether to sign up to these Optional Protocols.

70. They are the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the Optional Protocol on a complaint's mechanism for children (called Communications Procedure). For more information go to unicef.org.uk/crc/op