



Child Protection Policy - International

This Policy applies to the Self Help Africa Board, all Self Help Africa (and subsidiary company) employees, including affiliate organisations, and to all paid and unpaid consultants, contractors, interns, secondees and volunteers that provide supplies, services or support, to Self Help Africa or promote its work at any location in our countries of operation in Africa. All such parties are referred to as “employee” in this document. All visitors to Self Help Africa projects will be bound by this policy.

“Self Help Africa Board” is employed as a collective term and refers to the Self Help Africa Ireland Board as well as the boards of Self Help Africa UK, Gorta UK, Partner Africa, Traidlinks, TruTrade and the boards of any entities that may form part of the group in the future.

This Policy also applies to Self Help Africa’s partners, vendors and other third parties, where it is included or referenced in relevant bid or tender documents, agreements, memorandums, purchase orders or contracts.

Version Control

<i>Version No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>By (Name, Position)</i>	<i>Details of changes</i>	<i>Reviewed and approved by (Name, Position)</i>
1	2013	Ray Jordan, CEO	N/a	SHA Board
2	24.5.2018	David Dalton, Executive Director	Pledge, Serious Wrongdoing Investigation and appointment of Child Protection Focal Person	SHA Board on 24.5.2018

David Dalton

Executive Director

Peter Mc Devitt

Chief Finance and Operations Officer

POLICY STATEMENT

Self Help Africa recognises the rights of all children with whose families we work, to be protected from harm in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Self Help Africa takes seriously its duty of care, and undertakes that our organisation is safe for children, where all efforts are made to prevent abuse. Self Help Africa does not employ persons under 18 years of age. Self Help Africa sees the best interests of the child as paramount.

We do this by:

- Preventing abuse where possible by setting in place and implementing procedures to protect children through best recruitment practices, staff induction and training, creating an open and aware culture, assigning clear management responsibilities and involving children appropriately in their own protection.
- In the event of disclosure or discovery of abuse following clear guidelines and procedures for reporting and reacting, dealing promptly and properly with incidents, supporting victims and holding perpetrators to account.
- By appointing a Child Protection Focal Person at Head Office to oversee training and deal with child protection concerns.

The global responsibility for managing this policy lies with the Executive Director with the support of the Child Protection Focal Person. At country level, each Country Director has the responsibility of implementing the policy in full, again with the support of the Child Protection Focal Person. The Executive Director is responsible for ensuring that a Child Protection Focal Person is nominated in each country.

For the purpose of this policy Self Help Africa defines children as those under the age of 18.

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

According to the World Health Organisation, “Child abuse” or “maltreatment” constitutes ‘all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.’

The NSPCC similarly specifies “cruelty to children” or “child abuse” as ‘behaviour that causes significant harm to a child. It also includes when someone knowingly fails to prevent serious harm to a child. All forms of cruelty are damaging – it can be harder to recover from the emotional impact than from the physical effects.’

There are 4 categories of abuse generally defined:

Physical abuse: Physical abuse is any form of non-accidental injury or injury which results from wilful or neglectful failure to protect a child.

Sexual abuse: Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of others.

Emotional abuse: Emotional abuse includes humiliation, blaming, frightening, threatening, terrorising, discrimination, ridiculing, and other non-physical forms of rejection or hostile treatment.

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and physiological needs. Neglect can be defined in terms of an omission, where a child’s health safety, development or welfare is being avoidably impaired.

IDENTIFYING ABUSE AND TAKING ACTION

It is everyone’s responsibility to report any potential or actual abuse to a child’s wellbeing and safety. Any abuse, attempted abuse or suspected abuse of a child must be passed to the Executive Director, or his/her delegate, in this case the Child Protection Focal Person. The Executive Director has the authority to invoke the Serious Wrongdoing Investigation Plan in Self Help Africa in response to a report of abuse.

RECRUITMENT

- 1) All candidates are interviewed carefully with child protection in mind.
- 2) Selected candidates must sign the child protection policy, disclosure of convictions form and the standards of integrity before commencing employment.

TRAINING

- 1) Relevant Self Help Africa staff must undergo child protection training.
- 2) Awareness and update training will be arranged and provided as necessary.
- 3) All staff members have a responsibility to consider and help minimise child protection risks within their own areas of responsibility.

VISITS TO PROGRAMME AREAS

- 1) All visitors must sign the Self Help Africa Child Protection Policy.

WORKING DIRECTLY WITH CHILDREN

Staff members, who work directly with children must obtain police clearance as a condition of employment.

RECORDING IMAGES

Self Help Africa applies the Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages (<http://www.dochas.ie/images-and-messages>) regarding the use of images (photographic/film or other). The following guidelines must be adhered to: i) Ask the child(ren)'s parent's/guardian's permission to take the photograph/image; ii) Individuals must be appropriately dressed according to their choice and country of origin; iii) Any complaints or concerns about inappropriate or intrusive images must be reported and recorded; iv) The recorded images should focus on an activity and, where possible, feature groups of children rather than individuals; v) Make sure that photographers and film makers are not allowed to spend time with or have access to children without supervision.

RESPONSIBILITY

I accept that I must:

1. Never abuse and/or exploit a child or act/behave in a way that places a child at risk of harm.
2. Report any child abuse and protection concerns that I have. This is a mandatory requirement under this policy.
3. Cooperate fully and confidentially in any investigation of concerns and allegations.
4. Contribute to an environment where children are respected and encouraged to discuss their concerns and rights.
5. Be aware that, if a legitimate concern about suspected child abuse is raised, which proves to be unfounded on investigation, no action will be taken against the reporter.
6. Never share my personal contact details (this includes email, phone numbers, social media contacts, address, webcam, skype etc) with, nor ask for, or accept such details from any child associated with Self Help Africa's work.
7. Never make any unsupervised direct/indirect contact (such contact may include but is not limited to visits and any form of communication via social media, emails, letters etc) that is intended to establish personal relationships with any child associated with Self Help Africa.
8. Uphold the principles of the Child Protection Policy outside work/in their personal life.

I have read, agree with, and will adhere to Self Help Africa's Child Protection Policy.

Name (block letters):

Signature:

Position/relationship to SHA:

Date:
