

## Child Safeguarding Policy

### 1.1. Purpose and scope

- 1.1.1. The New Humanitarian (TNH) believes that a child should never experience harm of any kind, regardless of their ability, ethnicity, faith, gender, sexuality and culture.
- 1.1.2. While TNH does not work directly with children in its operations, its employees, consultants and freelance journalists with whom it works may come into contact with children while conducting interviews and taking photos or films for the purposes of TNH's journalism. TNH is committed to ensure that its activities do no harm to children, that they do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse, and that any concerns about children's safety within the context of TNH's activities are reported to the appropriate authorities.
- 1.1.3. This policy applies to anyone carrying out duties on behalf of TNH or who is perceived as representing TNH. This includes all TNH board members, employees, interns, consultants and freelance journalists with whom TNH has a signed agreement. All such persons are hereinafter referred to as "TNH representatives".

### 1.2. Definitions

- 1.2.1. **A child** is defined as every human below the age of eighteen years unless, under the law applicable to the child, the age of majority is attained earlier in line with Article 1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
- 1.2.2. **Child abuse or harm** refers to any detrimental effect on a child's physical, psychological, or emotional wellbeing. This includes violence, injury, neglect or negligent treatment, ill-treatment, harassment, and commercial or other exploitation of a child, whether intended or unintended. It may be an intentional act involving the use of physical force or power or it may be failing to act to prevent violence against a child. Harm can also take place online through, for example, the web, social media or mobile phones. Harm consists of anything which individuals, groups, institutions or organisations do or fail to do that results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's wellbeing, dignity, survival and development. This can take many forms:
  - **Sexual abuse:** forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, involving children in looking at or producing sexual images or activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

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- **Sexual exploitation:** engaging children in any sexual activity in exchange for money, gifts, food, accommodation, affection, status, or anything else that they or their family needs. Exploitation usually involves a child being manipulated or coerced, which may involve befriending children, gaining their trust, and subjecting them to drugs and alcohol. The abusive relationship between victim and perpetrator involves an imbalance of power where the victim's options are limited. It is a form of abuse that can be misunderstood by children and adults as consensual.
- **Commercial exploitation:** exploiting a child in work or other activities for the benefit of others and to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development. It includes, but is not limited to, child labour.
- **Emotional abuse:** persistent emotional maltreatment that impacts a child's emotional development. Emotionally abusive acts include restricting movement, degrading, humiliating, bullying (including cyber bullying), threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing or engaging in other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.
- **Physical abuse:** actual or potential physical harm perpetrated by another person, adult or child. It may involve hitting, shaking, poisoning, drowning and burning.

1.2.3. **Safeguarding:** preventative, responsive and referral measures undertaken to protect children, ensuring that no child is subject to any form of harm as a result of their engagement with the organisation or as a result of the actions of one of its representations. This includes ensuring that their interactions with TNH and its representatives are safe; where there are concerns over a child's welfare or where a child has been subject to harm that appropriate and timely actions are taken to address it; and that incidents are analysed so as to ensure continued learning for the organisation.

### 1.3. Roles and responsibilities

1.3.1. TNH representatives (as defined in Section 1.1.3) are responsible for familiarising themselves with this policy and fully complying with it. They are required to be aware of risks to children and to be vigilant. They are also responsible to report any concern about the safety of children as per the reporting procedure in Section 1.7 and to participate fully in any safeguarding investigation if requested.

1.3.2. The Management Team, which includes the TNH Director, the Director of Finance, the Executive Editor and the Director of External Relations, is responsible for the promotion of good practices by ensuring that TNH representatives remain in compliance with this policy.

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- 1.3.3. The Human Resources (HR) Manager is responsible for making sure that the training on child protection is performed and successfully completed by all those concerned.
- 1.3.4. The Board of Directors is responsible for oversight of TNH's compliance with this policy as well as ensuring that they too, as TNH representatives, comply with this policy. In the exceptional case of any reported case of non-compliance involving the TNH Director, the President of the Board of Directors assumes the responsibility for appropriate follow-up.
- 1.3.5. The independent Whistleblowing and Complaints Platform is an external point of contact and advice provided by an independent law firm for reporting any cases of alleged or suspected non-compliance with this policy among TNH representatives, where the person making the report prefers to contact an independent, confidential source.

### 1.4. Code of Conduct

- 1.4.1. All TNH representatives are required to adhere to this code of conduct in both their professional and private lives. Actions taken outside working hours that are seen to contradict this policy will be considered as non-compliance.
- 1.4.2. The standards of behavior for all TNH representatives are set out below.

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- a) Behave respectfully, courteously and ethically towards children regardless of their sex, ethnic or social origin, language, religious or other beliefs, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or other status.
- b) Use language and behavior towards children that is at all times appropriate and in no way harassing, abusive, sexually provocative or demeaning.
- c) Consider and respect the diverse backgrounds and needs of children.
- d) Identify and mitigate any risks to the safety and wellbeing of any children associated with TNH activities.
- e) Respond to any concerns or complaints of child harm or abuse promptly and in line with the TNH procedure for receiving and responding to complaints, listed below.
- f) Do not engage in any unlawful activity with or in relation to a child.
- g) Do not engage in any activity that is likely to physically, sexually or emotionally harm a child.
- h) Do not discriminate against any child or their family members.
- i) Do not disclose personal or sensitive information about a child, including images of a child, unless the child and their parent or legal guardian consent or unless required to do so by TNH's policy on reporting.
- j) Do not use inappropriate language in the presence of children or show or provide children with access to inappropriate images or material.
- k) Do not work with children while under the influence of alcohol or prohibited drugs.
- l) Do not ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child harm or abuse. Sexual activity with children is prohibited regardless of the local age of majority or age of consent locally accepted. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not an excuse.

1.4.3. In particular, in the course of their reporting, TNH-affiliated journalists and editors will respect the following rules when interviewing, photographing or filming a child or using children's stories and images for work-related purposes:

- a. Consider the potential harm on the child of publishing their story or image, including in the future.
- b. obtain informed consent from the child and parent or guardian of the child before interviewing, photographing or filming a child. Explain how the interview, photo or film will be used;
- c. assess and endeavor to comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images before photographing or filming a child;

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- d. ensure photos and films present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive;
- e. ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts;
- f. for children who have experienced violence, exploitation, have been otherwise abused or are in some way particularly vulnerable or at risk if identified, do not reveal any identifying information (such as full name, date of birth, full names of family members) or information that could be used to identify their specific location within a country (such as village or community names, school, etc.) and do not display their faces (in a way that may lead to their identification); change their real names and other identifying details;
- g. when photographing or filming a group, follow the same rules as for individual photos or films; any individuals who wish to opt out should be allowed to do so;
  - where using images of children in crowd scenes where it may be difficult or impossible to get consent, the following should be taken into consideration: would the children attending the event expect photos to be taken?
  - is it unlikely that anyone would object to the photos being taken?
  - where photos are being taken or films recorded at a planned event, as far as possible, individuals should be told in advance that cameras will be used and how the photos / films will be used, in order that they can opt out of the event or notify organizers that they do not wish to be featured in any photos or films;
- h. all images and stories, along with accompanying details of individuals, are used and kept according to relevant data and privacy laws.

## 1.5. Training

1.5.1. TNH requires all staff, board members and others likely to be in regular contact with children (as determined by the Management Team) to undergo online training on child protection to ensure they are fully aware of their responsibilities. This freely available training is offered by *The Humanitarian Leadership Academy*.<sup>1</sup> TNH will provide adequate lead time for current and future representatives to undertake this training.

## 1.6. Reporting and follow-up

1.6.1. Notwithstanding any incident being reported through one of the channels below, the first step of any incident is to ensure the safety of the child(ren) concerned. In cases of urgency and/or where a child or children may require emergency treatment and/or protection, witnesses should immediately notify the local emergency services and/or police.

1.6.2. Whilst TNH representatives are not responsible for the safety of every child, they are responsible for taking all reasonable steps to alert the appropriate emergency and/or law enforcement authorities if they witness any form of criminal activity, including child abuse, including by non-TNH representatives. Where TNH representatives come across *actionable, reportable* abuses committed by non-TNH stakeholders, for instance during their reporting, they should report this to their supervisor. TNH's management team will then decide whether it is safe and worthwhile to notify the authorities or the employer of the person suspected of abuse, to enable further investigation and ultimately an end to and accountability for the abuse. However, this policy recognises that reporters may often come across abuses, for example by militias in conflict zones, for which they and TNH are powerless to intervene (beyond any journalistic role).

1.6.3. Any person who believes that he or she has witnessed or become aware of any breach or potential breach of this policy by TNH representatives should immediately report it to any one of the following sources as may be appropriate to the circumstances:

- the immediate superior (if staff) or commissioning editor (if contributor);
- the HR Manager, Victoria Bytsko: [victoria@thenewhumanitarian.org](mailto:victoria@thenewhumanitarian.org)
- the Director of TNH, Heba Aly: [heba@thenewhumanitarian.org](mailto:heba@thenewhumanitarian.org);
- the external, independent *Whistleblowing and Complaints Platform*:  
HDC Legal, Avenue Auguste-Tissot 2bis, Lausanne  
Person in charge to be contacted: David Raedler  
Telephone: +41 21 310 73 10  
Email: [raedler@hdclegal.ch](mailto:raedler@hdclegal.ch)

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- 1.6.4. Once received by a supervisor, the alleged abuse will then be reported to the TNH Director, who will inform the Governance Committee of the Board of Directors and decide, together with the Committee, on required action.
- 1.6.5. When cases are reported to the independent Whistleblowing and Complaints Platform, the following procedure will be applied:
- HDC Legal will perform a brief responsive investigation, if required, further to the complaint in order to clarify the facts.
  - HDC Legal will then communicate the complaint to the Director, the President of the Board of Directors, and the Chair of the Governance Committee (unless one of those three is implicated).
  - The Governance Committee of the Board of Directors will decide whether a deeper investigation is required.
- 1.6.6. Investigations will be objective, transparent, and will be guided by external professional expertise and support when required.
- 1.6.7. No person who makes a report in good faith will be subject to retaliation. A person may report on an anonymous basis through the platform although that may impede the independent reporting service's ability to thoroughly investigate the allegations.
- 1.6.8. While TNH strives to maintain confidentiality to protect the affected individual(s), in its goal of engaging in a thorough investigation, TNH may inform relevant colleagues and/or be required to disclose the allegations or result of the investigation to the authorities.
- 1.6.9. Breaches of this policy will be investigated in accordance with contractual agreements or a referral may be made statutory authorities for criminal investigation. Breaches may incur sanctions, including disciplinary action leading to possible dismissal, termination of all relations including contractual and partnership agreements, and, where relevant, appropriate legal actions. Disciplinary measures taken as a consequence of the breach of the policy will be proportionate to the nature of the breach. Cases will be reviewed on an individual basis prior to applying sanctions.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.humanitarianleadershipacademy.org/safeguarding-essentials-a-new-online-course-for-the-humanitarian-sector/>

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1.6.10. If a legitimate concern about the suspected abuse of a child is raised but proves to be unfounded on investigation, no action will be taken against the person in question. However, appropriate sanctions will be applied in case of false and malicious accusations.

## 1.7. Monitoring and review

1.7.1. This policy will be reviewed and updated should legal, policy or practice changes indicate this is necessary.

1.7.2 The independent Whistleblowing and Complaints Platform will provide an annual written report to the TNH Board of Directors, listing any calls or emails received in the last year, while fully respecting and confidentiality requirements.