

CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Fundasaun Alola

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Timor-Leste

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Child Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

Fundasaun Alola (FA) believes in a global community where children are safe and have the opportunity to reach their full potential. We promote children's rights as described in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), an instrument ratified by Timor-Leste in 2003.

Fundasaun Alola recognises that children can be more vulnerable due to their age, gender, race, ethnic origin or socio-economic status. Children with disabilities, who are orphaned, are indigenous or from ethnic minorities, can face an even higher level of vulnerability. Natural disasters, disease, armed conflict and displacement expose children to additional risks. Many of these risks can impact the children we work with, so we regularly assess and manage risks at all stages of our activities.

This Child Safeguarding Policy broadly outlines the steps we take in our work and with our people, to ensure we do no harm to children.

Policy statement

Fundasaun Alola will advocate and support strengthening the protection, and promoting the rights, of all children with whom we work. We do this explicitly through our direct child protection projects which protect children from the risk of violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect. We also do this implicitly by ensuring that organisationally we do no harm in the way we work or through our people (as set out in this Child Safeguarding Policy).

Alola vision:

WOMEN AND CHILDREN ENJOY EQUAL STATUS IN ALL ASPECTS OF LIFE

Alola mission:

1. To promote women's rights and increase women's leadership capacity
2. To improve health status of women and children
3. To increase access & quality of education for women and children
4. To strengthen small enterprises of women's groups at grassroots level
5. To adopt digital technology as much as possible

23

Values

1. Justice and Equality
2. Peacefulness
3. Democracy
4. Non-violence
5. Integrity

Working Principles

1. Discipline
2. Equity
3. Ownership
4. Appreciation
5. Professionalism and harmony

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Board members, staff and volunteers at Fundasaun Alola at any time when they are working.

We will also promote the ideas in this policy through our work with local partners and encourage them to develop their own child safeguarding practices.

Fundasaun Alola defines a child as anyone under the age of 18 years.

DEFINITION

Child abuse: both boys and girls can be the victim of child abuse, and this can be inflicted by men, women and other children. It includes physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect/negligent treatment, or commercial or other exploitation that results in actual or potential harm to a child's health, development or dignity.

1. Physical abuse: the intentional causing of physical harm to a child. This may take the form of slapping, punching, shaking, kicking, burning, biting, strangling, poisoning or any other form of physical violence.

2. Emotional abuse: a pattern of behaviour by adults towards children that erodes social competence and self-esteem, and that has a negative effect on a child's mental and emotional well-being. These behaviours can include threats, rejection, isolation, belittling, name-calling or other nonphysical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.

② **Neglect or negligent treatment:** is the failure to provide a child within the context of resources reasonably available to the family or caregivers - with the conditions essential for their physical and emotional development and well-being.

③ **Sexual abuse:** occurs when someone uses their power or authority to involve a child in sexual activity. Sexually abusive behaviours can involve kissing, fondling genitals, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration (by a penis, finger or any other object), fondling breasts, voyeurism, exhibitionism or exposing the child to, or involving the child in, pornography. Both boys and girls can be victims of child sexual abuse.

Policy in action

CODE OF CONDUCT

Fundasaun Alola Code of Conduct for Working with Children (Tetun) is available as a separate document

RECRUITMENT

Fundasaun Alola will follow the following steps when we hire any new staff. These steps will make sure we are checking that staff are not a known risk to children.

We will require a '*Deklarasaun de Bom Comportamento*' from any new staff member. We will require a police clearance certificate from any foreign staff or volunteer.

We will verbally check two references for candidates before hiring.

We will ask candidates about their work with children before with at least one question that asks them to respond to a scenario related to children. As part of their contract, new staff must agree to follow our child protection policy.

When new staff join Fundasaun Alola, we will introduce them to this Child Safeguarding policy during their orientation.

Fundasaun Alola will arrange annual training for all staff about issues related to children's rights and how to work safely with children.

Reporting Process

Who should report?

All Fundasaun Alola staff and others including people in the community can report concerns about children, or about our staff.

What should be reported?

Any disclosure or allegation from a child/community member or staff regarding the safety or abuse of a child.

Any concerning behaviour by Fundasaun Alola staff or volunteers that breaches our Code of Conduct for Working with Children. Inappropriate use of the organisation's photographic equipment or computers including evidence of child pornography.

Staff engaging in suspicious behaviour that could be associated with sexual exploitation or trafficking.

Who to report to?

Concerns should be reported to your Manager or directly to the Chief Executive Officer.

How to make a report?

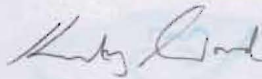
Reports can be made in person or by telephone as soon as possible. Verbal reports should be followed up with written notification within 24 hours.

Investigating and Responding

Once a report has been received, a full investigation will be conducted by Senior Managers at Fundasaun Alola and then action taken. All information provided in a report will be treated confidentially and professionally.

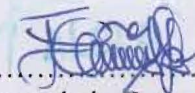
A decision to notify PNTL, MSS or child-focused organisations who can help, will be based on the type of concern reported, legal responsibilities and the best interests of the child involved.

A decision to suspend a staff member or volunteer may be taken while an investigation is underway; however, Fundasaun Alola will make sure that this process is just and fair.



Approved by:
15 Dec, 2021

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Kirsty Sword Gusmão, Chair, Fundasaun Alola Board
on behalf of the full Board of Fundasaun Alola



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Maria Imaculada Guterres, CEO

25

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