

# CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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**Translations available:** French and Spanish

## INTRODUCTION

Founded in 1968, Enfants du Monde (EdM) is a long-term, ZEWO-certified Swiss organisation for child relief and international development cooperation. EdM promotes the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and bases its action on the rights and objectives of sustainable development. Through a constant search for quality, a high degree of specialisation and a high level of demand, EdM intervenes in a targeted manner in specific areas of health and education, in connection with children.

Violence, abuse and many violations of children's rights are a reality in all countries and societies around the world. In all its interventions, EdM is committed to the protection of the children who benefit from its programmes and to the prevention of their abuse.

The purpose of this policy is to **ensure that any child who comes into contact with our organisation, and by extension our partners, is protected at all times**. It sets out the values, principles and beliefs that EdM holds in relation to safeguarding children and which must be respected by all partners and staffs. It also outlines the steps that must be taken by EdM and each of its partners and collaborators to meet their commitments to protect all children in their programmes.

**This policy forms an integral part of any Collaboration Agreement signed between EdM and its partners** (except in cases where the organisation in question already has its own policy in this regard).

## KEY CONCEPTS

**Protection of children.** Article 19 of the CRC calls for the protection of "children from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or

exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person(s) who has the care of the child".

**Safeguarding children.** It is the responsibility of organisations to ensure that their staff, operations and programmes do not harm children in any way.

**Violence against children (VAW).** EdM is committed to protecting children from all forms of violence, the main points remain as the following:

- **Sexual violence:** any abuse of a vulnerable position for sexual purposes, such as rape, incest, child pornography or sexual exploitation.
- **Physical injury or damage to health:** any abuse of a position of vulnerability, resulting in injury or causing bodily harm.
- **Mental and moral harm:** any abuse of a vulnerable position that can damage a child's self-esteem and confidence, such as rejection, humiliation, intimidation, isolation, exploitation or deprivation of affection.
- **Neglect:** any abuse of a vulnerable position that the carer deliberately or through unusual carelessness inflicts on the child, on a persistent basis, whether it be actual avoidable suffering or failure to provide one or more of the inputs generally regarded as essential to the child's development.

## OUR COMMITMENT TO PROTECTING CHILDREN

EdM focuses on children, both in our areas of work (education and health) and in terms of intervention strategies. As such, rights, and in particular the rights of the child, are the basis and justification for our work, and wherever possible we place the child at the centre of our work, as beneficiary, subject and actor. The strengthening of children's capacities to develop, act and assert themselves, within/with their family, community and society, is at the heart of our work.

In safeguarding children, **the following principles guide our work and that of our partners:**

- Any abuse of children involves an abuse of their rights. All children have the right to protection from abuse and exploitation. The abuse of children is not acceptable under any circumstances.
- Any safeguarding approach should be guided by the principles of the CRC, in particular: the best interests of the child; the active participation of the child in the process; listening to and taking into account the child's views and wishes.
- We have a responsibility to protect the children we work with/for. Where we work with partners and providers, they must sign up to this policy and its appendices and ensure its implementation in all their dealings and outcomes.
- Everyone involved in the implementation of EdM-supported programmes (staffs, contractors, volunteers, etc.) is obliged to comply with EdM's **Code of Conduct** (see **Annex 1**), which forms an integral part of this policy.

- The situation of all children can be improved through the promotion of their rights as set out in the CRC; we therefore contribute to raising awareness of children's rights in our countries of intervention.

## WHAT WE DO TO FULFIL OUR COMMITMENT

We fulfil our commitment to protect children from violence by-

### AWARENESS RAISING

We ensure that all those involved in the implementation of EdM programmes (beneficiaries, staff, volunteers, contractors/suppliers, partners, authorities and community representatives) :

- are aware of the abuse and violence against children and the risks that children may face in the contexts in which they operate;
- are aware of EdM's ESP and have access to a copy;
- are aware of EdM's Code of Conduct (see Annex) and have/had access to a copy.

### PREVENTION

We ensure that all those involved in the implementation of EdM programmes (beneficiaries, staff, volunteers, contractors/suppliers, partners), contribute to minimising the risks that children may face in the implementation of our programmes, through the following actions

- to analyse and respond to the risks that children may face in the implementation of our programmes;
- include in our recruitment procedures a check on the applicant's history of violence and abuse against children and their suitability to work with children and young people;
- include **EdM's Code of Conduct** (see **Appendix 1**) in any employment contract with our employees and ensure that it is respected;
- Brief all newly recruited staff on child protection and safeguarding issues and EdM's ESP;
- Produce information and awareness-raising materials on this policy in different languages, including the local languages of EdM's countries of operation, and disseminate them wherever necessary;
- comply with the **Guidelines for the Use of Images and Testimonies of Children in Communication Activities** (see **Annex 2**).

### NOTIFICATION AND REPORTING

We ensure that all cases of violence against children in our programmes are reported through the following actions:

- Establish a reporting mechanism for SEV cases where the perpetrator is an employee or a contractor/supplier recruited under an EdM programme;

- Post the EFV reporting numbers of the country of intervention at all workplaces and ensure that all staff have these details;
- Brief all those involved in the implementation of our programmes (beneficiaries, staff, volunteers, contractors/suppliers, partners) on what to do when they see a case of EFV.

## **RESPONSE**

We ensure that all reported cases are taken seriously, analysed and, where appropriate, dealt with, through the following actions:

- activate the investigation system to investigate and deal with reports of possible abuse;
- cooperate appropriately and effectively in the case of an investigation or enquiry process;
- take measures to support and protect children who are victims of reported abuse or violence;
- take steps to reassure the victim's family and community;
- protect staff who report or are reported.

## **SUPPORT AND TRAINING**

Training, learning opportunities and materials will be made available periodically by EdM to ensure that the above commitments are met.

## **WHAT WE DO TO ENSURE THAT OUR COMMITMENTS ARE IMPLEMENTED**

### **DESIGNATION OF PES FOCAL POINTS**

A Child Protection and Safeguarding (CPS) focal point must be designated at EdM's headquarters in Geneva, as well as in each EdM Coordination Office (BuCo) in the field and in each partner organisation. This role is part of the job profile of the staff member in question, and represents between 5% and 10% of his/her working time, depending on the case.

The responsibilities of the PES Focal Point at headquarters are as follows

- monitoring the implementation of EdM's PES policy, in collaboration with the BuCo focal points;
- Coordinate the actions carried out at headquarters concerning the implementation of the PES policy;
- Coordinate, in collaboration with the BuCo focal points, the actions carried out on the ground concerning the implementation of the PES policy;
- Develop and maintain a baseline of the child protection system at headquarters;
- Brief all new HQ staff on child protection and safeguarding issues and introduce them to this policy;
- Provide technical support for the implementation of the PES policy at headquarters;
- Produce an annual report on the implementation of EdM's PES policy, including a review of the year and lessons learned, as well as an outlook for the following year.

The responsibilities of the PES Focal Points in BuCo are as follows

- Follow up on the implementation of EdM's PES policy in its country, in collaboration with the cross-cutting focal point at headquarters;
- Coordinate actions at BuCo regarding the implementation of the PES policy;
- Developing and updating the state of play of the national child protection system in its country of operation;
- Brief all new BuCo staff on child protection and safeguarding issues and introduce them to EdM's ESP policy;
- Provide BuCo staff and EdM partners with the technical support needed to implement the PES policy;
- to identify and communicate to the EdM Secretary General (with a copy to the EdM regional coordinator if it is not the same person) any cases of abuse or violence committed by employees recruited by EdM or its partners in the implementation of EdM programmes;
- Support the cross-cutting focal point at headquarters in drafting the annual report on the implementation of EdM's PES policy.

**Each EdM partner organisation should clearly define the roles and responsibilities of its PES focal point.**

#### **PSE COMMITTEE AND MONITORING MECHANISM**

A monitoring committee for the implementation of the PES policy (hereafter, PES Committee) is in place within EdM. The PES Committee includes the PES Focal Points from HQ and BuCo, as well as the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General of EdM. The committee meets at least twice a year:

- a planning meeting in February each year, after the drafting of EdM's annual PES policy implementation report, to define EdM's action plan for the following year based on the report's findings;
- a mid-year review meeting to take stock of ongoing actions, identify priorities before the end of the year and identify any new needs.

Extraordinary meetings of the PES Committee may be convened as necessary by the Secretary General and/or the Deputy Secretary General of EdM, in particular when cases of abuse are brought to their attention by the PES Focal Points of the BuCo's, in order to consult with the Committee and decide on a course of action.

## **ANNEX 1. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PROGRAMMES SUPPORTED BY ENFANTS DU MONDE**

This Code of Conduct **forms an integral part of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy of Enfants du Monde (EdM), as well as the employment contract of all staff and contractors recruited to EdM supported programmes.** All staff recruited to EdM supported programmes must sign, acknowledge and abide by this Code.

### **The employee/contractor must never :**

- hitting, assaulting or physically abusing children;
- having physical/sexual relationships with children;
- develop relationships with children that could in any way be considered abusive or exploitative;
- act in an abusive manner or in a way that could place children at risk of abuse;
- use inappropriate, offensive or abusive language, suggestions or advice to a child;
- behaving in a physically inappropriate/sexually provocative manner with a child;
- invite a child or children with whom he/she works to stay overnight at his/her home without supervision;
- sleeping alone in the same room or bed as a child for whom he/she works;
- doing personal things for children when they could be doing it themselves;
- tolerate, or contribute to, behaviour towards children that is illegal, risky or abusive;
- acting with the intention of shaming, humiliating, belittling or denigrating children, or perpetuating any form of emotional abuse;
- discriminate, treat differently or favour some children over others;
- using children for any kind of profit-making activity.

This is not an exhaustive or exclusive list. The principle is that staff should avoid any actions or behaviours that may be harmful or potentially abusive.

### **In general, it is inappropriate to :**

- spending too much time alone with some children and keeping away from others;
- take children to your home, especially if they will be alone with you.

### **It is important that every employee :**

- is aware of and able to manage situations that may present risks;
- plans and organises work and the workplace to minimise risks;
- as far as possible, be visible when working with children;
- ensures that a spirit of openness is cultivated so that any questions or concerns can be raised and discussed;

- ensure that a sense of responsibility exists among staff so that bad practice or potentially abusive behaviour does not go unchallenged;
- discusses with children about their contact with staff or others and encourages them to raise concerns;
- empower children - discuss with them their rights, what is acceptable and unacceptable, and what they can do if they have a problem.

## **ANNEX 2. GUIDELINES FOR TAKING AND USING IMAGES AND TESTIMONIES OF CHILDREN IN COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES**

**When taking photos, videos or audio testimonies of children, Enfants du Monde or the person mandated by Enfants du Monde (photographer, journalist, service provider or partner) must**

- Have previously read and accepted by signature the Children of the World child safeguarding policy.
- Have obtained the prior and explicit consent of the child's caregiver; have explained for what purpose and on what media the photos/videos/testimonials will be used by Enfants du Monde (EdM) and have them sign a consent form which is kept by the Communications and Fundraising team with the photo/video/testimonial.
- Respect the dignity of the child: do not take photos that may give a degrading image, or that may be open to interpretation (no nudity, no children in underwear, no possible sexual interpretation of poses).
- Ensure the safety of the child: do not take photos/videos/testimonies of children if this would put the child at risk. If taking pictures or testimonies is absolutely necessary to change the situation of the children, ensure that they cannot be recognised (face covered, child from behind, blurring, voice modification...).

**When selecting images and using them for the different media and communication supports, the Communication and Fundraising team respects the following principles**

- Choose images that respect the principles listed above.
- Choose images that show action rather than misery; show the child as an actor and not just as a victim, with photos in action and not passive.
- Show hope and progress: for example, if we are talking about a child who has dropped out of school, show him or her in his or her environment, e.g. at home doing household chores, and show the child in the classroom if he or she is now in school.
- Choose images that give a positive image of the child and respect his or her dignity; Always ask yourself the question "if this child were my family, would I agree to this photo being used? »
- Give the child a fictitious name and do not give precise information about its location: do not give the name of a village, only the name of a region or large city in a country.