



Safeguarding Policy Statement of ECADE

Introduction

ECADE takes the prevention and protection of vulnerable adults from violence, abuse and harm with the utmost seriousness. Vulnerable adults are anyone aged 18 or over who requires care or support and as a result is unable to protect themselves from abuse and/or is currently experiencing or is at risk of experiencing abuse including but not limited to physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, neglect, radicalisation, discriminatory and financial/economic.

ECADE understands that its work with LGBTQI people, including those in criminalising countries and/or those who have experienced discrimination, hostility and/or violence, places this group of people at a social disadvantage, which has potential to increase the vulnerability of individuals within this group.

ECADE recognises that multiple other factors (such as sexual orientation and sexuality, gender identity and expression, marital status, race/ethnicity, tribe, religion, age, caste, class, disability, mental health, health, migrant status, nationality, etc.) can further place individuals at a social disadvantage, which also increases the vulnerability of individuals within this group.

ECADE also recognises that heteronormativity, patriarchy and power along multiple lines, including, race, gender, class, 'INGO-status', position within an organisation, for example, CEO or Executive Director, create hierarchy, privilege and power which may be exploited to inflict violence, abuse and harm on individuals who may be from different backgrounds.

This policy is guided by international standards and ECADE's internal policies, including:

Code of Conduct

Discrimination, Harassment, Grievances and Complaints Handling Policy

Policy for Engaging Consultants

Financial Management Policies and Procedures and Implementation for Financial Activities

Procurement Policy

Equal Opportunity Policy Statement

This policy statement does not cover the safeguarding of children and those persons under the age of 18 years. A separate policy statement will be developed to deal with this matter.

A. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure all persons and vulnerable adults who are involved in or come into direct contact with activities being carried out by ECADE or anyone acting on behalf of ECADE do no harm to and do not expose them to violence, abuse and harm.

This policy follows six guiding principles with regard to adult safeguarding as outlined by international standards. These are:

1. Empowerment - people being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
2. Prevention - it is better to take action before harm occurs.
3. Proportionality - the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
4. Protection - Support and representation for those in greatest need.
5. Partnership - local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
6. Accountability - accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

B. Applicability

This policy applies to all ECADE staff, including those on contract ('staff'); trustees, volunteers, interns, trainees, journalists, donors, supporters and others ('representatives'); staff and representatives of partner agencies, or any other individuals, groups or organisations with a formal/contractual relationship with ECADE ('partners'), who may come into contact with vulnerable adults through their involvement with ECADE or our partners.

There are no exceptions to this policy and breaching it will result in disciplinary and potentially legal action.

C. Prevention

Programme design and implementation of activities

- We will ensure our programme design incorporates creating environments where violence, abuse and harm can be prevented and are responded to appropriately.

We will do this by recognising and calling out power and privilege, supporting all partners and individuals in our programmes to take ownership of safeguarding and being led by local partners on the realities of how violence, abuse and harm can be prevented and responded to in the countries in which they reside.

- We will ensure that adequate training is provided to programme staff, partners and representatives on safeguarding, intersectionality, gender-based violence and other related areas.
- We will ensure that adequate technical capacities are strengthened for partner organisations and their staff.
- We will carry out appropriate due diligence of partners, consultants, researchers and any individuals subcontracted or hired to deliver services or goods as part of our work.

D. Risk Assessment

Good practice in keeping vulnerable adults safe includes undertaking an adequate risk assessment.

- A risk assessment should be undertaken each time a new programme/project activity is taking place, including but not limited to, convenings/ consultations/ conferences, country visits and monitoring visits.
- Any risk assessment should be completed in consultation and/or together with any in-country partner organisation.
- Prior to any programme/project activity, the risk assessment and safeguarding policy should be shared with partner organisations.

Convening(s), consultations, conferences and meetings

- Where ECADE is the host organisation in the Caribbean or abroad of any convening(s)/ consultation/ conferences/ meetings, staff will facilitate a session for participants to collectively set out any ground rules and ensure that ECADE's approach to adult safeguarding is highlighted and explained, including the procedure for reporting.

E. Reporting Procedure

The primary priority of any staff member/representative/partner to whom a disclosure has been made is the safety and well-being of the vulnerable adult.

- The staff member/representative/partner should follow the reporting process and not make any disclosures to any other individuals, including line managers.
- Staff/representatives who investigate concerns must:
 - o Complete an Incident/Disclosure Form; tailored where necessary (Appendix 2)
 - o Take any alleged or suspicious concerns raised seriously
 - o Ensure confidentiality of any disclosure will be retained to only those individuals who need to know
 - o Be guided by the principle of working in the 'best interests of the vulnerable adult'
 - o Take positive steps to ensure the immediate safety and well-being of the vulnerable adult
 - o Provide support and assurance to vulnerable adult
 - o Actively listen to and not influence or question (beyond seeking necessary clarifications) the vulnerable adult's disclosure
 - o Not make any assumptions and/or judgments of the individual concerned based on previous behaviour, their lifestyle, choice(s) and/or their sexual orientation, gender identity and expression or other identities
 - o Take full consideration of the views and wishes of the vulnerable adult with the understanding that this may change over time
 - o Provide full information to the vulnerable adult of the choices they have
 - o Request permission to share the disclosure with the Executive Director. If permission is not granted, the staff member/representative should report the incident anonymously and identify the person who the allegation has been made against as they may pose harm to others
 - o Carry out any investigation honestly and fairly and in accordance with this policy and first, where the national laws of the country where the incident has occurred
 - o Cooperate fully and confidentially with any subsequent investigation

- All ECADE staff, representatives and partners must report disclosures of concerns, including alleged and suspicious concerns of harm, abuse and violence to a vulnerable adult, to ECADE's Executive Director, with permission from the vulnerable adult or if it is not granted, anonymously.
- If the concerns are against the Executive Director, or it is otherwise not possible to report to the Executive Director, these should be reported to ECADE's Nominated Safeguarding Board members (the Chair and Vice Chair).
- All disclosures from a vulnerable adult of violence, abuse and harm caused or committed by a member of staff, a representative, a visitor, or a partner agency staff member must be reported.
- Any observations of violence, abuse and harm caused or committed by member of staff, a representative, a visitor, or a partner agency staff member must be reported.
- If the individual is outside the categories in point (a), or is a member of an organisation or institution which is not a partner agency, any concerns should be reported if:
 - o A vulnerable adult has or may have been the subject of violence, abuse and harm by that person where there is an obligation to report such abuse (this applies to the St. Lucia, the Caribbean region and may apply to other countries).
- Non-recent incidents of violence, abuse and harm by member of staff, a representative, a visitor, or a partner agency staff member should be reported with the same severity.
- The staff member/representative/partner must report any concerns within a maximum of 24 hours. Where it is not possible to report concerns within 24 hours (for example, there is limited connectivity), the report should be made as soon as possible.
- If a staff member feels that they cannot report a concern in accordance with this policy due to a genuine belief that it has been compromised, then they must report it in accordance with the ECADE's Whistleblowing Policy.
- The Executive Director must organise and appoint any investigators necessary to carry out any further investigation required.
- If the incident occurs in Saint Lucia or the Caribbean, there is a duty to report the incident to the police where violence, abuse and harm has been inflicted on a vulnerable adult