



# Safeguarding Policy

## Safeguarding Policy

The purpose of this policy is to protect all people, particularly women, girls, boys and at risk adults and beneficiaries of assistance, from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with Climate Rev Acts CIC. This includes harm arising from:

- The conduct of staff or personnel associated with CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC
- The design and implementation of CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC's programmes and activities

The policy lays out the commitments made by CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC and informs staff and associated personnel (including volunteers) of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

This policy does not cover safeguarding concerns in the wider community that are not perpetrated by CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC or associated personnel.

## What is safeguarding?

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. In the international development sector, we understand it to mean protecting people, particularly women, girls, boys and at-risk adults, from harm that arises from coming into contact with our staff, volunteers or programmes.

Further definitions relating to safeguarding are provided in the glossary below.

## Scope

- All staff, trustees and volunteers working or recruited by CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC
- CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC works in partnership with local organisations (statutory, private and NGO's) to support the development of their own safeguarding standards. These standards should apply to any associated personnel whilst engaged with work or visits at the project, including:
  - o local personnel: staff, management, board members
  - o family members, carers, helpers,
  - o trainers, volunteers, programme visitors

## Policy Principles

CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC believes that everyone we come into contact with, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin, has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by staff, volunteers, or charity representatives.

CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, across the three key areas of: *Prevention, Reporting and Response*.

## 1. Prevention

### *CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC will:*

- Ensure all staff, trustees and volunteers have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy
- Design and undertake all its programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programmes is gathered and communicated
- Implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and associated personnel
- Ensure staff receive training/updates on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organisation
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process

### *Staff responsibilities*

All CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC staff, volunteers and CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC partners are prohibited from engaging in the following harmful behaviour, including but not limited to:

- Any behaviour or activity that could amount to sexual exploitation and abuse, including the misuse of children's images
- Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defence.
- Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favours or any other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour.
- Any other activity that is intended to cause physical or emotional harm, humiliation or exploitation to any individual.
- Any activity, practice or behaviour that suggests staff, trustees, volunteers, grant recipients or partners have abused their position of power and are engaging any individual based on inherently unequal power dynamics.
- Sexual relationships between staff, trustees, volunteers, CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC partners and any individuals that are based on unequal power dynamics are not appropriate, since they may undermine the credibility and integrity of the work of the CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC.

## 2. Reporting

CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to staff, volunteers and the communities with whom we work.

Any staff reporting concerns or complaints through formal whistleblowing channels will be protected by CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC's Disclosure of Malpractice in the Workplace (Whistleblowing)

Policy. It is not appropriate for any individual to be the subject of criticism for identifying/raising concerns in line with this Safeguarding policy.

CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies.

#### *How to report a safeguarding concern*

Staff members, trustees or volunteers who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to the CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC designated Safeguarding lead. If the staff member does not feel comfortable reporting to the CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC designated Safeguarding lead (for example if they feel that the report will not be taken seriously, or if that person is implicated in the concern) they may report to any other appropriate staff member or Director.

CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC designated Safeguarding lead – Dr Colin Coleman

#### *Reporting to the Charity Commission*

The Charity Commission requires charities to report serious incidents. If a serious incident takes place within the charity, it is important that there is prompt, full and frank disclosure to the Commission. The responsibility for reporting serious incidents rests with the charity's trustees (although in practice, this may be delegated to the Executive Officer, by agreement of the Trustees). Any serious incident must be reported, explaining what happened and how the charity is dealing with it, including any reporting to the police, donors or another regulator.

Incidents that result in, or risk, the following should be reported:

- significant harm to people who come into contact with your charity through its work
- significant loss of your charity's money or assets
- significant damage to your charity's property
- significant harm to your charity's work or reputation

The main categories of reportable incident are:

- protecting people and safeguarding incidents – incidents that have resulted in or risk significant harm to beneficiaries and other people who come into contact with the charity through its work
- financial crimes – fraud, theft, cyber-crime and money laundering

### **3. Response**

CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligations.

CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff found in breach of policy.

CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC will offer support to survivors of harm caused by staff or associated personnel, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out (such as an internal investigation). Decisions regarding support will be led by the survivor. Where the survivor is a child or otherwise unable to make decisions, support will be provided by an appropriate guardian or carer.

### ***Confidentiality***

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need-to-know basis only and should be kept secure at all times.

## **Associated policies**

Complaints Policy

Whistleblowing Policy

Safer Recruitment Procedure

Code of Conduct

Reporting Concerns Procedure

## **Glossary of Terms**

**Beneficiary of Assistance:** someone who directly receives goods or services from CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC's programme. Note that misuse of power can also apply to the wider community that the CIC serves and also can include exploitation by giving the perception of being in a position of power.

**Child:** a person below the age of 18

**Harm:** psychological, physical and any other infringement of an individual's rights

**Psychological harm:** emotional or psychological abuse, including (but not limited to) humiliating and degrading treatment such as bad name calling, constant criticism, belittling, persistent shaming, solitary confinement and isolation

**Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA):** the term used by the humanitarian and development community to refer to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse of affected populations by staff or associated personnel. The term derives from the United Nations Secretary General's Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13)

**Safeguarding:** in the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

In our sector (international development) we understand it to mean protecting people, including children and at risk adults, from harm that arises from coming into contact with our staff or programmes.

CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC considers that 'Safeguarding' means taking all reasonable steps to prevent harm, particularly sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment from occurring; to protect people, especially vulnerable adults and children, from that harm; and to respond appropriately when harm does occur.

This definition draws from our values and principles and shapes our culture. It pays specific attention to preventing and responding to harm from any potential, actual or attempted abuse of power, trust, or vulnerability, especially for sexual purposes.

Safeguarding applies consistently and without exception across our programmes, partners and staff. It requires proactively identifying, preventing and guarding against all risks of harm, exploitation and abuse and having mature, accountable and transparent systems for response, reporting and learning when risks materialise. Those systems must be survivor-centred and also protect those accused until proven guilty.

Safeguarding puts beneficiaries and affected persons at the centre of all we do.

**Sexual abuse:** the term 'sexual abuse' means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

**Sexual exploitation:** the term 'sexual exploitation' means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. This definition includes human trafficking and modern slavery.

**Survivor:** the person who has been abused or exploited. The term 'survivor' is often used in preference to 'victim' as it implies strength, resilience and the capacity to survive, however it is the individual's choice how they wish to identify themselves.

**At risk adult:** sometimes also referred to as vulnerable adult. A person who is or may be in need of care by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC (CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC follows guidelines on Safeguarding and good working practice, including safe recruitment of volunteers, and works to the following Safeguarding policy.

## **POLICY Statement**

Our Safeguarding Policy establishes the following principles:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children without exception have the right to protection from abuse\* regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All the CIC's trustees, staff and volunteers have a responsibility to report concerns.
- CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC Safeguarding policy and procedures will form an essential part of partnership agreements.
- The policy is reviewed, approved and endorsed by the Board of Directors annually or when legislation changes.

### ***Definitions of abuse***

Child abuse occurs when the behaviour of someone in a position of greater power than a child causes harm. Harm cannot always be easily categorised as children can be abused in a number of ways, but four broad definitions of abuse can be identified:

**Physical** – where children are hurt by ill-treatment, or deliberate or neglectful failure to prevent injury or harm.

**Emotional** – where children are persistently or severely emotionally neglected or rejected, for example, by not being given enough love or attention, made to feel worthless, or being intimidated by threats or taunts.

**Sexual** – where children are encouraged or forced to observe or participate in any form of sexual activity.

**Neglect** – where children's physical and/or psychological needs are persistently or severely neglected, or there is a failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger.

### **1. Staff and Volunteers are recruited and selected in a way which ensures their suitability.**

Climate Rev Acts CIC recognises that its volunteers whilst abroad on their project are likely to come into contact with children, some of whom may be particularly vulnerable. In line with our Safer

Recruitment Procedure, all potential volunteers must complete an application form and obtain two references and complete a medical self-assessment. They are asked to sign a declaration of willingness to undertake a DBS check and are asked to complete a Disclosure Form.

DBS checks: Staff and volunteers are subject to regular enhanced DBS checks every 3 years. Any staff or project co-ordinators making overseas or in-country visits are required to have completed DBS (or equivalent in-country police) checks.

The content of our Safeguarding Policy is discussed with volunteers as part of their pre-departure training programme, to ensure as far as is possible, their understanding of safeguarding in the context of their project and the country they are visiting and their responsibility in this regard.

## **2. Staff and Volunteers are informed of the CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC standards & code of conduct**

CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Before taking up a volunteering or employment opportunity with CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC, applicants are made familiar with the Code of Conduct which clarifies the way in which CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC expects its representatives to behave.

## **3. Staff and Volunteers are familiarised with procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns**

Everyone, whether staff member or volunteer, carries a responsibility for reporting any concerns regarding the safeguarding of children, young people or vulnerable adults. The requirement to safeguard children applies both to work in the UK and in other countries where children may face different or additional risks of abuse or exploitation.

No staff member, volunteer or partner will prejudice their own position or standing with CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC by responsibly reporting potential or suspected child abuse. Responsible reporting is defined as being in line with the terms of this policy.

We aim to ensure that each volunteer is aware of his / her role in receiving information and passing it on to the appropriate person without delay and should be familiar with the CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC Reporting Concerns Procedure.

## Appendix 1 – CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC Safer Recruitment Procedure

Climate Rev Acts CIC is committed to safeguarding and protecting children, young people and adults and the care and nurture of children in our partner projects. This means that we are careful to select, train and support staff and volunteers in order to make sure that they present no risk to the children, young people or vulnerable adults with whom they may come into contact through working with Climate Rev Acts CIC.

We will:

1. make sure that our recruitment and selection processes are inclusive, fair, consistent and transparent.
2. take reasonable precautions to prevent those who might harm children or vulnerable adults from working or volunteering with the organisation, where they would be perceived as being trusted.
3. make sure there is a clear role description for all posts/roles within CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC which makes reference to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
4. obtain through a formal application form, and scrutinise, information from applicants; make sure that any gaps, discrepancies or anomalies are clarified;
5. obtain independent professional references that help assess an applicant's suitability to work with children and follow up on any concerns;
6. conduct a face-to-face interview that explores the candidate's suitability to work with children as well as his or her suitability for the post or volunteering role;
7. verify the applicant's identity;
8. check previous employment/volunteering history and experience;
9. carrying out an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring (DBS) Check for roles in "regulated activity" with children

## Appendix 2 – Code of Conduct

- Volunteers should treat all children with dignity and respect in attitude, language used and actions. Discrimination in the form of prejudice, oppressive behaviour or language in relation to any of the following are not acceptable – race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality or political persuasion.
- Everyone, whether an adult or a child, must take responsibility for treating one another with dignity, respect and fairness.
- Volunteers must respect the privacy of children.
- Transporting children must only be done with the knowledge of the team leadership and a parent or responsible adult. Inviting a child alone into your home or place of residence is not appropriate.
- Volunteers must avoid spending excessive time alone with children away from others and never act in a way that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse. Volunteers need to be aware of situations which may present risks and manage these.
- The safety of children visiting volunteers must always be ensured.
- Volunteers must avoid favouring particular children to the exclusion of others.
- This policy must be applied in ways that are culturally sensitive but without condoning acts of maltreatment that are universally described as abusive.
- Everyone must consider the risks of the online world and ensure that children are protected from potential online harm, respecting the principles outlined in CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC's Images Policy. Concerns regarding online abuse must always be reported and addressed according to CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC's safeguarding procedures.
- Teamwork and mutual accountability are encouraged and anyone seeing another volunteer acting in a way which could be misinterpreted should be able to speak to the individual, the supervisor or team leader about the concern.
- Any incidents must be recorded in detail and the implications discussed.
- Confidentiality of information-sharing is an important principle. However, it is not appropriate to promise confidentiality where the duty to protect a child from harm or abuse takes precedence. Make sure all your decisions on sharing information keep the safety and wellbeing of the child as your first consideration.

You may ask for consent to share confidential information unless:

- asking for consent will increase the risk of harm to the child or young person, or
  - a delay in sharing information may increase the risk of harm to the child or young person.
- Regular meetings will be arranged by CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC to review procedures and ensure a common approach, share concerns and identify other matters requiring clarification.

## Appendix 3 – Reporting Concerns Procedure

This procedure clarifies how to properly respond to suspicions and allegations

No staff member, volunteer or partner will prejudice their own position or standing with CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC by responsibly reporting potential or suspected child abuse.

The need to report arises in the following instances – if:

- Abuse (as defined above) is observed or suspected
- An allegation of abuse is made
- A child discloses abuse

If you have concerns about a child's safety and wellbeing, you should report this immediately.

Concerns are to be addressed in the first instance to the host, project leader or, if this is not possible or is inappropriate in the circumstances, directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (see Role description Appendix 4) for the organisation.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for notifying safeguarding concerns to the appropriate authorities. This may be:

- a) in the UK, by notifying the local safeguarding referral unit of any safeguarding concerns regarding individuals, or of concerns about potential risks.
- b) overseas, by notifying the local project manager or management group of concerns and requesting that local safeguarding procedures are engaged.

We have a duty of care to all the children or young people with whom we engage through our project work. This includes taking the necessary steps to safeguard them and promote their welfare.

**Note:** *Developing countries may have different and varying Safeguarding policies or standards; Climate Rev Acts CIC wishes to apply the same rigorous and consistent safeguarding standards to children accessing any of its projects as it would within the UK. The expectations of local partner project managers are therefore that they would identify any safeguarding concerns or incidents to the CLIMATE REV ACTS CIC Designated Safeguarding Lead, as well as following their local reporting procedures.*

## Appendix 4 – The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

This person should have the status and authority within the organisation to take the lead responsibility for safeguarding, including committing resources and, where appropriate, supporting and directing other staff or volunteers.

### **Areas of responsibility:**

#### ***Responding to concerns:***

- Refer any local (UK) cases of suspected abuse to the appropriate local authority children's social care and to the Police, in cases where a crime may have been committed.
- Refer any overseas cases of suspected abuse to the appropriate authority locally, and to the responsible safeguarding person in the local project.

#### ***Additional responsibilities:***

- Raise awareness of safeguarding across the organisation, ensuring all staff or volunteers know how to raise safeguarding concerns and understand the symptoms of child abuse and neglect
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff or volunteers on all matters pertaining to safeguarding.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead should receive appropriate training carried out every two years in order to:
  - o Understand local referral procedures.
  - o Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers.
  - o Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.
  - o Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking their views and information received from them seriously.
  - o Ensure the organisation's safeguarding policy is regularly reviewed annually and the procedures and implementation are updated.
  - o Link with the local Safeguarding Partnership to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.



## Climate Revolution Acts CIC

A UK Registered Non-profit (No 16995691)

**Director:** Dr Colin R Coleman PhD MPhil B.Ed(Hons) FRGS FRAS LRPS

**Registered Address:** 54 Brick Kiln Way, Tarleton, Lancashire, PR4 6FN, UK

**Office Address:** Propellor Hub, 4th Floor, Media Factory, University of Lancashire, Preston, PR1 2HE, UK

**E:** [colin@climaterevolution.net](mailto:colin@climaterevolution.net) **W:** [www.climaterevolution.net](http://www.climaterevolution.net)

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