

ACT UBUMBANO Safeguarding Policy
[FINAL – adopted 211125]

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1. Protecting Adults & Children

ACT Ubumbano is committed to safeguard the wholeness and the well-being of every person it works with by promoting dignity. It is the responsibility of each member of staff to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse or neglect of every member of the communities it works with. Particularly, the abuse of those most vulnerable among us, including children, young people and adults at risk. The welfare of these individuals is paramount. All children and adults at risk, without exception, have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or belief. All those who work or volunteer with ACT Ubumbano will be made aware of this policy and of what to do if they have any concerns.

ACT Ubumbano works to affirm, learn from and journey with those who are systematically excluded and impoverished in their struggles related to gender, environmental and economic justice. ACT Ubumbano supports people’s struggles for freedom and to regain their collective power.

ACT Ubumbano works with and from a value base which enables it to work adaptively within diverse and changing contexts while retaining an integrity of practice and purpose. ACT Ubumbano’s values are integral to its approach to the work and to its self-critical reflection on and assessment of the value of the work.

No one within ACT Ubumbano shall work with communities, especially children, if they:

- Have been convicted of or have received a formal police caution concerning an offence against children;
- Have been convicted of or has received a formal police caution concerning sexual offences against children, young people or adults at risk.
- All who work with communities, especially children are expected, at all times, to conform with good practice in their work.

2. Principles

- All communities have equal rights to protection from harm.
- Everybody has a responsibility to support the protection of children and adults.
- ACT Ubumbano has a duty to care for the communities they work with, are in contact with, or who are affected by their work and operations.
- All actions on child protection are taken in the best interests of the child.
- All actions on community protection are taken in the best interests of the communities.

3. Purpose of this Policy

The purpose of this policy is:

- to protect communities the organisation works with, including children.
- to provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to adult & child protection. ACT Ubumbano believes no one should ever experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of communities and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

4. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, the board, volunteers, students, interns, consultants, or anyone working on behalf of ACT Ubumbano.

5. Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children.

6. Definition of abuse

Abuse occurs when people inflict hurt on other people either physically, psychologically or in any other way. Children can be abused in a number of ways. The harm cannot always be easily categorised. However, broad kinds of abuse can be identified as follows:

- Physical abuse, such as evidence of hitting, kicking or shaking; where there is definite knowledge or reasonable suspicion, that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.
- Emotional abuse where harm is done by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection, such as degrading punishments, threats and not giving care and affection, resulting in adverse effects on behaviour and emotional development
- Sexual abuse where exploitation occurs. This includes rape, incest and all forms of sexual activities including pornography.
- Neglect, where basic needs such as food, warmth and medical care are not met, or when there is a failure to someone from exposure to any kind of danger, resulting in serious impairment to health or development.
- Exchanging of benefits, for example goods, food and money in exchange for sexual favours.
- Bullying, which could include physical intimidation. This includes verbal intimidation, including racist and sexist remarks; emotional intimidation for example, excluding or isolating someone.

7. Implementation

The protection from abuse to children and the communities ACT Ubumbano works with will be addressed through the following steps:

Risk Assessment

- ACT Ubumbano recognizes that there are a number of potential risks to communities in our work, particularly where staff or volunteers are in contact with groups. In recognizing these risks, staff and volunteers should pro-actively assess and manage risks to the communities, particularly the children, to reduce the risk of harm. Staff should ensure that any activities they undertake will ensure thorough and systematized safeguarding risk assessments.
- Staff should also ensure that safeguarding is mainstreamed throughout projects and activities along with other cross cutting issues.
- A risk assessment should always be conducted during project design, and periodically reviewed during the life cycle of the project. There will be a regular periodic review of current

programmes to assess any risks to the communities and to develop mitigation strategies. It is important that this assessment is gender sensitive and takes into account the specific needs of girl and boy children, relevant to the local cultural, political, religious and humanitarian context.

Safer Recruitment

- ACT Ubumbano will recruit staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.

Behaviour Protocols

- Staff members of ACT Ubumbano must follow the Code of Conduct.

Safe Programme Design

- ACT Ubumbano has a commitment to design and deliver programmes which are safe for the communities, especially children. This will ensure that programmes and projects will be risk assessed for safety and safety strategies developed.

Communications

- ACT Ubumbano commits to undertake all communications with communities, especially children, in a safe manner.

Reporting/Responding to Concerns

- All representatives of ACT Ubumbano should be alert to signs that may suggest that communities are at risk and need help.

Monitoring and Review

- Regular monitoring of risks and the effectiveness of safeguarding measures will be incorporated into ACT Ubumbano 's processes and activities. The policy will be reviewed every 3 years.

Investigations/Disciplinary Measures/Other

- ACT Ubumbano can and will take any disciplinary action necessary against staff or representatives if they are found to have breached the Safeguarding Policy. If such an incident occurs, ACT Ubumbano's disciplinary policy will be invoked. There will be times when the behaviour of employees may constitute a breach of the Safeguarding Policy, but not be considered criminal conduct under local legislation. In this instance ACT Ubumbano will consider providing other support to these staff, for example, training, counselling, increased supervision or transfer to other duties. There may be cases, however, where ACT Ubumbano feels it is appropriate to dismiss an employee even if the behaviour is not criminal, for example a gross violation of the Safeguarding Policy.
- Identifying information about safeguarding should be shared on a 'need-to-know' basis only.
- Any staff members who raise concerns of serious malpractice should be protected as far as possible from victimisation or any other detrimental treatment if they come forward with serious concerns, provided that concerns are raised in good faith.
- Deliberate false allegations is a serious disciplinary offence and investigated by ACT Ubumbano

Informing Communities and Receiving Complaints

- ACT Ubumbano must inform communities on the conduct to expect of staff and others associated with the organisation. Considerations should be made as to how community members, including children, can raise concerns over inappropriate behaviour by staff, ensuring the Safeguarding Policy is translated into all relevant languages and available in illustrative, low-literacy and/or a child friendly format. This information must be updated when changes are made to names, email addresses and phone numbers to access.

Management Responsibilities

The Director and Board have the responsibility to ensure that all representatives of ACT Ubumbano are made aware of the Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct and are given a copy. ACT Ubumbano recognises that:

- the welfare of communities, especially children, is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 2010
- all people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some communities are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- working in partnership with people i.e. children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting people's welfare.

ACT Ubumbano will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- adopting child protection practices through procedures and a Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers
- developing and implementing an effective Safeguarding Policy and related procedures
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers, and
- sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.

ACT Ubumbano is committed to reviewing their policy and good practice annually. This policy was adopted on 25 November 2021, and last reviewed on 25 / 11 / 2021.

Signature

Name

(this should be signed by the Chair of the board)