AFRICAN CENTER FOR HEALTH, CLIMATE & GENDER JUSTICE ALLIANCE

(ACHCGA)

Safeguarding Framework

Protection of Children, Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment, and Promotion of Gender and Diversity in All ACHCGA Programmes and Operations

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PART I

Foundations and Governance

Mission, policy statement, scope, principles, definitions and the governance architecture behind ACHCGA safeguarding

1. Executive Summary

The African Center for Health, Climate and Gender Justice Alliance, referred to throughout this document as ACHCGA, works at the intersection of health, climate justice and gender equality across communities that are frequently exposed to structural inequality, humanitarian crisis and environmental shock. These same conditions raise the risk of abuse, exploitation, harassment and neglect for the children, women, girls, young people and vulnerable adults who take part in ACHCGA programmes.

This Safeguarding Framework sets out a single, coherent system through which ACHCGA prevents harm, identifies risks early, and responds to concerns in a timely, confidential, and person-centered manner. It consolidates and operationalizes four component policies previously maintained as separate summaries: the Child Safeguarding Policy, the Policy for the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH), the Gender and Diversity Policy, and the Anti-Harassment Guidelines. Bringing these instruments under one framework closes gaps between them, removes duplication, and gives staff, partners, and communities a single point of reference for reporting, investigation, and support.

The framework is aligned with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Core Humanitarian Standard, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee guidance on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, the Sphere Standards and the safeguarding expectations of ACHCGA donors and institutional partners, including FCDO, USAID, the European Union, Global Affairs Canada, GIZ, SIDA, DANIDA, United Nations agencies, the World Bank, the African Development Bank and major philanthropic funders.

Who This Framework Is For

This framework binds every ACHCGA staff member, board member, consultant, volunteer, intern, researcher, partner organization, contractor and any individual or entity representing ACHCGA in any setting, whether in an office, in the field, at a conference, in a research encounter or on a digital platform.

The implementation is supported by a dedicated annex package that includes a Safeguarding Code of Conduct, PSEAH procedures, child safeguarding procedures, reporting and investigation protocols, survivor support and referral pathways, a safeguarding risk assessment tool, a safe recruitment checklist, a partner due diligence assessment, an incident reporting form, investigation templates, digital safeguarding guidelines, media and photography consent

procedures, and mandatory staff declarations. Together, these instruments provide ACHCGA with a practical system for a growing African civil society organization that meets the standards expected in donor due diligence review and safeguarding audit.

2. Organizational Mission, Vision and Values

Mission

ACHCGA exists to strengthen the agency of women, girls and young people within the health, environmental and legal systems that shape their lives, and to advance climate justice and gender equality across Africa through research, advocacy, community partnership and programme delivery.

Vision

A future in which every community, and every child, woman and young person within it, is protected from harm, treated with dignity and empowered to participate safely in decisions that affect health, climate and justice outcomes.

Values

- Dignity and respect for every person who interacts with ACHCGA, regardless of age, sex, disability, ethnicity or status
- Accountability to the people and communities ACHCGA serves, not only to donors and regulators
- Zero tolerance of abuse, exploitation and harassment, paired with zero complacency in prevention
- Transparency in decision-making and in the handling of concerns and complaints
- Intersectionality, recognizing that climate, gender and health risks compound for the most marginalized

3. Policy Statement

ACHCGA adopts a zero tolerance approach to child abuse, sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, workplace harassment, discrimination, bullying and retaliation. Zero tolerance means that ACHCGA will not knowingly work with any individual or partner who has perpetrated these acts, that every concern raised in good faith will be taken seriously and acted

upon, and that ACHCGA will take proportionate action against any staff member, partner or associate found to have caused harm, regardless of seniority or standing.

Zero tolerance does not mean zero incidents. ACHCGA recognizes that no organization can guarantee that harm will never occur. What ACHCGA guarantees is a functioning system of prevention, safe reporting, competent investigation and survivor centred response, and continuous learning from every case so that the same harm is less likely to recur.

4. Purpose

This framework exists to protect children and at risk adults from harm connected to ACHCGA work, to prevent sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment by anyone acting on behalf of ACHCGA, to embed gender equality and disability inclusion across programming, to give every person a safe and confidential way to raise a concern, and to meet the governance and due diligence standards required for ACHCGA to remain eligible for bilateral, multilateral and philanthropic funding.

5. Scope and Applicability

This framework applies without exception to all ACHCGA staff at every level, board and governance members, consultants and contractors, volunteers and interns, researchers and enumerators, implementing partners and sub grantees, suppliers with direct community contact, and any other individual or organization engaging with communities, children or vulnerable adults under the ACHCGA name or funding. It applies in every setting in which ACHCGA operates or is represented, including offices, field sites, community events, training venues, conferences, transport, accommodation provided for work purposes, and all digital and social media platforms used for ACHCGA business.

Setting	Illustrative Application
Community and field programmes	Household visits, focus groups, distributions, community health and climate activities
Research and data collection	Interviews, surveys, photography, biometric or health data collection involving children or vulnerable adults
Digital and media engagement	Social media, websites, newsletters, virtual trainings, use of children's images or stories

Setting	Illustrative Application
Partnerships and sub grants	Work delivered through implementing partners, consortium members and contracted suppliers
Recruitment and human resources	Advertising, vetting, background checks, induction, ongoing supervision of personnel

6. Guiding Principles

- Best interests of the child guide every decision affecting a child, consistent with the Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Non-discrimination in access to protection and services, regardless of sex, disability, ethnicity, nationality, religion or status
- Meaningful participation of children, women, young people and persons with disabilities in the design and review of safeguards
- Confidentiality, on a need-to-know basis, that still allows effective response and does not enable cover up
- Survivor and victim centred response that prioritizes the safety, wellbeing, choices and dignity of the person affected
- Do no harm and conflict sensitivity in every programme and communication decision
- Accountability to affected populations, with accessible feedback and complaint channels at community level
- Proportionality and fairness in investigation and disciplinary process, respecting the rights of all parties

7. Definitions of Key Terms

Term	Definition
Child	Any person under the age of eighteen, regardless of national age of majority or local custom
Safeguarding	The responsibility organizations hold to prevent their staff, operations or programmes from causing harm to children or adults, and to respond appropriately when harm occurs
Sexual exploitation	Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust for sexual purposes, including profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another

Term	Definition
Sexual abuse	Actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions
Sexual harassment	Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours or other verbal, non verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment
Vulnerable adult	A person who, because of disability, age, illness, displacement or dependency on ACHCGA services, may be less able to protect themselves from harm or exploitation
Survivor or victim	A person who has experienced abuse, exploitation or harassment; ACHCGA uses survivor centred language while recognizing individuals may identify with either term
Safe recruitment	Vetting, referencing and background check practices designed to prevent known or suspected abusers from gaining access to children or vulnerable adults through employment or association
Duty bearer	Any ACHCGA representative who, by virtue of their role, holds responsibility for upholding this framework and responding to concerns

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Core Safeguarding Responsibility
Board of Directors	Approves the framework, holds the Executive Director accountable, receives an annual safeguarding report and case summary
Executive Director	Overall accountability for safeguarding culture, resourcing and compliance across the organization
Safeguarding Focal Point or Committee	Receives and triages concerns, coordinates investigations, maintains the case log, advises programme teams
Human Resources	Applies safe recruitment procedures, maintains personnel files and disciplinary records, supports staff wellbeing
Programme and Field Managers	Embed safeguarding in activity planning, risk assessment, community sensitization and day to day supervision
All Personnel and Partners	Complete training, sign the Code of Conduct, model expected behaviour, report concerns without delay
Investigations Lead or External Investigator	Conducts fair, timely and confidential investigations in line with the protocols in Annex D

9. Governance and Accountability Structure

Safeguarding governance at ACHCGA operates on three tiers. The Board provides strategic oversight and approves the framework and any material amendments. The Executive Director holds day-to-day accountability and reports quarterly to the Board on cases, trends and mitigation. The Safeguarding Focal Point, supported where needed by a Safeguarding Committee drawn from programmes, human resources and finance, manages the operational case pathway described in section nineteen.

Where a concern implicates the Executive Director or a Board member, reporting routes directly to the Board Chair or to an independent designated person outside the normal management line, so that no individual investigates a concern about themselves or their direct supervisor.

Independence Safeguard

No person may participate in the assessment, investigation or disciplinary decision on a case in which they have a personal, familial or supervisory conflict of interest. Such cases are automatically escalated to an alternate decision maker or an external investigator.

10. Risk Assessment and Risk Mitigation Measures

ACHCGA applies a structured safeguarding risk assessment, consistent with ISO 31000 principles, at the design stage of every program, at partner onboarding, and at least annually thereafter. The tool in Annex F scores likelihood and severity across four domains: contact with children, contact with vulnerable adults, use of images and personal data, and exposure of personnel to positions of power or trust.

Risk Domain	Typical Risk Driver	Core Mitigation
Direct contact with children	Home visits, school based activity, distributions targeting households with children	Two person rule, visible identification, community sensitization, safe recruitment
Research and data collection	Interviews on sensitive topics, biometric or health data, photography	Informed consent and assent, data minimization, secure storage, ethics review
Digital and media exposure	Publication of images or stories involving children	Written consent, anonymization by default, takedown procedure

Risk Domain	Typical Risk Driver	Core Mitigation
Partner and supply chain risk	Sub-grantees or contractors with weaker safeguarding capacity	Due diligence assessment, contractual clauses, joint monitoring
Power imbalance in humanitarian settings	Aid distribution creating dependency and exploitation risk	Community complaint boxes, PSEAH sensitization, beneficiary feedback mechanisms

High-risk activities require a documented mitigation plan signed off by the relevant program manager and the Safeguarding Focal Point before implementation proceeds, and are subject to spot-check monitoring during delivery.

11. Standards of Conduct and Organizational Expectations

Expected Conduct

- Treat every child, community member and colleague with dignity, courtesy and respect
- Obtain informed consent, and child assent where applicable, before photographing, interviewing or collecting data from a child
- Use the two-person rule for any activity involving unsupervised contact with children, wherever operationally feasible
- Report any concern, disclosure or suspicion without delay through the channels described in section nineteen
- Maintain professional boundaries in all in-person and digital communication with children and vulnerable adults

Prohibited Conduct

- Any sexual activity, relationship or contact with a child, under any circumstance and regardless of local age of consent laws
- Exchanging money, employment, goods or services for sexual favors, including with adult beneficiaries
- Physical, verbal or emotional abuse or discipline of a child
- Inviting children into private accommodation or unsupervised transport connected to ACHCGA work
- Sharing, requesting or producing sexualized images of children in any form
- Any form of sexual harassment, bullying, intimidation or abuse of authority toward a colleague, partner or community member

- Failing to report a known or suspected safeguarding concern, or pressuring another person not to report

Full Code of Conduct

The complete, signature-ready Safeguarding Code of Conduct is provided at Annex A and is mandatory reading and signature for all personnel, board members, consultants, volunteers and partner staff prior to engagement with ACHCGA.

PART II

Component Policies

Child safeguarding, prevention of sexual exploitation abuse and harassment, gender and diversity, and anti-harassment standards

12. Component Policies

This framework consolidates four component policies into a single operating system. Each retains its specific standards while sharing common governance, reporting and investigation infrastructure described elsewhere in this document.

12.1 Child Safeguarding

ACHCGA protects every child who comes into contact with its programs, research, advocacy, communications or partnerships from physical, emotional and sexual abuse, exploitation, neglect, online abuse, child labor, trafficking and harmful traditional practices. Consent and, where age-appropriate, assent are required before collecting a child's personal information, image, or story, and digital safeguarding protocols protect children's identity and privacy in all publications. Detailed operating procedures are set out at Annex C.

12.2 Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment

ACHCGA's PSEAH standards align with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's six core principles, and the approach reflected in the IFRC Policy on the Prevention of and Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. ACHCGA recognizes that the power differential between aid providers and communities receiving assistance creates heightened risk of exploitation, and applies specific safeguards to humanitarian and community-facing activities, including community-based complaint mechanisms, pre-engagement PSEAH briefings for partners and contractors, and mandatory PSEAH screening in recruitment. Full procedures appear at Annex B.

12.3 Gender and Diversity

ACHCGA integrates gender equality, disability inclusion and diversity, equity and inclusion across governance, employment, procurement, partnership and programme design. Intersectional and feminist approaches inform how ACHCGA designs research, advocacy and climate action, recognizing the differentiated experience of women, girls, young people, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups. Recruitment, promotion, remuneration and leadership opportunity are governed by fairness, accessibility and equal opportunity, monitored through regular diversity assessment.

12.4 Anti-Harassment

ACHCGA prohibits verbal abuse, intimidation, threats, humiliation, bullying, sexual harassment, discriminatory conduct, unwanted physical contact, offensive jokes, online harassment, stalking, and abuse of authority in all organizational settings, including offices, field operations, conferences, digital platforms, travel, and partner interactions. Confidential reporting channels are available to staff, partners, and community members, and every complaint is promptly assessed and resolved through a process that upholds due process and survivor-centered principles.

PART III

Operating the Framework

Implementation, reporting, investigation, confidentiality, survivor support, training, monitoring, partnerships and compliance

13. Procedures and Implementation Framework

1. Every new staff member, board member, consultant, volunteer and partner completes safeguarding induction and signs the Code of Conduct before first contact with communities or children
2. Every programme undergoes a safeguarding risk assessment at design stage, using the tool at Annex F
3. Every partner and sub-grantee completes the due diligence assessment at Annex G before a funding or delivery agreement is signed
4. Every field office and program site displays accessible information, in local language, on how to raise a concern
5. The Safeguarding Focal Point maintains a confidential case log, reviewed monthly by the Executive Director and quarterly by the Board
6. Annual self-assessment against this framework is conducted using the checklist at Annex E and informs the following year's workplan

14. Reporting and Complaints Mechanisms

ACHCGA operates multiple, accessible channels so that any person, whether staff, partner, community member or child, can raise a concern in the manner that feels safest to them. No channel requires the reporter to confront the individual concerned, and every channel accepts anonymous reports, recognizing that anonymity may limit the scope of follow-up.

Channel	Access Point	Managed By
Direct verbal or written report	Any manager, the Safeguarding Focal Point or Human Resources	Safeguarding Focal Point
Dedicated safeguarding email and hotline	Published in every office, on the website and in community materials	Safeguarding Focal Point
Community complaint boxes and community feedback sessions	Field sites and distribution points	Programme team, escalated to Safeguarding Focal Point
Independent Board channel	For concerns involving senior leadership	Board Chair or designated independent person
Partner and donor reporting line	For concerns arising within partner organizations funded by ACHCGA	Safeguarding Focal Point, with donor notification per grant terms

All reports are acknowledged within two working days, and the reporting person is given an anonymous case reference to track progress without compromising confidentiality.

15. Investigation Procedures

Every report is triaged within three working days to confirm whether it falls within scope, assess immediate safety needs, and assign an investigation lead with no conflict of interest. Investigations follow the protocol at Annex D and are guided by the principles of fairness, proportionality, confidentiality and survivor-centered practice.

Stage	Target Timeframe	Key Action
Triage and safety assessment	Within 3 working days	Confirm scope, assess immediate risk, notify relevant authorities where legally required
Investigation planning	Within 5 working days	Appoint investigator, define terms of reference, identify witnesses and evidence
Evidence gathering	Within 20 working days	Interviews, document review, in coordination with statutory bodies where relevant
Findings and report	Within 30 working days of opening	Written findings on the balance of probabilities, submitted to the decision maker
Decision and action	Within 10 working days of the report	Disciplinary, remedial or referral action, and feedback to the person who reported

Where a criminal act is suspected, ACHCGA reports to competent national authorities in line with applicable law, without prejudice to ACHCGA's own administrative process, and takes steps to prevent contact between the person of concern and children or vulnerable adults during the investigation.

16. Confidentiality and Data Protection

Information relating to a safeguarding concern is shared strictly on a need-to-know basis with those responsible for assessing, investigating, or resolving the case, or as required by law. Personal data collected during safeguarding work is processed in accordance with data minimization, purpose limitation, secure storage and defined retention principles consistent with

applicable data protection law and GDPR good practice where relevant to ACHCGA's international operations.

- Case files are stored in access-controlled systems separate from general personnel or programme records
- Only the Safeguarding Focal Point, the Executive Director and, where relevant, the Board Chair may access full case files
- Images, names and identifying details of children and survivors are never published without specific, informed consent
- Digital safeguarding guidance at Annex K governs the collection, storage and sharing of children's data on ACHCGA platforms

17. Survivor Centered and Rights Based Response

The safety, dignity, wellbeing and wishes of the survivor guide every decision taken after a disclosure. ACHCGA does not proceed with an investigative step that a competent adult survivor has declined, except where doing so is necessary to protect a child or another person from imminent harm.

- Immediate safety planning and, where needed, temporary protective measures for the survivor
- Referral to medical, psychosocial, legal and protection services through the pathways mapped at Annex E
- Regular, sensitive updates to the survivor on the progress of any process they have consented to
- No requirement for a survivor to face the person of concern, or to repeat their account more times than necessary
- Specific attention to the needs of child survivors, survivors with disabilities and survivors facing intersecting discrimination

18. Protection Against Retaliation and Whistleblower Safeguards

The retaliation against any person who reports a concern in good faith, supports another person in reporting, or participates in an investigation is itself a disciplinary offense under this framework, regardless of the outcome of the underlying case. Good-faith reporting is protected even when an investigation does not substantiate the concern.

- Reporting persons may request that their identity be withheld from the person of concern throughout the process
- Managers are prohibited from altering duties, pay, evaluations or opportunities in response to a good faith report
- Any act or threat of retaliation may be reported through the same channels described in section fourteen
- ACHCGA monitors for indirect retaliation, such as exclusion or reputational harm, not only formal disciplinary action

19. Training and Capacity Building Requirements

Audience	Requirement	Frequency
All staff, board members, volunteers, interns	Safeguarding and PSEAH induction training and Code of Conduct signature	Before first contact with communities, refreshed every 2 years
Programme and field staff	Applied training on child safeguarding, community complaint mechanisms and risk assessment tools	Annually
Human Resources and recruiting managers	Safe recruitment and background checking practice	Annually
Safeguarding Focal Point and investigators	Investigation methodology, survivor centred interviewing, evidence handling	Annually and on case assignment
Partners and sub-grantees	PSEAH briefing as a condition of the funding agreement	At onboarding and annually thereafter

20. Monitoring, Evaluation and Continuous Learning

ACHCGA tracks safeguarding performance through case data, training completion rates, risk assessment coverage and community feedback, reported quarterly to the Executive Director and the Board. Every closed case includes a short lessons learned note, reviewed by the Safeguarding Focal Point to identify systemic gaps rather than only individual fault.

- Annual self-assessment against this framework, using the checklist at Annex E
- Periodic external safeguarding audit, at minimum every three years or as required by a major donor

- Community feedback data reviewed for safeguarding signals, not only programme satisfaction
- Framework revision informed by case trends, audit findings and evolving international standards

21. Partnership and Third-Party Due Diligence

Before entering a funding, delivery or research partnership, ACHCGA assesses the prospective partner's safeguarding policy, reporting mechanism, training coverage and history of concerns, using the assessment at Annex G. Funding and partnership agreements include mandatory safeguarding clauses covering standards of conduct, incident notification within 48 hours of a partner becoming aware of a concern, cooperation with investigation, and the right of ACHCGA to suspend or terminate the agreement for non-compliance.

- Risk tiering of partners based on level of contact with children and vulnerable adults
- Joint monitoring visits that include a safeguarding component for higher risk partners
- Capacity strengthening support offered to partners with safeguarding gaps identified at due diligence

22. Compliance, Enforcement and Disciplinary Measures

Substantiated breaches of this framework result in proportionate consequences ranging from mandatory retraining and formal warning to termination of employment or contract, referral to professional or regulatory bodies, and referral to law enforcement where criminal conduct is indicated. Partners found in breach may have funding suspended or terminated and may be reported to relevant donor safeguarding units in accordance with donor requirements.

Severity	Illustrative Conduct	Typical Consequence
Low	Minor boundary lapse without harm, first occurrence	Coaching, retraining, documented warning
Moderate	Repeated boundary violation, non sexual harassment	Formal disciplinary action, up to termination
Severe	Sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, abuse of a child	Immediate suspension pending investigation, termination, referral to authorities

23. Review and Revision Schedule

This framework is formally reviewed by the Board every two years, and earlier reviews were triggered by a significant case, an external audit finding, material changes in donor requirements, or a change in applicable law. Minor administrative updates, such as contact details, may be made by the Safeguarding Focal Point between formal reviews and logged in the revision history.

Version	Date	Summary of Change	Approved By
1.0	August 2026	Consolidation of Child Safeguarding, PSEAH, Gender and Diversity, and Anti-Harassment policies into a single framework	ACHCGA Board of Directors

24. References to International Standards

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
- Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability
- Sphere Standards
- Inter-Agency Standing Committee guidance on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse
- United Nations Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Sexual Harassment standards
- IFRC Policy on the Prevention of and Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
- IFRC Child Safeguarding Policy
- IFRC Gender and Diversity Policy
- IFRC Secretariat Policy on the Prevention of and Response to Workplace Harassment and Discrimination
- OECD Development Assistance Committee recommendations on safeguarding
- ISO 37301 Compliance Management Systems
- ISO 31000 Risk Management Guidelines
- General Data Protection Regulation principles, applied where relevant to ACHCGA international operations
- Applicable national child protection and labour legislation in each country of operation

PART IV

Annexes and Tools

Practical, fillable instruments that put this framework into daily operational use

25. Annexes, Templates, Checklists and Standard Operating Procedures

The following annexes form part of this framework and are maintained as living, fillable documents by the Safeguarding Focal Point. They are available on request in accessible and local language formats.

Annex	Title
Annex A	Safeguarding Code of Conduct
Annex B	PSEAH Procedures
Annex C	Child Safeguarding Procedures
Annex D	Reporting and Investigation Protocols
Annex E	Survivor Support and Referral Pathways
Annex F	Safeguarding Risk Assessment Tool
Annex G	Safe Recruitment Checklist
Annex H	Partner Due Diligence Assessment
Annex I	Incident Reporting Form
Annex J	Investigation Templates
Annex K	Digital Safeguarding Guidelines
Annex L	Media and Photography Consent Procedures
Annex M	Mandatory Staff Declaration

Annex A: Safeguarding Code of Conduct

I understand that as a representative of ACHCGA I hold a position of trust. I commit to treating all children, community members and colleagues with dignity and respect, to upholding the standards of conduct set out in section eleven of this framework, and to reporting without delay any concern, disclosure or suspicion of abuse, exploitation or harassment.

- I will never engage in sexual activity or a romantic relationship with a child, under any circumstance
- I will never exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual favors
- I will use the two-person rule wherever feasible when working directly with children
- I will obtain informed consent, and child assent where applicable, before photographing or interviewing a child
- I will report concerns through the channels set out in section fourteen, and understand that failure to report is itself a breach of this Code

Name	Position	Organization	Signature	Date

Annex B: PSEAH Procedures

Pre-Engagement

- PSEAH screening question during recruitment, including checks against prior employer references and, where legally available, misconduct disclosure schemes
- Mandatory PSEAH briefing for all personnel and partner staff prior to community deployment

Community Facing Standards

- Community sensitization on acceptable staff conduct and how to raise a concern, delivered in local language
- Community based complaint mechanisms established at every field site, independent of the staff delivering assistance
- No staff member may condition assistance, service or benefit on any form of sexual contact

Response

- PSEAH concerns follow the investigation protocol at Annex D with priority timelines given the heightened power imbalance involved
- Coordination with inter-agency PSEAH networks and national authorities where appropriate

Annex C: Child Safeguarding Procedures

Consent and Assent

- Written consent from a parent or guardian, plus age appropriate assent from the child, before any interview, photograph or data collection
- Clear, simple language explanation to the child of how their information or image will be used

Working Directly With Children

- Two person rule for unsupervised activity, visible identification of ACHCGA personnel, and a published schedule for home or school visits
- No transport of a child alone in a personal or ACHCGA vehicle without a second adult present and parental consent

Responding to Disclosure

- Listen without promising confidentiality that cannot be kept, reassure the child they are not at fault, and report immediately to the Safeguarding Focal Point
- Do not investigate or question the child in detail; leave formal fact-finding to the trained investigator

Annex D: Reporting and Investigation Protocols

This annex operationalizes sections fourteen and fifteen with role specific checklists for the reporting person, the intake officer and the investigator.

Reporting Person Checklist

- Record what was seen or heard, when, and by whom, without investigating the matter yourself
- Use the Incident Reporting Form at Annex I, or report verbally if writing is not accessible

Intake Officer Checklist

- Acknowledge the report within two working days and assess immediate safety needs
- Assign a case reference and check for conflict of interest before assigning an investigator

Investigator Checklist

- Develop terms of reference, identify witnesses, gather documentary evidence, and interview separately and confidentially
- Apply the balance of probabilities standard and submit written findings within the timeframe in section fifteen

Annex E: Survivor Support and Referral Pathways

Need	Referral Pathway
Immediate safety or medical need	Nearest health facility and, where applicable, national emergency services
Psychosocial support	Partner counselling service or Employee Assistance Programme
Legal support	National legal aid service or ACHCGA legal partner
Child specific protection services	National child protection authority or designated child protection partner

Annex F: Safeguarding Risk Assessment Tool

Risk Factor	Likelihood (1-5)	Severity (1-5)	Mitigation Owner
Direct unsupervised contact with children			
Collection or publication of images or personal stories			
Delivery through a partner with limited safeguarding capacity			
Activity in a humanitarian or high dependency context			

Annex G: Safe Recruitment Checklist

- Job advertisement includes a statement of ACHCGA's safeguarding commitment
- At least two professional references obtained and specifically asked about conduct with children and vulnerable adults
- Identity verification and, where legally available, criminal background or misconduct disclosure check completed

- Employment gaps discussed and explained during interview
- Signed Code of Conduct on file before first unsupervised contact with children

Annex H: Partner Due Diligence Assessment

Assessment Area	Evidence Reviewed	Rating
Written safeguarding policy	Policy document or equivalent	
Reporting mechanism	Description of channels available to staff and community	
Training coverage	Records of safeguarding training delivered	
History of concerns	Self disclosure and reference checks	

Annex I: Incident Reporting Form

Field	Detail
Date and time of incident	
Location	
Persons involved (or anonymous)	
Description of concern	
Immediate action taken	
Reported by (optional)	

Annex J: Investigation Templates

- Terms of reference template, covering scope, timeline and roles
- Witness interview template, including consent to be interviewed and note taking format
- Findings report template, structured around allegation, evidence, analysis and conclusion on balance of probabilities

Annex K: Digital Safeguarding Guidelines

- Children's images are never geotagged or published with identifying school, home or community detail
- Personal data of children is stored on access-controlled systems with defined retention periods
- Staff and partners do not connect with children on personal social media accounts in a manner unrelated to program purpose
- Any online safeguarding concern, including grooming or exploitation attempts, is reported through the standard channels immediately

Annex L: Media and Photography Consent Procedures

- Written consent obtained from parent or guardian and, where age appropriate, assent from the child, before any photograph or story is used externally
- Consent specifies the intended use, platform and duration, and can be withdrawn at any time
- Children are never photographed in a manner that is sexualized, degrading or that reveals a protection concern such as displacement status

Annex M: Mandatory Staff Declaration

I confirm that I have read and understood the ACHCGA Safeguarding Framework, that I am not aware of any prior finding of child abuse, sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or harassment against me, and that I will disclose immediately to Human Resources any such finding that arises during my association with ACHCGA.

Name	Position	Signature	Date