



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

LASWIDA - TANZANIA is a Nonprofit Organization registered under Non-Governmental Organizations Act, No. 24 of 2002 with registration No. **00NGO/R1/00894** and **LAP-2023-0003**. The core purpose is to bring back a smile to Street Children, Widows and People with Disabilities on the consideration that, these groups are particularly vulnerable to rights breaches and abuse because they are either illiterate, have limited access to support systems and representation, and or are currently struggling to meet their basic requirements which are limited by access to income and properties.

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2.0 SCOPE

This Child Protection Policy aims at protecting children within our areas of interaction from any form of abuse. This policy applies to staff, volunteers, contractors, board of directors or any other person working on behalf of LASWIDA - TANZANIA. The policy also includes training to adults involved with children, and emphasizing on reporting and response guideline in case there is any reported case of abuse.

3.0 PRINCIPLES, VALUES AND BELIEFS

The following are LASWIDA – TANZANIA principles, values and beliefs concerning child protection:

- LASWIDA - TANZANIA does not accept any kind or form of child abuse done by LASWIDA - TANZANIA employees or volunteers during the course of interaction with children
- LASWIDA - TANZANIA commits itself to adhere to child rights, including right to be protected
- LASWIDA - TANZANIA commits itself into seeking to do no harm to children through organization's programs
- The organization supports and encourages feedback from children who are beneficiaries of the organization's programs

4.0 DEFINITION OF CHILD ABUSE

Physical Abuse - the intentional causing of physical harm to a child; This may take the form of slapping, punching, shaking, kicking, burning, shoving, and biting, strangling, poisoning or otherwise physical hurting of a child.

Emotional Abuse - involves continuing behavior by adults towards children, which includes threats, rejection, isolation, belittling, name calling or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment which erodes social competence or self-esteem over time.

Neglect or negligent treatment - is the failure to provide a child – within the context of resources reasonably available to the family or caregivers – with the conditions essential for their physical and emotional development and well-being.

Sexual Abuse - occurs when someone uses their power or authority to involve a child in sexual activity. Sexually abusive behaviors can involve fondling genitals, masturbation, and oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or any other object, fondling breasts, voyeurism, and exhibition or exposing a child to, or involving a child in pornography. Both boys and girls can be victims of child sexual abuse.

Exploitation - Commercial or other exploitation of a child refers to the use of the child in work or other activities for the benefit of others that are unacceptable because it deprives them of their childhood, development or dignity. This includes, but is not limited to, child labor and child prostitution.

- ✓ A child of any age, sex, race, religion, and socioeconomic background can suffer child abuse and neglect.
- ✓ A child who is being abused may experience more than one type of abuse. For example, physical and sexual abuse almost always involves emotional abuse as well.
- ✓ Abused children can be helped to lead fulfilling lives, but we must never expect them just to forget about it and 'get over it'.

✓The impact of child abuse lasts a lifetime.

Sourced from Australian Volunteers International Definition of Abuse

5.0 CODE OF CONDUCT

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All members of staff and volunteers who are serving at LASWIDA - TANZANIA will be introduced to and sign a code of conduct before they have access to the children in the course of interaction during programs delivery.

See Appendix 1

6.0 RECRUITMENT

LASWIDA – TANZANIA is committed to the following recruitment practices that aim to mitigate unacceptable risk to children that we are protecting and defending under our programs. For all staff and employees who work at LASWIDA – TANZANIA their application and recruitment process will include:

1. At least two referees who can attest to their behavior and past interactions with children that will be checked by the interviewer.
2. Tanzanian applicants for positions will present a signed letter from their Local Government Offices will be provided attesting to their history that there is no history of crimes involving children. Foreign staff or volunteers serving at LASWIDA - TANZANIA irrespective of number of hours or days will provide a current police check and sexual offenders check as part of an application process. A written statement / statutory declaration will be required from the employee who discloses any previous convictions or charges of crimes relating to children.
3. All Applicants who progress to interview stage of recruitment will be asked at least one question relating to child protection.
4. All staff and volunteers at LASWIDA - TANZANIA will sign an acknowledgment that they will follow the child protection policy.
5. LASWIDA - TANZANIA) will not engage anyone for work if they are deemed to pose an unacceptable risk to children.
6. Verbal reference checks will be conducted for positions that involve contact

with children from former or current employees, places where someone has volunteered, community or church leaders, sports coaches etc

All LASWIDA - TANZANIA personnel will be required to sign a contract, as well as the Code of Contact (Appendix 1.) Included in each contract there is a section regarding the code of conduct that clearly states that LASWIDA - TANZANIA does not support children abuse, and that there are

Serious consequences if the code of Conduct is broken:

- personnel can be suspended or transferred to other duties if they are under investigation or dismissed if it is found out that they have breached the Child Protection Code of Conduct

7.0 TRAINING

All new staff and volunteers at LASWIDA – TANZANIA will have an induction session about the Child Protection Policy, to ensure awareness of their responsibilities in adhering to the code of conduct and the impact on the children in our care. They will be oriented to the file containing materials pertaining to the child protection policy, and informed on reporting procedures.

In addition to this the staff and volunteers at LASWIDA – TANZANIA will attend a training session each year to ensure adherence and further develop understanding of the Child Protection Policy.

8.0 REPORTING AND RESPONDING

1. Child Allegation of Abuse

In the event that a child reports abuse, LASWIDA - TANZANIA personnel must do the following:

- Any concerns or allegations or child abuse, and any breaches of LASWIDA - TANZANIA's Child Protection Policy, must be reported.
- Remain calm and in control of feelings;
- Tell them that you believe them;

- Listen carefully to what they are saying;
- Don't ask lots of questions - listen to what they want to tell you;
- Tell them it is not their fault and you are pleased that they told you as you can now do something about it;
- Take steps to distance the alleged perpetrator from the child.
- Write down everything the child said, bearing in mind that the matter is confidential. Use the Incident Reporting Sheet (Appendix 2). The staff member/volunteer should further discuss the matter only with the Managing Director of LASWIDA - TANZANIA or their appointed alternative.

2. Handling Information

All information regarding individual cases and reports of a child protection matter will be kept in a confidential file. Only authorized staff members of LASWIDA - TANZANIA will be allowed to access the information.

3. Allegations of Abuse within LASWIDA - TANZANIA

The Senior Management Team of LASWIDA - TANZANIA carry the responsibility for handling information about allegations of abuse by staff or volunteers of LASWIDA - TANZANIA, with the support of LASWIDA - TANZANIA Board of Directors. If the allegation of abuse is leveled against a member of the Senior Management Team, then the Board of Directors will handle the allegations.

LASWIDA - TANZANIA is committed to its workers as well as to the child, therefore only the personnel dealing with the allegation will have access to information about allegations, and will continue to treat the person under investigation with dignity throughout.

The person handling the allegations will agree on an appropriate course of action with whoever is helping them to handle the case. This may mean seeking further guidance from alternate childcare programs, or, for serious cases, referring the case

to the police or Social Services, if this has not already been done.

The person handling the allegations will document the allegations and date and sign them as soon as possible after hearing about them, and will also document the consequent action that they have taken. This documentation is to be kept safely on file indefinitely.

Advice will be sought from board members and alternate childcare programs in the area before speaking to the person alleged to have committed an offence. All conversations with the alleged offender will be carried out in the presence of two people, namely the Director of LASWIDA - TANZANIA and an alternate member of the Senior Management Team or the board.

All conversations will be documented and the documentation kept confidentially on file indefinitely. The member of staff, whether volunteer or not, alleged to have committed an offence will be automatically suspended from his/her duties on full pay, whilst the case is being investigated, and until it has been resolved.

4. Dismissal/ Discipline

Proven guilty of any form of child abuse as described in this policy will result in instant dismissal from the paid or volunteer employment at LASWIDA – TANZANIA.

9.0 CHILD PROTECTION RISK ASSESSMENTS

LASWIDA - TANZANIA will undertake risk assessments for all activities involving children in their care. These will be kept in a Risk Log (Appendix 3) and added to as the LASWIDA – TANZANIA changes and evolves. LASWIDA - TANZANIA personnel will NOT be allowed to work with children if any risks or concerns are identified.

10.0 REVIEW OF CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

This document will be reviewed every two years, or after any allegation of child abuse from LASWIDA - TANZANIA employees, volunteers or board members.

Appendix 1

Code of Conduct

LASWIDA – TANZANIA Personnel will:

- Advocate for the rights and wellbeing of children in our care
- treat all children with respect
- not use language or behavior towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate
- not engage children in any form of sexual intercourse or sexual activity, including paying for sexual services
- wherever possible, ensure that another adult is present when working near children
- not invite unaccompanied children into private residences, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger
- not sleep close to unsupervised children unless absolutely necessary, in which case the supervisor's permission must be obtained, and ensuring that another adult is present if possible
- (noting that this does not apply to an individual's own children)
- never use any computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras or social media to exploit or harass children, or access child exploitation material through any medium
- Be aware of behavior and avoid actions or behaviors that could be perceived by others as child exploitation and abuse
- Not take photos or share images of children in our care
- not use physical punishment on children
- not hire children for domestic or other labor: which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage; which interferes with their time available for education and recreational
- activities; or which places them at significant risk of injury

- Not hire children for domestic or other labor
- comply with all relevant local legislation, including labor laws in relation to child labor
- immediately report concerns or allegations of child exploitation and abuse and policy non-
- compliance in accordance with appropriate procedures
- immediately disclose all charges, convictions and other outcomes of an offence that relates to child exploitation and abuse, including those under traditional law, which occurred before or occurs during association with the child
- When photographing or filming a child or using children's images for work-related purposes:
 - Take care to ensure local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images are adhered to before photographing or filming a child
 - Obtain informed consent from the child and parent or guardian of the child before photographing or filming a child. An explanation of how the photograph or film will be used must be provided
 - Ensure photographs, films, videos and DVDs present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive
 - Ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts
 - Ensure file labels, meta data or text descriptions do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically or publishing images in any form

I, the undersigned, have read and understand LASWIDA – TANZANIA Child Protection Policy, including the Code of Conduct, and promise to abide by it.

I am aware that if proven guilty of any form of child abuse, as described in this policy, it will Result in instant dismissal from the paid or unpaid employment of LASWIDA -

Name

Signature

Appendix 2

Incident Reporting Sheet

All personnel/volunteers are required to complete this form if you believe that child abuse or exploitation, or a breach of the Child Protection Code of Conduct, may have occurred or that a child's safety is in danger. All child protection concerns should be reported immediately (and within 24 hours) to..... The report must be treated in strict confidence.

Date: _____

Time: _____

Name of Child: _____

Age of child: _____

Name of parents or guardian: _____

Details of Concern / Suspicion / Incident:

Please fill out as many sections as possible with as much detail as you can.

Describe what happened: time / dates / names of persons) involved/ behavior or signs observed / any other details.

1. Details of any conversation with the child:

2. Immediate safety concerns and long-term safety concerns for the child:

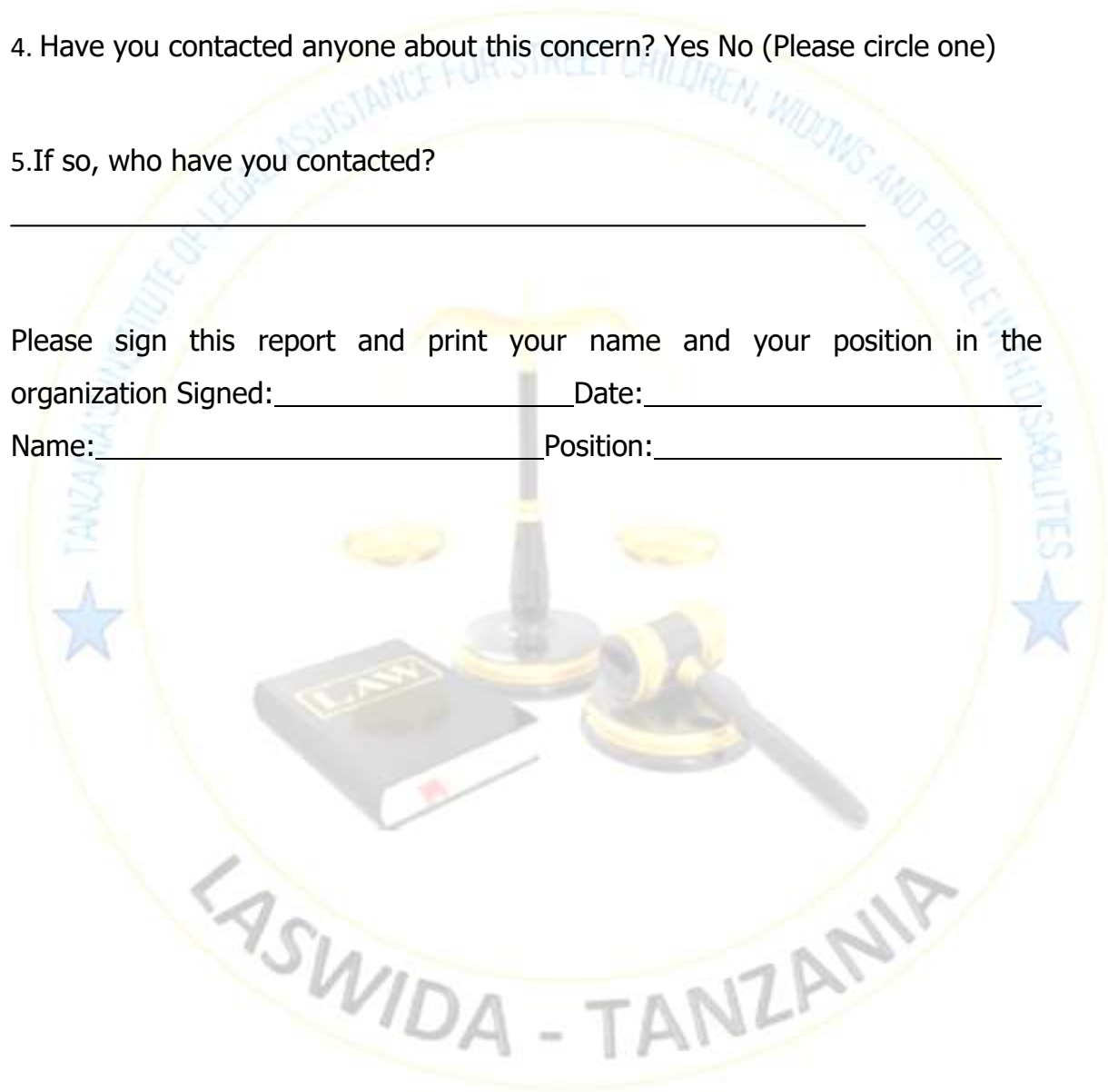
3. Other Safety Concerns:

4. Have you contacted anyone about this concern? Yes No (Please circle one)

5.If so, who have you contacted?

Please sign this report and print your name and your position in the organization Signed:_____ Date:_____

Name:_____ Position:_____



Appendix 3

Risk Log

Potential Risk

#1:

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A child needs an emergency evacuation or a medical transfer where a parent or legal guardian is unable to accompany them.

Steps to mitigate the risk:

- LASWIDA - TANZANIA will not transfer a child where there is not a parent of legal guardian present

