Safeguarding Policy

Policy Statement

The safeguarding policy sets out RAPID’s approach to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. This policy is applicable to all areas of RAPID’s work. RAPID is committed to promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and protecting them from harm. RAPID recognizes that:

- Everybody should be kept safe from harm regardless of his/her age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, economic status, sexual orientation or identity
- Some people would require heightened protection due to their age, level of dependency, the impact of previous experiences, or other issues

The aim of this policy is:

- To promote and ensure the safeguarding of Vulnerable Persons directly served by RAPID and its partners.
- To ensure that any abuse of Vulnerable Persons that occurs in the context of RAPID’s projects and programmes is reported and addressed.

Vulnerable Persons Covered by the Policy

- Children and young people under the age of 18 years
- Vulnerable adults, persons over the age of 18 years who are unable to take care of or protect themselves against harm or exploitation for whatever reason, require particular protection. Such adults can include (but not limited to)
  - Adults with mental health issues, a physical disability, and/or learning difficulties
  - Adults who have care needs or are struggling with addiction issues
  - Adults vulnerable to slavery, forced labour, sexual exploitation, organ donorship and force, threats, or deception

Vulnerable persons belonging to abovementioned groups should be protected from abuse and RAPID will ensure that their rights are preserved, and dignity is respected.
What is considered as abuse?

This policy considers the following as abuse (but not limited to):

- Physical abuse or physical injury, 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
- Sexual abuse where exploitation occurs. This all forms of sexual activities including pornography
- Neglect and negligent treatment, where basic needs such as food, warmth and medical care are not fulfilled, or when there is a failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, resulting in serious impairment of a vulnerable person’s health or development
- Exchanging of benefits (for example goods, food and money in exchange for sexual favors)
- Bullying and cyberbullying or discriminatory abuse, which could include physical or verbal intimidation, including hateful remarks based on age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, economic status, sexual orientation or identity; emotional intimidation; for example, excluding or isolating someone
- Compel or persuade a vulnerable person for acts of slavery, illegal organ donorship, forced labour and work in risk-exposed condition
- Radicalization, where the aim is to inspire new recruits, embed extreme views and persuade vulnerable individuals to the legitimacy of a cause. This may be through a direct relationship, or through social media

RAPID’s approach to safeguarding

Risk assessment and code of conduct: Safeguarding risks are assessed at the beginning of every project. When appropriate, team members involved within the project are given a safeguarding briefing and asked to report any safeguarding issues to the project manager. The project manager in consultation with the relevant line manager and Executive Director will undertake appropriate intervention to address any safeguarding concern.

Communications: All communications with or regarding an in-danger person, including those online like via social media services, are conducted in an exceedingly safe manner by:
- taking care to make sure the privacy of the beneficiary.
- never taking photos of an in-danger person without their consent.
- managing and preventing risks related to social media use like cyberbullying, fraud, and exposure to inappropriate content.

Monitoring and action: The respective Project Team Leader will remain responsible for ensuring that safeguarding risk is reviewed and monitored throughout each project. Safeguarding concerns should be reported to RAPID’s Executive Director when abuse is observed or suspected. RAPID will not make any compromises to implement this policy and will ensure it is communicated and well-understood by RAPID employees and Management.