

# Centre for Information Technology and Development (CITAD) Safeguarding Policy

## PURPOSE

The Centre for Information Technology and Development (CITAD) believes all children and young people have the right to protection from harm, abuse, or exploitation, wherever they are in the world. CITAD is committed to providing a respectful and inclusive environment for all individuals involved in all its initiatives.

Bullying, Harassment, and Discrimination (BHD), Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH) are unacceptable and will not be tolerated in any form. This policy aims to establish guidelines for preventing, addressing, and resolving instances of SEAH and BHD within our organization

CITAD aims to promote a strong safeguarding culture across all its work and to ensure that all children, young people as well as staff members that come into contact with CITAD, either directly, or through delivery partners, are protected.

As a non-governmental organization, CITAD is bound to uphold its civic social responsibility. CITAD therefore also has duties to prioritize safeguarding and to protect children and young people we work with from harm.

To achieve this, CITAD will partner with organizations nationally and internationally that share these values. CITAD has defined a set of safeguarding procedures that it requires its delivery partners to implement, to ensure a robust and consistent safeguarding approach in all areas. These are standards **that must be met prior to any delivery of CITAD programmes** and maintained throughout the relationship.

The policy is designed as the basis for delivery partners to continue to develop their own safeguarding strategy and culture. CITAD can support with this development where required.

Where local legal or statutory frameworks, accepted best practice or the partners own measures require a higher standard, the relevant higher standard shall apply.

## SAFEGUARING COMPONENTS:

**Prevention:** To safeguard everyone involved with, or taking part in programmes, by taking reasonable steps to provide safe environments (online, phone, face to face) and acting to prevent harm and promote safety and wellbeing

**Protection:** The steps and measures taken to protect individuals identified as either suffering, or likely to suffer from harm, exploitation, abuse and neglect.

**Zero Tolerance:** To ensure that everyone involved with or taking part in programmes are aware that SEAH will **NOT** be tolerated. CITAD has a zero-tolerance policy towards SEAH and BHD. Such behaviors will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, termination of volunteer status, or termination of partnership, as deemed appropriate by the organization.

**Investigation Process:** Upon receiving a report, CITAD will promptly initiate an investigation; a team comprising of the Safeguarding Focal Person, HR Officer and a management staff to conduct investigation impartially and confidentially. CITAD will take appropriate action to address the situation and prevent further occurrences, which may include disciplinary measures, training, mediation, or other interventions.

**Support for Victims:** CITAD is committed to providing support to victims of SEAH and BHD. This may include, advocacy, referral to external support agencies, or any other assistance deemed necessary to ensure the well-being and safety of the individual.

**Education and Awareness:** CITAD will regularly conduct training sessions and awareness campaigns to educate all stakeholders about SEAH/BHD, its impact, and the importance of maintaining a respectful and inclusive environment. Training will emphasize prevention strategies, recognizing signs, and reporting procedures.

**Non-Retaliation:** CITAD prohibits retaliation against individuals who report occurrence in good faith or participate in investigations. Retaliation against anyone for raising concerns or participating in the resolution process will be treated as a separate violation of this policy and will result in disciplinary action.

**Review and Update:** This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Amendments may be made as necessary to reflect changes in laws, regulations, or organizational needs.

## SAFEGUARDING CULTURE

1. Policies and Processes
2. Safer Recruitment
3. Reporting
4. Survivor Centered Approach
5. Safer Programming
6. Organisational Awareness

## KEY PRINCIPLES

1. **Safeguarding First:** The safety and wellbeing of children and young people is paramount, and comes above all other considerations. Safeguarding is considered at all stages of any programme or activity, from conception, through delivery and included in lessons learned.
2. **Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility:** We all have to act with safeguarding as a priority and at the forefront of our minds. We have to make sure it's a lived concept and a priority in all our roles
3. **Everyone has an equal right to protection from harm, abuse or exploitation:** Regardless of their age, race, religion, gender, ability, background or sexual identity and especially those who are in vulnerable circumstances and less able to protect themselves.
4. **A person-centered approach:** for safeguarding to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of individuals.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors, partners, and beneficiaries associated with CITAD. It encompasses behaviors occurring within our premises, during official activities, and in any interactions related to our mission and objectives. Programme delivery with children and/or young people cannot commence without these Policies being met and sufficient evidence provided to CITAD.

## DEFINITIONS

1. **Sexual Exploitation** – Actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, power differential or trust for sexual purposes. Includes profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from sexual exploitation of another. Under UN regulations (2017) of the Glossary on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, it includes transactional sex, solicitation of transactional sex and exploitative relationship.
2. **Sexual Abuse** – Actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or unequal coercive conditions. Ranges from sexual assault and touching to rape. Under UN regulations, all sexual activity with someone under the age of 18 is considered to be sexual abuse, regardless of the age of majority or consent locally.
3. **Sexual Harassment** – Continuum of unacceptable and unwelcome behaviors of sexual nature. For example, sexual suggestions or demands, requests for sexual favours and, verbal or physical conduct or gestures, that are or might reasonably be perceived as offensive or humiliating.
4. **Bullying** - Any intentional, repetitive behavior that aims to intimidate, harm, or undermine an individual or group of individuals.

5. **Harassment** - Unwanted conduct, whether verbal, physical, or non-verbal, that violates an individual's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment.
6. **Discrimination** - Unfair treatment or unfavorable consideration based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, or any other protected characteristic.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

CITAD and all partners must ensure that the Policies are met, and sufficient evidence is provided before programme delivery begins. If the Partner does not already have one or more of these standards in place, it should raise this with its CITAD contact.

The Partner must also ensure the Policies continue to be upheld and maintained throughout the relationship with CITAD. CITAD may at any time request evidence of compliance.

The implementation of the Policies is enforced as part of the Agreement, and failure by the Partner satisfactorily to implement them, maintain compliance or evidence this can result in termination of the Agreement.

### Prior to delivery (Partners):

**Policy 1** – The Partner must fully and accurately complete the CITAD Partner Due Diligence Form and return it with the requested supporting documents to the CITAD contact. The Partner must also promptly advise CITAD of any material changes to any of the information and documentation supplied, whether such changes occur prior to or during delivery.

**Policy 2** –. For partnerships to be viable, a robust safeguarding policy is essential. CITAD encourages partners to develop their own policies, and would offer support in this process if needed.

**Policy 3** – The Partner should have an appropriate code of conduct for its staff, volunteers (including mentors), and other representatives, that sets out clear standards of expected behaviours, as well as what is unacceptable. This should cover exploitation, sexual abuse, and professional conduct. Where there is none, the partner is encouraged to develop one.

**Policy 4** – CITAD, shall be allowed to visit the delivery site (or several if there are more than one in a region) on giving not less than 24 hours' notice; and the partner shall fully cooperate with that attendance and any inspection by CITAD.

**Policy 5** – The Partner should have an incident management and reporting process in place, to enable staff and young people to report issues. Furthermore, the Partner must report safeguarding incidents, concerns or allegations to CITAD.

**Policy 6** – The Partner should identify a key point of contact (“**POC**”) who shall be responsible for reporting all safeguarding and health and safety concerns to the relevant CITAD contact or Programme Manager.

### **During Delivery (CITAD):**

**Policy 7** – CITAD staff members will discuss safeguarding at each Programme Review Meeting, to be held quarterly or at a previously agreed frequency (either remotely or in person), with the CITAD Programme Manager to include safeguarding issues, ongoing management, best practice and effective signposting.

**Policy 8** – CITAD Programme Manager will hold sensitization/awareness twice yearly with staff, volunteers, partners and beneficiaries on safeguarding, to ensure the young people are aware of and confident in the relevant reporting mechanisms and how they should be treated and are confident that they are safe and protected.

**Policy 9** – CITAD will implement any further requirements of grant sponsors/donors that are specific to the Programme or type of delivery to help ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

## **Safeguarding Incidents and Concerns**

### **Reporting to CITAD - Reporting Requirements**

#### **1) Report Immediately**

If any of the following scenarios occur, notify CITAD immediately using the CITAD Emergency Line or email provided within this document

- An allegation or incident that a partner staff member, or CITAD staff member has sexually abused, exploited or harassed a child or young person.
- A concern or incident that a CITAD staff member has otherwise abused, harmed or exploited any person (this includes a child or young person, someone from within the local community, partner staff or representative)
- That a child or young person has died during programme delivery or activity (e.g. at the delivery centre) or as a result of their involvement in the programme or activity.
- Where any incident or concern means that the programme delivery must be suspended.

## 2) Reporting within 24 hours

If any of the following scenarios occur, notify your CITAD Point of Contact, or [safeguarding@citad.org](mailto:safeguarding@citad.org)

- An incident or allegation that a child or young person has been harmed as a result of their involvement in the programme – this could be mistreatment, harm or exploitation by:
  - A staff member or other representative (e.g. a volunteer)
  - Another party involved in the programme delivery, such as a mentor, an employer partner, facilitators, including trainers or other implementing partner staff or volunteers.
  - Another young person involved in the programme
- Any incident of harm to a child or young person that has arisen as a result of a programme activity (E.g. if a young person is harmed during a community activity, if the harm occurs during required travel to the activity site, etc)
- Where any incident or concern has resulted in local media attention or is likely to negatively impact the reputation of CITAD or the funding partner.
- Breaches of the relevant Safeguarding/Protection policy or Code of Conduct – this should include where failure to act or raise a concern has resulted in harm (actual or potential).

## 3) Regular Meetings

The following can be discussed at the regular quarterly meetings (or as agreed) held with CITAD Point of Contact.

Where there is a concern about a child or young person because of something in their home or personal life (welfare concern), or a concern or incident not related to a Partner/CITAD programme or activity.

This might be a mental health concern, or a challenge at home or in the community, including previous experiences of harm or abuse, food scarcity or experiences of poverty.

CITAD has a duty of care to support the child or young person and act in their best interests – this may include helping them find the appropriate support from other specialist organizations. These do not need to be reported immediately to CITAD PoC but should still be recorded and managed appropriately.

The CITAD programme manager and Partner point of contact may discuss concerns of this nature during their regular meetings, to understand support needs, any trends or lessons.

### **Additional Routes**

#### **4) Whistleblowing**

‘Whistleblowing’ is the reporting of suspected wrongdoing or dangers in relation to the organization’s activities.

A ‘whistleblower’ is someone who has a reasonable belief that wrongdoing has or is currently taking place, or that it is likely to take place in the future.

If you have concerns of this nature, about CITAD or a partner organization, you can report them using the routes below, as per the CITAD Whistleblowing Policy:

CITAD Incident Reporting Phone Number CITAD Whistleblowing Email address	+234 8121870567 <a href="mailto:whistleblowing@citad.org">whistleblowing@citad.org</a>
Nominated Person	Zainab Aminu CITAD Safeguarding PoC <a href="mailto:safeguarding@citad.org">safeguarding@citad.org</a>
Nominated Trustee	Haruna Adamu Risk and Compliance <a href="mailto:whistleblowing@citad.org">whistleblowing@citad.org</a>

#### **5) Complaints**

Under CITAD’s Complaints and Feedback policy, a complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction about CITAD’s services.

It is a criticism that expects a reply and would like things to be changed. This could relate to things like the standard of service we provide, the behaviour of staff and volunteers working for CITAD and practices or any other aspects of our work.

All complaints are reported via CITAD Feedback and Complaints policy:

Online – using our contact us form - Contact us | [CITAD](#)

Email – [info@citad.org](mailto:info@citad.org)