Child Protection Policy

KEYANG TIPIN
CARE FOR GIRLS

Statement of Commitment

Keyang Tipin (meaning "Care for Girls" in Pokot) is committed to creating a safe and nurturing environment for every girl in our care. The organization is committed to ensuring that all children and vulnerable individuals who interact with our programs are protected from harm, abuse, exploitation, and neglect. This policy provides guidance on the organization's safeguarding principles, expected conduct, and reporting procedures. It applies to all employees, volunteers, consultants, interns, partners, and affiliates associated with Keyang Tipin Foundation.

Guiding Principles

Keyang Tipin Foundation's safeguarding approach is guided by the following principles:

- **Child-Centered Approach:** The best interests of the child are the primary consideration in all program planning and implementation.
- **Zero Tolerance:** Any form of abuse, exploitation, or neglect is unacceptable and will be addressed decisively.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** Staff and volunteers are encouraged to report concerns promptly, and all reports will be handled responsibly.
- **Respect and Dignity:** All children must be treated with respect, ensuring their physical, emotional, and cultural needs are recognized.
- **Community Engagement:** Working alongside communities is essential to create safe and supportive environments.

Definition of Key Terms

For the purposes of this policy:

- A **child** is any person under the age of 18.
- **Child abuse** refers to physical, emotional, sexual abuse, or neglect.
- **Safeguarding** means protecting the welfare of children and preventing harm.
- **Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)** includes any sexual activity with children, abuse of power for sexual purposes, or exchanging money/goods/services for sexual acts.
- **Harmful practices** include cultural or traditional practices that negatively impact children, such as FGM/C or early marriage.

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Forms of Abuse

Abuse can occur in multiple forms, including:

- **Physical abuse:** Inflicting harm through hitting, burning, or other intentional injury.
- **Emotional abuse:** Actions that humiliate, threaten, or intimidate a child.
- **Sexual abuse:** Any sexual act or exploitation involving a child or vulnerable person.
- **Neglect:** Failure to meet basic needs, including education, health care, supervision, or protection.
- **Harmful cultural practices:** Practices that negatively impact children's health, safety, or dignity.

Code of Conduct for Staff & Mentors

To ensure the safety of the girls at **Cheposekek Girls High School** and during our outreach programs, all staff and volunteers must:

- **The Two-Adult Rule**: Avoid being alone with a girl in private settings; activities should occur in open, viewable areas.
- **Physical Boundaries**: Refrain from any physical contact that could be misconstrued or that makes a child uncomfortable.
- **Respect for Dignity**: Use language that is empowering and respectful. Corporal punishment or any form of shaming is strictly prohibited.
- **Mentorship Ethics**: Mentors must maintain professional boundaries and serve as positive role models during gender equity and SRHR trainings.

Confidentiality & Privacy

- **Personal Information Protection:** All information about the girls — including health, family background, program participation, or incidents reported — is kept strictly confidential.
- **Limited Access:** Only authorized staff have access to sensitive information necessary for program delivery or safeguarding purposes.
- **Anonymous Reporting:** Girls can report concerns or share information safely without revealing their identity if they choose.

Reporting & Responding to Concerns

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CARE FOR GIRLS

- **Mandatory Reporting**: Any staff member who suspects a girl is at risk of FGM/C, early marriage, or GBV must report it immediately to the **Program Coordinator**.
- **Confidentiality**: Reports will be handled with high sensitivity to protect the girl's privacy and safety.
- **Authority Liaison**: The Foundation will work closely with community leaders and local authorities to ensure legal protection under the **Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Act**.

Inclusion & Child Participation

- Programs are **inclusive**, welcoming all girls regardless of ability, ethnicity, religion, or social background.
- Girls are **encouraged to voice their opinions safely** about programs and decisions that affect them.
- Feedback mechanisms (anonymous suggestion boxes, safe conversations) allow girls to report concerns or make suggestions.

Media & Digital Safety

- **Consent**: No photos or stories of the girls may be shared on social media or in fundraising materials without written consent from the girl and her legal guardian.
- **Online Interaction**: Staff and mentors are prohibited from connecting with students on personal social media accounts.

Training & Review

All members of the field team must undergo annual safeguarding training to recognize signs of trauma and abuse. This policy will be reviewed annually to stay aligned with UNICEF standards and Kenyan law.