

It's vital that UK Aid Match projects uphold rigorous and ethical safeguarding policies and approaches, protecting project stakeholders and supporting the wider impact of the project. Consider these key points when implementing your safeguarding approach:

## Unsure? Report it immediately

Do not wait for a harmful situation to worsen or for internal reports to start or finish. Make sure you escalate any safeguarding concerns as soon as they arise. The UK Aid Match team is here to support and advise you and your colleagues throughout the process. **The golden rule is to share your concerns, whatever the situation.**



## Ways to report a safeguarding concern



- Email your Performance and Risk Manager or the UK Aid Match team directly
- Email the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) directly via [reportingconcerns@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:reportingconcerns@fcdo.gov.uk) (MannionDaniels works directly with the team at reporting concerns)
- For anonymous and toll-free reporting - use [Ethics Point](#)

## Identify and address reasons for non-reporting

Project teams may hesitate to raise a safeguarding concern. Common reasons include:

- Feeling unsure if an incident is 'serious enough' or 'counts' as a safeguarding concern
- Fear of reprisal
- Worry over intensive investigations or additional workload
- Wishing to avoid difficult conversations
- An expectation or cultural understanding that concerns are local issues that should be resolved at the local level - and do not need upward reporting. \*\* Solutions may be local, but reporting and investigating must follow policy.



**Try to get to the bottom of where these fears are coming from, and address them directly and regularly.**



## Reports show your mechanisms are working

Every project has safeguarding risk, and issues DO happen - no project is immune. Reports indicate your mechanisms are working, and project staff / stakeholders have confidence to speak up, whereas zero reports could be a sign of a problem.

## Your FCDO funding is secure

Reporting safeguarding concerns does not impact your project funding. **Not reporting a concern is a breach of your contractual obligation to the FCDO.**



## Safeguarding covers a broad range of issues



Sexual exploitation; abuse and harassment; child labour or forced labour risk; health and safety risks (including through construction and industrial pollution); land acquisition and leasing; road traffic accidents (RTAs) etc.

Ensure all are considered in your project risk register and Safeguarding Action Plan

## Safeguarding is a collaboration

- All project stakeholders should be aware of and engaged in a project's safeguarding approach
- Co-creation of approaches is important for buy-in and sustainability – and in some cases, could be a key project outcome in itself
- Information should be accessible and appropriate for each unique stakeholder group
- Policies should not sit on a shelf. Staff and stakeholders need regular refreshers and engagement to ensure they are put into practice.



## A contextually sensitive approach will strengthen reporting mechanisms



Ensure your project engages key stakeholders meaningfully throughout design, implementation and closure stages. This empowers communities to deal with safeguarding issues at a local level during project implementation and hopefully beyond.

Meaningful stakeholder engagement might look like:

- ➔ Establishing what 'safeguarding' means in the local context and designing all activities and materials around this, for example using local languages and examples/scenarios that are culturally sensitive
- ➔ Using accessible formats for materials, for example highly visual posters placed in culturally appropriate locations
- ➔ Involving key stakeholders (particularly project participants) in mapping current safeguarding risks and mitigation strategies
- ➔ Engaging local duty bearers in mapping of referral pathways and support service providers
- ➔ Co-creating contextually appropriate reporting tools that also promote the wellbeing, confidentiality and anonymity of whistleblowers, for example suggestion boxes or WhatsApp hotlines
- ➔ Engaging stakeholders in regular forums for review of policies, processes and reporting mechanisms to encourage ownership and implementation.

### What makes a good policy?

- ✓ An inclusive policy that protects everyone (including project participants, project and partner staff, and volunteers)
- ✓ Definitions of what safeguarding incidents are (and are not)
- ✓ Reporting mechanisms for incidents
- ✓ Procedures for handling incidents
- ✓ Overview of safe recruitment practices
- ✓ Identification of Designated Safeguarding Officers at all levels of a project/organisation
- ✓ Shared responsibility.

- ✓ A live tool (designed at grant set up) to help you articulate and plan for key project safeguarding actions and risk mitigations
- ✓ Review and update **at least** quarterly.

### Remember your project's Safeguarding Action Plan

## ➔ Additional resources

- The Learning Post podcast - [Safeguarding top tips and best practices](#) and [Inclusive safeguarding, an interview with Sense International](#)
- FCDO's (Formerly Department for International Development) [Enhanced safeguarding standards video](#)
- [Bond safeguarding resources](#).