











SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Championing Rights of Women & Girls For Sustainable Development

Head Office: 21 Touggourt Street Wuse Zone 2 Abuja

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MISSION

Promoting the empowerment of women and Girls' through programs which promotes social inclusion and stimulate social participation thereby creating avenues for Creativity, Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

VISION

To be a Pan-African Organisation consistently promoting the Empowerment of Women and Adolescent Girls' with the strategic objective of contributing to growth of the African Continent.

VALUES

Excellence | Partnership | Professionalism | Respect | Integrity | Hard Work | Forthright, Clear and Direct Communication | Team Work | Client Focus

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The protection of children, a very vital necessity to the actualisation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals is linked to our organisational mandate. In interacting with children particularly the Girl-Child, we have realised that a number of them have low self-esteem issues connected to abuse which includes but not limited to Sexual and Gender Based Violence. This policy seeks to ensure that members of our organisation have a mutual obligation in preventing Child Abuse and enforcing protection of children even as the document sets out the values, principles and beliefs that describes steps to be taken in meeting our commitments to protecting children. We recognise that children are one of the most vulnerable groups in the society and in ensuring their right to be safe, we understand that preventing against violence, abuse and exploitation is a shared responsibility for the society at large. Concerning children with disabilities, we acknowledge the need to develop their full potentials as well as the rights to develop their capabilities within the community and thus are committed and open to supporting them.

The commitment of WGCEO to Child Protection is guided by the following core principles:

- Responsibility: give our best to the effectual and accountable delivery of resources that have been entrusted to us.
- Impact: devotion to offering quality assistance to support the children we interact with.
- ➤ Inspiration: strive to make meaningful impact in the communities we work through our vision, values, approaches, actions and advocacy.

2.0 POLICY STATEMENT

WGCEO is committed to safeguarding her work standards in all our interventions particularly in the areas of efficiency, responsibility and transparency. This policy is therefore aimed at guiding the WGCEO staff and must be strictly adhered to at all times. As a non-profit organisation which operates in impoverished communities, we recognise that children constitute the majority of the vulnerable population group making them at a greater risk of violence, negligence, abuse and exploitation.

Our Child Protection Policy reveals our obligations to protect children within the framework of our internal procedures especially in the implementation of activities involving children and mainstreaming of these issues all our interventions. This policy further authenticates the need for strong commitment on child protection issues while also specifying that violations of Child Rights in whatever form is unacceptable to WGCEO and will be appropriately sanctioned.

It is worth mentioning that the policy was developed in best interest of the child and is based on provisions of;

- ➤ The 2003 Nigerian Child Rights Act
- > 1990 African Charter on Rights of the Child
- > 1989 Convention on Rights of the Child

2.1 WGCEO CHILD PROTECTION PRINCIPLES

In a bid to achieve the aforementioned objectives, WGCEO is determined to enlighten her personnel and sanction appropriately when staff conduct fall short of the required standard.

- Awareness: Complying with a critical component of our recruitment policy, WGCEO will make certain that staff are trained on Child Protection Policy and mechanisms in place to report all forms of violations in addition to professional responses on Violence against Children.
- Prevention: Strictly adhering to prevention involves thorough background investigations/checks on individuals and organisations that we will be working with, which shall include checking for their names in the sexual offenders register while also ensuring that each staff strictly comply with the policy.
- > Reporting: We will ensure that staff and volunteers are clear on the steps to be taken when issues arise concerning safety of children in our intervention programs.
- ➤ **Responding:** In the event that the policy is violated, an investigation panel would be set up by management and if any staff is found culpable he or she would be dismissed and handed over to the police.

Neutrality: WGCEO staff and entities must fulfil their official responsibilities in a neutral and apolitical manner in accordance with the law and ethical rules relating to official roles.

> Impartiality: WGCEO staff must act in accordance with the law and exercise their discretionary power in an unbiased manner taking into consideration only relevant information.

Confidence of Stakeholders: In a bid to ensure achievement of our mission and vision statement, staff of our organisation must work in an excellent and efficient manner to maintain confidence with our stakeholders.

Hierarchical Responsibility: Representatives of our organisation must carry out official responsibilities in a hierarchical order.

Confidentiality: WGCEO staff must treat official information with utmost confidentiality.

Protection of Privacy: We are daily making deliberate efforts in ensuring that members of our team treat official information with utmost confidentiality.

2.2 **DEFINITIONS**

Abuse: Cruel treatment of a child which could have devastating effects

Child: A child is any person below the age of 18 years

Child with Disabilities: A child with special needs due to a physical impairment

Negligence: Failure to abide by laid down rules and protocols

Partners: Organisations that support our work materially and financially

Staff: Persons who work for our organisation on a full-time or part time basis

Stakeholders: A group of persons/organisations whose work aligns with ours.

Volunteers: Persons who put in their skills to work in our organisation and are not being paid.

PURPOSE OF THE POLICY 3.0

- 1. Ensure WGCEO staff and volunteers adhere to organisational mechanisms on child protection and child ill-treatment.
- 2. Outline the rules of child protection and child ill-treatment that WGCEO staff and volunteers must abide by.
- 3. Promote safety of children in our intervention programs.

3.1 STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

All Women and Girls Capabilities and Empowerment Organisation staff must sign and abide by this Code of Conduct.

Staff and others must never:

- Physically assault children
- Have sexual relationships with children
- Act in ways that may place a child at risk of abuse.
- Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive
- Sleep in the same room or bed with a child
- Do things for children of a personal nature
- Engage in behaviour which is illegal, unsafe or abusive

Mechanisms in place to punish staff and volunteers who default this policy include to ensure that their names are written in the Sexual Offenders Register.

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