



**Hope of Refugee Women against poverty for the Social Wellbeing
(HOPDEV)**

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HOPDEV Child Protection Policy

INTRODUCTION

HOPDEV is self- led organization and grassroots for refugee children and adolescent girls from diverse background, including children living with disabilities, HIV/Aids and with no income. It was founded in 2014 by the group of women and girls, survivors of various civil war in the Republic democratic of Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, Somalia and Ethiopia and who have experienced difference forms of gender-based-violence and abuse in their families and communities.

HOPDEV is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children in its care. It recognizes the responsibility to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation. For the purposes of this policy and associated procedures, a child is recognized as someone under the age of 18 years.

Staff and volunteers will work together to embrace difference and diversity and respect the rights of children and young people.

This document outlines HOPDEV commitment to protecting children.

These guidelines are based on the following principles:

- The welfare of children is the primary concern.
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from all forms of harm and abuse.
- Child protection is everyone's responsibility.
- Children have the right to express views on all matters, which affect them, should they wish to do so.
- Organisations shall work in partnership together with children and parents/carers to promote the welfare, health and development of children.

HOPDEV will:

- Promote the health and welfare of children by providing opportunities for them to take part in Learning and sport safely.
- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of children.
- Promote and implement appropriate procedures to safeguard the well-being of children and protect them from abuse.
- Recruit, train, support and supervise its staff, members and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children from abuse and to reduce risk to themselves.
- Require staff, members and volunteers to adopt and abide by this Child Protection Policy and these procedures.
- Respond to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of children in line with this Policy and these procedures as well as implementing, where appropriate, the relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- Observe guidelines issued by local Child Protection Committees for the protection of children.
- Regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of this Policy and these procedures.

Review

This policy is reviewed by the Executive Team and ratified by the HOPDEV Board annually.

This Policy and these Procedures will be regularly reviewed:

- In accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on the protection of children or following any changes within HOPDEV.
- Following any issues or concerns raised about the protection of children within HOPDEV.
- In all other circumstances, at least every three years.

Groups protected by this policy

Our policy aims to protect those who are dependent on adults for their protection and well-being or who have a claim to such protection. This includes adults who may be vulnerable to exploitation because of disability, economic dependence or cultural constraints.

The Policy and Code of Practice apply to the following groups:

Children

All children under 18 years of age as defined by UN Convention on the Rights of the Child are protected by this policy.

Young People

As children grow to mature through their teenage years, we recognise that they may not view themselves as children. Some 16-year olds may be mature and already have responsibilities and may be starting to take their independent place in society. This is a two- way process: young people engage with the world in a more adult way as they mature, and society also begins to treat young people less like children and more like adults. However, we recognise that this is a process and that young people are vulnerable at least until they are 18 and may need protection beyond 18 and into their early.

Vulnerable Adults

Adults who are dependent on others for protection continue to merit the protection of the programme even beyond the age of 18.

HOPDEV recognises that girls do not automatically become protected when they are grown up, as they may remain in a position of dependence on their family or other adults for a variety of reasons. Young women aged eight (8); 15-24 are the group with the fastest rate of increase in HIV/AIDS infection, which is a clear indicator of their vulnerability. Vulnerable adults could include young women, mothers, and people with disabilities.

Groups governed by this policy

Any HOPDEV representative, any person presenting themselves to a child, young person or vulnerable adult because of their relationship with HOPDEV, must act in accordance with the Child Protection Policy and Code of Practice. This includes anyone paid by HOPDEV or voluntarily carrying out work for HOPDEV, and includes staff, board members, volunteers, consultants, and associates. HOPDEV ORGANISATION members, Resource Team members, representatives of partner agencies, and representatives of government and/or civil authorities who work with HOPDEV in the implementation of its programs.

We will work with our partners and other adults who are not direct representatives of HOPDEV but who are linked to the programme to ensure that they understand the standards we require from them in relation to the programme. We will expect them to abide by the Policy and Code of Practice in order to safeguard children. We will require from them a commitment to learning about and implementing the protection of children.