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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PERSONS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITY

Child Protection Policy

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1. BACKGROUND OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PERSONS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITY

National Association of Persons with Physical Disabilities (NAPWPD) is the umbrella organization of/for persons with physical disabilities in Nigeria. NAPWPD aims to promote disability inclusion, equity and justice for persons with physical disabilities via the instrumentality of advocacy, capacity building, stakeholders' engagement and sensitization, research & documentation, and policy development - monitoring and evaluation. NAPWPD was formed and began operation since over 20 years ago, but officially satisfied all requirement and registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission, in 2021 with Certificate No. 157873. NAPWPD is the most popular and populated cluster of the disability group in Nigeria. It has a BOT membership structure of 12 persons, and an 18 member National Executive members. NAPWPD has its presence in all the 36 states of the Federation and chapters in the 774 Local Government Area.

NAPWPD work focuses on the following five thematic areas: Promoting accessible environment for persons with physical disabilities; Assistive technology research and Development; Empowerment of women and girls with physical disabilities; Advocacy for realization of the rights of Nigerians with physical disabilities; promoting accessible education and employment opportunities, and the promotion of inclusive development.

MOTTO

Harnessing the potentials of persons with physical disabilities for personal and national development.

VISION

A barrier-free society in which equal opportunities for the inclusion, participation, growth and development of Persons with physical Disabilities is guaranteed, so that they can lead productive, safe and dignified lives.

MISSION

To build a proactive organization that empowers Persons with Physical Disabilities to seek intervention for their socio-economic and political rights.

CORE VALUES

- Accessible environment, enabled participation, Assisted technology, Inclusive development, Equal opportunity

2. THE ASSOCIATION POLICY

The Child protection policy is a statement of intent that demonstrates our commitment to safeguard children and vulnerable adults from sexual abuse and exploitation. It demonstrates NAPWPD's commitment to promote a safe environment for all children and vulnerable adults, especially persons with physical disabilities, by taking its duty and responsibility of care seriously.

Protection: preventing and responding to violence, exploitation and abuse against children and vulnerable adults - including [but not limited to] commercial and sexual exploitation, discrimination, trafficking, child labor and harmful traditional practices.

This is limited to what NAPWPD will be held accountable for/ responsibility/ duty of care in our operations/interventions such as during engagement with our clients, travel/transporting children and vulnerable adults, workshops, media engagement, rehabilitation etc. NAPWPD will be keen at all levels to conduct a risk assessment for all operations across the organization to ensure mitigation measures are in place to ensure children and vulnerable adults are safe. This will protect those associated with the organization and its image as well.

2.1 Policy aims

- a) To demonstrate NAPWPD's commitment to the protection of children and vulnerable adults against sexual abuse, exploitation and harm;
- b) To provide staff and volunteers with clear information about child abuse;
- c) To enable staff to meet their responsibilities in a manner that is not risky to the wellbeing of all children and vulnerable adults, especially those with Deafness;
- d) To provide an effective safeguarding framework for all children and vulnerable adults.
- e) To set down the procedures for reporting and recording suspicions, disclosures, and allegations of abuse and exploitation;
- f) To provide an effective safeguarding framework for supporting survivors of abuse;
- g) To provide references to relevant legislation and guidance in as far as children and vulnerable adult's safety is concerned.

This Policy has been agreed by the National Executives and Board of trustees (BoTs) of NAPWD, and its application is mandatory in all departments, member associations, projects, and services.

3. DEFINITIONS

Child Protection

UNICEF: *Keeping children safe from harm and danger*

SAVE THE CHILDREN: *Measures and structures to prevent and respond to abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence affecting children. Child protection means safeguarding children from harm. Harm includes violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect. The goal of child protection is to promote, protect and fulfil children's rights to protection from abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and other human rights, humanitarian and refugee treaties and conventions, as well as national laws.*

Child protection is a central part of but not separate to safeguarding. It is the process of protecting individual children identified as either suffering or at risk of significant harm as a result of abuse or programme of work. It also includes measures and structures designed to prevent and respond to abuse.

Understanding Child abuse

Child abuse can take the form of physical abuse, sexual abuse and exploitation, emotional abuse or neglect. Child abuse can have long term and significant effects on a child or young person's development. NAPWPD is committed to responding without delay to any suspicions of child abuse or neglect.

Physical Abuse

This abuse occurs when a person intentionally injures or threatens to injure a child or young person. The injury may involve: slapping, kicking, punching, shaking, burning, shoving, grabbing, pinching, biting, strangling or any other form of behavior causing physical injury. Physical abuse can also involve a situation where a parent or caregiver is not adequately ensuring a child or young person's safety, leading to them being placed in situations of extreme physical danger.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is when a person uses their power over a child or young person to involve them in sexual activity. Sexual abuse covers a wide range of sexual activities including both contact and non-contact situations. Contact situations can involve fondling of the child or young person's genitals, being forced to touch somebody else's genitals, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or other object. Non-contact abuse can involve obscene calls or remarks made in any written form/verbal. It involves exposure to pornography or being photographed for pornography.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse involves a consistent attack on the child or young person's self-esteem to the extent that it is affecting the child or young person's physical, emotional, social and/or intellectual development. It can take the form of rejection, put-downs, intimidation, bullying (including cyber bullying), threats, frightening or isolating the child or young person.

Neglect

This is a situation where a child or young person's basic daily physical and/or psychological needs are not being met and this is risking their health and development. It includes the failure to properly supervise and protect children or young people from harm and can involve a lack of food, clothing, personal hygiene, shelter, medical treatment or appropriate supervision.

Commercial exploitation

This involves exploiting a child or young person in work or other activities for the benefit of others and to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development. It includes, but is not limited to, child labor.

Discriminatory abuse - racism, sexism, tribe or abuse based on disability.

on the basis of disability and imposes sanctions including fines and prison sentences on those who contravenes it.

4. ADVANTAGES OF THE POLICY

Children and vulnerable adults are protected - No standards can offer complete protection for children, but following these Standards minimizes the risk to children of harm.

Organization staff and associates are protected - By implementing these Standards, all staff and associates will be clear about how they are expected to behave with children/vulnerable adults and what to do if there are concerns about the safety of a child/adults.

The organization and its reputation is protected - By implementing these Standards organizations make clear their commitment to keeping children and vulnerable adults safe. The Standards will help them to move towards best practice in this area.

5. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy is applicable to every individual involved with NAPWPD, including;

- Staff
- Clients
- Contractors, consultants, service providers
- Partners
- Individuals and Associations of persons with physical disabilities in Nigeria and Board of Trustees
- Volunteers and Interns
- Visitors
- Media personnel
- Members

6. ASSIGNING RESPONSIBILITIES

Governance level

At Board level, a representative is nominated by the National executives will be responsible for all Child protection and safeguarding related matters. S/he is required offer oversight for all Child protection and safeguarding interventions, including compliance issues for programme delivery and should be able to give updates of the safeguarding situation like emerging issues, developments and propose areas of improvement at least on a quarterly basis.

Senior Management level

At Senior Executive Management level, a Child Protection Designated Officer should be in place. S/he is responsible for taking the lead in child protection matters, and ensuring that appropriate responsibilities are assigned at all levels within the organization to enhance coordination, monitoring and evaluation of matters addressed in the policy.

Response mechanisms should also be in place to ensure all cases of abuse and harm are reported and are appropriately handled to their logical conclusion. The Safeguarding designee should ensure all Safeguarding cases are shared to the National President who can further share to those who need to know like the Donors.

Defining contact

Induction, Capacity building and supervision of staff on Safeguarding, NNAD would like to clarify its commitment to ensuring all staff and volunteers undergo comprehensive screening to create a safe environment for the children and young people and vulnerable adults accessing the Association services.

7. RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES

- In all advertisements and material promoting positions, the Association's commitment to child protection/ safeguarding and screening mechanisms should be made clear.
- Written position descriptions must be developed for all positions, which must include key selection criteria and promote NNADs commitment to child protection and safeguarding.
- Applicants should be encouraged to self-assess their suitability for the position and be provided with further information about the Association and position.
- All volunteer applicants must complete a volunteer application form, which includes a requirement to provide at least one professional and one personal referee.

Interview and Background Check Procedures

STAFF

Applicants meeting key selection criteria will be selected for interview. Panel interviews should be conducted with behavioral and situational based questions. The Association's commitment to child protection and safeguarding should be emphasized, including mention of the NNAD Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and outlining of screening mechanisms.

VOLUNTEERS

Face to face interviews must be conducted on prospective volunteers to understand volunteer motivations and to inform prospective volunteers about the volunteer role, program operations, screening mechanisms and compulsory training.

- Two forms of identification must be checked at volunteer and staff interviews, including one with a photograph.

- Working with Background Checks must be conducted on all staff and volunteers – receipt should be sighted before volunteers commence and volunteers must only work under direct supervision until check arrives.
- Police Checks must be conducted on all staff and volunteers.
- All applicants must be provided with a copy of NNAD's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Two reference checks should be conducted for preferred applicants (volunteer and staff) and should include verification of applicant's identity and employment history.

Procedures for Induction, Training and Supervision of Staff

- Adherence to the NAPWPD's Child Protection Policy is required by all staff as part of the Contract of Employment. New staff, contractors, volunteers, visitors, partners must be given a copy of the Policy and asked to sign a clause acknowledging they have read, understood and agreed to abide by the policy.
- During the probationary period of 6 months, within two weeks all new staff must be oriented in relation to:
 - understanding, recognizing and responding to child abuse and neglect;
 - understanding the NAPWPD Child Protection Policy; and
 - other important aspects of their role related to protecting the wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Staff should participate in education and training programs to improve their knowledge of child protection and best practice in responding to allegations of abuse and neglect.
- Staff should be supported and supervised to groom them to be positive role models to children, young people and vulnerable adults. Any concerns in relations to their suitability to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults should be addressed in the Performance Management process.

Induction, Training and Supervision of Volunteers and Interns

- As part of the induction process, NAPWPD will discuss the Code of Conduct with volunteers and ensure the volunteer understands the responsibilities and boundaries of the role. The Code of Conduct includes a clause acknowledging the volunteer has read, understood, and agreed to abide by the Child Protection Policy.
- Volunteers should be trained about the NAPWPD's Child Protection Policy, including learning about understanding, recognizing and responding to abuse and neglect.
- Volunteers should have the opportunity to participate in additional workshops and training to improve the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Volunteers should be supported and supervised to groom them to be positive role models to children, young people and vulnerable adults. Any concerns in relation to their suitability to work with children and young people should be addressed by NAPWPD's Human Resource Manager and the Child Protection Designee, in private discussion with the relevant volunteer.
- NAPWPD will evaluate the volunteer program regularly.
- Training Schedule: Orientation for new staff, volunteers, consultants etc. should be done within TWO weeks and for all permanent/contract staff training will be conducted at least twice a year. In addition, the Child Protection Designee can share regularly with

staff any new developments regarding child protection and safeguarding through staff meetings or via email and trainings as well.

8. CODE OF CONDUCT WITH CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

- Treat children, young people and vulnerable adults with respect regardless of race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status
- Not use language or behavior towards children, young people and vulnerable adults that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate
- Avoid any inappropriate contact or conduct with children, young people and vulnerable adults, including: Touching them inappropriately (such as stroking, hugging, kissing or caressing), Grabbing, pushing, smacking, punching or otherwise hitting, Being alone with a child/young person/vulnerable adult (such as going to the toilet or being in a separate area alone with a child).
- Not engage children/young people/vulnerable adult in any form of sexual activity or acts, including paying for sexual services or acts. Understand that mistaken belief of the age of the child is not a defense.
- Exercise a duty of care at all times, using common sense and exercising reasonable caution in working with children/young people/vulnerable adults and not placing children at risk of foreseeable harm.
- Not attend the program activities whilst under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.
Inform your supervisor:
 - If any difficulties are experienced during an activity
 - Of any accident or injury that occurs during an activity (to child/young person/vulnerable adult)
 - Of any information provided by the child/young person/vulnerable adult that may relate to mandatory reporting issues (such as abuse, domestic violence, self-harm, suicidal thoughts or intentions, homelessness, etc)
- Not invite unaccompanied children into my home, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger.
- Not sleep close to unsupervised children/vulnerable adult unless absolutely necessary, in which case I must obtain my manager's permission, and ensure that another adult is present if possible.
- Use any computers, mobile phone, or video and digital cameras appropriately, and never exploit or harass children/young person's/vulnerable adult or to access child pornography through any medium.
- Refrain from physical punishment or discipline of children (excluding my own children).

- Refrain from hiring children for domestic or other labour which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage, which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury.
- Respect the rights of the child and their families to confidentiality, unless there are concerns regarding a child's wellbeing.
- Immediately report concerns or allegations of child abuse in accordance with appropriate procedures outlined in this NNAD Safeguarding and PSEA Policy.
- Discuss areas of concern with the PSEA and Safeguarding designee for resolution. If the matter remains unresolved, refer the matter to the National President. If the matter continues unresolved, all parties should follow the Grievance Procedure.

9. MOUS WITH PARTNERS

10. COMMUNICATIONS

11. REPORTING

NAPWPD has the following guiding principles in relation to responding to concerns about a child or young person's safety and welfare. The Association recognizes that any allegation of abuse involves:

- The right of the child /young person/vulnerable adult to be listened to, protected and supported
- The right of the child/young person/vulnerable adult and their families to have their concerns acted upon.
- The right of the alleged perpetrator to a fair process
- Everyone's right to privacy
- The responsibility of NAPWPD to ensure all concerns are dealt with promptly and in a respectful manner.

Procedures for all staff (paid or voluntary):

The Child Protection Policy designee must be immediately informed:

1. If a child or young person or vulnerable adult is displaying signs indicating that they are being abused or may have been abused. This includes when a child or young person or vulnerable adult has disclosed any information that they have been abused/neglected or that they know of another child or young person or vulnerable adult who has been abused/harmed/neglected.
 2. Of any behavior by staff (paid or voluntary), parents, visitors to the organization or between children/young people/vulnerable adult and their peers that is concerning e.g. someone seeking to be alone with a particular deaf child or group of children or vulnerable adult.
- At all times, the confidentiality and privacy of those involved must be respected.
 - Debrief with the Child Protection Policy designee as required.

- It is the responsibility of any staff member paid or voluntary who has raised a concern about a child or young person's or vulnerable adult's welfare to ensure their concerns have been acted upon.

Roles and procedures for Child Protection Designee

- Once notified of a concern, the Child Protection Designee will then proceed to manage the case confidentially.
- Steps should be taken to immediately ensure the child or young person's or vulnerable adult's emotional and physical safety. If appropriate, the parents or caregivers will be notified.
- If necessary, prior to formally reporting the incident, the Child Protection Designee may consult with Senior Management, Board representative or other relevant authority for advice, information and further action including investigation.
- When a decision is being made to report to the police or other relevant authority, the Child Protection Designee, if feasible, will do so in consultation with the National President or Technical Director. Any notification must happen promptly and the child or young or vulnerable adult person's safety/welfare should be the top priority.
- The Child Protection Designee will keep confidential written documentation of any concerns raised including steps taken in follow up. All documentation should be dated and signed.
- Any support required by the child, young person, vulnerable adult, their family or staff of NAPWPD is to be arranged by the Child Protection Designee.
- If the alleged perpetrator of the abuse is a staff member (paid or voluntary) of NAPWPD, the Child Protection Designee must initially remove this person from contact with the victims or children, young person and vulnerable adults. This may include suspending the person until investigations are complete. Consultation with the National President or Technical Director needs to occur prior to the suspension. Formal follow up in relation to a staff member being suspended is to be managed by the Head of HR and Administration.
- Throughout the whole process, the Child Protection Designee must keep the National President and Technical Director informed of any developments in the situation.
- The Child Protection Designee must ensure the concerns about a child or young person's or vulnerable adult's welfare are being acted upon, this may mean in some circumstances of criminal offenses that reporting is made to police or other relevant authority.

Roles of the National President/Technical Director

- Support the Child Protection Designee and NAPWPD as required.
- Is responsible for the formal follow up of a staff member being suspended.
- Will respond to any media and external enquiries to the situation.

Procedures for Managers

Disclosure

If a child or young person or vulnerable adult discloses abuse, the person should:

- Say you believe them
- Praise them for having shared the information
- Reassure them the abuse is not their fault.
- Inform them you will be talking to the authorities to get help for them.
- Listen carefully to what they say but do not directly question the child or young person as this will not help with future investigations by police or other relevant Child Protection authority.
- Be very aware how distressing disclosing the information could be for the child or young person and be supportive.

If allegations involve the child or young person's or vulnerable adult's parents or caregivers, the police or relevant authority will inform you when and how to inform the parents/caregivers.

To report abuse: contact the Nigerian Police Force on **112** or **199**

Phone: **0805 700 0001** | **0805 700 0002**.

SMS and WhatsApp: **0805 700 0003**.

Or contact Nigeria Police Force Gender Unit

Email: **sexualoffences@police.gov.ng**

12. RESPONDING

13. RISK ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING

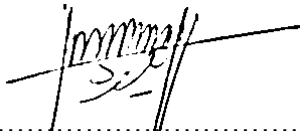
All NAPWPD programs and activities are required to undergo regular child protection risk analysis. This will be carried out by National President or Technical Director and the Child Protection Designee and the Program Coordinator/Manager and staff of any program involving children or young people or vulnerable adults. The risks are evaluated and strategies developed to minimize the likelihood of harm occurring. This institutional child protection risk assessment matrix will be updated on an annual basis.

APPENDICES

Annex 1 - Statement of Commitment to NAPWPD's Child Protection Policy

I, RILWAN MOHAMMED have read and understood the standards and guidelines outlined in this policy. I agree with the principles contained therein and accept the importance of implementing the Child Protection Policy standards and code of conduct while working with/for National Association of Persons with Physical Disabilities and children and vulnerable adults.

I further understand that adherence to the NAPWPD's Child Protection Policy will involve the following: signing a personal declaration stating any criminal convictions, including those considered 'spent'; declaring any previous investigations or allegations made against me with respect to Safeguarding issues; and providing two-character references.



.....
Rilwan Mohammed
National President
08037359760