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CHILD PROTECTION POLICY 2024

XENIOS POLIS PRINCIPLES ON CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY FRAMEWORKS

Updated Version 8



Introduction

XENIOS POLIS is a non-governmental, non-profitable organization addressing through its vision and actions the vulnerable groups care and empowerment- such as children under neglect, children in poverty, children under the risk of abuse, trafficking, exploitation, harm, violence- taking in view that any form of violence (physical, sexual, and psychological or violence due to negligence) against children is unacceptable and only a well-structured and consistent policy framework can prevent and fight against such forms.

This document on Child Policy Protection integrates the necessary requirements according to international standards and best practices, comments and expertise of qualified professionals; its standards and principles have been developed in the frameworks, context and under the guidelines of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989) and, the Keeping Children Safe standards: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/files/rights_child/standards_child_protection_kcsc_en.pdf. Additionally, there have been taken into consideration as literature and references resources the '*Child Protection Policies and Procedures Toolkit-how to create a child-safe organization*', by ChildHope UK, the '*Child Safeguarding Standards and how to implement them*' by Keeping Children Safe, the '*Child Safeguarding Policy*', by Terre des Hommes, the '*Guidance on writing a child safeguarding policy*', by the City of York Safeguarding Children Board.

The following set of fundamental principles have been substantially integrated:

- **All children have equal rights to protection from harm, risks, abuse and any action resulting to their physical, mental, psychological harm**
- **Every person has the responsibility to support the protection of children**
- **Organizations have the duty of care towards children with whom they work-cooperate, are in direct or indirect contact, are affected by their work, activities, and operations**
- **Organizations working with partners have the responsibility to help them meet the requirements on protection**
- **ALL actions on child protection and safeguarding are taken in the best interests of the child, which are of paramount pre• requirement**



Our Policy has been structured on the four standards of a) Policy, b) People, c) Procedures, d) Accountability:

1. XENIOS POLIS policy has been developed on its commitment to preventing and responding to harm, neglect, abuse, exploitation and any other form of harm or violence towards children
2. XENIOS POLIS has placed serious expectations and clear responsibilities for the staff, co-partners, associates and every entity, natural or legal, with whom our organization cooperates, supporting them to understand and act in line with these expectations and responsibilities
3. XENIOS POLIS is devoted to creating when acting for and with children - directly or indirectly - a safe environment for them implementing the best interest for child procedures
4. XENIOS POLIS monitors and reviews all the protection measures

In General, our commitment in relevant projects is to ensure that each child has the right to be respected and the right to enjoy a protective environment and this policy document aims to act as a guide to our activities for and with children.

Responsible for the policy review and implementation

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Appointed by the Board of Management at XENIOS POLIS, on 15th January 2024

Important Glossary for any/all use(s) regarding children protection and safeguarding policies

CHILD

In line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, a *child* is defined as any human under the age of 18.

CHILD PROTECTION

It includes all the policies, standards, guidelines and procedures protecting children and it applies particularly to the duty of organizations - and individuals associated in many forms with those organizations - towards children in their care.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

A written document statement helping to create a safe and positive environment for children and showing that the organization is taking its duty and responsibility of care seriously. This document demonstrates and clearly explicates the commitment to safeguard children from harm and to all what is required in relation to the protection of children.

CHILD PARTICIPATION

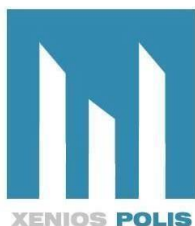
Anyone below the age of 18 taking part in a process/activity or playing a role in a process at his/her level, according to their capacities - children and young people thinking for themselves, expressing their views effectively, and interacting in a positive way with other people; involving children in the decisions which affect their lives, the lives of the community and the larger society in which they live.

CHILD ABUSE

As a term, it constitutes forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

DIRECT and INDIRECT CONTACT WITH CHILDREN

The first term entails the physical presence (occasional or regular, short or long) of a child or children in the framework of a particular organization activity and, the second refers to the access to information on children in the context of the organization's project.



1. POLICY PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES

The Child Protection Policy of XENIOS POLIS is the written commitment towards protecting children, keeping them safe and securing their rights. As a document, it aims to define, regulate and shape all the necessary context for their protection when our organization is engaged with, implements, supports projects and activities which are child - based and child-focused. In these circumstances, we totally accept, promote and follow the principles as follow:

- All children have the right on an equal basis to be protected
- Every person is responsible for protecting and safeguarding children, always to the best interest of them
- It is a priority for XENIOS POLIS that staff, external partners, volunteers and everyone involved in our activities is fully aware of the responsibilities concerning children protection and fight against harm
- We truly believe in cooperation and expertise exchange among relative organizations (child agencies, ministries, civil society organizations, etc.) along with joint actions to children rights implementation
- Accordingly, due to our policy, we respect and take into account the legal documents, policies, laws and reports, international and national, on keeping children safe
- The organization is also committed to act confidentially in any case having to do with children's data, information, situation

2. PEOPLE and PROCEDURES

Regarding people and the specific obligations and responsibilities they have in the framework of XENIOS POLIS work, all members of staff, volunteers and associates are aware of the purpose, principles, procedures and accountability of the protection policy. Significantly, all staff must respect and promote children's rights, protect the right of each child to live in safety, without risk of



harm, and must act always in the child's best interests. Concerning children, they need to be aware of their right to be safe from abuse and provided with advice and support on keeping themselves safe including information for children, parents, careers. In this context, the following principles are defined:

- ✓ All members have been given written guidelines and the relative resources as mentioned in the introduction of the document. They must accept and comply with the internal Code of Conduct concerning their behavior and providing guidance on both appropriate and expected standards of behavior towards children during their direct and /or indirect contact with them and as well as in the context of children's participation
- ✓ All members of staff, volunteers and associates have quality training on child safeguarding which includes an introduction to the organization's child protection policy and procedures and learning on how to recognize and respond to concerns about child abuse/harm
- ✓ Staff, partners and associates have to identify, raise and discuss child protection and safeguarding matters and must have access to advice and support when concerns or incidents arise; they also need to be able to identify sources of support for children and their environment.
- ✓ All have the personal responsibility to seek further clarification and advice in cases of reporting and confronting abuse, harm, or violence
- ✓ The role of the staff, their experience and their training should be provided, depending upon the nature of the activity they have to undertake
- ✓ Partner organizations are required and supported to present their child protection measures for their organization.

The organization is committed to meet the requirements and implement all the necessary actions for the protection of children when dealing with them directly or indirectly and engaged into situations affecting them directly or indirectly. Consequently:



- ✓ There are clear procedures in place providing step-by-step guidance on how a case of harm/abuse can be reported; the responsible person, who provides information and advice on child protection concerns and issues, will undertake all the essential actions towards it
- ✓ There is an appropriate process for reporting and responding to child protection incidents and concerns
- ✓ Case records are kept and maintained
- ✓ Keeping children safe work is reviewed regularly
- ✓ Any suspected violation or any actual violation of the rights of the child are reported immediately
- ✓ There are adequate human and financial resources available to support development and implementation of child protection measures

3. ACCOUNTABILITY: MONITORING AND REVIEWING

Central in the policy statement is that the implementation of child protection policies and procedures is regularly monitored. Accordingly, everyone in our organization has the responsibility for ensuring that the Protection Policy is adopted and implemented as stated and outlined in the document. In this context, there are the following parameters:

- The policy is reviewed on a regular basis and evaluated by an external expert
- The practices followed are reviewed and such reviews include important feedback from staff, relevant stakeholders and practitioners, and where possible, the views from the children, their relatives and their careers
- Learning from practical cases experiences contributes into policy review and changes towards the protection measures

- There are self-assessment tools and protocols on monitoring and reviewing procedures alongwitharrangements fulfillingcompliance with and implementation of this Child Protection Policy through specific measures.
- Progress, performance and lessons obtained are reported to key stakeholders and included in relative reports under the purpose of improving the procedures and the efficiency of policy practices implementation.

References

- ✓ EU Strategy on the Child Rights and the European Child Guarantee-
https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/rights-child/eu-strategy-rights-child-and-european-child-guarantee_en
- ✓ Freeman, M (2007) “Why it remains important to take children’s rights seriously”, *International Journal of Children’s Rights* (15): 5-23
- ✓ The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>
- ✓ The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990)-
<http://www.achpr.org/instruments/child/>
- ✓ The Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1924) - <http://www.un-documents.net/gdrc1924.htm>
- ✓ Wall, J. (2016) *Children’s Rights: Today’s Global Challenge*. USA: Rowman & Littlefield.