

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

STATEMENT

FIND respects the rights of all people and strives to *safeguard* or protect the welfare of its staff, partners, and beneficiaries of our work. Due to its projects in low- and middle-income countries, FIND is particularly vigilant of the well-being and security of vulnerable groups such as children, women and individuals unable to protect or look after themselves. FIND does not tolerate abuse of any kind in any of the settings in which we work.



1. Purpose

To describe the approach and actions FIND takes to protect its personnel and, most importantly, the children or vulnerable adults with whom FIND personnel come into contact.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all FIND personnel and partners (as defined in the [Code of Conduct & Ethics](#)) in all of its offices and sites worldwide, as well as to anyone working on behalf of FIND. It should be taken as part of a trilogy of policies, including the Code of Conduct & Ethics and the [Gender Equality Policy](#).

3. Definitions

Safeguarding is an all-encompassing term, which is broadly defined as “a framework to protect from harm, damage or exploitation with appropriate measure”. It can be applied to multiple concerns, such as:

- Child protection
- Protection of adults at risk
- Bullying, mobbing, harassment, and discrimination
- Sexual harassment, misconduct, or exploitation
- Peer-on-peer abuse, including sexual harassment and assault
- Overall organizational climate
- E-safety
- Financial exploitation
- Security and safety of the physical environment (place of work)

4. Safeguarding FIND personnel and stakeholders:

FIND has its Code of Conduct & Ethics as well as its Gender Equality Policy to provide guidance to its personnel and partners on the behavior that FIND believes is appropriate and acceptable, and the organization expects compliance with these policies. From its side, the organization takes safeguarding steps by:

- Valuing its personnel and partners; listening to and respecting them, and taking appropriate action where required;
- Encouraging reports of concerns, ensuring the protection of those who raise concerns, including targets, victims, and witnesses, and protecting them against possible retaliation;
- Providing guidelines through policies and procedures and regular training, including IT infrastructure and acceptable use policy;
- Incorporating best practice in its recruitment and selection process;
- Providing a safe and secure working environment;
- Providing a structure and process that ensures that secure reporting channels are available to all levels of the organizational hierarchy;
- Providing multiple mechanisms for internal and external concerns, including informal, formal, confidential, and anonymous mechanisms;
- Sharing information about concerns with all involved parties as appropriate.

5. Safeguarding the beneficiaries of FIND's work:

As stated in our Code of Conduct & Ethics, FIND respects the rights of all people and strives to safeguard vulnerable groups – such as children, women and adults – who are unable to take care of or protect themselves. Most of the projects and programmes that we support using donor funds are carried out in low- and middle-income countries and are targeted at vulnerable populations. While we do not provide medical care or facilities directly to patients, we work closely with partners that have direct access to patients. All personnel engaged in FIND projects are required to complete a subject-specific training module, and to be trained in Good Clinical Practice if they are working on clinical trials, to ensure that their responsibilities regarding safeguarding are fully understood.

Protection of human subjects

All studies that are sponsored or supported by FIND are subject to the ethical principles for medical research involving human subjects. We ensure that FIND personnel and all study-related professional staff treat children with respect and protect their rights, regardless of the child's race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, ethnic or social origin, disability, birth or other status. Our protocol on the protection of human subjects requires that no child be forced for any reason to participate in a FIND-supported or sponsored study and that no exploitation of children is involved in any form or manner whatsoever. If children are to be recruited for a clinical study, a simplified consent form for minors provides a clear explanation of the study. Study staff will work with the child and parent, guardian or legally authorized representative to explain the study clearly to ensure informed consent is received for participation in the study.

In cases where photographing or filming of children is needed for the study or other work-related purposes, it is required to:

- Assess and comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images.
- Obtain informed consent from the child and parent or guardian of the child before photographing or filming a child. As part of this exercise, a precise explanation for how the photograph or film will be used must be provided.
- Ensure that all photographs, films, videos and DVDs present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive one. Children should be adequately clothed and not filmed or photographed in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive.
- Ensure all images are honest representations of the context and the facts.
- Ensure file labels, metadata or text descriptions do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically or publishing images in any form.

Zero tolerance of exploitation

There is international recognition that adults who have a formal role in working with or supporting children are in positions of trust and authority. FIND has zero tolerance of exploitation or abuse of children. If exploitation is observed or suspected, we will ensure that proper authorities are notified and will end all alliance with the partner. FIND will not work with any organization where exploitation or abuse of children is suspected or, worse, confirmed.