



WORLD VISION CANADA SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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WORLD VISION CANADA SAFEGUARDING POLICY

This Child and Adult Safeguarding Policy expands upon World Vision’s Child Protection Standards, in place since the year 2000, to cover all vulnerable populations, especially women and children, in one integrated policy. This Policy continues to emphasize the unique vulnerabilities and special protection requirements for children, along with the importance of preventing sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), in particular among other forms of adult beneficiary abuse. World Vision Canada will review its Safeguarding Policy annually to ensure the Policy’s continued compliance with best practices.

World Vision Canada (WVC) is a registered charity in Canada and is part of the World Vision Partnership. World Vision partners with children, families and communities to help empower them to reach their full potential by tackling causes of poverty and injustice. Inspired by our Christian values, World Vision is dedicated to partnering with the world’s most vulnerable people regardless of religion, race, ethnicity or gender in the world’s toughest places. WVC fundraises, through child sponsorship and by other means, for various child-focused programs implemented by Field Offices in developing countries.

VALUES, PRINCIPLES AND BELIEFS

Our vision for every child, life in all its fullness, our prayer for every heart, the will to make it so. Guided by Christ’s teaching, we aim to protect children and their rights against all forms of abuse and violence within families, schools, institutions and communities. World Vision has zero tolerance for incidents of violence or abuse against children or adults, including sexual exploitation or abuse, committed either by employees or others affiliated with our work.

We support the prevention of exploitation, harmful traditional practices, and violence against children in their family and community; protection of children living in higher risk situations in communities; and restoration of children who have been abused, neglected or exploited. Incident responses are centred on the child or adult survivor, prioritizing their interests.

WVC is committed to creating an environment where potential risks are identified, considered and minimized and strives to prevent, report and respond to harm or abuse, suspected or known, of all beneficiaries and associates. We have clear responsibilities and easily accessible processes and procedures to ensure this in all areas of our work.

This Safeguarding Policy is applicable to all employees, volunteers, contractors and other affiliates. Failure to comply can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or volunteer position, and termination of contract.

WVC employees and affiliates are expected to comply with applicable Canadian legislation including the *Criminal Code of Canada*, UN Treaties and World Vision Partnership policies and procedures that provide for child and adult safeguarding and protection.

We will carry out our safeguarding commitments through:

- A. Awareness
- B. Prevention
- C. Reporting
- D. Responding

A. AWARENESS

1.0 SAFEGUARDING RESPONSIBILITIES

1.1 Employee and Affiliate Responsibilities

WVC equips employees and affiliates so that they understand their safeguarding responsibilities and obligations as set out in this Policy by ensuring:

All WVC employees and affiliates acknowledge in writing:

- (a) The receipt, acceptance and understanding of this Policy;
- (b) The receipt, acceptance and understanding of the Safeguarding Behaviour Protocols embedded in this Policy;
- (c) If they become aware of any harm or risk to any child or adult beneficiaries, they will follow the reporting procedures herein and report any incident to the WVC Safeguarding Focal Point immediately; and
- (d) If they are required to travel, they must satisfy pre-visit protocols detailed within [Section 4](#) of this Policy.

1.2 Acknowledgement

All WVC employees and volunteers, including Board members, must sign an acknowledgement of the receipt, understanding and acceptance of this Policy.

1.3 Contracts

All contracts (excluding WVC employees and Board members) will include a copy of this Policy and, where applicable, the following provision:

In the course of performing this contract, Contractor and Contractor's employees will ensure that:

- 1. Any of their interactions with children or with adult beneficiaries, or with personal data about such persons, will comply with the attached WVC Safeguarding Behaviour Protocols, and with any other reasonable safeguarding measures that WVC may specify;*
- 2. Any incidents of harm or risk of harm to children or to adult beneficiaries will be reported immediately to WVC;*

3. Any individuals with access to children or adult beneficiaries, or to personal data about such persons, will have a current clean criminal background check for offenses against children or abuse of adults, to the extent permitted by law (evidence of which will be provided to WVC upon request); and

4. These safeguarding obligations will be clearly communicated to, and acknowledged by, all employees who may have access to children or to adult beneficiaries, or to personal data about such persons, and will be extended in identical form to any subcontractors (if any are authorized) engaged to perform this contract.

1.4 Partners

When engaging a Partner for a WV program or activity, before the Partner begins any work on the project, the Partner's safeguarding policy and procedures must be provided to WVC and approved by WVC, as appropriate. Alternatively, the Partner can agree to follow WV's local Safeguarding Policy in carrying out the program activities. This requirement shall be set out in any agreement between WVC and a Partner.

1.5 Safeguarding Training

All WVC employees and Board members will receive mandatory safeguarding training through WVC with periodic refresher training at least once every 2 years.

1.6 Field Visits

All WVC employees and affiliates who go to the field with or on behalf of WVC must receive safeguarding training prior to their visit or deployment. On arrival, they must participate in the Field Office orientation, which may include additional safeguarding protocols that apply to that context.

1.7 Safeguarding Staffing

The WVC Safeguarding Focal Point (VP, Programs & Policy) and the WVC Chief People Officer jointly provide leadership to the implementation of this policy. The WVC Safeguarding Focal Point is directly supported by a dedicated International Safeguarding & Travel Security Specialist. Together, this team provides advice and support for the implementation of the WVC Safeguarding Policy.

2.0 SAFEGUARDING BEHAVIOUR PROTOCOLS

All WVC employees and affiliates will abide by and acknowledge in writing the receipt and understanding of the WVC Safeguarding Behaviour Protocols. Signed acknowledgements are kept on file.

2.1 Acceptable Behaviour

WVC employees and affiliates **will**:

- (a) create and maintain an environment which prevents sexual exploitation and abuse of children and adults, and promotes the implementation of these Behaviour Protocols;
- (b) where possible and practical, follow the "two-adult" rule while conducting WVC work, meaning two or more adults supervise all activities that involve children, and are visible and present at all times;

- (c) be aware of any situations which may present risks, and manage and minimize these risks prior to the implementation of any activity, project or program;
- (d) be careful how their language and actions will be perceived by another person, including on digital platforms, both on- and offline, and must behave in a manner that demonstrates respect for all beneficiaries and communities and their rights;
- (e) ensure that any physical and online contact with beneficiaries is culturally appropriate, never crossing personal boundaries or invading privacy. To avoid misunderstanding, WVC employees and affiliates should not initiate physical or online contact with a beneficiary (unless circumstances require this to reduce imminent danger to the beneficiary);
- (f) use positive, non-violent methods to manage children's behaviour;
- (g) accept responsibility for personal behaviour and actions as a representative of WVC;
- (h) always be accountable for their response to a beneficiary's behaviour, even if a child or adult behaves in a sexually inappropriate manner. WVC employees and affiliates should remove themselves from situations which could compromise or place them in a vulnerable situation, particularly if they may have contact with beneficiaries who, because of their circumstances and possible previous abuse or exploitation they may have experienced, may display inappropriate behaviour;
- (i) report any safeguarding concerns to the WVC Safeguarding Focal Point immediately and in any event **within 24 hours** (reporting mechanisms are found in [Section 6.1](#) below), comply with related investigations (either internal and/or external) and make available any documentary or other information necessary for the completion of such investigations;
- (j) ensure a culture of openness and accountability within World Vision to enable all safeguarding issues or concerns to be raised through proper channels, so that poor practice, potentially abusive or harmful behaviour does not go unchallenged;
- (k) behave sensitively within the local context and consider how their actions may cause potential conflict and tensions within communities. Where their presence may be of detriment to beneficiaries or the community, WVC employees and affiliates will seek advice from the appropriate WV Field Office Senior Safeguarding Focal Point;
- (l) comply with World Vision Digital Safeguarding protocols in any online image or information sharing about beneficiaries in World Vision Programs and be familiar with and responsible in the use of social media in all communications; and
- (m) comply with applicable data privacy laws and with relevant WVC data privacy and information security policies when handling any personal data about individual children or adult beneficiaries, noting in general that collecting or using such data must be limited to the minimum necessary, and that such data must be maintained and transferred in a secure, confidential manner.

2.2 Unacceptable Behaviour

WVC employees and affiliates **will not**:

- (a) behave in an inappropriate physical manner or develop or seek a sexual relationship with a child (under 18 years of age), regardless of country-specific legal age of consent or age of majority. This includes consenting or condoning the above behaviour (including fostering or condoning child marriage [under 18 years old]);
- (b) develop or seek a sexual relationship with a beneficiary of any age; such relationships are not acceptable and will not be tolerated since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of WV's humanitarian aid or development work;
- (c) sexually exploit or abuse any beneficiaries (adult or child); such behaviour constitutes an act of gross misconduct;
- (d) exchange money, employment, goods or services for sex including sexual favours, other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour, or hiring sex workers. The exchange of assistance (that may be already directed to beneficiaries) for these purposes is also strictly prohibited;
- (e) communicate with a child in World Vision program areas via digital platforms (i.e.: Facebook, Twitter) via mobile technology (i.e.: texting, WhatsApp, Skype, etc.) or online without the consent and knowledge of his/her legal guardians. Further, WVC employees and affiliates will not communicate on mobile, digital or online platforms with children or adults in ways that are inappropriate or sexual;
- (f) caress, fondle, kiss, hug or touch children or adult beneficiaries in an inappropriate, sexually provocative or culturally insensitive way;
- (g) use language, make suggestions, offer advice or act in ways which are inappropriate, offensive or abusive, that may cause shame, humiliation, and/or be belittling or degrading in nature;
- (h) spend excessive or unnecessary time alone with a child or adult beneficiary, or take a beneficiary to a location where they may be alone, away from others, behind closed doors or in a secluded area;
- (i) condone or participate in behaviour with or toward child or adult beneficiaries which may be illegal, unsafe or abusive; including practicing harmful traditional practices (i.e.: early and forced marriage, female genital mutilation or cutting), spiritual or ritualistic abuse;
- (j) hire children in any form of child labour (including as "house help") unless it is within the best interest of the child and in alignment with local law and international standards. Child labour is work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children, or that interferes with their schooling.

'Child Work' in contrast may be beneficial if permitted by International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions¹ and puts the child's interest ahead of any benefits gained by the adults;

- (k) hit or use other corporal punishment against a child while the child is in WV care or the WVC employee or affiliate is conducting WVC work²;
- (l) take a child alone in a vehicle for WV work, unless it is absolutely necessary, and with parental/guardian or managerial consent;
- (m) discriminate against or show preferential treatment to a beneficiary to the exclusion of others (i.e.: providing favours to a beneficiary or their family to gain trust, which can be perceived as a form of sexual grooming);
- (n) do things of a personal nature for a beneficiary, which they can do for themselves;
- (o) share personal contact details (home, work, hotel address, contact numbers or any social media identities) with any beneficiary or their family;
- (p) stay silent, cover-up or enable any known or suspected safeguarding incident or breach of Safeguarding Policy by another WV person;
- (q) visit sponsored children unannounced or participate in visits which have not been approved by WVC to sponsored children or World Vision project communities.

2.3 Failure to Comply – Consequences

Failure of any WVC employee or affiliate to comply with the above Behaviour Protocols or any other safeguarding behaviour protocols which WVC or WVI may put in place from time to time may result in termination of employment, contract or other affiliation with WVC.

B. PREVENTION

3.0 RECRUITMENT

3.1 Screening

WVC undertakes diligent measures to screen all employees, volunteers and Board members. These measures include asking relevant questions during interviews, obtaining references, police background checks, probationary periods, performance management and general supervision.

¹ Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138),

https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C138

Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182),

https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C182

² All WVC employees are familiar with alternatives to corporal punishment, including positive parenting approaches, which they are expected to apply with children inside and outside of the workplace or WVC program areas.

WVC reserves the right to require contractors and consultants to comply with this Policy and its safeguarding screening measures. Prior to travel, WVC business units are responsible to work with WVC's procurement department to ensure that any contractor or consultant, and any of their employees or affiliates that are travelling to the field, have completed the necessary screenings and signed the required documentation.

3.2 Identity and Background Checks

All candidates for paid or unpaid positions within WVC, and independent contractors or consultants who may have contact with a beneficiary or access to beneficiaries' personal information and/or images, will undergo necessary identification and criminal record/police background checks prior to appointment. These checks will be refreshed periodically, as may be required, at the discretion of WVC. People with a prior conviction for any crime against a child, or sexual exploitation or abuse against an adult, will not be hired by WVC, to the extent permitted by applicable law. Such persons shall not be placed in a position with access to children or adult beneficiaries, or to their personal data.

4.0 VISITS TO WORLD VISION PROJECTS

4.1 Visit Preparation

All visits to World Vision projects must be pre-approved by both WVC and the relevant Field Office. WVC will conduct background checks on all visitors before any field visit. Unannounced or unapproved visits to sponsored children or World Vision project communities are not permitted.

1. Prior to any visit to a World Vision project, all visitors must have undergone the following screening process:
 - (a) sign acknowledgement that they have received, read and understood WVC Safeguarding Behaviour Protocols ([Sections 2.1](#) and [2.2](#) above) and Prevention of Harm in Communications ([Section 5.4](#) below), and are prepared to abide;
 - (b) be pre-approved by both the sending and the hosting office; and
 - (c) complete a police background check.
2. Any visitor who chooses not to comply with the provisions contained herein, or fails to meet WVC screening standards, will be prohibited from visiting any World Vision project globally.
3. Eight weeks should be allowed for the completion of the screening process.
4. Visitors must always be accompanied by a World Vision employee when visiting World Vision projects.

4.2 Orientation

The WVC team arranging the visit will obtain from the Field Office (the host WV office) their Safeguarding Behaviour Protocols as well as local customs regarding appropriate interaction with beneficiaries together

with the name and contact details of the local Safeguarding Focal Point. This must be given to all visitors in their WVC orientation package, prior to visiting. All visitors to WV Field Offices must attend the Field Office orientation on arrival.

4.3 Exceptions

In exceptional circumstances when visitors are unable to comply with ALL the pre-visit protocols detailed in [Section 4.1](#) above, the WVC Chief People Officer may, with the approval of the relevant Field Office Director, authorize a field visit. These visits must always be accompanied by a WVC employee (as required according to [Section 4.1, Item 4](#)).

5.0 COMMUNICATIONS, SOCIAL MEDIA AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

5.1 Dignity

WVC is committed to ensuring all communications about beneficiaries are undertaken with sensitivity to safeguard each person's right to dignity, privacy and confidentiality. In all forms of communication, beneficiaries are treated and portrayed with dignity and not as helpless victims or in a sexually suggestive way.

5.2 Consent

Informed consent means the subject has a reasonable understanding of the purpose of reporting or photography and gives permission. WV employees must obtain informed consent from the beneficiary, and from parents, primary caregiver or guardian where the subject is a child and they are the primary subjects of a story, photo and/or video resource gathering.

Although informed consent can be verbal, written informed consent is obtained from the beneficiary or from the parent, primary caregiver or guardian in the following situations:

- (a) where a beneficiary could be easily identified,
- (b) where the sensitive nature of their personal disclosure of their situation could possibly cause a risk to his or her privacy, dignity, safety or reputation, or
- (c) where otherwise required by applicable law.

5.3 Empowerment

WVC actively works to empower beneficiaries and donors to understand how to safely and appropriately use, and avoid risks associated with, digital technology and social media.

5.4 Prevention of Harm in Communications

A beneficiary's personal and physical information that could be used to identify their location is not permitted to be used on World Vision websites or in any other form of communication by World Vision.

WVC takes the following steps to prevent harm through communications, including social media and digital technology (using photographs/videos/audio clips, stories, articles, or any other communication materials):

- (a) Material posted on social media or digital technology will not contain the family name, sponsorship ID number, or personal location/address of beneficiaries.
- (b) Material with a beneficiary will not be geo-tagged to precise locations if it contains any part of the beneficiaries' name or other identifying information.
- (c) Personal beneficiary information that is captured, stored or sent through electronic, online or mobile devices is password protected.
- (d) Wherever possible, measures are taken to prevent electronic copying of photographs without WVC's permission.
- (e) Discourages direct communication between a WVC employee or affiliate with a registered or unregistered beneficiary through social media or any other means that is without WVC's knowledge or facilitation.
- (f) WVC cooperates with WV Partnership and Field Offices to provide reporting and response options so that sponsors, donors, visitors, beneficiaries or their caregivers can report any incident(s) where either party feels uncomfortable or threatened.
- (g) Sponsorship welcome kits, WVC websites, domains and social media platform profile pages contain legal, privacy and confidentiality information with reporting options for safeguarding concerns or incidents.

5.5 Prevention of Harm in Sponsorship

Sponsorship is implemented in a manner that keeps the safety of beneficiaries as the top priority. This includes training employees to recognize, report and respond to potential abuse and harm, and the secure handling and storage of personal information and its eventual disposal.

C. REPORTING

6.0 REPORTING SAFEGUARDING INCIDENTS

All WVC employees and affiliates are made aware of their individual responsibility to uphold this Policy.

6.1 Incident Reporting Mechanisms

Any WVC employee or affiliate who is concerned, suspects or is made aware of a safeguarding incident, should report the matter immediately to:

- (a) the WVC Safeguarding Focal Point [email: safeguarding@worldvision.ca];
- (b) the Field Office Safeguarding Focal Point (when in country);

- (c) the WVI Safeguarding Director [email: safeguarding@wvi.org]; OR
- (d) the WVC Whistleblower hotline, which is available online at <http://worldvision.ethicspoint.com> or by phone at 1-888-291-7583 (toll-free), when confidentiality is required/preferred, or the other above options are not available for whatever reason).

6.2 Disclosure

While WVC maintains appropriate confidentiality for individuals in Safeguarding incidents, WVC may disclose information about incidents, when lawfully permitted, in order to support the prosecution of suspected criminal activity, meet donor and regulatory requirements, support learning and accountability, advocate to prevent future incidents, or as required by law.

In cases occurring abroad where WVC is the Supporting Office, funding programs and coordinating grant agreements, notification will be shared and supported by WVI to ensure WVC can appropriately report to legal authorities and Global Affairs Canada.

Information in ongoing investigations of Safeguarding incidents, and information about past incidents, is shared only with those on a 'need-to-know' basis, as deemed necessary by the WVC Safeguarding Focal Point, the Field Office or Regional Office or WVI Safeguarding Unit. If it is likely that sensitive information about survivors or about violence against children or adult beneficiaries will not be kept confidential and would put people at risk if accessed by unauthorized parties, such information should not be collected.

Detailed personal information, particularly health information, is not obtained or maintained by WVC, except for the minimum necessary to ensure the matter can be handled appropriately. Such personal data is kept strictly confidential and protected in accordance with the applicable data protection and information security standards.

6.3 Reporting to Authorities

WVC shall consider the best interests of the survivors and any legal³ (including contractual) obligations to report when deciding whether to report a Safeguarding violation to the appropriate legal authorities. Generally, reports are provided to authorities, unless a report is judged likely to cause greater harm to existing survivors or potential future victims.

³ For incidents in Canada, please contact the Safeguarding Focal Point or Legal Services for further guidance on Canadian reporting requirements that vary from province to province.

D. RESPONDING

7.0 RESPONDING TO SAFEGUARDING INCIDENTS

WV entities are required to investigate and respond to reports of child or adult beneficiary abuse in WV programs in ways which are consistent with local law. WV uses three levels of Safeguarding incidents (see table below) to determine its response, which is based on the seriousness of the incident and WV's role.

7.1 Incident Definitions

"Incident" – a concern, allegation or fact about inappropriate behaviour or any breach or threatened breach of the terms of this or any other organizational policy which may put a beneficiary at risk of harm, injury or death whether in temporary or permanent care of a WVC employee, affiliate or Field Office;

"Intervention" – when an incident demands action to be taken to mitigate, monitor or manage risk associated with a specific incident or suspected policy breach. An intervention may include internal administrative investigation or, if criminal in nature, a referral to an external agency, government authority, and any law enforcement body, including any other escalation within WV International.

7.2 Safeguarding Incident Categories

Level 1: Abuse of, or harm to, a child in a community where WV has program operations and that is not committed by WV employees or affiliates (serious harm that threatens the child victim's survival, safety or development).

Level 2: Any violation of the policy which puts children or adult beneficiaries in direct risk of potential harm, but where no actual harm is believed to have occurred. Report incidents to WVI Safeguarding within 24 hours of first notice.

Level 3: Allegation or accusation of harm or abuse to a child or adult beneficiary by a WV employee or affiliate. Report actual or alleged incidents to WVI Safeguarding within 24 hours of first notice.

7.3 Consequences and Outcomes

Violations of any provision contained in this Policy may result in:

- (a) disciplinary action which may result in suspension and dismissal from employment, volunteer/internship, partnership, contractual relationship or Board membership;
- (b) termination of sponsorship; or
- (c) termination of working relationship with WVC.

7.4 Disclosure for Learning and Accountability

While WVC maintains appropriate confidentiality for individuals and supports survivor-centred approaches, WVC may disclose general information about incidents (without personal or confidential details) to support learning and accountability, to prevent future incidents, or as required by law.

8.0 CHILD SAFEGUARDING IN PROGRAMMING

8.1 Safeguarding Essentials in Programming

In all programs WVC seeks to do no harm to children or adult beneficiaries, to keep the interests of community members—especially children—at the centre of its activities, and to utilize opportunities to help children be safer within their families and communities. WVC employees shall consider local child protection threats and issues during program design, including how to influence local actors and groups to be safer organizations for children and adult beneficiaries. In emergency program designs, humanitarian protection threats must be considered in addition to child protection threats.

8.2 Community Feedback and Complaint Mechanisms

Children, parents, and other adults must be made aware of established complaint mechanisms in WVC projects and their right to be safe from abuse and exploitation in WV programs. Every community-level WVC program will:

- (a) work with children and adults in the community to help them recognize inappropriate conduct by WVC employees or affiliates, and to develop safe and contextually appropriate community feedback mechanisms by which community members can report both general suggestions and any serious incidents of misconduct by WVC employees or affiliates;
- (b) provide information on how to report child abuse, sexual exploitation and abuse, or other breaches of Behaviour Protocols by WV employees or affiliates.

8.3 Institutionalization and Adoption

WVC does not facilitate the adoption of children or support programming within long-term institutions in ways that perpetuate the institutionalization of children.

8.4 Child Participation

World Vision works to empower children as citizens and participants promoting their own well-being, and to minimize any risk of harm or negative consequence resulting from participation in activities promoted by World Vision. When planning or organizing programs or activities where there may be contact with children or access to their personal information or images, a risk analysis will be carried out to clearly identify risks and mitigating actions. The analysis will be carried out by the team in charge of such planning or organization.

8.5 Ethics

Child participation activities are designed and implemented to adhere to principles and ethics which keep the best interests of children as the top priority.

8.6 Informed Consent in Child Participation

Child participation activities are voluntary and inclusive (especially of the most vulnerable children), and both children and parents/caregivers/guardians make informed decisions regarding participation, including due consideration of risks that could be associated with the activity.

8.7 Child Travel

World Vision sometimes supports children to travel to events, activities or for other opportunities. In such cases the parents, guardians or caregivers, or other legally required entity or individual, give informed written consent prior to travel. The child's health, safety and well-being are the most important priorities during any travel supported by World Vision. World Vision will not facilitate travel of children outside of their country to visit their sponsor.

DEFINITIONS

ABUSE: A form of maltreatment of a person/s. Somebody may abuse or neglect an adult or child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Beneficiaries may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. There are four main types of child abuse: emotional, neglect, physical and sexual.

BENEFICIARY/BENEFICIARIES: Regarding Safeguarding, WVC uses a broad, working definition of “beneficiary” to include not only direct beneficiaries of a project, but also any child or adult residing in a community in which WV operates.

CHILD: In conformity with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, a ‘child’ is defined as any person who is less than 18 years old, regardless of the country in which they live.

CHILD LABOUR: Work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children, or that interferes with their schooling.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT: Defined by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child as: “Any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light.”

EXPLOITATION: Abuse of power or trust to use a person for the benefit of another. This includes, but is not limited to, child labour and sexual exploitation.

FIELD OFFICE: A World Vision office in the field or country where World Vision projects are implemented.

HARMFUL TRADITIONAL PRACTICE: Harmful traditional practices are based on tradition, culture, custom and practice, religion and/or superstition. They have often been embedded in communities for a long time and are born out of community pressure. They are committed and actively condoned by the child's parents or significant adults within the beneficiaries' community. They include rituals, traditions or other practices that have a detrimental effect on the physical, mental and emotional health of the victim. Many of the practices involve bias against groups of beneficiaries, particularly girls and children with disabilities. Many involve physical abuse and pain leading, in some cases intentionally, to death or serious injury. Others involve mental abuse. Some examples include female genital cutting/mutilation, so-called 'honour'-based violence and 'honour' killings, early child or forced marriage, abuse linked to a belief in spirit possession and breast ironing also known as breast flattening.

PARTNER: A partner organization, for safeguarding purposes, is a Non-Governmental Organization, Community-Based Organization, for-profit enterprise, or other entity implementing a program or activity on WVC's behalf or in collaboration with WVC, and which has a written agreement with WVC. The partner may or may not receive funding from WVC.

SAFEGUARDING: Preventing, reporting and responding to harm or abuse of beneficiaries and others in WVC's sphere of responsibility.

SUPPORT OFFICE: A World Vision office that works with field offices to design programs and raises funds (private and grant) to support the work that World Vision does globally.

VIOLENCE: The use or threat of physical force or power that harms a beneficiary. Although abuse, neglect and exploitation are forms of violence, we include "violence" as a separate category to address threats from which beneficiaries need to be protected, including gang violence, bullying, harassment and playground violence.

VISITORS: Anyone visiting a World Vision project.

WVC EMPLOYEES AND AFFILIATES: Refers to the full range of people accountable to WV's Safeguarding policies and protocols, including all employees, interns, volunteers, and Board members, as well as external parties, including visitors, community volunteers, contractors, partners and others affiliated with partners or contractors.



For safeguarding inquiries, or to report a safeguarding incident:
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World Vision Canada is a registered business no. 119304855RR0001