



PROJECT YES – Youth Empowerment Support for Muslim communities

N. 875177

CHILDREN SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS

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Associazione Culturale
Le Réseau





1. FRAMEWORK OF THE PROJECT

Given the fact that Youth (as per UNICEF Youth: 15-24) are the main target group of the YES project, every partner in the consortium has the responsibility to ensure that every partner has incorporated safeguarding policies into their policies and actions.

Child, Adolescents and Youth in this document are all indicated as CHILDREN.

All the partners of the YES project agreed to a commitment to keep children safe. All the partners are aware of the importance of Child Safeguarding Standards and partners support each other to achieve compliance and competence around child safeguarding, including the provision or exchange of resources.

The proposal has foreseen the draft of Children Safeguarding Standards at the startup of the project to be adopted by all partners.

The adoption of the Standards has the aim to be a practical support for all the organizations involved in the YES project in developing and organizing project activities as well as to strengthen general awareness regarding the importance of child safeguarding; nevertheless, these Standards do not substitute the adoption and/or the revision of each organization's Child Protection Policy towards safeguarding policies which reinforce the protection of vulnerable subjects.

The *Children Safeguarding Standards* herein adopted are in line with the **UN Child Rights Convention** and they have elaborated on the base of **FADV's Child Protection Policy** and on the **Child Safeguarding Standards and how to implement them** elaborated by Keeping Children Safe¹.

In regards to project activities, three aspects are considered in the Children Safeguarding Standards:

- Reducing the risk of harm by staff, volunteers and associates
- Running safe events and activities for children
- Ensuring good practice when using the media

As mentioned in FADV's CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY, the right of children to be heard and the right to have their views taken into account must be systematically respected in all decision-making processes. Children's empowerment and participation should be fundamental in child safeguarding strategies and programmes.

¹ Keeping Children Safe is a coalition of relief and development charities organizations that launched more than a decade ago the first Child Safeguarding Standards.



2.SAFEGUARDING STANDARD

The main principle underpinning the Standards are:

- i. All children have an **equal right to protection** and the promotion of their wellbeing. They should have the chance to participate actively in their society – regardless of their ethnic origin, social background, age, gender, skin color, possible disability, sexual orientation, religion, caste or beliefs.
- ii. All actions regarding child safeguarding must be taken in the **best interest of children**. This includes the commitment that we respect children's rights in all our programs and activities and do not cause harm.
- iii. **Everybody has a responsibility for safeguarding**. Thus, these Standards are applied by those who work for the project YES, including staff, members, volunteers and partners. Training, advice and support will enable everyone to actively carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding children.

Safeguarding is the action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Child safeguarding is the responsibility that organizations have to make sure their staff, operations and programs DO NO HARM to children, that they do not EXPOSE children to the risk of harm and abuse, and that any concerns the organization has about children's safety within the communities in which they work, are reported to the appropriate authorities.

Child safeguarding comprises preventive action to minimize the risk of child rights violations. In addition, it covers responsive action to ensure that, if child rights violations do occur, they will be handled appropriately. Safeguarding implies the responsibility not only to protect children but also to promote their well-being.

Child Safeguarding means:

- protecting children from abuse and maltreatment
- preventing harm to children's health or development
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children and youth to have the best outcomes.

An overall approach to child safeguarding is rooted in understanding the risks to children from the organization itself (for instance: from the action of its staff, the programs or actions implemented, the involvement of children in actions that might expose them to external risks or by using as well their pictures or personal data).

All organizations partner in the YES project commit themselves in making sure that all people targeted and/or involved at different stages within the project are aware of potential risks, of the YES safeguarding policies and their obligations to meet the requirement of the Standards.



Acknowledging risks and implementing measures to address them is fundamental to organizations' strategies; THE MORE IS RECOGNISED, THE MORE RISKS CAN BE PREVENTED.

The TARGET identified in each activity is:

ACTIVITY	TARGET BENEFICIARY OF THE ACTION
WORK PACKAGE 2 - WP1 - Project management & coordination	
Visibility materials production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young and Young adults (male and female) aged 15-30, muslim and no muslim • Citizen
WORK PACKAGE 2 – WP2 - Engagement and Strengthening of Young Community's Leaders	
Activity 2.1 Engagement of 8 Master Equity Defender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Community's Leaders of the Islamic communities: Young and Young adults (male and female) aged 18-30, muslim
Activity 2.2 Capacity building for Master Equity Defender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Community's Leaders of the Islamic communities, 8 Master Equity Defender: Young and Young adults (male and female) aged 18-30, muslim
Activity 2.4 Support mechanisms for victims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young and Young adults (male and female) aged 15-30, muslim
Activity 2.5 Help Desk - Online Chat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young and Young adults (male and female) aged 15-30, muslim and no muslim
Activity 2.6 Awareness raising for reporting against Islamofobia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local institutions • Private bodies • CSO • Media • Citizen
WP3 - International Youth Forum against Islamophobia	
Activity 3.1 International call for participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 European youth organizations • Young and Young adults (male and female), aged 16-25 muslim and no muslim



Activity 3.2 International Youth Forum against Islamophobia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 Master equity defender: Young and Young adults (male and female), aged 15-30, muslim • 25 Young and Young adults (male and female), Italian, aged 16-25 Muslim and no muslim • 15 Young and Young adults (male and female), european Muslim and no muslim • 10 operators
Activity 3.3 Webinar Online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 European organizations (from MEET and more) • Young and Young adults (male and female), aged 16-25

Based on this framework and considering the target group of the project YES, the Coordinator has elaborated the following Standards that has been shared and agreed among the partners involved.

The Standards are organized in 3 categories, as mentioned above:

- 1) Reducing the risk of harm by staff, personnel and volunteers
- 2) Running safe actions for children
- 3) Ensuring good practices when using the media

Standard n.1: Reducing the risk of harm by staff

Staff, volunteer and associates involved in the project might be the person who harm children, deliberately or through the lack of understanding of what is an abusive behaviour. Do not assume that everyone who works with children is safe or will do them no harm.

Coordinator and Project managers involved in the YES project promote:

- the open and free discussion about all issue related to Child protection and keeping children safe from abuse and violence
- Provide adequate information to its staff, associates and representatives about Child Safeguarding Standards
- Establish clear roles and responsibilities regarding the monitoring of the respect and the enforcement of the Child Safeguarding Standards
- Ensure that children are informed about their right to be heard and to grow up free from all forms of physical and psychological violence

The YES project requests all its parties to place clear responsibilities and expectation on the staff involved in the project activities. In order to ensure this, everyone connected to the project YES should know how to keep children safe and to comply with this, specific Standards have been drafted, covering:



1. Designation of roles and responsibilities for child safeguarding

According to the size and human resources of the organization, the focal point will be the Project Manager for the YES project or any other staff in force of the organization with a clear mandate for being the focal point for the YES Child Safeguarding Standards.

The focal point is in charge of ensuring that the Child Safeguarding Standards are applied and during the 4 Coordination Meetings when is assessed the effective inclusion in the project of cross cutting issues.

2. Recruitment

The recruitment of staff, consultants, volunteers, equity defenders engaged in YES projects must reflect the commitment to protect children from different aspects of harm: physical abuse, sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation, neglect, negligent treatment, emotional abuse, commercial exploitation).

During selection process, the organization should consider the following aspects in selecting the proper candidate:

- Motivation and interest in working with children or with topic related to childhood
- Attitude to respect the right of children
- Values as honesty, nondiscrimination, accountability
- References
- Criminal Records

Coordinator and partners of the project should outline their commitment to child safeguarding in the vacancy, during the interview and as part of the employment/consultancy contract.

Each person employed or involved in the project (Equity Defender, PM, etc) sign the CODE OF CONDUCT as part of the contract. FADV has adopted a **Code of Conduct** that describes the appropriate conduct to be observed by its employees and partners. The Code of Conduct is strategic to ensure the well-being and safety of children who are beneficiaries of FADV's projects, it provides all people with a model of behaviour that FADV considers appropriate for establishing a relationship between adults and children.

Job and role descriptions should include a clear statement to meet the requirements of the organizations' Child Safeguarding Policy and YES Child Safeguarding Standards. The role descriptions of the different position foreseen in the project, such as the facilitators and trainers, should clearly design whatever the job position imply contacts with children and their commitment in respecting the principle of do not harm, in keeping children safe and in acknowledging the YES Child Safeguarding Standards.

All selection interviews should include a discussion on child safeguarding and a set of questions addressing people's attitude and values in relation with the protection of children, the candidates' understanding of this and the of the organizations' commitment on applying the Child Safeguarding Standards.



Standard n. 2: Running safe events and activities

Fondazione Albero della Vita and all the partners involved in the YES project stand for the right of children people to participation as part of an integral approach to realizing children's rights; moreover, the project aims to empowers children for enabling them to advocate for their interests and rights themselves.

As mentioned before, children are the main target and beneficiaries of the YES action, thus, their active participation is encouraged in all the activities foreseen by the project. All children should be given equal opportunities to participate regardless of gender, age or special circumstances. They should be able to speak up themselves and to represent their interests and concerns. These opportunities for participation must be appropriate to the age or maturity of the child in question.

Considering that, during the implementation of actions and events, the project promotes a safe, free and open environment where children are encouraged to discuss their concerns and rights and to express their point of view.

No children shall be forced or persuaded to engage in an activity if they feel uncomfortable and this shall be clearly explained to all children.

All the staff and personnel involved in events should keep a high standard of behavior in the presence of children.

1. Consent

Written consent by both parents or legal representative must be acquired for children engaged in all the activities implemented within the project and by all partners. The coordinator and the partners prepares a letter informing the children and their parents or their legal representative about the activity they should take part in, the objective of the activity, the use of the images collected, venue, time and person in charge. This information needs to be subscribed by the Project manager and by the parent of the child. The authorization should be kept and recorded by the partners involved.

2. Capacity building for Mater Equity Defender

The Masters of Equity Defenders, with an age between 18 and 30, should be heterogeneous including boys and girls from different background. Given this frame, the facilitator should ensure that every single children feel comfortable in the class and fell free to express his/her opinion. Language adopted in the class should be child-friendly and tackle issue such as discrimination and islamophobia in a child-friendly and proper way.

3. Helpdesk

A tool/service, called Help Desk Chat, is created and locally publicized to outreach more people using the online space and the project website. The Master Equity Defenders are engaged weekly in answering to the



requests of online users, providing information and supporting the victims of discrimination. This activity is also expected to give voice to Muslim women. This Chat encourages the participation and provides guidance and consulting.

In this case the Masters must be preserved supporting them with the adequate training on how to manage the cases, as well as to keep the privacy of the identities of the case supported.

During the Capacity building the Masters will receive the adequate training on simple and targeted procedures to refer to for the prevention of abuse and to set up a prompt response whenever an abuse occurs against one of the children benefiting from the FADV projects/activities. The tool Kit prepared for them also, will clearly indicate the intervention procedures in cases of violence.

4. Support mechanism

The Master Equity Defender are active on the territory collaborating with migrant associations in the cities, organizing large number of information sessions for members of Muslim / Islamic communities. During these sessions, by simple reflective listening and “triage”, victims are oriented by Master Equity Defender to social services and other institutions such as police department. Some cities have already been identified due to the greatest Islamic presence: Segrate, Brescia, Desio, Cremona and Bergamo. Master Equity Defender has been specifically trained (Task 2.2 – session 1, reporting/safeguarding) to deal with hate speech/hate crime victims.

In this activity is important to support and protect the Masters during the visits (either physically and mentally: mobility authorizations, registration of the planned visits, participation with the Facilitator/other Master, psychological support, briefing and debriefing structured moments).

The Masters are aware that the people they'll meet could be children or could have children during the meetings.

FADV and all partner organization working with FADV commit themselves to:

- Ensure child-friendly reporting mechanisms, so that children can report in confidence and safety about experienced maltreatment, abuse and violence.
- Guarantee that any child abuse/child protection concern is treated and investigated keeping the highest degree of confidence

5. International Youth Forum

The participation of children during the International Youth Forum (WP3) should be encouraged together with their parents or peers.

The event will be organized taking into consideration youth participation as well; specific safe measure should be adopted:

- Establish clear roles and responsibilities regarding the monitoring of the respect of the children's rights;
- Ensure that children are informed about their right to be heard and to grow up free from all forms of physical and psychological violence;



- Promote a safe, free and open environment where children are encouraged to discuss their concerns and rights and to express their point of view.

Standard n. 3: Ensuring good practices when using the Media

A particular attention to children should be taken into consideration for all the communication material and for the activity involving digital media.

The language should be child-friendly and age appropriate, especially when children are directly involved in the communication activities.

Here some elements to be considered during the elaboration of the visual identity of the project, of any communication material and mainly during the media campaign:

- Type of images depicted children must be presented in a dignified and respectful manner, that applies to visual language, photography and publications in flyers and brochures, likewise to posting material on websites and disseminating it via social media
- Ensure that images are honest representation of facts
- Handle sensitive information carefully (e.g. the family backgrounds, their medical condition, disability or negative behavior)
- Ensure that identities of children in images are displaced only if the written informed consent has been given by the parents
- Pay attention in peer to peer action to respects the above-mentioned approach

For digital communication of the project, channels like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Wikipedia, will be used; every staff and partners is required to follow all the Child Safeguarding Standards when communicating on these channels.

The project partner is responsible for obtaining the informed consent of the children, their parents or guardians to all media productions and to their use for the public relations of the head office. The provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) must be observed in this matter, along with other legal instruments.

3. MONITORING & REPORTING HARM DURING PROJECT TIMELINE

All partners appoint a child safeguarding focal point for the YES project if it is not already foreseen by the organizational chart, and share the name with the partners.

All the children participating in the activities will be informed about the child safeguarding focal point contacts (email): when filling the registration form to participate to the actions, they will be informed that there is a child safeguarding focal point to refer to, as well as the link on the website to the present Child Safeguarding Standard.



The Child Safeguarding Focal Point could be the project manager of the YES project or any member of the organization, preferably a staff with child protection background. The Child Safeguarding Focal Point contributes to cross cutting issues of the midterm and final report if required. The focal point is also in charge to promote awareness and training on the topic.

The proceeding to report harm must be clear and simple; it must embrace different tools in order to be accessible also from children: mail, written document, phone call, letter, or meeting.

The focal point provides to all staff, associates and representatives clear procedures for reporting any child abuse and child protection concerns and it ensures child-friendly reporting mechanisms, so that children can report in confidence and safety about experienced maltreatment, abuse and violence.

The privacy of the person must be kept safe.

Every infringement of the Principles and Standards set out in the Child Safeguarding Policy shall give grounds for disciplinary measures or action under employment law.

The focal point proceeds with an internal investigation in order to verify if the situation of HARM. In case the suspects are confirmed it is reported to the local authorities in accordance with national legislation.

The above Children Safeguarding Standards is countersigned by all the YES project's partners.