

Safeguarding Briefing

Let the right ones in...

exploring safe hiring practices

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding – the responsibility of organisations to **make sure their staff**, operations, and programmes **do no harm** to children and adults at-risk nor expose them to abuse or exploitation. This term covers physical, emotional and sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse by staff and associated personnel, as well as safeguarding risks caused by programme design and implementation. Many organisations now also use this term to cover harm caused to staff in the workplace.

Core Humanitarian Standard, 2020



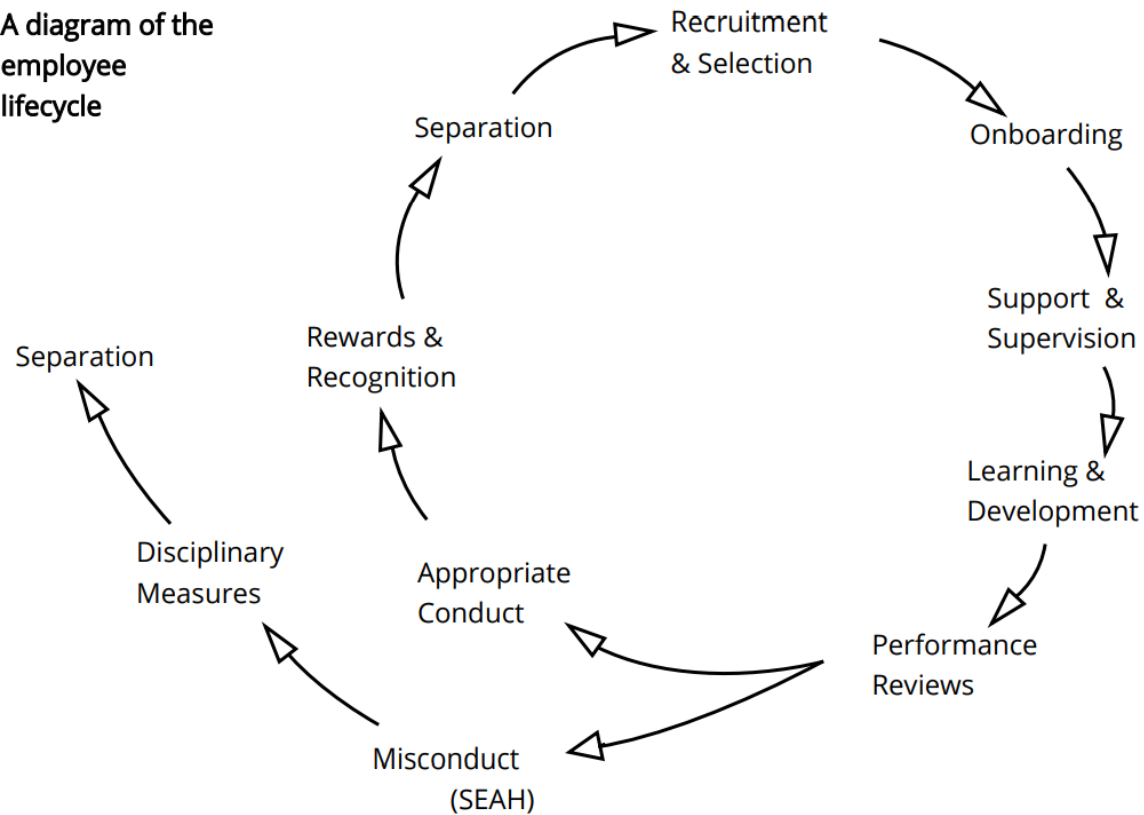
Power inequalities are at the root of safeguarding incidents





Safeguarding throughout the employment cycle

A diagram of the employee lifecycle



What's the problem?

- Harm has been and continues to be caused by people who are hired and retained by organisations in the humanitarian aid and development sector
- People who cause harm don't wear labels
- People who cause harm can seek out loopholes and weaknesses in recruitment practices to gain access to children or adults at risk, in contexts where there may be limited legal protections
- People who sexually exploit children are not seen as monsters until they are caught
- Until they are caught they are usually:
 - * Very Nice People
 - * Pillars of Society/Organisation
 - * Can have excellent CVs
 - * **So how do we accurately judge character?**

Hello
my name is

Ogre of
the Ardennes

What do we need to do?

- *Let the right ones in...*
- Kick the bad apples out and make sure they don't continue to move around the sector
- Strengthen response systems to ensure that a zero tolerance for harm and abuse is applied

What's the bigger risk?



Balancing
the rights of the applicant
and the risk to children and vulnerable adults

Principles to apply in hiring:

- Transparency
- Fairness
- Equality
- Balanced with the responsibility to safeguard the children and adults that our organisations are entrusted to assist

*Our shields are up and we're **not** a soft target for perpetrators of harm and abuse...*



Safeguarding measures in hiring practices (1/2):

- Sending clear messages about the commitment your organisation has to keeping children and adults safe – be explicit about your organisation's position on safeguarding
- Fair notice to candidates – they can self select if willing to go through the rigorous screening process
- Risk assess roles
- Criminal background checking and / or at least self declaration of relevant previous criminal convictions
- Equitable hiring processes – realistic criteria that does not unintentionally exclude good candidates
- EDI: Gender and equality lens on hiring practices - gender balance on teams and on hiring panels
- Build in safeguarding competencies into job descriptions and performance management processes – safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
- Build in Code of Conduct, expected behaviours into contracts

Safeguarding measures in hiring practices (2/2):

- Interview panels trained and sensitised in safeguarding
- Include safeguarding specific questions in interviews / assessments
- Have a healthy, respectful curiosity about gaps in CVs
- Be up front about the expected behaviours in advance of candidates joining and throughout the employment cycle
- Minimum two (ideally 3) references from most recent employers, verified for authenticity
- Qualifications checked for authenticity
- ID checked throughout the different steps of the hiring process, *they are who they say they are*
- Fair procedures apply if candidates' screening process indicates concerning past behaviours, attitudes or values
- Manage probation periods carefully – it's the final stage of the hiring process
- Collaborate with other INGOs – consider the Inter Agency Misconduct Disclosure Scheme, for example
- Consistent procedures for all offices

Criminal background checking – how?

National Vetting Bureau, (Children & Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012

Humanitarian and aid workers in programmatic contexts are outside of the scope of what is categorised as “relevant activities”.

Staff in HQ working directly with children through school debates and similar are eligible for Garda Vetting.

Recognised as a gap and inconsistent from an equality perspective

GOOD NEWS...!

Advocacy, listening, change as of January 2022:

Garda Certificates available for:

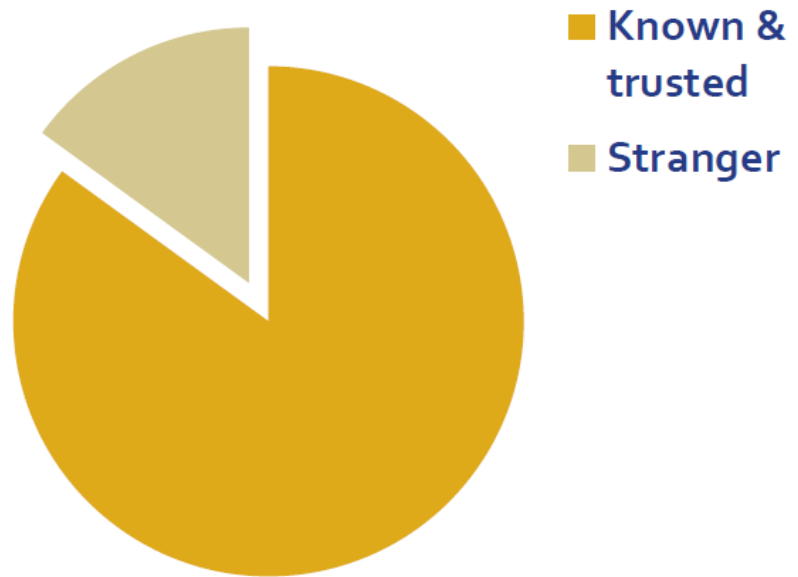


Development / Humanitarian / Aid Workers deployed Overseas on behalf of a Registered Non-Governmental Organisation with supporting documentation issued by the Department of Foreign Affairs and / or any other Statutory Agency related to the activity concerned.

Who might abuse?

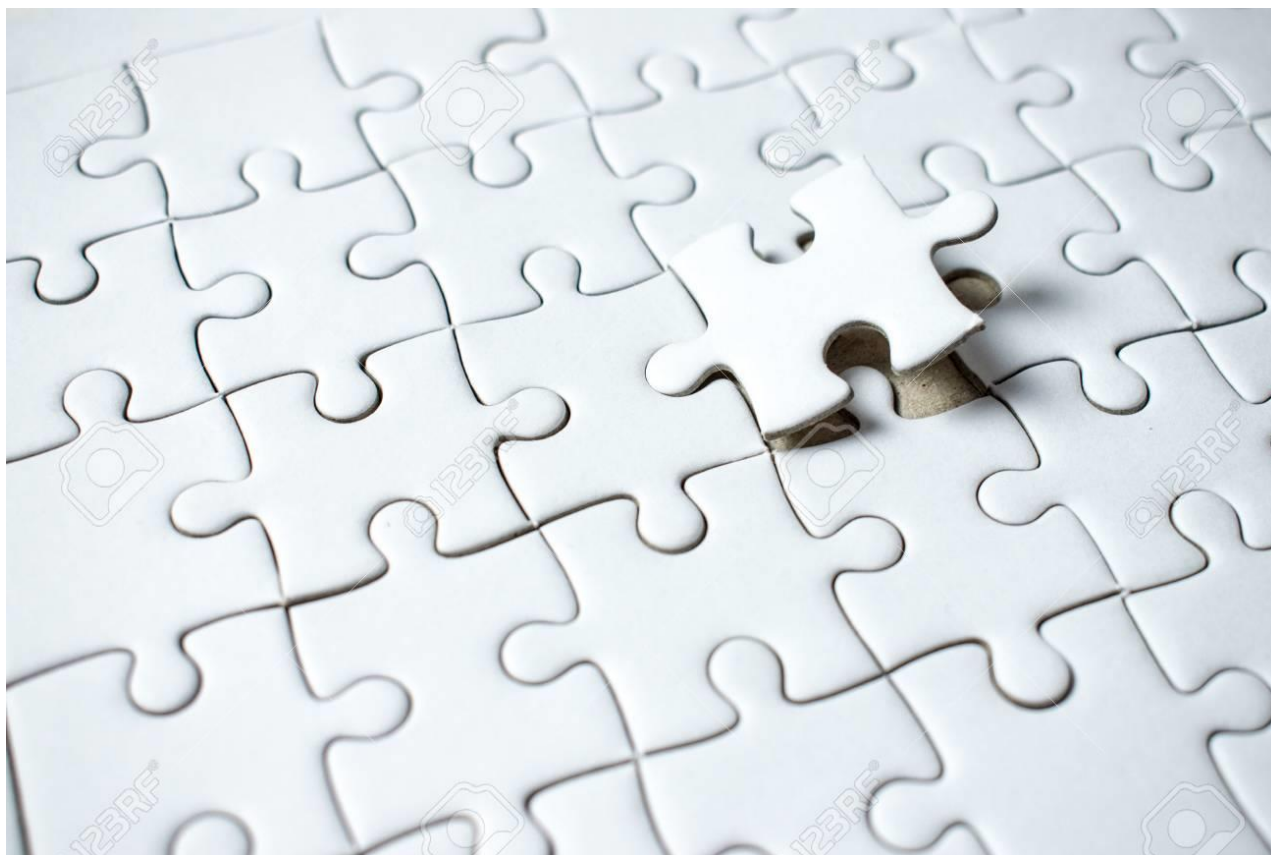
- Staff
- Volunteers
- Partners
- Contractors
- Consultants
- Visitors
- Family members
- Professionals providing services
- Spouses
- Community members
- Strangers

Relationship to Perpetrator



Anyone can abuse, especially those in a position of power, or perceived position of power!

Safe hiring practices need apply to all people we engage



Add in the chat function – any tips, suggestions or challenges that we could discuss now (or later) in our collective responsibility in safeguarding ?



Welcome to stay in touch or if you have any questions:



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Thank you!

CONCERN
worldwide

**ENDING
EXTREME POVERTY
WHATEVER
IT TAKES**