



The Irish Association  
of Non-Governmental  
Development Organisations

## Terms of Reference for the Dóchas Safeguarding Working Group

### Purpose

This Working Group is evolving from the initial Safeguarding Task Group established in 2018. The Dóchas Safeguarding Working Group is a group of members who have come together to network, learn and share resources and expertise on Safeguarding. It will also engage with key stakeholders<sup>1</sup>, in order to advance dialogue and influence matters relating to Safeguarding in international development and to promote best practice safeguarding standards.

### 1. Membership

Membership is open to any member of Dóchas (full or associate). Membership is based on active participation (see Section 6). The group may propose that a non-member may join for a specific purpose of sharing information, collaboration and the building of expertise, but this would be time-bound and subject to approval by Dóchas.

### 2. Areas of Focus

The Working Group will have four key areas of focus for the next two years;

2.1. *Peer to peer learning* and resource sharing in all areas of safeguarding including:

- Organisational Policies and processes
- Training and capacity building
- Legal and reporting requirements
- Due Diligence
- Funding and reporting

2.2 Promote dialogue with Irish Aid to deepen Ireland's commitment to best practice in Safeguarding

2.3. Promote the integration of Safeguarding as a priority across the wider sector

2.4. Research, capturing and dissemination of learning

### 3. Methodology

Full policy and procedures for all Working Groups are outlined in Section Two (Peer Learning) of the Dóchas Membership Handbook. The principal form of contact will be through e-mail.

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<sup>1</sup> Including Irish Aid, the Department of Foreign Affairs and peer groups such as BOND, CHS, Keep Children Safe, Beyond Care Network

Members will decide on the frequency of face-to-face/virtual meetings as needs determine, with a minimum of four meetings a year.

In case of interest by certain members on specific initiatives, sub-working groups may be established in areas of shared interest, for a finite period. Such sub-working groups will be responsible for establishing their own administrative, budgetary and communication requirements, and will report back to the main group.

#### **4. Financing**

Dóchas allocates yearly budgets for working groups and tasks groups which can be used for specific initiatives such as holding learning events, developing position papers or enlisting consultancy services. Proposals for the use of these funds should be made to the Dóchas Secretariat.

#### **5. Coordination**

A Chair will be elected from among the group members on an annual basis by a straight majority vote. An election for the Chair and Vice-Chair will take place in November each year. A quorum of four agencies needs to be present to allow meetings and voting to go ahead. A proxy vote can be submitted to the Chair in advance of the meeting by email. A Deputy Chair will be elected to support and work with the Chair.

#### **6. Commitment**

Active participation is required to be a member of this group. This requires a representative of an agency to be present at 50% of meetings. This group is open to members who hold a safeguarding function within their organisation and recognizes that attendance may change depending on the subject matter being discussed.

#### **7. Link with Dóchas**

Dóchas will where possible provide office or online space for meetings. The Safeguarding Working Group will ensure that its work compliments the overall priorities and strategic interests of Dóchas. While one of the objectives of the group is to support the development of safeguarding resources for the entire Dóchas membership, the articulation of any policy is the role of the Chairperson, CEO and the Board of Dóchas. Dóchas will also provide regular updates on the work and priorities of thematic working groups to ensure coherence across task and working groups. Roles and responsibilities vis a vis Dóchas and the members of this group regarding the execution of a workplan will be determined during the course of the year.

#### **8. Review**

The usefulness of the group and the Terms of Reference will be evaluated by the group on an annual basis, and externally every three years.