WADDAN

PARTNER IN DEVELOPMENT

Safeguarding Code of Conduct

The behaviour expected of everyone who works with or for WADDAN

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PUBLICATION STATUS

✔ **Signed and approved by the CEO of WADDAN for publication on the official website.**

Safeguarding Code of Conduct — public version

WADDAN has absolute zero tolerance for sexual exploitation, abuse, harassment, child abuse, trafficking, bullying, discrimination and any form of exploitation or harm. This Code sets out the behaviour every person associated with WADDAN must show, and the behaviour that is prohibited, so that beneficiaries, communities, colleagues and children are protected in all circumstances.

Must be signed before Day 1

Every member of the Board, every staff member, consultant, volunteer, intern and community mobilizer must read, understand and sign this Code before their first day of work. Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment are prohibited absolutely, and failure to report a concern is itself a violation of this Code.

Who it applies to

The Code applies at all times, not only during working hours, to members of the Board, General Body and Advisory Board; all staff at every grade and location; consultants, contractors, interns and volunteers; community mobilizers and anyone representing WADDAN in field or community settings; and vendors, suppliers and implementing or sub-granted partners to the extent set out in their contracts. It applies in offices, field sites, vehicles, accommodation, events and online spaces.

Required behaviour

- Treat all persons with dignity and respect and without discrimination, at all times and in all locations.
- Report any safeguarding concern immediately to the Safeguarding Focal Person; not reporting is itself a violation of this Code.
- Maintain professional boundaries with all beneficiaries and community members.
- Follow the two-adult rule: never be alone with a child in any unsupervised setting.
- Obtain explicit informed consent, in the local language, before taking photographs, video or personal stories; obtain parental or guardian consent for minors.
- Maintain strict confidentiality of all beneficiary information, safeguarding reports and case data.
- Support gender-balanced field teams wherever operationally feasible, and respect gender-sensitive arrangements for accommodation, transport and travel.
- Complete safeguarding induction within 30 days of joining and the annual refresher where required.
- Cooperate fully and truthfully with any safeguarding inquiry or investigation.

Prohibited behaviour — absolute

- Sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment of any beneficiary, colleague or community member.
- Sexual or romantic relationships with direct beneficiaries, prohibited regardless of claimed consent.
- Exchange of money, goods, services or employment for sexual favours.
- Physical punishment, emotional abuse or deliberate humiliation of any child or adult beneficiary.
- Discriminatory behaviour or language based on gender, age, religion, ethnicity, disability or any other characteristic.
- Sexual activity with any person under 18, whatever the local age of majority or consent; any belief about a child's age is not a defence.

- Sharing identifiable beneficiary images, stories or data without specific written consent.
- Retaliating against, threatening or pressuring any person who reports a concern in good faith, or attempting to identify an anonymous reporter.
- Using a position of power or trust, or access to WADDAN resources, to obtain any personal or sexual advantage.

Child-safe conduct

- Two-adult rule: no staff member or volunteer may be alone with a minor in any unsupervised setting, with no exceptions.
- Children are never taken into private accommodation, vehicles or rooms alone, and are never asked to keep secrets.
- Activities with children are planned with at least two adults present and visible to others, with a female staff member present where possible.
- Written parental or guardian consent is required before any photograph, video or story of a child; no identifiable child's image or story is shared with third parties without specific written consent.
- Child labour, child exploitation and hazardous or exploitative work involving children are prohibited.

Digital and media conduct

- No personal digital contact, including WhatsApp and social media, with direct beneficiaries outside organizational channels.
- Use organizational messaging platforms for all programme-related communication with beneficiaries; personal phone messaging is prohibited.
- Never share beneficiary images on personal social media, and never enter beneficiary data into publicly accessible platforms or AI tools.
- Report any digital safeguarding incident, including online abuse or grooming, to the Safeguarding Focal Person within 24 hours.
- Do not post or share unverified information about WADDAN, donors or beneficiaries online.

Reporting a concern

Everyone covered by the Code must report concerns immediately and in any case within 24 hours to the Safeguarding Focal Person. A concern does not need to be proved before it is reported. Reporting channels are the Safeguarding Focal Person, a dedicated confidential email and the Board Chair for concerns involving the CEO or senior management. Anyone who reports in good faith is fully protected from retaliation, and retaliation is gross misconduct. Contact details are available at www.waddan.org/complaints.

Consequences of breach

A violation results in immediate suspension pending investigation, formal investigation, disciplinary action up to termination, legal referral, and disclosure to the relevant regulatory authorities and donors. For consultants, volunteers, interns, vendors and partners, breach leads to immediate suspension and termination of the engagement or contract. There is no time limit for serious safeguarding violations. Failure to report a concern, or retaliation against a reporter, is itself a violation.