



# Child and Youth Safeguarding Regulation

June 2023




## General information

Approved by	Management Council Executive Board
Approved on	13 June 2023
Version	1
Binding for	All member associations of SOS Children's Villages International (ordinary members), including their affiliated entities; the members of their governing bodies; and their employees and others working for them or on their behalf and SOS Children's Villages International, including its affiliated entities; the members of its governing bodies; and its employees and others working for it or on its behalf
Based on	<a href="#">Child and Youth Safeguarding Policy</a>
Replaces	
Related materials	<a href="#">Workspace on child and youth safeguarding</a> <a href="#">Misconduct Incident Management Regulation</a> <a href="#">Misconduct Investigation Regulation</a> <a href="#">Sexual Misconduct Regulation (PSHEA)</a> <a href="#">Code of Conduct</a>
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Document owner	International Director of Safeguarding, International Office
Revision history	Section      Amended on      Comment

If you have any general questions about this regulation, please contact: [childsafeguarding@sos-kd.org](mailto:childsafeguarding@sos-kd.org).

# Policy framework

The SOS Children's Villages policy framework has three levels of binding rules for member associations and SOS Children's Villages International. They build a hierarchy, starting with foundations as the highest, followed by policies and finally, regulations.

 <b>Foundation</b>	 <b>Policy</b>	 <b>Regulation</b>
Foundations are the highest constitutional and fundamental documents, establishing basic norms and legal obligations.	Policies define guiding principles and minimum requirements for members based on the norms and obligations established in foundations.	Regulations provide further detail (e.g. procedures and processes) on how to fulfill the minimum requirements and obligations defined in policies or foundations.
Approved by the General Assembly	Approved by the International Senate	Approved by the Executive Board in consensus with the Management Council



## Categories of rules

This regulation defines the following categories of rules.

**Legally binding (B):** legally binding rules of a regulation constitute the minimum common standard to be implemented and applied by each member association and SOS Children's Villages International. Subject to applicable national laws, member associations or SOS Children's Villages International can apply a stricter standard for regulations or its individual rules, but they cannot go below the standard of rules as defined in the regulation. Each member association and SOS Children's Villages International are obliged to notify the CEO in the event one or more rules of the regulation contravene applicable national laws and they must mitigate the consequences by proposing alternative solutions to ensure compliance. The breach of a legally binding rule entails consequences, depending on the gravity of the breach. This includes disciplinary measures for employees, suspension/termination of governing body membership or suspension/expulsion of federation membership. Legally binding rules are phrased as "**must**" requirements.

**Recommended (R):** recommended rules go beyond the minimum common standard and are not required to be implemented and applied by member associations. SOS Children's Villages International, as the norm-setting authority, however, will implement and apply recommended rules, and all member associations are strongly encouraged to follow this example as far as applicable national laws or their internal policies allow, in order to achieve more uniform standards across the federation. Recommended rules are phrased as "**should**" requirements.



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## Purpose

This Child and Youth Safeguarding Regulation provides further guidance on the implementation and application of the [Child and Youth Safeguarding Policy](#). The regulation base on the guiding principles and definitions included in the Child and Youth Safeguarding Policy. The regulation is mandatory and must be complied with at all times.

The Child and Youth Safeguarding Regulation sets out the minimum requirements for all actions by SOS Children's Villages including all programme services, activities and functional areas. These requirements are in line with our four pillars of child and youth safeguarding: prevention, awareness and training, reporting, and responding.

This regulation is not a standalone document and must be applied in conjunction with other relevant policies, regulations and guidelines – in particular but not limited to the [Child and Youth Safeguarding Policy](#), [Code of Conduct](#), [Misconduct Incident Management Regulation](#), [Misconduct Investigation Regulation](#), and other specific child and youth safeguarding and protection guidance.



## Application and scope

<p>1.1 Creating a safe and protective environment for children and young people is everyone's responsibility. Therefore, this regulation applies to all those working for or on behalf of SOS Children's Villages in any capacity, whether paid or unpaid. This includes but is not limited to staff (full and part time), volunteers, board members and members of governing bodies, consultants, contractors, suppliers, partners, donors, and visitors to SOS Children's Villages premises, projects and programmes. <b>All those working for or on behalf of SOS Children's Villages MUST comply with this regulation at all times.</b></p>	<b>B</b>
<p>1.2 If there is any confusion or uncertainty about the implementation of the minimum requirements defined in this Child and Youth Safeguarding Regulation, this must be referred to the Child and Youth Safeguarding Team at the International Office for guidance.</p>	<b>B</b>

## Prevention

To prevent harm to children and young people, SOS Children's Villages must put in place structures and processes to identify, prevent and respond to safeguarding risks in its programmes and operations, continuously assess and manage safeguarding risks, carefully vet their staff and those working for or on behalf of the organization, and provide opportunities for meaningful child, youth and family participation in safeguarding, reflected both in prevention and raising awareness activities.

### Child and Youth Safeguarding structures

<p>2.1 SOS Children's Villages International (SOS CVI) and its member associations must define and establish appropriate safeguarding structures and actions to ensure the implementation of the minimum requirements defined by this Child and Youth Safeguarding Regulation at local, national, regional and global levels.</p>	<b>B</b>
<p>2.2 Senior management has the responsibility to foster a safe and supportive organizational culture for staff to be able to mitigate risks of all forms of harm, abuse and exploitation to children and young people.</p>	<b>B</b>
<p>2.3 The establishment of safeguarding structures and positions with specific responsibility for child and youth safeguarding does not remove the individual responsibility of all those working for or on behalf of SOS Children's Villages to act to protect children and young people from harm.</p>	<b>B</b>
<p>2.4 Safeguarding structures and specific safeguarding positions established must be based upon an analysis of the local context and scope of operations of SOS Children's Villages International or the member association. The requirements for the safeguarding structures and responsibilities of those involved are outlined in the Responsibilities Section.</p>	<b>B</b>



2.5 Each member association and SOS Children's Villages International run operations must appoint a national child and youth safeguarding focal person.	<b>B</b>
<p>2.6 The safeguarding structures of each member association and SOS Children's Villages International run operations must be aligned with the focus of the work of the member association and should include as a minimum the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. a national child and youth safeguarding team</li> <li>ii. programme-level child and youth safeguarding teams (where programming work is undertaken)</li> <li>iii. a national incident management team (with a responsibility for responding to reported incidents as stated in the Misconduct Incident Management Regulation)</li> </ul> <p>For further reference, see the Annex 1 with a summary of roles and responsibilities under this regulation.</p>	<b>R</b>
<p>2.7 At local/national level, each member association and SOS Children's Villages International run operations must integrate child and youth safeguarding into their national strategy and annual plans. This strategy and the plans must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Define the main objectives in child and youth safeguarding.</li> <li>ii. Specify the resources (financial and human) allocated</li> <li>iii. Set out time frames for implementation</li> <li>iv. Specify milestones/indicators to measure progress.</li> <li>v. Be based on an analysis of the local context</li> <li>vi. Be reviewed and updated annually, or more frequently if significant external developments or if gaps are identified.</li> </ul>	<b>B</b>
<p>2.8 At regional level, the international office of each region (IOR) must draft a child and youth safeguarding action plan that considers the situation in the region in general and the needs of individual member associations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The action plan must be based on information provided by member associations in their annual safeguarding plans.</li> <li>ii. The action plan must include specific human and financial resources needed for the implementation of the plan.</li> <li>iii. The action plan must be reviewed and updated annually.</li> </ul>	<b>B</b>
<p>2.9 At global level, the International Office must develop a global action plan, defining medium-term objectives in child and youth safeguarding for the entire organization and allocating necessary resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The action plan must be based on the child and youth safeguarding action plans developed by the IORs.</li> <li>ii. The General Secretariat must use this action plan for annual planning and budgeting of child and youth safeguarding activities and allocation of resources.</li> <li>iii. The global action plan must be reviewed every three years and updated if necessary.</li> </ul>	<b>B</b>
2.10 Appropriate resources, both human and financial, must be made available to ensure that the actions identified in the action plan can be implemented.	<b>B</b>



## Analysis of local and national context

<p>2.11 The actions defined by SOS Children’s Villages International and its member associations to implement the minimum requirements defined in this regulation must be based on a comprehensive understanding of the local and national child protection context and up-to-date risk assessments.</p>	<b>B</b>
<p>2.12 The analysis of the local and national context should include and make reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The situation for children generally and the most present risks specific to the context</li> <li>ii. The legal and regulation framework for protecting children and national/local child protection systems (such as social services, regulation, child protection agency, etc.)</li> <li>iii. The availability of independent services for children and families to report their concerns (such as hotlines etc.) and also to appeal against actions taken (or not taken) in relation to the reporting of incidents (for example through an Ombuds Office).</li> <li>iv. Key actors and agencies with a mandate to protect children</li> <li>v. The availability and quality of support for children and families, including services for children who have experienced abuse, neglect and exploitation</li> <li>vi. Any variances between the local context of activities and the national context.</li> </ul>	<b>R</b>
<p>2.13 The mapping and the analysis of the local and national context should be done first at programme level. Outcomes of the analysis on a programme level then inform the analysis conducted on a national level.</p>	<b>R</b>
<p>2.14 The analysis should be reviewed regularly and updated every three to five years. If any significant changes in context become evident (for example natural disaster, war or conflict) then the analysis must be updated immediately or as soon as is practically possible.</p>	<b>R</b>
<p>2.15 The child and youth safeguarding team should discuss the analysis of the local and national context with all programme staff and the national management annually to verify that it remains relevant and represents the current picture of the child protection situation.</p>	<b>R</b>

## Risk assessment and management

<p>2.16 Every project, department and programme team must complete a child and youth safeguarding risk assessment, considering all their activities, at least annually. The Child and Youth Safeguarding team at the respective level of the organization provides specific support to the team in charge of the risk assessment.</p>	<b>B</b>
<p>2.17 Where appropriate, programme participants including children and young people, should be included in both identifying risks and in designing risk mitigation actions.</p>	<b>R</b>
<p>2.18 For every identified risk, senior management must discuss and approve a mitigating action, including the necessary resources, the deadline for implementation, the staff responsible for implementation, and specific indicators to measure the success of implementation.</p>	<b>B</b>





<p>2.19 Based on the risk assessment, the member association, operation run by SOS Children's Villages International, and SOS Children's Villages International office must identify the risk factors with the most significant impact on children and young people and prioritize these factors in planning.</p>	<b>B</b>
<p>2.20 The responsible team must document and retain copies of the risk assessment, including actions and mitigation measures, and submit it to the relevant child and youth safeguarding team for monitoring and support purposes.</p>	<b>B</b>

## HR actions

<p>2.21 Safe recruitment procedures must be followed for all staff and those working for or on behalf of SOS Children's Villages and conducted prior to any contract of employment or engagement takes place. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Police checks and reference (where permissible under local laws)</li> <li>ii. Background checks such as employment and qualifications (based on a consent provided by the job applicant)</li> <li>iii. Questions relating to safeguarding included in interviews and when checking provided references.</li> </ul>	<b>B</b>
<p>2.22 If permissible by the national law, member associations and operations run by SOS Children's Villages should conduct psychological testing of the applicants for job positions in direct contact with children and young people, focused on their suitability to work with children and young people, to minimize potential child and youth safeguarding risks.</p>	<b>R</b>
<p>2.23 Job description of all those working for or on behalf of SOS Children's Villages must define their specific child and youth safeguarding responsibilities.</p>	<b>B</b>
<p>2.24 All contracts with consultants, contractors, suppliers and partners must include a specific reference to the Child and Youth Safeguarding Policy and the Code of Conduct.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. By signing the contract, consultants, contractors, suppliers and partners commit to follow the specific requirements of the Child and Youth Safeguarding Policy and the Code of Conduct, including child and youth safeguarding risk assessment and implementation of the relevant actions and risk mitigation measures,</li> <li>ii. The contract must include specific provisions for how to respond to situations when the requirements of the Child and Youth Safeguarding Policy or the Code of Conduct have been breached.</li> </ul>	<b>B</b>



## Trauma-informed approach

Many children and young people entrusted into alternative care organized by SOS Children's Villages and supported through other programme services have a history of abuse, neglect and exploitation from the time before they became in contact with SOS Children's Villages. It is important that member associations and operations run by SOS Children's Villages International collect as complete picture as possible of their past and present life situation so they are able to provide effective care and support to these children and young people with a focus on improving their mental health, social well-being and ability to cope with the impact of the past abuse. It is a responsibility of the senior management to allocate sufficient resources to implement this trauma-informed approach.

<p>2.25 Staff and other persons in direct contact with children and young people must</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Have a good understanding of the widespread impact of trauma and understand paths to recovery</li> <li>ii. Be able to recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma, so they can inform the respective child and youth safeguarding team</li> <li>iii. Actively avoid re-traumatization in all activities and actions.</li> </ol>	<b>B</b>
<p>2.26 As part of the alternative care programmes and other programme services, member associations and operations run by SOS Children's Villages International must actively promote and support principles of a trauma-informed approach:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Safety – children and young people feel physically and psychologically safe</li> <li>ii. Trust – decisions are made with transparency and with the aim to build and maintain trust</li> <li>iii. Peer support – member associations support creating networks of individuals with shared experience</li> <li>iv. Collaboration – children and young people and the relevant staff are making decisions together, instead of making decisions on behalf of the children and young people with trauma experience</li> <li>v. Empowerment – the staff in direct contact with children recognize and support their strengths and resilience</li> <li>vi. Responsiveness – the staff and children and young people jointly recognize and address various biases and stereotypes based on age, gender, race, sexual orientation etc. and historical trauma.</li> </ol>	<b>B</b>
<p>2.27 Members of child and youth safeguarding teams must receive training on trauma-informed approach and consequences of childhood adverse experience, so they can inform the support provided to staff and others in direct contact with children and young people.</p>	<b>B</b>



## Awareness and training

SOS Children's Villages must ensure awareness of this regulation among those who work for and on behalf of the organization, programme participants and other stakeholders and provide training to enable the regulation to be properly understood and implemented.

<p>3.1 Respective child and youth safeguarding team must provide, discuss and reflect age-appropriate and culturally acceptable information on the SOS Children's Villages approach to child and youth safeguarding to each child, young person and adult when they enter SOS Children's Villages care or start receiving any other type of support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. This exchange and reflection needs to continue on an ongoing basis. It includes also topics regarding children rights including the right for protection, what constitutes abuse, neglect and exploitation, the difference between appropriate, problematic and abusive behaviour, how to protect themselves, how to make a report of a concern, and how to interact with others in a non-violent and respectful way.</li> <li>ii. The same information is also shared with the spouses of the child and youth care practitioners and their biological children, if they are living on the SOS premises or with programme participants.</li> </ul>	<b>B</b>
<p>3.2 As part of the raising awareness activities with children and young people, member associations and operations run by SOS Children's Villages International should inform children and young people of the topics and their rights related to sexuality and healthy sexual relationships. This must include that expressing a consent with any sexual activity is solely their decision, that the consent must be explicit, and it can be revoked at any point of time.</p>	<b>R</b>
<p>3.3 The HR department, with the support of the child and youth safeguarding team at the respective level of the organization, must provide training/orientation on the overall child and youth safeguarding approach of SOS Children's Villages in the onboarding and during engagement for all staff and any other persons working for or on behalf of SOS Children's Villages in any capacity (including partners, consultants, contractors and volunteers etc.), so they</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Are able to recognize various forms of abuse</li> <li>ii. Understand the difference between expected, inappropriate and abusive behaviour</li> <li>iii. Know how to safeguard children and young people</li> <li>iv. Know how to respond if they suspect or are aware of any safeguarding concerns, and</li> <li>v. Know how to raise a concern/make a report.</li> </ul>	<b>B</b>
<p>3.4 All member associations and SOS Children's Villages International run operations must organize additional trainings to the staff with specific responsibilities for the direct care of children or for implementing or coordinating child and youth safeguarding procedures (for example child and youth safeguarding focal persons or child and youth safeguarding team members) to enable them to effectively discharge their roles.</p>	<b>B</b>



3.5	The national child and youth safeguarding team must organize a training on the overall child and youth safeguarding approach of SOS Children's Villages to all new national board members after they have been elected.	<b>B</b>
3.6	The Child and Youth Safeguarding Team at the International Office must organize a session on the SOS Children's Villages approach to child and youth safeguarding for all new members of the International Senate after they have been elected.	<b>B</b>
3.7	Member associations receiving programme visitors (e.g. donors, sponsors, journalists, foreign visitors) must ensure that they have received orientation on the safeguarding rules they will need to follow before their visit takes place. This orientation can be organized by the member association organizing the visit (if different from the receiving member association). Any visit to a programme must be planned with caution and organized strictly in line with the regulation on visiting member associations and SOS Children's Villages International run operations.	<b>B</b>
3.8	The HR department, with the support of the child and youth safeguarding team at the respective level of the organization, should provide a refresher training to all staff and any persons working for or on behalf of SOS Children's Villages in any capacity at least annually.	<b>R</b>
3.9	Written records of trainings / orientation provided to programme participants and those working for an on behalf of SOS Children's Villages must be recorded and records retained in line with data protection requirements locally.	<b>B</b>

## Child and youth participation in safeguarding

<p>There are two levels of child and youth participation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. At a group level – regarding issues related to safeguarding generally</li> <li>ii. At an individual level – when the child is the subject of a safeguarding incident, either because they were the victim/survivor, are a witness or they are accused of the abusive behaviour.</li> </ol> <p>This section considers participation at a group level. Guidance on participation at individual level is given in the sections on Reporting and Response.</p>	
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3.10	<p>In addition to awareness raising information, children and young people must be given opportunities to take an active role in discussing safeguarding topics, assessing risks and identifying mitigating actions in a variety of ways, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Informal discussions with their caregivers</li> <li>ii. Informal discussions with their peers, supported by staff</li> <li>iii. Consultation and input into risk assessments and mitigation plans and annual plans</li> <li>iv. Workshops and trainings related to safeguarding</li> <li>v. Opportunities to meet and talk to staff with specific child and youth safeguarding responsibilities, such as the national focal person or members of the child and youth safeguarding team.</li> </ol>	<b>B</b>
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<p>3.11 Any formal or informal child and youth participation structures must not be involved in responding to reported child and youth safeguarding incidents.</p>	<b>B</b>
<p>3.12 The staff facilitating awareness raising, discussions or trainings with children and young people on safeguarding issues must have the necessary skills and experience to be able to appropriately plan, organize and conduct sessions in ways which are appropriate and child friendly, promoting child and youth participation as a key component of the safeguarding approach of SOS Children's Villages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. This includes being able to take into account age, gender, different abilities, experienced trauma, social norms and other factors which may limit children's abilities to be able to participate fully.</li> <li>ii. Support must be available in case of disclosure and the staff facilitating the discussions etc. must know how to safely, sensitively and appropriately manage the situation if any disclosures of abuse, neglect or exploitation are made.</li> </ul>	<b>B</b>
<p>3.13 Member associations and operations run by SOS Children's Villages International must seek feedback on the organization's child and youth safeguarding practice from children and young people at least on annual basis using a range of methods, including anonymous polls, so that children can share their thoughts, concerns and ideas without fear of retaliation. This information must be used to both identify any gaps in safeguarding arrangements and identify topics which may require a dedicated session or workshop.</p>	<b>B</b>
<p>3.14 Member associations and operations run by SOS Children's Villages International must always give feedback to children participating in discussions and consultations etc. regarding how the information and ideas they have provided has been acted upon and why such decisions have been made. For example, how senior managers have incorporated the views of children and young people into the annual plan, and if any information has not been acted upon, why not.</p>	<b>B</b>
<p>3.15 Except for information giving sessions limited to raising awareness of the overall child and youth safeguarding approach of SOS Children's Villages and how to report concerns, children and young people participation must always be voluntary. Children and young people must be informed of the purpose of the session and how their inputs will be used. Children must not be forced or compelled to take part and must understand that they can withdraw from processes at any time without repercussions.</p>	<b>B</b>
<p>3.16 Where appropriate, for example in community-based programmes, member associations and operations run by SOS Children's Villages International should also seek the informed consent of the legal guardian of the child for the participation of their child.</p>	<b>R</b>
<p>3.17 Written summaries of meetings and other activities with children regarding safeguarding must be retained. This must also include written confirmation of consent sought and given.</p>	<b>B</b>



## Reporting concerns and incidents

SOS Children's Villages must provide appropriate and assessable mechanisms for the reporting of actual or suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation, or any other concerns relating to the implementation of the regulation for all those working for or on behalf of SOS Children's Villages, children, young people and community members, partners and other stakeholders.

4.1	Safe, appropriate and accountable reporting procedures must be established and maintained in line with the <a href="#">Misconduct Incident Management Regulation</a> .	<b>B</b>
4.2	<p>Ways of reporting concerns and incidents must be widely publicized among those working for or on behalf of SOS Children's Villages, children, young people and community members, partners and other stakeholders. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Distribution of printed materials, such as posters, within the programme and in the community</li> <li>ii. Trainings, workshops and other formal and informal meetings on reporting and responding procedures</li> <li>iii. Information on social media, maintained by the member association and operations run by SOS Children's Villages International</li> </ul>	<b>B</b>
4.3	Where the name of the reporter is given, the incident management team must provide feedback on the action taken as a result of the report. Such feedback must be limited to respect confidentiality of those involved.	<b>B</b>
4.4	All those who are impacted by a report – the subject, the reporter, the accused and any witnesses – must be offered appropriate support and protection from any negative consequences as a result of the report (except legitimate action taken against the perpetrator where this has been determined by investigation or a referral made to national child protection bodies, in line with local law).	<b>B</b>



## Responding

SOS Children's Villages must assess and manage all reported incidents and any concerns regarding safeguarding according to the appropriate procedures established by SOS Children's Villages. This includes ensuring that those who have experienced abuse, neglect or exploitation are appropriately supported, incidents are reported to child protection body/law enforcement where required and that appropriate actions are taken against perpetrators.

5.1	All reports must be registered and every child and youth safeguarding incident recorded in a safeguarding incident register.	<b>B</b>
5.2	Every reported incident must be properly assessed and managed according to the Misconduct Incident Management Regulation and Misconduct Investigation Regulation.	<b>B</b>
5.3	In case of peer-to-peer violence, member associations and operations run by SOS Children's Villages International must provide support both to the children and young people impacted by the abuse and the children and young people who displayed abusive behaviour. This support must be based on the principles of trauma informed approach and the focus of the support must be on restorative actions.	<b>B</b>
5.4	If a child or young person, living in alternative care or youth care organized by SOS Children's Villages, gets into a conflict with law, the respective member association or operation run by SOS Children's Villages International must provide support to this child. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Psychological/emotional support</li> <li>ii. Guidance through the legal process</li> <li>iii. Legal representation</li> </ul>	<b>B</b>
5.5	In case a child or young person, living in alternative care or youth care organized by SOS Children's Villages, gets into a conflict with law because of peer-to-peer violence, and the child or young person impacted by the abuse is another child or young person living in alternative care or youth care organized by SOS Children's Villages, the respective member association or operation run by SOS Children's Villages International must provide the same level of support both to the child or young person impacted by the abuse and to the child or young person who displayed abusive behaviour.	<b>B</b>
5.6	When a child or young person is in conflict with law, the respective member associations or operation run by SOS Children's Villages International should seek and actively propose to the relevant authorities other possible response actions than sentencing the child or young person to prison/detention. Depending on the national legislation, this may include a possibility to bail the child and providing further support to the child or young person with a focus on restorative actions.	<b>R</b>





5.7	All information must be kept confidential and shared only on a need-to-know basis (for the purposes of safeguarding) and with consent of the reporter and victim/survivor, except where to do so would leave a child or a young person at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation.	<b>B</b>
5.8	<p>In cases of consensual intimate relationships between children or young people, member associations and operations run by SOS Children’s Villages International must review the local legislation as for the age of consent and respond accordingly. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. In case the national legislation defines the age of consent at the age of 18 years and above, the member association or operation run by SOS Children’s Villages International follows the national legislation.</li> <li>ii. If the age of consent is not defined in the national legislation or it is below 18 years, the member association or operation run by SOS Children’s Villages International consider as the minimum age of consent 18 years.</li> <li>iii. Consensual intimate relationships below the age of 18 years, but above the age of consent defined by the national legislation, are not automatically considered a child and youth safeguarding incident. The member association or the operation run by SOS Children’s Villages International must assess the situation whether there are any concerns that require specific follow-up and make an appropriate response, including providing support to the children and young people involved. This includes information on topics related to sexuality; appropriate, problematic and abusive sexual behaviour; and healthy sexual relationships.</li> </ul>	<b>B</b>
5.9	In the case a staff member, volunteer, associate or another person working for or on behalf of SOS Children’s Villages is the subject of a reported child and youth safeguarding incident, every member association and operation run by SOS Children’s Villages International must take appropriate response action to protect children and young people from risk of any further harm. This may include also removing the accused staff member or other person from SOS premises and/or reporting them to the state authorities.	<b>B</b>
5.10	In accordance with the relevant organizational policies, member associations and operations run by SOS Children’s Villages International must take appropriate disciplinary actions against staff, associates, volunteers or other persons working for or on behalf of SOS Children’s Villages who were confirmed as perpetrators of abuse. In the frame of the disciplinary actions, moving the accused person into another location is not an option.	<b>B</b>
5.11	Those managing the response, including investigations, to reported child and youth safeguarding incidents must be provided with supervision and where necessary appropriate support and protection to limit the effect of any secondary trauma that could be experienced as a result.	<b>B</b>
5.12	All actions and decisions taken in response to a reported concern must be recorded at all times. These must be retained in accordance with relevant local data protection laws. For further reference, see the <a href="#">Misconduct Incident Management Regulation</a> .	<b>B</b>





<p>5.13 Outcomes of reports and investigations should be reviewed annually in order to identify any lessons that can be learned to improve safeguarding procedures and to track trends. Such reviews should be used in developing child and youth safeguarding action plans and processes.</p>	<b>R</b>
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## Past incidents of abuse

<p>5.14 <b>Past incidents of abuse</b> are incidents involving programme participants who have already left SOS Children’s Villages alternative care or stopped receiving other types of support. If the complaint involves a current staff member, the complaint must not be treated as a past incident but must be managed under standard procedures.</p>	<b>B</b>
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## Accountability

<p>5.15 All staff members who have breached the local law must be reported to the relevant law enforcement authority.</p>	<b>B</b>
<p>5.16 Depending on the severity of the misconduct, the organization must take disciplinary measures against the staff member who have been found guilty. This may include a mandatory refresher training and skills development, issuing a verbal or written warning or other appropriate disciplinary actions, which could include separation or dismissal. Such decisions must be made in conjunction with HR and in compliance with local employment and contract law.</p>	<b>B</b>
<p>5.17 Accountability must extend not only to those who directly perpetrated an abusive act but also to those found to have enabled the abuse or failed to act to protect the child or young person.</p>	<b>B</b>
<p>5.18 If a staff member or other working for or on behalf of SOS Children’s Villages accused of misconduct submits their resignation and leaves the organization, an investigation must still proceed.</p>	<b>B</b>
<p>5.19 Any disciplinary action taken against the staff as a result of a substantiated misconduct must be documented in their personnel file.</p>	<b>B</b>
<p>5.20 All member associations and operations run by SOS Children’s Villages International must ensure that the reporter, the victim/survivor, the person accused of misconduct, or another person involved have access to an independent, child-friendly mechanism to appeal against the outcomes of incident management. This is through access to an independent organisational Ombuds’ Office or an external Ombuds mechanism or equivalent process established by the state, in line with the Ombuds Master Charter as put in place by the global Ombuds Office.</p>	<b>B</b>



## Monitoring and evaluation

SOS Children's Villages must monitor, evaluate and audit the implementation of and compliance with this regulation. Reports must be made timely and accurately.

### Monitoring

6.1	The child and youth safeguarding focal person (at national, regional and global level) must monitor the progress, relevance and quality of child and youth safeguarding work including preventative actions taken to implement the overall child and youth safeguarding approach and a summary of any reports made or significant safeguarding actions taken.	<b>B</b>
6.2	The focal person must summarize the monitoring data in an annual report submitted to the national director (for member associations) or the global child and youth safeguarding team (for SOS Children's Villages International offices and operations run by SOS Children's Villages International).	<b>B</b>
6.3	The annual report must be shared by the national director with the governing body of the member association and the regional child and youth safeguarding focal person. In the case of SOS Children's Villages International, the Executive Board must share the annual report with the International Senate.	<b>B</b>

### Reporting

6.4	All member associations (including those that have no domestic programmes) and operations run by SOS Children's Villages International must complete an annual survey according to the deadlines and specifications issued by the General Secretariat, including data on reported and confirmed child and youth safeguarding incidents. The purpose of the survey is to assess compliance with the minimum requirements defined in this regulation and the overarching Child and Youth Safeguarding Policy.	<b>B</b>
6.5	All member associations (including those that have no domestic programmes) and operations run by SOS Children's Villages International must report according to the deadlines and specifications issued by the General Secretariat on their progress against the global action plan defining medium-term objectives in child and youth safeguarding for the entire federation.	<b>B</b>



## Review and audit

6.6	Every member association and SOS Children's Villages International run operations must conduct a child and youth safeguarding audit in all its programme locations at least every three years. It is organized as a separate child and youth safeguarding audit or as part of a cross-functional audit.	<b>B</b>
6.7	Every IOR must conduct a child and youth safeguarding audit of at least three member associations or operations run by SOS Children's Villages International per year. Each audit must include the national office and at least one programme location.	<b>B</b>
6.8	Either internal staff or contracted consultants may conduct a child and youth safeguarding audit. However, to avoid conflict of interest and for transparency, those conducting the audit must not be involved in the day-to-day operations of either the programme or the national office under audit.	<b>B</b>
6.9	Audit findings and lessons learned should feed into annual plans and safeguarding action plans.	<b>R</b>
6.10	The national director must include the audits and their findings and recommendations in the annual report submitted to the national board (for full members), or the IOR (for operations run by SOS Children's Villages International).	<b>B</b>

## Responsibilities

Each member association, operation run by SOS Children's Villages International, and SOS Children's Villages International must have a specific description of its child and youth safeguarding organizational structures, the roles and responsibilities of the staff involved, and communication flows for matters relevant to child and youth safeguarding.

### National and programme levels

7.1	The ultimate responsibility for implementation of this regulation in a member association or operation run by SOS Children's Villages International lies with the national director (or equivalent).	<b>B</b>
7.2	The national director should submit a report on the progress of child and youth safeguarding activities to the association's governing body at its every meeting (for full members) or to the IOR every quarter (for operations run by SOS CVI).	<b>R</b>
7.3	The governing body of a member association or operation run by SOS Children Villages International is responsible for overseeing implementation of this regulation by national management.	<b>B</b>



7.4	The board of a member association must have child and youth safeguarding as a standing agenda item, and request from the national director progress reports on the child and youth safeguarding work, including anonymized reported incidents.	<b>B</b>
7.5	In the case where the national director does not comply with the requirements of this regulation, or there is in conflict of interest in regard to a reported incident, the board of a member association must take over the responsibility for responding to the situation.	<b>B</b>
7.6	Depending on the size of the board of a member association, the board should nominate at least one member as a focal point for child and youth safeguarding who will be able to support the board in specific discussions on child and youth safeguarding topics. Where possible, the board should nominate a board committee to fulfil this specific role.	<b>R</b>
7.7	In the case of operations run by SOS Children's Villages International, the management oversight role must be fulfilled by the international office of the region (IOR). The governing body's oversight role must be fulfilled by the International Senate	<b>B</b>
7.8	In every member association and SOS Children's Villages International run operations, the national director must appoint at least one national child and youth safeguarding focal person, who is responsible for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the overall child and youth safeguarding approach according to this regulation.	<b>B</b>
7.9	The position of the national child and youth safeguarding focal person can be full time or part time or held by an employee with another role, depending on a specific situation of every member association. In this regard, member association should consider the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Outcomes of the analysis of the local and national context</li> <li>ii. Findings of the risk assessment</li> <li>iii. Size of the member association, defined by the number of programme participants</li> <li>iv. Number of child and youth safeguarding incidents, reported in the past three years</li> <li>v. Findings of the child and youth safeguarding audits, conducted by the member association in the past three years.</li> </ul>	<b>R</b>
7.10	Depending on their operating size, member associations and SOS Children's Villages International run operations should set up a child and youth safeguarding team at its national office and at each local programme location. The team is responsible for raising awareness, guiding risk management and implementing activities to prevent harm.	<b>R</b>
7.11	The child and youth safeguarding team at programme and national level should have at least three members representing different functional areas or programme services and be chaired by the programme director at location level and by the national director (or equivalent) at national level.	<b>R</b>
7.12	Staff, volunteers, children, young people and other programme participants should be consulted on the set-up of the child and youth safeguarding team at the respective level of the organization.	<b>R</b>



7.13	Child and youth safeguarding teams must not be responsible for incident management. This must be the responsibility of a dedicated misconduct incident management team, as described in the <a href="#">Misconduct Incident Management Regulation</a> .	<b>B</b>
7.14	Every member association and SOS Children's Villages International run operations must appoint a national incident management team that is in charge of managing reported incidents of abuse and neglect.	<b>B</b>
7.15	Every member association and SOS Children's Villages International run operations must ensure access to and collaborate with an independent organisational Ombuds Office or an external Ombuds mechanism or equivalent that meets the minimum standards outlined in the Ombuds Master Charter. This includes sharing information and learning aimed at improving child and youth safeguarding practice.	<b>B</b>

## Regional level

7.16	The International Director of the region (IDR) has the ultimate responsibility for implementing the child and youth safeguarding approach defined in this regulation in their region's international office (IOR) and promoting the implementation in the region's member associations and operations run by SOS Children's Villages International.	<b>B</b>
7.17	The IDR (or equivalent) must appoint an IOR child and youth safeguarding focal person, who is responsible for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the overall child and youth safeguarding approach according to this regulation in the region, including monitoring the implementation in individual member associations and SOS Children's Villages run operations in the region.	<b>B</b>
7.18	The IDR (or equivalent) must appoint an IOR child and youth safeguarding team. The team is responsible for raising awareness of the child and youth safeguarding approach among the staff of the IOR, coordinating implementation of this regulation in the region, and supporting risk management.	<b>B</b>
7.19	The IOR child and youth safeguarding team should be chaired by the IDR or a nominated senior manager and should be made up of the IOR child and youth safeguarding focal person and two or three members of the regional management team.	<b>R</b>
7.20	At least every six months, the IOR child and youth safeguarding focal person should submit to the IOR child and youth safeguarding team a report on developments in child and youth safeguarding.	<b>R</b>
7.21	In accordance with the <a href="#">Misconduct Incident Management Regulation</a> , the IDR (or equivalent) must appoint an IOR incident management team that is in charge of managing reported incidents of abuse and neglect, escalated for incident management to the IOR.	<b>B</b>
7.22	The IOR must collaborate with the Regional Ombuds for SOS Children's Villages. This includes sharing information and learning and taking into account Regional Ombuds' reports on trends and gaps aimed at improving child and youth safeguarding practice.	<b>B</b>



## International level

7.23	The Child and Youth Safeguarding team at the International Office is responsible for supporting the IORs and member associations in implementing the policies and regulations, and monitoring the progress of implementation.	<b>B</b>
7.24	The International Office's Child and Youth Safeguarding team must inform the Executive Board and the International Senate of the progress in implementing this regulation and other related policies and regulations that are binding for SOS Children's Villages International and its member associations.	<b>B</b>
7.25	In accordance with the <a href="#">Misconduct Incident Management Regulation</a> , the International Office must appoint an incident management team that is in charge of managing reported incidents of abuse and neglect.	<b>B</b>
7.26	The International Office's Child and Youth Safeguarding team must collaborate with the Global Ombuds for SOS Children's Villages. This includes sharing information and learning and taking into account Global Ombuds' reports on trends and gaps aimed at improving child and youth safeguarding practice.	<b>B</b>



# Annex 1. Summary of roles and responsibilities under this regulation

National director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure adherence to this regulation by all staff and associates</li> <li>- Ensure all staff members with specific child and youth safeguarding responsibilities can fulfil their tasks and they have the necessary resources</li> <li>- Ensure initial and ongoing training of all staff and associates on child and youth safeguarding</li> <li>- Take the lead and oversee the development of an annual plan of child and youth safeguarding activities and a dedicated budget for these activities</li> <li>- Submit a report on the progress of child and youth safeguarding activities to the association's governing body at every meeting (for full members) or to the IOR every quarter (for operations run by SOS CVI).</li> </ul>
National governing body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oversee implementation of this regulation by national management</li> </ul>
National child and youth safeguarding focal person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coordinate the implementation of the overall child and youth safeguarding approach defined in this regulation at national level</li> <li>- Coordinate the assessment and management of child and youth safeguarding risks</li> <li>- Coordinate the development of child and youth safeguarding actions as part of the national annual plan</li> <li>- Coordinate awareness-raising and prevention activities at national level</li> <li>- Improve organizational policies and regulations on child and youth safeguarding</li> </ul>
Child and youth safeguarding teams at programme level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Raise awareness of child and youth safeguarding issues among programme participants, staff and associates</li> <li>- Implement preventive activities</li> <li>- Support other staff at their organizational level in managing safeguarding risks</li> </ul>
National child and youth safeguarding team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Orient new board members on child and youth safeguarding and train them as necessary</li> <li>- Develop the sections of the national strategy relevant to child and youth safeguarding</li> <li>- Based on inputs from programme child and youth safeguarding teams, plan specific actions in child and youth safeguarding as part of annual planning</li> </ul>



<p>National incident management team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide the organizational response to all reported and identified incidents of misconduct experienced by children (child safeguarding), adult programme participants, community members, staff and those working for or on behalf of SOS Children's Villages as well as partners (adult safeguarding), and fraud, corruption and other misuse of SOS Children's Villages assets (asset protection), be it at programme or national level.</li> </ul> <p>More detailed description of the roles and responsibilities of the incident management team, including its composition, is provided in the <a href="#">Misconduct Incident Management Regulation</a>.</p>
<p>International director of the region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oversee the implementation of this regulation at the IOR and by the management of operations run by SOS CVI</li> </ul>
<p>Regional child and youth safeguarding team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Raise awareness on the overall child and youth safeguarding approach among the staff of the IOR</li> <li>- Define the overall action plan and plan specific actions to implement the child and youth safeguarding approach in the region as part of annual planning</li> <li>- Support other staff at the IOR in managing child and youth safeguarding risks</li> <li>- Proactively identify member associations operating in a high-risk environment and recommend specific preventive actions and monitoring activities including child and youth safeguarding audits</li> </ul>
<p>Regional child and youth safeguarding focal person</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coordinate the planning of regional child and youth safeguarding actions during annual planning in accordance with the regional child and youth safeguarding action plan</li> <li>- Coordinate, support and conduct risk assessment within the functions of the IOR and the implementation of the risk mitigation actions.</li> <li>- Maintain the regional child and youth safeguarding risk register</li> <li>- Coordinate activities around child and youth safeguarding awareness and prevention in the IOR and member associations in the region</li> <li>- Ensure clear, accessible, safe and effective reporting and responding mechanisms and procedures in the IOR and across the organisation</li> <li>- Regularly report on developments in child and youth safeguarding to the IOR child and youth safeguarding team at least every quarter</li> </ul>
<p>Global child and youth safeguarding team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop organizational policies and regulations on child and youth safeguarding</li> <li>- Support the IORs and member associations in implementing the policies and regulations</li> <li>- Monitor the progress of implementation.</li> </ul>



# Annex 2. Analysis of local and national context

Template, included for guidance and reference.

## Analysis of the local context

### 1. Child protection risks

<b>Main child protection concerns in context (examples given below)</b>	<b>What is the local attitude towards this child protection concern? Please also detail any form of reprisal towards persons impacted by abuse, persons accused of abuse, reporters, witnesses, etc.</b>	<b>What features of the local context are of concern since they increase the likelihood of this type of abuse?</b>
a) Sexual abuse		
b) Corporal punishment		
c) Female genital mutilation (FGM)		
d) Child labour		
e) Trafficking		
f) Early marriage		
g) Neglect		
h) Other		

## 2. Prevention and response

Governmental agencies, NGOs, community-based organisations, networks, etc. working on prevention of and response to child abuse and neglect	Type of services offered	Contact details of the senior officer(s) (name, position, telephone and email)
a)		
b)		
c)		
d)		

## 3. Criminal offences

Governmental agencies dealing with criminal allegations / offences related to child protection	Area of responsibility, type of services offered	Contact details of the senior officer(s) who can be contacted in the event of a child safeguarding incident (name, position, telephone and email)
a)		
b)		
c)		
d)		

## 4. Support to persons impacted by abuse

Governmental agencies, NGOs, community-based organisations, networks, etc. providing support to victims of child abuse and neglect	Type of services offered	Contact details of the senior officer(s) who can be contacted in the event of a child safeguarding incident (name, position, telephone and email)
a)		
b)		
c)		
d)		

## Analysis of the national context

### 1. National laws

<b>Definition of a child:</b>		
<b>Legislation covering legal age limits (please specify the age limits and the relevant legislation)</b>	<b>Legislation:</b>	<b>Please detail whether this legislation is implemented and/or enforced:</b>
	Sexual consent:	
	Marriage:	
	Criminal responsibility:	
	Other (please specify):	
<b>Legislation and policies governing child welfare/protection (also include any international conventions to which the country is a signatory or has ratified, e.g. the UNCRC)</b>	<b>Legislation:</b>	<b>Please detail whether this legislation is implemented and/or enforced:</b>

## 2. Statutory child protection

<b>Governmental bodies / agencies with statutory authority for the protection of children</b>			
	<b>Agency / office name</b>	<b>Area of responsibility, type of services offered</b>	<b>Contact details of the senior officer(s) (name, position, telephone and email)</b>
National child protection authority			
Child Ombuds			
Governmental authority coordinating all actions on violence against children			
Governmental authority responsible for supervising alternative care settings			
National mechanism for preventing torture and other cruel or degrading treatment or punishment			
Independent national complaints mechanism for children in alternative care			
Child protection helpline or hotline available across the whole country			
Programme for recovery of children impacted by abuse			
Programme for recovery of children with abusive behaviour			
Other (please describe)			

<b>Is it required to report <u>all</u> child safeguarding incidents to governmental authorities?</b>	
<b>Which governmental body / agency needs to be informed? (see the list above)</b>	

### 3. National mechanisms

Mechanisms	Description of the mechanism
National action plan (road map) for responding to violence against children	
Governmental investigations of alleged child protection incidents	
Strategy for preventing and combating child abuse	
National database on incidents of child abuse	
National register of child abusers	
Available channels for reporting child protection incidents in alternative care settings	

### 4. Child protection risks

Main child protection risks (examples given below)	How does the legislation define this type of abuse?	Please detail any legislation governing this child protection risk and provide a brief analysis of implementation/ enforcement as far as is known.	Please detail the police position on this type of incident, including the likelihood of investigation and prosecution.	Detail any other existing responses to this type of risk (e.g. community-based/informal protection, faith groups, and support for children impacted by abuse).	What are the gaps in the existing responses?
a) Sexual abuse					
b) Corporal punishment					
c) Female genital mutilation (FGM)					
d) Child labour					
e) Trafficking					
f) Early marriage					
g) Neglect					
h) Other					

# Annex 3. Risk assessment

Every identified risk must be assessed from the perspective of their likelihood and the potential impact on children and young people. When doing the assessment, it is recommended to use the scale from 1 – 3, where 1 means low likelihood / impact and 3 means high likelihood / impact. The results of the assessment should be then inserted into the risk matrix (see below) to get a final assessment of the risk level.

This template of the risk assessment form should be used only for guidance and reference. Member associations, SOS Children’s Villages International, and operations run by SOS Children’s Villages International should adapt the form according to their needs. This includes adjustments of the areas of risk, the number of identified risks etc.

## Risk levels

IMPACT ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	High (3)	Medium	High	High
	Medium (2)	Low	Medium	High
	Low (1)	Low	Low	Medium
		Low (1)	Medium (2)	High (3)

**LIKELIHOOD**

Areas of risk	Identified child and youth safeguarding risk	Risk level (High / Medium / Low)	Preventative (risk mitigating) action	Person responsible for implementation	Timeframe for implementation	Completed (Yes / Ongoing)
Governance and management	1.					
	2.					
	3.					
Local context	1.					
	2.					
	3.					
HR topics	1.					
	2.					
	3.					
Services for children and young people	1.					
	2.					
	3.					
Responding to child and youth safeguarding concerns	1.					
	2.					
	3.					
Fund development and child sponsorships	1.					
	2.					
	3.					

Areas of risk	Identified child and youth safeguarding risk	Risk level (High / Medium / Low)	Preventative (risk mitigating) action	Person responsible for implementation	Timeframe for implementation	Completed (Yes / Ongoing)
External communications	1.					
	2.					
	3.					
Partners	1.					
	2.					
	3.					
Other	1.					
	2.					
	3.					