



REVAMP AFRICA FOUNDATION

Child Safeguarding Policy

17 Olutosin Ajayi Street, Ajao Estate, Lagos, Nigeria
Website: www.revampafrica.org
Email: info@revampafrica.org

WHO WE ARE

REVAMP AFRICA FOUNDATION (called mostly as REVAMP AFRICA) is a registered youth-focused non-profit organisation (CAC/IT/NO 137619). REVAMP Africa functioned as PROJECT REVAMP AFRICA from 2016 to 2019, when a new registration was done with the CAC and renamed REVAMP Africa Foundation.

While the name may have changed, the vision and mission have remained the same.

Vision

Our vision is to be Africa's foremost organisation for grooming and raising young excellent leaders making a difference everywhere.

Mission

We are on a mission to educate, equip and empower young people for personal transformation and social impact.

Values

Our values shape everything.

- Servant Leadership
- Integrity
- Respect
- Excellence

We provide EDUCATION, LEADERSHIP and ENTERPRISE development support for children and youths.

Our interventions are designed to bridge the leadership gap, reduce unemployment, improve academics performance and behaviour in young people.

At REVAMP Africa, we provide quality skills and empower youths to make positive impact in their communities, states, country, Africa, and the world.

More information about us are on our website: www.revampafrica.org

OUR VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

REVAMP Africa abides by the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. We are committed to safeguarding practice that reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice requirements.

- We recognise the welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take.
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation has an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

Purpose:

REVAMP Africa will strive to:

- Protect children and young people who receive any REVAMP Africa's services from harm. This includes the children of adults who use our services.
- Provide members of staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of REVAMP Africa including the board of trustees, senior managers, paid staff, volunteers, interns, agents, contractors, external consultants, suppliers, third-party representatives, and partners. Failure to comply with the policy and related procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal and exclusion from the organisation. It applies during or outside of working hours, and at every day or time of the year.

Definitions:

Any person under 18 years is regarded as a child as provided by the Child's Right Act (2003) and Child's Rights Law 2007 Laws of Lagos State of Nigeria.

Child Abuse:

Child abuse consists of anything, which individuals, institutions or processes do or fail to do which directly or indirectly harms children or damages their prospect of a safe and healthy development into adulthood.

This policy covers all forms of child abuse. REVAMP Africa recognises five categories of child abuse, which are sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Other sub-categories may be adopted from time to time.

It is important to be aware of more specific types of abuse that fall within these sub-categories, which are:

- Child sexual exploitation
- Child trafficking
- Domestic abuse
- Child Criminal exploitation
- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Female genital mutilation
- Grooming
- Historical abuse
- Online abuse

Definitions of Child Abuse:**Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse is the non-accidental use of physical force that deliberately or inadvertently causes injury or poses as a risk to a child. This may include actions like hitting, strangling, throwing, poisoning, burning, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing non-accidental physical harm to a child. Physical harm can also be caused when a parent or child-care givers fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness or temporary, permanent injury or disability of a child.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse includes any act that involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. It does not matter whether they are aware of what is happening or not. In all cases, the consent of the child is irrelevant, as it is still termed as sexual abuse. Sexual abuse can be in form or contact or non-contact. As long as sexual connotations are evident, it is termed abuse.

Contact abuse include such as fondling/touching breasts, genital/anal fondling, masturbation, oral sex, penetrative or non-penetrative contact with the anus or genitals, encouraging the child to perform such acts on the perpetrator or another, involvement of the child in activities for the purposes of pornography, prostitution, or pressure. It also involves non-contact abuse such as Exhibitionism, exposure to pornographic or sexual imagery, inappropriate photography, or depictions of sexual or suggestive behaviours or comments.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse involves acts that results in adverse or impaired damage to the psychological, social, intellectual, and emotional functioning or development of a child.

This may occur as an isolated event or on an ongoing basis. Emotional abuse includes but is not limited to any form of humiliating or degrading treatment (e.g., threats, bad name calling, screaming, use curse words, bad teasing, constant criticism, belittling, body-shaming, persistent mockery, etc.

Neglect

Neglect is the most common form of abuse, and it has the potential of seriously impairing the child's health or development. Forms of Neglect include:

- Physical - Looking rough and uncared for, dirty, without appropriate clothing, underweight), not providing the necessities of life like a warm place, food and clothing.
- Emotional- Not providing comfort, attention, and love.
- Neglectful supervision- Leaving children without someone safe looking after them, no safe home to return to).
- Medical Neglect- Failure to present child for timely immunisation, persistent nappy rash or skin disorders or not taking care of health needs.
- Educational or Vocational Neglect- Allowing chronic truancy, failure to enrol in school or vocational training centres or inattention to education needs.

Child abuse and exploitation is a violation of fundamental child and human rights. It may also be a criminal act. REVAMP Africa has a zero-tolerance approach when it comes acting to protecting children from all forms of exploitation and abuse. We are committed to acting ethically and with integrity in all our dealings and relationships. We are resolved to implementing and enforcing effective systems and controls to ensure child exploitation and abuse is not taking place in any form in delivery of any of our services.

REVAMP Africa is also committed to ensuring there is transparency in our approach to preventing and responding to any child safeguarding violations throughout our service delivery and relationships with third parties. We remain consistent with our national and international disclosure obligations, and shall comply with all applicable laws, statutes, regulations, and codes from time to time in force.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is a term which is broader than 'child protection'. It involves:

- Actions taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.
- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children's health and development.
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Our approach to preventing the abuse and exploitation of children

REVAMP Africa is committed to preventing child abuse and exploitation, including through the following means:

Training: REVAMP Africa will ensure an appropriate level of safeguarding training is available to its Trustees, employees, volunteers, and any relevant persons linked to the organisation who requires it. For all employees who are working or volunteering with children, this requires them as a minimum to have training that enables them to:

- Understand what safeguarding is and their role in safeguarding children.
- Recognise a child potentially in need of safeguarding and act.
- Understand how to report a safeguarding alert.
- Understand dignity and respect when working with children.
- Have knowledge of the Safeguarding Children Policy.

Awareness: Ensuring that all members of staff, representatives and third parties connected to REVAMP Africa are aware of the high standards of behaviour and conduct expected of them to protect children from any form of abuse and exploitation in their private and working lives.

Prevention: Ensuring, through awareness and good practice, that members of staff and volunteers who work with REVAMP Africa minimise the risks of any form of child abuse and exploitation, including but by no means limited to conducting relevant vetting and background checks of staff as part of their recruitment process.

Reporting: Ensuring that all members of staff and volunteers who work with REVAMP Africa are clear on what steps to take where suspicions or concerns arise regarding allegations of child abuse or exploitation.

Responding: Ensuring that immediate action is taken to identify and address reports of child abuse and exploitation, and to ensure the safety and well-being of the child or children involved.

To help you identify incidents of child abuse, exploitation, and poor safeguarding practice the following are examples of prohibited behaviour and practice, which are not tolerated by REVAMP Africa:

- Physically, sexually, or emotionally harming or threatening to harm a child. This includes beating them or any other form of physical or humiliating discipline.
- Engaging in any form of sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18, regardless of age of consent or custom locally.
- Exchanging money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviours. This includes exchange for assistance that is due to beneficiaries and their families.
- Sending private messages to children you have met through REVAMP Africa, for example private messaging on social media or by mobile phone.
- Engage anyone under the age of 18 in exploitative and harmful labour.
- Employees engaging in commercial exploitation of children, for example a hotel employee facilitating sexual abuse by hotel guests or indirectly.
- Harm to a child that could cause serious injury or death due to careless driving.
- Failing to ensure the required health and safety conditions are being provided on behalf of REVAMP Africa.
- Failing to follow the law or required procedures and regulations which result in the death or harm of a child.

Safe Recruitment and Selection

REVAMP Africa is committed to safe employment and safe recruitment practices, that reduce the risk of harm to children from people unsuitable to work with them or have contact with them.

REVAMP Africa has policies and procedures that cover the recruitment of all Trustees, employees, and volunteers.

Responsibilities:

Members of staff of REVAMP Africa are required to:

- Organise the workplace so as to minimize risks.
- Be alert to situations which may present risks and properly handle it.
- Be open to culture to discuss any issues or concerns.
- Foster a culture of mutual accountability so that any potentially abusive behaviour can be challenged.
- Develop a culture where children and adults can talk about their contacts with members of staff and others openly.
- Board members, employees, and volunteers must avoid actions that could be construed as poor practice or potentially abusive.

Members of staff and volunteers of REVAMP Africa should not:

- Spend excessive time alone with children away from others.
- Take children or any adult to your own home, especially where they will be alone with you.
- Have a children or adults stay overnight at your home unsupervised.
- Act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse that includes intentionally humiliating, belittling, degrading, holding, kissing, cuddling, touching a child in an inappropriate, unnecessary or culturally insensitive way.
- Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive.
- Condone, or participate in, behaviour towards children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive or exposes the child to danger.
- Discriminate against, show different treatment, or favour particular children/adults to the exclusion of others.
- Sleep in the same room or bed as a child during official duty who is neither your child nor relative.
- Physically assault/physically abuse children or emotionally abuse a child or an adult.
- Behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative towards a child/adult.

Your Commitment

REVAMP Africa expects the same high standards from everyone working with REVAMP Africa in any capacity, including taking measures to prohibit their staff and representatives from engaging in any child sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or any other form of abuse or exploitation in their working and person lives.

You must have a zero-tolerance policy on Child abuse and exploitation and take all measures available to you to prevent and respond to actual, attempted or threatened forms of child abuse and exploitation involving members of staff or representatives of REVAMP Africa, or your organisation's employees or representatives that arises.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing: REVAMP Africa expects all trustees, employees, and volunteers to maintain high level of confidentiality. Information will only be shared in line with Data Protection. Information should, however, be shared with the police if a child is deemed to be at risk of harm, immediate danger, or a crime has been committed.

Reporting: You must immediately report any suspicion of child abuse or exploitation occurring in REVAMP Africa, your organisation or the organisations you work with, that arises during the performance of the terms of this agreement with REVAMP Africa. Failure to report will be treated as serious and may result in termination of any agreement with REVAMP Africa.

Social Media: All employees and volunteers should be aware of REVAMP Africa social media policy and procedures and the code of conduct for behaviour towards the children we support.

Use of Mobile Phones and other Digital Technology: All trustees, employees, and volunteers should be aware of REVAMP Africa's policy and procedures regarding the use of mobile phones and any digital technology. You understand that it is unlawful to photograph children and young people without the explicit consent of the person with parental responsibilities.

Cooperation: You will cooperate with REVAMP Africa in any investigations of concerns reported of child abuse.

Whistleblowing: It is important that people within REVAMP Africa have the confidence to come forward to speak or act if they are unhappy with anything. Whistle blowing occurs when a person raises a concern about dangerous or illegal activity, or any wrong- doing within their organisation. This includes concerns about another employee or volunteer. There is also a requirement by REVAMP Africa to protect whistle blowers.

Disciplinary Committee: The disciplinary committee will be responsible for receiving and rapidly responding to reports of child/adult abuse.

The committee consists of:

- DC Chairperson – Executive Director
- Child Protection Officer
- A senior staff member – Project Director
- External NGO member committed towards the cause of children’s rights and empowerment.

The Human Resources Personnel (SHM) will work in together with the Child Protection Officer (CPO) to file any report or complaints and ensure it gets to the committee as soon as possible as well as ensuring the implementation of the policy.

Legal Framework

This policy was drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children namely:

1. Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989
2. African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, 1999
3. Child's Rights Act, 2003
4. Lagos State Child's Rights Law, 2007
5. Prevention Against Domestic Violence Law, 2007
6. Criminal Law of Lagos State 2011
7. The Family Court of Lagos State (Civil Procedure) Rules 2012
8. EO/BRF/005OF2014, Lagos State Sex Offenders Monitoring Programme And Mandated Reporting, 2014.

