
Child Safeguarding Policy

1 Purpose

This policy is to support Rezan's commitment to preventing child maltreatment and to ensure Rezan representatives take all reasonable measures to safeguard children's welfare within our regular operations as a relief and development organization. It also aims to ensure that any potential or suspected harm to a child, internal or external, is reported and followed-up on in an appropriate and timely manner, and that any child or children affected are provided with the support they need.

2 Preamble

Child safeguarding is an accountability system made up of policies, procedures and actions that we take to ensure our organisation is safe for children. It is Rezan's responsibility to make sure our staff, programmes and operations do not directly or indirectly harm children, and do not expose them to the risk of harm and abuse. The policies and procedures that we put in place aim to both prevent and respond to any harm caused to children as a result of their interaction with our organisations.

2.0 Definitions:

- **Rezan representative** refers to employees, volunteers, interns, consultants, and invited visitors to Rezan projects (including Board Members). Additionally, elements of this policy will extend to refer to external representatives including contractors/suppliers, community workers, partners.
- **Child:** Refers to every human being under the age of 18¹.

2.1 Rezan, in line with our core value *honesty*, acknowledges that child maltreatment can occur in humanitarian and development work. We also acknowledge that in situations where humanitarian or development assistance is required, children are likely to be particularly vulnerable.

2.2 Rezan condemns all forms of child abuse and child exploitation. Our approach, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the U.N. Secretary General's Bulletin on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse,² incorporates all reasonable means to avoid all forms of abuse and exploitation against all children. The organisation's Code of Conduct commits staff to behavioural standards designed to safeguard human rights and express the organisational values in their work. Rezan subscribes to the 'Do No Harm' principle in its activities. It is committed to applying the Core Humanitarian Standard, and is a signatory to the Red Cross Code of Conduct.³

2.3 Rezan in line with our core values *respect for all people* and *valuing the individual* therefore adopts a child safeguarding policy that takes a zero tolerance approach to all abuse and exploitation against children and that seeks to ensure children are not exposed to the risk of maltreatment by its representatives.

2.4 Rezan acknowledges that all children, whatever their age, culture, abilities, gender, ethnicity, social status, religious belief or other status have the right to protection from maltreatment and commits to applying this safeguarding policy in a non-discriminatory manner. This also implies non-discrimination between Rezan representatives expected to apply the policy i.e. this policy applies equally to all categories of staff and Rezan representatives.

2.5 This policy covers child safeguarding within Rezan, including via our personnel management processes, our communications activities and our relationship with partners and

¹ United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989.

² Secretary General's Bulletin Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse 2003 ST/SGB/2003/13.

³ Code of Conduct for International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Response

procurement of services. In some locations Rezan operates specific child protection activities. 'Child protection' covers work, activities and programmes which intentionally support children's development and wellbeing, and might include work in schools, community centres, or rehabilitation facilities. For such programming, additional measures to ensure and promote child protection standards should be applied. The Child Safeguarding Commitment annexed to this policy is designed to support this, as well as further underlining our approach to all representatives. As such, it and should be signed by all Rezan staff & volunteers (including those managed by partner organisations) as well as consultants and visitors who may have direct contact with children through their roles.

3 Provisions

'Child safeguarding' aims to ensure an organisational environment that is safe and supportive for children and therefore safeguards their rights. We will incorporate approaches to promote and uphold an organisational environment that is safe and supportive for all children in all aspects of our work, as outlined below:

3.1 Personnel recruitment (including consultancy procurement)

We will incorporate a systematic approach to assessment and vetting within our recruitment and selection processes:

- Rezan's child safeguarding commitment and zero tolerance statement will be included in job advertisements, job descriptions, terms of reference, employment contracts.
- Job advertisements, job descriptions and terms of reference will clearly state the level of contact with/responsibility for children that the position requires.
- Recruitment procedures will be adjusted or enhanced, where necessary such that they are appropriate to the level of contact with/responsibility for children that the post requires:
 - Advertised selection criteria / requirements will detail the necessary checks and vetting that will be required for successful candidates to the role. This will include a requirement for candidates to undertake a formal criminal record check or to complete a self-declaration on any criminal convictions.
 - Specific child safeguarding questions will be included in interviews.
 - Reference checks will include specific questions (based on the level of contact with children required by the role) relating to Child Safeguarding and will be required before making employment offers.
 - Wherever feasible, checks of formal criminal records based on the position and level of contact with children will be required prior to an unconditional offer of employment being extended. Where formal checks are not feasible, candidates will be required to complete a criminal self-declaration form if formal criminal checks are not possible. Where information is disclosed which is deemed to have a potential bearing on Child Safeguarding, a risk assessment will be conducted and, where mitigation measures are not deemed satisfactory, may result in the withdrawal of any offer of employment. Information will be processed and stored in accordance with data protection good practice and Rezan will give due consideration to any legal rights relating to the avoidance of discrimination for ex-offenders.

3.2 Personnel induction

We will ensure that thorough induction processes effectively introduce Rezan's Child Safeguarding approach and individuals' responsibilities:

- Induction processes will incorporate verification (via signature of contract and additional documentation) of an individuals' agreement to this Child Safeguarding Policy, Child Safeguarding Commitment and Rezan's Code of Conduct.
- All new staff will receive a specific Child Safeguarding induction on joining the organisation. The detail and comprehensiveness of the induction will vary according to the level of contact with children required by the role.
- All new staff with a key child safeguarding position (e.g. management, Child Safeguarding Focal Points), will receive specific training relating to their additional responsibilities.

3.3 Child Safeguarding Awareness Raising and Training

We will encourage continual awareness Child Safeguarding and Rezan's approach via ongoing awareness raising initiatives:

- The Child Safeguarding Policy will be clearly visible and available in all of our offices and any infrastructure in the communities where children and their families come into contact with our organisation:
 - Whilst this policy document will be made available in an appropriate local language, we will also circulate child friendly materials to ensure that children and their families are aware of and understand the Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct.
- We will ensure children and their families are informed about how to report if they are concerned that violations of this policy have taken place. We will ensure that reporting mechanisms are available in an appropriate language and are safe and accessible.
- We will include child safeguarding as a permanent regular agenda point in appropriate management meetings, including programme and project management, team and country management and organisational management.
- We will include Child Safeguarding as an item for review in line management processes, including performance appraisal.
- We will provide mandatory refresher training on aspects of Child Safeguarding on an annual basis.
- We will train our partners and their Child Safeguarding Focal Points on our Child Safeguarding Policy and their responsibilities.

3.4 Safe programme design and implementation:

We will incorporate Child Safeguarding considerations into our programme design and implementation:

- Child safeguarding will be considered at every step of the program cycle, from designing a project, to implementing it and monitoring and evaluating it.
- We will ensure there are trained and qualified staff in positions working directly with children.
- Measures will be put in place to ensure that children are adequately supervised at all times.
- We will conduct risk assessments for projects directly involving children before a project starts. We will ensure that mitigated risk levels are at a safe level before an activity goes ahead.
- Child safeguarding measures will be included as an activity in projects wherever relevant, e.g. education and school projects.
- Child safeguarding training needs/targets will be explicitly accounted for in project proposals.
- We will ensure that the costs of appropriate child safeguarding measures are specifically included in project budgeting.

3.5 Behaviour standards

All Rezan staff are required to sign the organisational Code of Conduct, committing them to behaviour standards which reflect the values of the organisation.

In addition, Rezan has in place a Child Safeguarding Commitment. . As well as ensuring behaviours which create a safe and respectful environment for children, these standards aim to provide clarity on acceptable behaviour to avoid potential misunderstandings which can lead to false allegations of abuse. The Child Safeguarding Commitment which is to be signed by all staff is laid out in Annex 1 and forms an integral part of this policy.

This Child Safeguarding Commitment should be shared and discussed with partner organisation staff, volunteers and other stakeholders. While Rezan staff agree to comply with the behavioural standards laid out here as part of organisational policy via signature of their employment contract, Rezan also requires separate signature of the Child Safeguarding Commitment by individuals in order to further reinforce awareness of required standards. This

is particularly relevant when children are a specific programme target group, for example in projects covering education, rehabilitation and psychosocial support.

3.6 External Communication guidelines

In our information, publicity and advertising activities, we shall recognise all crisis-affected persons and project beneficiaries as dignified humans, not helpless objects⁴. Children are particularly vulnerable to misrepresentation, and have a right to decide if they wish to participate in communications activities.

All Rezan representatives should be aware of and adhere to the following communication guidelines regarding children⁵:

- Respect privacy and minimise protection risks in public communications:
 - In regular Rezan programming, participating children and their guardians should be made aware that photos may be taken, and they can choose not to be photographed if they wish.
 - When making a story about a specific child or group, ensure that children and their guardians have been properly informed and have given their consent (this should be recorded) before using any photo, film or quote of them.
 - Ensure the identities of children and young people in photos are not disclosed and that no details are shared that may make them traceable. Beneficiaries should be informed that name will be changed before publication. Do not use the real name of the child or location in any public communications unless their parent requests it.
 - Do not share or use children's or their families' information (visual, audio, written) obtained through work activities on any personal social media accounts (for example, this includes Instagram, Facebook, SnapChat). This includes their names, photos, location or any details about them.
 - When contracting media partners to work with us ensure they have read, understood and signed the Child Safeguarding Policy.
 - Do not use photos or videos of children in professional communication who are particularly vulnerable to be identified even if their identity has been changed, for example children associated with armed groups, unaccompanied children, or children that have been abused or exploited in any way.
- In any public communications, always be sure the images and stories of children are honest representations of the situation and the facts.

3.7 Focal Points

A Rezan staff member is identified as Child Safeguarding Focal Point for each country programme, as well at Head Office for organisational level. In each location, the Child Safeguarding Focal Point promotes good practice and the upholding of this policy.

Focal points' responsibilities will be incorporated into individual job descriptions.

Focal points will be identified in each office location, or via the organisational level focal point, by contacting Personnel@missioneast.org

3.8 Working with partners and other external representatives

We will make clear Rezan's Child Safeguarding expectations as they apply to our work with partner organisations and other representatives:

- Reference to Child Safeguarding is included in cooperation agreements with partner organisations. Partner organisations will be required to commit to a similar policy, and where programmes are child-focused, all relevant partner organisation representatives (staff and volunteers) are required to adhere to Rezan Child Safeguarding Commitment or equivalent code of conduct.

⁴ In line with *Code of Conduct for International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Response*, to which Rezan is a signatory

⁵ These requirements are also part of the Child Protection Commitment, Annex 1 to this policy.

- Reference to Child Safeguarding standards and expectations is incorporated in procurement processes and other due diligence checks for service providers. Compliance with Rezan's zero tolerance approach is incorporated into supplier / service provider contractual agreements.

3.9 Reporting protocols

All Rezan representatives must follow the standard organisational process for reporting to witnessed, suspected, or alleged violation of this safeguarding policy, including breaches of Rezan's Code of Conduct and the specific Child Safeguarding Commitment's behaviour standards listed in the annex below.

This includes reporting immediately to line manager witnessed, suspected or alleged violations of this policy, in keeping with procedures in Rezan policy on Reporting Misconduct, Whistleblowing and Grievance (Staff Handbook 3.9). Individuals who are not Rezan staff should report issues to their contract manager or person responsible for their involvement in Rezan activities.

- We will ensure that child-friendly reporting mechanisms are established for use in each project location.
- Rezan will report child safeguarding concerns and incidents to donors as required in their partnership agreements.
- Rezan will further report Child Safeguarding incidents to local authorities as required by local laws in force. If a confirmed incident violates local law, wherever possible, survivor wishes and best interests of the child will be taken into consideration in decisions about the detail of reporting to authorities.

3.10 Response

Rezan will take all allegations or reports of Child Safeguarding concern seriously and will take steps to investigate and follow up as appropriate:

- All child safeguarding reports, whoever they come from (children, adults, organisation staff etc.) will be taken seriously and will be thoroughly investigated.
- Confidentiality will be upheld wherever possible, in accordance with the scope of the investigation.
- The safety and best interests of the child will be the immediate and fundamental consideration in all Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct concerns or incidents.
- Any child or children affected will be provided with the care they need in line with best practice child protection case management, supported by trained case management professionals. Offices without the internal capacity to provide case management services for child or adolescent survivors will refer to an organisation who can.

4. Scope

4.1 Persons to whom this policy applies. This policy applies to all Rezan's employees and all interns, volunteers and consultants working with or via Rezan, paid or unpaid, full time or part time, temporary or long-term.

4.2 Authority to override the provisions herein. The provisions set out in this policy can only be overridden in appropriate circumstances and only on the authority of the Managing Director, in writing.

4.3 Waiver Any decision to override any of the provisions contained in this policy, for whatever reason, shall not be construed as a change in policy and will in no way indicate that such a decision would be taken to override the same or different provisions in similar or differing circumstances in the future.

4.4 Procedure for overriding the provisions herein. In the case of an individual wishing to appeal to override any of the provisions laid out in the policy, application must be made in writing to the Managing Director.

5. Policy responsibility

5.1 Pre-approval list. This policy was pre-approved by the Management Team of Rezan and by Kim Hartzner, Managing Director.

5.2 Policy duration. This policy will come into effect from the date of its inclusion in the Rezan Handbook and will have no limit of time. This policy will be reviewed regularly, and updated as required.

5.3 Responsibility for communication. This policy and updates to it will be communicated and made available to staff through the Rezan Handbook. It is the responsibility of line managers in field locations to ensure that national staff has access to this policy in their own language and that they indicate their understanding of it.

5.4 Responsibility for compliance. In Rezan field locations it is the responsibility of Rezan Country Directors to ensure that their operations adhere to the policy laid out herein and that the field location has an assigned Child Safeguarding Focal Point who will take responsibility for reporting against this policy. In Rezan head office locations, it is the responsibility of the Management Team to ensure that the provisions of this policy are upheld.

Annex 1: Rezan Child Safeguarding Commitment

Purpose

This standard aims to protect children from any physical or emotional harm while participating in Rezan activities or interacting with Rezan representatives. It applies to staff, volunteers, consultants and partner staff. It also applies to people visiting programs, such as journalists and donors. These persons commit upholding these rules whenever they are working with/for Rezan, and whenever they are present in beneficiary communities, whether on duty or off.

Commitment

Persons working with Rezan or its partners, or people Rezan invites to visit programmes commit to the following:

I will:

- treat all children with respect.
- do everything in my control to minimise the risk of children being harmed during the planning, implementation and evaluation of work activities, including carrying out risk assessments. I will contribute to a safe environment for children.
- **immediately report any concerns or incidents of sexual abuse, exploitation or violence against a child that I become aware of, whether it is related to Rezan or harm caused by someone or something external to Rezan.**
- ask for support if I have concerns about, or do not fully understand the Child Safeguarding Policy.
- inform a Child Safeguarding Focal Point if there is any situation where I am unsure or it is not clear to me if it is potentially a breach of the Code of Conduct.
- inform Rezan of any charges or convictions relating to child abuse or exploitation that I am subject to that occur before or during my association with Rezan. This includes charges or convictions that occur under either criminal or common/traditional law.
- use positive and non-violent methods at all times when interacting and working with children.
- seek to empower children and their families through providing them with information on their rights and how to report concerns or incidents of abuse.
- as much as possible, ensure that another adult is present when working with children.
- comply with local laws about child labour and avoid hiring children for any work which is inappropriate for their age, which prevents their education or play, or which puts them at high risk of injury.
 - encourage children to be open and to talk about any issues they have and promote them taking part in decisions that affect them, particularly concerning their safeguarding, and considering their age and maturity.
 - ensure that I treat confidential information about children and their families with respect, I will avoid sharing it with others either verbally, electronically, on paper or on social media, except if it is part of an approved organisational process or part of the case management service, and with informed consent from the child and their family.
- remain aware of the power imbalance between adults and children and behave in a child friendly way that sets a positive example for children at all times.
- obtain informed consent from children and their caregivers before taking their photograph, video or audio recording for professional reasons, and before using their photograph, video or audio file for professional reasons. Where possible I will obtain written consent.

I will NOT:

- use language or behaviour towards children that is harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate.
 - discriminate or exclude children on the grounds of age, culture, abilities, gender, ethnicity, social status, religious belief, political opinion, sexual identity or other status.
 - hit any child, or use any form of physical punishment.
 - do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves such as toileting them or changing their clothes.
 - commit any sexual act with a child (up to age of 18), including paying for sexual services or acts (mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defence).
 - invite children alone to my vehicle, home or office, unless they are in immediate danger.
 - sleep in the same room or bed as a child I am working with (apart from my own child) unless there are exceptional circumstances which mean that it is unavoidable. (In extreme cases such as these, wherever possible I will get my supervisor's permission, and will ensure that another adult is present if possible.)
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Annex 1: Rezan Child Safeguarding Commitment

- access or create sexually abusive images of children, or use computers, mobile phones, video or digital cameras or any other technology to exploit or harass children. I will not show material of a pornographic nature to children.
- use tobacco around children while I am working, or within the premises of spaces dedicated to children (Child Friendly Spaces, schools or learning centres, play areas, etc.)
- report information that I know is false or spread malicious information about co-workers that I know is false.
- get married to a child, regardless of the legal minimum age or any judicial consent that is given.
- engage in traditional practices that may be harmful to a child's healthy development.
- pay a child through either money, food or other goods unless it is part of an agreed and approved activity.
- withhold any basic care items from children such as water or food, as a way of disciplining them.
- take photos or videos of children that are for my personal use, or post pictures or videos of children on my personal social media channels.
- use photos or videos of children in professional communication who are particularly vulnerable to be identified even if their identity has been changed, for example children associated with armed groups, unaccompanied children, or children that have been abused or exploited in any way.
- develop relationships or display behaviour with children that may be perceived to be, or become, exploitative, abusive or inappropriate.
- share my personal email address, phone number or social media account details with children or their families, or request these details from children or their families, unless it is strictly for service provision. If needed I will only share my email and/or phone number, I will never share my social media account details.
- introduce or encourage a child to engage in harmful or dangerous activities.
- work with children while I am under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

I understand and will follow all the rules above. If I witness or become aware of violation of these rules by others, I will report them to my manager and/or child safeguarding focal point immediately. I understand that violation of any of the above policy, including failure to report, can result in immediate relevant disciplinary measures, including suspension or termination of my contract.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____
