Safeguarding at PATH

Overview of PATH’s safeguarding framework

This policy describes PATH’s safeguarding framework and commitments. Safeguarding at PATH encompasses the following policies and procedures: Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and Child Safeguarding, Trafficking in Persons, Harassment and Retaliation, Workplace Bullying, and Personal Conduct.

At PATH, safeguarding is the prevention of, and response to, harms including exploitation, sexual abuse, child abuse and neglect, trafficking in persons, harassment, discrimination, and workplace bullying occurring within PATH or against anyone who comes into contact with PATH—especially children and vulnerable adults. PATH is committed to creating and maintaining harassment and abuse-free environments for all personnel, program participants, and community members who have contact with PATH programs. PATH’s safeguarding framework aligns with PATH’s organizational mission, values, and Code of Ethics, Responsibility and Governance and Principles Relating to Responsible Conduct; PATH’s role as a signer on InterAction’s CEO Pledge to Action; and evolving sector and donor standards including the UN’s zero tolerance stance on sexual exploitation and abuse. PATH recognizes that promoting awareness and prevention of potential safeguarding harms requires prioritizing safeguarding considerations across every aspect of PATH’s work. The emphasis on “framework” reflects a cohesive approach to building knowledge and practices related to safeguarding that fundamentally impacts how PATH operates.

Definitions

Program participant: Any person who is served by a PATH project.

Project-level integration: The incorporation of safeguarding standards and measures in projects that involve direct contact with program participants in order to mitigate potential risks to program participants and others engaged in project activities and operations. These standards and measures apply to all stages of the project lifecycle from proposal development to project design and implementation.

Safeguarding: The prevention of, and response to, harms including exploitation, sexual abuse, child abuse and neglect, trafficking in persons, harassment, discrimination, and workplace bullying occurring within PATH or against anyone who comes into contact with PATH. This includes implementing preventive and protective measures for populations that may be at an increased risk of harm—especially children and vulnerable adults.

For definitions of child, vulnerable adult, exploitation, sexual abuse, neglect, and physical and emotional abuse, see PATH’s PSEA and Child Safeguarding policy. For definitions of harassment and sexual harassment, see PATH’s Harassment and Retaliation policy. For definitions of trafficking in persons, see PATH’s Trafficking in Persons policy.

Project-level integration

PATH’s safeguarding framework extends to its programs and operations worldwide. PATH is committed to the principle of Do No Harm and to treating all people with dignity and respect. This means protecting project staff, program participants, community members, health care workers, government staff, and others from safeguarding harms, including exploitation, sexual abuse, harassment, child abuse and neglect, and trafficking in persons, that are committed by PATH personnel or partner staff. At the project level, PATH’s safeguarding policies on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and Child Safeguarding, Harassment and Retaliation, and Trafficking in Persons address expectations for conduct and how we implement robust systems to prevent harm from happening and to respond appropriately when harm does occur.

PATH considers safeguarding—especially for children and vulnerable adults—in project design, planning and implementation for all projects that involve direct contact with program participants. PATH project-level integration involves evaluating and taking measures to mitigate potential risks to program participants and others involved in project activities and operations. The procedures accompanying this policy describe PATH’s standards and requirements for integrating safeguarding protections into PATH programs and projects.