



LEGS Safeguarding Policy

August 2022

LEGS SAFEGUARDING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The LEGS Safeguarding Policy describes the steps taken to protect people from harm, including beneficiaries, consultants and volunteers, and other people who come into contact with the Charity and/or their partners. While safeguarding principally refers to the prevention of harm, it also encompasses practices to handle incidents and/or complaints. UK charities have a duty of care to those involved in or affected by its activities and are required to take reasonable steps to manage the risk of causing harm

Unfortunately, charities are increasingly confronted by counterproductive and even hostile behaviours and attitudes inside and outside their organization. Risks that are arising must be well understood and averted through a sound safeguarding policy.

Risks to people include:

- Security, safety and health
- Commercial exploitation, human trafficking, slavery
- Physical and emotional abuse/bullying, harassment, negligent treatment
- Abuse, sexual exploitation, and harassment, forced marriage
- Radicalization and extremism
- Female genital mutilation
- Discrimination
- Risks from terrorist acts and terrorist infiltration of organisations.

Charities need to understand the issues around safeguarding, identify the risks and have in place ways in which to ensure that both charity staff and the people they relate to are protected as far as possible from these risks. The charity needs to:

- Ensure that all trustees, individuals, volunteers and beneficiaries know about safeguarding and people protection.
- Thoroughly assess the suitability of individuals in their respective role within LEGS.
- Have appropriate policies and procedures in place, and ensure that they are shared and applied.
- Guide all involved on how to spot and refer or report concerns.
- Have a clear system of referring or reporting to relevant organisations as soon as you suspect or identify concerns.
- Set out risks and how you will manage them in a risk register which is regularly reviewed.
- Be quick to respond to concerns and carry out appropriate investigations.
- Ensure the trustees work as an entity and not have individuals dominate the work.

Each of these requirements are addressed in the following numbered sections.

Make sure all trustees, individuals, volunteers and beneficiaries know about safeguarding and people protection.

LEGS has no employees. It does of course have trustees, who should make themselves familiar with the safeguarding concepts outlined above as part of their governance responsibilities. LEGS does contract a range of individuals to coordinate and manage LEGS' finances, administration and projects and implement LEGS training.

Each engagement is covered by a contract agreement. A condition of this agreement is that all individuals understand and comply with LEGS' Safeguarding Policy and all other relevant policies. This requirement should also be applied to volunteers, students or any other persons working with the charity in the future.

Have appropriate policies and procedures in place.

LEGS has procedures in place dealing with the following aspects of safeguarding:

- Dealing with unacceptable behaviours/actions, including sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, within the charity
- Dealing with unacceptable behaviours/actions, including sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, by LEGS consultants affecting beneficiaries or people outside the charity
- Protecting those consultants engaged by the charity
- Ensuring that consultants can recognise safeguarding risks and know how to report them and act on them

The table overleaf sets out for each type of safeguarding issue the procedures that the charity will follow in response to them.

Safeguarding: Responses and Procedures

| Behaviour or risk | Response and procedure |
|---|--|
| <p>Consultants (including LEGS Trainers), trustee or person for whom the charity is responsible accuses another of bullying, harassment (including sexual harassment) or discrimination. These behaviours are defined in Annex 1.</p> | <p>LEGS will not tolerate bullying, harassment including sexual harassment or discrimination of any sort. Anyone who feels they have been subjected to such should seek early advice from their manager. Where this is inappropriate, for example where the issue involves the relationship between the individual and the manager, then the individual should feel free to report or discuss their concern with another manager or the Chair of trustees.</p> <p>Confidentiality will be respected. All LEGS consultants are expected to report the harassment, including sexual harassment, of beneficiaries, colleagues or of partners.</p> <p>The initial response will be for the manager or trustee to try to resolve the issue informally, establishing the facts and speaking to both parties if appropriate. These situations call for tact and sensitivity, where an allegation is unfounded or unproven there can be serious consequences for working relationships and the danger of retaliation.</p> <p>Where the facts of an allegation have been established and it is not a minor issue LEGS will need to undertake a more formal investigation; see the LEGS Complaints Policy.</p> <p>Where the facts are proven, LEGS will choose an appropriate sanction which could include termination of contract in the case of a contractor or disqualification in the case of a trustee. In severe cases LEGS will consider whether the issues should be reported to the police or an external agency (the Charity Commission). Vexatious or false accusations will be dealt with in a similar manner.</p> |

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| <p>Consultants (including LEGS Trainers), trustee or person for whom the charity is responsible is suspected of, or has committed an act/acts of abuse and/or sexual exploitation involving persons external to LEGS. Sexual exploitation and abuse are defined in Annex 1.</p> | <p>LEGS is deeply committed to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse within humanitarian settings. Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse are prohibited and will be dealt with by termination of contract or disqualification.</p> <p>If an allegation has been received, the charity will need to decide if it needs to undertake its own investigation to establish the facts, or whether it should be reported immediately to the relevant law enforcement agency. The charity will take care not to compromise any criminal investigation. If there is prima facie evidence of criminal behaviour the situation should be reported immediately to the police without undertaking an investigation.</p> <p>If an investigation is appropriate before any external referral, the charity needs to follow a proper process which is set out in the Complaints Policy.</p> <p>The charity will consider the need to report to other external agencies; the Charity Commission or other partners/regulators.</p> <p>LEGS consultants/volunteers are obliged to create and maintain an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. Where a LEGS consultant/volunteer develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual exploitation or sexual abuse by or of a fellow worker he/she must report such concerns via their Line Manager or the chair of trustees.</p> |
| <p>Consultants, trustee or person for whom the charity is responsible is subjected to physical and/or sexual abuse by an external individual/organisation or is under threat of abuse.</p> | <p>LEGS has a Security Policy that requires consultants to report incidents which may affect the security of others and may lead to a revision of its security information. Where there is a threat or crisis, the Technical and Project Manager with support from the trustees will respond to serious incidents/ events that require overall coordination and management. Key responses are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediately ensure the safety of the person by ensuring the relevant law enforcement agency is aware of and is taking action to protect the victim and/or investigate the crime |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact LEGS local representative and/or partner organization to ascertain that the individual is being cared for and is under no threat of further harm • If appropriate, take steps to move the individual to a location of safety <p>All LEGS consultants should understand and abide by the Security Policy for their own protection and the safety of others.</p> |
| <p>Other risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human trafficking • modern slavery • health and safety • commercial exploitation • extremism and radicalisation • forced marriage • female genital mutilation • terrorism | <p>All LEGS' consultants need to be aware of the possibility of these kinds of risks to people in whose communities they operate and provide benefit to. All concerns should be reported to manager or trustee as appropriate.</p> <p>LEGS does not engage in major procurement or trading activities with other organisations and is therefore not required to provide a Modern Slavery Statement in accordance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015.</p> <p>Nonetheless, LEGS is committed to ensuring that its supply chains are free from trafficking and slavery through its Procurement Policy. LEGS recognises that it may work with larger organisations or charities which need to provide a modern slavery statement themselves and is committed to assisting such organisations in compiling their statements. LEGS will carry out proper due diligence when it works with, or make grants to, other bodies to achieve their aims. It will seek assurance that any grant recipient or partner body is suitable and that they must have appropriate safeguarding procedures in place.</p> <p>LEGS Security Policy states that it will always consider the communities where it is working and never knowingly develop security plans which endanger or act contrary to the interests of those communities.</p> |

PREVENTION OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, ABUSE AND HARASSMENT (PSEAH)

LEGS has a zero-tolerance policy towards inaction against sexual harassment, exploitation, and abuse. At LEGS, we believe all people have a right to live their lives free from sexual violence and any abuse of power regardless of age, gender, sexuality, sexual orientation, disability, religion or ethnic origin. We recognise that there are unequal power dynamics across the organisation and in relation to those we serve, and that we face risk of some people exploiting their position of power for personal gain. LEGS will not tolerate its trustees, consultants, volunteers, partners or any other representative associated with the delivery of its work carrying out any form of sexual harassment, sexual exploitation or sexual abuse. LEGS commits to supporting survivors, improving safeguarding capacity, reporting, investigating, responding to, and preventing sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse.

LEGS is committed to achieving full, ongoing implementation of the Six Core Principles relating to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Working Group on Prevention and Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Minimum Operating Standards on PSEA and the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability.

LEGS' Core Principles on PSEAH

The Core Principles provide that:

1. Sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian workers are acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of contracts.
2. Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the local age of consent, i.e. the local or national laws of the country where the work is taking place. Ignorance or mistaken belief in the age of the child is not a defence.
3. Exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour by LEGS Consultants and Related Personnel is prohibited. This includes the exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries.
4. Any sexual relationship between those providing humanitarian assistance and protection and a person benefiting from such humanitarian assistance and protection that involves improper use of rank or position is prohibited.
5. When a LEGS Consultant develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual exploitation or abuse by a LEGS Consultant or Related Personnel they must report such concerns via LEGS' established reporting procedures.
6. LEGS Consultants are obliged to create and maintain an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and abuse and promotes the implementation of this Policy. LEGS Trustees have particular responsibilities to support and develop systems that maintain this environment.

Roles and Responsibilities

All LEGS consultants and related consultants are required to report any suspicions or incidences of SEAH of others. Failure to report to a relevant person suspicion of SEAH relating to someone else is a breach of LEGS' policy and could lead to disciplinary action being taken. There is no obligation for an individual to report any incident that has happened to them.

LEGS Trustees, hold overall accountability for this policy and its implementation.

Reporting Channels

Anyone (including members of the community LEGS works with) can raise a concern or make a complaint to LEGS about something they have experienced or witnessed without fear of retribution. You can do this verbally or in writing to info@emergency-livestock.net. You can also write to us at LEGS, Vesey Farm, Little Clacton Road, Great Holland, Frinton-on-Sea, Essex, CO13 0EX (see LEGS Public Complaints Policy for further information).

Confidentiality

Complaints can be made anonymously. Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality throughout the complaints process. Information that identifies individuals involved in a complaint will be limited to consultants with the absolute need to have such information and will not be shared further without obtaining the informed consent of the survivor, except if someone's life is at risk, a child is at risk, or as required by law in consultation with legal counsel and where safe to do so. Non-identifying information will be shared as per donor and regulatory body reporting requirements.

Annex 1.***Definitions of unacceptable or prohibited behaviours*****Bullying and harassment**

Harassment, bullying (including cyber-bullying) and intimidation are defined as any act or conduct including spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of pictures or other material if the action or conduct is unwelcome, to the subject and could reasonably be regarded as offensive, humiliating or intimidating and may include but not limited to:

1. Offensive or degrading remarks, verbal abuse, or other hostile behaviour such as insulting, teasing, mocking, degrading or ridiculing another person or group
2. Racial slurs, derogatory remarks about a person's accent, or display of racially offensive symbols
3. Unwelcome or inappropriate physical contact, comments, questions,
4. Advances, jokes, epithets or demands
5. Physical assault or stalking
6. Displays or electronic transmission of derogatory, demeaning or hostile materials

Discrimination; in relation to the following protected characteristics - age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sex:

- direct discrimination - treating someone with a protected characteristic less favourably than others
- indirect discrimination - putting rules or arrangements in place that apply to everyone, but that put someone with a protected characteristic at an unfair disadvantage
- harassment - unwanted behaviour linked to a protected characteristic that violates someone's dignity or creates an offensive environment for them
- victimisation - treating someone unfairly because they've complained about discrimination or harassment

Sexual exploitation and abuse

- Sexual violence or harassment
- Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defence
- Exchange of money, work, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour, is prohibited

Human trafficking and modern slavery

The [Modern Slavery Act 2015](#) (MSA) defines modern slavery as slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour, in line with the Article 4 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Examples can include forced labour, debt bondage, human trafficking and forced or early marriage.