

Safeguarding Policy

Child and adult safeguarding · Applies to all staff, volunteers, and partners

1. Purpose and scope

SORD works with children and adults in crisis-affected communities. This policy exists to protect every person who comes into contact with our work from harm, abuse, exploitation, and neglect. It applies to all SORD staff, volunteers, board members, contractors, and partner personnel operating within SORD programs.

2. Our commitments

- The safety and dignity of program participants come before any program objective.
- All staff and volunteers complete safeguarding orientation before their first assignment, and refresher training annually.
- Roles with direct contact with children require reference checks and a signed commitment to this policy and our Code of Conduct.
- Program activities involving children take place in visible, supervised settings; one-to-one unobserved contact is not permitted.
- Images and stories are collected only with informed consent, never in a way that identifies a person at risk, and never in exchange for aid.
- Aid is never conditioned on any personal favour. Sexual exploitation and abuse are grounds for immediate dismissal and referral to authorities.

3. Recruitment and screening

All recruitment includes identity verification and at least two references. Volunteers in field roles must reside in the state of assignment and are supervised by SORD field coordinators. Safeguarding responsibilities are written into every role description.

4. Reporting and response

- Any concern — witnessed, disclosed, or suspected — must be reported within 24 hours to the safeguarding focal point or by email to info@sord-sudan.org.
- Reports may be made anonymously. Retaliation against anyone who reports in good faith is itself a violation of this policy.
- Concerns are logged, risk-assessed, and investigated confidentially. The safety of the survivor guides every step, including referral to medical, psychosocial, and legal services where they exist.
- Where a criminal act is suspected, SORD refers the matter to the appropriate authorities consistent with the survivor's safety and wishes.
- Funding partners are notified of safeguarding incidents connected to their programs in line with grant agreements.

5. Governance

The SORD board reviews this policy annually and receives a summary of all safeguarding reports and outcomes. Every partner agreement includes safeguarding obligations equivalent to this policy.