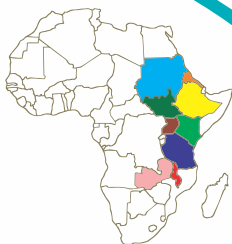


AMECEA SECRETARIAT

Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa

CHILD AND VULNERABLE ADULT SAFEGUARDING POLICY



AMECEA

Association of Member Episcopal
Conferences in Eastern Africa

MAY 2020

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However, AMECEA Secretariat has to be acknowledged.

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FOREWORD

AMECEA recognises that children and vulnerable adults can be at risk of harm from any organisation or institution that is supposed to support them. The risks could either be as a result of intended abuse and exploitation by individuals in positions of trust, or, unintentionally, via programme activities in general. It is therefore of utmost importance that the Church and its affiliated institutions create a strong safeguarding culture through compliance and accountability to upholding safeguarding standards. This is to ensure that any risk of harm to children and vulnerable adults is minimised, and, if harm is done, to respond appropriately when concerns or allegations arise.

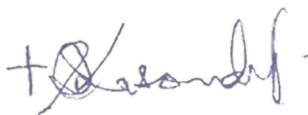
As highlighted by Pope Francis in his apostolic letter ‘As a Loving Mother’, “The Church loves all her children and vulnerable adults like a loving mother, and cares for all and protects with a special affection those who are smallest and defenceless. This is the duty that Christ himself entrusted to the entire Christian community. Aware of this, the Church is especially vigilant in protecting children and vulnerable adults.”

In February 2015, Pope Francis through his letter to the Catholic bishops and religious superiors, authorized the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) to investigate and judge claims of 'abuse of office' by anyone who allegedly failed to protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse.

In his statement, the Pope reaffirmed that, “everything possible must be done to rid the Church of the scourge of sexual abuse of minors and to open pathways of reconciliation and healing for those who were abused.”

AMECEA secretariat acknowledges that identifying, accepting and addressing risks is crucial to creating children and vulnerable adult-safe organization. Effective implementation of safeguarding measures that uphold the safety, confidentiality, and dignity of all parties is fundamental to creating a safeguarding culture.

Through this policy, AMECEA secretariat and Member Conferences make a commitment to protect children and vulnerable adults, by establishing mechanisms and systems for safeguarding. As such, I urge the AMECEA secretariat to implement the provisions of this policy towards the safety for all children and vulnerable adults.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rt. Rev. Charles Kasonde". The signature is stylized with a large initial "C" and "K".

Rt. Rev. Charles Kasonde,
Chairman of AMECEA.

PREFACE

A child is arguably life's greatest gift. Every child is a sure sign of God's blessing, presence and an assurance of a future. No child is born outside of God's plan and purpose. Indeed the Bible reminds us that "...before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations. (Jeremiah 1:5) The Catholic Church proclaims that human life is sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. The human person is the clearest reflection of God among us. The Book of Genesis teaches that every human person is created in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:26). Their dignity does not come from the work they do, but from the persons they are. Thus all human life is sacred and must be respected and protected absolutely, at every stage from the moment of conception through to natural death. We are therefore called to revere and cherish the life of every person (CCC 2258–2270). This Catholic view of the inherent human dignity spells for our perception of children who we must see not only as human persons but as vulnerable humans deserving our very best care and nurture.

At AMECEA, we acknowledge the gift of children to our families, churches and indeed to the entire region. In the AMECEA region, children below the age of 18 form around 50% of the entire population. This is a significant segment of any population and we are committed to their wellbeing. We are committed to ensure the highest possible care for children entrusted to us.

This implies that we have to do an introspection on how we do things and what we prioritize in respect to promotion of the best interest of the child. Our desire is that our programmes, projects and activities will not only do no harm to children but consciously advance the care and protection of every child.

This policy spells our commitment to be mindful of our duty to safeguard the wellbeing of all children. It binds the staff and all who work for and on behalf of the secretariat to a set of internationally recognized standards, aligned to the Universal Church's commitment to safeguarding and the national laws protecting children in Kenya.

I therefore urge all who are bound by this policy to adhere to its provisions and uphold the duty of care to all children without favor or discrimination. God bless you.



Very Rev. Fr. Anthony Makunde
Secretary General – AMECEA

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to all those who supported us in the process of drafting this policy. I appreciate the members of the AMECEA 19th Plenary Assembly meeting in Addis Ababa in July 2018 who resolved that AMECEA secretariat prioritizes safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. I gratefully acknowledge and appreciate the contributions of the AMECEA Executive Board members who relentlessly encouraged and supported the initiative to develop this policy.


I am indebted to His Eminence Berhaneyesus, Cardinal Souraphiel, Archbishop of Addis Ababa and Former Chairman of AMECEA secretariat under whose leadership the process of developing this policy began. I sincerely thank and appreciate the leadership of the Rt. Rev. Charles Kasonde, Bishop of Solwezi Zambia and Chairman of AMECEA secretariat and Most. Rev. Ignatius Chama, Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Kasama, Zambia and Chairman of AMECEA Pastoral Department. This work would not have been completed without their meticulous guidance.

I laud the zeal and commitment of the coordinators in the various departments towards this process. My profound appreciation further goes to all our partners and collaborators for their technical and financial assistance throughout this process.

I acknowledge the dedication and commitment of all those who have contributed in one way or another to the realization of this policy. Gratitude also goes to George Wahiti Thuku, of the AMECEA Child Safeguarding desk for professionally leading a team of experts who worked tirelessly to research, draft and refine this policy.

Finally, I wish to heartily thank my colleagues, fellow priests and staff at AMECEA secretariat for their support and insightful contributions towards this policy.

May this policy contribute to a better understanding, care and safety of all children and vulnerable adults at AMECEA Secretariat and beyond.



Rev. Fr. Emmanuel Chimombo.

Coordinator, AMECEA Pastoral Department.

ACRONYMS

■	AMECEA	Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa
■	AU	African Union
■	CAFOD	Catholic Agency for Overseas Development
■	CCC	The Catechism of the Catholic Church
■	CDF	Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
■	CST	Catholic Social Teachings
■	CUEA	The Catholic University of Eastern Africa
■	DSO	Designated Safeguarding Officer
■	HR	Human Resource
■	KCCB	Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops
■	SECAM	Symposium of Episcopal Conferences in Africa and Madagascar
■	USCCB	United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

1. OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Assent

Agreement by a child's parent/guardian and vulnerable adult to participate in an activity, procedure, or treatment. Depending on specific guidelines, the consent could be written. Members of AMECEA secretariat shall be presumed to have assented by virtue of being employed and signing the child safeguarding policy.

Best interest of the child and vulnerable adult

Means to evaluate and balance all the elements necessary to make decisions in specific circumstances for children and vulnerable adults.

Caregiver/carer.

A person with whom the children and vulnerable adults lives, provides daily care, and acts as the 'parent' whether they are biological parents, guardians or not. It includes informal arrangements in which the caregiver does not have parental responsibility.

Poor

"Poor" is understood to refer to the economically disadvantaged who, as a consequence of their status, suffer oppression and powerlessness.

Child

Any individual under the age of 18, including the unborn.

Child abuse

Constitutes all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, trafficking or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child and vulnerable adult's health, survival development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

Child safeguarding

This is the responsibility that organizations, Church institutions, have to ensure that their staff, operations, programs and activities "do no harm" to a child, that is, they do not expose the child to risk of harm and abuse, and any concerns raised are referred to the appropriate authorities.

Child safeguarding policy

A statement of intent that communicates an organization's or Church institution's commitment to keeping a child safe from harm.

Child protection

The prevention of and response to risks and any other form of violence against a child.

Child abuse risk

The potential for a situation to result in any form of harm or abuse to the child.

Child rights

The inherent fundamental entitlements and freedoms of a child which they have, merely by virtue of being human.

Direct contact with child

Being in physical or virtual presence with a child, regardless of whether contact is occasional or regular, short or long term, face to face or via direct email, texting or social media contact.

Indirect contact with child

Not being in the physical presence of a child but having access to child's files, names, addresses, photographs, case plans, etc.

Informed consent

The process by which a child and vulnerable adult learns about and understands the purpose, benefits and potential risks of an intervention and then agrees to it.

Vulnerable adult

Is an individual of 18 years or over who is at greater risk of significant harm due to factors such as gender, age, mental, or physical help or as a result of poverty, inequality or experience of displacement or crises.

Accused

The person against whom a complaint of sexual abuse is made.

Canon law

The term used to describe the ecclesiastical law of the Roman Catholic Church..

Civil Authorities

Local law enforcement agencies

Cleric

One who is constituted in sacred ministry in the Church; clerics are divided into deacons, priests and bishops.

Diocese

A particular Church entrusted to the responsibility of a bishop usually established by territory within the Catholic Church.

Dismissal from the clerical state

A penalty imposed on a cleric for having committed certain grave delict (offense). The penalty can be imposed through a judicial proceeding, or, in an especially grievous case of the sexual abuse of minors, ex officio, in an administrative proceeding.

Dispensation from the obligations of priesthood

Sacred Orders, once validly received, never become invalid. A priest or deacon, however, who recognizes his inability to continue to function as a cleric, can request from the Holy Father a dispensation from the juridic obligations connected with priesthood, including that of celibacy.

Promoter of Justice

The person appointed in each diocese and in the higher tribunals of the Catholic Church whose responsibility is to provide for the public good.

In penal proceedings, he brings the accusation on behalf of the Church, and prosecutes it before the tribunal.

Religious

A person who is a member of an institute of Consecrated Life or a society of apostolic life.

Safe Environment

Term used to refer to a wide assortment of practices that contribute to preventing abuse of a child or vulnerable adult.

Sexual Abuse of a Minor:

Contact or interaction between a minor and an adult when the minor is being used for sexual stimulation of the adult.

Definitions adapted from :

1. Committee on the Rights of the Child and vulnerable adult, General Comment No. 14 (2013).
2. United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and vulnerable adult (UNCRC), Article 1; African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and vulnerable adult, Article 2; Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela, Article 6; Canon 97.
3. World Health Organisation (WHO) Consultation on Child and vulnerable adult Abuse Prevention.
4. Keeping Child and vulnerable adults Safe (2014) Understanding Child and vulnerable adult Safeguarding, A facilitator's guide; Keeping Child and vulnerable adults Safe Coalition (2011) Keeping Child and vulnerable adults Safe, Toolkit for child and vulnerable adult protection.
5. CAFOD Safeguarding Policy V1 January 2019

2. INTRODUCTION AND POLICY BACKGROUND

2.1. AMECEA's understanding and commitment to safeguarding

2.1.1. What is AMECEA?

The Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa (AMECEA) is a Catholic service organisation for the National Conferences of Catholic Bishops from nine countries across Eastern Africa, including Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. Djibouti and Somalia are Affiliate Members. AMECEA is part of the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM). AMECEA's statutes were officially approved during the Council in Rome in 1964, the same year in which a Permanent Secretariat was established in Nairobi, Kenya.

Vision.

A Holy Spirit-filled family of God committed to holistic evangelization and integral development.

Mission.

To inspire and empower the family of God for credible witness by promoting unity, justice and solidarity among members.

2.1.2. Current Child Safeguarding Status

AMECEA secretariat's overall approach to children and vulnerable adults safeguarding is rooted in understanding that they can be exposed to risk or harm by organizations and their staff, programs and operations. Their safety is most often threatened by those closest or known to them, such as family and community members.

It is acknowledged that programs and operations may unknowingly expose children and vulnerable adults to risk or harm if their best interest is not explicitly considered during the design and implementation of an organization's work.

2.2. Problem Statement

For many years, cases of child abuse have rocked the Catholic Church. In fact of late the Church has experienced an increase of outcries from various sectors with regard to how She is responding or rather managing child abuse cases and mitigating the risks. In order to satisfy this demand, Pope Francis emphasized the need to put in place a policy document that would ensure the creation of a safe environment for children in all her institutions (*Vox estis lux Mundi*–7th May 2019).

AMECEA Secretariat sees a need to ensure that children, its employees and the institution are safeguarded. In order to fulfill this demand, AMECEA Secretariat has put in place a clear policy direction that spells out the interventions, coordination of the relevant actions

necessary to guide its employees.

2.3. Rationale

AMECEA secretariat recognises that a written safeguarding policy is an important first step in creating a safeguarding culture. Aware that a policy alone will not keep children and vulnerable adults safe, a strong safeguarding culture relies on the commitment and understanding of the people who use the policy to both prevent and respond to harm.

The policy provides guidance to make sure safeguarding awareness, procedures and mechanisms are built or strengthened among all AMECEA secretariat staff, operations, and programmes.

AMECEA Secretariat recognises that implementing the policy is beneficial because:

1. Children and vulnerable adults are protected against all forms of abuse.
2. The AMECEA secretariat staff are protected. All staff at AMECEA Secretariat will be protected against unfair accusation of abuse.
3. The AMECEA Secretariat and the Church at large are protected. All members make a clear commitment and be held personally accountable to keeping children and vulnerable adults safe.

It is notable that this policy aligns to international standards on safeguarding, and the Catholic Church directives on safeguarding of minors. It takes into cognizance the context, risks and considerations applicable to AMECEA secretariat.

3. BROAD POLICY DIRECTIONS

3.1. The overall goal of this policy is to create a conducive environment for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

3.2. Specific Policy Objectives

3.2.1.

To create an institutional environment that promotes provision of safety to children and vulnerable adults through the promotion of zero tolerance of abuse.

3.2.2.

To promote transparency and accountability and timely interventions on matters of abuse of children and vulnerable adults within the institution.

3.2.3.

To provide for the establishment of projects, monitoring & evaluation, and research by AMECEA Secretariat.

3.3. Scope

This Safeguarding Policy shall apply to all at AMECEA secretariat. This shall include but not limited to management, staff, volunteers, interns, contractors, consultants, partners, collaborators and any person or entity entering into a contractual agreement with AMECEA secretariat.

3.4. Core values and principles

The duty of caring for and protecting children and vulnerable adults is the responsibility of everybody within and outside the Church, with the clergy, the religious, the technical and operational staff playing a fundamental role. AMECEA Secretariat has therefore established the following core values and principles to guide the application of the safeguarding policy.

1. Dignity of life and human person from conception to natural death
2. Common Good
3. Solidarity
4. Preferential option for the poor
5. Moral Integrity
6. Integrity of Family
7. Integrity of creation
8. Prophetic Witness
9. Consciousness of sin

3.5. Policy Priority Areas

The problem statement as stated above has a number of facets that shall be considered as Policy Priority Areas. The Policy Statements associated with these areas contribute towards providing solutions to the problem.

These areas include:

1. Risk analysis and management
2. Prevention of abuse
3. Reporting and response to abuse
4. Behavioural protocols
5. Safe recruitment
6. Data and information sharing

3.5.1. Risk Analysis and Management Statement

In any organization, there is always a probability of something going wrong and posing a significant danger in form of potential reputational damage and possible financial implications.

Currently there is little or no awareness among the staff of AMECEA Secretariat with regard to risk factors related to safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults within its environment. This makes risk analysis and management important so as to minimize possible dangers and their impact.

3.5.1.1. Policy Statement

The Policy shall facilitate the analysis, prevention and mitigation of risks of abuse of children and vulnerable adults.

3.5.1.2. Strategies:

1. Identifying and analyse safeguarding risks in all departments, programs and projects.
2. Undertaking regular safeguarding risk management reviews to inform management decisions.

3.5.2. Prevention of Abuse

In fulfilling its mission, AMECEA secretariat is guided by the Catholic Social Teachings, Papal documents on safeguarding, its values and high standards of professional and personal conduct within and outside the work environment. AMECEA secretariat is cognizant of various situations and varying degrees of vulnerability of individuals who require protection against harm and exploitation.

3.5.2.1. Policy Statement

The policy shall ensure that children and vulnerable adults are safeguarded against all forms of abuse.

3.5.2.2. Strategies

1. All persons bound by this policy and code of behaviour shall undertake a mandatory induction and regular refresher training on the same and sign a commitment of adherence.

2. The Secretariat Disseminate and create awareness among all stakeholders to drum up support for prevention of abuse.
3. It shall openly display, promote and distribute its safeguarding commitment widely to all relevant stakeholders.
4. Briefings on the policy, procedures and commitments are included in appropriate fora.
5. It shall create and maintain a culture that supports open communication on safeguarding issues where individuals feel confident to raise concerns and challenge inappropriate behaviour.

3.5.3. Reporting of and Response to Abuse

AMECEA secretariat is committed to promoting an environment of zero tolerance of any form of abuse and exploitation including sexual abuse towards children and vulnerable adults.

In handling these the following principles will be applied:

1. Survivor centeredness
2. Timely response
3. Confidentiality
4. Safety and security
5. Impartiality and neutrality
6. Best interest of the child
7. Maximum survival and development of the child
8. Participation
9. Non- discrimination

3.5.3.1 Policy Statement

The policy commits AMECEA Secretariat to promoting an environment of zero tolerance to abuse and mandatory reporting in responding and handling of allegations, suspicions and actual harm committed towards children and vulnerable adults.

3.5.3.2 Strategies

AMECEA secretariat shall.

1. Implement provisions of the reporting protocols as laid down in this policy.
2. Establish safeguarding office and mechanism to handle all reports of alleged abuse.
3. Offer pastoral care and support to survivors and perpetrators of abuse.
4. Establish mechanisms to protect the whistle-blower and anyone reporting abuse.

3.6. Behaviour protocols

Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults from abuse rests on professional, caring and protective behaviour of all persons. AMECEA secretariat promotes a culture responsive to the needs of children and vulnerable adults one that prevents intentional and unintentional harm to them.

3.6.1. Policy Statement

The policy provides for professional, ethical and caring behaviour

that promotes safety of children and vulnerable adults.

3.6.2. Strategies

1. Implementing the provisions of the AMECEA secretariat code of conduct.
2. Mainstreaming safety and protection of children and vulnerable adults in all AMECEA secretariat programs.

3.6.3. Additional Commitments on Behaviour shall include:

1. Challenging, bullying and child to child abuse in all its forms.
2. In case of counselling, measures to enforce the two adult rule should be applied.
3. Children are not to be left unsupervised.
4. Measures to be taken to ensure that buildings are friendly for persons with special needs.

3.7. Safe Recruitment

The recruitment and selection process of individuals to work for and with the organization is an important element in organizational safeguarding risk management.

3.7.1. Policy Statement

AMECEA secretariat shall follow recruitment procedures that, to the best of our ability, individuals appointed to work with and for AMECEA secretariat are suitable to work with children and vulnerable adults with professionalism.

3.7.2. Strategies

Identifying the safeguarding risk(s) of each role.

1. Reflecting safeguarding commitments and responsibilities in job adverts, role descriptions and terms of reference as applicable.
2. Requesting confidential disclosure of convictions within the parameters of employment law.
3. Asking appropriate screening questions during selection/interview processes for relevant roles.
4. Performing thorough background vetting checks confirming an applicant's employment history and undertaking reference checks.
5. Performing police checks as appropriate.

3.8. Data and information sharing

Confidential data acquisition, transmission, storage and retrieval protects the integrity of individuals, organizations and processes.

3.8.1. Policy Statement

AMECEA secretariat shall protect personal data of children and vulnerable adults by processing and storing it in accordance with laid down AMECEA secretariat ICT policy.

3.8.2. Strategies

AMECEA secretariat shall:

1. Put in place mechanism to fully Protect the integrity of data and information on safeguarding.
2. Fully implement the provisions of AMECEA secretariat policy on ICT.

4. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS & IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1. Safeguarding roles and responsibilities

While safeguarding is a shared responsibility, with all parts of the organization and all levels of staff involved in ensuring a welcoming, inclusive, dignified and safe environment for all who come into contact with us. There are specific responsibilities within key roles.

4.1.1. AMECEA Secretariat Executive Board

In-charge of approval of the policy and Monitoring of the implementation of the policy.

4.1.2. Secretary General

1. Ultimate responsibility of the policy implementation.
2. Supervision and leadership in all matters pertaining to safeguarding.

4.1.3. Safeguarding Officer

Supports the safeguarding team to:

1. Prevent and respond to abuse and exploitation by receiving and forwarding concerns.

2. Implement and recommend review of safeguarding policies and procedures.
3. Raise awareness and promote best practice on safeguarding.
4. Provide advice to management and staff on safeguarding.
5. Ensure that AMECEA secretariat remains up-to-date with best practice in the sector and legislative changes.
6. Commit and contribute to an environment where children and vulnerable adults feel respected, supported, safe and protected.

4.1.4. Staff Shall

1. Be aware and comply with this safeguarding policy including the safeguarding code of conduct.
2. Commit and contribute to an environment where children and vulnerable adults feel respected, supported, safe and protected.
3. Report and respond to safeguarding concerns and breaches of the policy, in line with the applicable procedures.

4.1.3. Safeguarding Team

There shall be established a safeguarding team comprised of the Safeguarding Officer, Human Resource Coordinator or their equivalent, a Child Counsellor nominated to the committee and two other members nominated from within the Secretariat.

The team shall undertake the following mandate:

1. Prevent and respond to abuse and exploitation by receiving and forwarding concerns.
2. Support the implementation and recommend review of safeguarding policies and procedures.
3. Raise awareness and promote best practice on safeguarding.
4. Provide advice to management and staff on safeguarding.
5. Ensure that AMECEA secretariat remains up-to-date with best practice in the sector and legislative changes.
6. Support the process of administrative investigations in regards to safeguarding

5.ADDITIONAL PROTOCOLS

5.1. Reporting abuse

AMECEA secretariat shall encourage the use of a variety of reporting avenues. Both anonymous and disclosed reporting shall be used. This may include but not limited to; telephone calls, short text messages, suggestion box, emails, letters or one on one to any member of staff. Any person who receives an alleged case of abuse shall immediately inform the safeguarding officer. Anyone who raises a concern about potentially serious malpractice will be protected from victimization or any other detrimental treatment, provided that concerns are raised in good faith. Deliberate false allegations are a serious offence and shall be dealt with in line with provisions of sanctions under the HR Manual. Individuals, institutions and organizations are encouraged to report to the safeguarding officer any breach of the policy or commitments.

Upon receiving allegations, the Safeguarding officer shall:

1. Make an entry into a safeguarding register capturing sufficient details to allow follow up
2. Acknowledge receipt of such an allegation and establish the type of alleged abuse and the alleged perpetrator. Depending on the nature of the case, the following protocols shall apply:

5.1.1 Sexual Abuse by a clergy or religious

A preliminary investigation by the safeguarding Committee in

in accordance with provisions of this policy and in line with provisions of Canon 1717 shall be carried out. If there is sufficient evidence that sexual abuse of a child has occurred the matter shall be reported to the Local Ordinary as appropriate. AMECEA secretariat shall have the duty to notify the civil authority of such an occurrence within the provisions of the reporting protocols.

5.1.2 Abuse by Laity

A preliminary investigation shall be carried out by a Safeguarding Committee established in line with provisions of this policy. If there is sufficient evidence that abuse of a child or vulnerable adult has occurred, the matter shall be reported to the civil authority for further investigation and action.

Disciplinary procedures against the alleged perpetrator shall be applied in line with AMECEA secretariat Human Resources Policy, Code of conduct and other policies. In case of gross physical and sexual abuse, actions will include but not limited to suspension or dismissal.

This may include but not limited to;

1. Telephone calls, short text message,
2. Suggestion box,
3. Emails,
4. Letters.
5. One on one to any member of staff

AMECEA secretariat shall accept reporting using any mode.

5.2. Handling Cases of Abuse

5.2.1 Conducting Investigations

Upon receiving a safeguarding concern or allegation, AMECEA secretariat shall.

1. Prioritise the safety and security of the survivor. Medical attention for the survivor shall be sought immediately
2. Where applicable seek medical attention for the survivor. (This is mandatory in case of sexual abuse and in cases of grievous bodily harm to a survivor).
3. Convene a Safeguarding Committee meeting within 24 hours to assess the concern and consider if further investigation is required.
4. Additionally, where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation, the Safeguarding Officer shall liaise with HR to discuss implications of the allegations.
5. Take into account the integrity and right to confidentiality of the survivor and alleged perpetrator.
6. Conclude all investigations within 90 days from the time of receiving the report.

7. Hold in confidence all information relating to the investigation and shall not disclose any information regarding abuse to unauthorized parties. During the process of investigation, the concerned parties shall be updated on the progress on a need to know basis, with a recommendation of at least monthly progress

5.3. Decisions/Penalties

Penalties for various cases can be oral and written warnings, suspension, dismissal and demotion. Breaches of this policy that amount to criminal acts shall be subject to criminal procedures and accompanying penalties. Where decisions are made by AMECEA Secretariat, the accused person reserves the right of appeal to a higher authority within 14 days.

5.4. General Sanctions

1. If there is an allegation of violation of the policy or principles, the Safeguarding Committee may recommend to the HR in-charge, that the individual be suspended from all activities of AMECEA Secretariat pending the outcome of an independent investigation.
2. The investigation shall comply with the provisions of this policy and other AMECEA Secretariat policies.
3. Failure to report and a breach of confidentiality in the process will be subject to investigation and disciplinary measures or procedures.

4. If it is ascertained that an abuse had been committed which is either criminal, grossly infringes the right of the child or vulnerable adult or, contravenes the provisions of this policy, AMECEA Secretariat will take disciplinary actions appropriate to the circumstance.
5. In case of members of staff, volunteers or interns, Boards of Management, disciplinary actions envisaged shall include dismissal.
6. In case of partners, consultants, contractors, suppliers and any other contract holders, the actions envisaged shall include reporting the matter to civil authorities.
7. Without prejudice to the sacramental internal forum, the prescriptions of civil law regarding the reporting of such crimes to the designated authorities should always be followed.

5.5. Care for the Survivor

AMECEA secretariat shall:

1. Prioritize care to the survivor of abuse to mitigate the impact of the abuse and avert risk of further abuse.
2. Refer the survivors of abuse for care and support. The survivor shall be accorded appropriate medical attention. In addition, the survivor shall be offered continuous psycho-social support as appropriate including pastoral care. In events of sexual abuse and other serious and life-threatening situations, priority shall be given to the security of the survivor including referral for legal redress.
3. Collaborate with relevant actors to offer the same care to the families.

of the survivors as appropriate.

5.6.Care of the Perpetrator

1. In all cases in which there is proof of abuse by a religious or clergy: Provision shall be made for his decent support if he is not dismissed.
2. The Diocesan Bishop or superior (this refers to the diocese or congregation where one belongs) may consider that the cleric does not lack what is necessary for his worthy support because of the effects of the penalty.
3. The use of rehabilitation services shall be made available to the perpetrator.
4. The necessary mercy, equity and pastoral care shall be extended to the perpetrator.

5.6.1.Reintegration.

1. AMECEA Secretariat shall at all times uphold the need for children to be in family care.
2. Survivors of abuse shall be supported through a comprehensive care to ensure they are well integrated back to their families or placed in family like care based on careful assessment of the situation.

CODE OF CONDUCT

All people working with and for AMECEA secretariat will:

1. Treat children and vulnerable adults with respect and value their ideas and opinions.
2. Act as positive role models in their conduct with children.
3. Be professional in their dealings with children.
4. Comply with specific organisational guidelines on physical contact with children.
5. Respect the privacy of children, their families and caregivers, and only disclose information to people on a need to know basis.
6. Maintain a child-safe environment for children and vulnerable adults.
7. Adhere to mandatory reporting of alleged abuse.
8. Act to avert any risk of abuse to a child or vulnerable adult.

All persons bound by AMECEA secretariat safeguarding policy **MUST NOT**:

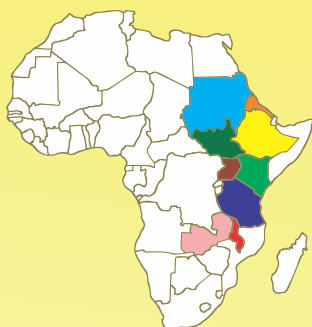
1. Engage in any type of sexual relationship with a child and vulnerable adult.
2. Shame, humiliate, oppress, belittle or degrade children or young people.
3. Unlawfully discriminate against any child.
4. Engage in any activity with a child that is likely to physically or emotionally harm them.
5. Initiate unnecessary physical contact with a child or do things of a personal nature for them that they can do for themselves.

6. Be alone with a child unnecessarily for a long time.
7. Show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention.
8. Arrange contact, including online contact, with children or young people outside of the organisation's programmes and activities.
9. Photograph or video a child or young person without the consent of the child and his/her parents or care giver.
10. Work with children or young people while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
11. Engage in open discussions of sexually explicit nature in the presence of children.
12. Use inappropriate language in the presence of children that may be threatening, intimidating or abusive.
13. Dress inappropriately while at AMECEA secretariat work premises or otherwise contrary to AMECEA secretariat Dress Code.

I have read and understood the content of this safeguarding policy and will act in accordance with it as a condition of my engagement with AMECEA secretariat.

Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____



AMECEA

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Conferences in Eastern Africa**



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