

ORGANISATION FOR COMMUNITY SOCIAL SUPPORT AND
RESEARCH IN DEVELOPMENT (OCSSRD) SAFE GUARDING
POLICY



OCSSRD
Saving Communities

JANUARY 2024

P.O. BOX 59, Lyantonde-Uganda

Contact: +256 786 789046/ +256 751 663902

Email: info@ocssrd.org, tumwinemoses2017@gmail.com

Website: www.ocssrd.org

KIDDU EDWARD
BOARD CHAIRPERSON

TUMWINE MOSES
BOARD SECRETARY/ EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

30/01/2024

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DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Child

A person below 18 years.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding means taking all reasonable steps to prevent harm, particularly sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment from occurring; to protect people, especially vulnerable adults and children, from that harm and to respond appropriately when harm does occur. Safeguarding applies consistently and without exception across programmes, partners and staff and specific attention is given to preventing and responding to harm from any potential, actual or attempted abuse of power, trust, or vulnerability. It requires proactively identifying, preventing and guarding against all risks of harm, exploitation and abuse and having accountable and transparent systems for response, reporting and learning when risks materialise.

Staff

Any person who has been formally appointed as an employee of OCSSRD.

Vulnerable Groups

People who may be in need of care by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of themselves to protect themselves against significant harm or serious exploitation." This is inclusive of children. Such people may be more likely to be targeted and less able to keep themselves safe and could have;

- a mental health problem;
- a physical disability;
- a learning disability;
- a sensory impairment;
- become old and frail;
- an illness; or
- a problem linked to drugs or alcohol

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1. INTRODUCTION

OCSSRD is a registered member-based Community Based Organization (CBO) in Rukungiri district, which started in 2021 by a group of friends during the period of Covid 19 pandemic when the vulnerable needed support to meet their needs. Because of the support extended to them, the beneficiaries named the group “**Rukobarwomunda**” a rukiga word that literally means **People Pillar**.

Since the Covid 19 Pandemic, the group continued to do community mobilization and support and in October 2023 it was registered as a community based organization. OCSSRD is currently operating in Rukungiri Municipality under the following vision, mission, objectives and core values.



Vision

To promote gender equality, social protection and community transformation in a just and healthy society.



Mission

To strengthen communities through research and innovations for sustainable development.

Safeguarding Policy - Statement of Intent

OCSSRD, is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare, both physical and emotional, of every child and adult, who participates in activities either directly organised by OCSSRD or through a third party working collaboratively with us.

This Policy sets out a clear and consistent framework for paid and unpaid staff and third parties working who are delivering this commitment in line with safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance. It will be achieved by:

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- Promoting and prioritising the safety and wellbeing of children and adults with all OCSSRD team members and those third party organisations who work directly on our behalf. Adopting safe recruitment procedures for paid and non-paid team members that help deter, reject or identify people who might pose a risk or inappropriate influence to children or adults.
- Ensuring that all existing and new team members understand their roles and responsibilities under safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance, to be alert to signs of abuse or maltreatment and refer concerns to the appropriate person using the agreed procedures.
- Ensuring that the organisations that work on our behalf commit to protecting children or adults from harm.
- Ensuring all stakeholders are informed of the policy and procedures as fully as possible by making it available via the OCSSRD website, OCSSRD Contracting procedures and engagement activities.
- Ensuring the Safeguarding Policy and its application is overseen through corporate governance arrangements including the Board of Directors.

The designated lead for safeguarding at OCSSRD will take all concerns and allegations of abuse seriously whether against OCSSRD staff and volunteers, or our contractors and third party deliverers. Children, young people and adults associated with OCSSRD through our work either directly or indirectly will have access to our policies and procedures to ensure any safeguarding concern can be referred to the relevant authorities. In emergencies, this obligation may extend to contacting the Police. The safeguarding policy and supporting procedures will be widely promoted and mandatory for all team members at OCSSRD. Failure to comply with the safeguarding policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and dismissal/exclusion from the organisation may be the result.

Signed by:

Date:

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2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to protect people, particularly children, vulnerable adults and programme beneficiaries, from any harm that may be caused due to their engagement in OCSSRD's activities. This may include harm arising from:

- The conduct of staff or personnel associated with OCSSRD
- The design and implementation of OCSSRD's programmes and activities

The policy lays out the commitments made by OCSSRD, and informs staff and other stakeholders of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding. The Safe Guarding Policy provides the basis to ensure fulfillment of vulnerable groups' protection standards.

2.1 OCSSRD's Safeguarding Policy

OCSSRD believes that everyone who comes into contact with the organisation, regardless of age, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. OCSSRD will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by staff or other associated actors.

In pursuit of her organizational goals and objectives, the Safe Guarding Policy will enable OCSSRD to take the necessary steps to guarantee protection to vulnerable groups in all her programmes and activities through measures towards prevention, reporting and response. OCSSRD will take remedial actions to ensure that vulnerable groups within the organization's programmatic remit are safe, however, if abuse, harassment, bullying, sexual exploitation occur, reporting and response procedures are in place. Victims are supported to recover and appropriate measures taken to deal with perpetrators.

It is important to have the policy and procedures in place so that staff, volunteers, service providers, contractors and other stake holders can work to prevent abuse and know what to do in the event of abuse. These measures will be instituted at all levels of the organization's operation.

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This Safe Guarding Policy will be applicable and adhered to by all staff and other actors affiliated with OCSSRD.

2.2 Common Forms of Abuse

There are four broad major categorizations that OCSSRD considers as abuse; physical abuse, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, emotional abuse, neglect and abandonment, and exploitation of vulnerable groups.

Physical Abuse

The intentional use of physical force or power, threats or actual or physical beating either result in or have a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, under-development or deprivation.

Sexual Abuse

This includes all forms of sexual violence including incest, early and forced marriage, rape, involvement in pornography and sexual slavery. It may also include indecent touching or exposure, using sexually explicit language towards the vulnerable and exposing them to pornographic material.

Sexual Exploitation

The sexual exploitation of a vulnerable person is a criminal offence. A vulnerable person cannot legally give informed consent to sexual activity. OCSSRD considers that;

- a. Sexual activity with a vulnerable person without their consent is abuse and a crime e. g. rape, indecent assault;
- b. Sexual activity in exchange of money, employment, goods or services is abuse.
- c. Any sexual activity with a vulnerable person regardless of whether they consent or not is abuse and a crime and will be dealt with as a breach of this Safe Guarding Policy.

Emotional or Psychological Abuse

It occurs when a vulnerable person's right to for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. It includes humiliating and degrading treatment, verbal assault, constant criticism, intimidation, belittling,

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persistent shaming, solitary confinement, isolation or any other treatment which may diminish the sense of identity, dignity, and self-worth.

Neglect and Abandonment

This refers to the failure (whether intentional, careless or due to inadequate experience, training, or skill) of caregivers to provide basic necessary care or services when agreed to by legal, contractual, or otherwise assumed responsibility. It may lead to physical or emotional harm due to lack of food, clothes, education, medical treatment and other basics of life. Abandonment means the desertion or intentional forsaking of a vulnerable person for any period of time by a person who has assumed responsibility for providing care, when that desertion or forsaking would place the person at serious risk of harm.

Exploitation of vulnerable groups

Exploitation is the use of vulnerable groups in work or other activities for the benefit of others. The most commonly reported forms include labour exploitation, sexual exploitation through prostitution and pornography, domestic servitude, forced marriage, forced criminality, child soldiers and organ harvesting. Experiences of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment significantly harm the vulnerable person's physical or mental health, education, moral and social-emotional development.

3. AWARENESS CREATION

In order to create awareness about protection of vulnerable groups in her area of operation, OCSSRD will ensure that;

- Staff and partners understand their responsibilities and protection obligations towards vulnerable groups. They are also required to immediately follow reporting procedures when they become aware of any harm or risk to the vulnerable individuals.
- Staff and partners, whose contracted responsibilities include interaction with or access to vulnerable groups or their personal information, must acknowledge in writing the receipt and understanding of the Safe Guarding Policy.

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- Staff, volunteers, board members and partners will be oriented to and given a copy of the Safe Guarding Policy. Orientation will be scheduled within the first two weeks of reporting. OCSSRD will endeavour to continuously sensitize and train staff on Safe Guarding during review and annual planning meetings.

3.1. Staff Code of Conduct and Behavior Protocols

Rules of behaviour to protect vulnerable groups are based on local and culturally appropriate interactions with the vulnerable groups. They are meant to guide all OCSSRD staff, board members and partners on what constitutes desirable and acceptable behaviour towards vulnerable groups and what is unacceptable abusive and risky behaviour towards the vulnerable (the Dos and Don'ts). They are also intended to protect staff from false accusations of inappropriate behavior or abuse and heighten awareness about protection of the vulnerable in the communities where OCSSRD operates.

This safeguarding policy is to be read in conjunction with the OCSSRD Human Resource Manual and the Whistleblowing Policy.

OCSSRD staff and partners will adhere to the following behaviour protocols;

3.1.1 Acceptable Behaviour

People associated with OCSSRD in any capacity shall:

- Be careful about perception and appearance in their language, actions and relationships with the vulnerable and always ensure that their behaviour demonstrates respect to the vulnerable and their rights.
- Always apply a "do-no-harm"-approach in all interactions with vulnerable groups.
- Ensure that all physical contact with the vulnerable is respectful and maintains professional boundaries.
- Use positive, non-violent methods to manage vulnerable people's behaviour.
- Accept responsibility for personal behaviour and actions as a representative of the organisation.
- Always be accountable for their response to the vulnerable person's behaviour, even if s/he behaves in a sexually inappropriate manner; they shall avoid being placed in a compromising position.

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- g. Comply with the vulnerable protection related investigations (internal and external) and make available any documentary or other information necessary for the completion of the investigation.

3.1.2 Unacceptable behaviour

People associated with OCSSRD in any capacity both within and outside their work environments **shall not:**

- i. Behave in an inappropriate physical manner, or develop a sexual relationship with a vulnerable person.
- ii. Fondle, hold, kiss, hug or touch a child or vulnerable adult in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way.
- iii. Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate or abusive, including language that causes shame or humiliation, is belittling or degrading.
- iv. Spend time alone with a vulnerable individual, away from others or behind closed doors or in a secluded area.
- v. Keep groups involved in programmes for unreasonably long hours or take them to spend a night in their homes.
- vi. Take vulnerable groups involved in programmes out of project areas without authorization. Involve vulnerable adults in programmes in their personal or private activities.
- vii. Condone or participate in behaviour with vulnerable groups, which is illegal, unsafe or abusive; including harmful traditional practices, spiritual or ritualistic abuse.
- viii. Hire vulnerable groups in any form of exploitative labour; in particular, hiring children as house help.
- ix. Hit or use any form of corporal punishment against any person. Take gifts, money or donations intended for vulnerable groups. Any such behavior by staff shall lead to disciplinary action.

Any staff who has knowledge about any breach of these behaviour protocols is required to follow the reporting procedures. Failure to follow OCSSRD Behaviour Protocols or other inappropriate behaviour towards vulnerable groups is ground for disciplinary action, which may include termination of the working relationship or dismissal from employment, volunteer/internship or Board membership. Legal action such as reporting to local authorities may be taken, in line with national legal requirements and

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obligations, and in the best interests of the vulnerable groups.

3.2 Recruitment Standards

In her recruitment processes OCSSRD will endeavour to ensure that individuals who might pose a danger to vulnerable groups are not recruited into the organisation. Protection of vulnerable groups screening measures shall be applied to candidates particularly where projects will involve working with vulnerable adults or children.

Job Applications: All job advertisements will indicate that OCSSRD is committed to equality of opportunity and protection of vulnerable groups in our work to deter potential abusers.

Interview process: During the interview process, applicants shall be asked about previous work with vulnerable groups as well as their attitudes towards vulnerable group protection issues.

Reference checks: When references are conducted, questions will be asked regarding the suitability of the candidate to work with vulnerable groups. Documentation of references shall be kept on file.

Criminal record checks: Candidates who have direct interaction with or access to vulnerable groups, particularly children, shall have a criminal record check done prior to employment.

Hiring restrictions: OCSSRD reserves the right not to hire an applicant, or to terminate employment, if the recruitment process or background check raises concerns that the person may pose a risk to vulnerable groups. People with a prior conviction for a crime against the vulnerable shall **NOT** be employed by OCSSRD.

Breach of this Safe Guarding Policy by any staff or partner shall lead to termination of a contract or partnership.

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3.3 Guidelines on Communications, Social Media and Digital Technology

These guidelines are geared at ensuring that in all forms of communication vulnerable groups are treated and portrayed with dignity, privacy is protected and that individuals have agreed to their pictures or information being made public.

Social media and digital communications technology shall include but is not limited to: social networking and internet sites, online discussion forums, email, podcast/video casts, micro blogging, regular blogging, RSS, wiki, instant messaging, shared/distributed photographs, videos, audio clips, virtual gaming and communities, social media use of mobile phones, and any other electronic media or digital communications of any kind.

3.3.1 Respect for vulnerable groups' dignity and protection from stigma

All OCSSRD staff and partners will ensure that all photos, stories, videos and other communications activities and materials put the best interest of vulnerable groups as top priority, and comply with the following standards:

- a. OCSSRD staff shall always be sensitive and shall not exploit any person's vulnerability. They shall always assess how the communication could impact the safety, well-being and rights of the vulnerable.
- b. The vulnerable shall at all times be portrayed with dignity and not as helpless victims.
- c. The vulnerable shall always be adequately clothed and not projected in sexually suggestive poses.
- d. Materials shall not identify a vulnerable person's medical conditions (including HIV status) or as sexually abused without their express consent.

3.3.2 Consent

Vulnerable groups who are primary subjects of text, photo and/or video resource gathering by OCSSRD must provide informed consent. Informed consent means the subject has a general understanding of the purpose of the reporting or photography, and gives verbal or written permission thereof.

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Informed consent is required in all situations to avoid doing harm, damaging reputations, invading personal privacy or incurring libel and copyright problems. Written permission is required from vulnerable persons, parents or other caregivers, or other individual or entity (such as a court appointee) as required by applicable law, when information or personal disclosures in a photo, video or story:

- a) Clearly identifies and provides personal information, such as full names and locations, about a particular vulnerable person.
- b) Might place or show a vulnerable person in a situation that could be damaging to his or her dignity, privacy, safety or reputation – including issues of sexual exploitation, medical conditions (including HIV and AIDS), drug trafficking, abuse and other forms of violence.

If a vulnerable person gives general consent for on-going use of images and stories then additional consent for individual stories, images, or videos is not required (unless the use of the story or images goes beyond the terms of the original consent).

Informed consent does not overrule OCSSRD standards for vulnerable groups' protection.

4. PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS IN OCSSRD'S PROGRAMMATIC WORK

Vulnerable groups' protection constitutes an integral part of both our field and head office operations. Every programme or project will be designed and implemented in such a way that it supports the protection of vulnerable groups and enhances the prevention of abuse, exploitation and neglect in the following ways;

- During assessments, baseline surveys and project design processes OCSSRD and any implementation partners will review the project designs to ensure that the protection of vulnerable groups is mainstreamed.

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- Sustained sensitization and dialogue with communities and other partners about vulnerable groups protection will be carried out throughout the life cycle of a given programme or project. OCSSRD shall provide vulnerable groups Protection Guidelines for developing and reviewing programmes and project plans.
- OCSSRD and its partners shall monitor and report on emerging safeguarding issues on a quarterly basis, which will be reported to the board.
- Through various programme interventions, OCSSRD will promote the protection and empowerment of vulnerable groups.
- Partners will be sensitized on the Safe Guarding Policy and any breach shall form a basis for cancellation of any ongoing partnership.
- OCSSRD will sensitize, train, empower and encourage vulnerable groups to participate in decisions and processes that impact their protection and make deliberate efforts to partner with groups and organisations representing them.

5. REPORTING AND RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

OCSSRD acknowledges the fact that notwithstanding concerted protection and prevention efforts, incidences of abuse and violation of rights may still occur. This section outlines the reporting and response procedures. OCSSRD's response to incidents of vulnerable groups' abuse will always be undertaken in a manner that is consistent with the national laws and in consideration of OCSSRD's potential responsibility and risk of liability.

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5.1 Reporting of vulnerable groups protection incidences

- All staff, partners and stakeholders are obliged to report any suspicions or concerns related to the protection of vulnerable groups involving a staff, volunteer, contractor, consultant, donor, partner, board member or any other person formally affiliated with OCSSRD.
- Reports will be made to the Executive Director through the Director of Programmes who also oversees the issue management and gives technical support.
- At district level, all allegations shall be reported to the Field Officer (FO). The FO will then inform the Programme Officer, who informs their supervisor, who in turn will communicate to Management for further action.
- OCSSRD will provide stakeholders with contact details of top management (Executive Director and Director of Programmes) to enable them forward their complaints where they are uncomfortable to report to programme staff.
- Staff shall be required to report all safeguarding issues encountered during programme implementation and all information provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality.
- The identity of any vulnerable person who has experienced abuse/whose rights have been violated shall be concealed while writing incident reports and in any communications about the same to external stakeholders.

5.2 Response to Safeguarding Concerns

Management shall expeditiously and with utmost confidentiality investigate any reported safeguarding concerns. Any alleged abuse or violation of vulnerable groups' rights shall be reported, investigated and appropriately managed in the best interest of the vulnerable and in line with OCSSRD policies and Ugandan law. If it is likely that sensitive information about vulnerable groups would put them at a risk if

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accessed by unauthorized parties, such information will not be collected. In general, regarding vulnerable groups protection incidents:

- Only the Executive Director or designated staff shall engage with the media on safeguarding incidents.
- While maintaining appropriate confidentiality for individuals, OCSSRD may disclose general information about incidents in order to support learning and accountability, and prevent future incidents, and as may be required by law.
- Depending on national laws and magnitude of the safeguarding issue, OCSSRD may be required to notify local authorities.

5.3 Roles and Responsibilities of Staff

There is a formalised structure in OCSSRD for reporting safeguarding concerns with different roles attached for staff, management and members of the board.

Staff

- ✓ Receive reports of allegations
- ✓ Formally record the incident in Safeguarding Evidence Log
- ✓ Notifies Designated Safeguarding Officer and Lead Safeguarding Officer
- ✓ Reports to local authorities where the situation may require

Designated Safeguarding Officer

- ✓ Advise staff with safeguarding concerns
- ✓ Act as focal point for concerns raised in head office
- ✓ Deal with safeguarding issues and concerns in line with the procedures including liaising with external bodies

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Lead Safeguarding Officer

- ✓ To manage safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure compliance with legislation and good practice.
- ✓ To liaise with relevant stakeholders and ensure training and sensitization during HR processes
- ✓ To produce reports for Management and Board
- ✓ Where necessary to advise DSOs on cases.

Management

- ✓
- ✓ Investigate reported internal safeguarding issues
- ✓ Reports to local authorities where the situation may require
- ✓ Respond to external communication on safeguarding

Board

- ✓ Approve the Safeguarding Policy
- ✓ Review the quarterly safeguarding reports
- ✓ Make recommendations for safeguarding actions

5.4 OCSSRD Safeguarding Pathway

1. When a concern is raised, the Field Officer or Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) fills in the Safeguarding Evidence Log (SEL) with the person raising the concern, including actions to keep person safe. If required, the Designated of Lead Safeguarding Officer is consulted to decide on actions and referrals.
2. When the SEL has been completed, it is submitted to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO).

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3. If required, LSO manages internal investigation and other actions
4. LSO collects and compiles cases for reporting to management, board and for organizational learning

6. MONITORING AND REVIEW

6.1 Monitoring at organizational level

To ensure safeguarding at organizational level, an issue report summarizing any cases raised is compiled quarterly and submitted to the board to review and recommend further organizational protection measures or procedures if necessary.

6.2 Review of Safe Guarding Policy

OCSSRD shall periodically review the impact of the Safe Guarding Policy and continually strengthen internal controls in order to reduce risk of harm and exploitation to vulnerable groups.

This policy shall be reviewed after every 3 years

6.3 Declaration of Acceptance

I have received, read and understood the OCSSRD Safe Guarding Policy.

And to show my commitment and consent to comply, I do hereby sign:

Name: _____

Signature: _____

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Location: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

In the presence of (Witness)

Name: _____

Position: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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APPENDIX 1

OCSSRD SAFEGUARDING EVIDENCE LOG

Date: _____

Time: _____

Who is raising the concern (full name): _____

Role (programme participant, friend, neighbour...): _____

Telephone number: _____

Who has or might be harmed:

Full name: _____ Age: _____ Sex: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Location/Local Council (LC 1 zone): _____

Address: _____

Occupation: _____

Name of the Parents/Guardians (for under 18 or vulnerable adults): _____

What harm has or might happen?

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☐ Physical ☐ Sexual ☐ Emotional ☐ Neglect ☐ Exploitation ☐ Other

Give a detailed description of the concern: What has or might happen? Who is causing the harm?

Where does or might it take place? When did it happen? (Include the verbatim)

What evidence backs up the conclusion of the harm? E.g. witnesses, physical signs, change in behavior, etc. append copies of other relevant documents if available

What ACTION needs to be taken to safeguard the individual from harm? Mention referral including contact details and action required.

Is there anything else relevant to the harm or safeguarding measures? Has the media been involved?

Confirmation of details by person raising the concern: I confirm that the above details reflect the concerns I have raised in good faith.

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____
Time: _____

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GUIDELINES ON NEXT STEPS AND REFERRALS IN CASES OF SEXUAL OR PHYSICAL ABUSE

In case of sexual abuse

- Immediately report to the nearest Health Centre & Police (Police surgeon).
- Talk to the victim to ensure consistent psychosocial support.
- If a case is reported early enough, notify parents or family **Not to wash** the under garments the victim was wearing when the crime happened in case it's a rape or defilement case.
- Immediately refer for police medical examination (this will require the examination required by Law with the Police Form III in case there is no Police surgeon nearby within the OCSSRD project area, a recognized health center (e.g. health center III & IV) can carry out the examination.
- Work with the police to make sure that the victim receives justice.
- Assist the victim access medical treatment and (if necessary with post exposure prophylaxis for HIV Prevention).
- Ensure confidentiality (Don't reveal the name of the victim except to those who need to know).
- Refer the victim and family for counseling/psychosocial support.

In case of physical abuse and other violations

Physical abuse like other forms of abuse require immediate attention therefore; -

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- Take care of the best interests and welfare of the victim
- Assist the victim access medical treatment & psychosocial support.
- Report to police: Make sure the victim is examined and the offender brought to justice. In cases of physical abuse, police may have to examine the victim.

Referrals

In all incidents, where it is required, further support should be obtained from institutions and organizations that have specialized services for vulnerable groups including, but not limited to;

Health Centers

Police

Probation Office/ Community Development Officer (CDO)

FIDA –Legal support

Association of Christian lawyers- Legal Support

Church, CBOS, NGOS, schools, hospitals.

Uganda Human Rights Commission where the abuse is by state agencies

While making referrals

- When making referrals to other NGOs /CBOs, Government i.e. Police or Probation Offices or Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development, ensure that a formal referral letter is made to follow up the case.
- Retain a copy of the referral letter and send the second copy to the referral organization.
- Be sure that you trust that the organization referred to will not abuse/ put the victim at any risk.
- Make a follow up to be sure that the victim is being helped.

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GUIDELINES FOR THE PREVENTION OF HARM IN COMMUNICATIONS

OCSSRD and her associated actors will adhere to the following standards in order to prevent harm through communications, social media and digital technology (including photographs/videos/audio clips, stories, articles, or any other communication materials):

- Material posted on social medial or digital technology will not contain a vulnerable person's family name, or personal location/address.
- Material with vulnerable persons will not be geo-tagged to precise locations if it contains any part of the vulnerable person's name. Where absolutely necessary, photos with the vulnerable person's first name shall be re-tagged only to the respective OCSSRD Field office location.
- Personal information that is captured, stored or sent through electronic, on-line or mobile devices will always be password protected.
- Wherever possible, measures shall be taken to prevent electronic copying of photographs without OCSSRD permission
- OCSSRD discourages direct, un-facilitated and undocumented communication through social media without OCSSRD's knowledge between OCSSRD staff and partners.
- OCSSRD shall provide reporting and response options so that staff and partners can report any incident(s) where either party feels uncomfortable or threatened.

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- OCSSRD will always educate her visiting partners to communities or OCSSRD projects about communications, social media and digital technology standards before visits to vulnerable groups occur.
- Staff shall not use digital or other technology to manipulate vulnerable groups' data/ information that exposes them to risks.
- OCSSRD staff shall give feedback to the vulnerable groups on individual photos, stories, videos where possible.

OCSSRD POLICY

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APPENDIX 5



OCSSRD

VULNERABLE GROUPS PROTECTION AGREEMENT FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS AND CONTRACTORS

OCSSRD is committed to the protection of vulnerable groups as a way of ensuring their well-being and achieving their full potential. OCSSRD has therefore adopted a Safe Guarding Policy which spells out the procedures and guidelines for protection of vulnerable groups within the districts where OCSSRD operates. All service providers and contractors are required to adhere to the policy guidelines as stipulated here under.

Please read, understand and sign in the space provided below to commit that you will adhere to the Safe Guarding Policy.

OCSSRD Vulnerable Adult / Child Protection agreement

Any person contracted by OCSSRD as a service provider or contractor may for a specified time engage with vulnerable groups in OCSSRD programmes. Therefore s/he;

1. Shall treat such groups with respect and dignity without discrimination on the basis of age, sex, ethnicity, religion in the best interest of the vulnerable persons.
2. Shall not administer corporal punishment or physically abuse a vulnerable person or act in a manner that affects his/her psychological or emotional well-being.
3. Shall not hold, kiss, cuddle or touch a vulnerable person in an inappropriate way or culturally insensitive manner.
4. Shall not make sexual advances towards a vulnerable person or involve them in any sexual acts. Any form of sexual abuse constitutes an offence under the Ugandan Laws and as such OCSSRD will report such incidents to the authorities and automatically terminate the contract with the service provider or contractor.

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5. Shall not expose vulnerable persons to pornographic materials
6. Shall dress in a decent manner, shall not use obscene language or abusive gestures while with vulnerable groups.
7. Shall not take pictures of vulnerable people harming their dignity.
8. Shall exercise utmost confidentiality not to divulge any sensitive information about any vulnerable person to the media or any other source.
9. Shall, when deemed necessary by OCSSRD, be required to provide a police background report.
10. In case any criminal record is established and found to be true, OCSSRD shall take all necessary steps that may include immediate termination of the contract.
11. Shall not employ vulnerable persons to work on any OCSSRD contract/project.
12. Shall not employ people s/he is aware have a record of vulnerable persons abuse.

I, the undersigned have read the OCSSRD Safe Guarding Policy behavior protocols for Service providers
Contractors, I agree to be bound by these provisions: I affirm my consent by signing this document.

Name

Signed.....Date.....

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APPENDIX 6



OCSSRD

GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS

Introduction

The OCSSRD vulnerable groups participation guide has been developed to provide a benchmark for the involvement of vulnerable groups to contribute in OCSSRD projects. The concept of participation of vulnerable groups is premised on the fact that they are not merely passive recipients of services but can contribute to social, economic and political changes in their environment. Vulnerable people are able to take a central and meaningful role in development and in promoting their rights if the adults recognize the value of their input and afford them the time, skills, guidance, resources and knowledge. OCSSRD recognizes the need for creating platforms for vulnerable groups participation at all levels.

VULNERABLE GROUP PARTICIPATION

Active engagement and participation in all issues that affect their lives gives vulnerable groups a voice and allows them to be listened to in a meaningful way. When done in the rightful way, participation of vulnerable groups influences decision making and creates change.

1.1 What vulnerable groups participation is not

It is not manipulation- This is when vulnerable people have no idea why you are consulting them or involving them but they go along with it because they are merely following orders.

It is not decoration- This is when vulnerable people are asked to take part in certain events to just present a good show without anything behind it.

It is not tokenism- This is when vulnerable people are merely given a topic or issues for them to talk about

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or to 'voice' out without getting their opinions on that topic or their contributions. They have no in-put on the subject or opportunity to have their opinions on that topic.

1.2 Guidelines to meaningful participation

Any event or activity involving vulnerable groups should ensure their safety first.

In all issues concerning vulnerable groups, ensure that they are protected in line with OCSSRD Safe Guarding Policy.

The following measures must be considered;

1. Participation in OCSSRD activities is by free will. For minors obtain the consent of the parents/ guardians or care takers) prior to involving them in OCSSRD activities.
2. Avoid engaging vulnerable groups until late hours (e.g. after 5 pm or depending on the distance they may have to travel back home) where it puts them at risk of being harmed on the way home.
3. Staff overseeing vulnerable group participation activities should be vigilant to ensure that they are safe
4. Ensure that there is availability of First Aid equipment and support in case of emergencies during vulnerable group participation initiatives.
5. Non-discrimination of any vulnerable persons during group participation initiatives.
6. Involve everyone. Participation of vulnerable groups will only be successful if individuals and community own up to group participation initiatives.

MANAGING RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH VULNERABLE GROUP PARTICIPATION

- 1) Mobilizing vulnerable groups to participate in advocacy drives can sometimes create risks or threats to them, especially if they are used to carry out advocacy on cultural / social / religious sensitive issues e.g. circumcision, FGMs, child marriages etc. Staff involving vulnerable groups in advocacy work should be cautious on the messages they want them to carry. We must consistently scan the environment for likely risks when involving vulnerable groups in programs and activities.

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- 2) Protection and confidentiality: Identity of vulnerable groups who are volunteering information, e.g. reporting on any form of abuse, needs to be protected, but also kept confidential as far as possible.

2.1 Appropriate Participation

The views of vulnerable groups regardless of their age, educational and societal status should be respected. Children, young adults, people with disabilities and individuals from other vulnerable groups may communicate in their unique ways. OCSSRD staff and partners need to give opportunity and nurture this communication so as to allow meaningful participation in programme activities.


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