### **Tool 4.2: Code of Conduct**

**Description**: This tool is a template for a code of conduct that each partner organisation may choose to request personnel or subcontractors to sign, as part of their induction and/or contracting process. The code of conduct aims to ensure that their personnel or those of subcontractor organisations avoid any behaviour or conduct that compromises the safety and protection of children,[[1]](#footnote-0) young people,[[2]](#footnote-1) persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups within its activities, operations and projects.

Please note that a list of useful terms can be found on Page 4 of the GEDSI Toolkit.

#### Safeguarding Code of Conduct

The TEA platform is committed to creating a safe environment for vulnerable groups, including but not limited to: children, young people, and people with disabilities. All staff and partners have a duty to commit to maintaining an environment that prevents violence against all people. Further to this, sexual exploitation and abuse by staff constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment.

1. **As such, I agree that I will:**
* Be open and honest in my dealings with vulnerable people, their families, and communities participating in projects, processes, public-facing pieces of communication, events, and activities.
* Treat all people in a manner which is respectful of their rights, integrity, and dignity and considers their best interests regardless of age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, race, language, religious or political beliefs, marital status, disability, physical or mental health, family, socio-economic or cultural background, class, or any history of conflict with the law.
* Create and maintain an environment which prevents the abuse and exploitation of all people ensuring that I am aware of potential risks with regards to my conduct and work, and take appropriate action so as to minimise risks to vulnerable people.
* Contribute to building an environment where all people we engage with are:
* respected and empowered to participate in and discuss decision-making and interventions into their safeguarding in accordance with their age, maturity, abilities and evolving capacities;
* well informed of their safeguarding and protection rights and what to do if they have a concern.
* Comply with all relevant international standards and local legislation in relation to child labour, and refrain from using children and young people aged under 18 years or other vulnerable people for domestic or other labour, if such work is inappropriate, exploitative or harmful given their age or developmental capacity, which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury, exploitation, or violence.
* Respect the privacy and confidentiality of all people associated with your project on the TEA platform. This means I will:
	+ Never ask for or accept personal contact details or invitations to share personal contact details (this includes email, phone numbers, social media contacts, address, Zoom, WhatsApp etc.) from any child, vulnerable person or family associated or formerly associated with our work or share my own personal contact details with such individuals except where this has been explicitly authorised by the TEA platform and/or for business purposes;
	+ Share my own personal contact details with such individuals except where this has been explicitly authorised by TEA and/or for business purposes;
* Never share my own personal contact details with such individuals except where this has been explicitly authorised by the TEA platform and/or for business purposes;2
	+ Never disclose, or support the disclosure of, information that identifies families, children and/or vulnerable people that directly benefit from projects on the TEA platform, through any medium, unless that disclosure is in accordance with standard policies and procedures and/or has the explicit consent of TEA;
	+ Never make any direct contact with a child, young person or vulnerable person associated with a project on the TEA platform that is not supervised by a (or another) member of staff or partner staff, or designated community member. Such contact may include but is not limited to visits and any form of communication via social media, emails, and letters;
* Report and respond to any concerns, suspicions, incidents or allegations of actual or potential abuse to a vulnerable person in accordance with the relevant reporting and responding mechanisms;
* Cooperate fully and confidentially in any investigation of concerns or allegations of abuse to vulnerable people; and
* Immediately disclose all charges, convictions, and other outcomes of an offence, which occurred before or occurs during association with a project on the TEA platform that relate to exploitation and abuse of a vulnerable person.
1. **I will not:**
* Abuse or exploit anyone or behave in any way that places a person at risk of harm, including through harmful traditional practices such as, for example, female genital mutilation, forced or child marriage;
* Engage in any form of sexual activity or develop physical/sexual relationships with anyone under 18 regardless of the age of consent locally, or with a vulnerable person. Mistaken belief in the age of a child or vulnerability of a person is not a defence.
* Hit or in any way harm or use physical punishment/discipline or use of physical force of any kind towards vulnerable people;
* Use language or behave towards a vulnerable person in a way that is inappropriate, offensive, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate in that context;
* Fondle, hold, kiss, hug or touch vulnerable people in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way;
* Have a vulnerable person with whom I am in contact in a work-related context, stay overnight at my home or any other personal residential location or accommodation;
* Sleep in the same room or bed as a vulnerable person with whom I am in contact in a work-related context. Where it is necessary to sleep close to unaccompanied vulnerable people, I will make sure that another adult is present and it is in line with authorised procedures;
* Do things of a personal nature for vulnerable people, with whom I am in contact in a work-related context, (e.g. taking a child/young person/person with a disability to the toilet/bathroom; helping them get un/dressed etc.) that they can do for themselves;
* Spend time alone away from others with vulnerable people with whom I am in contact in a work-related context; I will always make sure that another adult is with me and/or I am with the vulnerable person in an open public place, where others are around and in plain view of others;
* Act in ways that shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade vulnerable people, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse;
* Develop relationships with, engage in any practice with or develop behaviour towards vulnerable people which could in any way be deemed or interpreted as exploitive or abusive;
* Condone or participate in behaviour in our projects which are illegal, unsafe, or abusive;
* Use any computers, mobile phones, video and digital cameras, or any such medium to monitor, exploit, harass or bully vulnerable people; or to access, view, create, download, or distribute pornography, especially abusive images of vulnerable people.

The above is not an exhaustive list. Staff, partners and visitors should consider all related actions and behaviours which may compromise the rights and safeguarding of vulnerable people.

#### Personal Conduct outside Work or Engagement with The Organisation

The organisation asks that everyone signing this Code of Conduct considers how actions outside of working hours align with this Code of Conduct. As such, and due to the nature of our work and the consequences of any violations of this Code of Conduct, actions taken by project staff, volunteers, partners, suppliers, contractors and visitors outside of working hours that are seen to contradict this Code of Conduct will be considered a violation of this Code and may be subject to disciplinary action or termination of employment or work agreement.

**Acknowledgement**

By signing below, you acknowledge that you have read, understood, and acknowledged this Code of Conduct.

Signature Witness Signature

Name (Block Letters) Witness Name (Block Letters) Date………./………./……….. Date………./………./………..

| **Useful Terms for Section 4 (GEDSI Safeguarding,** [**Screening and Reporting**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1c0KG1-IAaCsrirHyUr9wHVXbgw-LDgABFSl0Yy5sgsE/edit#heading=h.ytfoc522h43k)**)** |
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| **Term** | **Definition** |
| **Abuse**  | Physical, sexual, emotional, economic or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviours that frighten, intimidate, terrorise, manipulate, hurt, humiliate, blame, injure, or wound someone. |
| **Exploitation** | The act of taking advantage of something or someone, in particular the act of taking unjust advantage of another for one's own benefit (e.g. sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, or servitude). |
| **Sexual abuse** | Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust for sexual purposes, including profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.[[3]](#footnote-2) |
| **Sexual exploitation** | The actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. All sexual activity with children sexual abuse, regardless of the age of maturity or consent locally. Mistaken understanding of the age of a child is not a defence. |
| **Safeguarding** | The set of responsibilities, preventative, responsive and referral measures that we undertake to protect vulnerable groups of people, ensuring that no-one is subject to any form of harm as a result of their association with the TEA platform. This includes ensuring that their contact with us and those associated with us and/or their participation in our activities, interventions and operations is safe. Where there are concerns over someone´s welfare or where a person has been subject to violence, appropriate and timely actions are taken to address this and incidents are analysed so as to ensure continued learning for the TEA platform. |
| **Vulnerable groups and people** | Any person (child or adult) who may be restricted in capacity to guard themselves against harm or exploitation or to report such harm or exploitation. This specifically includes but is not limited to: children, young people and people with disabilities. |
| **Violence against vulnerable groups/people** | This includes all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, emotional ill-treatment or psychological violence, sexual abuse and exploitation, harassment, and commercial or other exploitation of a person. Acts of violence can also take place online through, for example, the internet, social media or mobile phones. It may be an intentional act involving the use of physical force or power or it may be failing to act to prevent violence against a person. Violence consists of anything which individuals, groups, institutions or organisations do or fail to do, intentionally or unintentionally, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in actual or potential harm to the person’s wellbeing, dignity and survival and development.  |

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This tool is part of the TEA Gender Equality, Disability & Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Toolkit. For further details on this tool please refer to the GEDSI Toolkit Overview and Guide. If you have any questions on this specific tool or want to know more about the full toolkit, please contact TEAadmin@carbontrust.com.

This material has been funded by UK aid from the UK government; however the views expressed do not necessarily reflect the UK government's official policies.

This project was funded with UK aid from the UK government via the Transforming Energy Access Platform (TEA).

TEA works via partnership to support emerging clean energy generation technologies, productive appliances, smart networks, energy storage, and more. It increases access to clean, modern energy services for people and enterprises in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and the Indo Pacific, improving their lives, creating jobs and boosting green economic opportunities.

1. “Child,” in line with the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child), and for the purposes of this policy, is defined as any person — girl, boy, young woman, young man, and children of other gender identities — under the age of 18 years (UNCRC Article 1). [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. “Young Person/People” or “Youth,” in line with [United Nations definitions](https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-definition.pdf) and for purposes of this policy, include individuals – young women, young men, and young persons of other gender identities – aged 15–24 years old. This group spans the categories of ‘children’, ‘adolescents’ and ‘adults’ but regards young people as having particular safeguarding needs and requiring distinct consideration aside from younger children and older adults. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. IFC. “[Supporting Companies to Develop and Manage Community-Based Grievance and Feedback Mechanisms Regarding Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment](https://www.ifc.org/content/dam/ifc/doc/mgrt/ifc-communitybasedgrievancemechanism-toolkit.pdf).” *IFC*. 2022. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)