



POLICY FOR SAFEGUARDING

CHILDREN AND ADULTS-AT- RISK

*Version 2
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POLICY STATEMENT

AsiaCMS is committed to upholding the biblical mandate to safeguard the vulnerable and to affirm the rights and dignity of children and adults-at-risk. Through this Safeguarding Policy, AsiaCMS reaffirms its commitment to creating and maintaining safe environments that prevent abuse, harm, and exploitation across all its programmes, partnerships, and activities

*Defend the weak and the fatherless;
uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed.
Rescue the weak and the needy;
deliver them from the hand of the wicked.
-Psalm 82: 3&4 -*

1. INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child calls on nations to take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social, and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment, or exploitation, including sexual abuse (Article 19). Abuse or exploitation is a serious problem which affects all genders. Children and adults-at-risk are considered vulnerable to abuse or exploitation due to multiple factors such as age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, disability, illness, poverty. It is aggravated by deep rooted local cultural practices that may be considered harmful. They may experience emotional, physical, or sexual abuse, neglect, and discrimination, which can have long-term impacts on their lives¹.

Most often when children and adults-at-risk experience or witness incidents of abuse or exploitation they remain silent. This may be due to the fear of retribution and/or due to such subjects being considered a taboo within their society and culture. In the Asian context, many adults and children accept abuse or exploitation as part and parcel of life. In addition, the perception of what is considered abuse or exploitation to an adult, a child or adult-at-risk varies according to culture. As a result, the number of reported cases is just the tip of the iceberg.

Abuse or exploitation of children and adults-at-risk generally occur within families and communities. However, it also happens within organisations, institutions, and schools – including religious institutions, organizations that provide support and services to vulnerable groups in the humanitarian sector, and during emergency relief work.

Therefore, AsiaCMS strongly believes that as a part of the body of Christ, it is a calling and duty to be a loving community and offer a welcoming and safe environment for all children and adults-at-risk to learn and grow in Christ which is central to the mission of AsiaCMS. Therefore, AsiaCMS demonstrates its commitment as a ‘Policy for Safeguarding Children and Adults-at-risk’ hereinafter referred to as ‘Policy for Safeguarding’. The policy aims to safeguard children and adults-at-risk from abuse or exploitation.

WHY THIS POLICY MATTERS?

- Abuse and exploitation affect vulnerable children and adults worldwide.
- Many survivors remain silent due to fear and social stigma.
- Safeguarding is essential in families, communities, churches, and organizations.
- AsiaCMS is committed to creating safe environments and preventing harm.

¹ Refer Annexure 1 for definitions of terminology

2. BIBLICAL AND LEGAL MANDATE

AsiaCMS upholds the inherent dignity of every individual, created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), and follows Christ's command to love one another (John 13:34). We are called to defend the weak and the fatherless, uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed, and rescue the afflicted from injustice (Psalm 82:3–4). We take seriously the warning of Jesus against causing harm to little ones who believe in Him (Matthew 18:6). Abuse and exploitation violate God's heart and hinder faith, especially in children. Therefore, AsiaCMS commits to preventing harm, protecting the vulnerable, and seeking justice for survivors.

WHY SAFEGUARD THE VULNERABLE?

- Biblical foundation: Genesis 1:27, Psalm 82:3–4, Matthew 18:6
- Legal framework: UNCRC, UDHR, CRPD
- Applies international standards and country laws
- Purpose: Prevent, detect, report, and respond
- National laws in countries where AsiaCMS operates

As AsiaCMS works across Asia, it upholds the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), particularly Articles 3 and 19, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), particularly Article 16. AsiaCMS is committed to ensuring that all programmes meet international safeguarding standards and comply with applicable national laws in the countries where it operates.

Where safeguarding concerns or incidents occur outside Malaysia, AsiaCMS will give due regard to the laws of the country in which the incident takes place. In circumstances where national legislation provides weaker protection than international standards, AsiaCMS will apply the higher international safeguarding standard—provided this does not conflict with mandatory national legal requirements—to ensure the protection and dignity of children and other vulnerable persons.

Based on the above mandate, the purpose of this policy is to:

- **Prevent abuse or exploitation** of children and adults-at-risk during AsiaCMS' work.
- **Provide clear guidance for AsiaCMS** on common values, principles and procedures to be observed in order to prevent, detect, report, and respond to child/adult-at-risk abuse or exploitation.
- **Support all AsiaCMS personnel, in fulfilling their commitment** to safeguard children and adults-at-risk from abuse or exploitation.

3. SCOPE

- This Policy for Safeguarding applies to all AsiaCMS' work, including programmes, projects, events, and activities (hereinafter 'AsiaCMS Activity').
- Adherence to the Safeguarding Policy and Safeguarding Code of Conduct is mandatory for all AsiaCMS staff, consultants, Board of Trustees members, and volunteers (hereinafter referred to as "AsiaCMS Personnel"). This requirement also applies to Co-Mission Partners and Mission Associates, regardless of whether their work involves children or adults-at-risk.

- AsiaCMS encourages its Co-Mission Partners and Mission Associates to adopt and implement a Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct within their own organization. The respective organisation may enhance the standards and requirements set out in this Policy for Safeguarding and Safeguarding Code of Conduct in line with their national law and regulations.
- When Co-Mission Partners, Mission Associates, Partner organizations or churches are carrying out an activity of AsiaCMS, whether a one-off event or a short-term project involving children and/or adults-at-risk they must comply with the Safeguarding Code of Conduct of AsiaCMS.

WHO MUST COMPLY?

- All AsiaCMS programmes, projects, events, and activities.
- Mandatory for staff, consultants, trustees, volunteers, Co-Mission Partners, and Mission Associates.
- Partner churches and organizations must comply when implementing AsiaCMS activities.
- Encourages partners to develop their own safeguarding policies.

This policy will be made available to all AsiaCMS Personnel, Co-Mission Partners, Mission Associates, Partner organizations and churches and will always be accessible on AsiaCMS’ website.

4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

This policy applies the following principles that guide its implementation:

Best interests of the child and adult-at-risk:

AsiaCMS upholds the best interests of all children and adults-at-risk by ensuring they are treated with dignity, respect, and in full recognition of their rights. All safeguarding measures—including prevention, reporting, and response, will be guided by this principle, without discrimination based on age, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, nationality, language, health status, disability, religion, beliefs, socio-economic background, or legal history. A survivor-centred approach will be maintained throughout all processes.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Best interests of the child and adult-at-risk and a survivor-centred approach.
- Zero tolerance for abuse and exploitation.
- Alignment with international standards

Zero tolerance to abuse or exploitation:

AsiaCMS has zero tolerance for any form of abuse or exploitation of children or adults-at-risk. Such acts are a violation of human rights and are never acceptable under any circumstances

Recognition of the International Legal Frameworks:

AsiaCMS affirms the right of all children and adults-at-risk to live free from abuse and exploitation, as guided by international human rights frameworks including the UNCRC, UDHR, CRPD, CEDAW, ICERD, and CAT.

All staff, representatives, and partners are required to comply with this safeguarding policy and local country laws.

5. AsiaCMS RESPONSIBILITIES

- AsiaCMS Personnel will commit to provide a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all children and adults-at-risk to learn and grow in Christ and commit to safeguard all children and adults-at-risk from abuse or exploitation always when working or engaging with them.
- AsiaCMS Personnel will adhere to the provisions of the Policy, including signing up to comply with the Safeguarding Code of Conduct and the safeguarding manual.
- AsiaCMS Personnel are responsible to prevent, detect, report and respond to safeguarding concerns.
- AsiaCMS will designate one AsiaCMS Personnel as the Safeguarding Manager who shall be responsible for the effective implementation and monitoring of the Policy. The Safeguarding Manager will report to the Board of Trustees annually regarding the implementation of the Policy.
- AsiaCMS will appoint a Regional Safeguarding Focal Person for the purpose of a transparent and accountable safeguarding reporting system.
- Upon the adoption of this Policy for Safeguarding, the Safeguarding Manager, with the guidance of the Regional Safeguarding Focal Person, will review this Policy after one year of implementation.
- The Safeguarding Manager will present a report to the Board of Trustees on issues related to the implementation of the Policy along with any recommendation for appropriate amendments. Subsequently, a regular review of the Policy for Safeguarding and safeguarding manual will be undertaken every three years. For each review, the Safeguarding Manager and the safeguarding regional focal person, will present a report to the Board of Trustees on issues related to the implementation of the Policy along with any recommendation for change.

AsiaCMS RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments.
- Ensure all personnel comply with the policy and Code of Conduct.
- Prevent, detect, report, and respond to safeguarding concerns.
- Appoint a Safeguarding Manager and Regional Safeguarding Focal Person.

6. RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT OF ASIACMS PERSONNEL

AsiaCMS will ensure that in the recruitment, selection and screening of potential candidates there will be measures put in place in order to employ (paid or unpaid) only persons who meet our Policy for Safeguarding.

AsiaCMS will ensure:

- a clear job description is advertised
- a self-declaration on the application indicating no criminal records or legal proceedings
- interview screening questions
- a minimum of 2 written primary reference checks and secondary reference checks when required.

- Induction for new AsiaCMS Personnel will include briefing on the Policy for Safeguarding, Safeguarding Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Manual at a level appropriate with their roles.
- AsiaCMS Personnel must comply with the Policy for Safeguarding and Safeguarding Code of Conduct throughout their period of employment or engagement with AsiaCMS. Disciplinary measures, including dismissal or legal action, and reporting to local law enforcement authorities, will be taken if anyone is found to be in breach of the Policy for Safeguarding and the Safeguarding Code of Conduct in accordance with the procedures in the Safeguarding Manual.

SAFE RECRUITMENT

- Clear job descriptions.
- Criminal declaration requirement.
- Safeguarding-focused interviews.
- Reference checks.
- Safeguarding induction for all personnel.

For AsiaCMS Personnel with assigned safeguarding positions, they are encouraged to attend regular trainings on child/adult-at-risk safeguarding, provided by reputable external agencies, to stay up to date with the progress in this field.

7. PREVENTION

AsiaCMS recognises the importance of prevention in safeguarding and the responsibilities towards children and adults-at-risk. AsiaCMS activities will be designed and implemented in such a way that children and adults-at-risk will be protected from abuse or exploitation (intentional or unintentional) as a result of their engagement or contact with AsiaCMS Personnel.

AsiaCMS will ensure that children and adults-at-risk under ‘AsiaCMS Activities’ are well-informed on their safeguarding and protection rights regarding abuse or exploitation. AsiaCMS will ensure that children and adults-at-risk understand the essence of the Policy and the safeguarding commitment of AsiaCMS and will be aware that they can report an incident.

PREVENTING HARM

- Design activities to minimize safeguarding risks.
- Inform children and adults-at-risk about their rights and reporting options.
- Consider gender, discrimination, and inclusion risks.
- Consult affected individuals appropriately.

AsiaCMS will apply a safeguarding approach that takes into account:

- Gender considerations for the specific safeguarding risks and needs of girls, boys, and adults-at-risk men and women, respectively.
- Incorporating safeguarding measures to address risk factors such as gender discrimination and other forms of discrimination that could exacerbate abuse or exploitation of a particular group of children/adults-at-risk.

- Supporting meaningful consultation that is culturally appropriate with affected individuals² (in this case, children/adults-at-risk) in the safeguarding process in accordance with their age and maturity and ability to participate in decisions that affect them, in a manner that promotes equality and inclusion.

AsiaCMS understands that it is not possible to eliminate all risks when working with children and adults-at-risk, however, it is possible to minimise those risks. AsiaCMS will assess the level of risk of harm (in terms of abuse or exploitation) on children and adults-at-risk using the Child and Adult-at-risk Safeguarding Risk Assessment tool.

8.REPORTING

Any person or entity must report to AsiaCMS an actual or suspected abuse or exploitation that involves AsiaCMS Personnel, Co-Mission Partners and Mission Associates. It can be reported verbally, by email, and/or by completing the AsiaCMS Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form which is available in the Safeguarding Manual and AsiaCMS website. Reports of actual or suspected abuse or exploitation should be made according to the below mentioned reporting lines:³

8.1 Reporting flow chart

This reporting structure outlines the clear and confidential pathways for raising safeguarding concerns within AsiaCMS. It is designed to ensure that all concerns—whether related to staff, consultants, volunteers, leadership, or partner organizations—can be reported safely, received promptly, and addressed in a timely and accountable manner. The process emphasizes multiple entry points for reporting, appropriate escalation where conflicts of interest may arise, and collaborative review by designated safeguarding personnel and leadership. By establishing defined responsibilities for receiving, recording, consulting, and taking action, this structure aims to promote transparency, protect those affected, and ensure that safeguarding concerns are handled consistently, sensitively, and in line with AsiaCMS safeguarding commitments.

Any person or entity reporting actual or suspected abuse or exploitation shall do so in good faith and provide where possible information/evidence that would support a reasonable belief that a child/adult-at-risk abuse or exploitation has occurred. Prior to reporting, the person or entity does not need to ponder whether the matter is serious enough for a report to be made.

REPORTING A CONCERN

If there is a breach of code of conduct:

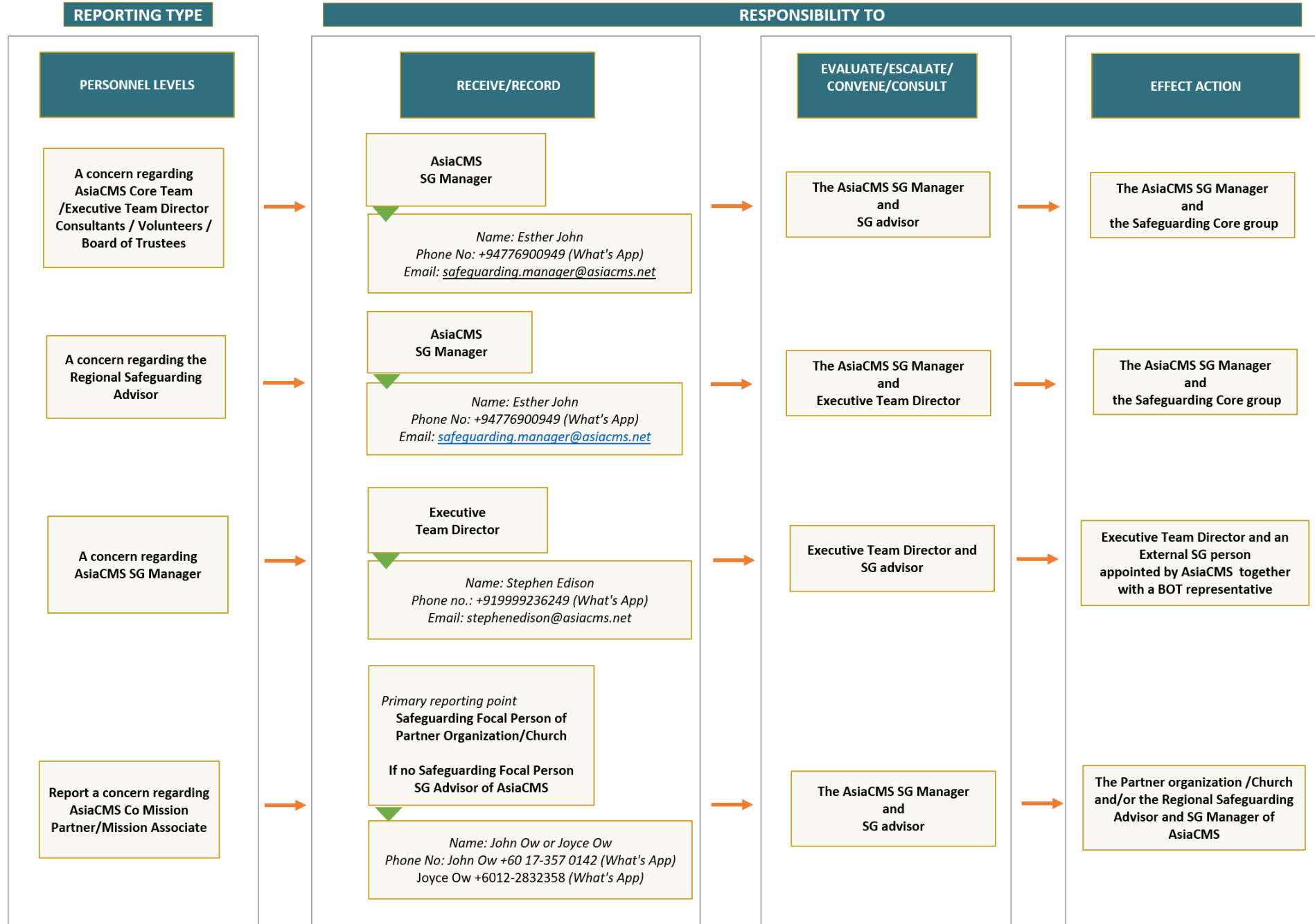
- Reporting is mandatory
- Any person may report actual or suspected abuse or exploitation.
- Reports may be verbal, written, email, or official reporting form.
- Concerns should be reported promptly without needing proof.
- Multiple reporting pathways ensure safe and confidential reporting.
- Concerns are escalated according to defined safeguarding procedures.

² Guided by the principle of the best interests of the child or adult-at-risk, children/adults-at-risk affected or potentially affected should be consulted in the decision-making process on matters affecting their lives and well-being; this is recognised as a best practice internationally.

³ All reports of actual or suspected abuse or exploitation should be made to the Safeguarding Manager as indicated in paragraph 37(a). However, if the Safeguarding Manager is implicated then paragraph 37(b) applies.

If AsiaCMS Personnel is unsure whether a concern, suspicion, incident or allegation amounts to abuse or exploitation, they should contact the Safeguarding Manager for confidential advice. However, if the Safeguarding Manager is the implicated perpetrator, they should contact the Executive Team Director of AsiaCMS for confidential advice.

REPORTING STRUCTURE OF ASIACMS



Concerns must be Reported to a non-alleged person

This reporting structure outlines the responsibilities of the individual receiving the concern, the immediate steps to be taken, and the roles of those to whom the concern is escalated. Concerns should be reported to the appropriate safeguarding focal person based on the alleged individual involved within the organization as per the above flow chart. The concern will then be assessed, appropriately escalated, and reviewed to determine the next course of action.

8.2 Safeguarding Core Group and Inquiry Process

A Safeguarding Core Group (SCG) shall be established whenever a safeguarding inquiry is required. The SCG shall consist of three to five members, including at least one Board member, and may include external experts where necessary.

As per those assigned for the evaluation of each incident depending on the alleged person, two persons shall assess the level of concern and convene the SCG. If the Safeguarding Manager is the subject of the allegation, the Executive Team Director shall consult the External Safeguarding Person appointed by AsiaCMS, and together they may establish the SCG. Details of reporting contacts and action protocols are outlined in the Safeguarding Manual.

INQUIRY PROCESS

- Safeguarding Core Group (SCG) established when an inquiry is required.
- Comprised of 3–5 members, including Board representation.
- Conducts inquiries in a survivor-centred, impartial, and confidential manner.
- Conflict-of-interest safeguards apply.
- Aim to complete inquiries within 60 days.

All reports of actual or suspected abuse or exploitation received by the Safeguarding Manager or Executive Team Director shall be reviewed and investigated by the SCG in accordance with the Safeguarding Manual. Any SCG member implicated in a case, or with a conflict of interest, must be excluded from the inquiry process.

The SCG shall conduct inquiries in a survivor-centred, transparent, impartial, and confidential manner, ensuring fairness, due diligence, and freedom from undue influence.

Efforts should be made to complete internal inquiries within 60 days of receiving the report. Following the inquiry, the SCG shall:

- monitor the wellbeing and safety of the survivor, the person reporting the concern, and the alleged perpetrator to ensure there is no retaliation;
- ensure that disciplinary or other agreed actions are implemented in a timely manner.

Where a reported concern may constitute criminal conduct under national law, the Safeguarding Manager or Executive Team Director shall promptly notify the relevant statutory authorities and fully cooperate with any official investigation.

9. RESPONSE

Protection will be provided to any individual reporting concerns, suspicions, incidents, allegations or complaints. Any survivor who reports, attempts to report, or is believed to have reported actual or suspected abuse or exploitation shall be entitled to all appropriate protection (which includes anonymity, confidentiality, and protection from retaliation) and remedies.

AsiaCMS will ensure:

- any appropriate measures to meet the protection needs, or the mental and physical health needs of a survivor must be taken concurrently with any reporting and/or follow-up investigation
- if any additional protection measures are needed, it will be guided by the principle of “the best interests of the child/adult-at-risk” while taking into account the survivor’s age and gender and tailored to the survivor’s circumstance.

If the Safeguarding Manager or the Executive Team Director⁴ is requested not to take any further action by the person making the report, in case of fear for the safety of the survivor, the Safeguarding Manager or SCG will assess the level of risk to the child and adult at risk and decide accordingly. However, an internal inquiry process will be conducted and recorded while upholding the best interest of the survivor.

RESPONSE

- Protection from retaliation, confidentiality, and anonymity.
- Survivor wellbeing prioritized throughout the process.
- Protection, health, and support needs addressed immediately.
- Decisions guided by the best interests of the child or adult-at-risk.

A Safeguarding Core Group (SCG) shall be established whenever a safeguarding inquiry is required. The Safeguarding Manager will assess the level of concern of the allegation and, in consultation with the Executive Team Director, decide whether to convene the SCG. If the Safeguarding Manager is the subject of the allegation, the Executive Team Director may directly form the SCG upon consultation with the external safeguarding focal person appointed by AsiaCMS.

9.1 Level of concern categorization

Serious Concerns (Harm Threshold) : Where a person has behaved in a manner that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child; may have committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; has behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children; or has demonstrated conduct suggesting they may be unsuitable to work with children. This includes **transferable risk**, where the behaviour may be repeated with another child or in another setting or institution.

Low-Level Concern : Refers to any behaviour that is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct, including conduct outside of work, and which does not meet the threshold of harm but nevertheless gives rise to unease or concern.

⁴ If the Safeguarding Manager is the alleged perpetrator.

9.2 AsiaCMS action pathways

OUTCOME	MEANING	ASIACMS RESPONSE
Substantiated	Sufficient evidence to confirm that the allegation occurred.	Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken in line With AsiaCMS HR and safeguarding procedures, which may include dismissal or termination of engagement. Where required, statutory authorities will be informed, and survivor-centered support will be prioritised.
Malicious	Evidence demonstrates that the allegation was deliberately false and made with intent to harm or deceive.	Disciplinary action may be considered against the individual who made the malicious allegation. If the reporter is a child, no punitive action will be taken; the child will be supported, recognising that the report may reflect underlying distress or a need for help.
False	Evidence clearly disproves the allegation, with no indication of malicious intent.	No disciplinary action will be taken against any party. AsiaCMS will take reasonable steps to support the wellbeing of all those involved and restoring working relationships where appropriate along with supervision.
Unsubstantiated	Insufficient evidence to either confirm or disprove the allegation.	This outcome does not imply guilt or innocence. AsiaCMS may implement proportionate risk management measures, including temporary adjustments to duties, supervision, monitoring, or support, to ensure ongoing safeguarding.
Unfounded	No evidence or reasonable basis to support the allegation.	The individual will normally return to their role or duties. Where appropriate, mentoring, supervision, or support may be provided to ensure a safe and respectful working environment.

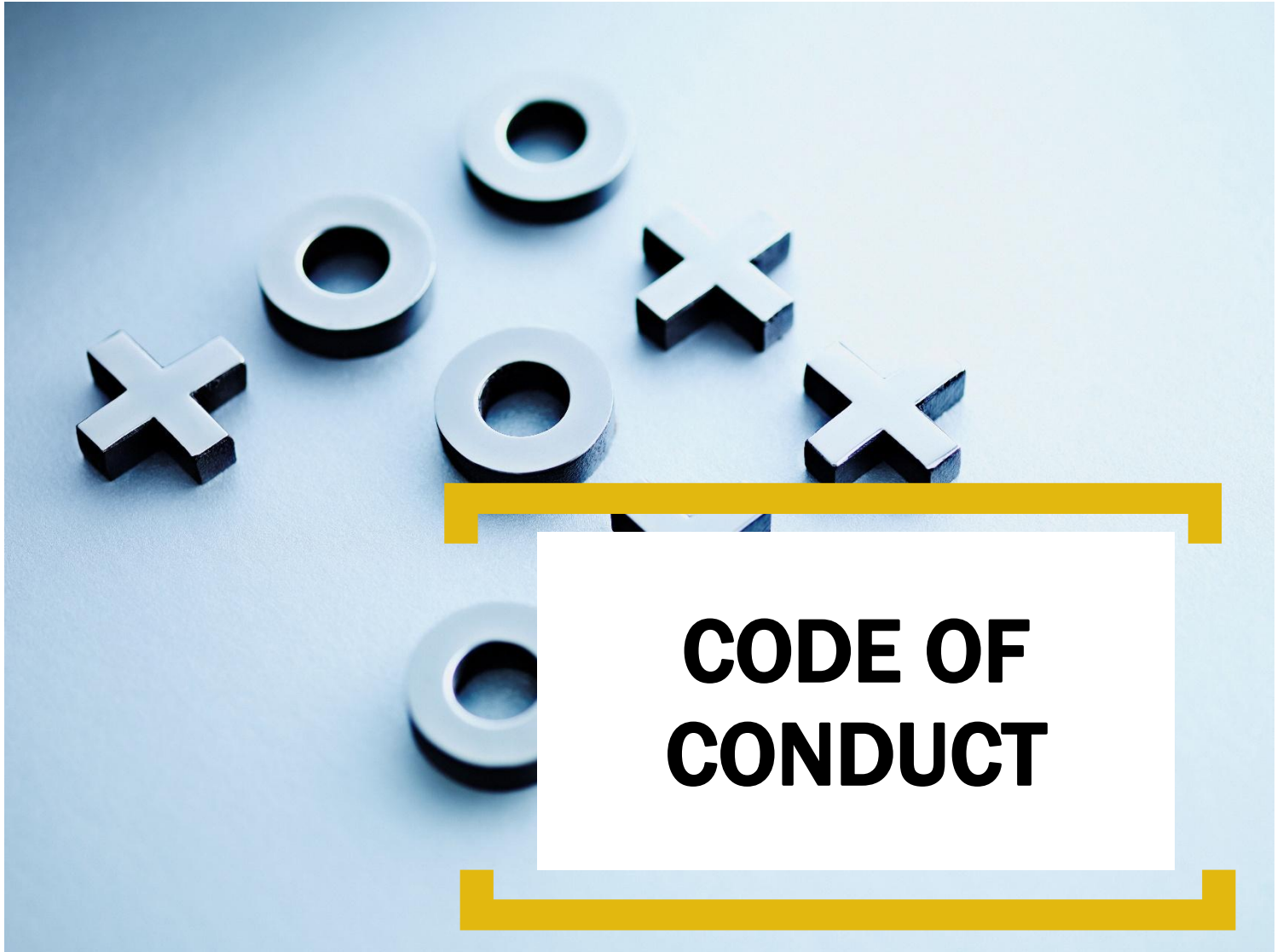
Any AsiaCMS Personnel found to have directly or indirectly condoned, encouraged, participated, or engaged in acts of abuse or exploitation or retaliation against an actual or suspected survivor or has negligently failed to prevent, report, incidents of abuse or exploitation, or retaliation, may be subject to disciplinary action or other remedial measures, as appropriate. AsiaCMS reserves the right to withdraw or terminate any appointment, employment contract, or partnership agreement with such AsiaCMS Personnel and organisation. Where appropriate, legal action shall be taken, and a report made to relevant statutory authorities for criminal investigation under the law and regulations of the country where the incident took place.

The Safeguarding Manager and the Safeguarding Core Group will ensure that for each case, appropriate protection and remedial measures decided by AsiaCMS are based on after considering the best interest of the child or adult-at-risk who has experienced abuse or exploitation. The Safeguarding Manager shall also ensure that all conversations will be recorded in writing and confidentiality shall be maintained throughout the process.

10.EFFECTIVENESS AND REVISION

This Policy for Safeguarding will come into effect upon adoption by the Board of Trustees. This Policy will remain in effect until amended or superseded by the Board.

Safeguarding children and adults-at-risk is a long-term undertaking and a sustained commitment, which includes monitoring and reporting on progress annually. In addition, approaches to children and adults-at risk safeguarding progress over time. The Policy for Safeguarding will be reviewed and updated one year after its implementation by a decision of the Board. Subsequently, the Policy of Safeguarding will be reviewed regularly **every three years** and updated by a decision of the Board. The Safeguarding Manager shall maintain a document of required or suggested amendments until the next revision.



**CODE OF
CONDUCT**

BACKGROUND

1. This Code of Conduct is to be read in conjunction with the AsiaCMS Policy for Safeguarding Children and Adults-at-risk.
2. AsiaCMS' staff, Consultants, Board of Trustees, Co-Mission Partners, Direct volunteers and Mission Associates must agree to this Code when working with children and adults-at-risk. They must maintain clear professional boundaries and highest degree of ethical conduct at all times. Breaches of this Code may result in termination of role

I WILL:

- a) Treat all children and all persons in a manner which is respectful of their rights and dignity, and consider their best interests regardless of age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity or national origin, nationality, language, place of residence, marital status, state of physical or mental health, disability, state of pregnancy, religion or belief, social-economic or cultural background, political beliefs, and any history of conflict with the law.
- b) Organise my work and the workplace to create and maintain an environment which prevents the abuse or exploitation.
- c) Keep my team informed about my whereabouts in my dealings with children and adults-at-risk participating in AsiaCMS' activities. Ensure that either another adult is present when I am with children/adults-at-risk or I am in an open place visible to others.
- d) Disclose all charges, criminal convictions or disciplinary actions, which occurred before or during association with AsiaCMS.
- e) Report all concerns, suspicions, incidents or allegations of actual or potential abuse or exploitation that I have either witnessed, are made aware of, or suspect according to AsiaCMS reporting procedures.
- f) Cooperate and comply with the reporting procedure fully in any AsiaCMS investigation of concerns or allegations of abuse or exploitation to a child/adult-at-risk.
- g) Comply with this safeguarding policy, the child labour laws of the country in which I work or represent the organization, and—where national laws are weaker—the higher international standards (such as those set by the ILO and UN CRC)

I WILL NOT:

- a) Act in ways that is intended to shame, humiliate, belittle, or degrade or discriminate children and adults-at-risk, or carry out any form of emotional abuse.
- b) Use inappropriate, offensive, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, culturally inappropriate or discriminatory language when speaking with a child/adult-at-risk.
- c) Use physical punishment/discipline or use physical force of any kind (e.g., hitting and physical assault) towards children and adults-at-risk.
- d) Behave provocatively or inappropriately with a child/adult-at-risk (e.g., fondle, hold, kiss, hug, or touch) in an inappropriate, unnecessary or culturally insensitive way.
- e) Condone or participate in behaviour of a child/adult-at-risk that is illegal, unsafe or abusive.

- f) Engage in any form of sexual activity or develop physical/sexual relationships with any child below 18 years old regardless of the local age of consent. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defense.
- g) Engage any child/adult-at-risk in any form of sexual activity which involve the exchange of either money, goods, assistance, employment, or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour.
- h) Invite unaccompanied children/adults-at-risk into my house or any other personal residential accommodation, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger. I must obtain my superior's permission and ensure that another adult is present in such situations.
- i) Make contact and/or spend time with any child/adult-at-risk or family members associated or formerly associated with AsiaCMS' work that is not authorised by my superior. This includes but is not limited to visits and any form of communication via phone, social media, emails, and letters.
- j) Use any computer, mobile phone, video/digital camera, or other electronic devices to exploit, harass or bully children/adults-at-risk or access, view, create, download or distribute pornography/child pornography, particularly abusive images of children/adults-at-risk.

When photographing or filming or live streaming children/adults-at-risk for work purpose, I must:

- a) Ask permission⁵ from the children/adults-at-risk and their parents or their guardians before taking photographs or filming or live streaming them. I must explain to them how and where the photographs or film or live streaming will be used and for what purpose. Also, I must respect their decision to say “No” and assure them that there will be no negative repercussions from refusing to consent.
- b) Assess and endeavor to comply with local traditions, culture or restrictions for reproducing personal images before filming or photographing a child/adult-at-risk.
- c) Ensure photographs or films, or live streaming present the children/adults-at-risk in a respectful manner and do not impact negatively their dignity and privacy.

GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING

When reporting on children/adults-at-risk for work purpose, I must:

1. Always provide an accurate context for the child/adult-at-risk's story or image.
2. Always change the name and obscure the visual identity of **any** child/adults at risk who is identified as vulnerable, this would include:
 - i. A survivor of sexual abuse or exploitation,
 - ii. A perpetrator of physical or sexual abuse,
 - iii. HIV positive, or living with AIDS, unless the child, a parent or a guardian gives informed consent,
 - iv. Charged or convicted of a crime,
 - v. A child combatant, or former child combatant who is holding a weapon or weapons,
 - vi. An asylum seeker, a refugee or an internal displaced person.

⁵ Refers to informed consent

PERSONAL CONDUCT OUTSIDE WORK

AsiaCMS expects personnel to uphold this Code both professionally and personally. While personal beliefs are respected, any conduct outside work that violates the Code may be treated as a breach.

AGREEMENT

I, _____, have read AsiaCMS' Policy for Safeguarding Children and Adults-at-risk and Safeguarding Code of Conduct. I agree to abide by the Code of Conduct at all times. I understand that disciplinary action, including dismissal, and legal steps will be taken if I am found to be in breach of the Code of Conduct.

Signature:

Position/role:

Date:

Name of witness:

Signature:

Position/role:

Date:

ANNEXURE 1 - DEFINITIONS

ASIACMS ACTIVITY - ACMS' work, including programmes, projects, events and activities.

ASIACMS PERSONNEL - ACMS' staff, Consultants, Board of Trustees and direct volunteers.

ASIACMS CO-MISSION PARTNERS - Personnel appointed by AsiaCMS and a partner organization for mission work across Asia. 'Co-Mission Partner' is inclusive of family members when placed as a couple or a family outside of the Co-Mission Partner's hometown.

ASIACMS MISSION ASSOCIATES – The Mission Associate Programme is a response of AsiaCMS to provide a covering and guidance for experienced missions personnel who do not require financial support from AsiaCMS but who seek accountability and fellowship with like-minded people in God's mission.

ADULT-AT-RISK - Refers to any person who due to his/her illness, physical or mental health, or disability is unable to care for self, and hence needs care and support. Due to this condition, he/she is unable to protect him/herself, and is at risk of either abuse or exploitation, neglect, bullying, or discrimination either due to his/her own behavior or another person's behavior. Vulnerable adults/adults-at-risk is any person aged 18 years old or above who may be in a vulnerable position as described above. They may also be seen as vulnerable due to age, illness or their context for example being a refugee or a survivor of domestic abuse.

Adults may also be seen as vulnerable due to age, illness or their context for example being a refugee.

CHILD- Any person below 18 years old

VULNERABLE- Inter-agency Child Protection: "Physical, social, economic and environmental factors that increase the susceptibility of a community or individuals to difficulties and hazards and that put them at risk as a result of loss, damage, insecurity, suffering and death."

Inter-Agency Standing Committee: Individuals who "hold less power in society, are more dependent on others for survival, are less visible to relief workers, or are otherwise marginalized⁶."

CHILD/ADULT-AT-RISK ABUSE OR EXPLOITATION - Abuse or exploitation that happens to any child/adult-at-risk regardless of age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity or national origin, nationality, language, place of residence, marital status, state of physical or mental health, disability, state of pregnancy, religion or belief, social-economic or cultural background, political beliefs, and any history of conflict with the law. Child/adult-at-risk abuse or exploitation includes emotional, physical and sexual abuse, neglect, bullying, and discrimination. Abuse or exploitation can be perpetrated on a child/adult-at-risk by either men, women or other children/adults-at-risk.

⁶ Child Protection Working Group, January 2014, Inter Agency Guidelines for Case Management & Child Protection: The Role of Case Management in the Protection of Children: A Guide for Policy and Programme Managers and Caseworkers, available at: http://www.cpcnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/CM_guidelines_ENG_.pdf.

CHILD/ADULT-AT-RISK PROTECTION - Actions by an organisation to protect children/adults-at-risk from abuse or exploitation. This includes preventing, mitigating and responding to violence, coercion, and abuse or exploitation.

CHILD/ADULT-AT-RISK SAFEGUARDING⁷ - The preventive, responsive and referral measures taken by an organisation when working with children/adults-at-risk to protect them from abuse or exploitation by its staff or others. This is to ensure that the presence and participation of children/adults-at-risk in the organisation's programmes, projects, events, and activities are safe. If there are concerns over a child/adult-at-risk's well-being or any suspected or proven child/adult-at-risk abuse or exploitation, appropriate and timely measures must be taken.

CHILD/ADULT-AT-RISK PHYSICAL ABUSE - Actual/potential physical harm perpetrated by another person (either a child or an adult) through acts such as hitting, shaking, poisoning, drowning, and burning. It also includes acts by parents/guardians/carers who deliberately deprive a child/adult-at-risk of food and water or deliberately induces illness in a child/adult-at-risk.

CHILD/ADULT-AT-RISK EMOTIONAL ABUSE⁸ - Persistent emotional maltreatment by another person (e.g., parents/guardians/adults in position of responsibility) that impacts a child/adult-at-risk's emotional development. As a result, this hinders a child/adult-at-risk from developing a stable and full range of emotional and social competencies commensurate with his/her personal potential and in the context of the society in which the child/adult-at-risk dwells. Examples of emotional abuse acts are such as restriction of movement, degrading, humiliating, bullying (including cyber bullying), threatening, scaring, discriminating, and ridiculing or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.

CHILD/ADULT-AT-RISK SEXUAL ABUSE - Forcing/enticing a child/adult-at-risk to take part in sexual activity that he/she does not fully understand, unable to give informed consent, and which he/she is not developmentally prepared for. Examples of the sexual activities include, but is not limited to, rape, oral sex, and penetration or non-penetrative sexual acts. It could also include forcing a child/adult-at-risk to look at or producing sexual images, watch sexual activities, and encouraging a child/adult-at-risk to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

SPIRITUAL ABUSE - Spiritual abuse may occur on its own, or alongside other forms of abuse, such as physical, sexual or domestic abuse. It may be used to 'legitimise' or facilitate other forms of abuse. It is often an integral element of other experiences of abuse within the Christian Church and other faith contexts and it is important that in investigating disclosures of other forms of abuse, spiritual abuse is considered. The abuse might be any combination of psychological, physical, sexual or emotional abuse.

⁷ "Child/adult-at-risk safeguarding" is a sub-component of child protection.

⁸ <https://www.keepingchildrensafe.global/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/KCS-CS-Standards-ENG-200218.pdf>

NEGLECT/NEGLIGENT TREATMENT - The failure to provide for the development of the child in all spheres: health, education, emotional development, nutrition, shelter and safe living conditions, in the context of resources reasonably available to the family or caregivers, and causes (or has a high probability of causing) harm to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. This includes the failure to properly supervise and protect children from harm as much as is feasible.

ONLINE ABUSE - Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the internet. It can happen across any device that's connected to the web, like computers, tablets and mobile phones. And it can happen anywhere online, including social media, text messages and messaging apps, emails, online chats, online gaming, live-streaming sites. Children and adults at risk are vulnerable to online abuse from people they know or from strangers. It might be part of other abuse which is taking place offline, like bullying or grooming. Or the abuse might only happen online.

FALSE OR MALICIOUS REPORT- An inaccurate or misleading report that is made recklessly, or knowingly, or deliberately with the intention of gaining undue advantage or causing harm to a person or entity.

SURVIVOR - A child/adult-at-risk who is, or at risk of, or has experienced abuse or exploitation.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN/ADULTS-AT-RISK- Being engaged in activities with children/adults-at-risk where contact, whether physical or otherwise, with children/adults-at-risk is a normal part of a person's work. This also includes volunteer work and unpaid work.



**SAFEGUARDING PROTOCOLS FOR
CO MISSION PARTNERS AND PARTNER
CHURCHES/ORGANIZATIONS**

ADDENDUM

SAFEGUARDING PROTOCOLS FOR CO MISSION PARTNERS AND PARTNER CHURCHES/ORGANIZATIONS

This section applies specifically to Co-Mission Partners (COMPs), partner churches, and partner organizations working with AsiaCMS. As COMPs formally engage and collaborate with AsiaCMS in ministry and mission initiatives, the AsiaCMS Code of Conduct applies to all COMPs.

Prior to engagement with AsiaCMS, all COMPs shall undergo a screening process, which includes written reference checks and the signing of criminal declaration forms. All COMPs engaging with AsiaCMS shall also receive safeguarding orientation, including guidance on relevant safeguarding protocols and reporting procedures, and shall be required to sign the AsiaCMS Code of Conduct.

All partner churches and partner organizations shall sign the AsiaCMS Safeguarding Compliance Agreement, acknowledging their commitment to adhere to safeguarding expectations and protocols. In situations where partner churches or organizations appoint personnel under a strategic project partnership, the appointed personnel or project implementers shall receive safeguarding orientation and comply with the AsiaCMS Code of Conduct and safeguarding policy requirements.

AsiaCMS encourages all partner churches and organizations to develop and implement their own safeguarding policies and systems. In the absence of an existing safeguarding policy, partners may adopt and follow the AsiaCMS Safeguarding Policy until their own policy framework is established.

All COMPs, partner churches, and partner organizations are required to report any safeguarding concern involving AsiaCMS personnel, Mission Associates, or other COMPs in accordance with the reporting protocols outlined below.

REPORTING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS INVOLVING OTHER CO-MISSION PARTNERS AND PARTNER ORGANISATIONS/CHURCHES

In upholding the safeguarding protocols of AsiaCMS, all safeguarding incidents reported to AsiaCMS will be considered as a reported incident. Accordingly, all incidents will be managed and handled based on a survivor centered approach. In addition, all personnel appointed by and/or in partnership with AsiaCMS should follow the reporting protocols below:

Who Can Report A Safeguarding Incident?

- The survivor of the incident: Child or Adult-at-Risk (CAaR)
- Parent or guardian of the CAaR
- Any individual within or outside the organization/church who witnessed the incident
- Any individual within or outside the partner organization/church to whom the incident was directly or indirectly reported

To Whom Can the Incident Be Reported?

- An incident may be reported to the Safeguarding Focal Person of the partner organization or church.
- Where there is no Safeguarding Focal Person within the church/organization, the incident must be reported to the Regional Safeguarding Advisor of AsiaCMS

What Will Happen When the Incident Is Reported?

- The partner organization/church may take the lead role in the inquiry process in accordance with the legislation of the respective country. Internal organizational/church disciplinary protocols may be followed accordingly.
- The partner organization/church must inform the AsiaCMS Regional Safeguarding Advisor* about the incident/complaint received.

What Will Be the Role of AsiaCMS?

- The reported concern will thereafter be escalated in accordance with AsiaCMS safeguarding protocols.
- AsiaCMS may be consulted if the partner organization/church requests support in handling the incident.
- If the subject of the complaint is a COMP, AsiaCMS will obtain a statement from the personnel appointed by and/or working in partnership with AsiaCMS and thereafter follow protocols in compliance with organizational procedures and country laws.

RESPONSE AND ROLE OF ASIACMS

The response and action protocol of AsiaCMS will differ according to the level of concern. If the allegation is proven false after inquiry, there will be a record made on the safeguarding incident logs of AsiaCMS and supervision will be provided where necessary.

If the allegation is not a serious breach of code of conduct or considered a low concern allegation (A low-level concern refers to any behaviour that is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct, including conduct outside of work, and which does not meet the threshold of harm but nevertheless gives rise to unease or concern). AsiaCMS will make a record on the incident log and accordingly a written warning will be given to the alleged personnel. Thereafter, the personnel will be advised to be under structured supervision.

If the allegation is a serious concern (A serious concern is one that meets the harm threshold, where a person has behaved in a manner that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child; may have committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; has behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children; or has demonstrated conduct suggesting they may be unsuitable to work with children. This includes transferable risk, where the behavior may be repeated with another child or in another setting or institution) an internal incident log will be recorded and thereafter may lead to a termination of contract. Where necessary legal action may be take and local country laws will be followed.

SUPPORT SERVICES FOR THE SURVIVOR

AsiaCMS emphasizes on a survivor centered approach and promotes the healing and restoration of the survivor. In order that the survivor will receive healing and justice, it is recommended that the following services should be provided for the survivor and the family by the partner organization/church. When necessary, AsiaCMS will be able to provide guidance on ways of supporting the survivor.

- Safety and protection
- Medical care
- Psycho-social support
- Material needs
- Legal services

**Regional Safeguarding focal points of AsiaCMS*

Partner Organizations/Churches may contact the Regional Safeguarding Advisors to report concerns related to any personnel appointed by and/or in partnership with AsiaCMS :

Name: John Ow or Joyce Ow

John Ow +60 17-357 0142 (What's App)

Joyce Ow +6012-2832358 (What's App)

Email: safeguarding.advisor@asiacms.net

REPORTING PROTOCOL FOR SAFEGUARDING INCIDENTS INVOLVING ASIACMS PERSONNEL AND MISSION ASSOCIATES

This protocol is intended for COMPs, churches, and partner organizations to report safeguarding concerns involving AsiaCMS personnel, including staff, consultants, Board of Trustees members, the Executive Team Director, Regional Safeguarding Advisors, the Safeguarding Manager, direct volunteers, and Mission Associates.

AsiaCMS is committed to accountability in all partnerships and encourages the timely reporting of safeguarding concerns. All reports will be handled in accordance with established safeguarding procedures, with due consideration for confidentiality, fairness, and the best interests of the survivor.

Reporting a Concern

If the allegation involves a staff member, consultant, Board member, Executive Team Director, Regional Safeguarding Advisor, Mission Associate, or direct volunteer, the concern should be reported to the:

Safeguarding Manager of AsiaCMS:

Name: Esther John

WhatsApp/Signal: +94 77 690 0949

Email: safeguarding.manager@asiacms.net

If the allegation concerns the Safeguarding Manager, the report should be made directly to the:

Executive Team Director of AsiaCMS:

Name: Stephen Edison

WhatsApp/Signal: +91 99992 36249

Email: stephenedison@asiacms.net

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