



FAIRTRADE

**Fairtrade Finland**

**Child and Vulnerable Adult  
Protection and Safeguarding Policy**

**Administration**

**Date: 10.11.2021**



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## **A. Objectives**

Fairtrade Finland respects the right of children (including youth) and vulnerable adults to protection, regardless of gender, race, culture and disability. Fairtrade Finland recognizes the power dynamics inherent in working with children and vulnerable adults and the potential for abuse, violence and exploitation by staff of people we work with.

Fairtrade Finland is committed to creating and maintaining an environment which promotes its core values and prevents abuse, violence and exploitation of all people. Fairtrade Finland staff and associates are expected to uphold the dignity of all people with whom they come into contact with by ensuring that their personal and professional conduct is of the highest standards at all times. They are equally expected to serve with integrity and promote ethical relationships while taking their responsibilities.

Fairtrade Finland acknowledges the unique needs of children and vulnerable adults and, therefore, commits itself to creating and maintaining an environment that protects these individuals.

This policy aims to provide a management strategy to prevent abuse of children and vulnerable adults and protect them in the course of our work, providing guidelines on what to do in the case of suspected abuse. This policy also protects Fairtrade Finland staff and people we work with from unfair practices and processes. It is complemented by Fairtrade Finland's Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Policy and Anti-bullying and Anti-Harassment Policy.

## **B. Scope**

It is an expectation that all persons within the scope of this policy familiarize themselves with this policy, which is available on the Fairtrade Finland intranet and website.

This Policy aims to prevent, detect and respond to acts against child and vulnerable adult involving:

- Board members and Board Committee members
- Employees or Associates of Fairtrade Finland ("staff members")
- Consultants, Contractors and Vendors
- Volunteers
- Interns and Student Assistants
- Partners and responsible parties engaged/contracted by Fairtrade Finland for a project or activities ("implementing partners" and "responsible parties", respectively).
- Program visitors including journalists, politicians, celebrities and donors



and applies to any behavior relating to work or in the context of work. Fairtrade Finland is committed to taking a systematic and robust approach to the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

### **C. Definitions**

#### 1. Child

Any person under the age of 18. National law or local customs may use different definition; however, Fairtrade' position is all persons under the age of 18 should receive equal protection regardless of local age limits.

#### 2. Vulnerable Adult

Vulnerable adults are individuals aged 18 years and over who are at greater risk of significant harm due to factors such as gender, age, mental or physical health, or as a result of poverty, inequality or experience of displacement, war or crisis.

#### 3. Protection

The responsibility and measures taken to prevent and respond to abuse, violence, neglect and exploitation of a child or vulnerable adult. This includes building awareness, promoting training, identifying and responding to all complaints, monitoring and evaluating protection structures, and taking personal responsibility.

#### 4. Abuse

Any action or inaction that causes harm to another person. It can include physical abuse, emotional abuse, verbal abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. It also includes abuse online and/or through mobile technology.

### **D. Policy Statement**

1. Fairtrade Finland is committed to protect children and vulnerable adults guided by the following principles:

- Awareness: we will ensure that all board members, staff and partners as well as stakeholders involved in projects are aware of the problem of child abuse and the risks to children and vulnerable adults.
- Prevention: we will ensure, through awareness and good practice, that all board members, staff and partners minimize the risks to children and vulnerable adults.
- Reporting: we will ensure that all board members, staff and partners are clear on what steps to take where concerns arise regarding the safety of children and vulnerable adults.



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- Responding: we will ensure that appropriate actions are taken to support and protect children and vulnerable adults where concerns of abuse arise.
2. Fairtrade Finland prohibits all forms of exploitation and abuse, namely:
    - Board members, staff and associates are prohibited from engaging in sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18, regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally). Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defense.
    - Board members, staff and associates are prohibited from causing any physical or emotional harm to children or vulnerable adults or any individuals.
    - Board members, staff and associates are prohibited from the exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favors.
    - Board members, staff and associates are prohibited from any form of humiliating, degrading, or exploitative behavior toward children and vulnerable adults or any individuals.
    - Board members, staff and associates are not to use their power or position to withhold assistance or services, or to give preferential treatment.
    - Board members, staff and associates are prohibited from using their power or position to request or demand payment, privilege, or any other benefit.
    - Board members, staff and associates are prohibited from engaging in trafficking in human beings, in all forms.
  3. Fairtrade Finland will not permit a person to work with children or vulnerable adults if it has been identified that they pose an unacceptable risk to their safety or well-being.
  4. Fairtrade Finland takes all abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence concerns raised seriously and responds in a timely manner. Please refer also to Fairtrade Finland's Complaint and Allegation Policy.
  5. Fairtrade Finland supports and protects everyone who raises concerns in good faith as well as subjects of concern. Please refer also to Fairtrade Finland's Whistleblower Protection Policy.
  6. Fairtrade Finland will act appropriately and effectively in instigating or cooperating with any subsequent process of investigation, in the best interests of the subject concerned.

## **E. Complaint and Reporting**

### **1. Obligation to Report**



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All employees of Fairtrade Finland have an obligation to report immediately (in a sensitive manner respecting the victim's interests) any behaviour, evidence or language that they believe suggests that the well-being of a child or vulnerable adult is endangered.

## 2. Allegation Handling

Any concerns, allegations or disclosures must be recorded in writing, signed and dated. All such records should be treated as extremely confidential. It is the responsibility of each individual in possession of the information to maintain confidentiality.

In order to protect and safeguard children and vulnerable adults, it may be necessary to take immediate action to ensure that the safety of the victim and that further abuse, exploitation or violence cannot take place. Some concerns might require reporting to authorities or police.

## F. **Data Protection**

Fairtrade Finland is committed to apply the highest levels of protection in the processing of personal data. Personal information acquired during investigations related to the breach of the Code of Ethics and Conduct of the Fairtrade Organization Code and the Child and Vulnerable Adults Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be treated with the highest confidentiality.

## G. **Roles and Responsibilities**

### 1. Board

The Board will have overall responsibility for monitoring the outcomes of this policy and ensuring that Fairtrade Finland effectively works towards protection of children and vulnerable adults. Executive lead responsibility will rest with CEO.

### 2. CEO or Protection Officer (PO) appointed by CEO

The Protection Officer is responsible for:

- Providing relevant guidance and advocating the importance of child and vulnerable adult protection and safeguarding to staff and associates and ensuring all relevant parties are familiar with the policy.
- Receiving and acting upon any reported concerns and securely storing records of any concerns.

### 3. Line Managers

Line managers have a key role in implementing this policy by:



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- Actively bringing this policy to the attention of all staff in order to promote the aims of this policy.
- Ensuring that staff is aware of their responsibilities and expectations of behaviour.
- Ensuring their own behaviour is beyond reproach and act in ways to maintain the dignity of all their staff particularly when managing issues of poor performance or conduct.
- Being responsive and supportive to any member of staff who raises concerns regarding abuse of a child or vulnerable adult or any individual. Ensuring that all complaints are taken seriously and dealt with promptly, sensitively and confidentially.

#### 4. All Employees

Every member of staff is responsible for contributing to a conducive and safe working environment in which the dignity of others is respected. In particular, it is expected that all employees:

- Treat children and vulnerable adults and all individuals with dignity and respect regardless of any differences.
- Comply with this policy and participate in the processes outlined.
- Report any concerns regarding abuse of a child or vulnerable adult immediately to Protection Officer.

#### **H. Document Change History**

| Document version | Date approved and by whom           | Mandatory Review                              | Creator        |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|---|----------------|
| 1.1              | 10.11.2021, Fairtrade Finland Board | Fairtrade Finland Board approves all changes. | Administration |