



MOUNTAINS OF HOPE CHILDRENS MINISTRIES UGANDA

POLICY: Child protection policy

POLICY NUMBER: 001

EFFECTIVE DATE: 6th January 2009

PERTAINS TO: All board members, staff, volunteers, interns, visitors and partners

1.0 Preamble:

Children are precious in the sight of God, unfortunately in our communities-children are neglected and have become vulnerable and are victims of all forms of abuse and neglect.

The Mountains of hope has among others, “required standards for child protection” which we adhere to:

This policy covers board members, staff, volunteers, interns, visitors and partners.

1.1 vision statement:

We have a vision of bringing lasting, and a positive change to the young children and the community they live in.

1.2 Mission statement:

Our mission is to make a real, lasting difference to the lives of children through provision of education, care and surrounding them with Gods love.

2.0 Problem statement:

Mountains of hope is aware of the vulnerability of children in and out of their communities. The children can easily be taken advantage of and preyed upon.

Unfortunately sometimes the very care providers for these children become the culprits perpetuating this abuse and exploitation.

This policy is therefore designed to provide guidance for Mountains of hope board members, staff, volunteers, interns, visitors, and partners to comprehend the values that should be adhered to when dealing with children.

Provisions in the Uganda constitution, children's Act 2000, and other International conventions guide this policy.

3.0 common definitions in this policy

3.1 **A child** in Uganda is any human person below the age of 18 years

3.2 **Child Abuse** is defined as specified in the UN Convention on child Rights.

3.3 **Child physical abuse** is the inflicting of physical injury upon a child.

3.4 **Child sexual abuse** is inappropriate sexual behavior with a child. The child is encouraged or forced to participate/ observe forms of sexual activity. It is criminal behavior to do that.

3.5 **Child emotional Abuse** involves neglecting to give enough love and attention to the child, not making the child feel secure and worthy, verbally assaulting by belittling, blaming, sarcasm, screaming and threats.

4.0 Common forms of child abuse in Uganda:

- a) Parents abandoning, burning their children sometimes to death, denying them food, clothes, education, medical treatment and other basics of life.
- b) Child sexual abuse most especially in communities highly affected by war and AIDS
- c) Child sacrifice
- d) Child labour
- e) Early marriages
- f) Uncontrolled corporal punishments.

5.0 Provision for children in the Uganda legal system

The Uganda Government became a signatory to the UN Convention on the rights of the child on 17 August 1990 (Rights of the child Fact sheet No.10 Annex II)

The Uganda constitution stipulates the constitutional rights of children and their protection. The constitution stipulates the roles of various duty bearers in regard to safeguarding of child rights and protection from abuse.

The government of Uganda enacted the children's Act 2000, (CAP 59 Laws of Uganda) to operationalize the constitutional provisions on child rights and domesticate the UN Convention on the rights of children.

The Mountains of hope child protection policy is based on the above mentioned legal provisions and the African Charter on the Rights and welfare of children.

6.0 Mountains of hope and the children

Mountains of Hope is a child focused organization that values children, recognizes their potential and is committed to their well being and protection.

6.1 Children in Mountains of Hope Mission

In pursuing its mission, we are particularly committed to addressing the needs of children.

6.2 Mountains of Hope commitment

MOH will therefore take the following steps to promote child protection in the communities where we operate and as opportunity arises and beyond.

- a) Elect a child protection committee in the communities we work with.
- b) Develop the awareness of staff, board members and volunteers about child rights, child abuse, child neglect and exploitation.
- c) Screen all staff, board candidates and volunteers.
- d) Seek opportunity to facilitate children to learn about their rights.

6.3 Procedures

6.3.1 Awareness Raising

6.3.1.1 We will educate staff, volunteers and board members on child abuse, neglect and exploitation, needs and rights of children.

6.3.1.2 In appropriate behavior towards children observed among staff, board members, volunteers, sponsors and visitors should be reported to the child protection committee which will decide what action to take in consultation with the director.

6.3.1.3 Cautious recruitment and deployment of staff, board and volunteers

6.3.1.3 We will inform all prospective employees, board candidates and volunteers of child protection policies as a matter of procedure in the recruiting process.

6.3.2 Protection of children at the Mountains of Hope

6.3.2.1 All sponsors correspondence with children will be screened

6.3.2.2 We will not facilitate the visit of any child to sponsors or facilitate the adoption of children.

6.3.2.3 Mountains of Hope staff, sponsors, donors, volunteers must not hold, kiss or touch minors in an inappropriate way, the adult will always be considered responsible even if a child behaves seductively.

7.0 Allegations management

7.1 The Director will use his discretion to take corrective action considering the welfare of the child.

7.2 In case of any involvement with the media. Only the Director is allowed to speak to the media in case any communication needs to be clarified

For Personnel File

This is to confirm that I have read and understood the child protection policy of our Company and agree to abide by the rules and regulations set forth.

I understand these policies in no way constitute a contract and cannot be construed as such, either in whole or in part.

I acknowledge that I have received, read and understood the Child protection policy and agree to follow it.

Date: _____

Approved By Executive Director:

Date _____