



# Humanity First UK

## Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

Jan 2025

Approved By:	Executive Committee
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Next Review Date:	22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2027

**Disclaimer:** The policy is for use by the Humanity First UK Board of Trustees, Executive Committee members, staff, volunteers and any consultants engaged. Any further circulation of the policy outside the organisation will be with the prior written approval/ authorization of the Chairman, Humanity First UK or his/her nominated individual to allow its use.

Humanity First UK  
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Registered Charity No. 1188494 · Company Registration No. 11512888



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## Introduction

Humanity First UK (“HF”) is an International Development and Disaster Relief charity, part of the Humanity First network of charities founded in 1995. The charity is run by volunteers with diverse skill sets across the world and has access to thousands of extra volunteers worldwide.

## Vision

Humanity First’s vision is to help achieve a world in which every person’s practical; emotional and physical nourishment needs are met. Where humans, right to learning and safety needs are addressed, and human suffering, whether it as a result of conflict, natural disaster or illness is eradicated.

## Mission

To provide appropriate humanitarian activities, interventions and solutions, with the aim of reducing/eradicating human suffering.

To help create lasting solutions to communities through forming local partnerships and that promotes and safeguards the preservation of life, dignity and peace.

To support local communities to become resilient, through the development of, skills and resources to enable self-maintenance, self-development and the preserve of physical and emotional well-being.



## Values

- **To improve the Human experience** our approach is to serve humanity by improving the quality of human life
- **Open, transparent and accountable.** To promote ourselves honestly and ensure that we are transparent in what we are trying to achieve. To be accountable to our donors and beneficiaries with regards to resourcing and funding of projects
- **Inclusiveness.** We approach work with others in a non-judgemental way. We welcome and embrace diversity
- **Independent.** Our actions and involvement is not aligned to any political or military action in the settings where we work.
- **Collaborative.** We work with local people to achieve the best outcomes.
- **Empowerment.** We aim to empower people to recover and to achieve their full potential as individuals, groups and communities.

## Objectives

The charity's objectives are specifically restricted to promoting the following charitable purposes for the benefit of the public:

- The prevention and/or relief of poverty
- The advancement of education in such ways as the Trustees think fit
- Advancement of human health through the relief or prevention of mental illness, sickness, disease, disability or other health conditions caused
- The relief of those in need because of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or any other disadvantage
- The objects may be advanced in any part of the world and shall include the relief of those suffering as a result of a natural disaster or human conflict



## **Scope of the policy**

Humanity First UK policy on Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults will cover all Humanity First UK Board of Trustees, Directors, all staff, volunteers and any consultants engaged by the organisation, all country programme offices, Humanity First UK partner organisations in respective countries and their teams.

## **Review and amendments of the policy**

The policy will be reviewed by the Board and/ or EC on an annual basis and will be updated accordingly, to comply with any new directives from the government.

## **Humanity First UK Commitment**

Humanity First UK believes that everyone we come into contact with, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin, has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. Humanity First UK will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by staff or associated personnel.

Humanity First UK Board of Trustees, members of Executive Committee (EC), all staff, volunteers, consultants, any partner organisations and their respective teams in any country of operations confirm to commit themselves adhering to this policy.

We believe that the UN 'Convention of the Rights of the Child' should be respected in its entirety. Our programme activities and interaction with children should reflect the international standards set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This includes the right to freedom from abuse and exploitation.

We do recognise that in times of war, conflicts, natural disasters and/ or national emergencies, children and vulnerable adults are most likely to be exposed to situations of potential abuse, we do take this aspect very seriously and will make every effort to prevent such situations from happening in the first instance and to perform proactive surveillance to identify risks as early as possible.



## **Our Approach**

Humanity First UK and all its staff, volunteers and partner organisations, including country programme offices aim to ensure that all children, young people and any vulnerable adults including disabled people and/ or elderly who come into direct contact with us or with our partner organisations receive appropriate care and attention, and that the organisations protect them from any harm whilst they are working with them.

The organisation does recognise that there will be instances, when there may be incidents, where children and/ or vulnerable adults may get hurt unintentionally due to an accident which could have been prevented by staying more vigilant.

In rare circumstances, a child or a vulnerable adult may be abused by another child, by a stranger, or by a paid member of staff or volunteer whilst in the position of power in the organisation. Abuse is always traumatic for the child and even for any adult, although some abuse may happen at their respective home, or in an orphanage by the service provider or at the school. We accept that prevention of any abuse is part of the duty to care for the children with whom we work.

Greater awareness of abuse of those who have special needs and of the elderly has been raised. This policy, although relating specifically to children, relates equally to those falling in these additional categories.

Humanity First UK believes the following:

- children have the right to a happy, healthy and secure childhood;
- the abuse of children is an abuse of their rights as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- child abuse is never acceptable;
- children must be confident that any disclosure of abuse will be treated discreetly, timely and seriously.

Humanity First UK staff, volunteers and any partner organisations

- are aware of the problem of child abuse;
- safeguard children from abuse through good practice;
- report all concerns about possible abuse;
- respond appropriately when abuse is discovered or suspected



In order to prevent abuse as far as possible, Humanity First UK will:

- ensure that all staff and volunteers are familiar with their responsibilities within this policy
- design and undertake all programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk or harm that may arise from their coming into contact with us. This includes the way in which information about individuals is gathered and communicated
- implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and associated personnel
- ensure staff receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organisation
- ensure service users are aware of their rights and how to raise concerns or issues
- conduct proactive surveillance of all projects including spot checks to identify risks as early as possible
- follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process, and provide counselling where required
- alert local authorities as appropriate if issues do arise and action is required

## **Definitions of Abuse**

**Physical Abuse** - where a child is physically hurt

**Sexual Abuse** - where a child is exploited sexually by another person who uses the child to meet their own sexual needs

**Neglect** - where parents fail to meet the basic and essential needs of children eg food, warmth, clothes and medical care

**Emotional Abuse** - where a child consistently faces a lack of love and attention or is constantly threatened by verbal attacks, taunting and shouting.

## **Safeguarding children**

Through its emphasis on prevention we aim to minimise the risks of children being abused. We will also do all we can to ensure that children who are being abused, or who are at risk of abuse, are supported and given protection. It is also possible that, on occasions, staff and others engaged by Humanity First UK or its partners to work with children, may pose a risk to children and abuse their position of trust. Humanity First UK demands the highest standards of professional practice in work with children and



vulnerable adults and describes the values and principles that must underpin our approach to children and vulnerable adults.

## **Responsibilities of staff and volunteers**

All staff, volunteers and other representatives of Humanity First UK must be familiar with the policy and be aware of the problem of abuse and the risks to children and/ or vulnerable adults.

Everyone's prime responsibility is to prevent child abuse. This means raising any concerns about the safety of children and/or the behaviour of adults. It also involves making sure contact with children is consistent with these policy guidelines.

It is clear that staff and associated personnel may not:

- engage in inappropriate or illegal behaviour especially where a child or vulnerable adult is involved
- abuse in any other way (physical, emotional or psychological) any of our service users
- exchange money, goods or services for inappropriate activity

Our staff and associated personnel are key to creating an environment that prevents risks and promotes the implementation of the safeguarding policy.

In the event of disclosure or suspicion of abuse outside the UK on partner's premises the partner's procedures should be followed. In case it is not available then Humanity First UK relevant policies & procedures will be adopted. These should comply with national legislation of the respective country.

In line with government legislation, police checks will be carried out on all staff and volunteers who are employed to work with young people under the age of 16 and for those who regularly meet people from this age group in connection with their work or with any vulnerable adults, including elderly people. The procedure in Appendix 1 will be followed in the UK in line with legislation. Humanity First UK other country programme offices may use this policy as a guideline but can make necessary changes to comply with national laws and requirements, including clearly stating reporting to the national/ local relevant law enforcement agencies e.g police or any local services department/ authorities.

## **If abuse is suspected**





Concerns for the safety and well-being of children and/ or vulnerable adults can arise in a variety of ways and in the whole range of different settings in which Humanity First UK works. For example, a child may say or display signs that they are being abused; someone may hint that a child is at risk or that a colleague is an abuser; you may witness or hear about abuse in another organisation.

Any suspicions or concerns regarding possible child abuse, or anything with which you feel uncomfortable, should be raised with line managers or with the Director of Administration and Human Resources in Humanity First UK or the Head of Compliance. A dedicated email and phone number will be made available for this purpose, audited and monitored regularly. If a local staff member does not feel comfortable reporting an issue to their line manager, they may report to a local Humanity First UK Director or via the email/ phone line as appropriate.

Humanity First UK commits to follow up on all safeguarding reports, investigate appropriately and with the support of local authorities where necessary, to take timely disciplinary action in accordance with our code of conduct and disciplinary policy. Humanity First UK will offer support to survivors of harm caused by staff or associated personnel, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out (such as an internal investigation). Decisions regarding support will be led by the survivor.

### **Training of all concerned**

Humanity First UK leadership and management will also ensure that all relevant staff, volunteers, Board members and Directors are duly informed about the policy and related information, some formal training/ briefing sessions will be organised for the relevant team(s), as required.



## DECLARATION BY BOARD / STAFF / VOLUNTEERS

I, the undersigned would like to confirm and state that I have read and understood the above policy. I will make every effort to apply the policy, where applicable within the organisation and/ or where relevant outside the UK. (The signed declaration will be kept by HR team for official records)

**Name:** Dr Aziz Hafiz

**Designation:** HFUK Chairman

**Dated:** 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025 **Place:** United Kingdom

Humanity First UK, is a UK registered charity (Reg No 1188494), having its main office at Unit 27, Red Lion Business Park, Surbiton, KT6 7QD.

We would like to assure all our supporters, donors, clients, volunteers, professional networks/ individuals and staff that HF is committed to keeping your personal data safe in accordance with applicable laws in relation to Data Protection Act.