



## **Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy 2022- 2025**

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**All children, young people and vulnerable adults have a right to protection from abuse, violence, and exploitation. The Mango Tree UK and our overseas partners in Kenya, Tanzania, and Malawi work together to create safe environments for these people so that they can benefit from their programmes.**

This mandatory policy is approved and endorsed by the Board of UK, and the boards of our Kenyan, Tanzanian and Malawian partners. It makes clear The Mango Tree UK's position on child protection and includes specific **Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Rules and Regulations and a Referral Procedure**. It applies to all Mango Tree staff, consultants, trustees, volunteers, and beneficiaries.

It is essential that all staff, trustees, consultants, volunteers, partner organisations, beneficiaries, donors, and the general public are aware of its central messages and any duties/responsibilities it places on them. This policy is publicised and promoted on our website and will be distributed to our donors.

The **Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Rules and Regulations and Referral Procedure** is translated into local languages and displayed visibly in all offices, village meeting points and centres. All TMT staff and volunteers receive training so that they understand the rules and are clear of the referral procedure.

All Mango Tree UK funded partners are expected, as part of the Memorandum's of Understanding with TMT UK, to adhere to this policy. They agree to translate this policy into local languages and display it to the public in their offices. They agree to review and adapt the policy and procedures to ensure it is made relevant to their work. Future partnership agreements will include such a policy as part of the agreement.

Children, young people, and vulnerable adults need protection and safeguarding for many reasons. They may need protection from the effects of poverty, disadvantage, exclusion, and violence. But in addition to these economic, social, and political problems affecting large numbers of people, individual children or vulnerable adults may also be at risk from specific and targeted forms of abuse by adults or other children.

**In this policy The Mango Tree UK (TMT UK) is concerned with specific incidents of maltreatment against a child or vulnerable adult who is in contact with a representative of the organisation or as part of our project work is identified as being at specific risk of abuse.**

It is not TMT UK's or its partner's task to decide whether a person has been abused. It is however their responsibility to refer concerns to the correct authorities, if they exist. If they do not, organisations dealing with children's or vulnerable people's rights, in Kenya, Tanzania and Malawi will be contacted. TMT UK and their partners will however strive to provide immediate protection to any person that is deemed to be at serious risk of injury or death with the assistance of other local agencies and the Police (by suicide or physical abuse).

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years, or whenever appropriate.

## **The Mango Tree UK's Vision, Mission, Values:**

**Our Vision** is that disadvantaged children, young people, and their communities in sub-Saharan Africa, succeed in school, work, and life, lifting themselves out of poverty and becoming resilient and independent.

**Our Mission** is to achieve lasting change in the communities we work, by ensuring that disadvantaged children and their caregivers in Kenya, Tanzania and Malawi receive a hand up (not a hand out) giving them economic security through education and sustainable livelihoods.

### **Our core values**

**Respect and collaboration** – The Mango Tree UK is founded on genuine relationships with people who share the same goals as us with a clear focus on poverty eradication. We respect local knowledge and expertise and strongly believe that rural people have the capacity to make significant changes to their own lives. Our work builds on people's own solutions, adding value to their knowledge and experience.

**Accountability and integrity** – We are accountable to the local people we aim to assist, the African partners we fund and the UK foundations, businesses, schools, churches, and the UK public who fund us. These relationships have developed over ten years and have been retained through transparent, honest communication, a commitment to strong financial accountability and by honouring our commitments to local people with sustainable practical action.

**Courage and innovation** – We support our partners and the communities with whom we work to challenge the causes of poverty, **addressing negative attitudes on gender and child rights and protecting those at risk of harm**. We support our partners to take risks, explore new ideas and trial new ways of tackling development problems.

**Sustainability and empowerment** – Our projects are tailored, appropriate, community focussed and community driven. They meet the real needs of the people with whom we work. We encourage local people to transfer their knowledge to new areas and new communities, in order to widen our scope of benefits, stimulate community social responsibility and **encourage gender equality and grass roots empowerment – especially for children, young people and vulnerable adults**. Our commitment to sustainability drives us to ensure that everything we do has a lasting impact. We seek to empower people to become self-sufficient and independent.

In line with Article 19 of the UNCRC, which states that all children have a right to protection, The Mango Tree and our partners advocates that:

“Children have a right to protection from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment, or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has the care of the child.”

**A child** in this policy is defined as anyone under the age of 18.

**A Vulnerable Adult** is defined in as a person aged 18 or over who have:

- Learning or physical disabilities;
- Physical or mental illness or mental disorders, chronic or otherwise, including living with HIV
- Recognisable addiction issues (chemical or behavioural) that have resulted in damage to themselves and others and affected their ability to participate in society
- Significant reduction in physical or mental capacity.
- Suffered the effects of poverty, social marginalisation, and trauma from the impact of HIV mortality (parental loss, child loss, high numbers of orphaned dependents)
- Low literacy – especially for women and elderly adults.
- The Mango Tree also includes poor, illiterate women as vulnerable adults as we recognise that the impact of long-term rural, poverty, HIV and institutionalised, entrenched gender exploitation and oppression has made women in rural Africa more vulnerable to marginalisation and abuse.

**TMT defines maltreatment and abuse in the following ways:**

**Physical injury:** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or vulnerable adult including fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately causing ill health.

**Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child’s or vulnerable adult’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development, such as failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, or neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a person’s basic emotional needs.

**Emotional abuse:** persistent or emotional ill treatment that adversely affects their life – or, for a child their child development. May involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, and inadequate, they exist only to meet the needs of another; or where inappropriate expectations are imposed upon them. In addition it includes children who are regularly coerced, frightened, exploited or corrupted.

**Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. This may also include involving children or vulnerable adults in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

**Safeguarding** - There is no legal definition of safeguarding. In this policy, any references to safeguarding are in keeping with the UK Government report published in 2006, 'Making Safeguarding Everyone's Business', in which there was a shift in emphasis from protecting children and vulnerable adults from harm, to preventing abuse and neglect in the first instance. Therefore, safeguarding is defined here as both safeguarding and promoting welfare together, through:

- (i) Protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults from maltreatment and abuse.
- (ii) Preventing impairment of children, young people, and vulnerable adults' health and/or development.
- (iii) Ensuring that children and young people are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care to enable them to have optimum life chances so that they are able to enter adulthood successfully.

## **Child & Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Regulations and Procedures for staff, teachers and volunteers 2022- 2025**

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**Confidentiality:** TMT UK and our partners recognise that all matters relating to the personal health and wellbeing of a child or vulnerable adult are confidential.

TMT Staff, school teachers, village volunteers and guardians will pass on information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only. TMT staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child or vulnerable adult to keep secrets.

**Supporting Staff:** TMT UK and our partners recognise that our staff, teachers, village volunteers and guardians who have been involved with a child or vulnerable adult who has suffered harm or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting. We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the TMT Social Worker and to seek further support as appropriate.

**Whistleblowing:** TMT UK and our partners recognise that children or vulnerable adults cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff and volunteers should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

### **TMT Code of practice and behaviour:**

All programmes that implement projects for children, families and communities will be implemented in a safe environment, all staff and volunteers will read and sign the TMT Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection Regulations & Procedures and the TMT Code of Conduct. These codes of practice include: disciplinary procedures, grievance procedures and HIV/AIDS and equal opportunities policies.

The Mango Tree UK's guiding principle is that 'the physical and emotional safety of the child is always the most important consideration'.

Any allegation or concern regarding the abuse of a child must be treated seriously. If any person has concerns but is not sure whether they are valid, they should speak directly to the designated Mango Tree's Child Protection Officers (currently Consolata Kunyada in Kenya and Emily Wilder in the UK) in confidence and directly follow reporting procedures. Particular care should be taken in regard to confidentiality and the sharing of information with appropriate people.

The Mango Tree UK takes its duty of care very seriously for all its programme staff, teachers, volunteers, and beneficiaries. All staff, teachers and volunteers must comply with the TMT Child & Adult Protection Regulations & Procedures and follow these rules, and, in the event of any disclosures of abuse from people, must agree to follow the steps outlined in the Referral Procedure below. Child and vulnerable adult safeguarding is mainly about prevention through establishing awareness and good practice in working with children and vulnerable adults and keeping them safe, but there will inevitably be times when children are identified as being at risk or experiencing harm, and it is essential that everyone is then clear on their responsibilities to report concerns and respond effectively and appropriately in line with local child protection arrangements.

The guidance below is designed to support (TMT) and its partners in meeting their practical protection responsibilities in reporting and responding to incidents of actual or potential harm.

### **1. Behaviour of adults towards children and of children towards other children (including disabled children)**

All TMT staff, teachers, volunteers and registered orphans or vulnerable children OVC that are supported by TMT will:

- Encourage self-esteem and self-assertiveness whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
- Promote caring, safe, and positive environments at home, work and/or school.
- Work together with teachers, head teachers and nursery staff and all other support services and local government agencies involved in the safeguarding of children in the areas where TMT works.
- Notify a named person within TMT as soon as there is a significant concern.
- Provide continued support to a TMT student about whom there have been concerns and ensure that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to appropriate agencies.

### **2. Behaviour of adults towards vulnerable adults**

All TMT staff, teachers, volunteers and registered orphans or vulnerable children OVC that are supported by TMT will:

- Encourage self-esteem and self-assertiveness whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
- Promote caring, safe, and positive environments at home, in the TMT office and in the communities where vulnerable adults are living.

- Work together with other services and local government agencies (nurses and MOH staff, HIV support workers or homecare nurses, support group members) with regards to the protection and safeguarding of vulnerable adults. Including follow-up meetings and referrals to other agencies in line with TMT referral procedures.
- Notify a named person within TMT as soon as there is a significant concern about a vulnerable adult's welfare in the home or community.
- Provide continued support to a vulnerable adult about whom there have been concerns and ensure that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to appropriate agencies.

### **3. Transportation of children**

When a child or children require transportation by TMT staff, teachers and volunteers will ensure that they:

- Gain witnessed verbal consent from a parent/ guardian or House Mother.
- Accompany the child/children in the TMT vehicle by a member of TMT staff or TMT adult volunteer at all times.
- Ensure that the child is not left unattended for any length of time whilst in the care of TMT.

### **4. Use of photos and written material:**

Case studies, reports and visual images used by TMT will be checked by the Programme Managers as being appropriate and not denigrating for any child before information is used in reports, publications, or the TMT website. Photographs, films of children and websites, must show respect for children, be in their best interest and conform to TMT's 'Guidelines for taking photographs of our work & writing case studies 2012'. Written consent must be sought from people to use their photos in any published literature or on our website.

### **5. Abuse of children or vulnerable adults:**

TMT will adhere to the Core Principles of the **United Nation's Task Force on Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises 2002**. These apply to implementing projects for children and communities and apply irrespective of whether there is an emergency situation or not. These principles stipulate:

- Sexual exploitation and abuse by project workers constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment.
- Sexual activity with children or vulnerable adults is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. A mistaken belief about a child's age or their level of vulnerability is not a defence.
- Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour are prohibited.
- Sexual relationships between project workers and beneficiaries are not allowed since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics. Such relationships can undermine the integrity of work to help vulnerable and excluded children and adults.
- Where a project worker develops concerns or suspicions regarding abuse or exploitation by a colleague, whether in the same organisation or not, s/he must report such concerns in accordance with the TMT Referral Procedure.

## 6. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) enhanced checks for UK staff and volunteers:

The Mango Tree UK Charity trustees are responsible for ensuring that those benefiting from or working with The Mango Tree are not harmed in any way through contact with it. They have a legal duty to act prudently, and this means that they will take all reasonable steps within their power to ensure that this does not happen. It is particularly important for beneficiaries who are vulnerable persons or children in the communities where we work.

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The UK Director is therefore responsible for ensuring that all UK staff and volunteers who visit overseas will complete an enhanced DBS check. This DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) processes criminal records checks and manages the Barred Children's and Barred Adults' Lists of unsuitable people who should not work in regulated activities with children or vulnerable groups.

The DBS decides who is unsuitable to work or volunteer with vulnerable groups and it is illegal for a barred person to apply for such work (paid or voluntary), or for a charity to employ a barred person in such work. The Mango Tree is registered with Gloucestershire County Council in order to process DBS checks for all Trustees, employed staff and volunteers who plan to travel to overseas and will have direct contact with Mango Tree Kenya staff, volunteers, children and vulnerable adults.

The Mango Tree UK will also report to the DBS if any member of staff or volunteer has been:

- dismissed because they harmed a child or adult
- dismissed because they might have harmed a child or adult otherwise
- were planning to dismiss them for either of these reasons, but the person resigned first

## Reporting and referral system 2022-2025

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The Mango Tree's child and adult protection reporting, and referral system is based on a network established between The Mango Tree, its partners, governmental, non-governmental agencies and community-level groups working in cooperation to address and minimise threats to children's protection. The network allows for easier and quicker identification of such threats and to maximize the impact of interventions once such threats are identified.

The reporting and referral system needs to work to ensure that a child affected by violence, abuse or exploitation will receive adequate services relevant to the type of abuse he/she is experiencing. These services are crucial for improving the chances for the children to overcome harm and mitigate long-lasting negative effects.

The Mango Tree and our partners have developed an internal reporting process and mechanism through which concerns reported by staff, associates, children, communities, and others could be received and processed. This internal process/mechanism is linked to an external referral system so that for cases of a serious (e.g., criminal nature), those with responsibility for and professional expertise in dealing with child protection can be notified of these concerns.

This model is used as the basis for this guidance document, along with other advice and resources to support the development and implementation of similar local procedures in other TMT (K) programmes/projects.

Reporting a suspected child or vulnerable adult protection issue:

1. Complete a Child/ Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form, Annex II. This should be completed for each individual case and a record kept confidentially.
2. Any concerns regarding the safety/protection of a child or vulnerable adult must be reported immediately (unless urgent action is required to protect the child – i.e., move to place of safety, access emergency medical attention)
3. Basic information must be gathered from the person raising the concern – who, what, where, when, who was involved.
4. Reports should go directly to: The TMT Kenya Director and/or Programs Coordinator in Kenya. If concern relates to these people or if there is any reason to believe it may not be possible to report to them (or if a report has been made and nothing has happened) reports should be made directly to the local administration.
5. Feedback should be provided to the person reporting, to inform them that the matter has been discussed and action taken (do not disclose details)
6. If the case involves staff/associates, and it is advisable that they cease duties whilst the case is being considered, they should be suspended with pay until the case is resolved. Cases where suspension is advisable are:
  - Criminal issues, e.g., sexual/serious physical assault
  - Non-criminal, breaches of the TMT (K) safeguarding policies/codes of conduct, e.g., bullying, discrimination, shouting/humiliation of children or vulnerable adults, spending excessive time alone with children, taking children to their home
7. If the concern involves actual/possible criminal action, refer to the police and/or Children's Officer prior to taking action internally – the organisation needs to work closely with the formal authorities and the policy and Children's Officer should work together on cases. Do not take action that could jeopardise or compromise the criminal investigation
8. If the concern is non-criminal, involves staff/associates and requires follow up/investigation, identify suitable persons (2 ideally) to conduct the investigation – the investigation should be objective, independent of the subject/s of allegation.
9. Each case that is reported to the Child Welfare Society of Kenya should be followed up by the Director or Programs Coordinator who referred the case. Follow-up should be weekly for the first two weeks after referral and monthly thereafter.
10. For external, non-criminal cases, the individual reporting the concern should be referred to the headteacher of a child's school for a school-related concern, or to the Community Volunteer for a community-related concern. The Director or Coordinator should immediately call the relevant headteacher or Volunteer to inform them that they should expect a concern to be raised with them and to request that the headteacher/Volunteer inform the Director once the child has accessed appropriate services. The Director or Coordinator should follow up with the headteacher/ Volunteer after one month.
11. For non-criminal concerns related to another agency, the Director should contact the local Head of Agency (or relevant department) to inform them and to request opportunity to follow up on case at a later date to ensure it has been dealt with.

12. A criminal case will be considered closed when the Child Welfare Society of Kenya has closed it.
13. A non-criminal case will be considered closed when the Director is satisfied that they child has received sufficient support.

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I declare that I have read and understood the TMT Child & Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy, TMT Child Safeguarding Regulations and Procedures & The Reporting/ referral process, and, in the event of a suspected case of abuse or serious neglect I agree to abide by the rules and will follow the steps outlined in the Reporting and referral process and use the incident form to record any safeguarding incidents:

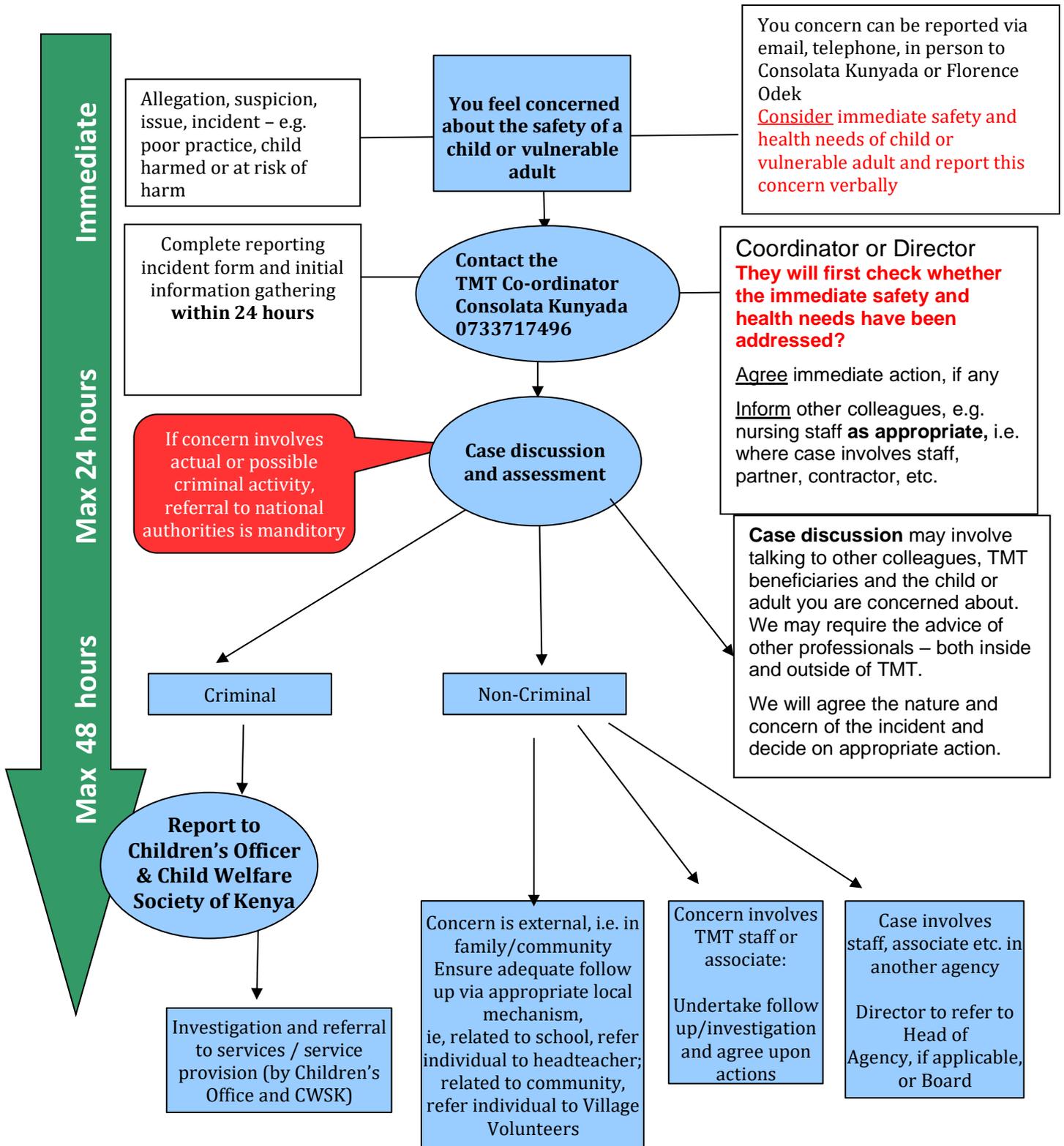
Print name:

Job Title:

Signed:

Dated:

Annex 1 – Reporting & Referral Process for TMT Staff 2022-2025



## Annex II Child & Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form

<b>Programme/Location/Region:</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Case no:</b>

<b>Referral details:</b>		
Time:	Date:	
Place:		
<b>Referrer's details:</b>		
Name:		
Address:		
Contact telephone no:		
Occupation:		
Relationship to child/ vulnerable adult		
<b>Child's details:</b>		
Name:		
Age:	Date of birth:	Gender:
Address:		
Description of household structure including other syblings and any other people living in the household whether family members or not:		
School:	Class:	Teacher:
Ethnicity/Tribe:		Language spoken:
Religion:		Any Disability:



**Details of all others involved in the incident (witness/ alleged abuser) (if known):**

Name:

Address:

Age:

Date of birth:

Employment details:

Nature of job:

Relationship to The Mango Tree or partner if any:

Relationship, if any, to child/ vulnerable adult:

Current location:

**Current safety of child or vulnerable adult including location:**

**Has emergency medical attention been required?**

**Provided by:**

**Who else knows? Include contact details.**

Agencies:

Family members or other individuals:

**Actions taken to date** e.g. Referral to police, children's services, social welfare, other.  
Give contact details and date and time of action.

**Referral taken by (where possible, line manager):**

Name:

Position and Location:

Date:

Signature (on hard copy):

**Action to be taken**

a) Is this a case to be dealt with under External Procedures i.e.  
No connection with The Mango Tree (Kenya) or Partner Agency?  
Yes/No

b) Is this a case to be dealt with under Internal Procedures?  
Yes/No

**Decision made by Country Director for immediate action as agreed in Local Procedures?** (Please specify who is to do what and when and give names and contact details of people to be contacted.)

Referral to police (if not, why not?)  
Yes/No

Referral to Local Authority for child protection /welfare  
Yes/No

Other action required to ensure child not at further risk:

Referral for medical treatment/ to meet health needs  
Yes/No

Name of referrer to The Mango Tree safeguarding focal points and date referral passed on:

Signature of person arranging above action: