

## **DOC Servizi** **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

DOC Servizi, for what concern activities involving or targeting children, is committed to keeping them safe. DOC Servizi recognizes that all DOC Servizi Managers, Employees, Associates and Representatives and those of partner organizations coming into contact with children have a fundamental duty of care towards them. DOC Servizi condemns all forms of abuse and violence against children that can be perpetuated outside and inside the organization.

DOC Servizi Child protection Policy is grounded on:

- DOC Servizi mission, vision and values.
- The UN Child Rights Convention (Art. 19).
- General Comment No.13(2011) of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child - the right of the child to freedom from all forms of violence.
- Keeping children Safe Coalition Child Protection Standards.

### **STAKEHOLDERS**

Children involved in any DOC Servizi project or activity directly implemented as well as supported action, in Italy, in Europe and in other countries where DOC Servizi will work.

DOC Servizi Managers, Employees, Associates and Representatives in DOC Servizi facilities, programmes, offices.

Partner organizations' staff, associates and representatives.

External contractors and consultants who provide services.

### **DEFINITIONS UNDER THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

#### **Children**

In line with the UNCRC, for the purposes of the present Policy, a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years. (UNCRC Article 1).

#### **Abuse**

In line with WHO definitions, child abuse or maltreatment constitutes all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

Physical abuse is defined as those acts that cause actual physical harm or have the potential for harm. Sexual abuse is defined as those acts where a perpetrator uses a child for sexual gratification. Emotional abuse includes the failure of a caregiver to provide an appropriate and supportive environment and includes acts that have an adverse effect on the emotional health and development of a child. Such acts include restricting a child's movements, denigration, ridicule, threats and intimidation, discrimination, rejection and other non-physical forms of hostile treatment.

### Neglect

Neglect refers to the failure of a caregiver to provide for the development of the child in one or more of the following areas: health, education, emotional development, nutrition, shelter and safe living conditions.

## PRINCIPLES

This policy is set up by a set of principles that are derived from the UNCRC and from the Comment No. 13 (2011) of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, and includes:

**No violence against children is justifiable; all violence against children is preventable.**

**A child rights-based approach to child caregiving and protection requires a paradigm shift towards respecting and promoting the human dignity and the physical and psychological integrity of children as rights-bearing individuals rather than perceiving them primarily as "victims".**

**The concept of dignity requires that every child is recognized, respected and protected as a rights holder and as a unique and valuable human being with an individual personality, distinct needs, interests and privacy.**

**Children's rights to be heard and to have their views given due weight must be respected systematically in all decision-making processes, and their empowerment and participation should be central to child caregiving and protection strategies and programmes.**

**The right of children to have their best interests be a primary consideration in all matters involving or affecting them must be respected, especially when they are victims of violence, as well as in all measures of prevention.**

## SCOPE

The Child Protection Policy applies to all DOC Servizi Managers, Employees, Associates and Representatives who must comply with its requirements. In addition, DOC Servizi Child protection policy applies to all DOC Servizi partner organizations' staff and representative, so to ensure that all children involved in Actions directly implemented or supported by DOC Servizi are kept safe from all forms of abuse and violence.

## OBJECTIVES

- To make all DOC Servizi Managers, Employees, Associates and Representatives and Partner organizations' staff and representative aware about all aspects of child protection and all the procedure about the prevention, disclosure, reporting and responding of abuses.
- To ensure that all DOC Servizi Managers, Employees, Associates and Representatives and Partner organizations' staff and representative are well supported in meeting their Child protection responsibilities and engage positively with children and communities.
- To avoid and prevent cases of abuse, violence and neglect from happen in the context of any Actions directly implemented or supported by DOC Servizi, in Italy, Europe and in other countries.
- To guarantee that safe environments for children are created in all aspects of DOC Servizi work whether fundraising or program implementation, where children are respected, protected and empowered as their capacities evolve.
- To contribute to generate awareness in children about their rights and the role they pay in the

prevention, identification, disclosure and management of abuses.

- To guarantee that fair, secure and transparent reporting channels are put in place in all types of programmes that fulfil the right of stakeholders to be heard.

## **IMPLICATION FOR DOC Servizi**

**DOC Servizi staff, associates and representatives, and all partner organizations' staff, associates and representatives are bound to the respect of DOC Servizi Child Protection Policy.**

**All DOC Servizi Regional and local office must ensure that each DOC Servizi office has in place local procedures that are consistent with DOC Servizi Child Protection Policy.**

**By respecting DOC Servizi Child Protection Policy, DOC Servizi and all partner organizations working with DOC Servizi commit themselves to:**

### **Awareness Generation**

- Promote the open and free discussion about all issues related to child protection and keeping children safe from abuse and violence
- Provide adequate information to its staff, associates and representatives about DOC Servizi Child Protection Policy
- Adopt written guidelines for appropriate and inappropriate behaviour of adults towards children and of children toward other children
- Establish clear roles and responsibilities regarding the monitoring of the respect and the enforcement of DOC Servizi Child Protection Policy
- Ensure that children are informed about their rights to be heard and to grow up free from all forms of physical and psychological violence

### **Prevention**

- Guarantee high professional standards to be applied during the selection of staff, associates and partner organizations
- Provide adequate training to staff, associate and representative on child protection and to include child protection as regular topic in all training programmes
- Foreseen specific supervision mechanisms for staff, associates and representatives directly working with children as a space for open and free discussion about Child protection concerns coming from any DOC Servizi directly implemented or supported action
- Promote a safe, free and open environment where children are encouraged to discuss their concerns and rights and to express their point of view
- Put in place a system of partnership with families and communities that area appropriate to support the CPP
- Never expose children to, or place them at risk of, harm. This while carrying out activities directly with children as well as when taking images/pictures or generating stories of children

### **Reporting**

- Provide to all staff, associates and representatives, clear procedures for reporting any child abuse and child protection concerns
- Ensure child-friendly reporting mechanisms, so that children can report in confidence and safety about experienced maltreatment, abuse and violence
- Guarantee that any child abuse/child protection concern is treated and investigated keeping the highest degree of confidence

- **Guarantee that the denouncer, potential offender and victim, all are kept safe and are provided with needed psycho-social support**

### **Responding**

- **Investigate any concern about the conduct of DOC Servizi staff, associates and representatives – as well as partner organizations' staff, associates and representatives – according to applicable local office procedures and DOC Servizi Child Protection Policy; investigation may result in disciplinary action for DOC Servizi staff, associates and representatives and in the immediate termination of Partnership Agreement in case of partner organizations' staff, associates and representatives**
- **Foresee all needed measures for ensuring child protection and security in case of proven child abuse and neglect and report to concerned Authorities**
- **Periodically review the Policy, according to the feedback and experience**

### **Doc Servizi leading principles in ethical policy**

**Doc Servizi, (its Managers, Employees, Associates and Presentative of partner organisations), promotes and respects the rights of children, express in the UN Child Rights Convention. It ensures that children understand and approve all their proposed individual interventions and contributions. Doc Servizi is responsive to complaints of children, family and other relevant stakeholders with the aim to improve its services.**

**Doc Servizi operates on the basis of ethical guidelines that ensure that Managers, Employees, Associates and Presentative of partner organisation respect dignity and well-being of children and their families and colleagues.**

**Doc Servizi provides services that are based on trust, confidentiality and honesty to children and promotes protection of children from abuse and misconduct.**

#### **More specific:**

##### **Doc Servizi:**

- ... guarantees the rights of the Children in a Charter of Rights that is based on U.**
- ...informs and supports children in understanding their rights in an accessible way.**
- ... respects that children freely pursue personal goals and aspirations in line with their choices, needs and abilities.**
- ... has a transparent Complaint Management System that registers and responds to complaints from children, family and other relevant stakeholders.**
- ... promotes ethical behaviour for all Employees, partners and associates towards children and their families.**
- ... has ethical guidelines (Code of Ethics) that ensure Employees, Partners and Associates respect dignity and well-being of children.**
- ... defines, monitors and evaluates a set of principles, values and procedures that govern Employee's behaviour in ensuring aspects of confidentiality, accuracy, privacy and integrity.**
- ... operates measures that ensure the prevention physical, mental and financial abuse of the children.**

  
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