

## Safeguarding Policy – Equipop (version 2025)

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<b>Associated Policies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Code of Ethics and Good Conduct</li><li>● Equipop Charter Against Gender-Based and Sexual Violence</li><li>● Charter Against Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing</li><li>● Feminist Guidelines for Grant Retrocessions to Equipop</li><li>● Note on Gender-Sensitive Communication</li></ul>

### Preamble

Equipop is a feminist international solidarity organisation. It works to defend the rights and health of women and girls worldwide by combining support for grassroots associations and activists, social and political mobilisation, project implementation, and knowledge production.

Equipop's vision is a world in which the rights of all people, regardless of gender, are respected — including their sexual and reproductive rights — and in which the active participation of everyone in building just and sustainable societies is ensured.

## SECTION I

### Safeguarding Policy Statement

At Equipop, we affirm that every child and every vulnerable adult has the fundamental right to be protected against all forms of abuse, exploitation, neglect, violence, or discrimination.

Guided by the principles of intersectional feminism, Equipop recognises that structural inequalities — of gender, class, origin, or migration status — can heighten the risk of harm in the contexts where the organisation operates.

Equipop applies a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of abuse.

Any concern, suspicion, or allegation involving a staff member, volunteer, partner, or service provider is handled with seriousness, diligence, and confidentiality.

In order to ensure the safety of all, Equipop commits to:

- ⇒ actively preventing risks of abuse, whether physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, economic, or institutional;
- ⇒ responding to any reported concern and, when necessary, conducting proportionate investigations followed by appropriate measures;
- ⇒ ensuring that all persons associated with Equipop uphold the same standards of conduct, regardless of their role or position;
- ⇒ establishing reliable safeguarding systems and mechanisms so that our activities, communications, partnerships, and working environments cause no harm to children, vulnerable adults, or any other participants.

This commitment is at the heart of Equipop's mission to contribute to building environments that are safe, equitable, and respectful of the rights of all.

## 1. Purpose and Scope of the Policy

This **Safeguarding Policy** forms part of Equipop's commitment to promoting human rights, gender equality, intersectional feminism, social mobilisation, and the active participation of communities at the heart of its work.

It aims to prevent and respond to any form of harm to individuals — particularly children and vulnerable adults — in the context of Equipop's and its partners' activities, whether programmatic, operational, or administrative, and whether occurring in physical or digital environments.

The Safeguarding Policy applies specifically within the framework of:

⇒ Equipop's interventions and programmes

⇒ collaborations with staff members, interns, partners, volunteers, consultants, service providers, and supported associations.

This policy applies to all persons associated with Equipop: staff, management, consultants, volunteers, interns, service providers, partners, subcontractors, consortium members, and funded or supported associations.

### Scope and Limits of Responsibility

Equipop's Safeguarding Policy covers all situations in which the organisation, its representatives, or its partners can reasonably be considered to exercise influence, power, authority, or responsibility over the persons involved in its activities.

#### What falls within Equipop's scope of responsibility:

- activities conducted or funded by Equipop (mobilisation, advocacy, training, research, facilitation of activist or community spaces, school outreach, etc.);
- interactions between staff members, volunteers, service providers, partners, and participants in the context of projects;
- communications, data collection, media or digital productions related to projects;
- travel, meetings, seminars, or programme-related activities;
- contractual relationships (grants, services, consortia, Feminist Fund retrocessions).

#### What falls outside the scope:

- personal or private conflicts between individuals with no connection to Equipop or its activities;
- strictly financial or administrative disputes not related to safeguarding (e.g. payment disputes, partners' internal governance), which are covered by other policies (anti-corruption policy, retrocession guidelines, etc.);
- internal conflicts within a partner organisation that do not involve Equipop, unless a risk to individuals' safety is identified.

#### Special cases:

In certain situations, Equipop may play a limited listening and referral role, even when the matter does not fall under safeguarding, in order to contribute to a safe environment. These limits will be clearly explained to the persons concerned and to partners so as to avoid unrealistic expectations.

## 2. What is Safeguarding?

By "Safeguarding", Equipop means the obligation to take all reasonable steps to prevent harm — including sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment — to protect individuals, particularly children and vulnerable or at-risk adults, from such harm, and to respond appropriately when harm occurs. Equipop interprets this definition as protecting any person, particularly children and adults in vulnerable situations, from any form of violence, harm, abuse, or exploitation that could arise from their interaction with programmes supported or implemented by Equipop.

## 3. What Are the Key Principles?

Equipop's Safeguarding Policy rests on the following principles:

### 3.1 Do No Harm

Equipop commits to ensuring that no intervention, activity, or partnership creates — directly or indirectly — harm to the persons involved, regardless of the positive impact expected from the action. Each initiative is subject to a risk analysis, both in advance and on an ongoing basis, in order to identify, prevent, and mitigate any potential negative effects on participants, communities, partners, or teams, and to ensure that our actions do not reinforce existing vulnerabilities or harmful power dynamics.

### 3.2 Feminist Approach

Driven by its feminist commitment, Equipop recognises the connections between different systems of domination and the importance of understanding how multiple identities (gender, social class, disability, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc.) can contribute to creating or reinforcing situations of vulnerability. Any safeguarding action must therefore take these power relations into account and work to transform them.

### 3.3 Respect for Human Rights, Children's Rights, and Dignity

In line with its values and internal charters, Equipop commits to treating every person with respect, dignity, and integrity, with particular attention to children and adults in vulnerable situations.

### 3.4 Zero Tolerance for Abuse, Discrimination, and Inappropriate Behaviour

No form of abuse, exploitation, harassment, mistreatment, intimidation, or discrimination is tolerated. Abusive behaviours, including gender-based and sexual violence, are explicitly prohibited and subject to disciplinary measures.

### 3.5 Non-Discrimination and Inclusive Environment

Equipop promotes an environment free from all forms of discrimination, founded on mutual respect, equality, and the struggle against all forms of domination identified in its internal documents. Safeguarding actions must guarantee equitable access to protection for all.

### 3.6 Individual and Collective Responsibility

Every person working for or with Equipop (staff member, member, volunteer, service provider, or partner) has the responsibility to know, understand, and apply the Safeguarding Policy. This includes the duty to report any inappropriate behaviour and not to abuse unequal power relations.

### 3.7 Integrity, Transparency, and Responsible Use of Resources

In line with the Code of Ethics, safeguarding implies ethical professional practices: responsible management of sensitive information, prevention of conflicts of interest, compliance with anti-corruption rules, and adherence to legal obligations.

### 3.8 Participation of Those Concerned

Participants in Equipop's activities — including children, young people, vulnerable adults, and field-based associates — must be able to express their needs and concerns and contribute to building suitable protection mechanisms.

### 3.9 Alignment with International Standards

Equipop commits to respecting the relevant international frameworks, including:

- the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) standards (IASC);
- the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS);
- international guidelines on human rights, gender equality, and prevention of gender-based violence.

#### 4. Key Definitions

**Child:** In accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and for the purposes of this policy, a child is defined as any person — girl, boy, young woman, young man, and children of other gender identities — under the age of 18, regardless of the age of majority in their country of origin or residence.<sup>1</sup>

**Vulnerable Adult:** any person aged 18 or over who, due to personal, social, economic, political, health-related, or institutional circumstances, is at greater risk of abuse or exploitation.

In the context of Equipop's work, these vulnerabilities include in particular:

- migrants, asylum seekers;
- young adults aged 18–25 engaged in activist, academic, or associational spaces;
- LGBTQIA+ persons exposed to discrimination or violence;
- persons with disabilities;
- volunteers or young activists, often exposed to asymmetric power relations;
- persons engaged in care pathways or psychosocial support;
- women in situations of high maternal responsibility (e.g. participants with young children);
- persons in extreme poverty or social isolation.

Vulnerability is not a status but a contextual situation that may be temporary or cumulative.

**Abuse:** A deliberate act with real or potential negative effects on the safety, well-being, dignity, and development of a person. This act is committed within the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power. Used in its broadest sense, this concept includes physical, emotional/psychological, and sexual abuse, neglect, mistreatment, violence, and exploitation in all its forms.

**Exploitation:** Taking advantage of, or attempting to take advantage of, a state of vulnerability, an unequal power dynamic, or a relationship of trust for sexual purposes, but also in order to derive pecuniary, social, or political advantage.

**Sexual Exploitation:** Refers to any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes. This includes deriving monetary, social, or political gain from the sexual exploitation of another person.

**Sexual Harassment:** Any unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature, which may include but is not limited to sexual suggestions or requests, demands for sexual favours, and sexual behaviours or gestures — verbal or physical — that are or could reasonably be perceived as offensive or humiliating. Sexual harassment may be overt or indirect, physical or verbal, repeated or isolated, and perpetrated by any person, regardless of their gender, against any person, regardless of their gender. Sexual harassment may be perpetrated against programme participants, community members, as well as staff and employees.

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<sup>1</sup> Article 1 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989

**Child Maltreatment:** Encompasses everything that individuals, institutions, or mechanisms do or fail to do, directly or indirectly harming children or impairing their prospects for safe and healthy development into adulthood. The main categories of maltreatment as defined by the WHO include physical maltreatment, emotional maltreatment, neglect and negligent treatment, sexual abuse, and exploitation. Physical maltreatment is the use of violent physical force likely to cause actual or probable injury or suffering (e.g. hitting, shaking, burning, female genital mutilation, torture).

**Harm:** A violation of an individual's rights, interests, or well-being, whether intentional or unintentional.

**Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA):** A term used in the humanitarian and development sector to designate the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse of affected populations by staff or associated personnel. The term originates from the United Nations Secretary-General's Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13).

**Survivor:** The person who has been abused or exploited. The term "survivor" is often preferred over "victim" as it implies strength, resilience, and the capacity to survive, but it is for the individual to choose how they wish to identify.

**Violence:** With respect to a child, adolescent, or adult, encompasses all forms of violence, physical or mental injury or abuse, abandonment or negligent treatment, emotional mistreatment or psychological violence, sexual abuse and exploitation, harassment, and commercial or other exploitation. Acts of violence can also occur online, for example on the internet, on social media, or via mobile phones. It may be an intentional act involving the use of physical force or power, or the omission to act to prevent violence against a person. Violence consists of anything that individuals, groups, institutions, or organizations do or fail to do—whether intentionally or unintentionally—that results in, or is likely to result in, actual or potential harm to the well-being, dignity, survival, and development of a child, young person, or adult.

For further detail on the various forms of gender-based and sexual violence, please refer to Equipop's *Charter Against Sexual Violence*.

## SECTION II

### 5. How Is the Safeguarding Policy Implemented?

Equipop commits to making safeguarding a priority across all of its activities — accompaniment, mobilisation, advocacy, social experimentation, capacity-building, community outreach, and actions carried out within its projects — through an approach structured around **prevention, reporting, and response**.

Equipop thus works to establish mechanisms that ensure all persons covered by its policy can fulfil their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding, to the best of their abilities.

#### 5.1. Prevention

##### Equipop's Responsibilities:

**a) Leadership and Governance:** Equipop's management and department heads ensure clear safeguarding leadership. They ensure that safeguarding is funded, supported, and integrated into all organisational practices, and that it reflects Equipop's feminist and intersectional values.

**b) Organisational Culture:** Equipop commits to maintaining a safe, inclusive, and respectful working and intervention environment in which:

- teams, partners, volunteers, and participants feel confident in speaking up;
- safeguarding incidents are taken seriously;
- survivors are supported;
- inappropriate behaviours are discouraged and sanctioned.

The organisation ensures responsible communication and respectful relationships, particularly in activist, associational, school, and community settings.

**c) Information and Training:** Equipop will ensure that this policy is distributed, accessible, known, and understood. Equipop provides initial and ongoing training for:

- all salaried staff,
- volunteers,
- partners,
- project managers and safeguarding focal points.

Enhanced training is offered for roles with higher risk exposure (e.g. school outreach, community mobilisation).

**d) Safe Recruitment and Engagement:** Equipop applies a rigorous safeguarding procedure during the recruitment, supervision, and deployment of employees and associated personnel through:

- inclusion of safeguarding clauses in all contracts (employees, partners, service providers);
- verification of at least one reference;
- criminal record check for persons in direct or indirect contact with children, young people, or vulnerable adults;
- mandatory signing of internal policies.

**e) Risk-Sensitive Programming:** Equipop commits to structuring and implementing all its programmes and activities so that persons are protected against any risk of potential harm during their contact with Equipop, including in the way information about persons taking part in its programmes is collected.

Each project must incorporate:

- a safeguarding risk analysis;
- appropriate preventive measures;
- reporting mechanisms adapted to the relevant target groups (migrants, young adults, activists, women with children, etc.).

**f) Adaptation According to Contractual Relationship Type:** Given the diversity of contractual formats through which Equipop works, safeguarding implementation adapts to the specific type of collaboration:

- **Financial support via the Feminist Fund:** enhanced accompaniment, flexibility for unregistered organisations, support in developing minimum policies, assistance in formulating clauses proportionate to the risk level.
- **Service contracts:** strict requirements, mandatory contractual clauses.
- **Consortium contracts:** harmonisation of standards, joint agreement on alert mechanisms, sharing of responsibilities, reference verification.
- **Volunteers, interns, informal collectives:** enhanced explanation of standards, informed consent, simplified but mandatory procedures.

**g) Communication and Representation:** Equipop ensures respectful, non-stigmatising communication centred on dignity, including the use of inclusive, accessible, and appropriate materials for the persons concerned, as well as ethical use of images, testimonies, and narratives (informed consent, dignified representation).

**h) Policies and Systems:** Equipop will develop, establish, and periodically review contextualised safeguarding policies, processes, and systems in order to ensure that safeguarding is properly integrated at all levels of the organisation and to maintain a culture conducive to safeguarding.

### Specific considerations for child safeguarding

Equipop systematically integrates child safeguarding into the design, implementation, and evaluation of its programmes, including when these are not directly targeted at children. This involves identifying the specific risks to which children may be exposed within the activities or environments in which Equipop operates, anticipating the potential — direct or indirect — impacts of these activities on their safety, and putting in place proportionate mitigation measures in line with international standards and the “Do No Harm” principle.

For detailed guidance, please refer to *Annex I – Child Safeguarding*.

### Responsibilities of Equipop Personnel:

All staff members, volunteers, members, service providers, and persons associated with Equipop must comply with the principles of the Code of Ethics and Good Conduct, the Charter Against Gender-Based and Sexual Violence, and this Safeguarding Policy.

The obligations below apply to all persons working for or on behalf of Equipop.

#### a) Child Safeguarding:

In addition to the general safeguarding obligations, Equipop staff and associated persons **must in no circumstances:**

- have a sexual relationship or sexual contact with a person under 18 years of age;
- commit, permit, or tolerate any sexual, physical, or psychological abuse or any form of neglect towards a child;
- participate in, encourage, or turn a blind eye to any form of child exploitation (including labour, economic exploitation, trafficking, non-consensual use of images, etc.);
- engage in behaviours that could in any way harm or put a child at risk of maltreatment.

See ANNEX I – Child Safeguarding

#### b) Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults:

In line with Equipop's *Charter Against Sexual Violence (see 6. Related Documents and Policies)*, Equipop staff and associated persons **must not:**

- exert or attempt to exert pressure, coercion, or manipulation to obtain a sexual or personal advantage;
- abuse, sexually exploit, or mistreat a vulnerable adult or a person in a situation of dependency within the framework of Equipop's activities;
- inflict or permit any form of physical, psychological, verbal, economic, or institutional violence.

#### c) Protection against Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Sexual Harassment (PSEA / GBV/SH):

In line with Equipop's Code of Ethics and Good Conduct, Equipop's Charter Against Sexual Violence (see 6. Related Documents and Policies), and international standards, Equipop staff and any person acting on behalf of the organisation must **under no circumstances:**

- offer, request, exchange, or accept money, a service, a benefit, or any other item in exchange for sexual activity;
- engage in a sexual, intimate, or romantic relationship with a person who is or could be a beneficiary of activities conducted by Equipop, due to the structural power imbalance;
- engage in any form of sexual exploitation or abuse, including non-consensual, coercive, manipulative, or pressure-induced acts;
- engage in any form of sexual harassment, including: unwanted comments or behaviour of a sexual nature, inappropriate gestures, persistent remarks, insinuations, sexist jokes or comments, unsolicited sending or distribution of sexual content, intimidating, humiliating, or hostile behaviour;
- use their position, role, or a power relationship to obtain a sexual, emotional, or personal advantage.

All these prohibitions apply in the context of Equipop's activities as well as in any context that may affect the safety, dignity, or integrity of participants, colleagues, or partners.

### **Responsibilities of Equipop's Partners:**

Equipop requires its partners — activist associations, student collectives, community organisations, service providers, consortium members, etc. — to respect and apply the principles of this Safeguarding Policy and its associated policies. Partner safeguarding assessments will be an integral part of our due diligence process in partner selection. Initial assessments and reviews will be conducted in a collaborative and supportive spirit with prospective and existing partners respectively, in order to ensure that their safeguarding practices are appropriate and adequate in terms of operational size, required expertise, and level of involvement in Equipop's projects.

Each partner must:

- 1) Have and apply an equivalent safeguarding policy, or, failing that, adopt Equipop's standards and requirements for the duration of the partnership;
- 2) Participate in the due diligence process (initial and periodic), in order to document its protection practices and capacity to prevent abuse;
- 3) Integrate safeguarding clauses into its own contracts and ensure that its subcontractors (service providers, volunteers, local structures, consultants) uphold equivalent safeguarding standards, particularly when they interact with vulnerable persons or children. The partner remains responsible for the conduct of its subcontractors within the framework of the project;
- 4) Immediately report to Equipop any incident, concern, or allegation falling within the scope of safeguarding;
- 5) Collaborate transparently in the event of an investigation or incident management involving joint activities.

These obligations are integrated into:

- partnership agreements;
- service contracts;
- consortium agreements;
- grant retrocessions via the Feminist Fund.

Equipop adopts a progressive and collaborative accompaniment approach, adapted to the capacities of each partner and the nature of the projects and programmes, in order to guarantee consistent, realistic, and effective protection and safeguarding practices.

### **5.2. Reporting**

Equipop commits to providing its employees, partners, and the communities with which it works with safe, appropriate, accessible, and confidential means to report any safeguarding concern.

Equipop commits to protecting any person who, in good faith and on the basis of a reasonable concern, reports a risk, incident, or behaviour contrary to this Safeguarding Policy. Any form of retaliation — such as intimidation, harassment, discrimination, reputational damage, or pressure — against a person who has raised a concern or contributed to a reporting or investigation process is prohibited. The identity of persons who have reported a matter or participated in a procedure will be treated with the strictest confidentiality and will only be disclosed with their consent or when required by law. If a risk of retaliation is identified, Equipop may implement appropriate temporary protective

measures. Any attempt at retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action. Deliberately false accusations may also be subject to appropriate measures.

It is not necessary to have proof or certainty to make a report: it is sufficient that the person reasonably believes that a harm, risk, or inappropriate behaviour may exist.

Equipop will also accept complaints from external sources, such as individuals, partners, or official bodies.

Equipop commits to ensuring a safe, respectful, and open environment in which everyone can speak up without fear.

### **Distinction Between Safeguarding and Other Types of Reports**

The safeguarding mechanism is not intended to cover:

- personal conflicts;
- complaints relating to partners' internal working conditions;
- financial or internal governance disputes;
- alerts related to money laundering, fraud, corruption, or misuse of resources.

These matters fall under other internal policies (administration, finance, anti-corruption, Feminist Fund).

However, Equipop will provide a single point of entry to redirect reports to the appropriate mechanism, while guaranteeing confidentiality.

### **How to Report a Safeguarding Concern?**

Staff members/partners wishing to file a complaint or report a safeguarding concern should do so immediately with their safeguarding focal point (if present) or their line manager. If the staff member or partner feels uncomfortable reporting their concern to their safeguarding contact or line manager (for example, if they feel the report will not be taken seriously, or if that person is involved in the issue), they may report it to any other appropriate staff member (e.g. a senior manager or a member of the human resources team).

Equipop will also accept complaints from external sources, such as community members, partners, or official bodies.

### **Alert channels:**

- Dedicated email: [signalement@equipop.org](mailto:signalement@equipop.org)
- Online form (anonymous option available): Coming soon
- Project safeguarding focal point

Context- and activity-specific alert channels are also set up for each project, including, among others:

- Verbal report to any Equipop staff member
- Suggestion boxes / community feedback mechanisms

Any person associated with Equipop may receive a report and must immediately pass it on to the safeguarding focal points or the Global Safeguarding Officer.

### **Principles Governing Reporting Mechanisms:**

The reporting mechanisms established by Equipop are based on principles aimed at ensuring safe, ethical, and effective receipt of reports, so as to enable consistent, secure, survivor-centred case management.

Equipop's reporting mechanisms are founded on the following principles:

- **Responsiveness:** every report is processed promptly (within 24 hours for serious situations, 48–72 hours for others).
- **Strict confidentiality:** only authorised persons access information on a need-to-know basis.
- **Protection of whistleblowers:** no form of retaliation, pressure, or sanction against persons reporting in good faith is tolerated.
- **Clear and fair procedure:** the steps for receipt, assessment, decision, investigation, and closure are defined, with escalation thresholds and precise responsibilities.
- **Referral to appropriate services:** with the consent of the person concerned, prompt connection is ensured to specialised services (psychosocial, legal, medical, child protection, GBV/SH services).

These principles apply in all intervention contexts and to all persons concerned (participants, partners, staff, volunteers, beneficiaries, activists, collectives, etc.).

### 5.3. Response

Equipop ensures rigorous handling of all safeguarding reports and concerns, in accordance with the policy, internal procedures, and applicable legal obligations in each country of operation.

When an incident is reported, Equipop:

#### 1) Ensures a rapid, secure, and survivor-centred response

- Every report is assessed without delay by the safeguarding focal point of the project concerned.
- Follow-up actions are defined prioritising the safety, consent, and choices of the survivor.
- Equipop will endeavour to connect with appropriate services (psychosocial, medical, legal, security-related, or other referral), even if no internal investigation is conducted.
- The person concerned retains the right to decide on the type of support desired and the sharing of their testimony.

#### 2) Implements appropriate internal measures

- If a policy violation is confirmed or suspected, proportionate disciplinary measures may be taken (warning, suspension, termination of contract, etc.).
- In situations involving a partner, contractual or corrective measures are initiated in line with partnership obligations.

#### 3) Ensures structured and coherent management

- Trained and clearly identified safeguarding focal points are the primary recipients of reports;
- Project leads (mobilisation, advocacy, Feminist Fund, youth) are responsible for the practical integration of safeguarding into activities.
- The Global Safeguarding Officer handles technical coordination, data consolidation, and harmonisation of practices.
- The Department Head is responsible for operational supervision and decisions on serious cases.
- The Executive Director is the institutional guarantor.
- An annual safeguarding report is presented to the Executive Director, including:
  - number and types of incidents (anonymised);
  - actions taken;
  - prevention measures and training delivered;

- areas for improvement.
- The safeguarding policy and procedure are reviewed at least every two years, or sooner if necessary (legal developments, new risks, internal learning).
- Equipop ensures systematic tracking of training, incidents, and corrective measures implemented.

#### **4) Respects confidentiality and protection against retaliation**

All stages — receipt, analysis, decision, feedback to the person — take place within a strict framework of confidentiality. Equipop protects any person who reports an incident in good faith against any form of pressure, threat, discrimination, or retaliation.

##### **Confidentiality**

Equipop commits to maintaining confidentiality at all stages of the handling of safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and the subsequent case management must be shared only on a need-to-know basis and kept secure at all times.

#### **6. Related Documents and Policies**

- *Code of Ethics and Good Conduct*
- *Equipop Charter Against Gender-Based and Sexual Violence*
- *Note on Gender-Sensitive Communication*

#### **7. ANNEXES**

- I. Child Safeguarding
- II. Examples of Safeguarding Risks
- III. Checklist for Integrating Safeguarding into Programming

## ANNEX I - Child Safeguarding

As a feminist organisation committed to the defence of human rights and the promotion of equality, Equipop recognises that every person under the age of 18 has the right to a safe, protective environment free from violence. In accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which stipulates that all children have the right to protection, Equipop commits to respecting and encouraging respect for the rights and dignity of children, to protecting them against abuse in the context of its programmes, to preventing all forms of violence, exploitation, abuse, and neglect towards them, and to ensuring that its work does not perpetuate or reinforce systematic or structural abuse and discrimination against them.

The measures set out in this annex complement and reinforce those provided for in Equipop's Safeguarding Policy, and must be applied jointly in order to ensure the highest possible level of protection, particularly where children are concerned.

### 1. Fundamental Principles for Child Safeguarding

- **Rights-based approach:** In accordance with the CRC, every child has the right to survival, development, protection, and participation.
- **Zero tolerance for all abuse:** No form of violence, exploitation, or inappropriate behaviour towards a child will be tolerated.
- **Shared responsibility:** Child protection is a collective duty. Each person is responsible for implementing this policy.
- **Risk management approach:** Equipop systematically identifies, analyses, and reduces risks to children in its programmes and organisation.
- **Confidentiality and protection of those involved:** All alerts are handled in a secure, confidential manner, centred on the best interests of the child.

### 2. Specific Behavioural Obligations

All Equipop staff and any person associated with Equipop must:

- adopt exemplary behaviour in the presence of children;
- maintain clear professional boundaries;
- avoid any isolated or ambiguous situation with a child when it is not necessary for professional purposes;
- ensure that the child is never exposed to risk, inappropriate content, or an unsuitable environment;
- obtain all required consents (from the child and their legal representative) for any participation, photograph, testimony, or data collection;
- immediately report any concern or suspicion, even without proof.

Any person working for or with Equipop must **under no circumstances:**

- have a sexual, intimate, or suggestive relationship with a minor;
- inflict or permit physical, psychological, sexual, or institutional violence;
- use their position to obtain an emotional, affective, or sexual advantage;
- engage a child in a dangerous or unsuitable activity;
- request unjustified personal contact (private phone numbers, social media, etc.);
- disseminate identifiable images of a child without informed consent and protective measures.

### 3. Specific Child Safeguarding Considerations in Programming

Equipop integrates child safeguarding into the design, implementation, and evaluation of every activity likely to involve children, directly or indirectly. This includes:

#### **a) Child-Specific Risk Analysis and Mitigation Measures**

For each activity, Equipop identifies:

- risks for present or potential children (physical, digital, psychosocial);
- specific power dynamics involving children;
- risks of violence against children, including sexual and gender-based violence;
- appropriate risk mitigation measures, such as appropriate supervision (trained adults, oversight), appropriate management of spaces (safety, accessibility, confidentiality), protection of sensitive data, and anonymisation of images.

#### **b) Safe and Ethical Participation of Children**

The participation of children in research, advocacy, or other project activities must be:

- voluntary, informed, and age-appropriate;
- free from pressure;
- safe (safe spaces, accompaniment);
- centred on the child's dignity and voice.

### **4. Partnerships Involving Children**

When partners work with or around children, they must:

- have a child protection policy or adopt Equipop's standards;
- train their teams on specific risks;
- establish internal reporting procedures;
- immediately inform Equipop of any incident.

Equipop may support partners in strengthening their capacities when structures are emerging, informal, or activist.

### **5. Reporting and Response**

Any incident, suspicion, or concern involving a child must be reported immediately through the channels provided for in the Safeguarding Policy.

When a report involves a child, Equipop commits to:

- processing the information within 24 hours for serious cases;
- following an approach centred on the child's safety;
- promptly referring to competent specialist services (child protection, medical-psychological, legal);
- complying with legal child protection obligations according to the country;
- taking appropriate internal measures (disciplinary, contractual).

## ANNEX II - Examples of Safeguarding Risks

This annex provides a non-exhaustive list of the main safeguarding risks that may arise in Equipop's activities, along with several prevention options and strategies to reduce the exposure of participants, partners, activists, children, and vulnerable adults. This list aims to help staff responsible for designing programme and project objectives and activities to consider potential negative implications for girls, boys, young people, and vulnerable adults in all their diversity.

Risks are classified by major activity type.

Activity Type	Risks	Mitigation Measures
<b>Conferences, public events, seminars, external outreach</b>	Sexual harassment, discriminatory remarks, intimidation among participants	Communicate clear rules of conduct before any event; Train reception teams; Ensure accessible reporting mechanisms and the presence of an identified safeguarding focal point.
	Photos/videos taken without consent that could expose persons to protection risks	Follow the consent procedure; Clearly inform responsible staff and participants about the photography/communication policy; Include opt-in/opt-out badges or colour codes; Prefer non-identifying angles when necessary.
	Spaces not accessible to certain groups (disability, specific needs)	Verify accessibility conditions; Inform participants in advance to arrange specific accommodations.
	Psychological harm from sensitive content that may trigger distress (testimonies of violence, sensitive themes)	Advance warning to participants; Adopt a trauma-informed approach (open questions, possible breaks); Ensure the presence of support or referral resources.
	Unsafe environments for young participants/activists	Logistical risk assessment; Ensure appropriate accommodation is available; Accompaniment by trained staff.
	Unintentional exposure of children or young people present with adults to sensitive topics	Check for the presence of children and plan suitable spaces for their care; Adapt sensitive content when children and/or young people are participating.
	Exclusion of participants with childcare responsibilities (e.g. mothers with babies), or risk of child neglect to enable participation	Provide options enabling participation by persons with young children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Childcare option (when appropriate)</li> <li>● Quiet micro-space or table at the back for parents/children</li> <li>● Hybrid or recorded sessions if physical attendance is complicated</li> </ul> Avoid pressure on accompanying parents and allow temporary withdrawal without stigma; Adapt activity schedules to facilitate participation.
<b>Training activities, workshops, capacity building</b>	Power imbalances between trainers and participants (abuse, favouritism, discrimination)	Code of conduct signed by trainers; Prior safeguarding training; Clear participation rules.
	Use of personal or sensitive data that may create protection risks (stigmatisation, family or community)	Collect only data strictly necessary for the activity; Systematically anonymise data used in training or communications; Store

	reprisals, harassment, breach of confidentiality)	information in secure, restricted spaces; Clearly explain to participants the intended use of the data and obtain informed consent (double consent for minors); Prohibit use of data or testimonies outside the agreed framework without new authorisation; Sensitise the team to confidentiality, secure document sharing, and digital risks.
	Participation of children in unsuitable workshops: e.g. exposure to sensitive content (sexuality, GBV) not appropriate for their age or level of understanding; misunderstanding or misinterpretation of messages; emotional distress; power imbalances with adults or older young people; lack of adequate supervision if the activity is not intended for minors.	Assess the age and maturity of the audience before any enrolment or participation; Adapt content and materials to an appropriate educational level or offer a youth-specific version when necessary; Obtain double consent (child + parent/guardian) for any activity involving a minor; Ensure adult supervision by staff trained in safeguarding and facilitation with minors; Avoid discussions or exercises that could lead children to share personal or sensitive information; Provide a quiet space or withdrawal option, without consequence, if a young person feels uncomfortable; Ensure that children/young people never participate in workshops where adults share traumatic testimonies or unsuitable content.
<b>Activities in school settings and spaces for children/young people</b>	Maltreatment, humiliation, punishment, discrimination, or emotional abuse of children related to gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity by adults (teachers, staff) or peers	Prior awareness-raising/training of staff on gender/safeguarding; Code of conduct signed; Regular supervision and presence of a trained safeguarding focal point; Establish accessible, child/youth-appropriate complaint mechanisms; Train staff to identify and respond appropriately.
	Exposure to sensitive content (sexuality, GBV) not appropriate to age	Assess the age and maturity of the audience before any enrolment or participation; Adapt content and materials to an appropriate educational level; Inform parents/guardians in advance and obtain double consent (child + parent/guardian) for any activity; Allow for the possibility of withdrawal.
	School or social pressure to participate in or confide during sensitive activities	Ensure voluntary participation and give children and young people the ability to withdraw at any time; Plan non-intrusive group activities.
<b>Caravans, community activities, mobilisation actions</b>	Attacks, threats, or harassment of young or vulnerable activists online or offline following public speech	Develop a security plan before any activity; Train participants in risk management; Equip activists with emergency contacts; Provide support in the event of an incident.
	Exposure of children to poorly secured spaces (crowds, travel, public spaces)	Venue risk analysis; Clear signage; Establishment of assembly points; Ensure a sufficient number of supervising adults.

<b>Advocacy activities (political meetings, institutional encounters, youth mobilisation)</b>	Exploitation or pressure on young activists to testify publicly	Informed consent and option to refuse; Support for psychological and emotional preparation; Provide constant accompaniment; Ensure protection against unwanted media exposure.
	Online harassment or targeted attacks following public speech/testimony	Develop and apply an online security and protection strategy; Proactive content moderation; Establish accessible reporting mechanisms.
	Emotional distress during sensitive discussions (gender-based violence, sexuality)	Prior assessment of the appropriateness of the content; Consider the possibility of separate groups (e.g. for young people and children); Ensure the presence of staff trained to provide emotional support.
<b>Testimonial collection, interviews, qualitative research</b>	Distress due to reactivation of trauma in the person interviewed	Adopt a trauma-informed approach (non-intrusive questions, pauses, option to stop); Ensure ongoing consent; Provide support or referral to specialist services if needed.
	Increased risks for children giving testimony (family pressure, risk of community stigmatisation)	Double consent (from the child and parent/guardian); Systematic anonymisation and secure storage of sensitive data; Identify safe interview locations; Ensure the presence of a trained adult.
	Power bias related to the status of interviewers and interviewees	Train interviewers on ethics and gender-sensitive communication; Supervision of the process; Final validation of content by interviewees.
	Cyberbullying, targeted attacks, violent comments, particularly against young feminist activists	Develop and apply a digital protection strategy; Active moderation; Anonymisation of content and privacy settings; Train young people and participants in online harassment management.
	Participation in sensitive discussions that may reactivate trauma or cause psychological distress	Advance warnings and preparation of participants; Provide listening spaces and referral to support resources; Always inform participants of the possibility of withdrawal.
	Manipulation, grooming, or inappropriate contact via interactive platforms	Use secure platforms; Monitor interactions; Develop clear guidelines, such as prohibiting unsupervised private messages.
	Use of a child's image without consent or in a sensitive context	Informed and verifiable consent; anonymisation; validation by parent/guardian; prohibition of images that could expose the child to risks.

### ANNEX III - Checklist for Integrating Safeguarding into Programming

This checklist is a methodological tool that can be used during the planning and launch phase of each project. It should be completed with the relevant team in order to identify safeguarding risks, define mitigation measures, and ensure a safe implementation framework for participants and partners.

#### 1) Partner Assessment

The partner has a safeguarding / PSEA / GBV/SH policy	
A safeguarding focal point has been identified	
Partner staff / volunteers have received basic safeguarding training	
The partner has a functional and accessible reporting mechanism	
Safeguarding clauses are integrated into the partnership agreement	
If necessary, enhanced accompaniment planned for low-capacity partners	

In the case of partnerships with informal collectives or organisations with low administrative capacity, proportionate measures must be adopted to ensure safeguarding without imposing an excessive burden.

#### 2) Project/Programme Risk Analysis

For the project formulation, have the following dimensions been explicitly examined and documented?

<b>Risks related to target groups</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children, young people, vulnerable persons, minorities, migrants, etc.</li> <li>• Risks of power imbalance between teams/project and participants</li> </ul>	
<b>Risks related to planned activities</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops, training, public events, mobilisations, field activities, online activities</li> <li>• Possible isolation situations (individual interviews, travel, accommodation)</li> </ul>	
<b>Risks related to venues and context</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physically unsafe environments or spaces shared with other actors.</li> <li>• Social norms, gender-based violence, discrimination, political or security context</li> </ul>	
<b>Risks related to data and communications</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collection of images, testimonies, personal data.</li> <li>• Public dissemination (media, social networks, reports) that may expose persons</li> </ul>	
<b>Risks related to partners and service providers</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role of partners in implementation and contact with target groups.</li> <li>• Partners' actual capacity to manage safeguarding risks</li> </ul>	
<b>For each category above:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risks have been identified</li> <li>• Risk level has been assessed</li> <li>• Risks are described in the project documentation (narrative / risk annex)</li> </ul>	

### 3) Prevention / Mitigation Measures

For each identified risk:

● Mitigation measure(s) defined	
● Responsible person assigned	
● Implementation deadline set	
● Necessary resources have been allocated	

### 4) If the project is classified as "high sensitivity" (high risk)

Enhanced supervision of high-risk activities	
Mandatory specific training for persons involved	
Validation by the Safeguarding Officer before start	
Reporting channels clearly communicated to participants	
Survivor support mechanism anticipated (referral, assistance)	

### 5) Monitoring, Review, and Validation

Periodic risk review planned (e.g. every 3 months).	
Risk matrix updated in the event of project or context changes.	
Decisions documented (adaptations, new measures, etc.).	
Checklist reviewed by the Safeguarding Officer.	
Final validation by Management / Programme Director	