

Welcome to the RSH webinar

07 October
2021



@SafeguardingRSH

Practical application of disability inclusion in safeguarding

Starting soon

Panelists:

- Tushita Mukherjee- Project officer, Sightsavers, India
- Lucy Muchiri – Technical lead social inclusion, ECSA
- Richard Musisi –Executive Director and safeguarding Focal person, MADIPHA

Chair: Eleanor Nwadinobi (RSH Senior Advisor to Nigeria Hub)



Practical application of disability inclusion in safeguarding:

Sightsavers approach

- Tushita Mukherjee- Project officer, Sightsavers, India
- Lucy Muchiri – Technical lead social inclusion, ECSA



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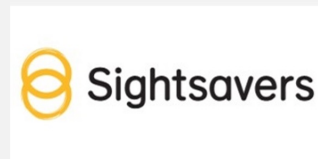


Disability and Safeguarding risks

- Higher risks of abuse, neglect and harm
- Less likely to disclose abuse.
- Women with disabilities 10 times more likely to be victims of sexual violence
- Children with Disabilities are 2.9 times more likely to be victims of sexual violence

About Sightsavers

- Works in more than 30 countries in some of the poorest parts of the world.
- Works to eliminate avoidable blindness and promote the rights of people with disabilities.
- Focuses on protection of Sight, fighting disease and disability rights



Sightsavers commitment

- Recognition of risks.
- Work with its staff and programme partners
- Assess, address and monitor risks of harm, exploitation or abuse facing people with disabilities.
- Communication of policy
- Challenge stereotypes and cultural norms around disability.



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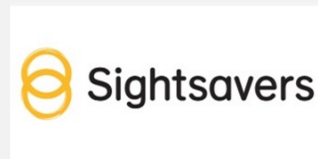
What we are doing about it

- Policy- Recognizes risks for children and adults with disabilities.
- Safeguarding manager and country designated safeguarding lead
- Speak up system- 100 languages, online and phone options.
- Staff awareness of their role in safeguarding
- Consultation with communities and OPDs
- Context mapping in each country



Integrated in programme processes

- Proposal guide for safeguarding
- Programme reporting checklist
- Partner due diligence- includes safeguarding
- Policy guideline to guide partners without policies
- Policy checklist – to check existing partner policies.



Challenges of an Inclusive Approach

Budget Constraints

Lack of training for safeguarding leads on an Inclusive Approach

Safeguarding leads may not have lived experience of a disability and may not represent all genders, which can discourage reporting by groups who feel they will not be heard or understood.

Safeguarding policy and reporting processes need to be translated into local languages that the staff, partners and consultants can understand

Safeguarding policies and reporting processes must be available in all accessible formats used by the persons with disabilities of the organization

Successes of Inclusive Approach



People with disabilities feel safe



Can frankly speak out



People with disabilities are empowered



Feel respected & heard



Aware Culture

Practical application of disability inclusion in safeguarding:

MADIPHA'S Experience on practicing inclusive safeguarding

- Richard Musisi - Executive Director and Safeguarding Focal person



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The map displays Uganda's borders with Sudan to the north, Kenya to the east, Tanzania to the south, and Rwanda to the southwest. The Democratic Republic of Congo is located to the west. Major cities like Kampala, Jinja, and Mbarara are marked. The Nile River system, including Lake Kyoga and Lake Kybura, is shown. A scale bar indicates distances up to 120 km.

Healthcare, social and economic barriers.

Peer support approach to reduce stigma & Discrimination



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SAFEGUARDING AT MADIPHA

- ADD International Uganda introduced the concept of safeguarding to MADIPHA in 2019. During the due diligence meeting at the beginning of the Inclusion Work Project.
- As a new concept, it took us(the board and staff) time to understand and appreciate it.
- We thought we were supposed to provide security guards to members.
- After series of trainings on safeguarding we realised that it involves things that we were doing before to ensure safety environment for our members and was requiring us to do more but in an organized way
- Later, MADIPHA developed a safeguarding policy with the technical support from ADD International.



Purpose of Safeguarding policy

MADIPHA did not establish a safeguarding mechanism just to fulfil the partnership requirement with ADD International.

The purpose is to help MADIPHA representatives to:

- 1) To provide protection to all people, particularly children, vulnerable adults, staff members and beneficiaries from any harm (**Financial, Physical, Psychological, Sexual, Neglect and Abuse of authority or power**).
- 2) Understand safeguarding concerns/issues .
- 3) Know their responsibilities and ensure compliance under legal and policy obligations within and outside their work environments at all times.
- 4) Uphold the dignity and respect of children with disabilities and vulnerable adults.
- 5) Ensure a safe environment for children with disabilities is created through preventative measures.
- 6) Provide guidance to those they lead or manage on child protection issues and good practice.



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Implementation of Safeguarding

- MADIPHA has a safeguarding focal persons (Executive Director). The Gender focal Person on the Board and any Board member can receive cases of abuse.
- All staff including volunteers and Board members has a copy of safeguarding and impended their signatures on it to ensure compliance
- Provide training opportunities for safeguarding to staff members organised by Partners (virtual and physical), staff meetings and one on one interactions
- Design and Implement programme activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with MADIPHA.(Use of nicknames on photos, directions, incurring extra costs to respond to abuse etc.)
- Established a safeguarding reporting mechanisms in place that allow community members to raise concerns with directly to MADIPHA or partners.(use of Community peer monitors, leaders and disability leadership structures).
- Report to authorities and make follow up on concerns



Challenges of implementing safeguarding

- Safeguarding is wide, goes beyond the organizational limits down to community level.
- Safeguarding and Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (PSEAH) policies look alike with almost the same content.
- Response to safeguarding reports involves monetary costs most often not available to ensure effective follow ups and collection of enough evidences most especially in the cases which requires involvement of police investigations and courts of law
- Much as safeguarding is important, most Donors/ partner do not prioritise budget allocations to support safeguarding concerns, unless the project is related to prevention of abuses.
- Lack of internal capacity to respond to increasing safeguarding concerns against people with disabilities. For example providing emergency medical support, shelters and legal Aid to victims.



Challenges continues

- Weak referral systems with limited contribution of other stake holders and duty bearers to respond to abuses against persons with disabilities.
- Corruption; Some files for cases disappears are overturned by authorities.
- The males feel that safeguarding is against them and favours women mostly.
- Male staff and board members fears to freely interact with female counter parts.
- Fear to report cases of abuse among the victims.



Challenges continues

- Staff and Board members of OPDs feel that safeguarding interferes their personal lives-(from office to home). Do staff utilizes their salaries and allowances in such a way which do not abuse the rights of others?
- Barriers related to cultural social and gender norms – a person with disability is useless, shameful for a women to report that was raped, Men are superior will be ashamed among fellow men to report/ speak out that he is under abuse.
- Intimidations from family and community members
- Resistance from staff, Board, and members of organization of Persons with disability by giving excuses to defend their bad practices.
- Poverty and dependence on family support, limits people with disability to speak out or report abuses against them.



Learnings

- Safeguarding is a human right concern which must be handled seriously by all organizations.
- Safeguarding is more of cultural practices and norms requires more time. We need to orient people to a new culture.
- There is need for deliberate continuous capacity building for small and growing organizations by International organization in terms of technical support and budget allocation on safeguarding related activities. Talking about safe guarding, asking for policies and reports on safeguarding concerning is not enough.
- The concept of safeguarding is wide, goes beyond organisational level. There is need to involve the community.



Learnings continues

- Requires continues refresher training to ensure compliance and implementation.
- Need to provide a budget to support reporting, investigations and follow-up on cases of abuses.
- Staff and Board members were not aware that safeguarding benefits both females and males and the roles they have to play.
- Victims lack trust to among community leaders to speak out the abuses they are going through.



THANK YOU!

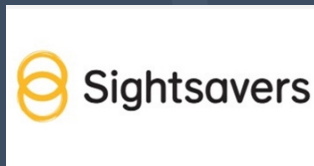
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Useful resources:

<https://www.sightsavers.org/how-we-re-run/our-approach-to-safeguarding/>



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