EGOLI AFRICA UGANDA

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Applies to staff, volunteers, board members, consultants, visitors, partners and representatives

Formal organisational policy for safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk

Organisation	Egoli Africa Uganda
Operational area	Kamuli District, Eastern Uganda
Effective date	22 August 2026
Review cycle	At least annually, or sooner following a safeguarding incident or legal/policy change
Policy owner	Executive Director / designated Safeguarding Focal Person
Version	1.0
Approval status	Approved by the Board of Egoli Africa Uganda on 22 August 2026

1. Purpose and commitment

Egoli Africa Uganda is committed to creating and maintaining an environment in which children, young people and adults at risk are respected, protected from harm and able to participate safely in our programmes. We have zero tolerance for abuse, exploitation, neglect, harassment or sexual misconduct by anyone associated with our organisation.

This policy establishes minimum safeguarding standards for our programmes, including community WASH, vocational and digital skills training, education, community health, livelihoods, outreach and other activities. Safeguarding is a shared responsibility and is integrated into programme design, recruitment, implementation, partnerships, monitoring and reporting.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all board members, employees, volunteers, interns, consultants, contractors, visitors, partners and anyone acting on behalf of Egoli Africa Uganda. Compliance with this policy is a condition of engagement with the organisation.

For this policy, a child is any person under 18 years of age. An adult at risk is an adult who, because of age, disability, dependency, displacement, poverty or other circumstances, may be at increased risk of abuse or exploitation.

3. Safeguarding principles

Egoli Africa Uganda will:

- place the safety, dignity and best interests of children and adults at risk at the centre of decisions;
- treat all people fairly and without discrimination;
- listen to concerns and take them seriously;
- act promptly and proportionately when concerns arise;
- protect confidentiality and share information only on a need-to-know basis;
- never retaliate against a person who raises a concern in good faith;
- work with appropriate community and statutory authorities where referral is necessary; and
- ensure that programme activities do not create avoidable safeguarding risks.

4. Forms of harm covered

This policy covers physical abuse, sexual abuse and exploitation, emotional or psychological abuse, neglect, bullying, harassment, discrimination, trafficking, child labour, harmful practices, financial exploitation, online/digital abuse, and abuse of power.

Sexual exploitation and abuse are strictly prohibited. Staff and representatives must never exchange money, employment, goods, services, assistance or programme benefits for sexual activity or sexual favours. Sexual activity with a child is prohibited regardless of local perceptions of age or consent.

5. Code of conduct

Everyone covered by this policy must behave professionally and respectfully. They must not hit, humiliate, threaten, exploit, sexually harass or abuse a beneficiary; develop inappropriate relationships with children or adults at risk; be alone with a child unnecessarily where this can reasonably be avoided; use sexualised, degrading or discriminatory language; favour beneficiaries in exchange for personal benefit; or use photographs, personal information or stories in ways that compromise dignity, privacy or safety.

Adults should use visible, accountable and age-appropriate methods when working with children. Programme staff must maintain appropriate boundaries and report suspected misconduct or unsafe practice.

6. Safe recruitment and personnel management

Egoli Africa Uganda will use safeguarding-conscious recruitment and engagement procedures appropriate to each role. These may include identity verification, references, relevant background checks where lawful and available, interview questions on safeguarding, signed codes of conduct, induction and periodic training.

Roles involving regular contact with children or adults at risk will receive enhanced scrutiny. Managers are responsible for ensuring that staff and volunteers understand this policy and know how to report concerns.

7. Safe programme design and WASH activities

Safeguarding risks will be considered during programme planning and implementation. For community water and WASH projects, Egoli Africa Uganda will consult women, girls, persons with disabilities and other community members when selecting locations and designing access arrangements.

Water points should, as far as practicable, be accessible, visible and located to reduce exposure to violence, harassment and unsafe travel. Community committees will be encouraged to include women and to establish fair, transparent rules for access and maintenance. Children must not be assigned hazardous construction, excavation, lifting, electrical or mechanical tasks.

8. Photography, communications and personal information

Images and stories must preserve dignity and must not expose children or vulnerable people to harm. Appropriate informed consent will be obtained before identifiable images or personal stories are used. For children, consent/assent procedures will reflect age, capacity and applicable requirements.

Staff must not publish sensitive identifying information unnecessarily. Organisational devices, social media and digital platforms must never be used to exploit, harass or groom beneficiaries.

9. Reporting safeguarding concerns

Any staff member, volunteer or representative who witnesses, suspects, receives a disclosure of, or becomes aware of a safeguarding concern must report it promptly to the designated Safeguarding Focal Person or Executive Director. If the concern involves that person, it must be reported to the Chairperson of the Board or another designated senior governance representative.

Concerns may be reported verbally or in writing. The organisation will make reporting channels known to staff, volunteers and communities. No person will lose access to services or suffer retaliation for raising a safeguarding concern in good faith. Anonymous concerns will be considered where sufficient information is available to assess risk.

A person reporting a concern should record factual information, avoid conducting their own investigation, preserve relevant evidence, and maintain confidentiality. Immediate safety and urgent medical needs take priority. Where there is imminent danger or suspected criminal conduct, Egoli Africa Uganda will make appropriate referrals to competent authorities and services in accordance with Ugandan law and the best interests and safety of the affected person.

10. Responding to disclosures

When someone discloses abuse or exploitation, personnel should listen calmly, take the disclosure seriously, avoid blaming or making promises of absolute secrecy, explain that information may need to be shared with people who can help, record the person's words as accurately as possible, and report through the safeguarding procedure without unnecessary delay.

Egoli Africa Uganda will seek to use a survivor-centred approach that respects safety, dignity, privacy and informed participation while meeting applicable legal and protection obligations.

11. Managing allegations

Allegations involving Egoli Africa Uganda personnel or representatives will be handled promptly, fairly and confidentially. Protective measures may include temporary changes to duties or contact while a matter is assessed. Internal action does not replace referral to competent authorities where required.

Where an allegation concerns the Executive Director, it will be escalated directly to the Chairperson/Board. Where an allegation concerns the Chairperson, it will be escalated to another authorised Board member. Relevant funders or partners will be informed when required by grant conditions, law or safeguarding agreements, while protecting confidentiality.

Retaliation, intimidation, interference with reporting or deliberate concealment of a safeguarding concern may itself result in disciplinary action. Substantiated misconduct may result in disciplinary measures up to and including termination of employment, volunteer service, contract or partnership.

12. Partners, contractors and visitors

Egoli Africa Uganda will communicate relevant safeguarding expectations to partners, contractors and visitors. Where another organisation delivers activities with Egoli Africa Uganda, safeguarding responsibilities should be clearly understood and serious concerns communicated through agreed channels.

Contractors working on water infrastructure or other community facilities must follow site safety and conduct requirements, particularly where children or vulnerable community members are present.

13. Confidentiality and records

Safeguarding records will be kept securely with access limited to authorised persons. Information will be collected and shared only to the extent necessary to protect people, manage cases responsibly, meet legal obligations and support appropriate referrals.

Safeguarding information must not be discussed casually or disclosed to people who do not have a legitimate safeguarding role.