

We are inspired by the words of our Lord Jesus Christ found in the book of Matthew 19:13-15 to provide support to children. Through this Scriptural passage, Jesus Christ taught us that we need to care for our children. The development of this Action Plan on Child Protection by the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia marks a critical milestone in ensuring that the organization's staffs, visitors, members of the board and partners are guided in ensuring the safety, security and protection of children whenever they came into contact with them during their project visits to the communities or to our offices. It also sets out as a guide in ensuring advocacy in favor of the protection and well-being of children. This Action Plan is aimed at providing a fundamental basis for the appropriate code of conduct in ensuring a child-friendly environment at all times in all places.



**Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia**

**Action Plan on Child Protection**

*Guiding our leaders and Guarding our children*





September 2011

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## **Acronyms**

AIDS Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

CPO Child Protection Officer

EFZ Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia

HIV Human Immunodeficiency Virus

Mk The gospel of Mark of the Holy Bible

OVC Orphan and Vulnerable Child

UNICEF United Nations International Children Emergency Fund





### Foreword

We are inspired by the words of our Lord Jesus Christ found in the book of Matthew 19:13-15 to provide support to children. Through this Scriptural passage, Jesus Christ taught us that we need to care for our children. The action which was exhibited by the disciples by preventing children to meet Jesus Christ could be likened to that of many of our brothers and sisters worldwide today who do not have regard about the importance of children nor their rights. When Jesus Christ demanded that the disciples allow the children to be brought to him and not to be hindered, meant a lot about how Jesus dealt with the children's rights. Oftentimes, the plight of the children is overlooked and sometimes they are deliberately denied of their fundamental Human Rights and consequently, their survival is affected.

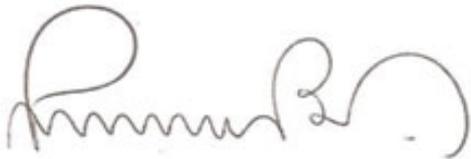
The development of this Action Plan on Child Protection by the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia marks a critical milestone in ensuring that the organization's staffs, visitors, members of the board and partners are guided in ensuring the safety, security and protection of children whenever they came into contact with them during their project visits to the communities or to our offices. It also sets out as a guide in ensuring advocacy in favor of the protection and wellbeing of children.

This Action Plan is aimed at providing a fundamental basis for the appropriate code of conduct in ensuring a child-friendly environment at all times in all places. Children are often vulnerable to many abuses and mistreatment by adults and their peers in homes, schools, workplaces and in Childcare facilities etc. Children can be abused by imposing on them unfavorable conditions and demands beyond their ability, contrary to their will and consent and also because of threats from adults.

In order to effectively implement this Action Plan, we shall collaborate with the Government of the Republic of Zambia through the line Ministries dealing with children. Further, we shall liaise with our counterparts, the Non – Government Organizations on projects pertaining to children.

Through this Action Plan, we make clear that it is important to care and protect children as human beings and that they have rights like any other person. This Action Plan also points out various dangers to which children can be exposed to and provides mechanisms for ensuring their protection and safety. EFZ will endeavor at all times to strengthen the understanding of child protection issues in homes, schools, churches, communities and the general public.

We urge everyone to understand and adhere to this code of conduct and by so doing contribute to the creation of a child-friendly society for the appropriate growth and development of our children in Zambia.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pukuta N. Mwanza', with a large, stylized initial 'P' and a flourish at the end.

Pukuta N. Mwanza (Rev.)

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

### 1.0 Background

#### 1.1 About our organization

Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ) is a Christian umbrella organization representing Christian denominations, local congregations, mission agencies and para-church organizations working together in providing a united effort for the holistic transformation of Zambia. EFZ achieves this objective through serving the member churches and through direct humanitarian initiatives and sustainable interventions at community level.

EFZ carries out various programs in education, health, HIV/AIDS, OVC support, livelihoods, agriculture and food security, entrepreneurship, advocacy and water and sanitation etc. This means that EFZ staffs spend a lot of their time in the field working with communities in various projects. The participating groups include volunteers, community leaders and members of collaborating agencies with children as the primary beneficiaries of a number of programs.

In working with the poor and marginalized, EFZ staffs, volunteers and partners regularly come into contact with children. We recognize the weakness and vulnerability of children to abuse and EFZ seeks to prevent this problem through this child protection policy.

In this Action Plan, a child is defined as a person under the age of 18 according to the United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF). EFZ staff shall cooperate at all times in the implementation of this policy when carrying out work that involves children or when they come into contact with them. This will ensure the safety, well being and protection of the children.

EFZ shall have one full time staff to lead on child protection and provide awareness of this policy and guidelines among other staff in enforcing it. The officer will take a leading role in sharing the policy with the community leaders in which the fellowship is implementing its development activities. Child protection policy will also be mainstreamed during project formulation to ensure that the needs of the children are addressed.

EFZ will ensure that all children, regardless of their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin or ethnicity, physical condition or religious beliefs have the right to protection from abuse at all times. All suspicions and allegations of abuse that are either discovered or reported to EFZ management will be taken seriously and acted upon swiftly and appropriately. All staffs have a responsibility of reporting concerns to the appropriate child protection lead member of staff for follow up action on any issues related to child abuse.

### 1.2 Our motivation and basis for child protection

Firstly, we are motivated and inspired by the biblical mandate exemplified by the life and ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ regarding the safety and protection of children. Secondly, we feel that the protection of children and ensuring a child friendly society is a human rights issue that should be complied with.

### 1.3 What we recognize:

i. We recognize that the protection of children is our biblical responsibility as well as our moral obligation so as to ensure that children are given an opportunity to grow up properly into responsible adults and enjoying their fundamental rights and freedoms.

ii. We recognize the example given by Jesus Christ using the metaphor of the humility of the child as a requirement for the adults to enter the Kingdom of God (*Mtt. 18:1-3*). He rebuked the disciples who tried to hinder the children from being brought to him. Jesus promoted the

children's rights by allowing them to be brought to Him.

iii. We recognize that children can play a critical role in societal transformation from the story of the little child that carried two fish and five pieces of bread that were used as a means for the provision of food aid which can be likened to a huge humanitarian emergency food response to feed more than 5,000 hungry persons (*Mk.6:44*). We shall seek to incorporate the children in the development work by listening to their needs and encouraging them to participate in decision-making.

iv. We recognize the importance of creating a conducive environment for the holistic development of the children taking action against child abusers. We shall prevent actual abuses through sensitization programs and infrastructural considerations for facilities meant for children.

v. We recognize that children become vulnerable to various catastrophes affecting humanity and the communities in which they live. We seek to integrate the needs of children in our disaster assessment and in developing response interventions that will take into account the needs of children. During disaster times, children become vulnerable to forced child labor, sexual abuse, human trafficking, early marriages, rejection, neglect and deprivation etc.

vi. In educational programs, we seek to promote safer environment for learning for all the children such as infrastructure or buildings, social environment such as the people that are in the community in which the children learn such as teachers, fellow pupils and parents. We will

ensure that children have peer support suitable for learning and protecting the vulnerability of children to bullying, harassment, or any form of peer abuse. We seek to ensure that there are adequate suitable resources for the safety and protection of children including the resources needed to support children with special needs and children with disabilities.

vii. We will ensure the orientation of teachers and PTA committees in the child protection policy. We will lobby and advocate that child protection is an integral part of all teacher training curricula in the country. Bible colleges and theological institutions under EFZ will be encouraged to ensure that students are exposed to and learn about child protection.

viii. In churches, we will encourage leaders to pay special attention to the needs of children during meetings and that there is appropriate safety and security for all the children at all times. Also, we will promote the training of Sunday school teachers in child protection and children's rights.

ix. In feeding programs, we will seek to pay attention to the nutritional requirements of children to ensure appropriate dietary allocation that is suitable for their age, health and physical needs.

x. In physical infrastructure, we will promote the design of buildings that is sensitive and appropriate for the safety of children. Children with special needs will require appropriate support systems or resources to ensure their safety and access to their requirements without being disadvantaged. Roads should be properly marked with signs showing the presence of

children in the vicinity or road markings that show children crossing to ensure that the road users take special caution to the safety of children. At all times, children should be given the right of way and should be supported with safe passage on roads. Public conveniences should be designed with special consideration on the needs of children.

### **2.0 Code of conduct**

In order to ensure the safety and protection of children in the conduct of our duty, we demand that at all times there is compliance with this code of conduct for all the staffs, members of the board, volunteers, visitors to the communities, partners and staffs of collaborating agencies by adhering to the following requirements:

i. All persons working under and through the EFZ shall conduct themselves in an appropriate manner. Appropriate conduct involves behavior that does not threaten the safety of the child, or conduct that may affect the privacy of the child or deprive the child of his or her fundamental freedoms or rights or any conduct that puts the life of the child in danger or any harm.

ii. The recruitment of new employees in the EFZ shall include screening on cases related with child protection clearance with the Zambia Police against any previous child abuse cases. Failure to disclose previous involvement in child abuses will lead to the nullification of the offer of employment or disqualification of a candidate from being considered for a job placement in the organization.

iii. Everyone who visits the project sites and field offices where EFZ is implementing its community projects will have to be made aware of the child protection code of conduct and upon careful understanding of the policy, the visitors shall be made to append their signatures indicating that they have received the child protection policy, have read it and therefore shall adhere to the code of conduct as set out in the policy before coming into contact with children. This will be done for each visit or entry to the field offices or communities or project sites even if such visitors have signed the policy before in their previous visits.

iv. Visitors that come into contact with children will not be allowed to take photographs of children without the child's consent or in the absence of the authorized staff of EFZ. Children will be sensitized against unauthorized photographing by visitors without their consent. Children will not be photographed with nudity or in a posture that is inappropriate as this may be perceived or interpreted as child exploitation.

v. EFZ staffs that are mandated to enforce this policy will be reprimanded for lack of enforcement to any degree and at any time.

### **3.0 Implementation of the action plan.**



v. For all matters dealt with as part of this policy, it is essential to have respect for confidentiality for both the allegedly abused child and the suspected abuser at all times. Information being collected during investigations shall not be passed on to unauthorized persons and shall be kept in secure storage facilities to restrict or prevent access by unauthorized persons in the organization. Computers will be protected by password only known by the authorized EFZ staff and filing cabinets will be securely locked at all times. Staff handling child abuses shall not be allowed to solicit for prayer support in public meetings for cases involving child abuse.

vi. Lack of confidentiality may hinder the effectiveness in investigations and affect the quality of information being collected. It may affect cooperation with principal informants or other collaborating persons. The victims may feel jeopardized and go into withdrawal, remain quiet and feel unhappy to share any more information about their condition or experience.

vii. Advocacy – the EFZ will lobby and engage government, traditional rulers and members of parliament and advocate for the safety and protection of the children at all times. EFZ will achieve this through the use of the public media, the hosting of website materials and the sharing of information on child protection with all the stakeholders and partners. EFZ will make child protection an integral part of any development initiative and will ensure that there is the involvement of the community in the implementation of the policy at all times. EFZ will conduct sensitization and awareness campaigns on child protection and children's rights both to the community and to the children to ensure adherence.

Employment standards for domestic servants – Since some of the abuses are caused by people in homes, EFZ will ensure government facilitates for the formulation of appropriate legislation to ensure that persons employed as domestic servants or child minders have undergone prior training in child protection from appropriate service providers.

EFZ will lobby the Ministry of Education to integrate child protection issues in the teacher training curriculum to ensure that teachers are knowledgeable in child protection. Later on they can help in disseminating the information to the children to ensure that they know their rights and also prevent or minimize the number of child abuse cases by teachers.

viii. National registration of child offenders – EFZ will work with the appropriate departments in government to ensure that there is a register for child offenders which will help to track such persons and reduce the repetition of offences. This will also prevent persons already on record for child related offences from being recruited for work involving children unless they have been cleared by the Police service.

ix. In responding to issues and concerns regarding possible abuse, staffs and others shall exercise extreme vigilance in protecting information and must pass on this information only to those people who need to be aware of it.

### 4.0 Types of child abuses

i. **Physical abuse** – beating or caning of a child, or punishing by denying food, appropriate nutritional provisions, accommodation or shelter, child labor, denial of clothing, abduction, and kidnapping.

ii. **Sexual abuse** – inappropriate touching of a child with intent to molest or rape a child and noncontact sexual abuse that involves exposing the child to view obscene materials, pornography, sexual acts or induced sexual act involving a child or motion pictures bearing an adult theme, violence or strong language.

iii. **Emotional abuse** – emotional humiliation involves use of abusive language, derogatory words, cursing, neglect, insults, negative gender remarks, recruitment of children into armed forces, damaging the dignity of the child through ridicule, racial/discriminatory remarks, bullying, deprivation of essential provisions, blame and stigma associated with the child's disabilities or physical handicap.

iv. **Harmful cultural practices** - that lead to the denial of fundamental freedoms and rights of the child. These harmful practices include female genital mutilation, sexual cleansing involving children, infanticide, circumcision, child labor and early marriage.

v. **Early marriage** - often leads to pregnancy at a young age preventing the child from completing her education. This hinders and affects the proper development of the child when the girl becomes a mother at a tender age.

vi. **Child labor** - involves giving a child tasks for which he or she is not physically or emotionally ready to perform; expecting children to do work that does not allow time for their education, rest, and play. Examples include bonded or forced labor, persuading children to sell or be used as couriers for drugs, recruiting children into fighting forces, domestic work, selling alcohol, or working with dangerous tools and equipment or unsafe and unsupervised work.

### 5.0 Places where child abuses often occur

Child abusers cannot be easily identified. Abusers can be male or female members of any social, cultural, or economic group and of any age.

#### 1. Abuse in the family

Most abuses of children occur within the home by other family members that may be close to the child and these may be people that are meant to provide safety and protection to them. These may include child minders, domestic servants, parents, dependents or other members of the family or visitors to the family.

#### 1. Within the community

In most cases, children are abused by people known to them, and the abuse may take place in the local area. This may involve rape or other forms of sexual abuses, harassment, physical bodily harm, ridicule or insults etc.

1. **In institutions** – in schools, daycare centers, refugee camps, orphanages, correctional/ rehabilitation centers and children's homes.

1. **By visitors to communities** – outsiders visiting the communities may sometimes take advantage of a child's vulnerability, for example; drug dealers, sex tourists, pedophiles, debt collectors, human traffickers, development agents, traders, business persons, tourists, etc.

### 6.0 What EFZ will do with child abuse cases or allegations

i. **Investigate** – EFZ will thoroughly and objectively investigate all the alleged child abuse cases with utmost confidentiality and in a professional manner.

ii. **Professional reference** – EFZ will refer the allegedly abused children for specialized attention, help or investigations such as to doctors for medical tests and forensic examinations in order to establish clear evidence and facts about the extent of abuse. In addition, the alleged abuser may be referred for special examination to establish facts about the alleged crime or conduct.

iii. **Law enforcement** – EFZ will refer cases of child abuse to the Zambia Police in order to ensure that the investigations and/or prosecution is conclusive and will collaborate to ensure fairness in dealing with the rights of the affected children.

**Note:**

EFZ will notify the Commissioner of Juvenile Welfare regarding all the children under our care. Therefore, EFZ will obtain committal orders through the district Social Welfare Office, e.g. Lusaka.

iv. **Counseling** – EFZ will ensure that the abused child's immediate members of the family are talked to and counseling is provided to help in the healing or recovery process.

v. **Safer home** – Where abuses have been caused in the same home where the abuser and the

affected child resides, EFZ may seek to protect the child from perpetual abuse by transferring the child to a safer home. This may be possible in homes where the children or a particular child has been perpetually abused and the child fears that revealing the truth about the abuse may worsen the condition of staying at home.

vi. **Employment** – EFZ will instantly dismiss any of its employees found guilty of any form of child abuse. In addition, any staffs who fail to report a child abuse case will be perceived to have colluded in the abuse and will be treated as an abuser. For non full time staffs of EFZ such as consultants, EFZ will immediately terminate the consultancy and this may be coupled with legal action.

vii. **Visitors** – EFZ will take appropriate action on visitors who are found guilty of child abuse, and this will involve reporting them to the law enforcement agents in Zambia and to their own organizations for follow up legal or appropriate action.

viii. **Partnership and collaboration** – EFZ will leverage its collaborative efforts with the appropriate government ministries such as Ministry of Sports, Youth and Child Development, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Community Development and Social Services, Zambia Police Service, other civil society organizations, human rights organizations involved with child protection and legal counsels to ensure that the due process of dealing with the problem is legally followed and becomes conclusive in a just and fair manner.

**Note-** Child protection is the mandate of the Ministry of Community Development & Social Services and all laws related to children thereof.

## **7.0 Children's rights**

The following are the children's fundamental rights that must be upheld:

- i. The right for physical care and attention
- ii. The right for intellectual stimulation
- iii. The right for emotional love and security
- iv. The right for social contact and relationships
- v. The right to have their needs met and safeguarded
- vi. The right to be protected from neglect, abuse and exploitation

vii. The right to be protected from discrimination

viii. The right to be treated as an individual

### **8.0 Awareness of actual or likely occurrence of abuse**

Here are a number of ways in which an abuse becomes known:

i. A child's personal disclosure of the abuse.

ii. Any concerned person can express concern about a child that he/she believes may have been or is being allegedly abused.

iii. A child may show signs of physical injury which may be linked to a likely abuse.

iv. A child's behavior may be a pointer to a possible case of the child's abuse.

v. Concerns may be raised on a member of staff's behavior in the manner in which he/she relates to a child that may be cause for concern for inappropriate behavior.



## Appendix

### Definition of Terms [\[1\]](#)

**Child** – Any person aged 18 years and below.

*I. **Disabled Children** – children are often excluded or marginalized as result of mental, physical or emotional impairments they may have, including learning difficulties. These also tend to make a child more vulnerable to abuse and the effects even more harmful.*

*II. **Children** in vulnerable circumstances would include children who are in vulnerable circumstances due to, for example, poverty and hardship, affected or orphaned by HIV and AIDS, in the commercial sex trade and affected by conflict.*

*III. **Representative** – all paid or unpaid staff, volunteers , freelancers, consultants, board members, visitors appointed or recruited by EFZ or deemed to be representing EFZ in any way in Zambia or anywhere in the World.*

*IV. **Partner** – any organization or church which has a formal partnership agreement with EFZ and is in receipt of funding for projects, programs and activities.*

*V. **Alliances** – any formal or informal arrangement entered into, with a faith-based organization, non-governmental organization or individual, by EFZ for one-off events or in order to maintain a long-term existing relationship.*

*VI. **Child Protection Officer** – a member of staff of the EFZ responsible for this Policy and its application.*

*VII. **Investigating Officer** – person(s) appointed by the Child Protection Officer or line management to investigate child protection concerns in the EFZ.*

*VIII. **Child Development Advisor** – a person employed by EFZ to advise on child protection issues generally, the application of this Policy and to develop good practice guidelines, or equivalent.*

*IX. **Human Resource Advisor** – (or equivalent) person(s) employed by EFZ to advise on recruitment, selection and dismissal or representatives in accordance with this policy, national laws in Zambia and internationally.*

*X. **Visitor** – a person authorized to visit EFZ, its operations or partners within Zambia*

### Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia Child Protection Protocol

I \_\_\_\_\_ do hereby declare that I am visiting the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia projects or field offices in which I am likely to come into contact with children. I confirm that:

i. I have received orientation or a copy of the child protection code of conduct (or summary) that clearly stipulates the appropriate conduct expected of me during my visit and that I need to pay special attention against interfering with the rights of the children or coercing them into doing anything contrary to their consent or personal will.

ii. I am aware of the consequences that may be imposed on me in case I am found to have breached the code of conduct.

iii. I accept that I will adhere to the code of conduct and abide by the behavioral protocol that will ensure the protection and safety of children.

I am visiting EFZ programs or field offices as a (consultant, partner, board member, staff, sponsor/donor, government official etc)

\_\_\_\_\_ (specify)

Full name \_\_\_\_\_

Contact details:

Full residential address (house number, street name etc)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Full organizational contact details (with telephone numbers, email address, fax numbers etc)

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Name and contact details of the supervisor in your organization or of the next of kin

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Signature\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_

Name of an EFZ Official \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

[1] Definition of terms adapted from “A Summary of Tearfund’s Child Protection Policy 2009