

1. Safeguarding Policy Statement

SouthSouthNorth (SSN) – the **consortium** lead - in partnership with ODI, Social Development Direct (SDDirect) and Paul Watkiss Associates (PWA) have been selected by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's (FCDO) Energy, Climate and Environment Directorate (ECED) to deliver its new project: the Climate, Environment and Nature (CLEAN) Helpdesk. As consortium lead, SSN is ultimately accountable for safeguarding for the CLEAN Helpdesk; however, **everyone involved has a responsibility for safeguarding**.

This policy statement and framework does not replace but rather **compliments all delivery partners' safeguarding policies – including their codes of conduct - and systems**. All partners will continue to be guided by their own policies, principles, and values, as well as by the FCDO requirements set out in the grant agreement. *Note that for the purposes of the CLEAN Helpdesk, PWA will be covered by SSN's policies and procedures and will defer to SSN in the event of any safeguarding incident/reports.*

The statements below describe the CLEAN Helpdesk's principles, values and approaches to safeguarding:

The CLEAN Helpdesk is committed to the **safety and rights of all individuals** regardless of their gender, age, race, ethnicity, impairments, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or any other identity marker/ protected characteristic. The CLEAN Helpdesk acknowledges that a person may be more or less at risk in any given context due to their **intersectional identity markers** or characteristics, and that **vulnerability is dynamic**. The CLEAN Helpdesk recognises that **safeguarding is essential** for doing safe, inclusive and accessible work.

The CLEAN Helpdesk commits to the [global minimum standards on safeguarding](#), including but not limited to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Minimum Operating Standards on PSEA (MOS-PSEA) and the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS). When the Common Approach to Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Sexual Harassment (CAPSEAH) is finalised in 2024, the CLEAN Helpdesk will ensure alignment with this throughout the project. These standards apply to all CLEAN Helpdesk staff and associated personnel, in both their personal and professional lives, **24 hours a day, seven days a week**.

The CLEAN Helpdesk considers safeguarding misconduct to include all forms of violence, abuse, exploitation and harassment, including sexual. Broadly speaking this encompasses physical, verbal, emotional/psychological, economic abuse and neglect, and acts ranging from, but not limited to, bullying and discriminatory behaviour to modern slavery, sexual exploitation, abuse, including rape, and workplace harassment. The CLEAN Helpdesk recognises that these harms can happen **both in-person and online**.

The CLEAN Helpdesk recognises that **all abuse is causally rooted in power imbalances and inequalities**. The CLEAN Helpdesk expects all staff and personnel to be aware of such power imbalances which are especially inherent in the delivery of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA), and to avoid exploiting these imbalances to abuse. The CLEAN Helpdesk

expects all staff and associated personnel to be aware of their conscious biases and to be vigilant around any potential unconscious biases, including those expressed by others engaged on the CLEAN Helpdesk. Such inequalities and biases not only create safeguarding risk but can also create poor or no responses to safeguarding misconduct.

The CLEAN Helpdesk takes safeguarding misconduct extremely seriously and has **zero tolerance for inaction** in this regard. Each consortium member commits to keeping people safe – whether colleagues, service users, community members or others the CLEAN Helpdesk comes into virtual or physical contact with through its people, activities and communications. The CLEAN Helpdesk expects all staff and associated personnel to internalise and embody the **Do No Harm principle**, including through CLEAN Helpdesk products, and to act swiftly where breaches are observed or suspected.

CLEAN believes in integrating **survivor-centred and trauma-informed approaches** into its work. This means that the needs and wishes of survivors are prioritised (with informed consent always sought), and that best efforts to understand trauma are made in order to proactively avoid retraumatisation and revictimization of already at-risk people through contact with CLEAN Helpdesk personnel or its project activities. All parties including victim-survivors, witnesses/ whistleblowers, and subjects of complaint (SoCs) will be protected and supported as per the CLEAN Helpdesk's **duty of care** (moral and legal obligation to keep those working with and for it safe) responsibilities. Should a report be proven to have been made with malicious intent, disciplinary measures will be taken, up to and including the termination of employment, consultant, supplier/vendor and/or partnership contracts.

The CLEAN Helpdesk recognises its responsibility to keep people safe and to encourage a **culture** around the project that is conducive to reporting safeguarding misconduct. The CLEAN Helpdesk commits to ensuring that **reporting mechanisms are safe, appropriate, accessible, inclusive, confidential and user-friendly**, and that adequate communications are done on these to encourage uptake. Where reports are made, the CLEAN Helpdesk commits to making best efforts to ensure confidentiality as well as prevention of retaliation.

While much of the CLEAN Helpdesk's work is facilitated digitally and online, the consortium recognises that safeguarding risk exists not simply through in-person interactions, but also in virtual ones, and also that its products can carry associated safeguarding risks when put out into the public domain. The CLEAN Helpdesk **commits to thinking holistically around safeguarding risk**, and to taking every opportunity to risk assess, mitigate and monitor risk, and also to learn and iteratively embed safeguarding principles into all aspects of work.