

Vimercate, August 15, 2022

Dear Supporters,

we are delighted to inform our supporters that the Pistorio Foundation is currently implementing across all its projects, locations, and chapters, a Child Protection Policy. The Foundation prides itself with having rigorously upheld to this day its founding principles, that place at the center of every intervention and activity it engages in, the respect and protection of the rights of the child, as stated in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. We have expected and demanded that our staff, volunteers, collaborators, and partners over the years hold up to our high standards of care, attention, and safeguard of the welfare of the beneficiaries we serve, to contribute to build together a better, safer, and more just world.

Despite our relatively small size, in terms of budget, and of number of projects and beneficiaries served, we are determined to operate only with the best possible governance and practices that distinguish the top organizations of the non-profit sector involved in programs that benefit underprivileged children. To this end, we are convinced that a Child Protection Policy is an important blueprint to adopt and use at all levels of our organization as a distinctive trademark of our work.

We would like to thank our Board Member, Giovanna Bottani, who has extensive expertise in this domain, for having drafted our Child Protection Policy, and for providing the guidance and direction for its effective implementation. As we continue to reach out to more children in need, we continue to strive to improve our operations, and the introduction of a Child Protection Policy is a testimony to this endeavour. Beyond a written statement, such Policy is a formal agreement amongst partners, staff, and volunteers worldwide to respect strict standards of codes of conduct when interacting with our beneficiaries and adhering to a set of clear and precise procedures and guidelines in identifying, communicating, and intervening in any situation which can be considered as placing the welfare of a child at risk. Implementing this policy entails a concerted team effort over time which will ultimately further strengthen our relationships with our partners and within the organization, as well as the trust of our supporters and collaborators. Moreover, it will guarantee the Foundation a solid framework of reference of procedures and regulations to safeguard the protection of the rights of the children we are able to reach as we expand our projects and as our organization evolves over time. We therefore thank our partners, staff, and volunteers, for their collaboration in embracing this policy and once again giving proof of their faith in our work and vision.

Best regards,

Pasquale Pistorio

Child Protection Policy

and Code of Conduct

August 2022

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Pistorio Foundation's Policy on Protecting Children

I. Premise

The Foundation is a non-profit organization based in Vimercate (MB), Italy, founded by Pasquale Pistorio in April 2005, with the mission of improving the living conditions of children in developing countries with a focus on education, by providing long-term scholarships for underprivileged children from Primary to Professional School, and by building and improving school infrastructure. We ensure that every child we support has access to basic nutrition and primary health care.

The Foundation subsequently addresses women and community sustainable development issues through agriculture and income generation opportunities. In accomplishing our mission, we wish to equally spread awareness of the living conditions of children in the world and promote values of solidarity, cooperation, justice, giving, and volunteering.

Implementing its mission, the Foundation is aware of the fragilities and special attention that every organization that works with minors must have. Therefore, it decided to give a homogeneous, concrete, and flexible structure to its ethical-value system, focusing on the implementation of specific policies and procedures that protect the beneficiaries of its activities and all other parties that come into contact with it. To this end, the Foundation has decided to:

- Ensure the respect, at all organizational levels and in every project area, of human rights as recognized by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights approved by the UN in 1948 as well as by the other international conventions in force on the subject.

II. Our way of life

Pistorio Foundation takes the protection of children extremely seriously. Our concern is to ensure the safety of the children that come into contact with the organization through our activity. Pistorio Foundation believes that no one should ever experience harm, mistreatment, carelessness, and exploitation. We are responsible for protecting those at risk from harm and violence by safeguarding and supporting children's welfare. We are committed to protecting all minors participating in our programs irrespective of ability, ethnicity, faith, gender, sexuality, and culture. We are committed to guaranteeing that our staff, associates, Board Members, partners, volunteers, consultants, and suppliers respect and promote our core principles in their daily activities.

III. Scope

The scope of this Policy is:

- Ensure the protection of minors who receive Pistorio Foundation's services and support.
- Guarantee the protection of all minors our staff and associates come in contact within our areas of intervention.
- Ensure that there is an agreed, understood and standardized approach to child protection across the organization and that all its staff, Board Members, partners, volunteers, consultants and suppliers have signed up to the principles guiding our approach to protecting children.

IV. Legislation of reference

- *"The child must be given the means requisite for its normal development, both materially and spiritually"* - **Declaration of the Rights of the Child**, Society of Nations, Geneva, 1924, first point.
- *"The child shall enjoy special protection, and shall be given opportunities and facilities, by law and by other means, to enable him to develop physically, mentally, morally, spiritually and socially in a healthy and normal manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity. In the enactment of laws for this purpose, the best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration"* - **Declaration of the Rights of the Child**, ONU, 1959, principle 2.
- *"In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration"* - **Convention on the Rights of the Child** - ONU, 1989, article 3, paragraph 1, ratified by Switzerland on 24 February 1997 and entered into force on 26 March 1997.
- *"The purposes of this Convention are to a prevent and combat sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children; b protect the rights of child victims of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse; c promote national and international cooperation against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children"* - **Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse**, European Council, Lanzarote, 2007, Article 1, ratified by Switzerland on 18 March 2014 and entered into force on 1 July 2014.
- *"In all actions relating to children, whether taken by public authorities or private institutions, the child's best interests must be a primary consideration"* - **Charter of fundamental rights of the European Union**, EU, 2012, article 24, paragraph 2.

Starting with the legislation mentioned above, Pistorio Foundation believes that the protection of children is adequate and appropriate only when a constant intervention based on respect for their rights is encouraged. More in detail to reach complete prevention, protection, and intervention framework, the organization is dedicated to respecting and implementing the core principles described in the 5th chapter.

V. Pistorio Foundation's Principles

At the Foundation, we recognize that:

- Children's welfare is paramount, as established by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
- Children's abuse is never acceptable.
- We have a strong obligation to protect the children with whom we work.
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation, or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Whenever we work with implementing partners, they are responsible for sharing Pistorio Foundation's principles in their activities. (Annex 1 Child Protection Partnership Agreement and checklist).
- Working in partnership with children, their parents, carers, and other agencies, the Foundation promotes child protection principles.

VI. Definitions:

Associates

Pistorio Foundation associates include volunteers, freelance, employees, interns, students, visitors, or anyone working on behalf of the organization

Child

A child is any person up to the age of 18, regardless as to whether or not this age is established in national law in the countries where we work.

Bullying

Bullying is harmful behavior, often used from a position of strength and constantly repeated over time hurting another individual or group, physically or emotionally".

Exploitation

Commercial or other forms of exploitation of a child refer to the use of a child in work or other activities for the benefit of others. This includes but is not limited to child labor and child prostitution. These acts hurt children's physical or mental health, education, or spiritual, moral, or social-emotional development.

Partner

Partner refers to a local organization receiving funding from the Foundation for ad hoc initiatives.

Emotional abuse

Constant emotional mistreatment that impacts a child's emotional development. Emotionally abusive acts can include restriction of movement, degrading, humiliating, bullying (including cyberbullying), and threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing, or other non-physical forms of intimidating treatment.

Physical abuse

Actual or potential act causing injury or trauma committed by another person, adult or child. There may be a single or repeated incidents.

Sexual abuse

Forcing or inviting a child to participate in sexual activities that he or she does not entirely understand and has little choice in accepting.

This may include but is not limited to:

- The encouragement or intimidation of a child to engage in unlawful sexual activity.
- The abusive use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices.
- The exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials.

Neglect and negligent treatment

Allowing for context, resources, and circumstances, neglect and negligent treatment refers to a constant failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to seriously weaken a child's healthy physical, spiritual, moral, and mental development. It includes failing to appropriately supervise and defend children from harm and providing nutrition, shelter, and safe living/working conditions. It may also involve maternal neglect during pregnancy because of drug or alcohol misuse and the neglect and ill-treatment of a disabled child.

Child Protection

Protecting from mistreatments. Preventing any harm and ensuring that children grow up in the circumstances consistent with the requirement of safe and effective care while taking action to enable beneficiaries to have the best outcomes.

VII. Prevention measures

We will try our best to keep our children safe in every moment of our activity, promoting:

Safe Program Design:

- Before implementing a project, the Foundation or the implementing partner will assess the social impact of its initiatives, ensuring that a safeguarding mapping is carried out in all localities where it works to understand which authorities to report abuse to and what organizations are working nationally and locally that can provide advice on reporting cases.
- It's aware of the official safeguarding processes and procedures established in the operational countries, tailoring its strategies and policies to fit each new context.
- It makes sure that its projects are designed to uphold the principles delineated in this document.
- It assures that its projects minimize risks to children, taking into account the peculiar needs that can vary from country to country and from community to community.

Safe recruitment:

- All recruitment of staff and volunteers is done safely, ensuring verifications are in place, and references are a prerequisite for starting the selection process in line with our Annex 2 (Policy for Safe Recruitment, Induction and Supervision of Staff and Volunteers).
- Recruitment guidelines will include checks on capacity and correctness for working with children.
- The organization ensures that partners working with the Foundation have adopted dedicated policies on the protection of children.

Dedicated communication on the Policy:

- The Policy will be publicized to the staff, associates, partners, children, and communities we work with.

- A copy of the Policy will be made available on our website.
- A copy will be enclosed in all Conventions signed with the implementing partners as appropriate.
- The key requirements of this Policy will be given to sponsors and donors.

Safe environments in which safeguarding principles are supported:

- Our staff and associates will fully adhere to the Policy in every daily activity (Annex 8).
- The organization will share information on the Child Protection Policy and procedures with the direct beneficiaries so that children know what they can expect from us.
- The organization will share information about Child Protection and good practice with children, parents, carers, staff, associates, volunteers, and program visitors.
- The organization will promote safeguarding principles to guard against any bullying or abuse between beneficiary children.
- The organization will ask potential visitors to the different projects implemented by the Foundation to adhere to the Policy and its code of conduct.

Monitoring and continuous improvement of programs:

- The organization monitors its programs' situational context and proposes possible changes in safeguarding practices in the different localities when deemed needed to improve children's wellbeing.
- If it comes to light that its programs could be made safer for children, then we will ensure that this is implemented as a priority.

Management voice on the Policy:

- The management of the Foundation makes it clear through our Code of Conduct, recruitment procedures, training, and internal communications that the abuse of children by staff, volunteers, and associates will not be tolerated.
- The management will guarantee that all the staff and associates understand the obligation to respect the rules expressed in the Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct in their daily work and private life. It will share a copy of the indicated documents with all staff and associates.
- The management will guarantee that all images used of children meet the standards of Annex 3 (Ethical Images Policy).

- The management will give access to the needed training materials to the staff and volunteers to improve their awareness of the topic.

Governance and accountability:

- The organization guarantees a transparent governance and accountability structure as outlined in Foundation's Child Protection governance and accountability framework.
- The organization ensures that there are named Child Protection officers and focal points who clearly understand their roles and responsibilities.
- The organization ensures a clear and accessible system for identifying and reporting abuse in line with its Procedures for identifying and reporting abuse and concerns (see Annex 4, 5 and 6).
- The organization ensures regular checks within our governance to confirm that our Policies and procedures are being met and verified.

Swift and efficient actions if child protection concerns come to our attention

- The Foundation's management ensures that staff and associates are clear on what steps to take where problems arise regarding the safety of children in line with our Procedures for identifying and reporting abuse and concerns (see Annex 4 and 5)
- The Foundation's management understands that abuse may come to light within the communities in which we operate and may not be due to our organization's programs or operations and yet still recognize the responsibility to report on suspected or actual child abuse.
- The Foundation's management will report any concerns to the formal authorities of the relevant country. Where they are weak or unreliable, it will contact dedicated entities that can deal with cases appropriately, such as alternative safeguarding organizations
- The Foundation's management seeks guidance to ensure that children and their families are not put at further risk or made vulnerable by reporting harm and/or abuse.
- The Foundation's management will share concerns with agencies who need to know, involving other organizations in line with Pistorio Foundation's Procedures for sharing safeguarding information with other organizations.
- The Foundation's management will guarantee that action is taken to support and protect children where worries arise regarding possible abuse.

VIII. Pistorio Foundation's Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct defines the behaviors expected of staff and associates from Pistorio Foundation and staff from other organizations and visitors who collaborate with the Foundation.

All staff, volunteers, and project visitors must sign up to and always abide by this Code of Conduct (at work and in their personal life).

Purpose

Respecting this code will help to protect children from abuse and inappropriate behavior from adults. It will also guarantee that staff, volunteers, and visitors maintain a high standard of conduct, reducing the possibility of unsupported allegations of abuse against them.

Endorsing this code of conduct

All members of staff and volunteers are expected to report any breaches of this code to Pistorio Foundation's selected Child Protection Officer following the procedure of Annex 5 . Staff and volunteers who breach this code of conduct be assessed under SFL's disciplinary procedures.

The following are some virtuous behaviors that the recipients of this CPP must keep and others that, being inappropriate, they should never engage in.

"Dos"

While working with children, it is essential to:

- i. Always follow the Child Protection Policy and Procedures of Pistorio Foundation.
- ii. Actively involve children in planning activities wherever possible, valuing their voices.
- iii. Guarantee that any contact with children is appropriate and related to ongoing projects.
- iv. Respect children's personal privacy.
- v. Make sure that whenever feasible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children or, if this is impossible, that you are within sight or hearing of other adults.
- vi. Treat all children with empathy, respect, dignity, and in the same manner regardless of gender, language, ethnicity, religion, nationality, or ability.

- vii. Use particular attention is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children.
- viii. Empower children by informing them about their rights, what is appropriate and improper, and what they can do if a problem arises.
- ix. Challenge deplorable behavior and report all allegations/suspensions of bullying or abuse.
- x. Always seek and get written authorization from children and their parents before taking photographs, recording or using images of children, or reporting their stories.
- xi. Explain, at all times, to children and parents how photos, videos, or messages will be used. In any case, the materials must never harm children's dignity.

"Don'ts"

When working with children, you must not:

- i. Hurt or physically assault and/or abuse children.
- ii. Develop physical/sexual relationships with children under the age of 18 regardless of the definition of age of majority or how consent is legally recognized in different countries. A misconception about the age of a child is not considered an acceptable defense.
- iii. Use language, and suggest inappropriate, offensive, or abusive advice.
- iv. Make sarcastic, uncaring, insulting, or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children.
- v. Behave physically in a manner that is inappropriate or sexually provocative.
- vi. Sleep in the same room or bed as a child with whom you are working.
- vii. Kiss, hug, caress, rub or touch a child in an incorrect way even for the cultural context in which the child lives.
- viii. Remain alone with a child under circumstances that may be deemed inappropriate by a third party.
- ix. Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, deride children, or provoke emotional abuses.
- x. Discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favor children excluding others.
- xi. Let children have your personal contact details or contact them through social networking sites.

- xii. Take photographs, make videotapes, or solicit personal information if not required for the project activities.
- xiii. Misuse images in any format, whether online, in printed material or other medium.

This is not an exhaustive or exclusive list. The principle is that staff should avoid actions that may represent poor practice or potentially abusive behavior.

Requirements and prohibitions will also inevitably differ according to the geographical areas in which they are to be applied, considering the various environments in which the recipients will be operating.

To tailor the reporting process to each context, the Foundation may define and agree upon specific in-field procedures in collaboration with the Implementing Partner. These procedures will then be formally integrated into the respective Conventions.

Linked policies and procedures

This Child Protection Policy is linked with the following other policies and procedures and must be read in conjunction with them to understand the management, accountability, and monitoring:

Annex 1. Child Protection Partnership Agreement and checklist.

Annex 2. Policy for Safe Recruitment, Induction and Supervision of Staff and Volunteers

Annex 3 Ethical Images Policy

Annex 4. CPP governance and accountability framework

Annex 5. Raising Concern Process

Annex 6. Report Form

Annex 7. Dedicated training course: <https://agora.unicef.org/course/info.php?id=915>

Annex 8. Statement of Commitment

Annex 9. Organisation chart