



# OXFAM GB SURVIVOR POLICY

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## 1. Introduction, Purpose, and Scope

### Policy Statement

Oxfam GB will not tolerate its employees or other representatives carrying out any form of sexual harassment, sexual exploitation or sexual abuse. Oxfam GB commits to supporting victim-survivors of sexual harassment, exploitation or abuse, where the alleged wrongdoer is an Oxfam GB employee or representative, or if the incident happens as a direct result of Oxfam GB's work. Oxfam GB takes a survivor centered approach to supporting victim-survivors. Insofar as possible, victim-survivors will be equally supported to access the services they require whether they are members of staff or members of the communities we work with.

### Purpose

This policy outlines how Oxfam GB will support victim-survivors of sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse perpetrated by Oxfam GB employees or representatives, or as a direct result of Oxfam's work. The policy builds on the previous policies through including feedback from consultations with communities, staff and GBV actors.

### Scope

This policy applies to all Oxfam GB employees and representatives. Where employees from one Oxfam affiliate may be working in the country of another affiliate, the policy should be understood to have a generous application where there is a link with Oxfam GB and with the best interest of the victim-survivor in mind .

All victim-survivors of sexual harassment, exploitation or abuse perpetrated by Oxfam GB employees or representatives, and victim-survivors of sexual harassment exploitation, or abuse which happens as a direct result of Oxfam's work are eligible to receive support as outlined in this policy, regardless of when the incident occurred.

## 2. Commitments to Victim-Survivors

- Victim-Survivors have a right to understand how their case will be handled prior to reporting an incident, including any mandatory reporting requirements and case management procedures.
- Victim-Survivors have the right to be kept updated with relevant information pertaining to their cases throughout the case management cycle.
- Victim-survivors' informed consent to share information should be voluntarily and freely given based on a clear understanding of the facts, implications and future consequences of sharing information.
- Victim-Survivors should be informed that they have the right to withdraw or change their minds at any time, but subject to a risk assessment, an investigation may still continue despite this.
- Victim-survivors will not be asked to sign non-disclosure agreements by Oxfam GB regarding cases of sexual abuse, exploitation or sexual harassment.
- Victim-survivors have the right to access their personal data at all times and such requests from victim-survivors will be dealt with in a timely manner.

- Every effort must be made to ensure the dignity of victim-survivors at all times; however, Oxfam reserves the right to share information without consent where the alleged wrongdoer is an immediate risk to someone else, or where the victim-survivor is a child or vulnerable adult.

### **3. A Survivor Centred Approach to Accessing Services**

Survivor Support refers to the provision, funding of, or referral to support services, or provision of material goods or financial support, in order to meet the immediate needs of a victim-survivor following a safeguarding incident.

Applying a survivor-centred approach, Oxfam GB commits to assisting victim-survivors to access appropriate services through the Safeguarding Team or partners, should a victim-survivor choose to pursue them. This may include specialist medical, psychosocial, legal and security support where this is possible. Oxfam GB recognises that service provision will differ from place to place and it may not always be possible to access some services. Oxfam GB will bear any reasonable costs accessing the services outlined below, on a case by case basis and in consultation with the victim-survivor.

Following an incident, immediate support may be provided if it's deemed necessary by the Safeguarding Team without awaiting the outcome of an investigation. Support can be provided at any time following an incident of sexual harassment, exploitation or abuse and is not dependent on the naming of the perpetrator or the outcome of an investigation. Assistance and support for victim-survivors are based on the guiding principles of do no harm, confidentiality, safety and non-discrimination.

All forms of assistance and support should be survivor-centred, taking into account individual needs, for example, age, gender, sexuality, preferred language, ethnicity, culture, and should be provided through qualified services, programmes and networks that are contextually appropriate and in a manner that does not further isolate or stigmatise victim-survivors.

## **4. Types of support to be considered**

### **4.1. Healthcare**

Service providers you could be referred to may provide services which might include, but are not limited to:

- Emergency contraception
- HIV Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP)
- Abortion
- Treatment for Sexually Transmitted Infections
- Psychological support

The Safeguarding Team will make all reasonable efforts to refer victim-survivors to healthcare facilities which provide safe, confidential care, with trained clinical staff, who obtain informed consent from victim-survivors, provide private examination rooms and document injuries in the event the victim-survivor chooses to pursue legal action.

Oxfam GB staff may also have access to further support from Staff Health and through their insurance policy.

#### **4.2. Safety**

The Safeguarding Team will work with victim-survivors on a case by case basis to assess their safety needs and with victim-survivors' informed consent, put measures in place to reduce the risk of further harm. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Removal and/or relocation
- Provision of physical security measures such as mobile phones or alarm systems
- Removal of the alleged perpetrator where an investigation is pending
- Reporting to police, where it is safe to do so and with consideration of the victim-survivor's wishes (the Safeguarding Team will keep victim-survivors informed of any risks of reporting to the police in the country where the incident took place)

#### **4.3. Immediate needs and on-going needs**

Additional immediate and ongoing needs may include, but are not limited to:

- The Safeguarding Team will work with the victim-survivor to establish any additional immediate needs e.g. food, shelter, fuel, travel or other subsistence costs.
- In person support and/or accompaniment (a person chosen by the victim-survivor to accompany them) to e.g. health, local authority, or legal appointments.
- The Safeguarding Team will work with other service providers to give victim-survivors opportunities to access programs which could provide them with sustainable support, such as education or livelihoods programs.
- Where there is evidence that a child has been born as a result of rape by an Oxfam GB employee or representative, reasonable ongoing support for the mother and child will be made by Oxfam on a case by case basis.

#### **4.4. Guidance on Legal Issues**

Oxfam GB cannot provide victim-survivors with legal advice or representation, due to potential conflicts of interest. However, Oxfam GB's Safeguarding Team will endeavor to signpost you to sources of legal support whenever possible. The Safeguarding Team will also be able to provide information including, but not limited to:

- Guidance on whether to make a legal complaint in-country, or potentially in the UK courts, and direct victim-survivors to organisations which can provide legal support. The decision on whether or not to make a complaint or pursue legal action rests with the victim-survivor who must be informed by their assessment of their safety. Oxfam will not place undue emphasis on formal justice systems as a mechanism of response.
- In cases where the victim-survivor chooses to pursue criminal prosecution or civil remedies, advice on protection of victim-survivors and their family members from secondary and repeat victimization, from intimidation and from retaliation may be facilitated through consultation with local legal, GBV, Child Protection and other experts, as well as measures to protect the dignity of victim-survivors during questioning and when testifying (e.g. by supporting a victim advocate or case worker to accompany the victim-survivor to legal proceedings).

The policy published on the [Alphabet of Links on Compass](#) is the valid version.

- Guidance on procedures established under national law for the physical protection of victims and their family members.
- International staff may have access to their embassy where they may be able receive support and referrals for legal advice based on their nationality. The Safeguarding Team will support the employee with finding appropriate legal support as far as possible.
- UK based staff will be signposted to charitable organisations which can assist in providing information on legal remedies.

## 5. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Country Directors and Heads of Offices	Responsible for the allocation of funding towards safeguarding activities and for the delivery of appropriate reporting mechanisms and safeguarding communication amongst staff and representatives as well as communities, in line with this policy. The Country Director shall support the Safeguarding Team with the facilitation of support in a survivor-centred way, including support with adaptation of financial process to uphold confidentiality as much as possible.
Integrity Director	Responsible for the Safeguarding Team's delivery of assistance to victim-survivors in line with this policy, including allocation of funds for survivor support and approval of support requests following approval from the Head of Safeguarding.
Head of Safeguarding	Responsible for allocating and supervising adequate staff to manage support for victim-survivors. The Head of Safeguarding shall approve the support offered having evaluated it is appropriate and proportionate.
Safeguarding Advisors	Responsible for facilitating timely and survivor centred support to victim-survivors. Safeguarding advisors are responsible for amplifying the voice of victim survivors and advocating for their support, as well as working with country teams, partners and other appropriate stakeholders to identify services and processes which can facilitate safe support for victim-survivors.
All Oxfam GB staff and representatives	Are obliged to report safeguarding concerns, to their manager, or directly to Speak Up, but are required to keep this information confidential outside of that process.
Managers	Must report safeguarding concerns via Speak Up or directly to the Head of Safeguarding.

## 6. Related documents

OXFAM PSEA POLICY

OXFAM CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

OXFAM DIGITAL SAFEGUARDING POLICY

OXFAM SAFEGUARDING YOUTH POLICY

OXFAM GB SAFEGUARDING ADULTS' POLICY

## 7. Version control

This policy will be reviewed and updated every 4 years or earlier as required to comply with legislation or external and internal changes. Existing policies that need to be reviewed, must comply with this Policy on Operational Policies.

Version	Approved by	Approval date	What has changed
1	Clifford Isabelle Director of Safeguarding	30/03/2020	Accessibility and measurable standards included
2	Andy Watson Director of Integrity	16/01/2025	Definitions expanded for clarity, refinement of repetitive sections, inclusion of annex with complimentary research.

## 8. Annex 1 Definitions

**‘Employees and Representatives’** include all employees of Oxfam GB. The term also includes board members, volunteers, interns, and international and local consultants, day labourers, in addition to individual and corporate contractors of these entities and related personnel. This includes non-Oxfam entities and their employees and individuals who have entered into partnership, sub-grant or sub-recipient agreements with Oxfam.

**Oxfam GB Employees and Representatives:** The term “Oxfam GB Employees and Representatives” includes all employees of Oxfam GB. The term also includes board members, volunteers, interns, and international and local consultants, day labourers, in addition to individual and corporate contractors of these entities and related personnel. This includes non-Oxfam entities and their employees and individuals who have entered into partnership, sub-grant or sub-recipient agreements with Oxfam.

**Survivor Redress:** Support provided following a credible allegation aimed at enabling victim-survivors to recover and rebuild their lives.

**Survivor Support:** The provision, funding of, or referral to support services, or provision of material goods or financial support, in order to meet the immediate needs of a victim-survivor following a safeguarding incident.

**Sexual Abuse:** The actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. This would include forced marriage and sexual slavery and also includes sexual activity with a child (any person under the age of 18).

**Survivor-Centred Approach:** A victim-survivor-centred approach is one where the wellbeing and the wishes of the victim-survivor of an incident are put at the centre of all actions taken. This includes ensuring: The safety and security of the victim-survivor, any dependents, witnesses, or whistleblowers. Assurance that issues will be handled in confidence. The victim-survivor’s wishes (self-determination) and best interests are taken into account. The victim-survivor is treated with dignity and respect, demonstrating belief and trust. Empowerment of the individual, their family, friends, and community. A timely response at each stage. No limitations on who reports or when they report. An individual can report a concern or incident at any time after it happens. Everyone is able and encouraged to report.

**Sexual Exploitation:** Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. Oxfam recognises that the terms sexual abuse and exploitation represent a wide spectrum of behaviours and is not limited to the act of sexual intercourse.

**Sexual Harassment:** Any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favour, verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature, or any other behaviour of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another. Such conduct will also be considered sexual harassment when it interferes with work, is made a condition of employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. While typically involving a pattern of behaviour, it can take the form of a single incident. Sexual harassment may occur between persons of the opposite or same sex. Both males and females can be either the victims or the offenders.



**Victim-Survivor:** This means any victim-survivor of sexual harassment, exploitation or abuse allegedly perpetrated by Oxfam GB employees or representatives, or as a direct result of Oxfam GB's work. Victim-survivors may include victims of modern slavery, adults and children, Oxfam staff and people from the communities in which we work.