



MILLENNIUM CHILD SUPPORT GROUP

Do No Harm Policy

Revised
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MILLENNIUM CHILD SUPPORT GROUP

"Save the child, Save the future, Save the world"

Millennium Child Support Group (MCSG)

Do No Harm Policy

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SUPPORT AND COLLABORATION

Millennium Child Support Group (MCSG) extends its sincere gratitude to the **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission, the Spanish Cooperation, the Africa Soccer Stars Network, UN Women, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**, and all our esteemed stakeholders for their unwavering support, commitment, and invaluable collaboration in advancing our shared vision of a **healthier, child rights-centered, women-empowered, and inclusive, violence-free world in Africa.**

Your steadfast partnership has been instrumental in strengthening our programs—particularly in the areas of school feeding, gender equality, women’s health, and child protection. Through these strategic collaborations, we have been able to reach and positively impact countless children, women, and families living in underserved communities in **Ghana and Nigeria**. Together, we are promoting sustainable development and delivering hope and opportunity to those who need it most.

As we continue to work toward equity, justice, and empowerment for all, we reaffirm our dedication to the collective values and goals that unite us. We look forward to building on our shared successes and deepening our collaboration to drive lasting, transformative change across the region.

Thank you for standing with us.

Together, we are building a future where every woman and child can thrive.

Millennium Child Support Group

Date: 09/09/2024

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1. Introduction

Millennium Child Support Group (MCSG) is a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting the rights, dignity, and well-being of vulnerable children, women, and communities in Ghana. Our programs span education, nutrition, health, child protection, women's empowerment, and humanitarian support. As we engage in these critical activities, we recognize the need to ensure that our actions do not unintentionally contribute to conflict, discrimination, exploitation, or harm of any kind.

The "Do No Harm" policy affirms our commitment to conflict sensitivity, ethical conduct, and the prioritization of safety, inclusion, and accountability across all levels of programming.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to guide all MCSG activities and interventions in a manner that avoids causing harm and instead contributes positively to peacebuilding, equity, and protection. It ensures that MCSG remains accountable to the communities we serve and minimizes any risk of reinforcing societal divisions, exclusion, or tension through our work.

This policy provides a structured approach for analyzing context, designing conflict-sensitive interventions, and integrating risk mitigation strategies throughout the project lifecycle.

3. Understanding the Do No Harm Concept

The "Do No Harm" approach was developed by Mary B. Anderson and is a globally recognized framework for conflict-sensitive programming. It is grounded in the principle that all humanitarian and development work occurs in a context that includes both tensions (dividers) and commonalities (connectors).

Seven core principles guide the approach:

1. Every intervention has an impact.
2. Contexts are shaped by dividers (sources of tension) and connectors (capacities for peace).
3. Interventions interact with both.
4. The way resources are distributed matters.
5. Implicit messages from aid projects affect local dynamics.
6. Details of implementation determine impact.
7. There are always alternative actions that can reduce harm.

By applying this approach, MCSG ensures that our work supports local capacities for peace, avoids reinforcing existing divisions, and mitigates any negative consequences.

4. Objectives of the Policy

MCSG aims to achieve the following through the implementation of the Do No Harm Policy:

- Prevent unintended negative consequences of our actions.
- Identify the impact of interventions on community dynamics.
- Promote conflict sensitivity and inclusivity.
- Strengthen community resilience and peace.
- Guide staff, volunteers, partners, and donors to apply ethical and responsible practices.
- Foster an organizational culture of reflection, learning, and adaptation.

5. Areas of Application

MCSG applies Do No Harm principles across all operational areas, including:

- Program design and planning
- Implementation and delivery of services
- Human resource management
- Partnership and collaboration
- Monitoring, evaluation, and learning

All interventions are subjected to conflict-sensitivity analysis before launch.

5.1 Dividers and Sources of Tension

Common sources of tension include:

- Unequal access to resources
- Ethnic or religious divisions
- Political affiliations or historical grievances
- Gender-based discrimination
- Community mistrust or unresolved trauma

These factors must be identified and mitigated during project planning.

5.2 Connectors and Capacities for Peace

MCSG recognizes and strengthens connectors such as:

- Shared values and traditions
- Interfaith dialogue and community cooperation
- Local leadership and traditional structures
- Joint community projects or events

Programs are designed to amplify these positive relationships.

5.3 Programmatic Impact Analysis

We assess:

- Who benefits from the program?
- Who is excluded or marginalized?
- How are resources perceived?
- Are staff and beneficiaries diverse and representative?

These questions guide implementation choices to prevent harm.

5.4 Program Redesign for Peace

Where necessary, MCSG will:

- Modify targeting criteria
- Adjust distribution mechanisms
- Reassign staff or reallocate resources
- Conduct conflict-sensitivity workshops

These actions help reduce risks and enhance program relevance.

6. Stakeholder Responsibilities

6.1 Contracted Partners and Vendors

- Adhere to MCSG's ethical and conflict-sensitive standards
- Sign agreements incorporating Do No Harm principles
- Share and promote complaint mechanisms
- Participate in regular program reflection meetings

6.2 Employees and Volunteers

- Receive training on the Do No Harm policy
- Sign and abide by MCSG's Code of Conduct
- Report concerns related to risks or unethical practices
- Engage with communities respectfully and impartially

6.3 Donors and Members

- Support flexibility in project implementation to accommodate conflict-sensitive adaptations
- Receive orientation on Do No Harm commitments
- Promote ethical fundraising and communications

6.4 Community Members

- Participate in program design and feedback sessions
- Use available complaints mechanisms to raise concerns
- Collaborate through local peace committees and PTAs

7. Complaints and Feedback Mechanism

MCSG provides confidential and accessible complaints mechanisms including:

- Anonymous suggestion boxes
- Hotline and SMS services
- Community complaint focal points
- In-person reporting to designated staff

All complaints are logged, reviewed, and addressed within a 30-day window. Urgent issues, including sexual exploitation or abuse, are fast-tracked.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Executive Management:** Policy oversight and resource allocation
- **Field Coordinators:** Conduct conflict analyses and training
- **Community Outreach Staff:** Ensure local engagement and inclusivity
- **Monitoring & Evaluation:** Track impact and feedback
- **HR Department:** Ensure training and conduct enforcement

9. Support for Victims and Survivors

MCSG offers:

- Access to medical and psychological services
- Safe spaces and referrals to protection agencies
- Legal and advocacy support where appropriate
- Respect for survivor confidentiality and agency

10. Policy Review and Revision

This policy will be reviewed every three (3) years or as needed based on:

- Field insights and evaluations
- Complaints and feedback
- Emerging risks and contextual changes
- Legislative or donor requirements

11. Contact Information

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12. Final Commitment

MCSG, its Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, and partners affirm their full commitment to the principles outlined in this policy. We pledge to continually assess our programs, respond to risks, and ensure our work contributes to safety, peace, and dignity.

Appendices

A. Glossary of Key Terms

- **Do No Harm:** A principle guiding ethical, conflict-sensitive interventions.
- **Dividers:** Factors increasing tension or conflict.
- **Connectors:** Elements uniting or harmonizing groups.
- **Conflict Sensitivity:** Understanding the context of conflict and adapting interventions accordingly.

B. Reporting Templates and Forms

- Incident Report Template
- Community Feedback Log
- Staff Misconduct Report

C. Relevant Laws and International Guidelines

- Ghana Data Protection Act
- UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights
- Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS)
- CDA Collaborative Learning Projects' Do No Harm Framework