

## **DOLEN FFERMIO (FARMING LINK) SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

### **Introduction**

Dolen Ffermio is based within a small farming community in Montgomeryshire and North Shropshire and works closely with and in support of our partners in remote, rural areas of Eastern Uganda. We formed links with them from 1991 and we became a registered charity in 2008.

Dolen Ffermio recognises the importance of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults both in Wales and Uganda. Dolen Ffermio has a firm commitment to keep people and children safe whom we have contact with and help to support. We are aware that providing support to adults and children in Uganda could make them vulnerable to exploitation. Our primary aim in our Constitution is the relief of poverty and improving the quality of life of our beneficiaries and we would not do anything which would bring harm to the people and children we are trying to help.

In Wales Dolen Ffermio is made up of unpaid volunteers. Our role is to raise funds for our Ugandan projects and raise awareness in the local community of world food and farming issues. In this process, we are sometimes invited to deliver talks in schools but these take place only in the presence of teachers, with very limited interaction with individual children. One trustee interacts with individual children occasionally as part of her Photodiary project but this is always under the supervision of teachers and she was DBS checked in 2016. We hold a sixth form conference every two years in Llanfyllin High School to which we invite local, national and sometimes international speakers. This only takes place in the presence of teachers and there is no interaction with individual children. .

Dolen Ffermio has two partner groups in Uganda – FARLU (Farmers Link Uganda) and DFEFHO (Dolen Ffermio Environmental Farming and Health Organisation). They were formed by our partners themselves many years ago in order to support marginalised groups in their communities whose families live in poverty. Dolen Ffermio supports our partners with grants, advice and practical help on visits in close consultation and collaboration with them and their communities.

FARLU is the only partner group which works closely with vulnerable children and the families who care for them through the Ngora Orphans and Vulnerable Children (NOVC) project which was set up in 2012 to provide support through school resources, livestock and skills training. Our partners in FARLU have a comprehensive Safeguarding policy in place, drawn up under Ugandan Government guidelines. We have known our main partner, Moses Ekoi, since 1998. Moses has overall responsibility for a number of FARLU projects, including the NOVC project. He is a well known and highly respected elder in his community. His daughter helps on the project, along with 6 committee members, all of whom are well known and respected. They were selected by Moses in 2012 when the project started and are carrying out their duties exceptionally well.

There are no children involved in the DFEFHO project, which is a demonstration and training resource for good methods of agro-forestry and livestock breeding in the farming community by local adult farmers.

### **Policy and Procedures**

In Wales if the situation described in the introduction changes in the future which means that someone else interacts with children we will ensure that they will be DBS checked

In Uganda FARLU's policy of choosing beneficiaries is on the basis of the greatest need within the community. We will make sure that it is only on this basis and that they are never put at risk of exploitation because they have been chosen or in order to be chosen. We will do this through twice yearly visits (usually of 3 weeks or more) by our chair and other visits by our Phortodiary project trustee, when they will monitor this in person with our partners. Safeguarding training takes place each year with the new intake of children and carer families, often by the District Health Officer. We receive a report on this after it has taken place. We will ensure that this continues and is sufficiently robust.

The children's health and well being are officially monitored and entered on to their record once a month by the committee. They know the members of their community well and see them informally on a regular basis. We will ensure that procedures are in place so that children feel able to report to them any abuse or exploitation from whichever source, be it their carer family, school or anyone working on the project. These reports will be taken very seriously and given to Moses who will take appropriate action. They will be sent on to us in Wales, together with a report of the action taken. We will ensure that the action taken has been appropriate and sufficient and, if necessary, we will take steps to discipline anyone who has been found to have committed an offence. The committee members have run the project since 2012, they had significant training at the start and ongoing training since. We will ensure that safeguarding is a regular part of their training.

Our chair was CRB checked in 2007. She has no contact with individual children but meets them en masse at gatherings and she has discussions with Moses and his team during each visit. These gatherings are always attended by local government officials and local dignitaries. Our Photodiary project trustee does have interaction with some children and we will put in place a mechanism whereby she can talk to children, the committee and local government officials about safeguarding issues including how we can work with local government officials to ensure the safety of children on the project.

Moses Ekoi sends us a very comprehensive report every year and we will ensure that he includes a section on the safeguarding measures in place and any issues that have arisen, in addition to the reporting of individual instances as they arise.

### **Recruitment of Volunteers**

In Wales we are all volunteers. If any volunteers are asked to work with children or vulnerable adults here or in Uganda in the future, we will ensure that they are checked through the Disclosure and Barring Service, we will take up references and put in place training and induction on safeguarding.

### **Visiting Groups**

Most years there is a small group of people who simply wish to visit Uganda to see Dolen Ffermio's projects and experience the country. They are often not volunteers but simply members of our Welsh community. In this case, they would be organized and supervised by our Ugandan partners and/or by one of the two trustees who will lead the group. If anyone else volunteers to lead the group, we will ensure that they are checked through DBS and we will take up references. We will provide information to all visitors to Uganda on what to expect, including an appropriate code of conduct and safeguarding issues.

### **Treatment of Volunteers**

We will put measures in place to make sure that volunteers are treated fairly and are not subjected to any maltreatment. We will also ensure that volunteers know where to report any complaint they have and we will take appropriate action. We will provide an induction programme and suitable training, which will include the importance of safeguarding.

### **Code of Conduct**

We will draw up a Code of Conduct for trustees and volunteers which sets out Dolen Ffermio's culture, aims and standards of behaviour. We will also draw up a Code of Conduct for our partners in Uganda, taking into account their culture and practices and the existing Safeguarding policy operated by FARLU.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the trustees and placed on our website for public consumption in Wales. In Uganda we will amend our current Memoranda of Understanding to include the policy and procedures on safeguarding outlined above.