

VENRO E-Learning Video: Introduction to international safeguarding standards

Assignment 3: Case Studies

Case Study 1

You are a project officer for a youth-focussed project. You hear a rumour about a new finance officer who started his job 2 weeks ago. Apparently, he was fired from his last job for inappropriate behaviour with some young beneficiaries.

1. Are you concerned?
2. What harm has occurred and may still occur?
3. What could have prevented this officer from being hired in your project in the first place?
4. What next steps would you take?

Suggestion response to Case Study 1:

1. You would be concerned since your organisation works because this Finance Officer could have contact with the young group of people who access and benefit from your youth project. Although you have been informed how old this group of people are – they may be as young as 14 or 15 years old. Also, they may be a mixed group of boys and girls. Finally, you would also be concerned about any contact with young members of staff as well. Even though this matter looks like just a rumour, safeguarding must be given high importance to keep all people safe.
2. You don't have any details of what this previous "inappropriate behaviour" is however the signs look like it could be physical and/or sexual abuse, exploitation or harassment of children and/or young people.
3. Your project and/or organisation should have undertaken a robust recruitment check prior to hiring this Finance Officer which should include a criminal records check, reference checks from at least 2 previous employers who should be asked if they have any concerns regarding the officer's behaviour and/or reasons for them leaving, also undertaking a check with the [Misconduct Disclosure Scheme](#) if your organisation is a member.
4. I would report my concerns to the Safeguarding Lead of my organisation so that next steps could be taken to investigate the matter. I would want to ensure that the report is kept confidential.

Case Study 2

You work for a local organisation that supports vulnerable communities suffering from the impact and effects of HIV and AIDs. The INGO that financially supports your organisation asks you to accompany their research consultant to visit your programmes. During the visit she takes photos on her smart phone of vulnerable beneficiaries, naming them and uploads them on her social media pages.

1. Are you concerned? What and who are you concerned about?
2. What harm do you think may have occurred?
3. What could have prevented this researcher from acting in this way?
4. What next steps would you take?

Suggestion response to Case Study 2:

1. Yes, I would be concerned because this research assistant did not obtain informed consent from these vulnerable communities prior to taking photos and personal information publishing them on the internet where anyone in the world to access. There is a lot of stigma and shame associated with being HIV+ and therefore this information must be dealt with sensitively and confidentially.
2. There has been a breach of confidentiality and privacy of vulnerable individuals. This could have the emotional and economic impact on them, including ostracization from their communities.
3. At the time of recruiting the research consultant, the INGO donor organisation should have briefed her on their Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct which includes the ethics and integrity on how to carry out research including keeping the beneficiaries informed on why photos and details will be taken, where it will be published and how such information can be anonymised to protect the identity and safeguard the dignity of the beneficiary. I should also have briefed the consultant of my organisational policies and procedures to prevent harm to the beneficiary community prior to the visit.
4. I would report to the safeguarding officer of my organisation who will inform the safeguarding officer of the INGO who would more than likely immediately ask the consultant to remove her social media postings and possible further action. Also, to address any negative consequences on the vulnerable communities based on her actions are addressed quickly and as confidentiality. The INGO may also have to pay the beneficiaries some compensation if they are fired from their jobs or their children are asked to leave school.