



Safeguarding Policy

Updated December 2025

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1. About This Policy

Zaluso Arts is firmly committed to safeguarding the well-being, dignity, and rights of all individuals participating in its activities. This policy outlines the measures, responsibilities, procedures, and behaviours expected to maintain an environment free from harm, abuse, exploitation, or neglect.

Safeguarding at Zaluso is not optional – it is a mandatory organisational standard upheld across all programs, staff levels, and partnerships.

2. Definitions

Safeguarding

Actions, policies, and procedures that protect children, young people, and adults at risk from abuse, harm, exploitation, or neglect.

Child

Any person under the age of 18, in line with the Malawi Child Care, Protection and Justice Act.

Vulnerable Adult

An adult who may be unable to protect themselves from harm due to age, disability, illness, or social circumstances.

Abuse

Includes physical, emotional, sexual abuse, neglect, exploitation, bullying, online/digital abuse, and all forms of gender-based or power-based harm.

Positions of Trust

Any individual in a role of power, authority, influence, or responsibility over beneficiaries or colleagues.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees (full-time, part-time, casual)
- Volunteers
- Contractors and consultants
- Board members
- Partners, collaborators, and anyone acting on behalf of Zaluso Arts

Compliance with this policy is mandatory.

4. Zaluso's Commitment to Safeguarding

Zaluso Arts commits to:

- Zero tolerance for abuse, harm, or exploitation
- Creating safe, inclusive spaces
- Ensuring all individuals feel protected and respected
- Prioritising survivor-centred responses
- Transparent but confidential reporting and investigation
- Compliance with Malawi laws and donor safeguarding standards

5. When This Policy Applies

This policy applies:

- During all Zaluso activities, events, workshops, and meetings
- During travel or fieldwork associated with Zaluso

- Online and digital interactions linked to Zaluso activities
- In any conduct that may affect the safety of participants or Zaluso's reputation

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding Officer

- Receive and record safeguarding reports
- Conduct preliminary assessments
- Assign Investigation Leads
- Ensure survivor support
- Maintain secure records
- Report serious matters to authorities

Alternate Safeguarding Contact

Handles cases when the Safeguarding Officer is unavailable or implicated.

Investigation Lead

- Conduct full investigations
 - Interview all parties
 - Document findings
 - Submit written reports
- May be internal or external depending on complexity.

Managers & Supervisors

- Reinforce policy compliance
- Ensure staff and volunteers understand safeguarding obligations
- Support investigations where appropriate

Board Safeguarding Focal Person

- Provide oversight
- Assign external investigators when cases involve leadership or conflict of interest
- Review final investigation reports

All Staff, Volunteers, and Associates



- Prevent harm
- Report concerns immediately
- Act in line with the Code of Conduct
- Participate in mandatory training

7. Safer Recruitment

To prevent harm, Zaluso embeds safeguarding into recruitment through:

- Reference checks
- Requesting declarations of past misconduct
- Verification of identity and qualifications
- Safeguarding induction during onboarding
- Probation period assessment of conduct

8. Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Zaluso encourages a culture of speaking up. Reports may be made by staff, beneficiaries, parents, or external parties.

Reporting Channels

- **Safeguarding Officer:**
 - Esther Mazengera
Phone: +265 999 59 46 13
Email: esther@zalusoarts.org
- **Alternate Contact:**
 - *Email:* safeguarding@zalusoarts.org
- **Anonymous Option:**
 - Physical drop-box at Zaluso offices

Reports can be made verbally or in writing.

No one will face retaliation for reporting in good faith.

9. Investigation Procedures

Zaluso follows a structured, time-bound approach to managing safeguarding concerns.

1. Receipt & Acknowledgment (Within 24 hours)

The Safeguarding Officer acknowledges the report and performs an immediate safety check.

2. Immediate Safety Measures (Same Day)

If there is ongoing risk, Zaluso may:

- Remove the alleged perpetrator from duty
- Contact guardians or caregivers
- Report promptly to police or Social Welfare
- Ensure medical or psychological support if required

3. Preliminary Assessment (Within 48 hours)

Assesses:

- Severity of the concern
- Whether the case requires internal investigation, external referral, or both
- Any conflicts of interest

4. Appointment of Investigation Lead

The Safeguarding Officer assigns an internal or external investigator.

If senior leadership is implicated, the Board Safeguarding Focal Person assigns the investigator.

5. Formal Investigation (10–14 working days)

The Investigation Lead will:

- Interview complainants, respondents, and witnesses
- Review evidence or documentation
- Conduct a risk assessment
- Ensure confidentiality and neutrality

All interviews will be documented.

6. Findings and Recommendation

A written investigation report is submitted to the Executive Director or Board Safeguarding Focal Person.

7. Decision Making (Within 5 working days)

Appropriate actions may include:

- Disciplinary action
- Termination of contract
- Referral to authorities
- Protective or remedial measures

8. Survivor Support

Zaluso ensures:

- Confidential handling of cases
- Respectful, non-judgmental treatment
- Referral to psychosocial, medical, or legal support
- Safety planning where required

9. Documentation & Case Closure

- All documentation stored securely
- Case closed only after all actions are completed
- Learning points included for improvement

10. Confidentiality

- Information is shared strictly on a “need-to-know” basis
- Records stored securely with restricted access
- Limits to confidentiality apply when safety or legal obligations require reporting to authorities

11. External Partners and Contractors

Zaluso requires partners to:

- Demonstrate safeguarding policies or adopt Zaluso’s policy
- Agree to reporting and investigation collaboration
- Uphold expected conduct, including during joint programming

12. Alignment with Malawi Laws

This policy aligns with:



- Child Care, Protection and Justice Act (2010)
- Gender Equality Act (2013)
- Penal Code provisions on abuse and exploitation
- Trafficking in Persons Act
- Cybersecurity and Cybercrime Act

13. Training and Awareness

All staff, volunteers, and associates receive:

- Mandatory safeguarding induction
- Annual refresher training
- Additional training for those working directly with children

Zaluso also conducts awareness campaigns for participants and communities.

14. Continuous Improvement

Zaluso commits to:

- Regular policy reviews every two years
- Updating practices based on lessons learned
- Incorporating feedback from staff, beneficiaries, and partners

15. Policy Acceptance

All employees, volunteers, partners, and contractors must:

- Read and understand this policy
- Sign a declaration of acceptance
- Comply fully with safeguarding requirements

16. Policy Contact

For questions, clarifications, or to report concerns:

Safeguarding Officer

Esther Mazengera

Phone: +265 999 59 46 13

Email: esther@zalusoarts.org

Alternate Contact: safeguarding@zalusoarts.org

Signature.....
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Date.....
.....
Name.....
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PLEASE RETURN TO HUMAN RESOURCES.

