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Safe from Harm

Support document for Draft Resolution 2024-E

By the World Scout Committee

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Safe from Harm

This Conference Document provides an update on the implementation of Conference Resolution 2021-04. This content has also been approved by the World Scout Committee as an annex to the World Safe from Harm Policy. It aims to connect the most recent updates on Safe from Harm and the implementation of the Safe from Harm assessment mechanism with the current World Safe from Harm Policy.

Conference proposal:	Draft Resolution 2024-E
Related document:	Conference Document 4A
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The purpose of Draft Resolution 2024-E is to request that a full review of the World Safe from Harm Policy be done in the next triennium and an enforcement mechanism on the Safe from Harm membership requirements put in place.

Table of Contents

Introduction 2

Glossary of key terms 2

1. Preamble - why an annex? 3

1.1. Introduction 3

1.2. The Safe from Harm assessment mechanism - progress and achievements 3

1.3. Aligning the World Safe from Harm Policy with the new Safe from Harm assessment mechanism 3

2. The Safe from Harm assessment mechanism 3

2.1. The Safe from Harm assessment tool dimensions 3

Dimension 1: Child and Youth Safeguarding 4

Dimension 2: Safeguarding, Selection, Recruitment and Training of Adults in Scouting 4

Dimension 3: Report, Response, and Case Management 4

Dimension 4: Education 4

2.2. The Safe from Harm Major Non-Conformities 4

2.3. Learning more about the Safe from Harm assessment mechanism 5

3. The Safe from Harm policy's four areas of implementation 6

3.1. Youth Programme 6

3.2. Adults in Scouting 6

3.3. Structures 6

3.4. Scout Events 7

4. Future steps for the World Safe from Harm policy 7

4.1. Review of policy based on learnings 7

4.2. Develop enforcement mechanism 7

Languages

The official languages of WOSM are English and French. The World Scout Bureau will make all Conference Documents available in both languages. When possible, it endeavours to also make them available in Arabic and Spanish. In the event of a conflict arising out of the interpretation of this Conference Document or any other official document of WOSM, the English text will prevail.

Introduction

As a global youth movement, Scouting must protect children and young people, and do everything in its power to prevent abusive or harmful situations. Where harm occurs, Scouting must support victims and hold those responsible to account. The aim of the World Safe from Harm Policy adopted in 2017 is to protect all members from harm and abuse - children, young people and adults - recognising our specific responsibility towards children and young people.

In 2021, the World Scout Conference agreed to a Constitutional Amendment making safeguarding part of the membership requirement for every Member Organization. Through this strong commitment, Member Organizations have positioned Safe from Harm as a matter of the highest priority, recognising the need to improve in this area to ensure a safe environment for all, preserving the essence of Scouting education. Conference Resolution 2021-04 also supported the implementation of this membership requirement in the Constitution, through the development of an assessment mechanism to support Member Organizations in their journey.

As an outcome of this Conference Resolution, the World Scout Committee has approved the following text as an annex to the World Safe from Harm Policy. The annex connects the most recent updates on the Safe from Harm framework and the implementation of the Safe from Harm assessment mechanism with the current World Safe from Harm Policy, while allowing for a full review of the policy in the next triennium.

Glossary of key terms

- **Safe from Harm framework –** encompasses all policies, processes, and resources of World Scouting or a Member Organization designed to ensure the safety and well-being of young people and adults in Scouting.
- **Safe from Harm assessment mechanism –** refers to the full Safe from Harm assessment process, from having the assessment tool, to a Member Organization completing an assessment, to the Safe from Harm regional panel conducting a review of the assessment and providing feedback and guidance to the Member Organization.
- **Safe from Harm assessment tool –** the collection of criteria organised into dimensions, and the framework that produces scoring to assess how an organisation is meeting the Safe from Harm requirements.
- **Safe from Harm membership requirements –** the Safe from Harm related membership requirements in the WOSM Constitution (article V.5.e).
- **Safe from Harm enforcement mechanism –** a mechanism to enforce a Member Organization's compliance with the Safe from Harm related requirements in the WOSM Constitution (article V.5.e).

1. Preamble - why an annex?

1.1. Introduction

It is important to note that Safe from Harm efforts are not just aimed at addressing institutional risks. It is critical to see the Movement's safety, safeguarding and wellbeing efforts as foundations upon which the Mission of Scouting is realized. Children and young people globally are facing an unparalleled mental health crisis, are being exposed to evolving risks of a digital world and are subjected to increasing polarization and isolation. As the world's leading youth education movement, we must create safe spaces and provide children and young people with the tools and supports to live safe and fulfilled lives. We can equally provide them with the confidence and capability to speak out and intervene to ensure the safety and well-being of others.

Leading Safe from Harm in this Mission-centred manner will promote collective understanding and action. As a Movement, we will reduce the impacts of the transmission of trauma from one generation to another and move beyond a generation that *reports* harm to a generation that *acts* to prevent it.

1.2. The Safe from Harm assessment mechanism - progress and achievements

The Safe from Harm assessment tool was launched in its final version in May 2023. This assessment tool is composed of 23 criteria, including six Major Non-Conformities, divided into four dimensions following for format of World Scouting's Global Support Assessment Tool. This assessment tool is the result of the review of the previous Safe from Harm self-assessment tool and international standards on child protection and safeguarding.

To implement the assessment tool, an assessment mechanism was put in place and piloted with Member Organizations from the five WOSM Regions. This Safe from Harm assessment mechanism includes the process that Member Organizations go through from completing their assessment to having a regional panel review the assessment to provide feedback and guidance. Aspects of Safe from Harm were also incorporated into WOSM's annual reporting requirements of Member Organizations.

Support tools and resources have been developed to help with the implementation of the Safe from Harm assessment mechanism and support Member Organizations in meeting the Safe from Harm membership requirements. The Safe from Harm service was also reorganised to provide the resources and answer the needs of the new assessment mechanism.

1.3. Aligning the World Safe from Harm Policy with the new Safe from Harm assessment mechanism

As a result, new criteria in the Safe from Harm assessment tool have highlighted areas and elements missing in the World Safe from Harm Policy, creating a discrepancy between the Safe from Harm assessment mechanism and the policy. To achieve consistency, this annex was developed to align both documents and avoid confusion in implementing Safe from Harm in Scouting.

2. The Safe from Harm assessment mechanism

The Safe from Harm assessment is designed to evaluate and assess every Member Organization's safeguarding structures, policies and procedures against international standards tailored to a WOSM context. Member Organizations are required to meet the minimum standards outlined in the Safe from Harm assessment tool and requirements of annual reporting to WOSM.

It provides a platform for continuous improvement and a structure for regular strategic planning regarding the protection of members of Scouting. It also allows the Member Organization to identify their stage of implementation and areas for improvement in ensuring a safe and inclusive Scouting environment for all. This collective effort contributes to making Scouting safer, more adventurous and fun for everyone year upon year!

2.1. The Safe from Harm assessment tool dimensions

The Safe from Harm assessment tool consists of four dimensions which evaluates the performance of Member Organizations on Child and Youth Safeguarding; on Safeguarding, Selection, Recruitment and Training of Adults in Scouting; on Report, Response and Case management; and in Education.

Dimension 1: Child and Youth Safeguarding

Child and youth safeguarding describes the policies, systems and processes a Member Organization puts in place to achieve the core aim of Safe from Harm: protecting children and young people. This includes having in place a strong National Safe from Harm Policy, a Code of Conduct that covers the behaviour of adults towards young people, and a Safe from Harm team or coordinator. This dimension also encourages Member Organizations to reflect on how to communicate and ensure the implementation of safeguarding across the organisation.

Dimension 2: Safeguarding, Selection, Recruitment and Training of Adults in Scouting

Adults in Scouting have a central role in ensuring implementation of Safe from Harm at all levels. This responsibility must apply throughout the Adults in Scouting lifecycle, with a special focus on the support and management of adults. This includes their selection process, induction and training, and support and handling of any complaints raised by or against them. This dimension highlights how to prepare adults to be safe and also offer safe experiences for children, young people and other adults.

Dimension 3: Report, Response, and Case Management

Safeguarding reporting is an essential element of a strong safeguarding structure, including the procedures and mechanisms a Member Organization must have in place for members to share concerns relating to potentially harmful situations. Safeguarding reporting procedures link with risk management and events and must be implemented at all levels of a Member Organization, taking into account the victim protection and data privacy.

Dimension 4: Education

Safe from Harm in our educational methods helps prevent harm by empowering children and young people to learn about how to keep themselves safe. It includes access to child-friendly information so that children and young people can be empowered to protect themselves and have access to safe spaces, trained "listening ears", educational materials on Safe from Harm, and learning opportunities for them to take some responsibility for their own safety through the Youth Programme.

2.2. The Safe from Harm Major Non-Conformities

As in World Scouting's Global Support Assessment Tool, the Safe from Harm assessment tool outlines six criteria defined as Major Non-Conformities with at least one per dimension. These criteria are "considered key and serve as red flags that enable Member Organizations to spot priority areas in the assessment follow-up."

Dimension	Criteria which are major non-conformities
1. Child and Youth Safeguarding	1. The NSO has a written National Safe from Harm Policy covering child and youth safeguarding that meets the following criteria: • Addresses different types of harm and abuse, including emotional, physical, sexual, and neglect. • Considers diversity and inclusion issues and any special needs of children and young people in the NSO. • Is consistent with national legal frameworks. • Applies to all levels of the NSO (local, regional, and national). • Is approved by relevant governance bodies. • Aligns with the World Safe from Harm Policy. • Is reviewed regularly.
	4. The NSO has an effective team or coordinator responsible for overseeing all work on Safe from Harm. The process to contact this team or coordinator has been disseminated across the NSO.

2. Safeguarding, Recruitment, Selection and Training of Adults in Scouting	10. The NSO ensures all adults receive an elemental Safe from Harm training as part of their integration process, before they interact with children and young people. It must include the following elements: • Recognizing and identifying abuse • Responding and reporting a potentially harmful or abusive situation • Understanding the National Safe from Harm policy and Code of Conduct • Ensuring the safety and well-being of children and young people in Scouting.
	12. The NSO has a system in place to review the background of adults that includes the following elements: • Performs relevant background checks on all incoming adults, in accordance with national laws and regulations. • Prevents adults who don't comply with the prerequisites of the National Safe from Harm Policy to interact with children and young people. • - Regularly checks the compliance of adults actively involved in the Movement.
3. Repot, response and case management	13. The NSO has defined child, youth, and adult safeguarding reporting procedures that: • Have been approved by relevant governance bodies and are aligned with the World Safe from Harm Policy. • Are compliant with national legal frameworks in which the NSO operates. • Outline how to report and respond to a safeguarding concerns, breach of the code of conduct, or potential case of abuse. • Outlines the measures and actions to take following a safeguarding report. • Contain guidelines on how to collect and record information from all parties involved in a safeguarding concern or potential case of abuse. • Are reviewed regularly.
4. Education	20. The NSO provides educational materials on how to integrated safeguarding in the Youth Programme and raise awareness amongst children and young people based on the following elements: • Understanding what Safe from Harm is when they join Scouting • Their right to be safe and how to act if they experience harmful situations • Following the promise and law and acting against abuse or bullying. These materials are publicly available to all members and external stakeholders (parents, partners) and disseminated to all local Scout groups.

2.3. Learning more about the Safe from Harm assessment mechanism

The **Safe from Harm assessment tool** and **guidelines** provide more in-depth information about the Safe from Harm assessment mechanism.

3. The Safe from Harm policy's four areas of implementation

There are four essential implementation areas in the current World Safe from Harm Policy: Youth Programme, Adults in Scouting, Structures and Scout Events. To ensure alignment between the World Safe from Harm Policy and the Safe from Harm assessment mechanism, each implementation area was reinforced by additional elements that were lacking in the policy. These additions also include reference to other core WOSM documents that relate to these elements.

3.1. Youth Programme

To reinforce the Youth Programme, the following elements should be emphasised addition to those in page 14 of the World Safe from Harm Policy.

1. The Member Organization empowers young people to identify and act in harmful situations closely aligning with the World Scout Youth Involvement Policy. It ensures children and young people are not only being protected by adults but are active participants in their own safety.

2. Diversity and inclusion must be ensured by the Member Organization in Safe from Harm, taking account of members' special needs. As a consequence, making every young person, regardless of their background or ability, feel included, valued and protected.

3. The Member Organization should provide Safe from Harm publications (policy, code of conduct, safeguarding reporting procedures) that are easily understandable by children and young people. This approach enables Scouts to grasp important safety concepts and apply them effectively.

These elements align with dimensions 1 and 4 of the Safe from Harm assessment tool.

3.2. Adults in Scouting

To reinforce Adults in Scouting, the following elements should be emphasised addition to those in page 16 of the World Safe from Harm Policy.

1. The Member Organization provides protection and a safety framework to its adult members, ensuring their well-being throughout their Scouting experience and supporting them when facing challenging or harmful situations. Ensuring a safe environment for everyone in Scouting involves supporting and listening to adults, whether volunteers or staff, thus enabling them to perform their roles effectively.

2. The Member Organization implements the Adults in Scouting lifecycle to ensure that adults can identify, prevent, correct and address any undesirable behaviour that poses a risk to anyone else.
    a. During the induction process, a written commitment is made by each adult to follow the Safe from Harm policy, procedures and processes
    b. Clear exit processes and record keeping are in place to prevent recurrences of undesirable behaviours.

These elements align with dimension 2 of the Safe from Harm assessment tool.

3.3. Structures

To reinforce Structures, the following elements should be emphasised addition to those in page 18 of the World Safe from Harm Policy.

1. The Member Organization has a written document defining appropriate behaviours in Scouting between young people and adults and between adults.

2. Safety, safeguarding and wellbeing risks are assessed and mitigated as part of the Member Organization's risk management process, to protect children, young people, adults and the organisation.

3. A Safe from Harm implementation plan is developed and implemented regularly to address the Member Organization's needs and ensure continuous improvement in this area.

These elements align with dimensions 1, 2 and 4 of the Safe from Harm assessment tool.

3.4. Scout Events

To reinforce Scout Events, the following elements should be emphasised addition to those in page 20 of the World Safe from Harm Policy.

1. The Safe from Harm plan tailored for each in-person, hybrid or online event includes structures, process and procedures to prevent and react to any harmful situation and ensure the wellbeing of participants.

2. Safe spaces are developed, identified, promoted and available to all participants with trained adults available to support as needed.

3. Organising teams can refer to the Safe from Harm Guideline for World and Regional Scout Events to ensure all requirements are met in preparing and delivering a safe Scouting event.

This element aligns with all dimensions of the Safe from Harm assessment tool.

4. Future steps for the World Safe from Harm policy

This annex highlights the need to move further in the alignment of the World Safe from Harm Policy with the Safe from Harm framework in WOSM.

4.1. Review of policy based on learnings

Based on the initial reviews initiated by the Safe from Harm team during the 2021-2024 Triennium, the World Safe from Harm Policy will need to go through a thorough review in the 2024-2027 Triennium. This review should be based on the recommendations above and learnings that the further implementation of the Safe from Harm assessment mechanism will bring during the next triennium.

4.2. Develop enforcement mechanism

To ensure completion of the Safe from Harm assessment mechanism, the review of the policy should be paired with the development of the enforcement mechanism to comply with the Safe from Harm membership requirements in the WOSM Constitution. This enforcement mechanism will ensure implementation of Constitution Article V.5.e, voted by the World Scout Conference in 2021.