

## **EVC Uganda Fundraising - Vulnerable People Policy**

### **Policy Statement**

Fundraising activities, public support and public trust are all essential to EVC's ability to achieve its overall objective of preventing or relieving poverty in Uganda.

We believe that giving to your favourite causes should be a positive experience for all, whether an existing donor or potential new supporter. Everyone should have the opportunity to donate if they are able to, but EVC Uganda recognises that it is inevitable that some of the many people that we engage with through our fundraising activities will not always have the capacity, at the point of the interaction, to fully understand the nature of the donation they are being asked to give to EVC Uganda, or the consequences of making that donation.

EVC Uganda also understands that people in vulnerable circumstances may need further support before making a decision about whether to make a donation.

EVC Uganda recognises that it has an obligation to protect those in vulnerable circumstances. Whenever we suspect that someone we engage with is lacking capacity or is in vulnerable circumstances, we will take steps to terminate the contact in a way which seeks to protect that person while protecting their dignity and having due regard for any desire they have expressed to support EVC Uganda.

In particular, we recognise that some fundraising activity (such as telephone fundraising or door to door fundraising) carries higher risks in balancing the right to give and the need to protect. In these circumstances, whenever a fundraiser suspects that a person may be vulnerable, our approach is to immediately end the engagement. This should always be done politely, and without making a request for a donation or any direct enquiries about the individual's capacity to make a decision or the existence of vulnerable circumstances. This approach applies in all fundraising areas, whether delivered by our direct employees and volunteers or through a third party or agency. EVC Uganda will provide alternative options for the individual to engage with us once the conversation has ended, thereby upholding the right that everybody has to donate if they wish to and are able to do so.

### **Sector Guidance**

The Institute of Fundraising (IoF) Code of Fundraising Practice states that :

- Fundraisers must take all reasonable steps to treat a donor fairly, enabling them to make an informed decision about any donation. This must include taking into account the needs of any potential donor who may be in a vulnerable circumstance or require additional care and support to make an informed decision.
- Fundraisers must not exploit the credulity, lack of knowledge, apparent need for care and support or vulnerable circumstance of any donor at any point in time.

EVC Uganda recognises that it may be difficult in some situations for fundraisers to make a clear-cut decision as to whether or not someone is in a vulnerable circumstance or lacks capacity. The person is likely to be a stranger to the fundraiser; the interaction can

be short-lived and may not be in person. Our approach is always to err on the side of caution.

Our approach has been informed by guidance from the Institute of Fundraising (IoF), in particular their document :

- 'Treating Donors Fairly' - Guidance for fundraisers responding to the needs of people in vulnerable circumstances and helping donors make informed decisions. Click here for more **information**.

## **Definitions**

Vulnerable Supporter - an individual that finds it difficult to immediately make an informed decision about the choices offered to them. A vulnerable supporter may experience all or none of the following :

- Physical and mental medical conditions
- Disability
- Learning difficulties
- Times of stress or anxiety (eg bereavement, redundancy)
- Financial vulnerability (where a gift from a donor may impact on their ability to sufficiently care for themselves or leave them in financial hardship)
- English not being the donor's first language
- Under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

## **What the Policy Involves**

EVC Uganda is compassionate towards its supporters and will never exploit vulnerability. We will always do everything we can to assist supporters to make informed decisions about the support they choose to give to EVC Uganda.

We fully comply with the Fundraising Regulator's Code of Fundraising Practice.

When a donation from a vulnerable supporter is received the following process will be put in place and the results formally signed off by the Marketing and Fundraising Committee :

- Identify whether the individual has donated to us before or if there is a prior relationship
- Consider whether the donor was given any additional support (eg from family or friends) to help them make an informed decision
- Implement a two week cooling off period, to give the donor time to change his/her mind
- Attempt to contact the donor to check that the donation and amount was intended

- Make a judgement on whether you think that the person is able to make an informed decision - and if not, then do not take the donation.

EVC Uganda does not accept donations where it has reason to believe that a supporter may be experiencing vulnerable circumstances and accepting the donation would be ethically wrong and/or harmful to the donor.

Should a situation arise where EVC Uganda becomes aware that it has unknowingly accepted donations from an individual during a time that he or she was experiencing vulnerable circumstances, it will endeavour to return all donations accepted during this period.

Should EVC Uganda receive information regarding a supporter's vulnerability from a third party, it will not act on any request to alter a supporter's preferences unless the third party can provide evidence that he or she has authority to act on behalf of the supporter.

EVC Uganda recognises that it may sometimes be difficult for fundraisers to assess the vulnerability of a supporter. In cases where a fundraiser is unsure, they must consult with the Chair of the Marketing and Fundraising Committee for a second opinion and approval to accept any donation.

### **Large Personal Donations**

With particular regard to financial vulnerability, the procedures outlined above will be automatically triggered where the donation exceeds £500 per annum for a multi-year donation or £1,000 for a one-off donation.

Approved by the EVC Uganda Board of Trustees on 3 February 2024

Ted Fawcett, Chairman, 3 February 2024