Creating a safer social sector: what has been done and what is still to do?

On June 11 2019 the Charity Commission released its [inquiry report on Oxfam GB](#) following reports last year that some domestic and international charities had caused harm to those they work with and those they support. Page 33 of the summary report (or 134 of the full report) details the wider lessons for the sector.

This briefing outlines the cross-sector activity which has been taking place since the initial reports about Oxfam and other charities in February 2018. It will be updated as new work is launched.

Charity Commission

Activity	Lead organisation	Completion date and link
Revised safeguarding guidance	Charity Commission	Revised guidance published October 2018 [Safeguarding and Protecting People for Charities and Trustees](#)
Pilot whistle-blowing hotline	Charity Commission (helpline run by [Protect](#))	[Hotline launched 3 June 2019](#) and will be evaluated on an ongoing basis

Domestic safeguarding programme

Activity	Lead organisation	Completion date and link
Report on 'values-based leadership'	ACEVO	Released July 2018 [Leading with values: creating a safe organisational culture](#)
Charity Ethical Principles	NCVO	Released January 2019 [Charity Ethical Principles](#)

Research report on bullying in the charity workplace	ACEVO	Released June 2019 In Plain Sight: workplace bullying in charities
Safeguarding resources and training	Funded by National Lottery Community Fund, lead by NCVO	The Safer Social Sector Partnership was announced in April 2019. Phase 1 due for completion Autumn 2019

International safeguarding programme

Bond, the membership body for international civil society organisations, has been coordinating the international response.

In May 2019 Frances Longley, CEO of Amref and co-chair of the Bond safeguarding working group on leadership and organisational culture, provided an update on the work to the International Development Committee.

Activity	Lead organisation	Completion date and link
Improve feedback mechanisms	Bond Feedback and Accountability Learning Group	Completed September 2018 Eight principles for building trust through feedback
Updating the Bond charter with new safeguarding principle	Bond	Completed November 2018
Produce new governance guidance on safeguarding	Bond	Released May 2019 Good governance for safeguarding: A guide for NGO boards

What's coming up?

- Bond's leadership and culture group is working on a document that will help leaders identify indicators of an effective safeguarding culture and a tool to help them develop a positive safeguarding culture in their own organisations
- Both groups are looking at producing guidance on providing references
- Bond is working with DFID to create a reporting and complaints toolkit
- DCMS is working on a digital tool that will support charities in reporting, referring and handling safeguarding issues

DCMS and DFID are sharing information with each other to reduce examples of duplication in each work stream.

What is ACEVO going to do next?

We anticipate that our work in this area will be ongoing, at the very least covering the next few years. When we launched *In Plain Sight,* the research report on bullying in the charity workplace ACEVO carried out with Centre for Mental Health, we committed to certain next steps which can be found on our website.

Anyone interested in supporting or contributing to this work should contact Kristiana Wrixon.

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