BY LIFE CONNECTED



PEOPLE



NATURE



ANIMALS

CULTURE OF BY LIFE CONNECTED

HR Policy

Kellie Bocxe & Lars Vermeer

This document explains the goals, traditions, symbols and language which together form By Life Connected's culture. The highest priority of the organizations culture is the care of the people that work for By Life Connected. The organization aims to create a safe and supportive working environment which will enable its employees to communicate, understand each other and work together effectively.

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1. PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

Companies are our modern tribes. Like any tribe they have goals, traditions, symbols, and language which together form a culture. In many companies the culture promotes competition and individualism, which can make it hard for members to work together. At the NGO By Life Connected we want to stimulate a sense of safety.

When we feel safe people are more open to trust and cooperation. With trust and cooperation, our organization creates conditions under which employees can work together to achieve things none of them could have achieved alone.

In By Life Connected we want a culture that inspires its people to give all they have to give, simply because they love where they work. We want the tribe members of By Life Connected to return home from work inspired, safe, fulfilled, and grateful. We believe this is a natural human right to which we are all entitled and not a modern luxury that only a few lucky ones are able to find.

To realize this culture within By Life Connected, it is essential to understand the goals, traditions, symbols, and language of this organization. That is the purpose of this document.

Acknowledgement: many of the ideas in this document, such as the Circle of Safety and leaders who take care of their people ("leaders eat last"), are inspired by Simon Sinek's book Leaders Eat Last. We have adapted them to the work of By Life Connected in rural Zambia.

This is the public edition of our culture document. Detailed contract terms and internal procedures are set out in contracts and in an internal handbook for staff.

2. VISION, MISSION AND PURPOSE

It is By Life Connected's responsibility to create a culture where the employees of By Life Connected love their work, cooperate easily and come home inspired. It is the employees' responsibility to ensure that their passions align with By Life Connected's vision, mission and purpose.

Next to a culture they love, people need three things in their work to enjoy it:

- Authority: The ability to make decisions and have control over one's work. Employees need autonomy and trust to perform their tasks effectively.
- Belonging: Feeling connected to a team, valued by colleagues, and aligned with the culture of the organization. A sense of community enhances engagement and motivation.
- Competence: Opportunities to develop skills, grow professionally, and feel confident in one's abilities. Continuous learning and recognition play a big role.

Short or long term, the clearer we can see what we are setting out to achieve, the more likely we are to achieve this vision as a team. An example of a good vision is that of Microsoft. When Bill Gates started in his garage, he set the vision of putting a computer on the desk of every person in the world.

2.1 Vision, Mission and Purpose Statements

The vision of By Life Connected is a balanced co-existence between people and nature, that will empower and protect the current and future generations of people, livestock, wildlife, and nature in a sustainable way.

The mission of By Life Connected is to facilitate the trust, leadership and effective communication that are necessary for collaboration within and between groups to flourish. Collaboration is indispensable in solving sustainability challenges like development and nature conservation.

The purpose of By Life Connected is to be of service to the people or stakeholder groups we are facilitating collaboration for.

2.2 The Vision

Many Zambian rural communities near natural areas have boundaries where on one side it's green with forests and the occasional wildlife, and on the other the soil is bare due to villages and agricultural land. The people's connection with nature has diminished and, in most livelihoods, people are even working against nature.

In our vision things change. Let's take a walk through our vision of what Zambia can look like in the future: We are walking on the boundary between where animals (a protected area) and where people live. There is a clear distinction between the two areas, but not the way it used to be. The protected natural area is still green with forests, but the animal populations are skyrocketing with decreasing human pressure. However, the change in the economic area is far more distinct, once bare and dusty, it is now also green!

The change started with people taking control over their lives through collaboration. By organizing themselves in Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) core units (about the size of a seniority) they could collectively prioritize their needs and work on a solution for each of these needs themselves voluntarily. They proved that the power for real change in community development lies with the communities taking a leading role – mobilizing the whole community for change. The government, businesses, churches, NGO's, and other parties started to take a supporting role; providing funds, expertise, networks, markets, and all other things the communities did not have access to.

The power for change lies with the community

By participating in all the communal projects which the community themselves led, they quickly realized that working against nature didn't make sense. Why should we collectively destroy what also feeds us? The community learned that everything alive – People, Nature, Animals – is connected with each other. And that by working with nature and animals, people automatically benefit as well.

This led to a wide range of communally led, regenerative, interventions which drastically changed the landscape. The landscape was no longer only for humans or nature, but it changed to an environment in which humans and nature live in harmony. The biggest focus of the interventions was to meet the primary needs of the people. When, especially, food security is met, the pattern of unsustainable resource use can be interrupted. Based on the dominant livelihoods of the people in an area (agriculturalist, pastoralist, fishing or hunter-gathering) sustainable nature-based activities were realized that in combination lead to local regenerative food systems.

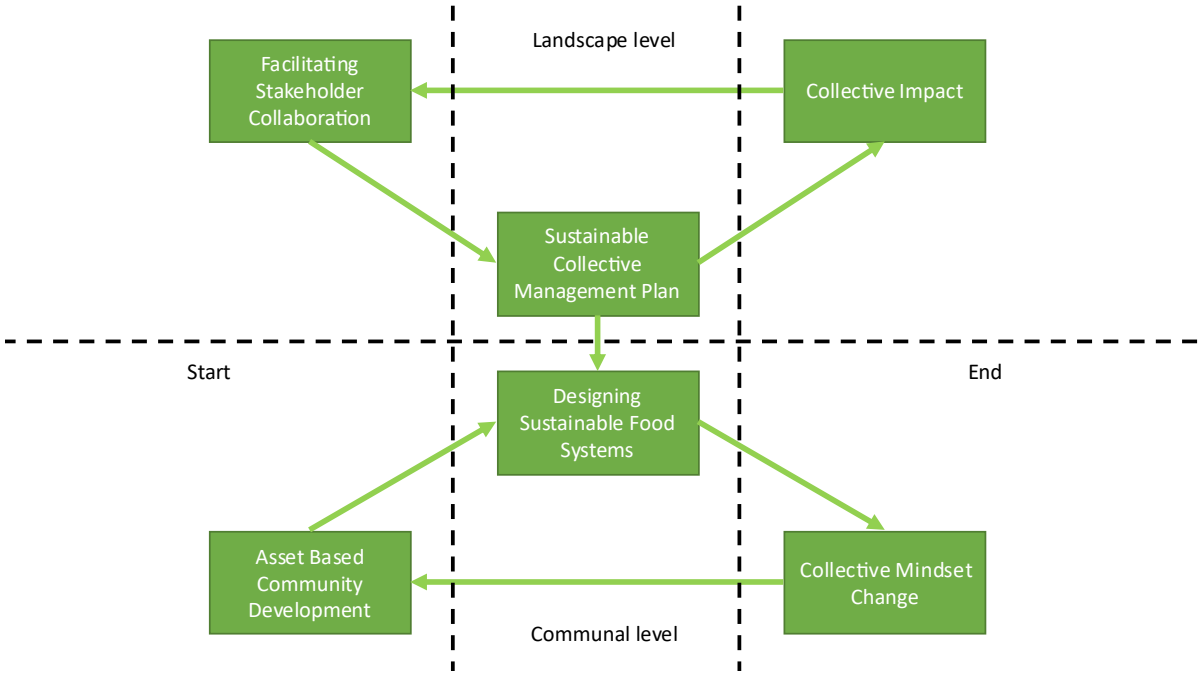
The people found out that when working together with nature, it leads to abundance. The surplus in products could be sold, creating communal wealth. As the community was proud and still holding on to the collaborative mindset of the ABCD procedure, it made sense for people to reinvest their surplus back in the community. People were suddenly contributing to building more and better schools, health clinics, recreation, public transport, etcetera. Even pieces of land were handed back to nature and nature in protected areas was left alone.

To complete the transition to a regenerative culture the people made sure that all their children were taught the importance of collaboration and our connection with nature. They

sang a song in school every day to thank nature for all that it is giving them. There is a special communal celebration organized once a year to commemorate our connection with nature.

The change in the seniorities where the ABCD procedure was implemented did not go unnoticed in neighboring areas, and the regenerative transition started spreading like ripples in water. With it the vision to heal the world was initiated.

2.3 The Mission



The biggest power of humanity is its potential to collaborate on a scale unknown to any other species on our planet. Collaboration, however, is not easy to achieve and maintain. The main mission of By Life Connected is to facilitate the trust, leadership and effective communication that are necessary for collaboration to flourish. With this, we hope to create regenerative systems on both the landscape and local levels (see framework below). This will ultimately lead to BLC's vision of a better future for both people and nature.

The only way to make an area sustainable, change people's mindsets and behavior, and truly develop a community, is when we change the system that they are part of. This is essential as it is the system and the challenges that come with it, that determine the behavior of the people. To accomplish this, By Life Connected works with communities on a communal level and with all stakeholder groups on a landscape level.

Communal level

By Life Connected facilitates collaboration within communities using the ABCD procedure. This goes as follows:

- Demarcate a deliberately small area the size of a seniority (around 40 km^2) and the community it encompasses.
- Establish clear communal leadership through the creation of an ABCD core group.
- Inform the ABCD core group about their area through baseline surveys every second year.
- Prioritize the needs of the community.
- Empower the community with the opportunity to lead their own development.
- Mobilize the community through building trust and effective communication structures.

Landscape level

Some challenges need a larger scale approach. Therefore, By Life Connected aims to also facilitate collaboration on a landscape level. The importance of this can be shown by taking wildlife conservation as an example. As wildlife requires vast land for seasonal migration to survive, only landscape level solutions can have a meaningful impact. Landscape level solutions however require landscape level collaboration; all stakeholder groups on a landscape level need to co-create a General Management Plan that can realize a new system. As on the communal level, this process needs to be facilitated.

2.4 The Purpose

To facilitate collaboration effectively By Life Connected needs to be truly of service to the people or stakeholder groups it is facilitating. This means that the primary motive for By Life Connected is to bring value or benefit to others, and not By Life Connected. The purpose of By Life Connected therefore has profound consequences for how the organization and its working family should behave both internally and externally. Internal values can be found in paragraph 9.1 - Internal Values

As an organization:

- By Life Connected needs to be and stay neutral. Only when neutral can By Life Connected truly be of service to people and stakeholder groups. When By Life Connected is somehow invested it can create a conflict of interest.

On the communal and landscape forefront:

- By Life Connected can only lead in realizing systemic change by asking the right questions! We cannot lead by forcing decisions on people or stakeholder groups we are working with. Even if we are frustrated, for whatever reason, we should never do that because the moment we do, By Life Connected takes back ownership over the programs.
- By Life Connected members should go out of their way in providing the needs to ones we are facilitating. This can be both material and emotional needs. What this

comes down to is the energy every By Life Connected member is putting forth; be proactive in asking questions, showing compassion, stimulating perseverance and being humble.

2.5 What teams need to flourish

A helpful way to order what teams need in order to flourish is a pyramid, inspired by the work of Patrick Lencioni (The Five Dysfunctions of a Team). Each level builds on the one below it. From the bottom up:

- Trust: team members trust each other and show their vulnerability.
- Healthy conflict: people dare to enter into open and honest disagreement about ideas.
- Commitment: people commit to decisions and actions, also when it was not their own idea.
- Responsibility: people take responsibility for their work and hold each other accountable.
- Shared results: the team focuses on shared results more than on individual ones.
- Vision and strategy: the team steers on a shared vision and strategy.
- Mission and resilience: the team works on its mission and keeps going through setbacks.

A weak team lacks trust, is afraid of conflict, avoids responsibility and pays little attention to shared results. A strong team has mutual trust, dares to enter into healthy conflict, takes responsibility and is focused on shared results.

3. BY LIFE CONNECTED – WORK CULTURE

By Life Connected strives to be an organization that prioritizes the care of human beings above everything else. This will not only create a pleasant, but also a productive work environment resulting in a win-win situation for both the organization and its members.

3.1 Wellbeing of the members

Research on workplace health, such as the Whitehall II study of British civil servants (Bosma et al., BMJ, 1997), shows that people with little control over their work have a higher risk of heart disease. A supportive and well-managed work environment is good for one's health. Those who feel they have more control, who feel empowered to make decisions instead of waiting for approval, suffer less stress. Those only doing as they are told, always forced to follow the rules, are the ones who suffer the most.

Take a few minutes and think about something that recently gave you stress. There is a good chance that the thing that gave you stress was something that felt like it was out of your control. Correct?

Our feelings of control, stress and our ability to perform at our best are all directly tied to how safe we feel in our organization. By prioritizing the care of human beings above everything else as an organization and making sure our members feel safe, we can directly and positively affect their health.

3.2 Performance of the organization

With increased health of the members of the organization, the performance of the organization naturally improves. Not only because they are sick less often, but also because they can take on more activities, perform better and collaborate more effectively.

There is however a deeper way in which the performance of the organization improves with feeling safe:

- We cannot tell members to trust the organization.
- We cannot force members to come up with big ideas.
- And we cannot expect members to cooperate effectively with everyone.

These are always results – the results of feeling safe and trusted among people with whom we work. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the organization to protect our people, and, in turn, our people will protect each other and advance the organization together.

3.3 Sharing an identity

Our goal is to make working for By Life Connected mean more than 'just a job'. For those who fit the By Life Connected culture, it will say something about what kind of people they are. It will also tell the outside world what they could expect from them, because they work or worked for By Life Connected. We strive for our members to take pride in being part of the organization and ultimately use the company's name as a very symbol of their own identity.

3.4 Family

To realize the above, we cannot see the members of our organization as just employees. We can only prioritize the care of human beings when we start seeing the role of leader not as being a boss, but like being a parent. And the organization is the family to join.

Like a parent, a leader of an organization is responsible for the precious lives of their members. Parents work to offer their children a good life and a good education and to teach them the lessons that will help them grow up to be happy, confident and able to use all the talents they were blessed with. This is what it means to be a leader. And we believe that this is the essence of what it means to build a strong organization.

At the same time, a good parent does not take over the responsibilities of their children, but raises them to take responsibility themselves. In the same way, people leaders at By Life Connected are role models who coach their colleagues towards ownership of their work, so

that responsibility sits with everyone and not only with the leaders or the founders. Everyone is a leader in their own role.

4. THE CIRCLE OF SAFETY

4.1 Introduction

Imagine a hungry lion prowling a field with four oxen. The lion tries to attack the oxen, but whenever he comes near, they turn their tails to one another and form a circle. Whichever way the lion approaches, he is met by horns and all the oxen remain safe. However, the oxen get into a fight and start to graze alone. This time the lion's attack is successful and one by one he makes an end of all four.

The ability of a group of people to do remarkable things depends on how well those people pull together as a team. That doesn't happen without the effort of each member. In the story above, the lion represents dangers from outside. These dangers can be rendered ineffective by pulling together. The dangers from within, however – leading to the demise of the oxen – need to be managed actively.

Intimidation, humiliation, isolation, feeling dumb, feeling useless and rejection are all stresses we want to actively avoid inside the organization. It is a goal of leadership in all levels of the organization to set a culture free of danger from each other. And the way to do that is by giving people a sense of belonging. By offering them a strong culture based on a clear set of human values and beliefs (see Chapter 9. Code of conduct). By giving employees power to make decisions. By offering trust and empathy. By creating a circle of safety.

When we are in the circle, it creates an environment for free exchange of information and effective communication, both top-down and bottom-up. This is fundamental to driving innovation, seizing opportunities, preventing problems from escalating and making organizations better equipped to defend themselves from outside challenges.

To maintain the circle of safety is a responsibility of everyone who belongs in the circle, not only the leaders. Anyone can act like a leader and work to uphold values (see paragraph 5.2 What makes a good leader?). Additionally, the members of the circle equally have the responsibility to express concern for the well-being of their leaders.

4.2 Positive reinforcement

For the most part, the incentive structures that are offered inside most organizations do not reward members for cooperating, sharing information or reaching across the company to offer or ask for help. There is little positive reinforcement when it comes to behaviors and actions critical to maintaining the circle of safety. In our organization we'd like to change that.

When recognising people, we only recognise a whole group and never an individual. Recognising a group encourages collaboration and friendship, while recognising individuals promotes competition, individualism and jealousy. By Life Connected does not pay individual

or group bonuses. Instead, leaders show their appreciation for good cooperation in other ways, for example by thanking teams openly, by sharing results and credit with the whole team, and by taking time together as a team when a milestone is reached.

5. LEVELS OF MANAGEMENT

5.1 Introduction

The responsibility of a leader is to provide cover from above for their people and to maintain the circle of safety. The most valuable thing we can do if we are to truly serve the members of the organization, is to know them personally. So, let's make sure all leaders of By Life Connected prioritize knowing their team.

It can happen that at a point in the future, the number of members becomes too big for a single leader to know everybody personally. So instead of talking to people personally, the leader starts to rely on numbers. As a result, the members become separated from the leader. The more separated and abstract people become, the more capable we are of doing them harm. So, **let's not be leaders of metrics, but leaders of people**. Leadership is about taking responsibility for lives and not numbers.

The earliest groups of humans lived in hunter gatherer tribes that maxed out between 100 and 150 people. This magical number is the number of close relationships we are naturally designed to manage. Any more than that starts to cause a breakdown of our social system, especially when effective hierarchy is not implemented to help manage the scale.

This means, for larger organizations, the only way to manage the scale and keep the circle of safety is to rely on hierarchies. That means empowering the levels of management. They can no longer be seen as managers who handle or control people. Instead, managers must become leaders. This means they must take responsibility for the care and protection of those under their charge, confident that their leaders will take care of them.

5.2 What makes a good leader?

Like being a parent, leadership is the choice to serve others. Not everyone in the hierarchy of By Life Connected can be a leader but note that **everyone can act like a leader**! The question "What makes a good leader?" is therefore relevant for everyone.

Leadership is about integrity, honesty, accountability, and empathy. All components of a relationship are built on **trust**. Integrity is when our words and deeds are consistent with our intentions. Integrity is not about being honest when we agree with each other; it is mostly about being honest when we disagree, or, even more important, when we make mistakes or missteps. **It is okay for any leader to make mistakes**. What we need more than being right, is people who can admit when they falter. We don't need people who try to hide or spin a story to protect their image. Any attempt at spinning a story is self-serving, and such a selfish motivation can do damage to our tribe. To be a true leader, bringing about deep trust and loyalty, starts with **always telling the truth**.

Empathy is a continuous service that we owe to everyone in the circle of safety if we want to call ourselves a leader. Leadership is not a license to do less; it is the responsibility to do more. The most exceptional organizations all have cultures in which leaders provide cover from above, and the people on the ground look out for each other. The way any organization can achieve this, is with empathy.

To further strengthen the bond of trust, leaders need to take responsibility and teach their people the rules, train them to gain competency and build their confidence. The best leaders share what they know, ask knowledgeable people for help performing their duties and make introductions to create new relationships within their networks. Poor leaders hoard these things. When a leader is done empowering their people, leadership must step back and trust that their people know what they are doing and will do what needs to be done.

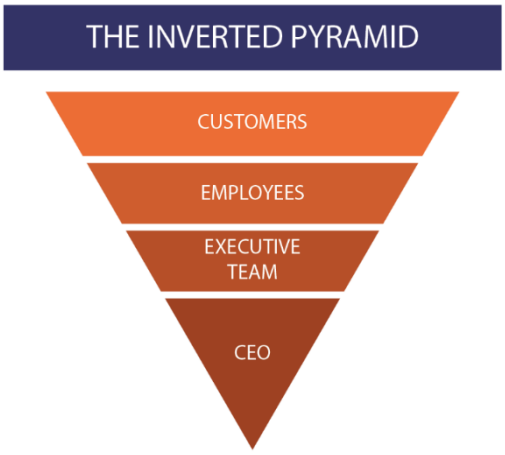
People leaders are role models and coaches. They do not solve everything themselves or take over responsibility. They ask questions, give feedback and help their colleagues to take ownership of their work and decisions, so that leaders and founders do not have to be involved in everything.

Sharing your professional competence with your people is not enough to be a good leader; good leaders must truly care about those entrusted to their care. To really show that leaders often give up something of their own for their people. Their time, their energy, their money, maybe even the food off their plate. When it matters, leaders choose to eat last.

Overall, it is the feeling of trust coming from anyone's leader that gives them the confidence to do what is right. So be there for your working family. And when in doubt about how to be the best leader possible in any situation, ask yourself the following question: How would I treat my children?

5.3 Hierarchy structure

The hierarchy in any organization can be depicted as a pyramid. Normally in organizations, bosses see themselves at the top of the pyramid, directing an increasing amount of people going down the pyramid. Such a top-down pyramid has a chain of command, division of labour, and communication that happens from the top to the bottom. At BLC we don't think such a structure works best for community development. The idea is that community-BLC employee interaction is ultimately what decides how effective BLC is in realizing community



development. Therefore, the members of BLC working with communities on the ground are the most important for impact, and not the bosses!

A viable alternative that incorporates this is the inverted pyramid. Here, the community and employees are at the top of the pyramid and Area Manager and Founders are at the bottom. Here, employees are part of the decision-making process and communication is two-way. In addition, the leaders of BLC play a facilitating role in which they guide employees to become the best version of themselves. Furthermore, they lead by asking the right questions!

6. PERSONAL GROWTH

6.1 Yearly Evaluation Exercise

Building a strong circle of safety, forming relationships based on trust, and collaborating effectively are not easy to realize. It will require effort and growth. Not everyone is as skilled in being a good leader. However, it is something anyone can learn. The best companies therefore have a robust curriculum to include human skills like effective confrontation, active listening, and communication skills. This curriculum takes the form of a yearly evaluation exercise.

Once a year, each person on a team is asked to write down their top three strengths or areas they believe they've most improved in, and their three biggest weaknesses or areas they feel they need the most growth. Everyone's answers are consolidated into one document and shared with every member of their team. Each person must first read out their weaknesses. Then anyone who wants can add to, or comment on that list. During this time, the person sharing their list may not speak. They are refrained from defending themselves or offering excuses. Their job is to listen. Immediately after, the person reads their strengths. And again, anyone else can add to, or comment on the list. Again, the person being reviewed may only listen. At most, we allow clarifying questions. Someone at the meeting needs to take responsibility to run the meeting to ensure that anything outside these parameters is quickly shut down.

Every quarter – or more often if necessary – in between these yearly evaluation meetings, smaller coaching pods meet for an hour to help each other build on what we have learned in the review session.

6.2 Education

In addition to learning from our peers, BLC's members can also improve their skills or learn new skills with external education or professional subscriptions. When the funds are available, and the opportunity arises, BLC would love to invest in their members. For that reason, we would like to ask every member to set up a list of skills and educational opportunities (including the cost, duration and location of the education) that can improve these skills. It is the responsibility of the leaders of BLC to stimulate the formation of this list and to keep it up to date.

7. PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT

7.1 Introduction

Since 2023, By Life Connected has offered permanent employment contracts. A permanent contract has no end date. It ends when the employee retires, or earlier when it is terminated in accordance with Zambian law. It is not a guarantee of a job for life: By Life Connected can only terminate a permanent contract for a valid reason, being the conduct or capacity of the employee or the operational requirements of By Life Connected (including redundancy when there is no work or money for a position), after giving the employee the opportunity to be heard and with the notice and payments required by law and by the contract. When the issue is conduct or performance, By Life Connected will first spend the time to help figure out what the problem is and help its people overcome it. Contracts signed earlier under the name permanent employment contract are permanent contracts and remain valid.

Positions that are funded for a specific project or period are offered a project-based contract. The contract names the project and the funding period and has a fixed end date. It ends on that date, or earlier when the funding of the project is withdrawn, reduced or not continued. In that case By Life Connected informs the employee as soon as it knows, first considers other options such as a position in another funded project or reduced hours, and gives the notice stated in the contract. A project-based contract does not create an expectation of renewal: a new contract is only made in writing and when funding is available. By Life Connected does not use a series of short contracts for work that is permanent in nature, as Zambian law does not allow this.

The purpose of permanent employment is that we are prioritizing care of human beings by creating a safe environment for our people to work in. Like raising children, our commitment to our members is long term. Ultimately, we want our members to become better people. Despite how much we may fight with our siblings, it is hard to get rid of family. The intention of this policy is to make it work.

What By Life Connected hopes to accomplish with this policy, is that our members start to communicate more openly. We hope that mistakes and problems are going to be pointed out more quickly, long before they escalate. We hope that information sharing and cooperation increases. We hope that team performance, and therefore the performance of the whole company, skyrockets. Not because the leaders are telling the members to do so, but because members feel secure in their jobs.

7.2 Hiring

Because permanent employees can stay with By Life Connected until they retire, By Life Connected will take more time in the hiring and probation period. We won't just consider

skills and experience, but also character evaluation. (Extra) Skills can be learned, while changing somebody's character is difficult. The first year, under a one-year contract that starts with a three-month probation period, serves as the trial period before permanent employment (see Chapter 10).

More about the procedure of hiring and on-boarding new members of our working family in Chapter 10 - Hiring and On-boarding.

7.3 Job termination

By Life Connected wants to make it work with every member, but termination is possible. Some actions of members cannot be accepted or are illegal. For these actions you will get one warning, after you have been heard, followed by an open and in-depth conversation with a manager or founder (I) to create an understanding of the reasons why, (II) how BLC can help making sure it never happens again and (III) subsequently make an agreement. For a repeat offense, the contract can be terminated. Any termination needs a valid reason, an opportunity to be heard and the notice required by law and by the contract. For more information on reasons for job termination see Chapter 9 - Code of conduct.Code of conduct

7.4 Retirement and long-term illness

A permanent contract ends when the employee retires. The retirement age and the retirement benefits follow Zambian law and the National Pension Scheme (NAPSA). When an employee is ill, sick pay follows the contract: full pay for the first three months and half pay for the next three months, on a doctor's certificate. When the employee has not recovered after six months, By Life Connected can, on the recommendation of a medical doctor, end the contract on medical grounds and pays the amount required by law. Until then the contract is not ended because of the illness. Zambian law prohibits discrimination because of disability, so before ending a contract on medical grounds By Life Connected considers whether adjusted work is possible.Code of conduct

8. TYPES OF CONTRACTS

8.1 Contract types

By Life Connected offers a one-year employment contract, a permanent employment contract, a piece-work contract, a volunteer contract and an internship contract. Positions funded for a specific project can be offered a project-based contract with a fixed end date that ends when the project or its funding ends. The rights and benefits that come with each type of contract are set out in the contract itself, in line with Zambian law.

8.2 Working conditions

Employees work a 40-hour week with the weekend free and have paid public holidays. They receive 24 days of annual leave, paid sick leave, compassionate leave, maternity and paternity leave, and contributions to the National Pension Scheme (NAPSA) and National Health Insurance (NHIMA), in line with Zambian law. All terms are set out in each person's contract.

8.3 Equal Employment

By Life Connected is an equal working opportunity employer and bases decisions on the amount of responsibility a worker holds within the organization. Employment decisions including hiring, termination, promotion, and wages and privileges will be made without regard to race, skin colour, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, or any other classification protected by law.

9. CODE OF CONDUCT

Our Employee Code of Conduct policy is an elaboration on the Circle of Safety policy described before and outlines By Life Connected's expectations regarding all workers' behaviour both internally (their working family and overall organization) and externally (especially the communities we work with and other partners).

9.1 Internal Values

In general treat others as you would treat your children. Similarly, treat others how you would like to be treated yourself. Internal values that lie at the core of these sentences are:

- Safety: An environment free from hurt, injury, danger, or risk.
- Care: The provision of what is needed for the well-being or protection of a person or thing.
- Trust: To rely upon or place confidence in someone or something.
- Cooperation: An act or instance of working or acting together for a common purpose or benefit.
- Leadership: Showing integrity, honesty, accountability, and empathy to people that share a social group.
    - Integrity: Integrity is when our words and deeds are consistent with our intentions.
    - Honesty: Always tell the truth.
    - Accountability: The obligation or willingness to accept responsibility for one's actions.
    - Empathy: The ability to understand and share the feelings of another.
- Friendship: A state of mutual trust and support.
- Effective communication: The process of exchanging ideas, thoughts, opinions, knowledge, and data so that the message is received and understood with clarity and purpose.
- Ownership: Taking responsibility for your own work and results, and making decisions within your role.
- Results: Doing what we agreed and delivering for the communities and partners we serve.

Love and power are both needed. Values such as care, trust and friendship create safety; ownership and results make sure that decisions are taken, work is delivered and problems are addressed.

9.2 External Values

Any worker related to By Life Connected is an agent of change for the betterment of people and nature. We do this in a bottom-up way by focussing on the following core values:

- Facilitation of collaboration: Making the process of people or organizations working together to achieve a shared goal easier.
- Citizenship: Serve and show responsibility to local communities.
- Perseverance: Sticking with something and not giving up, even if it is difficult.
- Courage: Being brave and doing what is right regardless of our fears, the difficulties, or the consequences.
- Compassion: Being kind and considerate and showing concern for the well-being of others.

9.3 Reasons for Job Termination

By Life Connected's employees and other workers are bound by their contract to follow our Employee Code of Conduct while performing their activities. By Life Connected wants to make it work with every worker, but termination is possible. Some actions of members can simply not be accepted or are illegal. For some actions you will get one warning first. This will be followed by an open and in-depth conversation with a manager or founder (I) to create an understanding of the reasons why, (II) how By Life Connected can help in making sure it never happens again and (III) subsequently make an agreement. For a repeat offense of BLC's policies, a member will get fired.

The following actions are part of this 'one-warning' policy:

- Drugs and alcohol
- Conflict of interest
- Discrimination
- Corruption
- Theft
- Harassment
- Intentional damaging of company property
- When members show no willingness to change

For more information see paragraph 9.4 Components of Code of Conduct.

Reasons for immediate dismissal (after the worker has been heard) are any form of violence:

- Physical violence: Physical violence occurs when someone uses a part of their body or an object to control a person's actions.
- Sexual violence: Sexual violence occurs when a person is forced to unwillingly take part in sexual activity.

- Psychological violence: Psychological violence occurs when someone uses threats and causes fear in an individual to gain control.
- Spiritual (or religious) violence: Spiritual (or religious) violence occurs when someone uses an individual's spiritual beliefs to manipulate, dominate or control.
- Cultural violence: Cultural violence occurs when someone uses an individual's cultural beliefs or practices to manipulate, dominate or control.
- Financial abuse: Financial abuse occurs when someone controls an individual's financial resources without the person's consent or misuses those resources.

9.4 Components of Code of Conduct

We outline the components of our Code of Conduct below:

Compliance with law

All workers must protect By Life Connected's legality. They should comply with all environmental, safety and fair dealing laws. We expect employees to be ethical and responsible when dealing with our company's finances, products, partnerships, and public image.

The Circle of Safety

All workers should do their best to commit and maintain the Circle of Safety.

Protection of Company Property

All workers should treat our company's property, whether material or intangible, with respect and care. This means they shouldn't misuse company equipment or use it frivolously.

Leadership

Anyone can and should act as a leader. See paragraph 5.2 What makes a good leader? for a detailed understanding.

Substance use

By Life Connected considers substance (drugs and alcohol) use, or when under the influence of it, during working hours very disrespectful, especially towards the employees working family and community members. Leaders should give the right example and substance use shows the opposite. Substance use is part of the one-warning policy.

Safeguarding

All workers must protect children, young people and adults at risk and follow Chapter 16 (Safeguarding).

Conflict of interest

A conflict of interest is a situation in which a person is able to derive personal benefit from actions or decisions made in their position as part of By Life Connected. This is prohibited and can, based on the severity, be part of the one-warning policy.

Discrimination

Discrimination means treating a person differently than others based on their identity. Someone's identity consists of many traits including:

- Race
- Colour
- Ancestry
- Religion
- Place of origin
- Ethnic origin
- Citizenship
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Age
- Marital status
- Family status
- Disability

Discrimination is part of the one-warning policy.

Corruption

We discourage employees from accepting gifts from clients or partners. We prohibit briberies for the benefit of any external or internal party. Corruption is part of the one-warning policy.

Theft

Theft is a crime and By Life Connected can report offenders to the police. Don't steal from By Life Connected, from workers of By Life Connected or any of By Life Connected's partners. Don't use By Life Connected's project funding for personal purposes. Theft is part of the one-warning policy.

Harassment

Harassment involves behaviours of one person that are disturbing, upsetting or threatening to others. For information see Chapter 13 - Harassment. Harassment is part of the one-warning policy.

Intentional damaging of By Life Connected's property

Intentional damaging of others property is a crime and By Life Connected can report offenders to the police. Property of By Life Connected are items that By Life Connected paid

for. Only after handover of projects to communities can it no longer be considered By Life Connected's property. Intentional damaging of By Life Connected's property is part of the one-warning policy.

No willingness to change

As described before, By Life Connected has the intention to make it work with any worker. However, when the worker has no willingness to change their behaviour after obtaining feedback from their leader, it is part of the one-warning policy.

Use of Violence

Whatever form of violence is not tolerated and leads to immediate dismissal and termination of the contract.

Mentoring

We encourage mentoring throughout our company.

Punctuality

We expect employees to be punctual when coming to and leaving from work.

Communication

All employees must be open for communication with their colleagues and managers.

Benefits

We expect all workers to not abuse their employment benefits. This can refer to time off, insurance, facilities, subscriptions, or other benefits By Life Connected offers.

Wellbeing of family

Next to the working family, each employee has responsibilities towards their own family, especially their children and other dependants. By Life Connected cares about the wellbeing of our members' families and wants every child to be taken care of. If a family member of an employee approaches By Life Connected because the employee is not supporting the family, a manager or founder will first talk with the employee in confidence to understand the situation and see how By Life Connected can help, for example by helping to find an arrangement for the family's support. By Life Connected does not share information about an employee's salary or finances with others without the employee's consent, but will comply with any legal order, such as a court maintenance order, that requires a deduction from the employee's salary for the support of their children.

By Life Connected's Policies

All employees should read and follow our company policies. If they have any questions, they should ask their managers or the founders of By Life Connected.

10. HIRING AND ON-BOARDING

With permanent employment, employees can stay with By Life Connected until they retire. As a result, it is important to hire the right people.

10.1 Solicitations

How do you know if someone is right for the job and sits well in the team without providing them with a working opportunity first? At By Life Connected we try to get around this by:

- Asking the right questions: Solicitation questions focus on character evaluation instead of skills and experience. The reason being that skills can be learned, while changing somebodies' character is difficult.
- Referrals from By Life Connected's employees: The most promising way to find out if somebody is right for the job and fits well in the team is when we ask By Life Connected's employees to actively put people they know who are right for the job, forward as solicitors. Referrals never replace a fair selection: every candidate is assessed against the same criteria, and anyone who refers a candidate, or has a family or close personal relationship with one, reports this (see paragraph 14.2 on conflicts of interest) and does not take part in the selection decision.
- References: References put forward by solicitors should be actively called and questioned.

10.2 On-boarding

When a solicitor is hired, they will first receive a 1-year contract with a 3-month probation period. As soon as possible the new employee should receive a job description, including goals and milestones. See Chapter 11 - Performance management for more information on this procedure. In their first week every new worker is briefed on Chapter 16 (Safeguarding) and signs the declaration in paragraph 16.9.

The probation period and the initial 1-year contract are measures to get to know the new employees better and know for sure that the employee fits the organization well. By Life Connected sets a maximum of one 1-year contract per employee. After the 1-year contract By Life Connected needs to choose between a permanent employment contract or not, meaning a termination of the working relationship between By Life Connected and the employee. For positions that depend on project funding, By Life Connected can offer a project-based contract instead (see Chapter 8).

11. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Performance management is the process of continuous feedback and communication between leaders and employees to ensure the achievement of goals of By Life Connected.

11.1 Planning

At the beginning of each year a job description is established which clearly describes the personal and team expectations of an employee. Expectations consist of goals and tasks. An example of a personal task is keeping track of leave days for personnel. An example of a team goal is to construct 5 check dams within the year as part of the larger and long-term ABCD project. To stimulate ownership, employees first write down their own proposal for their goals and tasks and then discuss it with their leader and the team. The leader can invite the employee to adjust the proposal where it does not fit the goals of the team or the organization. During this initial meeting, milestones are set by the team itself to define the route how the goals are going to be achieved.

Next to project planning to achieve the goals of the organization, leaders should also define Personal Development Journeys with the teams. This will strengthen the Circle of Safety. Find more information in Chapter 6 - Personal Growth.

The table below states what meetings should be held in which month.

Month	Activity?	When?
January	Project planning team meeting	First 2 weeks
	Personal Development Journey exercise	First 2 weeks
	Operations team meetings	Every week
	Evaluation of milestones and goals	Month end
February	Operations team meetings	Every week
	Evaluation of milestones and goals	Month end
March	Operations team meetings	Every week
	Evaluation of milestones and goals	Month end
April	Personal Development Journey evaluation	First week
	Operations team meetings	Every week
	Evaluation of milestones and goals	Month end
May	Operations team meetings	Every week
	Evaluation of milestones and goals	Month end
June	Operations team meetings	Every week
	Evaluation of milestones and goals	Month end
July	Personal Development Journey evaluation	First week
	Operations team meetings	Every week
	Evaluation of milestones and goals	Month end
August	Operations team meetings	Every week

	Evaluation of milestones and goals	Month end
September	Operations team meetings	Every week
	Evaluation of milestones and goals	Month end
October	Personal Development Journey evaluation	First week
	Operations team meetings	Every week
	Evaluation of milestones and goals	Month end
November	Operations team meetings	Every week
	Evaluation of milestones and goals	Month end
December	Operations team meetings	Every week
	Evaluation of milestones and goals	Month end
	Personal Development Journey end evaluation	Year end

11.2 Monitoring

In this phase, leaders are required to monitor the employee's performance on the goal. Is the employee, or the team, on track to achieve the goal at the end of the year? Once a month the teams with the leader should have a team meeting to evaluate this question by looking at the milestones and take adequate measures. Employees first assess their own progress and then discuss it with their leader, who coaches them where needed.

Every quarter the Personal Development Journey should be evaluated as well.

11.3 Developing

In case the team clearly notices that personal or team performance needs to improve, this can be communicated. Educational courses, additional assignments that will help with the performance, or altering the course of an employee or team development, to enhance performance are options. See Chapter 6 - Personal Growth for more information on education opportunities for employees.

11.4 Rewarding

At By Life Connected we recognise teams and not individuals. Leaders show appreciation for team results as described in Chapter 4 - The Circle of Safety.The Circle of Safety

12. SAFETY

By Life Connected strives to provide a working environment that is as safe as possible, for employees and non-employees alike.

12.1 First Aid

Sometimes partner lodges organize First Aid trainings. Whenever that occurs, we will ensure employees of By Life Connected will attend those trainings with the goal to have a qualified first aid practitioner at every project. First aid boxes therefore also need to be available at every project.

12.2 Personal Protective Equipment

Activities of employees that require personal protective equipment provided by By Life Connected are farming and security. Farmers need gumboots and an overall. Guards need at least boots and a torch, preferably also a uniform.

12.3 HIV and AIDS

By Life Connected will not treat any worker differently because of their HIV status, and no worker is required to disclose it or to take an HIV test as a condition of employment or continued employment. Workers who choose to share that they are living with HIV or AIDS can do so, in confidence, with their manager or a founder so that By Life Connected can offer support. This information is confidential and will only be shared with the worker's explicit consent.

12.4 Burnout Prevention

Burnouts are a serious matter, and it is at an all-time high since 2021. Recovery from burnout can take months to even more than a year. As By Life Connected, we are therefore putting policies in place to protect our working family from burnouts.

What is a burnout?

Burnout can take different forms, affecting a person physically, emotionally, and behaviourally. Some characteristics of burnout include:

- Frequent illness.
- Disengagement and detachment.
- Feelings of frustration, helplessness, and hopelessness.
- Loss of motivation.
- And feelings of energy depletion.
- At its worst, burnout can cause a person to question if life is worth living.

What causes burnouts?

Burnouts are often caused by a combination of factors, including:

- Lack of control. An inability to influence decisions that affect your job — such as your schedule, assignments, or workload — could lead to job burnout. A lack of the resources that you need to do your work could also contribute to a burnout.
- Unclear job expectations. If you're unclear about the degree of authority you have or what your supervisor or others expect from you, you're not likely to feel comfortable at work.
- Dysfunctional workplace dynamics. Perhaps you work with an office bully, or you feel undermined by colleagues, or your boss micromanages your work. This can contribute to job stress.
- Extremes of activity. When a job is monotonous or chaotic, you need constant energy to remain focused — which can lead to fatigue and job burnout.
- Lack of social support. If you feel isolated at work and in your personal life, you might feel more stressed.
- Work-life imbalance. If your work takes up so much of your time and effort that you don't have the energy to spend time with your family and friends, you might burn out.

Prevention

Identification. It is the intention of BLC to actively reduce the burnout inducing factors above by I) allowing employees to be active crafters of their work, II) cultivate and encourage social support through the Circles of Safety and social life outside work and III) engage employees in decision-making.

However, it is almost inevitable that some of these factors will befall a member of our working family. Every member of BLC therefore needs to be vigilant on identifying the symptoms of a burnout, also in ourselves!

The following questions will help in the identification of a burnout:

- Have you become cynical or critical at work?
- Do you drag yourself to work and have trouble getting started?
- Have you become irritable or impatient with working family members?
- Do you lack the energy to be consistently productive?
- Do you find it hard to concentrate?
- Do you lack satisfaction from your achievements?
- Do you feel disillusioned about your job?
- Are you using food, drugs or alcohol to feel better or to simply not feel?
- Have your sleep habits changed?
- Are you troubled by unexplained headaches, stomach or bowel problems, or other physical complaints?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you might be experiencing a certain level of job burnout. Please inform your Area Manager or a Founder of BLC about this!

Adapting. It is the system in place at work that often causes burnouts. Area Managers and the founders of BLC therefore need to adapt the working system wherever necessary so that stress is reduced. Stress management interventions are applied to determine how the system needs to be adapted. Primary interventions aim to reduce the intensity or number of stressors through strategies such as job redesign or workload reduction.

12.5 Driving at night

The chances for accidents when driving at night are significantly higher than driving during the day. To protect the members of our working family, BLC forbids any members of the organization to travel for work related activities after 19.00. Funds will be made available for the member to stay the night to facilitate this.

13. HARASSMENT

Harassment covers a wide range of behaviours that are offensive in nature. In general, it involves behaviours of one person that are disturbing, upsetting or threatening to others. Harassment can be categorized as follows: Online, power, psychological, racial, religious, or sexual.

Although it is often hard to proof, By Life Connected will consider report of any type of harassment very seriously and it can lead to the one-warning policy. If violence is involved, it will lead to instant dismissal. This applies to everyone we work with: colleagues, partner organisations, community members, suppliers and funders, in every direction. Nobody is disadvantaged for reporting harassment in good faith. Harassment, abuse and exploitation of children, young people and adults at risk are covered in more detail in Chapter 16 (Safeguarding).

13.1 Power

Involves misusing a position of power to force targets into activities that are outside their job description.

13.2 Psychological

Characteristically lowers a person's self-esteem or causes one to have overwhelming torment due to verbal comments, engineered episodes of intimidation, aggressive actions, or repeated gestures of colleagues.

13.3 Racial

The harassment may include words, deeds, and actions that are specifically designed to make the target feel degraded due to their race or ethnicity.

13.4 Religious

Verbal, psychological, or physical harassment used against targets because they choose to practice a specific religion. Religious harassment can also include forced and involuntary conversions.

13.5 Sexual

Sexual harassment is an offensive or humiliating behaviour that is related to a person's sex. It includes unwanted and unwelcome words, facial expressions, sexual attention, deeds, actions, symbols, or behaviours of a sexual nature that make the target feel uncomfortable. This can involve visual or suggestive looks or comments, staring at a person's body, or the showing of inappropriate photos. Women are more likely to be affected than men.

13.6 Online

All types of harassment can also be applied through online media. This can occur in chat rooms, on various social media platforms or by use of email.

13.7 Relationships at work

By Life Connected does not interfere with the private lives of its workers. At work, however, romantic or sexual behaviour, such as dating, flirting, physical affection, or sexual jokes and messages, has no place. This applies in offices, in the field, in vehicles, in accommodation during work trips, at work events and in work chat groups. It protects everyone from unwanted attention and keeps the working environment safe.

A romantic or sexual relationship between a leader and someone they lead, or between a worker and someone at a partner organisation or in a community they work with, creates a conflict of interest and a risk of abuse of power. Such a relationship must be reported to a manager or a founder, so that reporting lines or responsibilities can be changed (see paragraph 14.2). Sexual contact with community members or other people who depend on By Life Connected for work, services or support is never allowed, also not when both agree (see also Chapter 16). Breaking these rules is handled as harassment (see paragraph 13.5) and falls under the 'one-warning' policy; sexual violence leads to immediate dismissal (see paragraph 9.3).

14. LEGAL & COMPLIANCE

14.1 Grievance

Grievance is a complaint of an employee or group of employees against a different employee, manager, or the organization. The grievance can be anything like a harassment or discrimination complaint, other violations of the code of conduct, an unresolved safety issue, a decision one doesn't agree with, etcetera.

The grievance procedure goes as follows:

1. Raise the issue informally. Do this either with a manager if the grievance is directed at another employee or with the employer if the grievance is directed at a manager or employer.
2. Raise the issue formally with a grievance letter. Send it to the manager if applicable and the employer.
3. A grievance investigation will take place.
4. If required, a grievance hearing will be held to review the evidence.
5. A decision will be made by the employer with subsequent consequences.

Complaints involving partner organisations and other external parties

This procedure also applies when a By Life Connected worker experiences harassment, discrimination or other misconduct from someone at a partner organisation, a government office, a community or another external party, and when someone from such a party raises a complaint about a By Life Connected worker. A complaint about a By Life Connected worker is investigated by By Life Connected under the procedure above. When the complaint is about someone outside By Life Connected, the following applies.

First, By Life Connected makes sure the worker is safe, for example by stopping a visit or a joint activity if needed. Second, By Life Connected raises the matter with the leadership of the partner organisation, following their own grievance process where they have one, and both organisations agree how it will be investigated and followed up. Third, By Life Connected keeps the worker informed. If the partner does not act, By Life Connected can pause or end the collaboration.

Raising a concern safely

A concern can be raised with a manager or a founder, informally or in writing. Concerns are treated confidentially as far as possible, and nobody is disadvantaged for raising a concern in good faith. When the concern is about a founder, it can be raised with a member of the board of By Life Connected. A concern about the safety of a child, young person or adult at risk is reported within 24 hours to the Safeguarding Focal Person, as set out in Chapter 16.

14.2 Conflict of Interest

At By Life Connected, our core purpose is to be of service to the people and stakeholder groups we work with. This requires us to be and remain neutral, ensuring our actions are always for the benefit of others and not the organization itself. A conflict of interest occurs when a personal interest, whether financial, professional, or personal, could potentially interfere with, or appear to interfere with, the best interests of By Life Connected or the communities we serve.

Because we are a family dedicated to trust and integrity, we must be proactive in identifying and addressing any potential conflicts of interest. The moment By Life Connected becomes "somehow invested" in a way that benefits us personally, it can create a conflict that compromises our ability to truly serve. This can damage the trust we have built within our circle of safety and with our external partners.

Identifying a Conflict

A conflict of interest is not always about money. It can be any situation where your personal connections, loyalties, or decisions could be influenced by a competing interest. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Using your position at By Life Connected to gain personal benefits for yourself or your family and friends.
- Having a personal relationship with a vendor, supplier, or community leader that could influence your professional judgment.
- Working with another organization whose mission or values could be seen as competing with or detracting from the work of By Life Connected.

Our Policy

We believe in honesty and communication, just as we would within a family. Therefore, our policy is based on disclosure and discussion, not avoidance.

1. Report: If you believe you have a potential or actual conflict of interest, or if you are unsure, it is your responsibility to report it immediately to your direct manager or a founder. There is no shame in a potential conflict—it is a part of life. The shame comes in failing to disclose it.
2. Discuss: Once disclosed, we will have an open and honest conversation to understand the situation. Your manager or a founder will work with you to determine the best course of action.
3. Manage: If a conflict of interest is discovered and not disclosed, the employee will receive a formal warning. Continued conflicts will be considered a serious lack of willingness to change and may be grounds for dismissal.

Just as a leader must be able to "admit when they falter," we want you to feel safe to be truthful about these situations. Our goal is to protect the integrity of our organization and our mission, and we can only do that by facing challenges together. Ultimately, this practice strengthens our circle of safety and our ability to have a positive impact on the world.

15. BLC SYSTEMS

15.1 Financial & Procurement system

All spending follows a documented financial and procurement procedure: budgets are approved together with each funder, purchases are based on written quotations and approved before they are made, every payment is backed by receipts and filed, and the books are reviewed every month by the Lead Accountant and the CFO/COO. The detailed procedures are shared with staff.

15.2 Feedback system

It is essential for any organization, but often difficult, to obtain feedback from all employees regarding their working environment and experiences. To facilitate this By Life Connected is implementing a feedback system. Through a yearly online poll every employee can anonymously let their opinions be heard, so that nobody has to raise a concern only in a conversation with their own manager. The poll has only a few multiple-choice questions. Where the answers show a possible problem, By Life Connected may zoom in on that point with an open-ended survey or a conversation. The outcomes will be shared with all BLC members, after which By Life Connected will do its best to change policies.

16. SAFEGUARDING

16.1 Why we have this policy

We work in rural communities, with chiefs, headpersons, women, young people and children. We are often seen as people with money, vehicles and influence. That gives us power, and we must never use it to harm anyone. This chapter says what we expect from everyone who works for By Life Connected, and what anyone can do if something goes wrong. It applies to board members, employees, piece workers, volunteers, interns, consultants and contractors. Partners are asked to follow it (see paragraph 16.5).

16.2 Our commitments

- We do no harm. We protect children, young people and adults at risk from abuse, exploitation and harassment by anyone connected to our work.
- We treat every concern seriously and act on it, even if it involves a respected person.
- We protect people who raise a concern. Nobody is punished for reporting in good faith.
- We keep information about a case confidential and share it only with those who need it to act.

16.3 What we mean

- Child: anyone under 18.
- Adult at risk: an adult who may be less able to protect themselves, for example because of disability, illness, poverty, age or dependence on someone.
- Abuse and exploitation: physical, sexual or emotional harm, neglect, and using a position of power or money to get something from someone. This includes sexual exploitation (trading help, jobs, payments or benefits for sex) and sexual harassment.
- Safeguarding concern: anything that suggests someone has been, or may be, harmed by our staff, volunteers, partners or activities. It can also be harm you notice in a community, which we then pass on to the right authority.

16.4 Code of conduct

Everyone covered by this chapter must:

- Treat everyone with respect, whatever their age, sex, disability, religion, ethnicity or status.
- Never have sexual contact with a child. Believing a child to be older, or the child agreeing, is no defence.
- Never exchange money, jobs, food, lifts, training places or any other benefit for sex or sexual favours, and never have a sexual relationship with a person who receives our help.
- Never harass, bully, threaten, humiliate or discriminate against anyone.
- Avoid being alone with a child. Meet in the open or with another adult present, and move a child in a By Life Connected vehicle only with another adult and a parent or guardian's permission.
- Take and share photos or videos of people only with their consent (a parent or guardian's consent for children). Never publish a child's full name with their picture or location.
- Let a child or young person under 18 take part in a workshop, training or other activity only with the agreement of a parent or guardian or, on a school excursion, of the teacher who accompanies the children.
- Never use alcohol or drugs while working with communities in a way that affects judgement.
- Report any concern or breach of this chapter straight away (see paragraph 16.7).

These rules add to the Code of Conduct in paragraph 9.4 and the rules on harassment in Chapter 13. Any form of violence, including sexual violence, leads to immediate dismissal after the worker has been heard (see paragraph 9.3).

16.5 Staying safe in our work

- Hiring: we check references for every new employee, volunteer or consultant, and ask about previous misconduct. Everyone signs the declaration in paragraph 16.9 before they start.
- Induction and refresher: every new person is briefed on this chapter in their first week, and all workers are reminded once a year.
- Planning: when we plan workshops, trainings and field visits we ask who could be at risk (for example children present, women travelling, people with disabilities) and what we can do to reduce it. Workshops are held at times and places that let women and young people attend safely.
- Partners and contractors: we give this policy to partners and contractors and ask them to follow it, or to show us their own equivalent policy.

16.6 Community complaints and feedback

At the start of each project we tell communities, in local language and in plain words, that By Life Connected workers must behave according to this policy and that anyone can raise a concern or complaint. People can do so by:

- speaking to the Safeguarding Focal Person, Mulyokela Kaluluka, Chair of the Board: +260 976 367 736 (calls, voice notes and messages by phone or WhatsApp are all fine);
- speaking to any By Life Connected worker, who must pass it on within 24 hours;
- using the suggestion box at the By Life Connected camp, or emailing mulyokela@gmail.com;
- speaking to a trusted person such as a headperson or the Chief, who can contact By Life Connected for them.

Complaints can be made anonymously. We tell communities what happens next and that they will not lose any support for complaining.

16.7 If you have a concern

- Make sure the person is safe. If someone is in immediate danger, get help first (police, clinic, Victim Support Unit).
- Report within 24 hours to the Safeguarding Focal Person. If the concern is about the Chair of the Board, who is the Safeguarding Focal Person, report to the executive director or to another board member you trust. Write down what you saw or heard, without questioning the person or investigating yourself.
- By Life Connected acts. The Safeguarding Focal Person records the case, tells the executive director and the board (leaving out anyone the concern is about), protects

the person involved, and decides on next steps. Where there is a risk to a child or a possible crime, we report to the relevant Zambian authorities (such as the Zambia Police Service Victim Support Unit, or the Department of Social Welfare for children) and, where the person wants it, support them to get medical and counselling help.
- Investigation: a person who was not involved looks into the case fairly and promptly. The person accused may be suspended while this happens.
- Outcome: breaches of this policy can lead to disciplinary action, up to dismissal or end of contract, and to a report to the police. The person who raised the concern is told the result as far as confidentiality allows.
- Funders: where a funder's agreement requires it, the executive director tells the funder of any serious case.

16.8 Roles

- Board: adopts and reviews the policy; receives a report of all cases at least once a year (and any serious case immediately).
- Executive director and managers: make sure everyone has signed and been briefed, and give time and budget for safeguarding.
- Safeguarding Focal Person: the Chair of the Board. When the Chair changes, the role passes to the next Chair. Receives concerns, keeps the confidential case record, advises workers, and runs the yearly refresher.
- Everyone: follows the code of conduct and reports concerns.

16.9 Related laws and declaration

This policy is meant to work alongside Zambian law, including the Children's Code Act (2022) and the Anti-Gender-Based Violence Act (2011), and the Dutch law that applies to the Dutch foundation.

Every employee, volunteer and contractor signs the following declaration: "I have read and understood the By Life Connected Safeguarding policy. I will follow the code of conduct and report any concern."

17. CHANGES TO CULTURE DOCUMENT

By Life Connected always has the right to amend or add policies to the culture document. By Life Connected needs to communicate any amendments or additions to all the workers of By Life Connected before they take effect. If any amendments or additions affect signed contracts of the workers with By Life Connected it is important to note that signed contracts trumps amendments or additions of the Culture document. Subsequently, new contracts need to be set up and signed in case the worker agrees with the policy changes. Where this document and Zambian law differ, Zambian law applies.