

THE JESUIT CENTRE FOR SAFEGUARDING IN AFRICA



**REPORT ON TURKANA SAFEGUARDING TRAINING FOR YOUNG
MISSIONARIES OF ST. PAUL'S COMMUNITY AT NARIOKOTOME,
26TH JUNE TO 4TH JULY 2024**

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Nariokotome Mission

The Missionary Community of Saint Paul the Apostle and Mary, Mother of the Church, is a global family within the Catholic Church. It unites priests and lay people, men and women, from diverse corners of the world. Their shared inspiration is to emulate Christ and His apostles in their daily lives.

They answered His call, leaving behind their worldly possessions to live in His service. Their journey is one of faith, hope, and charity, forging enduring bonds of friendship. In their mission in Kenya, they are stationed in the Lodwar Diocese, with the recent training taking place at the Nariokotome mission.

Nariokotome Mission is located in northern Kenya, in Turkana, an area classified as ASAL (Arid and Semi-Arid Lands). It was established on the western shore of Lake Turkana in 1993 at the initiative of the late Bishop John Mahon. It has become, with time, the logistic centre of widespread development and assistance work carried out in the area, the pastoral headquarters for a territory of 3,000 km², and the central base and Mother House of the Missionary Community of Saint Paul the Apostle. For the members and many visitors, it is also where the founder of the Community, Fr. Francisco Andreo (Fr. Paco), spent the last years of his life and is buried.

After successfully holding online training for their priests and community lay members (from different countries), we were privileged to have a site safeguarding training for their apprentices. Thirty-nine persons, consisting of 3 female and 36 male participants, were effectively trained and assessed per the course requirement.



Class session

Introduction

From 26th June to 4th July 2024, a safeguarding certificate course training program was conducted for young St. Paul's Community missionaries at Nariokotome, Turkana. This was an academic course: The "Child Safeguarding and Protection of Vulnerable Adults Certificate Course" designed with these principles in mind, aimed at equipping diocesan priests, religious men and women, and other individuals involved in service to the Church with comprehensive knowledge and practical skills in safeguarding.

The course draws on interdisciplinary insights from theology, psychology, sociology, and law to provide a holistic understanding of child protection. By so doing, the participants are equipped with essential knowledge and skills to ensure the safety and well-being of children and vulnerable adults within their pastoral work.



Class session

Objectives and Delivery

We listened to the participants' expectations, which eventually bore into the goals of the training. Summarily, the objectives are to:

- Teach participants about pastoral safeguarding.
- Comprehend Turkana's and other mission areas' children and adult vulnerable populations.
- Offer helpful advice on policy.
- Enable participants to address concerns efficiently.

- Promote a respectful and safe environment within St. Paul's Community missionary endeavours.

By achieving these objectives, we can create a culture of safety and protection within our community programs. This will ultimately lead to a stronger and more resilient community that prioritizes the well-being of all its members.

The course content, unitized as Introduction to Safeguarding, Culture and Safeguarding, Canon and Civil Laws in Safeguarding, Child Development and ACEs, Policy Implementation, Therapy for the Victims, and Self-Care, was delivered in tandem with their expectations and without forgetting the course requirement.

Participants gained a comprehensive understanding of safeguarding principles and practices, equipping them with the necessary tools to protect vulnerable individuals in their community effectively. The interactive nature of the course allowed for the practical application of learned concepts, ensuring that participants were well-prepared to implement safeguarding measures in their respective roles.

Activities and Sessions

Protecting people from harm involves a thorough grasp of legal and policy frameworks, vulnerability awareness, risk assessment, and management. It also covers case studies, role plays, practical application, and safe environment creation. The particular difficulties that Turkana's and other mission areas' vulnerable people and children confront, as well as the legal and legislative framework, risk assessment and management, encouraging a culture of safety, handling disclosures, and scenario analysis, are covered. The practical workshops and group discussions, part of the training, focus on implementing safeguarding measures within missionary operations in Turkana.

The diversity of the participants, who hailed from different parts of the globe (Spain, Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Malawi, Kenya, South Sudan, and Ethiopia), was a crucial factor in the success of the training. The exchange of ideas and experiences among participants from diverse backgrounds enriched the discussions and provided valuable insights into implementing safeguarding measures effectively in missionary operations.

This collaborative approach fosters a holistic understanding of the challenges faced by vulnerable populations in Turkana and other mission areas, leading to more comprehensive and sustainable solutions.

Nicholas Okwatch and Mr. Kevin Ayuko, who represented JCSA, were fortunate to have been joined by a special guest, Rev. Dr. Marcel, Hekima University Principal. His unique perspective on the intersection of faith and safeguarding practices encouraged the participants to think critically. His expertise added a unique dimension to the dialogue, inspiring new ideas and approaches for ensuring the safety and well-being of all individuals involved in missionary work. He also acknowledged the centre's good work, assuring his continued support for JCSA.

Similarly, the Bishop of Lodwar Diocese, Rt. Rev. John Mbinda also commended JCSA for its dedication to promoting safe practices within the missionary community. He expressed gratitude for their efforts to create a safer environment for everyone involved. His encouragement and support further emphasized the importance of prioritizing safeguarding measures in all aspects of missionary work.

He promised to liaise with the HUC principal for any further engagement. These endorsements from prominent religious figures highlight the positive impact of JCSA's work and serve as a testament to the organization's commitment to safeguarding. Their continued support will undoubtedly strengthen JCSA's mission to create a safe and secure environment for all involved in missionary activities.

Outcome and Impact

Participants expressed a deeper understanding and commitment to safeguarding principles following the training. They reported feeling more equipped to recognize signs of abuse or neglect and confident in their ability to respond effectively. The training fostered a sense of responsibility and accountability among participants towards protecting the vulnerable populations they serve. The team was also assessed based on their participation and written test, and the results were satisfactory. The pictures below remain a testimony of the work done during training.



Group Photo when Launching the program with the participants and mission safeguarding leaders

Conclusion

The Turkana safeguarding training for young missionaries of St. Paul's Community at Nariokotome was a significant step towards ensuring the safety and well-being of children and vulnerable adults in the region. The skills and knowledge gained will undoubtedly contribute to creating a safer and more supportive environment within the community's missionary activities.

More importantly, this training will empower the young missionaries, instilling the confidence and capability to take proactive measures to protect those they serve. This initiative reflects JCSA's proactive approach to promoting a culture of safety and accountability within missionary work.

This report highlights the importance of continuous training and education in safeguarding practices, particularly in pastoral settings where vulnerable populations rely on the support and protection of caregivers and community leaders.



Group photo after attending the mass

Photos



Group photo after class session



Hekima team with the Bishop of Lodwar diocese



Photo after we attended the mass celebrated by Fr. Marcel and other St. Paul Priests



Touring the mission facilities

Videos

<https://youtu.be/CbVGJulqmc>



<https://youtu.be/Klx1HTfb8J0>

