

Duty of Care Framework

This publication is part of a suite of EngenderHealth policies, procedures, and frameworks that govern our operations. These materials are grounded in principles of intersectionality and feminist accountability and governance. Colleagues from across our global and country offices collaborated with the Centre for Transnational Development and Collaboration in developing these materials.

Framework ownership: Tonee Mwangi, Vice President of Finance and Administration, is the primary owner of this framework.

Framework issuance and revision dates: This framework was initially published in January 2019 and was updated in July 2022. EngenderHealth will update this policy every three years.

Applicability: This policy applies to all staff, associates, and partners.



EngenderHealth

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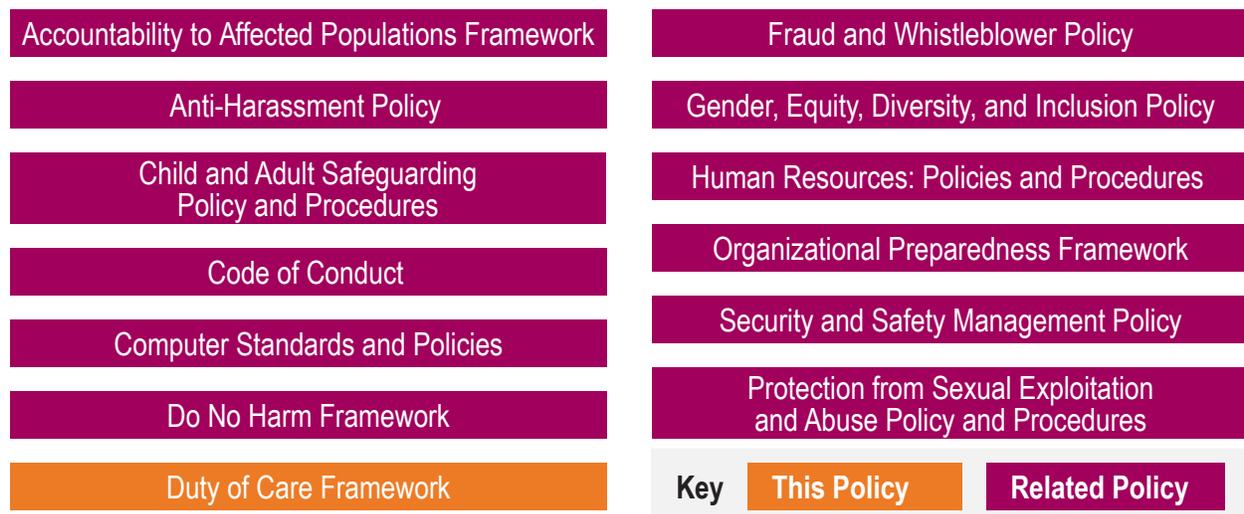
Introduction

EngenderHealth is a nonprofit organization aiming to contribute to a gender-equal world where all people achieve their sexual and reproductive health and rights through implementing high-quality, gender-equitable programs that advance sexual and reproductive health and rights. EngenderHealth works across Africa and Asia and we recognize that all environments around the world hold some level of inherent threat, thus wherever we operate, we will be at some level or risk. Political, socioeconomic, and other factors—combined with EngenderHealth’s mission and activities—contribute to shifting dynamics that may result in violence, insecurity, and/or disorder. These dynamics may affect the physical and mental health and well-being of EngenderHealth’s staff and associates.

We designed this Duty of Care Framework to minimize the impact of such risk on EngenderHealth staff and associates as well as to the organization’s reputation, finances, and sustainability. EngenderHealth takes the security and well-being of all staff and associates seriously and fully accepts responsibility for providing a reasonable standard of care to those performing activities on EngenderHealth’s behalf. This document lays out EngenderHealth’s approach, processes, and tools for ensuring duty of care toward these personnel.

This framework is a component of a larger suite of policy and procedures (see Figure 1) and complements our Organizational Preparedness Framework, which seeks to identify and respond to risks associated with operating in humanitarian and fragile contexts. Our definition of accountability is expansive and acknowledges that some people are more vulnerable than others, due to intersecting social markers of exclusion. As an international organization, we have a duty of care toward our beneficiaries in conflict- and crisis-affected contexts and we acknowledge that this accountability also extends to our staff, partners, personnel, and funders. To support our duty of care, EngenderHealth developed this framework as well as a complementary Accountability to Affected Populations Framework, a Security and Safety Management Policy, and an Organizational Preparedness Framework, to protect our personnel as well as the organization’s reputation, finances, and sustainability.

Figure 1. Key EngenderHealth Policies and Procedures



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Scope of Application

We expect all our personnel (including permanent and seasonal employees, contractors, consultants, volunteers, and members of our board of directors) as well as our partners and other stakeholders to adhere to this framework. Any deliberate breach of this framework may result in disciplinary action, including termination, in accordance with EngenderHealth's human resources and disciplinary procedures.

The Vice President of Finance and Administration is responsible for disseminating this framework. Adherence to this framework is monitored by various individuals including:

- At the organizational level: Vice President of Human Resources
- At the global office level: Director of International Human Resources
- At the country office level: Country Representatives
- At the project level: Chief of Party, Project Director, Project Manager (as applicable)

Refer to the Risk Management section of this framework for more information on specific tasks and processes assigned to select staff members.

Guiding Principles and Commitments

The guiding principles and commitments of this policy are summarized below.

Adequate resourcing: EngenderHealth ensures there are adequate resources (human and financial) at all levels of the organization for sustaining and improving security risk management processes and staff well-being practices. All donor proposals therefore include costs for such resources.

Continuous improvement: EngenderHealth maintains assessment, reflection, and feedback mechanisms to inform improvements that the organization can make to our security risk management and staff well-being policies and practices.

Effective communication: EngenderHealth effectively communicates with all staff and associates in simple and accessible language to create a positive and accessible security risk management and staff well-being culture. This includes providing access to information and to those with security risk management and staff well-being responsibilities.

Increased exposure: EngenderHealth understands that certain factors (age, gender identity, sexuality, ethnicity, etc.) may expose EngenderHealth staff and associates to increased risk. In response, EngenderHealth commits to supporting each individual at increased risk by assessing their risk and developing targeted risk reduction measures.

Informed consent: EngenderHealth actively shares information about the risks that our staff and associates may face so they are able to make informed decisions and consent or decline to participate accordingly. EngenderHealth will never force or coerce staff or associates into accepting any risk that exceeds their personal comfort levels.

Primacy of life and wellness: The safety, security, and well-being of EngenderHealth's staff and associates are our highest priority and take precedence over anything else, including EngenderHealth's operations, property, and reputation.

Proportionality: EngenderHealth ensures that the measures in place to reduce security and well-being risks are commensurate to the associated threat and risk. EngenderHealth will not place overly restrictive requirements on staff and associates working in low-risk

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environments. Conversely, staff and associates working in heightened risk environments will be subject to more rigorous and robust requirements.

Safeguarding: EngenderHealth is committed to all staff and associates having the right to safeguarding, irrespective of ability, culture, ethnicity, faith, gender, sexuality, or other social characteristic.

Shared responsibility: For our policies and practices to be effective in reducing risks to our staff and associates, everyone at EngenderHealth must share responsibility for their implementation and improvement. As such, a failure at one level of the organization constitutes a failure at all levels of the organization.

Risk Management

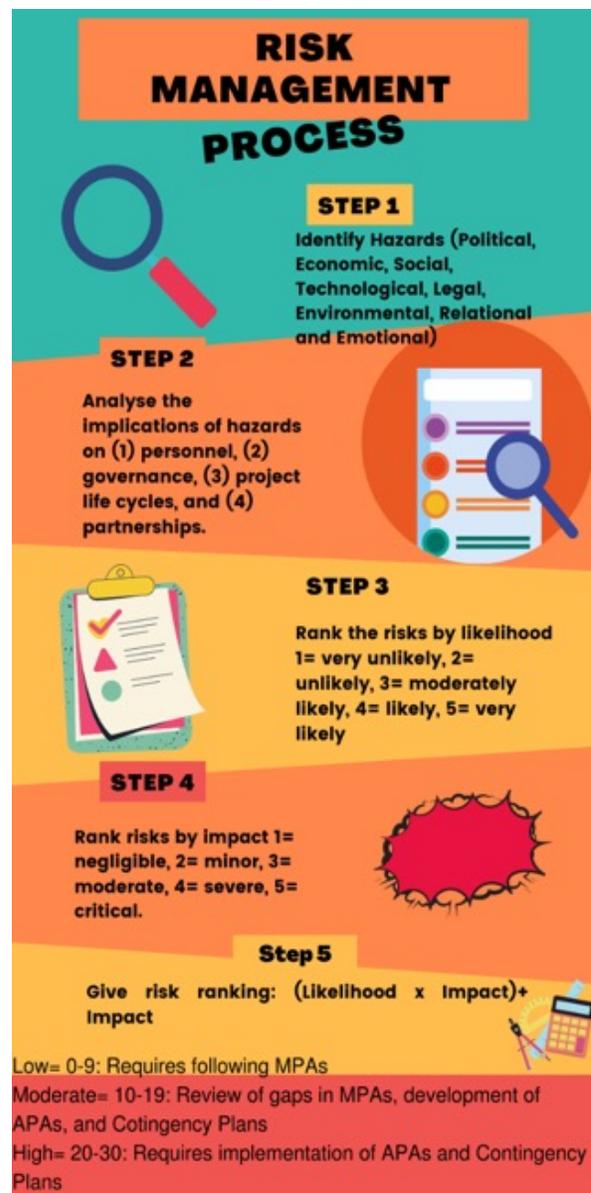
To achieve our mission, we accept the need to operate in locations that inherently involve exposure to various risks. In exceptional circumstances, EngenderHealth may engage in high-risk activities and, in these cases, EngenderHealth develops advanced preparedness actions and contingency plans (refer to EngenderHealth's Organizational Preparedness Framework for more details these actions and plans).

Our risk management process enables us to remain vigilant, prepared, and compliant with our duty of care principles and commitments. To reduce the likelihood of injury, trauma, or fatality, EngenderHealth actively manages all safety, security, and staff well-being risks to reasonable levels. This requires engagement of all EngenderHealth's personnel.

EngenderHealth ranks and classifies risks as (1) low, (2) moderate, and (3) high, based on likelihood and impact (see Figure 2. Risk Management Process). We manage risks according to our Organizational Preparedness Framework and assign risks to owners. In addition to the actions assumed by risk owners (see Table 1), our risk management process sets forth overall requirements for actions based on risk level:

- **Low:** Follow [minimum preparedness actions \(MPAs\)](#)
- **Moderate:** Review gaps in MPAs; develop advanced preparedness actions and contingency plans
- **High:** Implement advanced preparedness actions and contingency plans.

Figure 2. Risk Management Process



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We classify hazards into eight categories, listed in order of frequency below.

- **Political:** political coups, armed conflicts, and human rights violations
- **Economic:** economic inflation, fluctuating currency exchange rates, high unemployment rates, and high levels of poverty
- **Social:** unwelcoming social attitudes and behaviors, traditional gender roles, biases and stigmas against minoritized communities, and social violence
- **Technological:** cyber harassment, cyber attacks, online smear campaigns, and malfunctions in software or hardware
- **Legal:** discriminatory legal frameworks and unjust judiciary systems, military systems, and emergency laws
- **Environmental:** cyclones, droughts, earthquakes, epidemics, floods, pandemics, and pollution
- **Relational:** harm that may result from the organization’s relationships with particular stakeholders, such as dissatisfied employees, funders, governments, and partner organizations
- **Emotional:** staff burnout, mental health fatigue, context-induced anxiety, excess workload, and other stress and pressure

Relevant Stakeholders

There are two categories of stakeholders associated with this framework: (1) risk stakeholders, those who bear various responsibilities for upholding this framework and (2) commitment stakeholders, those to whom EngenderHealth is committed to protecting through this framework.

Risk Stakeholders

EngenderHealth maintains four levels of responsibility for security risk and staff well-being management: (1) risk owners, (2) risk managers, (3) risk advisors, and (4) risk exposed (see Table 1). EngenderHealth’s Chief Executive Officer (CEO), together with our Board of Directors, is the primary risk owner and bears ultimate responsibility for this framework and its implementation. The CEO stays abreast of all reported safety and security incidents or attempts via weekly executive team meetings.

Table 1. Risk Stakeholders and Their Responsibilities

Stakeholder	Responsibilities
Risk Owners	
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Holds ultimate accountability for the safety, security, and well-being of all staff and associates• In collaboration with the Vice President of Finance and Administration, ensures that this framework governs and regulates security and staff well-being risk; reviews and revises the framework in accordance with current legal standards and best practices in the sector• Ensures availability of adequate financial and human resources support to manage security and staff well-being risk, including by allocating contingency funding for emergencies

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Stakeholder	Responsibilities
Risk Owners (continued)	
CEO (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides executive oversight and decision-making authority for security risks that exceed EngenderHealth’s risk appetite • Approves (or disallows) all travel to high-risk settings, exploring options for minimizing risks • Approves (or disallows) all in-country activities in high-risk settings, exploring options for minimizing risks
Vice President of Finance and Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that this framework governs and regulates security and staff well-being risk; reviews and revises the framework in accordance with current legal standards and best practices in the sector, in collaboration with key internal and external stakeholders, every three years (at a minimum) • Ensures availability of adequate financial and human resources to manage security and staff well-being risk, including by allocating contingency funds for emergencies • Informs all staff and associates of requirements for adhering to this framework • Works with regional- and country-level leadership to regularly review and update regional- and country-level program procedures for accuracy and comprehensiveness • Retains operational authority for canceling, postponing, or suspending any activities in or travel to settings where the risk has escalated beyond EngenderHealth’s risk appetite • Approves (or disallows) all travel to all moderate-risk settings, exploring options for minimizing risks; escalates approval for travel to all high-risk settings to the CEO • Approves (or disallows) all in-country activities in moderate-risk settings, exploring options for minimizing risks; escalates approval for in-country activities in high-risk settings to the CEO • Ensures EngenderHealth’s global support staff and associates receive current risk information prior to any travel • Authorizes the withdrawal or evacuation of any staff or associates in the event of an emergency or deterioration in the contextual environment • Maintains mechanisms that allow for incident reporting at all times and ensures adequate capacity and capability for managing incidents that pose a direct threat to life or that pose other serious implications for EngenderHealth’s staff, associates, finances, reputation, legal position, or sustainability • Coordinates reviews of any reported incidents by a staff member or associate and ensures incidents are accurately reflected in the Global Incident Database

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Stakeholder	Responsibilities
Risk Managers	
Country and Regional Representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure availability of adequate financial and human resources (in the country and region) to manage security and staff well-being risk, including by allocating contingency funding for emergencies • Inform all staff and associates within their respective country or region of the requirements for adhering to this framework • Regularly review and update local procedures (within the country or region) for accuracy and comprehensiveness; submit plans for approval to the Vice President of Finance and Administration • Provide opportunities for staff and associates under their purview to consent to potential risks or to decline to participate in cases where the risks exceed their personal comfort levels • Develop and update national travel and activity risk assessments • Ensure adequate travel, personal accident, and other relevant insurance policies are in place (for the country or region), including for any physical offices • Ensure all travel to or within country or region is necessary • Approve (or disallow) all travel to all low- and moderate-risk settings (in the country or region), exploring options for minimizing risks; escalate approval for travel to all high-risk settings to the Vice President of Finance and Administration • Approve (or disallow) all activities (within the country or region) in low- and moderate-risk settings, exploring options for minimizing risks; escalate all activities in high-risk settings to the Vice President of Finance and Administration • Maintain mechanisms that allow for incident reporting at all times and ensure adequate capacity and capability for managing incidents that pose a direct threat to life or pose other serious implications for EngenderHealth's staff, associates, finances, reputation, legal position, or sustainability • Coordinate reviews of any reported incidents (within the country or region) by any staff or associate • Report all safety and security incidents to the Vice President of Finance and Administration in writing within three days of the incident's occurrence • Report any deliberate violations of this framework to the Vice President of Finance and Administration, verbally or in writing
Global Line-Managers (those managing staff who travel internationally)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform all staff and associates they manage of the requirements for adhering to this framework • Provide opportunities for staff and associates they manage to consent to potential risks or to decline to participate in cases where the risks exceed their personal comfort levels

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Stakeholder	Responsibilities
Risk Managers (continued)	
Global Line-Managers (those managing staff who travel internationally) (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop international travel and activity risk assessments• Ensure all international travel is necessary• Approve (or disallow) all travel to all low- and moderate-risk settings (in the country or region), exploring options for minimizing risks; escalate approval for travel to all high-risk settings to the Vice President of Finance and Administration• Report any deliberate violations of this framework to the Vice President of Finance and Administration
Risk Advisors	
Global, Regional, and Country Security Focal Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain and monitor the effectiveness of this framework and country and regional program procedures• Advise on requirements for staff and associates to complete safety and security training; periodically assesses the appropriateness and relevance of such training• Provide technical guidance, support, advice, and briefings to colleagues on potential safety- and security-related risks• Coordinate with all external providers (e.g., travel insurance, travel management, and risk management companies) to ensure adequate technical expertise and assistance are available to support this framework and country program procedures• Schedule and conduct in-country check-ins with staff and associates• Escalate issues or concerns related to the safety and security of any staff or associates to respective line managers
Global, Regional, and Country Well-Being Focal Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain and monitor the effectiveness of this framework and the country program procedures• Coordinate with all external providers (e.g., psychosocial providers) to ensure that adequate technical expertise and assistance are available in support of this framework and country program procedures• Advise on requirements for staff and associates to complete well-being training; periodically assesses the appropriateness and relevance of such training• Provide technical guidance, support, and advice on any potential well-being risks and on managing well-being• Escalate issues or concerns related to the well-being of any staff or associate to respective line managers• Provide psychological first aid as necessary and provide referrals to further psychological and medical care as required

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Stakeholder	Responsibilities
Risk Exposed	
All Staff and Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully comply with this framework and follow security instructions to avoid unnecessary risks and prevent behavior that may put themselves or others into danger • Participate in and contribute to organizational safety, security, and well-being measures • Complete all required safety, security, and well-being trainings • Promote equity and respect and act with accountability, integrity, and professionalism, and in consistency with EngenderHealth’s vision, mission, and values • Recognize that EngenderHealth is a nonpolitical, nonreligious organization and avoid political and religion discussions • Responsibly manage all information, equipment, money, and other resources in their purview; refrain from engaging in and report any bribery or acts of corruption • Notify line management (staff) or relevant contact (associates) of any intention to travel, as soon as possible • Methodically and accurately complete (staff) or review (associates) a risk assessment for all travel to high-risk settings, in consultation with other nongovernmental organizations, relevant embassies, and donor agencies • Behave as not to compromise their own or others’ safety, security, or well-being, including by being conscious of security conditions and by observing applicable national laws and respecting local customs and cultural practices • Request safety, security, or well-being risks information from EngenderHealth’s security and well-being focal points, as necessary • Maintain timely and reliable communication with line management (staff) or relevant contact (associates) during travel, sharing location and other information as requested • Immediately report any potential safety, security, or well-being issues and any incidents that have caused, or may cause, injury, harm, or mental or physical illness to themselves or others

Commitment Stakeholders

EngenderHealth bears different duty of care obligations to different categories of commitment stakeholders (see Table 2).

Table 2. EngenderHealth Obligations to Commitment Stakeholders

Stakeholder	EngenderHealth Obligations
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the safety, security, and well-being of staff working within their purview, including staff based in or on travel to their location,

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Stakeholder	EngenderHealth Obligations
Staff (continued)	<p>during normal working hours, and at all times for those working in high-risk settings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain robust risk reduction measures• Provide appropriate and comprehensive insurance, including personal accident, medical, travel, and life insurance to staff• Provide information related to security and well-being responsibilities and obligations to staff• Provide safety, security, and well-being training to staff• Provide information related to threats and measures to prevent and mitigate risk to staff, including via verbal pre-departure briefs, for staff traveling to high-risk settings• Ensure access to medical and psychosocial support before, during, and after travel, including post-incident• Support staff in declining to participate in activities where the risks exceed their personal comfort levels, including declining to travel to a location or requesting to be withdrawn from a travel location
Associates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct rapid assessments, as part of the procurement process, of the safety and security management capabilities of associates; where capacity is low, require the associate to secure appropriate guidance and support• Manage the safety, security, and well-being of associates working within their purview, including those based in or on travel to their location, during normal working hours, and at all times for those working in high-risk settings• Maintain robust risk reduction measures• Provide information related to security and well-being responsibilities and obligations to associates• Provide information related to threats and measures to prevent and mitigate risk to associates, including via verbal pre-departure briefs, for associates traveling to high-risk settings• Support associates in declining to participate in activities where the risks exceed their personal comfort levels, including declining to travel to a location or requesting to be withdrawn from a travel location• Provide associates with relevant personal accident and travel insurance coverage, as necessary and upon request• Provide associates with information related to appropriate safety, security, and well-being training, including directly offering training, as necessary and upon request
Sub-Awardees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct rapid reviews of safety, security, and well-being policies, protocols, and practices of potential sub-awardees prior to signing sub-award agreements

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Stakeholder	EngenderHealth Obligations
Sub-Awardees (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure agreements with sub-awardees include and explain the necessity of appropriate safety, security, and well-being policies and practices
Donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand donor duty of care requirements • Implement any necessary policies and practices to achieve donor duty of care requirements

Mandatory Trainings

To fulfill our duty of care obligations, EngenderHealth commits to conducting security and well-being trainings using risk-based and role-based standards, as described below.

Risk-Based Standards

EngenderHealth maintains mandatory security training requirements for those located in or traveling to any given location, based on the location's risk level (see Table 3).

Table 3. Risk-Based Standards

Risk	Low-Risk	Moderate-Risk	High-Risk
Training Required	Personal Security Training	Personal Security Training	Hostile Environment Awareness Training

Role-Based Standards

EngenderHealth also maintains mandatory security training requirements for staff based on their position or role within the organization (see Table 4).

Table 4. Role-Based Standards

Role	Training Required
All Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability to Affected Populations • On-Boarding Security Brief • Organizational Preparedness • Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse • Safeguarding
Drivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defensive Driving • Technical Training

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Role	Training Required
Executive Team and Regional and Country Representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security Risk Management • Psychological First Aid • Well-Being and Resilience for Managers
Family Liaison Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Liaison
Frontline Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-Being and Resilience for Frontline Workers
Guards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guarding
Incident Management Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incident and Crisis Management
Safeguarding Focal Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding
Security Focal Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security Risk Management
Well-Being Focal Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychological First Aid • Well-Being and Resilience for Managers

Security Management Strategies

As threats may arise and subside over time in different settings, EngenderHealth develops, revises, and deploys different security strategies for each operating location, prior to activity implementation or travel. This approach improves the effectiveness of our strategies in reducing risks to EngenderHealth’s staff and associates at key points in time. As such, EngenderHealth works with a menu of security strategies (see Table 5).

Table 5. Security Management Strategies

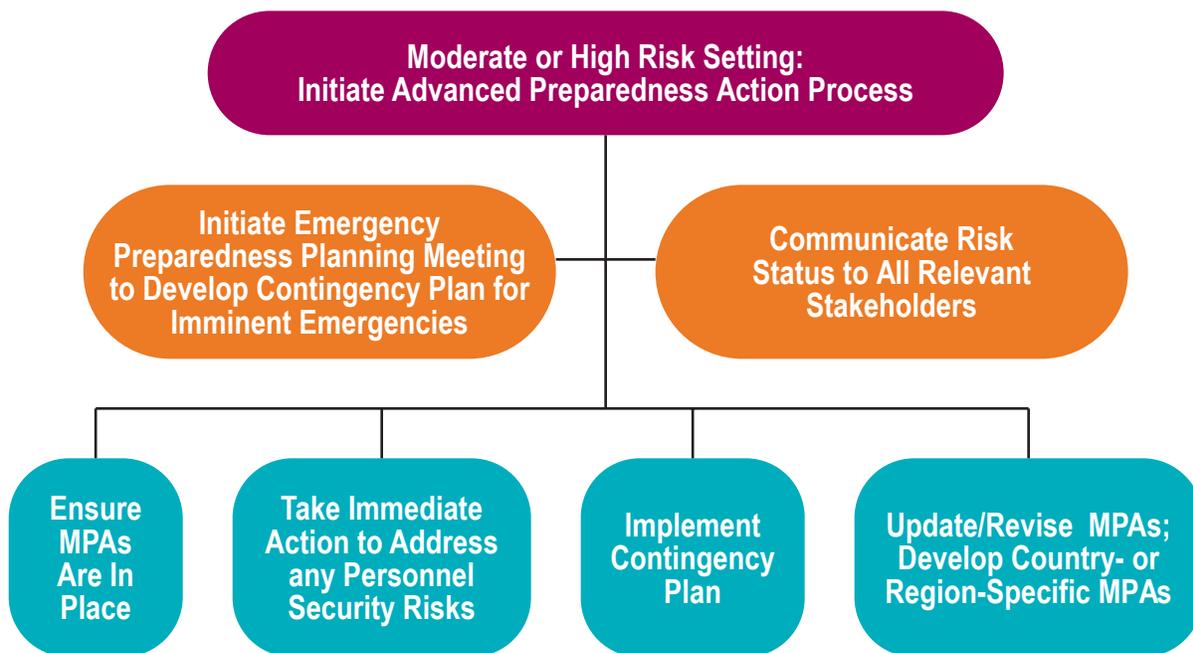
Strategy	Description
Acceptance	Reduce risk by improving acceptance of EngenderHealth and/or our partners’ work (e.g., engaging community members and local leaders to participate in project design activities) (<i>preferred option</i>)
Low Profile	Reduce risk by maintaining a low profile (e.g., minimizing signage)
Physical Protection	Reduce risk by deploying physical protection measures (e.g., gated or locked facility entries)

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Strategy	Description
Non-Armed Deterrence and Response	Reduce risk and respond to any threat incidents via non-armed counter-threat (e.g., security cameras)
Armed Deterrence and Response	Reduce risk and respond to any threat incidents via armed counter-threat (e.g., armed guards) <i>(least preferred option)</i>

Additionally, moderate- and high-risk settings necessitate advanced preparedness actions and contingency planning processes (see Figure 3). Refer to the Organizational Preparedness Framework for more information.

Figure 3: Advanced Preparedness Actions and Contingency Planning Processes



Relevant Procedures

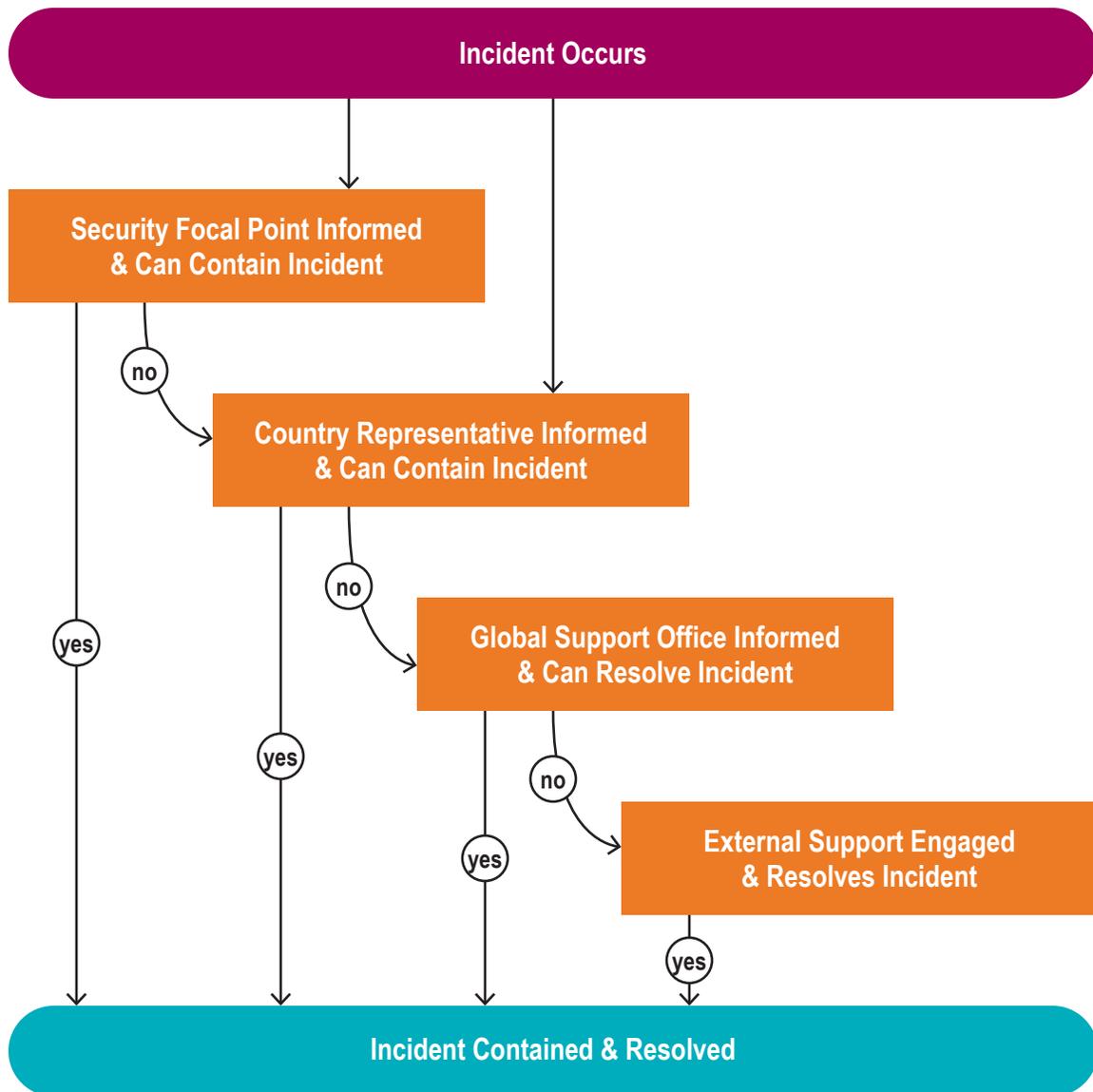
To complement this framework, EngenderHealth maintains several procedures, which enable us to respond to incidents and security threats. This includes procedures for incident management, medical and security evacuations, and abduction response.

Incident Management Procedure

EngenderHealth's incident management procedure aims to contain or resolve any incidents that may occur (see Figure 4).

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Figure 4. Incident Management Procedure



Medical Evacuation Procedure

All staff and associates traveling internationally for EngenderHealth business are entitled to a medical evacuation (except in the case of a failure to declare a preexisting medical condition that prohibits travel). A medical evacuation is at the discretion of the Vice President of Finance and Administration and will only be considered in cases where appropriate medical care is not available in country. The decision to evacuate for medical reasons may be made by EngenderHealth's insurers or, if not an insured evacuation, by an appropriately qualified medical doctor not employed by EngenderHealth. This decision may only be overruled in cases in which the evacuation would expose the individual to immediate and life-threatening security-related dangers, as determined by a member of

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the EngenderHealth Executive Team. Return to travel following a medical evacuation is only permitted following issuance of travel clearance by EngenderHealth's insurers or a medical doctor.

Security Evacuation Procedure

All staff and associates traveling internationally for EngenderHealth business are entitled to a security evacuation, in the event that their work has placed them in danger; however, approval for such evacuation is at the discretion of the Vice President of Finance and Administration. The decision to evacuate in response to a security situation may be made by the traveler themselves, the relevant country or regional representative, or the Vice President of Finance and Administration. This decision may only be overruled in cases in which the evacuation would expose evacuee to greater immediate danger than remaining in the current location, as determined by a senior line manager. Anyone who refuses to evacuate following such a decision is subject to immediate termination and will no longer benefit from EngenderHealth's duty of care. In cases where evacuation is necessary but evacuating everyone is not possible, individuals categorized as being at the highest risk, at the discretion of the CEO, will be prioritized. Return to a location following a security evacuation is only permitted with the approval of the CEO and after EngenderHealth has completed a full security risk assessment and updated the country management procedure.

Abduction Response Procedure

EngenderHealth's crisis management team (yet to be established, as of publication) provides advice and expertise in handling cases of abduction, with the support of external crisis management specialists, as necessary. The primary objective of our abduction response procedure is ensuring the safety of abductees; the secondary objective is securing abductees' safe release. EngenderHealth promotes preventive measures in locations where an elevated abduction threat is present. EngenderHealth will not pay ransoms or concede to other demands, nor will it facilitate ransoms payments on behalf of others (for instance, for staff family members) to obtain the release of abducted staff or associates.