

# MK Safety Net's response to the January 2020 document, Ethnos360 and Child Safety

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MK Safety Net applauds the efforts of the many New Tribes Mission missionary kids whose decades-long quest for justice has resulted in the publication of a historic document by Ethnos360 (formerly NTM). The document, released in early February 2020, is titled *Ethnos360 and Child Safety*. MK Safety Net acknowledges that this document is a step in the right direction by Ethnos360, but we also have concerns about it.

The first sentence of the Forward (sic) to the document states that Ethnos360's "first apology is rightly to the MKs who were victims of abuse and to their families." This is followed by a statement in the Introduction that says, "We believe it is appropriate and right that the MKs have come forward with their stories, and we thank them for their bravery and tenacity."

However, in spite of seeming to affirm MKs at the beginning of the document, MKs whose abusers are listed on page 11 were not notified about this document nor have they received copies of it. It is public because it is on the Ethnos360 website, but it is not easy to find. (Click on About, then on Child Safety, then on Historical Reviews, then on *Find out more* and finally on *Read more here*.) Or, click the link below.

The sections on pages 3-5 detail at length how New Tribes Mission strived to overcome its wartime mentality that caused its *failures*. However, the repeated use of the word *individual* when *abuse* is mentioned on these pages underscores who is most to blame. Particularly problematic is the suggestion that New Tribes Mission was simply unaware of how abuse affected children, including a paragraph claiming that sexual abuse of a child was considered a form of adultery in U.S. culture at the time, and thus was not handled appropriately when it was reported to mission leaders.

The middle sections about inquiries on pages 5-8 start out with inaccuracies. Pat Hendrix worked for the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. (not the PCA) and the name of the group she worked with was the Independent Abuse Review Panel (not the Independent Abuse Response Process). The document makes multiple attempts to liken IHART to GRACE (Godly Response to Abuse in the Christian Environment) and claims that it is just their methods that differ, but those methods are not explained. One difference is that GRACE, as an organization, has no links to any organized group. IHART, on the other hand, has had its independence questioned repeatedly by MKs and others. Its roots can be traced directly back to New Tribes Mission in 2011 and it is even described on the Ethnos360 website as "a process, commissioned by Ethnos360." IHART's current coordinator, Theresa Sidebotham, is on record warning institutions to protect themselves from abuse allegations.

Secondly, GRACE and IHART differ in how they report their findings. After a GRACE inquiry, the report, in its entirety, goes to both the organization and to any and all reported victims. IHART's full reports, on the other hand, go to the organization but individuals receive a partial report from the organization. A third way their methods differ is that GRACE includes the names of abusers in their reports, whereas IHART's most recent reports do not.

IHART's methods could perhaps be explained by how its name has evolved: IHART used to stand for Independent Historical Abuse Response Team. It now stands for Independent Historical Allegations Review Team. MKs who were abused want a response to the abuse that happened to them, not just a review of their allegations.

In the last part of the document, pages 8-15, Ethnos360's definitions of abuse are fine but it is unfortunate that spiritual abuse is just mentioned in passing after sexual, physical and emotional abuse are described at length. What is most troubling, however, is Ethnos360's reasoning for not naming everyone who was found guilty. If being in the grave or being listed in a sex offender registry means that a former New Tribes Mission employee can no longer harm children, then Ethnos360 apparently believes it is off the hook - which totally disregards the people who matter more than the employee or the organization: the MKs who were abused and who need to see their abusers named along with the others.

MK Safety Net urges Ethnos360 to do the following things:

- For future inquiries, use a truly independent group that is trusted by the MKs you claim to be helping.
- State what you did, not what you failed to do. Ignorance is not a defense, nor is a mentality. New Tribes Mission knowingly and repeatedly supported abusive employees and thus, as an organization, sacrificed its children, silenced their pleas and dismissed their concerns causing its MKs great physical, sexual, emotional and spiritual harm.
- Include a definition of spiritual abuse in your list of kinds of abuses. Using God and the Bible as tools of control - or as justification for covering up evil - caused suffering as serious as the others.
- Publish this document more openly and more widely than it is now. In spite of MKN's concerns about it, it has the power to bring healing to victims when they see the names of their abusers acknowledged by their mission board. Additionally, it gives missionary parents and others in the Ethnos360 family permission to affirm the adult MKs who were abused, as opposed to seeing them as wayward or adversarial.

MK Safety Net Board

February 28, 2020

The Ethnos360 document is here: [https://ethnos360.org/downloads/Ethnos360 and Child Safety.pdf?utm\\_source=go.ethnos360.org&utm\\_medium=urlshortener&utm\\_content=9PB](https://ethnos360.org/downloads/Ethnos360%20and%20Child%20Safety.pdf?utm_source=go.ethnos360.org&utm_medium=urlshortener&utm_content=9PB) <http://https://ethnos360.org/.../Ethnos360%20and%20Child%20Safety.pdf>