



AUSTRALIAN  
COUNCIL  
FOR  
INTERNATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT

## **A Statement from the Board of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID)**

3rd annual update on the recommendations of the independent review to improve the practice and response in the prevention of sexual misconduct

October 2021

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In 2018, following incidents of sexual misconduct in the aid and development sector reported in the UK media, the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) commissioned two reviews examining the Australian aid and international development sector.

The first review examines the strength of the ACFID Code of Conduct in setting standards for the prevention of sexual misconduct. The second, conducted by the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine (VIFM), was an independent review to improve the practice and response of ACFID's members in the prevention of sexual misconduct.

The reviews resulted in two reports outlining recommendations for strengthening the ACFID Code of Conduct and strengthening sector-wide practice and culture. ACFID accepted the recommendations of both reports and immediately began work to implement the recommendations. In April 2019, ACFID released its implementation plan setting out a roadmap for implementing the recommendations, including annual updates on progress against the recommendations.

This is ACFID's third annual update. It sets out how our organisations have progressed against the commitments detailed in our implementation plan, key achievements from ACFID, its members and DFAT in this regard and includes a breakdown of progress to date against each of the 31 recommendations set out in the independent review conducted by VIFM. As ACFID reaches the end of its three-year implementation plan, ACFID remains committed to strengthening and supporting improved practice and response to sexual misconduct; prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment will be pursued as a Code of Conduct Committee focus area for 2020-23, and safeguarding people will be a priority under the High Performing Sector domain in ACFID's Strategic Plan 2020-2025.

The Board has provided further detail on the key activities which demonstrate our commitment to sustained action in the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment. These are set out under the three streams of ACFID's implementation plan: policy and standards, learning, and leadership and accountability.



## Policy and Standards

At the 2018 Annual General Meeting, ACFID's members agreed to a new Commitment in ACFID's Code of Conduct. Commitment 1.5 (We advance the safeguarding of those vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse) took effect for ACFID's members in January 2019, with compliance reporting due at the end of 2019. On 31 December 2019, the further changes to the ACFID Code's Quality Assurance Framework took effect. All ACFID members have reported on their compliance with the new changes to the ACFID Code of Conduct and Quality Assurance Framework; to date 30 members have had their compliance with the new requirements verified by ACFID.

To support ACFID members, the ACFID Good Practice Toolkit provides detailed guidance and a suite of resources and example policies to support compliance with PSEAH related requirements in the ACFID Code of Conduct and good practice. In the past year, the Good Practice Toolkit has been updated with five new resources and example policies related to the new PSEAH requirements.

ACFID has also completed a mapping of the ACFID Code of Conduct to the criteria of DFAT's accreditation scheme for ANGOs participating in the official Australian aid program. The resulting compliance mapping tool and supporting resources serve to assist organisations in identifying opportunities for alignment and efficiencies in their reporting and compliance requirement processes, including those relating to PSEAH.

## Learning

Following the May 2020 launch of the 'Introduction to Safeguarding' eLearning module, ACFID has supported members to integrate the module into their induction/refresher training requirements and to deploy via their own learning management systems. ACFID has produced adapted versions of the module customised for the specific requirements of individual ACFID members and has commissioned and deployed translated versions of the eLearning. ACFID also maintains the Good Practice Toolkit for the Code of Conduct (via [acfid.asn.au](http://acfid.asn.au)) and the PSEAH Resource Hub (via [learnwithacfid.com](http://learnwithacfid.com)) as online platforms for curated and freely available safeguarding resources.

Peer learning and resource development has leveraged the expertise of ACFID members including practice discussions and curated resources driven by the ACFID Safeguarding Community of Practice. These include detailed country mapping of local context, legislation, reporting and referral pathways for sexual exploitation and abuse in nine countries: Fiji, Indonesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, and Vanuatu. ACFID commissioned the development of pictorial PSEAH terminology and behavioural standards resources and will develop accompanying guidance that will support ACFID members to establish understanding of commonly used PSEAH terminology and explain the conduct requirements of organisational staff and personnel. The resources and guidance will be tested with the ACFID Safeguarding Community of Practice before being released as a suite of learning and organisational support files.

## Leadership and Accountability

Following its launch in early 2020, the ACFID Safeguarding Community of Practice has shared and demonstrated practice leadership for the sector in both regional and domestic fora. At the Oceania Connect Regional Conference 2020, the Community of Practice presented the session 'Safeguarding who? Unpacking a complex system in the pursuit of a real power shift'. The session convened technical experts, standards setters, in-country partners, and voices from the ACFID membership to discuss collective progress in PSEA, the fundamental challenges within a complex system, and identify how to ensure PSEA implementation efforts are people-centred. In February 2021, the Safeguarding Community of Practice contributed to DFAT's review of its safeguarding policies. In preparing the submission, the Community of Practice worked with ACFID's members to present a succinct and collated viewpoint of the sector on the key issues for consideration within each of DFAT's safeguarding policies: child protection, prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, and environmental and social safeguards.

The Child Safeguarding sub-group of the ACFID Child Rights Community of Practice identified a need and an opportunity to draw on the collective experience of ACFID members and in-country partners to better understand how to test or measure the effectiveness of child safeguarding policies and measures. The group is leading on ACFID-commissioned research consolidating more than 10 years of promoting child safeguarding practices and leveraging this learning to inform future sectoral strategies and practice on safeguarding more broadly.

Following regular engagement and collaboration, ACFID formalised its membership of the Trust Alliance, a group of non-profit, academic and technology organisations taking a collective impact approach to foster the development of a useful and ethical identity ecosystem. ACFID has partnered with the Trust Alliance on a safeguarding credential project, reviewing sector and organisational requirements for safeguarding training obligations with a view to developing portable

**ENDS**

## Further Information

If you have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment and would like to speak to someone for support or information, 1800RESPECT can provide counselling 24 hours a day, 7 days a week via 1800 737 732 (free call) and online at [www.1800respect.org.au](http://www.1800respect.org.au).

If you have experienced sexual assault and would like to make a complaint or report to the police, contact the [relevant state and territory police contacts for sexual assault](#).

State-based services with additional resources and support are available across Australia:

- ACT – [Canberra Rape Crisis Centre](#) via (02) 6247 8071
- NSW – [Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia](#) via 1800 424 017 (24-hour and free-call)
- NT – [Sexual Assault Referral Centres](#) via [NT location-specific phone lines](#)
- QLD – [Brisbane Rape & Incest Survivors Support Centre](#) via (07) 3391 0004
- SA – [Yarrow Place Rape & Sexual Assault Service](#) via 1800 817 421 (24-hour and free-call)
- TAS – [Laurel House](#) via 1800 697 877 (24-hour and free-call)
- VIC – [Sexual Assault Crisis Line](#) via 1800 806 292 (after hours free-call)
- WA – [Sexual Assault Resource Centre](#) via (08) 6458 1828 (for metro areas, 24-hour) and 1800 199 888 (for country areas, 24-hour and free-call from landlines)

## Using the ACFID Code of Conduct Complaints Mechanism

ACFID's Code of Conduct offers an independent mechanism to address concerns in relation to the conduct of ACFID's member. Anyone can make a complaint against an ACFID member that is believed to have breached the ACFID Code of Conduct.

Complaints should first be raised with the relevant ACFID member. [All ACFID members](#) have their own mechanisms to handle complaints, and information can be found on their websites. If you are not satisfied with the response, you can lodge a complaint with the Code of Conduct Committee, who are responsible for investigating the complaint.

[Learn more about using the ACFID Code of Conduct complaints mechanism.](#)

## Contact ACFID

Contact ACFID about its work on the prevention of sexual misconduct via [PSEAreview@acfid.asn.au](mailto:PSEAreview@acfid.asn.au).

# Third Annual Safeguarding Update 2020-21

## Snapshot of Achievements

In 2018, the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) commissioned two reviews to improve the practice and response of ACFID's members in the prevention of sexual misconduct.

The reviews resulted in recommendations for strengthening sector-wide practice and culture. This annual snapshot sets out key achievements of ACFID and its members, and a short response from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) on action related to the prevention of sexual misconduct.

## ACFID Achievements

### PSEA in the ACFID Code of Conduct

ACFID introduced changes to the ACFID Code of Conduct and Quality Assurance Framework, which took effect for ACFID's members from 31 December 2019. All ACFID members have reported on their compliance with the new changes to the ACFID Code of Conduct and Quality Assurance Framework; and to date 30 members have had their compliance with the new requirements verified by ACFID. Ongoing support is provided to members, including detailed guidance, resources, and example policies via the ACFID Good Practice Toolkit. ACFID members are assisted in identifying efficiencies in their reporting and compliance requirement processes, including those relating to PSEAH, via ACFID's mapping of the ACFID Code of Conduct to the criteria of DFAT's accreditation scheme for ANGOs participating in the official Australian aid program.

### Safeguarding learning initiatives

ACFID maintains the Good Practice Toolkit and the PSEAH Resource Hub as online platforms for safeguarding resources. These include new detailed country mapping of local context, legislation, reporting and referral pathways for sexual exploitation and abuse in nine countries, authored by the ACFID Safeguarding Community of Practice. ACFID has supported members to integrate the 'Introduction to Safeguarding' eLearning module into their training requirements and learning systems. ACFID has produced versions of the module customised for the requirements of individual ACFID members and has deployed translated versions of the eLearning. To further support ACFID members to establish understanding of commonly used PSEAH terminology and explain the conduct requirements of organisational staff and personnel, ACFID commissioned the development of pictorial PSEAH terminology and behavioural standards resources and will develop accompanying guidance materials.

### Member leadership and sector collaboration

Via the Oceania Connect Regional Conference 2020, the ACFID Safeguarding Community of Practice convened technical experts, standards setters, in-country partners, and voices from the ACFID membership to identify how to ensure PSEA implementation efforts are people-centred. In February 2021, the Safeguarding Community of Practice worked with ACFID's members to form a submission to DFAT's Safeguarding Policies Review. The Child Safeguarding sub-group of the ACFID Child Rights Community of Practice is leading on ACFID-commissioned research consolidating more than 10 years of promoting child safeguarding practices and leveraging this learning to inform future sectoral strategies and practice on safeguarding more broadly. ACFID has partnered with the Trust Alliance, a group of non-profit, academic and technology organisations taking a collective impact approach to foster the development of a useful and ethical identity ecosystem, on a safeguarding credential project, reviewing sector and organisational requirements for safeguarding training obligations with a view to developing portable verifiable credential/s.

## ACFID Member Achievements

### CAN DO Network

The Church Agencies Network – Disaster Operations (CAN DO) is a consortium comprised of 8 Australian church agencies and is one of the members of the Australian Humanitarian Partnership. CAN DO is a subset of the Church Agencies Network (CAN)<sup>1</sup>, that have a strong history of supporting each other to build good practice and learn from each other. CAN DO

committed to an inter-agency approach to Safeguarding in 2018, which began with a review of all member policies and practices on PSEAH to inform the development of an effective inter-agency safeguarding mechanism. This review led to the establishment of a Safeguarding Working Group and appointment of a Safeguarding Focal Point. Since its establishment, the Safeguarding Working Group has achieved significant outcomes, including:

Developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for interagency collaboration and report handling. The SOPs provides the consortia with a best practice, shared approach to safeguarding. A comprehensive training package to socialise the SOP with each agency has also been developed and each agency's focal point is training their respective agencies, including joint-agency trainings.

Safeguarding and protection modules within the Disaster Ready training program, a Humanitarian Training package targeted at in-country partners and community level leaders, the training is regionally contextualised and faith-literate.

Peer support and learning with regular meetings and annual workshops.

Digital resource sharing platform established.

Supporting project design and project implementation with technical safeguarding advice.

Peer Safeguarding organisational assessments piloted in 2021, providing an opportunity for a CAN DO agency to have an independent peer assessor evaluation who provided constructive feedback on the agency's policies, procedures and practice in line with contractual and compliance requirements.

Engaging a consultant to work with CAN DO members on developing child-friendly complaint mechanism training for CAN agencies and their partners.

Feedback from across the consortia continues to highlight that member agencies' participation within the Working Group has impacted and enhanced each agencies' capacity:

To strengthen their own safeguarding frameworks, culture and practices and collectively debrief.

To work with local partner organisations, particularly church institutions and other faith-based actors, collaboratively working together to strengthen partner safeguarding policies and practices.

To provide personal and professional peer learning and support to Safeguarding Focal Points

1. CAN members include ACCI Relief, Act for Peace\*, Adventist Development and Relief Agency\*, Anglican Board of Mission\*, Anglican Overseas Aid\*, Australian Lutheran World Service\*, Caritas Australia\*, Global Mission Partners, The Salvation Army, Transform Aid International\*, Quaker Service Australia, and Uniting World\* (members with an asterisk are CAN DO members).

## Oxfam Australia

Oxfam Australia is an active member of the Oxfam International Safeguarding Shared Services Core Group. This group brings together Safeguarding expertise from across the Confederation to deliver Safeguarding projects that support Oxfam's commitment to the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment and any form of child abuse perpetrated by Oxfam staff and related personnel in the delivery of Oxfam's work. Through strong collaboration across the Oxfam Safeguarding Community, since the last report in 2020, this Group has delivered on several projects,

such as the Safeguarding Essentials training for all staff across the Confederation, training for Safeguarding Focal Points, a Safeguarding Risk Guide, and a practical guide to budgeting for Safeguarding. Oxfam Australia's Programs team, Safeguarding Lead and Country Offices work together to plan, monitor, evaluate and improve Safeguarding practices. In development is an online platform to centralise the planning, reviewing, and reporting of Safeguarding work in line with the Oxfam Safeguarding 10 Core Standards. Oxfam Australia continues to convene the ACFID Safeguarding Community of Practice.

## DFAT Update

Over the last year, DFAT has continued to implement the PSEAH Policy (released in April 2019) across the department and with funding partners (as per recommendations 2 and 26) with full implementation achieved in December 2020. We have rolled out PSEAH eLearning for DFAT staff and continued to engage with partners through information sessions. Following the appointment of a DFAT PSEAH Champion, DFAT continues to advocate its PSEAH Policy and associated issues at domestic and international for a. DFAT has provided advice and targeted communications on the high risks relating to PSEAH that have emerged as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic. DFAT continues to work with the UK and other donors to improve global standards and reporting to reduce the risk of safeguarding

incidents, with a current focus on multilateral organisations (as per recommendations 5 and 30). In particular, DFAT, together with 13 other donor countries, successfully negotiated United Nations harmonised donor language on PSEAH. The agreed language aligns with DFAT's PSEAH Policy and may now be used in arrangements with UN partners. DFAT's independent review into our safeguarding policies (including PSEAH) was recently submitted. The Review was forward-looking, and identified lessons learned, good practice, gaps and opportunities, and suggestions for improvement. The Review and its recommendations will inform future improvements in policy design, compliance monitoring, as well as targeted assurance activities.

## More Information & Updates

Learn more and provide feedback about ACFID's ongoing work on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse on the ACFID website at [www.acfid.asn.au/content/psea](http://www.acfid.asn.au/content/psea).

# Third Annual Safeguarding Update 2020-21

## VIFM Recommendations Implementation Update

The Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine (VIFM) conducted the 2018 independent review and made 31 recommendations for ACFID, ACFID's membership, DFAT and the ACNC.

ACFID has reported its progress against each recommendation based on a four-point scale and provided an update on the latest, key activities related to the implementation of the recommendation. Where the recommendation does not pertain to ACFID or ACFID's members, ACFID has provided commentary on what it has done to encourage or support its implementation.

**Progress Indicators** No action taken Scoping Phase Implementation Phase Ongoing Management Phase

**Recommendation 1** Establish a Reportable Conduct Scheme subject to funding and legislative requirements to apply to all organisations subject to the ACNC External Conduct Standards.



**Progress Update** ACFID has advocated on the matter to the Government and the Government has replied. No further advocacy is planned at this time.

**Recommendation 2** ACFID and DFAT should develop a policy that allegations involving criminal sexual misconduct should be reported to local enforcement authorities as a default position. This should be regardless of local mandatory obligations unless this is at odds with the wishes or welfare of the affected person or the life or serious welfare of the alleged perpetrator.



**Progress Update**

ACFID introduced changes to the ACFID Code of Conduct and Quality Assurance Framework to address this recommendation. The verifier for the new Compliance Indicator 1.5.1 requires ACFID members' PSEA policies to specify the agency's reporting responsibilities where an incident is identified, including processes for reporting to local enforcement authorities, subject to the wishes and welfare of the complainant/survivor. Since taking effect for ACFID's members on 31 December 2019, 91% of ACFID members have self-assessed as compliant with Compliance Indicator 1.5.1. In addition, 30 members have had their PSEA policies assessed by ACFID. Of these, 11 organisations have been required to strengthen their PSEA policy to meet this Code requirement. DFAT's PSEAH Policy stipulates that when safe to do so, and in accordance with the survivors' wishes, all alleged sexual exploitation, abuse, or harassment incidents involving a criminal aspect should be reported to the correct local law enforcement channels. Implementation of the DFAT PSEAH Policy commenced from July 2019.

**Recommendation 3**

ACFID should monitor and engage in the development of multi-lateral international humanitarian passporting and registration schemes and other forms of regulation-tech.



**Progress Update**

ACFID is a member of the Trust Alliance, a group of non-profit, academic and technology organisations taking a collective impact approach to foster the development of a useful and ethical identity ecosystem. ACFID has partnered with the Trust Alliance on a safeguarding credential project, reviewing sector and organisational requirements for safeguarding training obligations with a view to developing portable verifiable credential/s.

**Recommendation 4**

ACFID member organisations should publicise all steps that they have in place to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct in their on- and off-shore activities through their websites.



**Progress Update**

ACFID introduced changes to the ACFID Code of Conduct Quality Assurance Framework to address this recommendation. An expansion of the verifiers for Compliance Indicators 7.3.3 and 7.3.4 requires ACFID members provide their complaints-handling policy and PSEA policy on their website. Since taking effect for ACFID's members on 31 December 2019, the websites of 30 ACFID members have been assessed and given feedback in relation to this requirement.

**Recommendation 5**

DFAT and ACFID work together to advocate for international donor cross-recognition and accreditation of the ANCP accreditation system and ACFID Code of Conduct and ancillary Quality Assurance Framework systems.



**Progress Update**

DFAT continues to work with the UK and other donors to improve global standards and reporting to reduce the risk of safeguarding incidents, with a current focus on multilateral organisations. In particular, DFAT, together with 13 other donor countries, successfully negotiated United Nations harmonised donor language on PSEAH. The agreed language aligns with DFAT's PSEAH Policy and may now be used in arrangements with UN partners. ACFID has completed a mapping of the ACFID Code of Conduct to the criteria of DFAT's accreditation scheme for ANGOs participating in the official Australian aid program. The resulting compliance mapping tool and supporting resources serve to assist organisations in identifying opportunities for alignment and efficiencies in their reporting and compliance requirement processes.

**Recommendation 6**

ACFID member organisations should ensure that pre-deployment training includes scenario-based discussions about power imbalances, status, and workplace cultures of the destination nation and how these factors can impact on work and personal relationships.



**Progress Update**

ACFID introduced changes to the ACFID Code of Conduct Quality Assurance Framework to address this recommendation. An expansion of the verifier for Compliance Indicator 9.4.2 requires ACFID members document evidence of induction, pre-deployment and refresher training provided to all staff and volunteers on the member's code of conduct and key policies including child protection, PSEAH, complaints and whistle blowing. Since taking effect for ACFID's members on 31 December 2019, 95% of members have self-assessed as compliant with this requirement in ACFID's Code of Conduct. Further, an additional Good Practice Indicator asks ACFID members' pre-deployment training to cover scenario-based discussions as described by Recommendation 6, and 69% of ACFID members have self-assessed as achieving this Good Practice Indicator. ACFID also monitors, curates and brokers access to resources and training via the 'Power Imbalance and Gender Inequity' section of the PSEAH Resource Hub.

**Recommendation 7** ACFID member organisations should embed psychological welfare within their HR program as part of sexual misconduct prevention processes. 

**Progress Update** ACFID's Communities of Practice for Safeguarding and for HR Managers are established fora for collaborative and peer-supported implementation of the recommendations. ACFID continues to provide systems and support for the Communities of Practice to pursue this recommendation. ACFID also monitors, curates and brokers access to resources and training via the 'Staff Welfare' section of the PSEAH Resource Hub.

**Recommendation 8** ACFID member organisations should support the understanding of healthy sexual relationships through training of field managers and regular local workshops for staff. 

**Progress Update** ACFID's Communities of Practice for Safeguarding and for HR Managers are established fora for collaborative and peer-supported implementation of the recommendations. ACFID continues to provide systems and support for the Communities of Practice to pursue this recommendation. ACFID has provided translated versions of the 'Introduction to Safeguarding' eLearning course for ACFID members to rollout the training with local partners. ACFID also monitors, curates and brokers access to resources and training via the 'Power Imbalance and Gender Inequity' section of the PSEAH Resource Hub.

**Recommendation 9** ACFID member organisations should actively adopt measures to prevent and respond to transactional sex in field work (particularly in humanitarian response work) by making changes to codes and policies, and through training and recruitment. 

**Progress Update** ACFID introduced changes to the ACFID Code of Conduct Quality Assurance Framework to address this recommendation. An expansion of the verifier for Compliance Indicator 9.4.1 requires ACFID members document a code of conduct that specifies the values and expectations of all staff and volunteers, including reference to child safeguarding behaviours, PSEA, transactional sex, anti-bullying and sexual harassment, and an obligation to staff and volunteers to report wrongdoing. Since taking effect for ACFID's members on 31 December 2019, 95% of members have self-assessed as compliant with this requirement in ACFID's Code of Conduct. New ACFID resources to support member organisations in implementing this recommendation include the 'Standards and Core Princi-

ples' and 'Power Imbalance and Gender Inequity' sections of the PSEAH Resource Hub, and forthcoming pictorial terminology and behavioural standards resources and accompanying guidance.

**Recommendation 10** ACFID member organisations should align approaches to sexual harassment, child protection and exploitation and abuse within a wider framework of gender equity whilst acknowledging the need for different responses to each. 

**Progress Update** ACFID purposefully set the scope and breadth of changes to the ACFID Code of Conduct and the Quality Assurance Framework to require members to take an organisation-wide approach to addressing PSEAH in their agencies. ACFID members have also engaged with questions of alignment via the ACFID Safeguarding Community of Practice's submission to the DFAT Safeguarding Policy Review, submitting relevant recommendations relating to minimum standards and to effective and efficient implementation.

**Recommendation 11** ACFID through its Child Rights Community of Practice should consider a primary prevention strategy for child sexual abuse in the aid sector that may include promoting awareness of the Stop it Now! Campaign. 

**Progress Update** ACFID's Communities of Practice for Safeguarding and for Child Rights are established fora for collaborative and peer-supported implementation of the recommendations. While a sector-specific primary prevention strategy or campaign is not a current focus for the Communities of Practice, ACFID continues to provide systems and support for the Communities of Practice should ACFID members agree to pursuing collective action against this recommendation.

**Recommendation 12** ACFID should consider the development of generic sexual misconduct materials with a focus on gender inequity and power imbalances that can be localised by small member organisations for implementing partners. 

**Progress Update** ACFID commissioned the development of pictorial PSEAH terminology and behavioural standards resources and will develop accompanying guidance to release with the resources that will support ACFID members to establish understanding of commonly used PSEAH terminology and explain the conduct requirements of organisational staff and personnel. ACFID has continued to rollout e-learning, available to all members and their partners, to support

training in the fundamentals of the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. ACFID maintains the PSEAH Resource Hub and supports the Safeguarding Community of Practice as platforms for members to share practical policies, tools, and resources that they are using to implement and localise PSEA.

**Recommendation 13** ACFID member organisations should preferentially document all misconduct incidents even if the management response is “informal”, considering the wishes and welfare of the victim/survivor.



**Progress Update** ACFID introduced changes to the ACFID Code of Conduct Quality Assurance Framework to address this recommendation. An expansion of the verifier for Compliance Indicator 7.3.3 requires ACFID members have a documented investigation procedure stipulating that an organisational record must be kept of all misconduct complaints, noting the ability to de-identify complaints at the request of complainant. Since taking effect for ACFID’s members on 31 December 2019, 88% of members have self-assessed as compliant with this requirement in ACFID’s Code of Conduct. To date 30 members have had their complaints policies assessed by ACFID, with 8 required to strengthen their policies to address this requirement.

**Recommendation 14** ACFID member organisations should add gender and safeguarding expertise to the desirable skills and experience sought when recruiting new members for governing bodies.



**Progress Update** ACFID introduced changes to the ACFID Code of Conduct Quality Assurance Framework to address this recommendation. The new Compliance Indicator 7.4.4 includes a new Good Practice Indicator that asks ACFID members seek out gender and safeguarding expertise as described by Recommendation 14. Since taking effect on 31 December 2019, 53% of ACFID’s members have self-assessed as achieving this Good Practice Indicator.

**Recommendation 15** ACFID member organisations should have safeguarding as a standing agenda item for governing body meetings and all misconduct incidents should be reported to senior management and governing bodies (in addition to compliance with contractual reporting requirements).



**Progress Update** ACFID introduced changes to the ACFID Code of Conduct Quality Assurance Framework to address this recommendation. The verifier for the new Compliance Indicator

7.4.4 requires ACFID members document protocols for the reporting of serious incidents to their governing body and include safeguarding as a standing agenda item for governing body meetings. Since taking effect for ACFID’s members on 31 December 2019, 94% of members have self-assessed as compliant with this requirement in ACFID’s Code of Conduct.

**Recommendation 16** ACFID member organisations should develop a leadership charter for governing members and senior managers which include a commitment to gender equity and safeguarding.



**Progress Update** ACFID members are bound by Commitment 1.5 of the ACFID Code of Conduct, and their compliance with this Commitment must be asserted by the organisation’s Governing body when submitting a compliance assessment. Based on this mechanism for documented commitment to safeguarding, ACFID’s scoping of implementation activities determined that available resources should focus on the practical implementation of this commitment at every level. No further action is planned at this time.

**Recommendation 17** ACFID member organisations should ensure that gender equity is an internal organisational priority as well as a program priority



**Progress Update** ACFID introduced changes to the ACFID Code of Conduct Quality Assurance Framework to address this recommendation. An expansion of the verifier for Compliance Indicator 2.3.1 requires ACFID members have a policy, statement or guidance document committing the member to promoting gender equality and equity and to non-discrimination regarding gender identity; and addressing how these are prioritised and advanced within organisational programming as well as within the member’s internal operations. Since taking effect for ACFID’s members on 31 December 2019, 98% of members have self-assessed as achieving this Compliance Indicator.

**Recommendation 18** ACFID member organisations should work with their staff, partners, and communities to challenge male attitudes towards girls and women, which permit or excuse sexual misconduct internally and in program activities.



**Progress Update** ACFID introduced changes to the ACFID Code of Conduct Quality Assurance Framework to address this recommendation. The Compliance Indicator 2.3.1 includes a new Good Practice Indicator that asks ACFID members

work with staff, partners, and communities to challenge attitudes which permit or excuse sexual misconduct both internally and within organisational program activities. Since taking effect on 31 December 2019, 62% of ACFID's members have self-assessed as achieving this Good Practice Indicator.

**Recommendation 19** ACFID member organisations should ensure that implementing partners have an informed understanding of what behaviours are inappropriate and how to report, investigate, document, and manage sexual misconduct incidents.

**Progress Update** ACFID introduced changes to the ACFID Code of Conduct and Quality Assurance Framework to address this recommendation. ACFID members are required to extend the new Compliance Indicator 1.5.1 and its verifier to partners through a memorandum of understanding (or similar). Since taking effect for ACFID's members on 31 December 2019, 95% of members have self-assessed as compliant with this requirement in ACFID's Code of Conduct. ACFID has produced new resources for ACFID members to use to support their implementing partners' informed understanding of appropriate behaviours and the reporting, investigation, documentation, and management of sexual misconduct incidents. These resources include translated versions of the 'Introduction to Safeguarding' eLearning course, the 'Standards and Core Principles' and 'Working with Partners' sections of the PSEAH Resource Hub, and forthcoming pictorial terminology and behavioural standards resources and accompanying guidance.

**Recommendation 20** ACFID member organisations should ensure that commitment to the rights of women and LGBTI+ persons and bystander responsibility training is included in sexual misconduct prevention training.

**Progress Update** ACFID monitors, curates and brokers access to resources and training for ACFID members via the 'Power Imbalance and Gender Inequity' section of the online PSEAH Resource Hub. With ACFID Communities of Practice, ACFID continues to scope opportunities to develop learning initiatives aligned with this recommendation.

**Recommendation 21** ACFID member organisations should ensure that appropriate staff members are trained in international investigation of sexual misconduct or outsource investigations to specialist providers.

**Progress Update** ACFID monitors, curates and brokers access to resources and training for ACFID members via the 'Investigations and Reporting' section of the online PSEAH Resource Hub.

**Recommendation 22** ACFID member organisations should provide feedback to the person making a misconduct complaint within applicable privacy provisions and in consideration of victim/survivor needs.

**Progress Update** ACFID determined that no changes to the ACFID Code of Conduct or the Quality Assurance Framework are required to address this recommendation as the recommendation is addressed by the guiding principles for developing a complaints-handling policy under Commitment 7.3. As part of the Code of Conduct Committee's current three-year focus on PSEAH, ACFID members are required to submit their complaints-handling policy for verification as part of the Code Self-Assessment process. To date 30 members have had their complaints policies assessed, with 12 required to strengthen their policies as a result.

**Recommendation 23** ACFID member organisations should develop a survivor-centred sexual misconduct response protocol based on guides, such as those produced by the CHS Alliance, to support internal investigations and UN Women.

**Progress Update** ACFID introduced changes to the ACFID Code of Conduct and Quality Assurance Framework to address this recommendation. Compliance Indicator 1.5.1 for the new Commitment 1.5 (we advance the safeguarding of those who are vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse) requires ACFID members to demonstrate a survivor-centred approach to PSEA; and the verifier requires ACFID members to outline how their policy is implemented throughout the organisation and to specifically address reporting responsibilities where an incident is identified. Since taking effect for ACFID's members on 31 December 2019, 91% of ACFID members have self-assessed as compliant with Compliance indicator 1.5.1. In addition, 30 members have had their PSEA policies assessed by ACFID. Of these, 6 organisations have been required to strengthen their PSEA policy to meet Code requirements. ACFID also monitors, curates and brokers access to resources and training via the 'Power Imbalance and Gender Inequity' section of the online PSEAH Resource Hub.

**Recommendation 24** ACFID member organisations should include reparation for victim/ survivors such as long-term access to medical and legal services and other forms of support in sexual misconduct policy design. 

**Progress Update** ACFID introduced changes to the ACFID Code of Conduct Quality Assurance Framework to address this recommendation. An expansion of the verifier for Compliance Indicator 7.3.3 requires ACFID members' complaints handling policy commits the organisation to providing appropriate assistance and referrals to complainants (for example, providing assistance to complainants might include medical, social, legal and financial assistance, or referrals to such services). Since taking effect for ACFID's members on 31 December 2019, 30 members have had their complaints handling policies assessed by ACFID. Of these, 11 organisations have been required to update their policy to meet this Code requirement.

**Recommendation 25** ACFID member organisations should be prepared to provide long-term support to victim/survivors even after the employee has ceased employment in cases of sexual harassment, assault and rape. 

**Progress Update** ACFID introduced changes to the ACFID Code of Conduct Quality Assurance Framework to address this recommendation. An expansion of the verifier for Compliance Indicator 7.3.3 requires ACFID members' complaints handling policy commits the organisation to providing appropriate assistance and referrals to complainants (for example, providing assistance to complainants might include medical, social, legal and financial assistance, or referrals to such services). Since taking effect for ACFID's members on 31 December 2019, 30 members have had their complaints handling policies assessed by ACFID. Of these, 11 organisations have been required to update their policy to meet this Code requirement.

**Recommendation 26** DFAT and other donors should recognise the central cost of sexual misconduct safeguarding expertise as an eligible program cost for offshore work. 

**Progress Update** ACFID and its members have engaged with DFAT on the central cost of sexual misconduct expertise as an eligible program cost via the ACFID Safeguarding Community of Practice's submission to the DFAT Safeguarding Policy Review.

**Recommendation 27** ACFID should create a Safeguarding Peer to Peer Mentor Scheme. 

**Progress Update** The ACFID Safeguarding Community of Practice has fostered an informal mentoring and sharing culture. The Community of Practice is also a mechanism for identifying a cohort of practice leaders for formal peer-to-peer mentoring, which will continue to be supported by ACFID as part of the current Code of Conduct Committee focus area strategy for PSEA.

**Recommendation 28** ACFID should establish a Safeguarding Community of Practice (that aligns with, but is separate from, Child Protection and other related Community of Practice). 

**Progress Update** Following its launch in early 2020, the ACFID Safeguarding Community of Practice has maintained a regular schedule of meetings, including engagement with ACFID, DFAT and other domestic and international stakeholders. With support from ACFID, the Community of Practice developed resources mapping the known PSEA context, legislation, reporting and referral pathways for nine countries; presented a session at the Oceania Connect Regional Conference 2020; and formed a jointly authored submission to the DFAT Safeguarding Policy Review. The Safeguarding Community of Practice continues to engage with the Child Rights Community of Practice to leverage expertise and align the focus of ongoing discussions and projects.

**Recommendation 29** ACFID should document enhanced safeguarding good practice and tools in its Good Practice Toolkit for the Code of Conduct. 

**Progress Update** The ACFID Good Practice Toolkit provides detailed guidance and a suite of resources and example policies to support compliance with PSEAH related requirements in the ACFID Code of Conduct and good practice. In the past year, the Good Practice Toolkit has been updated with five new resources and example policies.

**Recommendation 30** DFAT, ACFID and ACNC should work together to ensure the accessible provision of safeguarding resources. This may be through the proposed International Safeguarding Hub or through domestic arrangements. 

**Progress Update** ACFID has maintained the Good Practice Toolkit for the Code of Conduct (via [acfid.asn.au](http://acfid.asn.au)) and the PSEAH Resource Hub (via [learnwithacfid.com](http://learnwithacfid.com)) as online platforms for curated and freely available safeguarding resources,

including DFAT and ACNC resources. DFAT and ACFID resources also appear on the international Safeguarding Resource and Support Hub (via [safeguardingsupporthub.org](https://safeguardingsupporthub.org)).

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**Recommendation 31** DFAT should consider capacity development in the investigation of sexual violence as an aid priority for justice and health systems in nations where it is determined that there is clear service failure.



**Progress Update** ACFID has advocated the importance of this recommendation with DFAT. No further advocacy is planned at this time.

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**ENDS**