



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

2nd Annual update on the recommendations of the independent review to improve the practice and response in the prevention of sexual misconduct

August 2020

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, conducted by Learning4Development, was a review into 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 them. In April 2019, ACFID released its implementation plan setting out a roadmap to deliver against our commitment to the recommendations made. In June 2019, we provided our first annual update against the recommendations, setting out our key achievements, and acknowledging that our sector still had a way ahead of us to reshape and improve how our organisations protect people.

This is ACFID's second annual update, consistent with our commitment to remain accountable to victims/survivors of sexual exploitation and abuse as set out in our implementation plan. It sets out how our organisations have progressed against the commitments detailed in our implementation plan, key achievements from ACFID and its members in this regard, and includes a breakdown of our progress to date against each of the 31 recommendations set out in the VIFM report. Yet there is still more to be done. ACFID remains committed to leading our sector's collective action, and invites our members, their partners, donors, victims/survivors, and all those affected to continue to hold us to account.

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 have been organised under the three streams of ACFID's implementation plan.

POLICY AND STANDARDS

SAFEGUARDING IN THE ACFID CODE OF CONDUCT

At the 2018 Annual General Meeting, ACFID's members agreed to a new Commitment in ACFID's Code of Conduct: We advance the safeguarding of those vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse. This addition requires all members to have a Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) policy operating within their organisation. This Commitment took effect for ACFID's members in January 2019, with compliance reporting due at the end of 2019. Following on from this commitment, the ACFID Code of Conduct Committee have chosen this area of the Code as a focus area for the coming three years of Code compliance submissions. This means all ACFID's members will submit their policies to ACFID for assessment as part of the Code reporting process.

On 31 December 2019 the further changes to ACFID Code's Quality Assurance Framework took effect. This framework sets out the specific evidence members must have in place to comply with the Code, and covers all aspects of an organisation's approach, processes and systems. This change brings ACFID members' practice into alignment with the organisation-wide approach to PSEA recommended in the VIFM review and includes new requirements accountability and reporting to Boards, investigation procedures, serious incident processes, victim/survivor-centred complaints handling and important screening and onboarding processes for recruitment of staff and volunteers. The first members to report their compliance to ACFID with these new requirements submitted assessments at the end of May 2020 and these submissions are currently under assessment.

Concurrently, ACFID has released tailored guidance on the development of a PSEA policy incorporating all of the requirements under the Code, as well as the requirements of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)'s aid delivery partners. This has been complimented by refreshed ACFID guidance on the development of a complaints handling policy encompassing new guidance on incorporating an organisation-wide victim/survivor centred approach. These resources are housed on the dedicated PSEA section of ACFID's Good Practice Toolkit and are bolstered by other available resources curated here for the use of ACFID's members and other interested organisations to improve understanding and practice.

LEARNING

UNLOCKING SECTOR EXPERTISE AND THINKING

In July 2019, ACFID hosted a PSEA Design Lab for ACFID members to pitch ideas, exchange good practice, and build a coalition across the sector to advance action in addressing the recommendations. Following a series of focus groups hosted by ACFID in June, a face-to-face event was held in July 2019. Arising from the Design lab were a number of innovative ideas that ACFID has continued to support and progress since the event, including the development of e-learning tools, collaboration between in-country partners' safeguarding focal points, and developing a pictorial-based code of conduct to establish common understanding in local communities regarding the expectations of staff behaviours. Further detail is provided in the update against each recommendation from the review.

In March 2020, ACFID hosted a 'safeguarding with partners' learning event in Melbourne for members. Attended by over 30 representatives from within ACFID and live-streamed to many more, this panel brought together ACFID's members, their in-country partners and diverse insights into implementing safeguarding standards in the countries where our members work. In November 2019, ACFID was also pleased to work with the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) Alliance to broker Sexual Exploitation and Abuse investigations training for ACFID's members in Melbourne.

DEVELOPING A SUITE OF HIGH-QUALITY TOOLS FOR VIRTUAL LEARNING

In collaboration with ACFID's Human Resources Community of Practice and Safeguarding Community of Practice, ACFID has worked to develop an e-learning module covering an introduction to safeguarding. This module is additional to the three existing e-learning modules covering child safeguarding. This training is hosted on LearnwithACFID.com and is available to any organization interested in improving practice and staff understanding.

LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY

LAUNCHING ACFID'S SAFEGUARDING COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Building on the collective thinking and leadership shown throughout the Design Lab series, in March 2020, ACFID launched our Safeguarding Community of Practice. This Community of Practice has three co-convenors from within ACFID's membership and is working closely with both the Human Resources Community of Practice and the Child Rights Community of Practice. It will work closely with ACFID to provide technical advice to our progress against the VIFM recommendations.

Connecting ACFID's members to focus on safeguarding during COVID

Whilst ACFID's members continue to work from home during COVID-19, many adjustments have needed to be made for our members' plans to roll-out PSEA trainings and policies for their work in developing countries around the world in line with their commitments. COVID-19 poses unique challenges for our work in safeguarding, and yet it has never been more important. In June 2020, ACFID hosted an online "ACFID Connect" panel event on safeguarding during COVID-19 discussing these challenges with CEOs, in-country partners, and representatives of the Safeguarding Community of Practice. The recorded event was attended by over 60 representatives from ACFID's members, and is available online for those who were unable to attend.

The ACFID Board will continue to prioritise the implementation of the VIFM report and will provide the next update in July 2021.

ENDS



FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have experienced violence as a result of this issue or know someone who has you can contact 1800RESPECT at any time of day to speak to a trained counsellor. You can call 1800RESPECT on 1800 737 732.

You can also find further information online about understanding sexual assault, harassment and coercion (<https://www.1800respect.org.au/violence-and-abuse/sexual-assault-and-violence/>), including how to report to police, and how to support someone who has experienced sexual violence (<https://www.1800respect.org.au/violence-and-abuse/sexual-assault-and-violence/support>) on the 1800RESPECT website.

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

ACT – Canberra Rape Crisis Centre <http://www.crcc.org.au/>

NSW – NSW Rape Crisis <http://www.nswrapecrisis.com.au/>

NT - Sexual assault referral centres <https://nt.gov.au/wellbeing/hospitals-health-services/sexual-assault-referral-centres>

QLD – BRISSC - <https://brissc.org.au/>

SA - Yarrow Place Rape and Sexual Assault Service <http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/health+services/yarrow+place+services>

TAS – Sexual Assault Support Service <https://www.sass.org.au/>

VIC – Sexual Assault Crisis Line <https://www.sacl.com.au/>

WA – Sexual Assault Resource Centre <http://www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au/Our-services/Statewide-Services/SARC>

USING THE ACFID CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS MECHANISM

ACFID's Code of Conduct offers an independent mechanism to address concerns relating to the conduct of ACFID's members. Anyone can make a complaint against a [specific member](#) that is believed to have breached the Code.

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 then lodge a complaint with the [Code of Conduct Committee](#) who are responsible for investigating the complaint. For further information on complaints under the ACFID Code of Conduct visit [ACFID's website](#).

CONTACT ACFID

If you would like to speak to ACFID about its work on the prevention of sexual misconduct please contact

PSEAreview@acfid.asn.au.





Second Annual Safeguarding Update 2019-20

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 provides key achievements of ACFID, its members and a short report from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) on action related to the prevention of sexual misconduct.

ACFID

SAFEGUARDING E-LEARNING MODULES

ACFID has launched a new e-learning module in collaboration with sector experts covering an introduction to safeguarding. ACFID has a suite of four safeguarding e-learning courses now available on learnwithACFID.com to assist our members and other interested organisations to continue to build their knowledge and understanding of safeguarding issues.

PSEA IN THE ACFID CODE OF CONDUCT

All changes to the ACFID Code of Conduct and the Quality Assurance Framework have now taken effect for ACFID's members. The first members to report their compliance to ACFID under the full suite of requirements did so on 31 May 2020, and these reports are currently under assessment. The Code of Conduct Committee has identified PSEA as a focus area for the coming three years for ACFID's members.

PSEA IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCES

ACFID has launched tailored resources to ensure our members have the tools they need to ensure effective policies are in place to address PSEA. This year, this has included the release of ACFID's Guidance for the development of a PSEA policy, and a revised version of ACFID's guidance for the development of a complaints handling policy, which are both freely available on the Code's Good Practice Toolkit.

CONVENING MEMBERS ON SAFEGUARDING

ACFID continues to highlight the importance of safeguarding to members, and bring members together to discuss best practice, challenges and share learning and advice. This year, this has included a "Safeguarding with partners" learning event, an "ACFID Connect" event discussing Safeguarding during COVID-19, and the launch of ACFID's Safeguarding Community of Practice.



ACFID'S MEMBERS

THE BRIEN HOLDEN FOUNDATION

The Brien Holden Foundation has provided training workshops and worked closely with staff and implementing partners across the world to communicate the significance of comprehensive PSEAH and Child Safeguarding policies. A reaffirmed commitment and a clear plan for implementation and monitoring of the policies has been developed in consultation with in-country staff and partners. This active engagement has sparked constructive discourse and exchange and provided a deeper shared understanding of the necessity for a safe environment. The Brien Holden Foundation has placed emphasis on survivor-centred reporting mechanisms, ensuring an organizational culture that acknowledges and demonstrates its dedication to safeguarding its community against any form of sexual misconduct.

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 all forms of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment and child exploitation and abuse perpetrated by Oxfam staff and related personnel in the delivery of Oxfam's work. Through strong collaboration, this Group has delivered on a number of projects, such as the One Oxfam Safeguarding policies, the Global Case Management System for Safeguarding and Fraud & Corruption, the Oxfam Safeguarding Core Standards and - very relevant to current times - Confederation wide communications, such as Safeguarding during COVID-19 Risk and Mitigation Measures information packs. In 2020, Oxfam Australia has implemented the Survivor Support Policy and our Safeguarding Manager is a co-convenor of the new ACFID Safeguarding Community of Practice.

THE FRED HOLLOWES FOUNDATION

With the advent of heightened awareness regarding prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (PSEAH) more generally, and in order to keep our approach clear, simple and accessible, the Foundation decided to enhance its child protection and PSEAH positions by combining these do no harm principles and commitments into one clear Safeguarding People Policy. The Policy has been translated into 8 languages that were identified as most needed for the locations in which the Foundation works. The Foundation have also created postcards to be provided to in-country programs teams to make available in the Foundation's offices and to implementing partners. The postcards contain on one side safeguarding information and on the other ways to report. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 these postcards have yet to be distributed.

UPDATE FROM DFAT

Over the last year, DFAT has been working to implement its PSEAH Policy (released in April 2019), which was developed in consultation with the sector and informed by the VIFM Report (as per recommendations 2 and 26). The 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. DFAT continues to work with the UK and other donors to improve global standards and reporting to reduce the risk of safeguarding incidents (as per recommendations 5 and 30) and share best practice in responding to SEAH, particularly in the wake of heightened SEAH risk under COVID-19. DFAT is working in partnership with a range of governments to build their capacity to address sexual violence through strengthened justice and health systems (as per recommendation 31).

MORE INFORMATION

LEARN MORE AND GIVE FEEDBACK

Learn more about ACFID's work on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse on the website: acfid.asn.au/content/psea

Here you can also provide feedback, and contact ACFID's Director of Development Effectiveness, Jocelyn Condon, who oversees ACFID's implementation plan.

SUPPORT SERVICE AVAILABLE

A partnership with 1800RESPECT, the national sexual assault, domestic and family violence support service, has been established to provide support—including information, referrals and counselling—for anyone affected by sexual misconduct in relation to the review's remit. If you have experienced violence as a result of this issue or know someone who has you can contact 1800RESPECT (1800 737 732) at any time of day to speak to a trained counsellor.

Second Annual Safeguarding Update 2019-20

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 activity 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

N

No action has been taken

S

Scoping phase

I

Implementation phase

O

Ongoing management phase

RECOMMENDATION 1

Establish a Reportable Conduct Scheme (RCS) subject to funding and legislative requirements to apply to all organisations subject to the ACNC External Conduct Standards.

N S I O

ACFID UPDATE

ACFID has advocated on the matter to the Government and the Government has replied ([links](#)). ACFID will continue to advocate for the Government's uptake of this recommendation.

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.

N S I O

ACFID UPDATE

ACFID has introduced changes to the Code of Conduct to address this recommendation. Under Commitment 1.5 (we advance the safeguarding of those who are vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse), an addition has been made to verifier 1.5.1. The addition requires 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. This took effect for ACFID's members on 31 December 2019. The first members to report their compliance to ACFID under these new requirements submitted their reporting on 31 May 2020, and these reports are currently under assessment.

DFAT released its PSEAH Policy in April 2019, developed in consultation with the sector and informed by the VIFM Report. The 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.

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.



ACFID UPDATE ACFID has supported our Human Resources Community of Practice to engage with international pilots of the IASC Inter-agency misconduct disclosure scheme and consider the legal implications of applying such a scheme to the Australian NGO sector. ACFID is currently supporting a small group of ACFID's members working on developing a credentialing application that would operate in a manner similar to a humanitarian passporting system for rapid recruitment and deployment.

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 offshore activities through their websites.



ACFID UPDATE ACFID requires its members to place their PSEA policies on their websites. This is specified under Commitment 1.5 (we advance the safeguarding of those who are vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse) which took effect for ACFID's members on 1 January 2019. Commitment 1.5 has been identified as a focus area for Code reporting by ACFID's Code of Conduct Committee. This will require each of ACFID's members to submit their PSEA policies to ACFID when their reporting falls due, and each will be verified for compliance. This check will include confirming that the policy is available on the member's website.

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.



ACFID UPDATE Now that the PSEAH changes have come into effect, ACFID is working on a mapping of the ACFID Code of Conduct to DFAT's accreditation criteria with the assistance of an expert consultant. The map will be finalised in consultation with DFAT, and ACFID anticipates it will assist in identifying greater opportunities for alignment between the two.

DFAT and ACFID will continue to collaborate on PSEAH. DFAT continues to work with the UK and other donors to improve global standards and reporting to reduce the risk of safeguarding incidents.

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



ACFID UPDATE ACFID has introduced changes to the Code's Quality Assurance Framework to address this recommendation. Verifier 9.4.2 requires ACFID's members to have in place documented 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, prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, complaints and whistle blowing. These changes took effect for ACFID's members on 31 December 2019. The first members to report their compliance to ACFID under these new requirements submitted their reporting on 31 May 2020, and these reports are currently under assessment.

ACFID's new e-learning modules on PSEAH include a module on "vulnerability, power imbalance and gender inequity" to help further facilitate training of ACFID's members' personnel. ACFID's Code incorporates a Good Practice Indicator asking members to indicate whether their organisation provides this training as part of the Code assessment process. This will allow us to continue to support and monitor our members' achievements.

RECOMMENDATION 7

ACFID Member Organisations should embed psychological welfare within their HR program as part of sexual misconduct prevention processes.



ACFID UPDATE

In March 2020, ACFID launched our Safeguarding Community of Practice as a valuable forum for members to discuss specific issues of implementing safeguarding within their organisations. ACFID will continue to support this Community of Practice with the development of initiatives to meet our members' needs. No further action is planned at this time.

RECOMMENDATION 8

ACFID Member Organisations should support the understanding of healthy sexual relationships through training of field managers and regular local workshops for staff.



ACFID UPDATE

In March 2020, ACFID launched our Safeguarding Community of Practice as a valuable forum for members to discuss specific issues of implementing safeguarding within their organisations. ACFID will continue to support this Community of Practice with the development of initiatives to meet our members' needs. No further action is planned at this time.

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.



ACFID UPDATE

ACFID has introduced changes to the Code's Quality Assurance Framework to address this recommendation. Verifier 9.4.1 requires ACFID's members to have a documented code of conduct that specifies the values and expectations of professional conduct of all staff and volunteers. This now must include reference to child safeguarding behaviours, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, transactional sex, anti-bullying and sexual harassment; and an obligation on staff and volunteers to report wrongdoing. These changes took effect for ACFID's members on 31 December 2019. The first members to report their compliance to ACFID under these new requirements submitted their reporting on 31 May 2020, and these reports are currently under assessment.

ACFID has further updated the Code's Good Practice toolkit to include a number of resources to support members with implementing this recommendation, and have worked collaboratively with DFAT to host a number of webinars to ensure ACFID's members understand this issue.

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.



ACFID UPDATE

ACFID has purposefully ensured that the scope and breadth of changes to the Code and the Quality Assurance Framework require members to take an organisation-wide approach to addressing PSEA in their agencies. ACFID has also developed and released tailored guidance for our members on the development of a PSEAH policy to further support our members to understand how to embed this approach within policy frameworks in a practical way. In 2019, ACFID released our Gender audit toolkit helping members to understand how to apply a gender lens across their organisations. ACFID's data shows over 80 individuals have accessed and used this tool, and we continue to collect monitoring, evaluation and learning data to help us to understand further how it is being applied within our member organisations.

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.



ACFID UPDATE

In March 2020, ACFID launched our Safeguarding Community of Practice, which includes a sub-group focused on Child Safeguarding. ACFID will continue to work with this Community of Practice, and our Child Rights Community of Practice to agree a strategy for further promoting awareness in the aid sector.

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.



ACFID UPDATE

ACFID has developed a suite of e-learning modules available to all members to provide training in the fundamentals in the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. In collaboration with our members, we have adapted content from a number of member organisations to create plain language content that can be used on members' learning management systems, and translated for use in other contexts such as with implementing partners. ACFID has further created a resource and collaboration hub for our members to allow them to 'live-share' with each other practical policies, tools and resources that they are using to implement PSEA, and to ask questions of one another.

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



ACFID UPDATE

ACFID has introduced changes to the Code's Quality Assurance Framework to address this recommendation. Verifier 7.3.3 requires ACFID's members to have in place a documented investigation procedure, which stipulates that all misconduct complaints must be recorded, subject to the wishes and welfare of the complainant. These changes took effect for ACFID's members on 31 December 2019. The first members to report their compliance to ACFID under these new requirements submitted their reporting on 31 May 2020, and these reports are currently under assessment.

ACFID has also released a revised version of our guidance for the development of a complaints handling policy that incorporates these changes and provides practical examples of the implementation of a victim/survivor centred approach. This guidance is available on the Code's Good Practice Toolkit.

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.



ACFID UPDATE

ACFID has introduced changes to the Code's Quality Assurance Framework to address this recommendation. A new Good Practice Indicator (not compulsory for compliance) at Commitment 7.4 asks ACFID's members to seek out gender and safeguarding expertise as desirable skills and experience when recruiting new persons to the governing body. These changes took effect for ACFID's members on 31 December 2019. ACFID will continue to monitor our members' progress on achieving this 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).



ACFID UPDATE

ACFID has introduced changes to the Code's Quality Assurance Framework to address this recommendation. Verifier 7.4.4 now requires ACFID's members to have documented protocols for the reporting of serious incidents to the governing body. This verifier further requires that safeguarding form a standing agenda item for governing body meetings. These changes took effect for ACFID's members on 31 December 2019. The first members to report their compliance to ACFID under these new requirements submitted their reporting on 31 May 2020, and these reports are currently under assessment.

ACFID has also updated our standing agenda for ACFID Board meetings to ensure it includes a safeguarding item.

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.



ACFID UPDATE

ACFID's initial scoping of this recommendation revealed the breadth of existing, current commitments from our sector to gender equity and safeguarding. These include a resolution at the ACFID Annual General Meeting 2018 acknowledging the critical importance of sector leadership to the prevention of sexual misconduct, exploitation, abuse and harassment and affirming the importance of adopting a transformative approach that includes challenging gendered power relations. This resolution was passed unanimously. ACFID's members are also bound by the Code's Commitment 1.5 - We advance the safeguarding of those who are vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse, and their compliance with this commitment must be asserted by the organisation's Governing body when submitting a compliance assessment. Taken together, ACFID's assessment was that sufficient documentation of the commitment of our leaders in this regard already exists, and thus our 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.



ACFID UPDATE

ACFID has introduced changes to the Code's Quality Assurance Framework to address this recommendation. Verifier 2.3.1 requires ACFID's members to have a policy, statement or guidance document that commits the member to promoting gender equality and equity and to non-discrimination in regard to gender identity. This verifier has been expanded to now also require members to address how these are prioritised and advanced within organisational equity programming as well as within the organisation's internal operations. These changes took effect for ACFID's members on 31 December 2019. The first members to report their compliance to ACFID under these new requirements submitted their reporting on 31 May 2020, and these reports are currently under assessment.

ACFID's guidance for the development of a PSEAH policy, released in August 2019 includes specific guidance on ensuring policies capture this commitment. As part of the Code of Conduct Committee's selection of PSEAH as a focus area for the Code, these policies will now be verified in assessments of ACFID members' Code compliance over the coming three years.

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.



ACFID UPDATE

ACFID has introduced changes to the Code's Quality Assurance Framework to address this recommendation. A new Good Practice Indicator (not compulsory for compliance) at Commitment 2.3 asks ACFID's members work with staff, partners and communities to challenge attitudes which permit or excuse sexual misconduct both internally and within organisational program activities. These changes took effect for ACFID's members on 31 December 2019. The first members to report their compliance to ACFID under these new requirements submitted their reporting on 31 May 2020, and these reports are currently under assessment.

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.



ACFID UPDATE

ACFID has introduced changes to the Code to address this recommendation. The requirement for a PSEA policy under Commitment 1.5 must be extended to partners. ACFID's members were asked to nominate partners to attend the PSEA Design Lab in June 2019. ACFID supporting a number of members to bring overseas implementing partners to this event. In March 2020, ACFID also hosted a learning event discussing safeguarding with partners, including a panellist from a members' partner organisation as part of the discussion. This event was attended by over 30 representatives from within ACFID and live-streamed to many more. A learning summary of the event was produced and is available on ACFID's website.

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.



ACFID UPDATE

ACFID has worked to prepare practical guidance resources for members to implement this recommendation through a suite of resources on the Code's Good Practice Toolkit dedicated to PSEA. These resources were released in August 2019. These materials include guidance on sexual misconduct training that incorporates the requirements of this recommendation. We continue to work on strengthening the practical resources available to members to support their work on 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.



ACFID UPDATE

In collaboration with the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) Alliance, ACFID has worked to broker Sexual Exploitation and Abuse investigations training for our members. This training took place in Melbourne in November 2019. ACFID will continue to work with CHS Alliance to make subsequent modules of this training available to members.

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.



ACFID UPDATE

ACFID's assessment was that guidance on the implementation of this recommendation did not require changes to the ACFID Code as this principle is already reflected in the guiding principles for developing a complaints-handling policy under Commitment 7.3, including transparency and responsiveness. ACFID has since revised and released updated guidance on the development of a complaints handling policy that has specific guidance on this issue. As part of the Code of Conduct's Committee's focus on PSEA for the coming three years, ACFID's members will be required to submit their complaints handling policy for verification as part of the Code Self-Assessment process.

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.



ACFID UPDATE

ACFID introduced a new Commitment for members on 1 January 2019. Commitment 1.5 (we advance the safeguarding of those who are vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse) requires members to demonstrate a survivor-centred approach to PSEA, to outline how this policy is implemented in the organisation, and to specifically address the agencies reporting responsibilities where an incident is identified. As part of the Code of Conduct Committee's selection of PSEAH as a focus area for the Code, these policies will now be verified in assessments of ACFID members' Code compliance over the coming three years.

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



ACFID UPDATE

ACFID has introduced changes to the Code's Quality Assurance Framework to address this recommendation. Verifier 7.3.3 requires ACFID members' complaints handling policies to now also commit 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). These changes took effect for ACFID's members on 31 December 2019. The first members to report their compliance to ACFID under these new requirements submitted their reporting on 31 May 2020, and these reports are currently under assessment.

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.



ACFID UPDATE

ACFID has introduced changes to the Code's Quality Assurance Framework to address this recommendation. Verifier 7.3.3 requires ACFID members' complaints handling policies to now also commit 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). These changes took effect for ACFID's members on 31 December 2019. The first members to report their compliance to ACFID under these new requirements submitted their reporting on 31 May 2020, and these reports are currently under assessment.

RECOMMENDATION 26

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



ACFID UPDATE

In collaboration with a small sub-group from the Safeguarding Community of Practice and ACFID's Development Practice Committee, ACFID have drafted a initial concept to conduct research to understand how safeguarding is being implemented, including the associated resourcing required for this to be done effectively. ACFID anticipates that the resulting report could help to inform DFAT's response to this recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION 27

ACFID should create a Safeguarding Peer to Peer Mentor Scheme.



ACFID UPDATE

Through ACFID's Safeguarding Community of Practice and the PSEA resource and collaboration hub, an informal mentoring and sharing culture is growing. Through these fora, ACFID continues to identify a cohort of leaders who could form the foundations of a successful formal Peer-to-Peer mentoring scheme. The establishment of this scheme will be progressed through the Code's focus area strategy for PSEA over the coming three years.

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 (CoP))



ACFID UPDATE

ACFID's Safeguarding Community of Practice was successfully launched in March 2020.

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

N S I O

ACFID UPDATE

ACFID engaged expert consultants to prepare and expand resources and guidance for ACFID's members. These materials were released on ACFID's website in August 2019. ACFID has also developed a resource and collaboration hub for members to 'live-share' policies, guidance and resources with each other. ACFID continues to monitor these spaces and update resources as required, and will curate high-quality resources placed on the collaboration hub onto the Code's Good Practice Toolkit.

RECOMMENDATION 30 DFAT, ACFID & 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.

N S I O

ACFID UPDATE

ACFID continues to work closely and proactively with DFAT and the ACNC to ensure the accessible provision of safeguarding resources. ACFID continues to develop and release safeguarding resources on our Good Practice Toolkit, which is freely available. ACFID has liaised with the implementing team of the UK's International Safeguarding and Resource hub to have our resources utilised on this hub (which was launched in May 2020), and have also encouraged our members to on-share their own resources on the hub.

DFAT resources on child protection and PSEAH are also available on the International Safeguarding Hub.

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.

N S I O

ACFID UPDATE

ACFID will continue to discuss the importance of this recommendation with DFAT through the joint PSEA task group.

DFAT is working in partnership with a range of governments to build their capacity to address sexual violence through strengthened justice and health systems.

