



Child Safeguarding

ACFID Code of Conduct Topic Guide

This guide outlines the requirements in the ACFID Code of Conduct related to Child Safeguarding. Additional guidance can be found in the online [Good Practice Toolkit](#).



QUALITY PRINCIPLE 1: RIGHTS, JUSTICE AND SAFEGUARDING

COMMITMENT 1.4 We advance the safeguarding of children.

Compliance Indicators Verifiers

Members are required to ensure they have appropriate mechanisms to assess, manage and mitigate the risks relevant to these Compliance Indicators and Verifiers when working with partners.

1.4.1 Members demonstrate their organisational commitment to the safeguarding of children.

- Policy document applicable to all governing body members, staff, contractors, volunteers and visitors to projects, that includes:
 - A commitment to effective leadership to enable the safeguarding of children.
 - Definition of a child as anyone under 18.
 - The reporting procedure for child exploitation and abuse suspicions or allegations, code of conduct or policy non-compliance, and sanctions that would be applied in the event of breaches.
 - A commitment to communication of the Child Safeguarding policy and procedures to all governing body members, staff, volunteers, visitors to projects and partners.
 - A commitment to report to any donors that require reporting under any funding agreements.
 - A commitment to providing child safeguarding training for personnel at induction and regularly thereafter depending on risk profile.
 - A commitment to preventing a person from working with children if they pose an unacceptable risk to children.
 - Approach to assessing risk and monitoring risk and child safeguarding processes of all activities.
 - A commitment to the use of images and personal information for promotion, fundraising and development education which ensures the privacy and safeguarding of children.
 - The process for regular review of the policy, at least every 5 years.

- Policy or procedures applicable to all governing body members, staff, contractors, volunteers and visitors to projects, that cover:
 - Recruitment screening processes for all personnel in contact with children which include:
 - Criminal record checks before engagement; statutory declarations of local legal equivalent where criminal record checks are unavailable or unreliable. Checks must be conducted for each country in which the individual has lived for 12 months or longer over the last 5 years, and for the individual's countries of citizenship.
 - Verbal referee checks.
 - The following additional screening measure for all personnel working with children:
 - Behavioural-based interview questions.
- Risk assessments of all activities including identification of risks and an outline of mitigations measures, which are regularly re-assessed.
- Employment contracts which contain:
 - Provisions for the prevention of a person from working with children if they present an unacceptable risk to children.
 - Suspension or transfer to other duties for any employee who is under investigation and provision to dismiss any employee after an investigation.
- Child safeguarding training is provided to all personnel, including on reporting procedures.

1.4.2 Members have a code of conduct that advances child safeguarding behaviours.

- A documented code of conduct that covers the following with regard to child safeguarding:
 - Appropriate language, communications and behaviour.
 - Banning of alcohol and drugs.
 - Gifts to children.
 - Physical contact with children.
 - Banning of sexual relations with children.
 - Child labour.
 - Photos and images.
 - Reporting obligations.
- The code of conduct must be signed by relevant governing body members, staff, contractors, volunteers and project visitors.

1.4.3 Members have documented approaches to child safeguarding incident reporting and complaints handling that are child-focused, aligned with principles of privacy and that promote safety and dignity.

- Documented and accessible policies and/or procedures for:
 - Child safeguarding incident reporting
 - Child-friendly complaints handling

These policies and/or procedures must be known by all personnel and:

- Cover:
 - How to report and respond to child exploitation and abuse suspicions and/or allegations.
 - The relevant roles and responsibilities of governing body, staff and volunteers.
 - How concerns or allegations of child exploitation, abuse, or noncompliance with the code of conduct or policy will be managed, including sanctions that would be applied in the event of breaches.
 - How reporting obligations will be fulfilled.
 - Contact information to enable an external person to report.
 - Appointment of a child protection incident reporting focal person.
- Reflect the following principles:
 - The safety and wellbeing of children and young people are prioritised.
 - Consistency with relevant legislation, including compliance with mandatory reporting responsibilities, privacy, and employment law.
 - Protection of all parties involved in the complaint of concern.
 - Confidentiality (as distinct from secrecy).
 - Expedient reporting.
 - Truthfulness.
 - Fairness.
 - Professionalism.



QUALITY PRINCIPLE 2: LOCALLY LED ACTION AND INCLUSION

COMMITMENT 2.4 We promote the participation of children.

Compliance Indicators

Verifiers

The Indicators and Verifiers under this Commitment are relevant to members with initiatives involving or directly affecting children.

2.4.1 Members whose initiatives involve or directly affect children demonstrate an organisational commitment to their participation.

- Policy, statement or guideline document that commits the member to the participation of children in development and humanitarian initiatives which target them.

2.4.2 Members whose initiatives involve or directly affect children enable children's views to influence initiative designs.

- Design or planning framework, tools, templates which require or approaches which consistently show evidence consultation with children, contextual analysis of their needs and rights, and identification of opportunities for their participation.

2.4.3 Members whose initiatives involve or directly affect children have complaints handling processes that are child friendly.

- Complaints handling processes are child friendly.



QUALITY PRINCIPLE 5: COLLABORATION

COMMITMENT 5.1 We respect and understand those with whom we collaborate.

Compliance Indicators

Verifiers

5.1.2 Members undertake due diligence and capacity assessments of organisations with whom they work in formal partnerships.

- A documented assessment process that includes:
 - o ...Capacity assessment to implement safeguarding practices including child protection and prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.

COMMITMENT 5.2 We have a shared understanding of respective contributions, expectations, responsibilities and accountabilities of all parties.

Compliance Indicators

Verifiers

5.2.1 Members negotiate shared goals and respective contributions with partners and those they collaborate with.

- For formal partnerships, partnership agreement template or examples of partnership agreements that consistently describe:
 - o ...Specific statements about child protection, prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, policies, procedures and incident reporting (see 1.4 and 1.5).



QUALITY PRINCIPLE 6: COMMUNICATIONS

COMMITMENT 6.2 We collect and use information ethically.

Compliance Indicators

Verifiers

6.2.2 Members have organisational requirements for the collection of information, images, and stories.

- Policy, statement or guidance document that:
 - Commits the organisation to use images and messages in communications in a way that portrays the affected people (including children) in a manner that respects their dignity, values, history, religion, language and culture, and protects their safety and rights.
 - Is consistent with ACFID's Fundraising Charter (8.1.2).
 - Includes a requirement for free, prior and informed consent and acknowledges people's right to information.
 - Requires that the collection of information, images and stories does not harm people or the environment.
 - Applies to all information, stories and images collected for research, evaluation, and donor and supporter purposes.



QUALITY PRINCIPLE 8: RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

COMMITMENT 8.2 We source our resources ethically.

Compliance Indicators

Verifiers

8.1.2 Members report their compliance with the ACFID Fundraising Charter annually to their own governing body.

- The ACFID Fundraising Charter requires that members have processes and procedures in place to ensure that:
 - ... Images and messages used for fundraising will not:
 - Be untruthful, exaggerated or misleading (e.g. not doctored, created as fiction or misrepresenting the country, etc.).
 - Be used if they may endanger the people they are portraying.
 - Be used without the free, prior and informed consent of the person/s portrayed, including children, their parents or guardians.
 - Present people in a dehumanised manner.
 - Infringe child protection policies and in particular show children in a naked and/or sexualised manner.
 - Feature dead bodies or dying people.



QUALITY PRINCIPLE 9: PEOPLE AND CULTURE

COMMITMENT 9.4 We enable our people to conduct themselves professionally and according to our stated values.

Compliance Indicators

Verifiers

9.4.1 Members specify the expectation of professional conduct of all staff and volunteers.

- A documented code of conduct that specifies the values and expectations of professional conduct of all staff and volunteers. This must include reference to child safeguarding behaviours, prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, transactional sex, antiracism, and anti-bullying; and an obligation on staff and volunteers to report wrongdoing.
- Acknowledgement by staff and volunteers of their acceptance of the code of conduct (e.g. signed, incorporated into employment or volunteer agreement).

9.4.2 Members' staff and volunteers work in accordance with agreed standards of practice.

- 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.

Good Practice Indicators (not required for compliance)

COMMITMENT 1.3

- Information and training for staff and partners on Standards for Child Protection in Emergencies is provided, and related compliance mechanisms established.

COMMITMENT 1.4

- A child safeguarding focal person is in place who is responsible for child safeguarding systems.
- Policies and/or procedures address all National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.
- Compliance with or analysis of breaches of relevant safeguarding policies are periodically reported to the governing body.
- Child safeguarding policies and practices are adapted to local contexts in collaboration with local stakeholders.
- Commitment to child safeguarding is promoted to the public and external stakeholders.

COMMITMENT 2.4

- A staff person with specialised expertise in child-centred development is in place.
- Activities that seek to build the capacities of children to participate and influence issues that affect them are supported.
- Child-centred development and/or child rights training is provided for key personnel and partners.

COMMITMENT 5.1

- Joint capacity assessment and re-assessment is undertaken with partners, extended to areas such as human resources, project cycle management systems, risk management, financial management, policy compliance and safeguarding of children and those vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse.

Definitions

Child Safeguarding	Actions, policies and procedures that create and maintain protective environments for children to protect them from exploitation and abuse of all kinds (adapted from DFAT Child Protection Policy).
Contact with Children	Working on an activity or in a position that involves or may involve contact with children, either under the position description or due to the nature of the work environment (see also Working with Children definition)
Focal person	A focal person provides a key role in raising awareness, coordinating, supporting and advising on the development and implementation of policy and practices relevant to the topic area, e.g. child safeguarding.
Personnel	Personnel are either employed by an organisation, engaged by an organisation on a subcontract basis, or engaged by an organisation on a voluntary or unpaid basis. Personnel can include paid staff, volunteers, interns, trustees, board members.
Working with Children	Being engaged in an activity with a child where the contact would reasonably be expected as a normal part of the activity and the contact is not incidental to the activity. Working includes volunteering or other unpaid works (see also Contact with Children definition).

ACFID Resources and Communities of Practice

ACFID Child Protection eLearning (3 modules) - available at learnwithacfid.com

[ACFID Guidelines for the Development of a Child Safeguarding Policy](#)

Practice Note: [Youth Participation in Development](#)

[Join](#) the ACFID Child Rights Community of Practice.

[Join](#) the ACFID Safeguarding Community of Practice.