

# Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Title	<b>Child Protection &amp; Safeguarding Policy</b>
Policy Type	<b>Company Operational Policy</b>
Effective Date	<b>March 2017</b>
Last Revised	<b>February 2016</b>
Policy Number	<b>COP 1.0</b>

## **1. Statement of Purpose**

- a.) The purpose of this Policy is to state ChildFund New Zealand's core values and commitments in relation to the children that it serves
- b.) The core values and commitments set out in this Policy are intended to establish the highest ethical and moral practice standards which are to be employed by ChildFund New Zealand in all of its work and activities

## **2. Scope**

- a.) ChildFund New Zealand acknowledges the Global Child Protection Policy of the ChildFund Alliance and subscribes to its Child Safeguarding Standards. This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the ChildFund Alliance Programme Standards
- b.) For the purpose of this Policy:
  - i.) A 'child' is defined as any person under the age of 18 years; and
  - ii.) 'ChildFund Representative' is defined as ChildFund New Zealand Directors, employees, contractors, volunteers, sponsors and donors; this entails the singular use of the term 'ChildFund Representative', as well as its plural 'ChildFund Representatives'
- c.) ChildFund New Zealand holds the following values with regard to children:
  - i.) **Dignity and Worth of Every Child**

Creation of safe environments that promote the dignity and worth of each child, regardless of ethnicity, race, colour, language, religion, opinion, gender, origins, birth status, ability, or belonging to a particular group
  - ii.) **Children's Rights to Participate**

Recognition of children as active and competent contributors to their own development, with the right to participate in decisions affecting their lives, in accordance with their development and evolving capacities
  - iii.) **Empowerment**

Empowerment of children to develop capacity for self-protection and to advocate on their own behalf in respect of issues that concern them.

#### iv.) Respect for Children's Rights

Promotion of the four principles which underpin the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC), that:

- All children have the right to protection from discrimination on any grounds;
- The best interests of the child should be the primary consideration in all matters affecting the child;
- Children have the right to life, survival and development; and
- All children have the right to an opinion and for that opinion to be heard in all contexts

### 3. Core Commitments

a.) ChildFund New Zealand will apply the highest ethical, moral and practice standards in all of its work and activities

b.) ChildFund New Zealand will commit to strengthening the protective environments where children live and supporting community-based child protection mechanisms to help support prevention and response to abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation. This will include advocating for policy, regulation and legislation changes that will improve conditions for children

c.) Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, ChildFund New Zealand specifically, emphatically and unequivocally denounces all of the following practices:

#### i.) Discrimination

##### *Definition*

Discrimination refers to the unequal treatment of a person or persons, based on personal or group characteristics, including but not limited to:

- Religion;
- Ethnicity
- Gender;
- Language; and
- Disability

##### **Commitments**

- ChildFund New Zealand prohibits discrimination against children on the grounds of religion, ethnicity, gender, language, or any other characteristic;
- ChildFund New Zealand supports religious, linguistic and ethnic diversity and tolerance amongst ChildFund Representatives and beneficiaries;
- ChildFund New Zealand shall create environments that protect and enhance the rights and opportunities for children with disabilities in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

## ii.) Harassment

### *Definition*

Harassment refers to inappropriate comments, and behavior that is offensive, demeaning, intimidating, or physically harmful. It may include:

- Physical harassment (assault, impeding or blocking movement); and
- Unwanted attention or verbal harassment (demeaning language, labeling or use of nicknames)

Harassment can be relative to:

- Race;
- Ancestry;
- Place of origin;
- Ethnic origin;
- Citizenship;
- Appearance;
- Creed;
- Gender;
- Sexual orientation;
- Age;
- Record of offence;
- Marital status;
- Family status;
- Political opinion;
- Health;
- Abilities status;
- Children in conflict with the law; and
- Children without documentation, including birth registration

### **Commitments**

- ChildFund New Zealand prohibits all kinds of harassment of children by ChildFund Representatives;
- ChildFund New Zealand will endeavour to maintain environments that promote and support the dignity and self-esteem of all children that it reaches through work and activities
- In addition, ChildFund Representatives will be screened according to ChildFund Alliance Safeguarding Guidelines

## iii.) Sexual Harassment

### *Definition*

Sexual harassment with respect to a child is defined as any conduct of a sexual nature towards that child. It includes, but is not limited to:

- Comments or demands of a sexual nature;
- Leering;

- Sexually suggestive gestures; and
- Visual displays or degrading jokes of a sexual nature

#### **Commitments**

- ChildFund New Zealand expressly prohibits sexual or sexually suggestive behavior towards children or in the presence of children

#### **iv.) Exploitation**

##### *Definition*

Exploitation of children refers to the abuse of power by coercing or leading children into activities or situations that humiliate and violate their rights. It includes, but is not limited to:

- All forms of child trafficking (selling or buying children for economic gain or in any way supporting such practices);
- Child marriage;
- Hazardous forms of child labour or recruitment or use of children in armed forces or groups; and
- The use of imaged of children and statements by them in the media in any way that is exploitative, or portrays them in ways that are disrespectful or undignified. (Privacy and permission for the use of child images will respect ChildFund New Zealand's Responsible Fundraising Guidelines and the Fundraising Institute of New Zealand's Code of Ethics.)

#### **v.) Sexual Exploitation**

##### *Definition*

Sexual exploitation of children is the abuse of power by an adult or a child to entice or coerce a child or children into sexual activity. It includes, but is not limited to:

- Prostitution of children;
- Sexual abuse;
- Child pornography; and
- Any forms of transactional sex wherein a child is coerced into sexual activities

#### **Commitments**

- ChildFund New Zealand strictly prohibits any sexual activity between ChildFund Representatives and children whatsoever. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defence;
- ChildFund New Zealand strictly prohibits exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex with children, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior. This includes exchange of assistance that is due to children and/or their families, or to persons involved as beneficiaries within ChildFund New Zealand programmes

## vi.) Neglect

### *Definition*

Neglect of a child occurs when there is a recurring failure to provide a child's basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter and supervision to the extent that the child's health and development are placed at risk. It also includes abandonment and withholding of necessary medical treatment

### **Commitments**

- As far as possible, ChildFund New Zealand will facilitate the provision of basic needs and care for children to enable them to realise their full development potential;
- ChildFund New Zealand prohibits the deliberate neglect of children and will endeavour to facilitate appropriate care and to help secure basic needs for children

## vii.) Abuse

### *Definition*

Abuse of a child involves a pattern of verbal, physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment that results in damage to the child's health, emotional and/or psychological development. It can take the form of threatening, ridiculing, ignoring or isolating the child. It may also include exposure to violence, such as when a child witnesses domestic violence or is directly exposed to family violence, civil violence, or armed conflict.

### **Commitments**

- ChildFund New Zealand prohibits all forms of abuse and will endeavour to maintain a positive environment for healthy child development. ChildFund Representatives will refer all cases of abuse to appropriate services;
- ChildFund Representatives will not engage in violent or abuse activity at any time, but in particular towards children, or in the presence of children. All instances of suspected or identified child abuse will immediately be escalated to ChildFund New Zealand's Whistle-blower Policy and appropriate actions will be taken

d.) ChildFund New Zealand's programme design must be aimed at reaching the most deprived, excluded and vulnerable; this may include children with disabilities. ChildFund New Zealand incorporates disability investigations into programme visits by reflecting on how its programmes and projects seek to remove barriers to participation and to achieve equal opportunity and equitable outcomes for children, youth and caregivers with disabilities

e.) At in-country level - where ChildFund New Zealand is not the Alliance-lead - this consideration will fall under the direction of the relevant lead

f.) ChildFund New Zealand must commit to ensuring the projects it supports do not increase rights violations for children. Risk assessments will be made across all stages of the project lifecycles

- g.) ChildFund New Zealand will work to minimise the potential risks to children through Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy compliance, supporting partner-organisations with compliance and comprehensive risk assessments and strategies that minimise risks to children
- h.) ChildFund New Zealand will uphold international treaties in partnership with government, civil society organisations, families and others to realise the best interests of the child, and will coordinate activities with other actors to ensure best outcomes for children
- i.) ChildFund New Zealand will commit to putting in place child-friendly mechanisms for feedback and complaints in relation to programmes and policies and for determining actions to take in response to breaches in policies
- j.) ChildFund New Zealand will commit to ongoing training of staff in child protection. ChildFund New Zealand Programme staff must commit to ChildFund Alliance learning programmes on the issue of child protection. All new staff will undertake an induction programme that requires them to read and understand the specific material, information and policies relating to child protection, including ChildFund New Zealand and ChildFund Alliance policy statements and procedures
- k.) ChildFund New Zealand will commit to assessing all employees prior to employment to ensure that they do not pose an unacceptable risk to children’s safety or wellbeing. This will extend to the referee-checking process, and mandatory police clearance checks
- l.) All Programme personnel must undergo police-checked every two years

**CEO Approved:**

CEO's Signature	
Date	