

POLICY NAME: Child Safeguarding Policy

APPROVED BY: CPAC

POLICY OWNER: Co-Directors, HR

CATEGORY: Human Resources

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1. INTRODUCTION

World Renew, in alignment to The ACT Alliance membership requirements and principles, has updated this Child Safeguarding Policy of 2015, to further minimize the risk of harm to children who come into contact with World Renew activities. This policy complements, but does not replace, the World Renew Code of Conduct, and Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct. It also complements World Renew's Code of Good Practice and the principles of the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGO's in disaster relief. By aligning with ACT Alliance requirements it therefore meets global best practices, drawing on Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS), SPHERE Standards, including the accompaniment Child Protection Minimum Standards, and IASC-gender handbook in humanitarian action.

Due to the nature of its work, World Renew and its Partners work with some of the most vulnerable children all over the world. Over the past few decades, we have all become increasingly aware of the particular risk of abuse and exploitation to children by those in positions of power and trust, including in humanitarian and faith-based settings.

World Renew believes that all forms of violence, abuse and exploitation are an affront to children's dignity as human beings. We believe that all children have a right to be safe at all times, and that all children have equal rights to protection from all forms of abuse, neglect, and exploitation, regardless of their gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, nationality, age, religious or political beliefs, family background, economic status, legal status, ability, physical or mental health or criminal background, and that any form of child abuse or exploitation is unacceptable.

World Renew recognizes the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which has been ratified by 194 countries. The UNCRC is the main international human rights convention for children. A majority of the 52 articles within the UNCRC are concerned with children's rights to protection from all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation. Two foundational principles of the UNCRC are the best interests of the child and participation. This means that any decision or action taken will always be done in the best interests of the child, and that children will be consulted and their views taken into account on all matters involving them.

2. SCOPE

This policy is intended to apply to any work implemented or funded by World Renew, all World Renew staff and volunteers, and World Renew partners.

3. PURPOSE

The policy applies to all people who work in and through World Renew and its partners as they have unique access to children. Rather than adding to risks that children already face, the intention of this policy is to assist World Renew as it seeks to be part of a global effort to value, support and protect children and childhood. This policy seeks to reduce risks to children as a result of World Renew's work and to ensure that acts of abuse are identified and dealt with if they occur. It also seeks to reduce the risk to World Renew and World Renew staff and volunteers of suspicion and allegation.

4. PRINCIPLES

While compliance with applicable law is required, the philosophical basis of World Renew's policy to safeguard children is informed by three main sources: a reading of Christian scriptures, World Renew values, and an understanding of international development practice:

- Christian scriptures teach that children are to be cared for and protected; children can participate in the community; children are to be taught; children can serve as an example to adults.
- World Renew's Values include a commitment to the whole person, which encompasses not just physical, social, spiritual and emotional needs, but also understands needs and opportunities of a range of life stages.
- As an organisation involved in community and international development, we understand that good development for a community must work for the most vulnerable groups in a community. In other words, what is good for children is good for communities.

The expression of this philosophy is found in international law. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is an agreement of which 193 countries are a party. It commits signatory countries to ensure that children's rights are upheld in the domains of safety, survival, development and participation.

5. POLICY

World Renew takes a zero tolerance approach to child abuse, respects children's right to participate, and ensures priority is always given to the best interests of the child. World Renew staff and volunteers are expected to take the same approach when developing and implementing programmes and projects. World Renew also respects children's right to participate in any decision affecting them, and to have their views heard and acted upon.

Whenever there are conflicting interests, World Renew will ensure that the rights, needs and welfare of the child will always come first – meeting the principle of the ‘best interests of the child’.

World Renew staff and volunteers will adhere to all child protection laws. This includes travel and work, as well as international laws and conventions in relation to all forms of child abuse and child exploitation, including but not limited to: child sex tourism, child sex trafficking, child labour, and child pornography.

6. WORLD RENEW STANDARDS FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

a) Safe Ideas

World Renew’s Child Safeguarding Policy outlines the essential ideas, principles and standards that World Renew staff and volunteers and World Renew’s partner organisations are expected to work within. Guidelines that develop the ideas in this policy document and describe its implementation will be developed and regularly updated to ensure that they meet the needs of the organisation and keep up with good practice. This policy will be reviewed every three years.

b) Safe Behaviour

World Renew has developed and will maintain a Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct that details acceptable and appropriate behaviour for World Renew staff and volunteers. All World Renew staff and volunteers will be expected to sign and abide by the Child Safeguarding code of conduct.

c) Safe People

This policy will be a feature of recruitment processes for all World Renew staff and volunteers. Interviews will include questions relating to the safeguarding of children. All World Renew staff and volunteers, prior to commencing work, will be subject to referee and National Criminal History Record Checks. Staff or volunteers who pose an unacceptable risk to children will not be offered paid or voluntary positions at World Renew.

d) Safe Plans

All programmes that are run by World Renew staff or volunteers, or funded by World Renew, will include an assessment of activity-related risks to children in their planning. As part of assessing and managing risks to children within our work, World Renew will identify aspects of local law relating to the protection of children and ascertain the resources available in various locations and jurisdictions for notification and assistance in the event that abuse is reported or suspected.

All Communications, including the use of images and children's information, will be undertaken in accordance with World Renew's Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct.

e) Skills for Safeguarding

All World Renew Staff and Volunteers will be made aware of World Renew's Child Safeguarding Policy, including how to report a concern about abuse of children in World Renew run or funded programmes.

World Renew will communicate its Child Safeguarding Policy to relevant stakeholders, including children, in a form that is accessible for them and appropriate to their context and level of contact with World Renew.

In addition, training will be made available to staff, tailored to the frequency and intensity of their contact with children in their work with World Renew.

f) Reporting and Investigating Child Protection Concerns

All World Renew Staff and Volunteers are required to report to their designated Safeguarding and Complaints Focal Point, according to the process outlined in this Policy, or the process outlined in the World Renew Complaints Policy, when they know of or have reasonable suspicion of abuse of a child or children. The Safeguarding and Complaints Focal Point will determine whether the concern being reported is handled as a complaint against a member of World Renew Staff or Volunteer or whether it is dealt with in the context of a broader child protection programme. This policy details the procedure for confidential reporting of concerns about child safety, or allegations of abuse or non-compliance with this policy, the Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct or World Renew's Code of Conduct.

Child Safeguarding reporting procedures include the following minimum standards and should be read in conjunction with the World Renew Complaints Policy:

- Appoint one person as a Child Safeguarding focal point (this can be the same as the Complaints focal point - ie a designated Safeguarding and Complaints Focal Point) in each World Renew office or programme location.
- Have clear procedures/guidelines for how staff and others should report a breach of the Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct by a staff member or other person associated with World Renew.
- Ensure that during any investigation, the safety of the child remains paramount, keeping in mind the best interests of the child at all times. Have clear procedures/guidelines, which are accessible and appropriate to the local context, for how community members and children themselves can report a breach of the Code of Conduct by a staff member or other person associated with World Renew.
- Report any allegations or complaints to the Safeguarding and Complaints Focal Point (mandatory) and to management/donors/authorities as appropriate, depending on the

- nature and severity of the case and requirements of donor.
- Review all reported cases, and determine whether a full investigation is necessary, ensuring that the safety of the child is the primary concern.
 - If a staff member or other person associated with World Renew is alleged to have abused or exploited a child, they will be suspended from their post, or be assigned modified duties, until the investigation is concluded.
 - If a staff member or other person associated with World Renew is found to have abused or exploited a child, they will be dismissed from their post.
 - Take any disciplinary measures necessary against staff or others if they are found to have breached the Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct.
 - Depending on the nature of the breach, provide support such as training and counselling, increased supervision or transfer to other duties, for staff whose behaviour is in breach of the Code of Conduct but does not pose a significant risk to the safety of children, for example shouting at a child.
 - Subject to all applicable legal requirements, the need to respond to any legal proceedings and as may be necessary for the proper investigation of an allegation, all information about child protection concerns and reports is to be kept confidential, discussed only with the Safeguarding and Complaints Focal Point, and any other parties designated by them according to reporting requirements.

The reporting process will be accessible for World Renew staff and volunteers and for children or families of children that may experience abuse in the course of a World Renew programme. All concerns and allegations must be reported and followed up according to this policy, the World Renew Complaints Policy and requirements of relevant local laws. The Safeguarding and Complaints Focal Point, in consultation with other senior staff as appropriate, including but not limited to the Country Consultant and relevant Department Coordinator will determine the best response to concerns or allegations. This may include a report to an external authority or an internal investigation. The investigation may also recommend internal disciplinary measures, including dismissal. All information from reports and investigations will be carefully documented and stored confidentially.

g) Safe for All Children

World Renew staff and volunteers and World Renew's partners work across a range of jurisdictions, and are subject to state, regional, national and international laws. All children have equal and significant value, and should be safe within World Renew programmes or World Renew funded programmes, wherever they come from. World Renew's partners will develop their own policies and processes, adapted to their own local contexts that have as their minimum basis the standards included in this policy.

h) Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years. If there is any significant programme or contextual changes, the policy may need to be reviewed more frequently.

Child Safeguarding policy requirements are included in partnership agreements with partner agencies, contractors, vendors, and consultants.

7. KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Abuse: Where the term “abuse” is used in this policy it should be understood to include sexual, physical and emotional abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Child or Minor: A person under the age of 18 (a child according to the definition in the Convention for the Rights of the Child).

Child Protection: In its widest sense, child protection is a term used to describe the actions that individuals, organisations, countries, and communities take to protect children from acts of “harm”, maltreatment (abuse) and exploitation e.g., domestic violence, exploitative child labour, commercial and sexual exploitation and abuse, deliberate exposure to HIV infection, physical violence to name but a few. It can also be used as a broad term to describe the work that organizations undertake in particular communities, environments or programmes that protect children from the risk of harm due to the situation in which they are living.

Child Safeguarding: safeguarding is the set of internal facing, operational policies, procedures and practice that we employ to ensure that our organization itself is a child safe organization. This means we ensure that:

1. Anyone who represents our organization behaves appropriately towards children and never abuses the position of trust that comes with being a member of our organization family.
2. Everyone associated with the organization is aware of and responds appropriately to issues of child abuse and the sexual exploitation of children
3. We create a child-safe environment in all of our activities by always assessing and reducing potential risks to children.
4. We are driven by the duty of care that we have to children.

Contact with children: Any interaction with or proximity to children. This includes both intentional and incidental contact. Most roles can be considered to involve contact with children at some point.

World Renew Staff: Refers to all World Renew staff, volunteers, consultants, exposure visit participants, contractors and fieldworkers. The exception to this is for volunteers and National Criminal History Record Checks, which only apply to “Category Green” volunteers, as described in the Volunteer Policy.

Working with children: Implementing activities directly with children.