



# Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

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## Table of Contents

1. Introduction .....	2
2. Scope .....	2
3. Recruitment and selection .....	4
4. Background .....	4
5. Preparation for activities with children .....	5
6. Communications .....	6
7. The Child Safeguarding Focal Person (CSFP) and Dedicated Safeguarder .....	8
8. Reporting and responding guidelines .....	8
9. Acting on an incident or concern .....	10
10. Incident reporting forms and confidentiality .....	10
11. Risk assessments .....	11
12. Concerns about staff of Child Rights Connect .....	11
13. Monitoring and evaluation .....	12
14. Reporting and review .....	13
APPENDIX 1 Declaration of Acceptance .....	14
APPENDIX 2 Child Safeguarding Reporting Form .....	15
APPENDIX 3 Record of Concern/Incident .....	18
APPENDIX 4 Risk Assessment Form .....	20
APPENDIX 5 Local Emergency Contacts .....	22
APPENDIX 6 Child Rights Connect Relevant Contact Details .....	24
APPENDIX 7 Partnership Arrangements – Agreement of Joint Procedure .....	25
APPENDIX 8 Code of Conduct .....	26

## 1. Introduction

Who we are: Child Rights Connect is an independent, non-profit organisation made up of more than 90 national, regional, and international member organisations worldwide, making it one of the largest international child rights networks. It has a permanent international Secretariat based in Geneva, Switzerland and an Executive Committee with legal, policy and management responsibility for the organisation.

Child Rights Connect convenes and engages civil society and other relevant actors, by fostering cooperation and collaboration, and by empowering children's rights defenders, including children, to meaningfully participate in global advocacy for children's rights at different levels.

It is the expert non-government organisation (NGO) working closely with the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC Committee) and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to drive and support the development of international legal standards as well as their implementation on national level.

The nature of the work of Child Rights Connect means that the organisation works collaboratively with a vast number of different organisations, agencies, academics and individuals of all ages.

A child rights approach underpins Child Rights Connect's work with and for children, both in what it seeks to achieve and how it goes about achieving it. Child Rights Connect prioritises the human rights principles of equality, non-discrimination, participation and accountability. The organisation is constantly seeking approaches that are collaborative, sustainable, fair, harmless, inclusive, multipliers of knowledge, respectful, environmentally friendly and sensitive to difference and diversity.

**Child safeguarding commitment:** Child Rights Connect is committed to being a **child safe organisation** and to ensure the safety and wellbeing, and the prevention of abuse, of all children involved in its activities, and swift and appropriate action to be taken by adults should an incident or concern arise.

This Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure has been developed with the contributions of members through advice and relevant tools. Many elements within this document have been built on Child Rights Connect's Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure for the 2018 Day of General Discussion, whereby feedback from members and partners has been taken into account. It has been approved by Child Rights Connect Executive Committee and Senior Management.

Child Rights Connect commits to regularly monitoring, reviewing and updating its Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure every three years (changes may be made prior to formal review should legal, policy or practice changes suggest this is necessary). This document was translated into French and Spanish in 2020 and the Secretariat worked with the child advisors of Child Rights Connect's Children's Advisory Team in 2020/2021 to develop a child-friendly version in English, French and Spanish. The Secretariat commits to producing further child-friendly and accessible versions of this document with children (for example, audio, braille, for a younger audience).

## 2. Scope

This Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure covers all work taken forward by Child Rights Connect and it applies to any child up to the age of 18, as defined by the UNCRC. For young people of concern who are over 18 years old, the principles of this policy and procedure must apply.

As outlined in the list below, all staff members, volunteers, interns, consultants, members and partners of Child Rights Connect are expected to uphold and take forward the standards and procedures set out in this document. Child Rights Connect will ensure its dissemination to all those under this scope and request a signed Declaration of Acceptance (**see appendix 1**). This also includes existing and future service providers and new members of the network.

A disciplinary procedure will be taken forward by the Child Safeguarding Focal Point if any person under the scope of this document fails to comply with any of the principles, policies or procedures as set out in this document. This will follow an organisational disciplinary policy.

Child Rights Connect has a Whistleblowing Policy and a child-friendly version of this Policy, which is accessible [here](#).

New members are requested to provide their organisation's child safeguarding policy and procedure on application as a requirement for membership. Any existing members without such will be encouraged by Child Rights Connect to use its safeguarding materials to develop their own, relevant to their focus and type of work.

The following Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure is applicable to the professional and personal lives of all the persons in the scope of this document, including:

1. Child Rights Connect Secretariat staff, interns, volunteers and consultants
2. Executive Committee members of Child Rights Connect
3. Members of Child Rights Connect
4. External partners collaborating with Child Rights Connect
5. All adults accompanying children to Child Rights Connect activities
6. All other adults taking part in any Child Rights Connect activities
7. The parents or guardians of children engaging in Child Rights Connect activities (such as a Children's Advisory Team)
8. CRC Committee members and Committee Secretariat staff

Child Rights Connect stresses that the protection of children is everybody's responsibility, irrespective of role or status within or related to Child Rights Connect.

**Members and Partners:** Members and partners are expected to follow the Child Rights Connect Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure for any joint activities or projects being implemented, and to sign an agreement of joint procedure (**see appendix 7**). In the event which a member or partner wishes to follow its own child safeguarding policy and procedure, this will be agreed to by the Child Safeguarding Focal Person (see page XX) and the agreement of joint procedure will be modified accordingly.

A written agreement specifying a joint commitment to safeguarding children will be issued and signed both by Child Rights Connect and any members or partners collaborating on activities involving children. Both Child Rights Connect and the relevant members or partner organisations reserve the right to independently refer child abuse concerns to the appropriate authority where there is disagreement on actions to take in order to safeguard children.

The purpose of the written agreement is to ensure clarity as to which organisation is responsible for taking action in specific circumstances of Child Rights Connect activities so that:

- Action is taken in respect of children at risk
- Work is not duplicated unnecessarily
- The child is not subject to unnecessary questioning
- Events or activities organised individually by or jointly with partners are clearly identified in terms of child protection jurisdiction and responsibility

The agreement should reflect the principles and standards specified in the Child Rights Connect Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure.

Concerns regarding abuse perpetrated by staff in member organisations or partners should be treated as a child safeguarding matter and dealt with as specified in this procedure.

**Awareness-raising and training:** All persons included in the above scope will be provided with the Child Rights Connect Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure via email and be able to access an online copy on the the organisation's website. Hard copies will be available in the Child Rights Connect Secretariat office and during any activities involving children.

Children and related community members taking part in any activities of Child Rights Connect will receive information in a language and format that is easy for them to understand about safeguarding and the

standards and procedures in place to ensure their safety and protection, such as when to report, how to report, whom to report and what happens next.

New staff members and new members of Child Rights Connect will be provided with a comprehensive induction on child safeguarding within 6 months of joining the organisation and a refresher training will be given to all staff members (including interns, volunteers and consultants) and the network each time the safeguarding policy and procedure is reviewed. The designated child safeguarding focal point (CSFP) is required to equip themselves every 6 months with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively implement the policy and procedure, and handle concerns when reported.

When events are being organised with members and partners, Child Rights Connect will ensure that all necessary child safeguarding training is carried out. This includes service providers such as translators and catering staff.

### 3. Recruitment and selection

Child Rights Connect acknowledges that creating safe environments for children starts with the appointment of suitably qualified, skilled and vetted staff, consultants, interns and volunteers who have the desired competencies and skills to carry out their function in an effective, efficient and safe manner. The Child Rights Connect Recruitment Policy and Procedure, and the procurement procedure for consultants, aim to be in the best interests of children and reflect our commitment to safeguard and protect children and prevent abuse. Child Rights Connect carries out reference and background checks to screen out unsuitable applicants.

### 4. Background

A child is defined by the CRC as anyone under the age of 18 years.

According to Article 19 of the Convention, children should be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse. These may include:

- **Physical violence:** actual or potential physical harm perpetrated by another person, adult or child, including all forms of corporal punishment and bullying.
- **Sexual abuse:** the inducement of coercion of a child to take part in sexual activities that he or she does not fully understand and has little choice in consenting to. Sexual abuse also consists of any sexual activity with a person under the age of 18: an underage child cannot legally give informed consent. It may also include involving children in looking at or producing sexual images, watching sexual activities and encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- **Sexual exploitation:** a form of sexual abuse that involves children being engaged in any sexual activity in exchange for money, gifts, food, accommodation, affection, status, or anything else that they or their family needs.
- **Neglect or negligent treatment:** allowing for context, resources and circumstances, the failure to meet a child's basic physical and /or psychological needs, protect them from danger, or obtain medical and other services, which is likely to result in serious impairment of a child's healthy physical, spiritual, moral and mental development.
- **Emotional abuse:** emotional maltreatment that impacts on a child's emotional development, such as: bad name calling, constant criticism, belittling, persistent shaming, solitary confinement and isolation.
- **Commercial exploitation:** exploiting a child in work or other activities for the benefit of others and to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development.

Abuse and violence against children take place globally in all settings, including online. Accidents and incidents affecting children usually occur suddenly and unexpectedly. These are events that cause disruption to the normal functions of work and bring significant danger or risk. They include, but are NOT limited to:

- Assault, including physical or sexual
- Severe verbal aggression, including threats
- Robbery or destruction of personal belongings
- Traffic accident
- Serious injury
- Natural disaster
- Fire
- Bomb or hostage threat
- Explosion, gas, or chemical hazard
- Exposure to pornographic materials in electronic or any other form
- Trafficking / kidnapping

According to Article 17e of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, all children have the right to be protected from any information they do not need to know and for which they may not have the understanding and maturity to cope. This is especially true if the information deals with sexual matters. All adults have a duty to ensure that no child is harmed as a result of the activities of Child Rights Connect, whether in spoken, written or visual form or any other kind of communication. In practice, this means:

- No shocking/offensive stories or case studies
- No shocking images or audio
- No emotional personal testimony of abuse and exploitation
- No role play or drama depicting rape or other sexual or violent acts
- Sensitivity to other cultures
- No 'bad' (improper/offensive) language either at children or in the presence of children

All adults should be alert to such situations and are responsible for protecting all children involved in Child Rights Connect's activities. During any events or workshops, facilitators in particular must be prepared to stop discussions or presentations that are inappropriate, and remind participants that:

- Child safeguarding is mandatory
- Activities must remain within professional limits
- Time-out may be necessary

## **5. Preparation for activities with children**

The nature of the programmes of Child Rights Connect means that there will be a variety of different activities organised from national, regional to international levels, jointly planned with members and/or partners and involving the participation of children (both in person and/or remotely through an online platform).

Activities taken forward by Child Rights Connect and its members/partners involving children must require the child safeguarding forms (accessible as a package on the Child Rights Connect website) to be completed and signed by the relevant children and adults prior to implementation of any projects. These forms include:

1. Consent Form for Children
2. Consent Form for Supporting Organisations
3. Consent form for Accompanying Adults
4. Child Medical History Form (for in-person events)
5. Consent Form for a Parent/Guardian

Depending on the type of activity or event and those involved, further forms and agreements might be required and therefore produced by Child Rights Connect in order to ensure maximum safeguarding of all children involved.

### **Data protection**

As a result of using the above consent forms, information will be collected by Child Rights Connect which should be handled securely. Child Rights Connect will not share information received from children, their parents/guardians, accompanying adults and supporting organisations outside of the organisation unless it is deemed necessary (for example, to book a hotel room, to book an aeroplane ticket).

Child Rights Connect will keep the first name and contact details of children to remain in contact for future participatory activities but commits to destroying all other information maximum 5 years after collection (for example, from an online call for applications or an in-person event in Geneva).

## **6. Communications**

Child Rights Connect is committed to undertake all communications, both online and offline, in a safe and reputable manner.

In the use of information and visual images, both photographic stills and video, our overriding principle is to maintain respect and dignity in the portrayal of children, families and communities. This is in accordance with the CRC, in particular the best interests of the child as a primary consideration (Art. 3), the right of every child to privacy (Art. 16) and protection from all forms of exploitation (Art. 36).

Whilst we acknowledge that images can be an important element in portraying our work to the general public and other stakeholders, and for raising funds, we strive to maintain the dignity of everyone with whom we work and will not use images without consent or that are disrespectful or demeaning.

The following guidelines set out the principles Child Rights Connect employs to regulate our use of images of children and their families.

### **For the use of visual images:**

#### **1. We will respect the dignity of the subject.**

We will always seek permission when taking photographs or video footage of individuals. Consent for taking and using photographs and case studies will be sought from parents or carers, from the children directly and accompanying adults.

We will explain to the subject the use of the images. For children or adults who do not wish to have their photos taken, measures will be adopted to ensure this is clear and followed for all present. For example, using different coloured lanyards and raising this policy during a child safeguarding briefing at the beginning of all activities. We will seek to ensure that no pictures are taken of people who say they don't want to be photographed by all present and that any photos with their presence are not shared and deleted.

#### **2. We will not exploit the subject.**

We will not manipulate the subject in a way which distorts the reality of the situation. If necessary, to protect confidentiality, the names of children can be changed, and this option will always be available.

Never will a child's full name or contact details be published. Child Rights Connect follows the principle to use only the child's first name in all communications.

#### **3. We aim to provide a balanced portrayal of reality.**

We will avoid stereotypes (e.g. children from developing countries as helpless victims) and aim to present children as individual and equal rights holders.

**4. *We will use images truthfully.***

Case histories or descriptions will not be fabricated, although they may be adapted or edited to preserve the dignity and confidentiality of the subject. We will not use an image of one project to illustrate the work of another and where possible, use a balance of images to reflect the reality of a situation. If we use an image in a general way (e.g. illustrating a project similar to the one being described), we will make this clear in the caption.

We will not use an image in a way which deliberately misinterprets the true situation.

**5. *We will maintain standards of decency consistent with our values and those of our members.***

We will not use indecent images of any kind or make gratuitous use of images of extreme suffering.

**6. *We will respect and seek the views of our member and partner organisations.***

We will be sensitive to the concerns and advice of our member and partner organisations in our gathering and use of visual material, and take any feedback into account.

**7. *We will maintain high technical standards.***

We aim to use only high-quality images. We may use digital manipulation of images for creative or iconic effect, but not in a way which deliberately and misleadingly distorts the reality of the situation depicted. We will not crop an image in a way which misleadingly distorts the reality of the situation. In video editing, we will not misleadingly distort the reality of the situation.

**8. *We will maintain a suitable photo library.***

All images will be current and appropriate, kept centrally and fully documented. No images will be stored without consent and images older than 5 years will be archived.

**For the use of social media:**

Child Rights Connect will update and maintain an internal social media policy for staff members, which is provided to all new staff members and updated accordingly. It includes:

- Online communication between different stakeholders, use of personal information, promotion of the organisation and rules regarding the use of social media.
- Personal use of social media and adherence to this child safeguarding policy and procedure and disclaimers.

Regarding the use of social media by members of Child Rights Connect, the Child Safeguarding Focal Point will be informed if any staff observe members uploading sensitive content (such as name or location of a child) or against the communication principles set out above. Necessary steps will be taken by the Child Safeguarding Focal Point to ensure that all members adhere to this safeguarding policy and procedure on social media.

Child Rights Connect recognises that children are increasingly active on social media and use such platforms to defend theirs and others human rights and to communicate with their peers. A child safeguarding brief will always be given near the start of any activity, including communication principles online and offline, in accordance with this policy and procedure.

Communications with children will primarily take place using Basecamp; a secure communications platform. For online calls, Child Rights Connect will use Zoom, Microsoft Teams or other secure platforms as required. Recognising that many of our activities involve awareness-raising or advocacy on social media, the principles, policies and procedures outlined in this document will be adhered to.

## 7. The Child Safeguarding Focal Person (CSFP) and Dedicated Safeguarder

The Child Safeguarding Focal Person (CSFP) ensures the prevention of, and timely, appropriate responses to any situation raising child protection concerns, or of child abuse and incidents that might affect them. An additional, exclusively dedicated child safeguarding person (the Dedicated Child Safeguarder) will be available throughout any Child Rights Connect activity involving children, for the reporting of any incidents or concerns. Both the CSFP and Dedicated Safeguarder work closely together. Accompanying adults of child participants will be responsible for the safety and protection of the children outside of Child Rights Connect's activities.

**The CSFP** has the overall responsibility and management for the promotion, awareness and implementation of the Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure, to assure:

- Monitoring of the Policy and reporting on any developments to Child Rights Connect staff and other relevant adults (see below procedure)
- The development and coordination of child safeguarding trainings/briefings/resources as required
- Maintenance of good practices and statutory requirements
- A source of support and information on safeguarding issues for all adults under the scope of the Policy and Procedure
- When a concern or incident is raised, to be the main focal person to make decisions and liaise with the relevant stakeholders (see below procedure)

The CSFP for Child Rights Connect is always the Executive Director of the organisation (full details below).

**The Dedicated Child Safeguarder** always has the exclusive role to be available for the safety and well-being of children during all Child Rights Connect activities, for the reporting of any incidents or concerns. Any concerns will be addressed in confidence keeping the best interest of the child in mind. The Dedicated Safeguarder will be a staff member of Child Rights Connect, be appointed in advance of any activity and made clearly visible to all children and adults (including contact details)

### **Child Safeguarding Focal Person (CSFP)**

Emma Grindulis, Programme Officer and Focal Point for Child Participation and Child Safeguarding, Child Rights Connect

Email: [safeguarding@childrightsconnect.org](mailto:safeguarding@childrightsconnect.org)

Phone number: +41 22 552 41 34

## 8. Reporting and responding guidelines

The guidelines for reporting incidents and emergencies involving children have been developed for when a child's safety and/or well-being is jeopardised. Any child protection concerns and/or complaints can be written or verbally reported to the CSFP or Dedicated Child Safeguarder, who will handle them in the strictest confidence and ensure that they are properly dealt with and responded to.

In the event of an emergency and there is a conflict between local protocols and the Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure, the latter will take priority.

### **Suspecting child abuse and possible indicators**

There are a number of circumstances under which adults under the scope of this document may suspect child abuse during or outside of activities of Child Rights Connect. These include:

- A child 'disclosing' abuse – telling someone that s/he is being or has been abused
- A child having an injury for which there is no satisfactory explanation

- A child behaving or appearing in such a way as to give rise to concern
- A child that we are in contact with abusing another child
- An adult under the scope of this document abusing a child e.g. their own child or one they are in contact with through their work.
- Adults or children viewing child abuse on the internet.
- Being informed of or witnessing abuse by a stranger or someone known to you.

Some examples of possible indicators of abuse include:

- A child who is self-harming
- A child who has age inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviour
- A child who is often very withdrawn
- A child who often presents poor personal hygiene
- A child who is often hungry, or under or over-dressed for the time of year
- A child who runs away
- A child who is often left in unsafe situations, or without medical attention when they need it
- A child who is constantly 'put down', insulted, sworn at or humiliated
- A child who seems very afraid of particular adults, and reluctant to be alone with them
- A child who has unexplained changeable emotions, such as depression, anxiety or severe aggression

The above lists are not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of these does not automatically indicate abuse. In some cases, these indicators may have an acceptable explanation, but all adults under the scope of this document should be aware of which kind of abuse might be the case, particularly if no other explanation is forthcoming.

### Responding to a concern

Recognising abuse can be a complex matter, for example:

- The child's anxiety around the consequences of 'disclosing'
- The child protecting the perpetrator of the abuse
- The child is unknown (e.g. attending a Child Rights Connect activity without registering)
- There are potential indicators of abuse but there is no constitute definitive proof

There are also a number of factors relating to adults under the scope of this procedure that can act as barriers to their recognising abuse or acting upon their concerns. These include:

- Fear of being mistaken about the concern
- Concerns that reporting concerns might have an adverse effect upon themselves and/or the child
- Ignorance as to what might happen next
- A misguided sense of loyalty to a colleague
- Anxiety that the matter is trivial
- A belief that abuse does not take place through organisations or families they know
- Assumptions that someone else will deal with it or that concerns are already being dealt with

The effect of abuse on children depends on a number of factors and is not readily predictable. It is an extremely serious matter with multiple negative long-term consequences when there is a failure to respond, report and investigate.

In responding to concerns of abuse, adults under the scope of this procedure **should not**:

- Panic - this may scare and silence the child
- Inquire into the details of the abuse - it is the duty of the Child Protection Services and police to investigate abuse
- Push the child too hard to speak if s/he is reluctant to
- Promise to keep secrets
- Raise the child's expectations and hopes beyond what the adult is actually able to do

- Fail to report their concerns as per this procedure (see ‘acting on a concern’ below)

In responding to concerns of abuse, adults under the scope of this procedure **should**:

- Support and respect the child at a particularly difficult time, maintaining appropriate boundaries
- Inform the child of the nature of the child safeguarding policy and procedure, its implications and the reasons why we have adopted this approach
- Act speedily and prioritise as a matter of urgency
- Ensure that the child is well informed of progress and outcomes within the procedure
- Adopt a child participatory approach, and explain to children that the action taken is in their best interests even if different to their desired course of action
- Seek/prepare longer – term support for the child
- Immediately refer verbally to the CSFP for consideration of actions required

## 9. Acting on an incident or concern

Adults under the scope of the Child Rights Connect Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure (see page 2) must report any safeguarding concerns they have to the Dedicated Child Safeguarder on duty or the CSFP. The CSFP will then ensure full implementation of this Procedure. The only exception is if the CSFP is suspected of abuse. In this event, the Dedicated Child Safeguarder will instead notify the alternative CSFP who will be appointed during any Child Rights Connect activities where there are child participants.

If an adult under the scope of this Procedure is unhappy with the proposed course of action, they can raise the concern with the President of Child Rights Connect, Maria Herzog (contacts below). The concerns will be raised in good faith and will not attract reprisal, retaliation or other detriment to the person raising the concern.

In the event of concerns being raised through a complaint to the organisation (or other scenario), this Child Safeguarding Policy document assumes priority.

## 10. Incident reporting forms and confidentiality

An initial written record must be made using the child safeguarding incident reporting form (**see appendix 2**) and a copy of this record must be sent as soon as possible to the Child Safeguarding Focal Point via email or in writing.

Hard copies must be kept by the Child Safeguarding Focal Person in a locked filing cabinet, with a coding system in place of names. All envelopes must be marked with ‘private and confidential’ and ‘for the attention of.’ All circulation and storage of recordings must be secured with the utmost care and respect for confidentiality. Word Documents must only be accessible by password, with the password sent to those who require it in separate communication to the document itself (i.e. two emails).

All child safeguarding records are handled and held securely by Child Rights Connect.

Confidentiality is vitally important for both the child and the alleged perpetrator during and after any actions taken within this procedure. Indiscretion or carelessness can have damaging consequences for any potential legal action taken against an individual, for the child’s dignity and self-respect, or for the alleged perpetrator if it is subsequently found there is no case to answer. It is everyone’s responsibility to ensure the security of knowledge, information and records. Case details must only be provided on a ‘need to know’ basis.

There is also an online reporting form for children to report safeguarding incidents or concerns (which interlinks with the organisation’s whistleblowing reporting procedure) which is accessible [here](#).

**Follow-up and debriefing:** Relevant services shall be approached in the aftermath of an incident to develop appropriate supports for children, adolescents and others directly affected by or involved in the incident. Depending on the circumstances this may involve:

- Supportive counselling
- Referrals for more in-depth counselling as required
- Support to relevant persons who respond to the incident
- Holding a review meeting for the purpose of reviewing the incident for lessons learned
- Medical referrals

## 11. Risk assessments

A risk assessment must be carried out in order to safeguard children, and to protect adults under the scope of this Procedure from malicious or mistaken allegations. Where this involves children taking part in any Child Rights Connect activities, there are two areas to cover within the risk assessment – Health & Safety, and Child Safeguarding. It includes accidents, incidents or near-miss events. A risk assessment:

- Identifies possible risks to children (caused by the staff, partners, organisation internal procedures, etc)
- Identifies the level of risk
- Helps develop appropriate mitigation plans to address the identified risks
- Identifies and designates responsibilities within Child Rights Connect to monitor the implementation of the mitigation plan

Child Rights Connect has issued a draft risk assessment framework (**see appendix 4**) of whom those under the scope of this Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure will be encouraged to use as a tool in developing their own risk assessments. An amended version must then be sent to the Child Rights Connect Secretariat for approval in advance of Child Rights Connect activities. We encourage consultation with children in the process of developing a risk assessment and determining mitigation strategies.

## 12. Concerns about staff of Child Rights Connect

Concerns about staff behaviour – whether Child Rights Connect, its members or partner agencies and other stakeholders – must be treated with the same rigour as other concerns. If there is any concern of child abuse or an illegal act having been committed then this information must be passed on immediately, as per this Procedure, to the Child Safeguarding Focal Point or where there is immediate danger to a child, the police or other appropriate authority.

If the alleged abuser is a staff member, intern or volunteer of the Child Rights Connect Secretariat, the case will be reported by the Executive Director centrally to the President of Child Rights Connect. The President will assess, investigate and respond to the report appropriately, in line with this Procedure (and in some circumstances involving an internal investigation or referral to local authorities with support of the Executive Committee Bureau), based on the detail of each case, which could be child abuse or inappropriate behaviour.

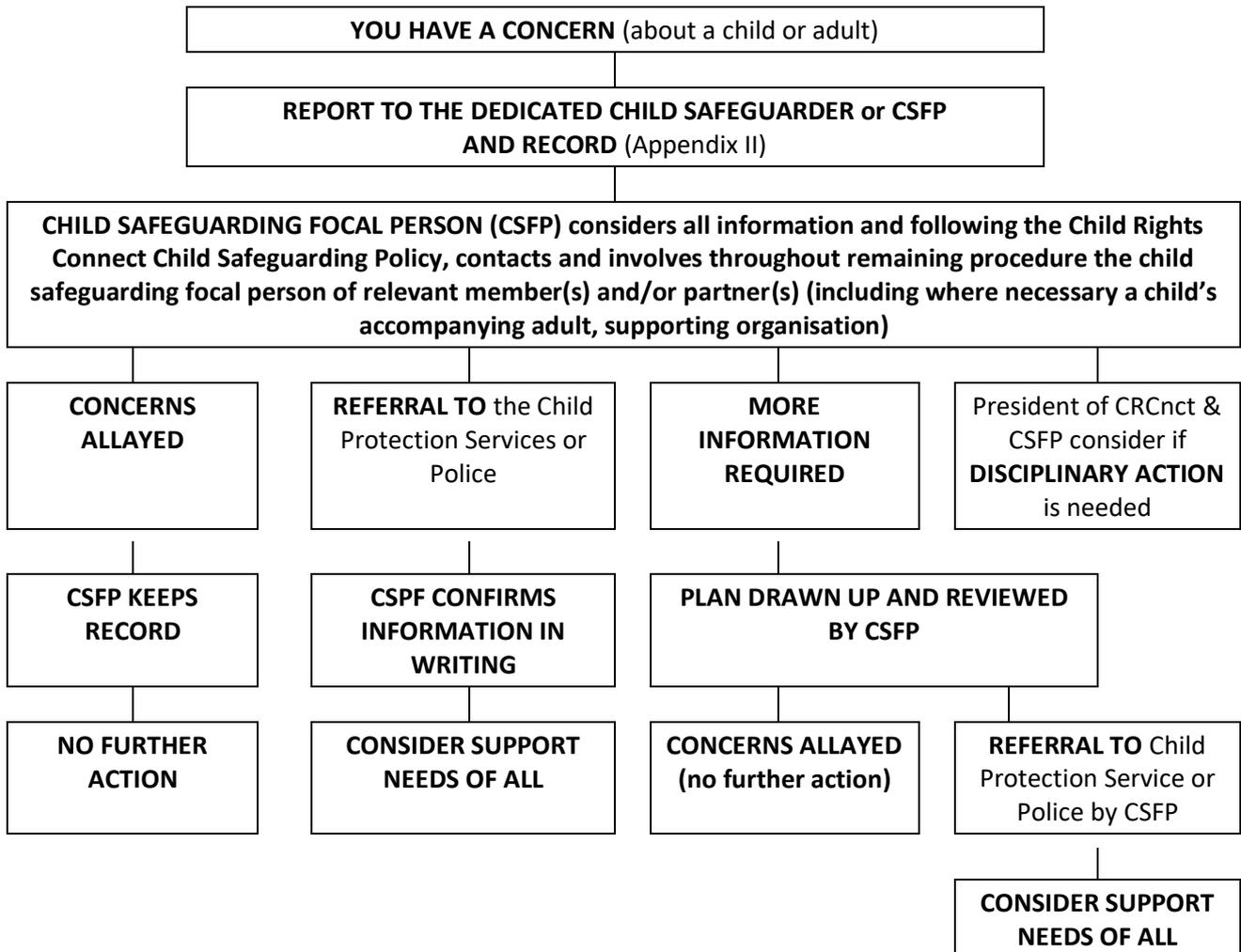
The process may also vary depending on the exact nature of the report. Where the allegation concerns a potential illegal act, they will under normal circumstances refer the case to the national authorities. If this action endangers the life and wellbeing of the child, then alternative courses will be considered. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process, with information being shared purely on a 'need to know' basis.

Adults under the scope of this Procedure can raise concerns in good faith about anyone working or volunteering for Child Rights Connect and will not suffer adverse consequences whatever the outcome.

If there is a concern regarding inappropriate behaviour of Child Rights Connect staff, interns or volunteers, this will have a number of possible outcomes, including:

- Concern diminished - no further action
- Identification and implementation of a simple solution
- Evidence of professional misconduct and referral into a disciplinary procedure
- Concern arises that abuse has taken place and referral is made to the Child Protection Services or the police.

### Child Safeguarding Procedure Flowchart



### 13. Monitoring and evaluation

As a diverse network, it is recognised and appreciated that members have varying levels of capacity, structures, implementation, and experience on child safeguarding. The monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of this Policy and Procedure is part of Child Rights Connect’s ongoing awareness-raising and understanding of this network document and the capacity-building and technical assistance delivered to members on child participation and safeguarding.

The following series of broad safeguarding standards offers a progressive framework for building network capacity and expertise on child safeguarding among network members and the Secretariat. These three standards will be used to monitor and evaluate progress and advance towards our common goal to be a child safe organisation.

- **Minimum standards:** use of the network Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure within the member organisation, working to secure resources to develop organisational safeguarding capacities, policy and procedure and related activities, receiving support and guidance from the Secretariat.
- **Medium standards:** the development and roll-out of a member's organisational child safeguarding policy and procedure, including a child-friendly version and reporting procedure, and conducting safeguarding training for staff, interns, volunteers, governance members, partners, etc.
- **Gold standards:** monitoring, evaluation and review of organisational policy and procedure (and possibly children's participation in such activities), including annual reporting on the implementation of the policy, development of additional safeguarding resources (e.g. safeguarding in online spaces, in-person events, global advisory teams), engaging in peer-to-peer safeguarding coaching through the network.

Child Rights Connect Secretariat will also collect member case studies each year (encompassing a range of contexts) to track progress against these standards, collecting further details and in-depth examples to share and learn from across the network, as a means to continuously improve this policy and procedure and its implementation.

## **14. Reporting and review**

On an annual basis, the Executive Director will review this policy, suggests necessary modifications to the ExCo, and provide the ExCo with an update on implementation of the policy (including using findings from the above-mentioned monitoring and evaluation activities). The ExCo is responsible for approval of any modification(s) to the policy. Any substantial changes to the policy will be communicated to Network members during or around the yearly General Assembly, as relevant. Any updates to the policy will be published on Child Rights Connect's website.

All persons under the scope of the Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure will be briefed on any revisions to this Policy and Procedure.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Declaration of Acceptance**

I have received and read in full the:

***Child Rights Connect Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure***

I have discussed the contents with a staff member of the Child Rights Connect Secretariat (the line manager if a Child Rights Connect staff member) and I agree to be bound by them.

Name :

Position (plus programme/department) :

Location :

Date :

Signature :

To be completed by Child Rights Connect Secretariat (line manager if a Child Rights Connect staff member):

I have discussed the contents of the:

- **Child Rights Connect Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure**

with the above-named. They have indicated their agreement to be bound by them.

Name :

Position (plus programme/department) :

Location :

Date of discussion :

Date :

Signature :

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Child Safeguarding Reporting Form**

*This report form may be filled out by any person to whom a child discloses the incident, or by the child safeguarding focal person (CSFP). This should be determined on a case by case basis. This reporting form will be available online (accessible on the Child Rights Connect website) whereby the author has the opportunity to be anonymous.*

PLEASE TYPE YOUR REPORT

CONFIDENTIAL

#### ***Child Safeguarding Incident Report Form***

**Child Rights Connect activity:**

**Child's name:**

**Case no:**

**Referral details:**

Time:

Date:

Place:

**Referrer's details:**

Name:

Address:

Contact telephone no:

Occupation:

Relationship to child:

**Child's details:**

Name:

Age:

Date of birth:

Gender:

Address:

Household structure:

School:

Class:

Teacher:

Ethnicity/Tribe:

Language spoken:

Religion:

Any Disability:

Identity no:

Status/whose legal responsibility:

**Relevant points/recent changes regarding the child's behaviour?**

**Any other information:**

**Details of concern: what, who, where, when (including child's words if possible):**

**Alleged Perpetrator's details (if known):**

Name:

Address:

Age:

Date of birth:

Employment details:

Nature of job:

Identify if Child Rights Connect, member or partner agency is the employer:

Relationship, if any, to child:

Current location of alleged perpetrator:

**Current safety of child including location:**

**Has emergency medical attention been required?**

**Provided by:**

**Any other relevant information or comments?**

**Who else knows? Include contact details.**

Agencies:

Family members or other individuals:

**Actions taken to date** e.g. Referral to police, children's services, social welfare, other. Give contact details and date and time of action.

**Referral taken by (where possible, the Dedicated Child Safeguarder):**

Name:

Position and Location:

Date:

Signature (on hard copy):

**This section is to be completed by Child Safeguarding Focal Person (CSFP) following receipt of referral:**

**Action to be taken**

Name:

Position:

Location:

Date and time referral received:

Identity of the alleged perpetrator, if known:

Any connection with Child Rights Connect, member or partner:

a) Is this a case to be dealt with under External Procedures i.e.  
No connection with Child Rights Connect, member or partner?  
Yes/No

b) Is this a case to be dealt with under Internal Procedures? Yes/No

If yes, immediately contact Maria Herzog, President of Child Rights Connect, for guidance.

Date contact made:

**Decision made by CSFP for immediate action as agreed in the Child Safeguarding Procedure?** (Please specify who is to do what and when and give names and contact details of people to be contacted.)

Referral to police (if not, why not?) Yes/No

Referral to Child Protection Services Yes/No

Other action required to ensure child not at further risk from alleged perpetrator:

Referral for medical treatment/ to meet health needs Yes/No

Name of referrer to child safeguarding focal person (CSFP) and date referral passed on:

Signature of CSFP arranging any above action (Emma Grindulis, Programme Officer, Child Rights Connect):

## APPENDIX 3

### Record of Concern/Incident

#### ***Recording and Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Sexual Exploitation***

*Gathering information at the point of referral (when a concern first arises) is a crucial part the process. The report should be accurate and objective, focusing on facts and relevant information that will help in deciding what actions to take. The Referral Form below is designed to help with this and **must** be used for recording and reporting any allegations or concerns of abuse received, whether from a child or an adult.*

When told of abuse by a child ask only questions needed to establish a clear understanding of the narrative provided by the child and to ascertain the safety and welfare of that child.

The following questions need to be covered (and recorded succinctly and clearly):

Who is involved in the abuse?

What happened?

When and where did the fact occur?

When being told by an adult it should be possible to gain additional helpful information without straying into a mini investigation.

*All concerns or allegations, must be recorded on the following form and sent to your line manager and the DGD Child Safeguarder **as soon as possible and within 24 hours.***

*The report should not be delayed because the referrer does not have all of the following information.*

- 1. Referral details-** time, date and place referral received
- 2. Referrer's details** - name, address, any identity no., any contact telephone number, occupation and, if not the child, relationship with the child
- 3. Child's details-** name (home and school names), age and date of birth, gender, address (and previous if mobile), household structure (if child separated, name of carers), school, class, teacher, ethnicity/tribe, language spoken, religion, any disability/special needs. Any identity no. Status of child i.e. whose legal responsibility? **(Note that the child's age is particularly important in establishing whether a crime has been committed)**
  - Any recent changes in child's behaviour or presentation? What are they, and when behaviour changed if known?
  - Any other information What else can referrer tell you about the child?
  - Information about other children in household/family
- 4. Details of concern** -incident, people involved, place, time, (what, who, where, when) Use child's own words, where possible:
  - Physical and emotional state of child (describe any cuts, bruises, behaviour and mood)
  - If the referrer is not the child, whether the referrer spoke directly to the child? If not, who did the referrer obtain this information from?
  - Did the child report or disclose abuse?

- If so, what were the exact words of the child?
- If not, what made the referrer suspicious?

**5. Alleged perpetrator's details**, where identified

- What can referrer tell you about the alleged perpetrator/s including name, address, age, employment details, **including whether an employee, intern or volunteer of Child Rights Connect, or member or partner of the organisation**, position held and current location
- Previous address and employment if known
- Relationship, if any to child e.g. same household or compound
- Information on activities/behaviour etc. alleged abuser/subject of concern
- Source of information

**6. Whether the child is currently safe and current location** (Ask early in the interview if the child is not present to establish whether urgent action is required)

**7. Whether emergency medical treatment has been necessary**- if so, what was provided, when and by whom?

**8.** Does the referral or presentation of the child, if present, suggest that emergency medical treatment is needed now?

**9. Who else knows** of the allegation and referral? Knowledge of other agency's involvement

**10.** Whether child/family aware of referral and parent/carers response to concern if aware

**11. Actions taken to date:** Details of:

- action taken to make child safe by person taking referral/others
- referrals to police, social welfare, other agency and their response

**12. Other relevant information**

**13. Name, position and location of person receiving the referral.**

**14. Signature and date.**

***Taking a referral of sexual exploitation***

Where an allegation of sexual exploitation or "sex for favours" is made, it is particularly important to establish and record the actual words used by the alleged victim or person informing the referrer. This is to avoid any subsequent misinterpretation of the nature of the alleged abuse.

Establishing the age of the alleged victim of sexual abuse or exploitation, where possible, will assist in the determination of whether a sexual crime has been committed and whether a criminal investigation should be instigated.

Where an allegation of sexual exploitation is made, it is particularly important to also obtain from the referrer their knowledge of whether other children are involved in exploitation and, if so, that they (and the perpetrator/s of their exploitation) are also identified.



## APPENDIX 4 Risk Assessment Form<sup>1</sup>

We kindly request to receive before any joint activities a risk assessment prepared by you as member or partner, to assess the risks involved to child safeguarding.

Please use the following framework to adapt to fit your own assessments.

<b>ACTIVITIES INVOLVING CHILDREN</b> (name, describe all activities of the project)	<b>STAFF &amp; OTHERS</b> (list of all adults who are involved in these activities... staff, experts, volunteers etc)	<b>CHILD PARTICIPANTS</b> (describe children who will be involved and what kind of info will be collected about them)	<b>COMMUNICATION WITH CHILDREN</b> (describe nature of contact with children in the listed activities)
<b>Activity</b>			

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Keeping Children Safe Guidelines for CPP development, 2014.

**POTENTIAL RISKS<sup>2</sup> & MITIGATION STRATEGIES<sup>3</sup>**

Potential Risks	Mitigation Strategies
•	•
•	•
•	•

Summary – list of key documents composing Child Rights Connect’s child safeguarding forms for specific events:

- a) Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and Child safeguarding reporting form;
- b) Child participant Consent form;
- c) Medical History Form;
- d) Consent form from parents/guardians;
- e) Communications consent form supporting organizations;
- f) Consent and code of conduct for accompanying adults;
- g) Guidelines for translators;
- h) Guidelines/code of conduct for all participants (reflecting CRC standards).

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<sup>2</sup> Considering all info above (activities, people involved, type of contact with children and information collected about/from children), list/describe potential risks connected to the activities; take into account all forms of violence including sexual, neglect, emotional [these are listed because usually neglected, many organisations focus more on physical safety and physical violence.

<sup>3</sup> Describe how could you deal with the above identified risks ...consider what you have in place already, eg. how can you use Code of Conduct, reporting procedures, communication guidelines etc to minimize risks.

## APPENDIX 5

### Local Emergency Contacts

Fire Department (Pompiers) – 118  
Police – 117  
Tourist assistance centre - +41 22 546 14 00  
Ambulances – 144  
Toxicology Centre (Centre toxicologique) – 145  
Medical – +41 22 372 81 20 (adult urgency); +41 22 372 45 55 (child urgency)

#### ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY:

Hôpitaux Universitaires de Genève (HUG):

- *Service d'accueil et d'urgences pédiatriques*

Address: Avenue de la Roseraie 47, 1211 Genève 14

Tel: 022 372 45 55 Website: <http://dea.hug-ge.ch/urgences.html>

- *Urgences gynécologiques de la maternité*

Address: 30 Boulevard de la Cluse, 1211 Genève 14,

Tel: 022/382 68 16 /17, Website: <http://gyneco-obstetrique.hug-ge.ch/URGENCES.html>

#### VICTIM SUPPORT SERVICES:

Consultations LAVI (loi fédérale sur l'aide aux victimes d'infractions) Genève

Mandate: Support (information, advice, financial assistance for treatment and legal support) to victims of physical and sexual violence. The law covers all victims of abuse that has taken place in Switzerland.

Address: Centre LAVI Genève, 72 Boulevard Saint-Georges, 1205 Genève

Open: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Fridays (by appointment only)

8:30-12:30, 13:30-17:00

Tuesday: 13:30-17:00

Tel: 022 320 01 02

Email: [info@centrelavi-ge.ch](mailto:info@centrelavi-ge.ch)

Website: <http://centrelavi-ge.ch/>

#### PSYCHO-SOCIAL SUPPORT:

Centre de consultations pour victimes d'abus sexuels durant l'enfance et l'adolescence (CTAS)

Mandate: NGO that provides psycho-social support to children victims of abuse, families and professionals. They can provide support to children in French, English and Portuguese.

Address: 36, Boulevard St. George, 1205 Genève

Tel: 022 800 08 50

Website: <http://www.ctas.ch/>

#### SERVICE SOCIAL

Rue Dancet 22, Genève

Tél.+41 22 418 47 00

#### SPMI - SERVICE DE PROTECTION DES MINEURS (CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES)

Boulevard de St-Georges 16

1211 Genève

022 546 10 00

SOS ENFANTS

Tel: 022 312 11 12

Website: [www.sos-enfants.ch](http://www.sos-enfants.ch)

**If you are concerned about the immediate safety of a child, please call the Geneva police on 117.**

## **APPENDIX 6**

### **Child Rights Connect Relevant Contact Details**

Emma Grindulis, Child Safeguarding Focal Person (CSFP), Programme Officer, Child Rights Connect - +41(0) 22 552 41 34, [safeguarding@childrightsconnect.org](mailto:safeguarding@childrightsconnect.org)

Alex Conte, Executive Director, Child Rights Connect - +41 (0)22 552 41 32, [director@childrightsconnect.org](mailto:director@childrightsconnect.org)

Ilaria Paolazzi, Deputy Director, Child Rights Connect – +41 (0)22 552 41 36, [paolazzi@childrightsconnect.org](mailto:paolazzi@childrightsconnect.org)

Dedicated Child Safeguarder – To Be Confirmed for specific activities

If the CSFP, staff member, intern or volunteer of the Child Rights Connect Secretariat is suspected of abuse:

María Herzog, President, Child Rights Connect, [herczogmaria@me.com](mailto:herczogmaria@me.com)

## **APPENDIX 7**

### **Partnership Arrangements – Agreement of Joint Procedure**

**Name of member or partner:** \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

**Child Rights Connect:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: Executive Director

We agree to follow the Child Rights Connect CHILD SAFEGUARDING policy and procedure as attached.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**(for: \_\_\_\_\_)**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**(for: Child Rights Connect)**

Copies of the Partnership Arrangements Agreement and the Procedure to be kept with both organisations.

Both organisations reserve the right to independently refer child protection/safeguarding concerns to the appropriate authority where there is disagreement on actions to take in order to safeguard children.

## APPENDIX 8

### Code of Conduct

All those under the scope of the Child Rights Connect Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure are bound and must abide by the following Code of Conduct. It specifies actions which adults, when in contact with children:

- Should take to empower and safeguard children
- Should refrain from
- Must avoid

Adhering to this Code of Conduct will protect children from abuse and adults from allegations of misconduct or even abuse. In all instances, this Code of Conduct applies in-person and online.

This is not an exhaustive list. All adults engaging in Child Rights Connect activities should consider all related actions and behavior which may compromise the rights and safeguarding of children.

**Do not:**

- Hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children
- Develop physical/sexual relationships with children
- Develop relationships with children which could in any way be seen as exploitative or abusive
- Act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse
- Use language, make suggestions, or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive, or abusive
- Behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative
- Sleep in the same room as a child (apart from exceptional circumstances and only if agreed by the child, their parent/guardian and the child protection focal person)
- Do things for children of a personal nature that they could do on their own
- Permit or participate in behaviour of children that is illegal, unsafe, or abusive
- Act in ways meant to shame, humiliate, belittle, or degrade children and/or adolescents, or otherwise commit a form of emotional abuse
- Discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favour particular children to the exclusion of others
- Expose children and adolescents to pornographic materials in electronic or any other form
- Use an image, information or story of a child online including on social media, unless consent has been given by the child

**Do:**

- Adhere to the Child Rights Connect Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure
- Create and maintain an environment which prevents the abuse and exploitation of children and take appropriate action to minimise risks to children.
- Contribute to building an environment where children are respected and empowered to understand all safeguarding measures in place and who to go to if they have a concern or incident to report
- Display high standards of professional behaviour at all times, providing a positive role model for children
- Observe and respect confidentiality of all children and adolescents and their personal information
- Ensure child-friendly language and communicate clearly
- Respect children's views and give equal opportunity to all for expression of their views without discrimination
- Ensure that all activities are smoke, drug and alcohol-free zones

- Dress appropriately and respectfully

Anyone (a child or adult) who feels uncomfortable or needs a break from an activity, such as a presentation or discussion, can leave. Child Rights Connect will always arrange and indicate a quiet place for reflection/time-out, and a counsellor can be on call to provide support if needed.