

CHILD PROTECTION

INA'S CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

INA is committed to the welfare and protection of children. INA believes that child protection is both a corporate and an individual responsibility. Every person who shares in the work of INA, including board members, staff, volunteers, contractors, ambassadors and supporters also share in the responsibility of taking every precaution to protect the children and families we serve. How we care for the most vulnerable among us is an outward expression and evidence of our love for God and all of His creation. The purpose of INA's child protection policy is to protect children from sexual exploitation and sexual, physical and emotional abuse, all of which are unacceptable to INA. The objective of this policy is to create and maintain protective environments for children in the delivery of all of INA's activities, including community education and overseas aid programmes. To this end, we require our board members, staff, ambassadors and volunteers to actively participate in building and maintaining a child safe environment. Furthermore, every individual or organisation that works with children under an INA funded activity has an obligation to protect children from exploitation and abuse. All partners implementing INA funded activities must have, maintain, and monitor the implementation of a Child Protection Policy that is compliant with INA's policy.

LEGALITIES OF INA'S CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Children have the right to be protected from abuse, and there are laws in most countries to protect children as well as bring child abusers to justice. The aim of this policy is to prevent the abuse of children associated with INA's programs and prevent any perpetrators from access to children associated with INA's programs. INA upholds the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), in particular Article 19 which states, 'State Parties shall protect the child [1] from all forms of physical and mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse'. In accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, a child is defined for the purposes of this policy as a human being below the age of 18 years (unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier). As an ACFID Member and a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct as well as being a non-government organisation with full AusAID accreditation, INA also takes seriously the requirement that exists for appropriate policies and procedures to promote the safety and well-being of all children accessing or associated with our services and

programmes. INA adheres to all relevant laws and legislation in both Australia and foreign countries regarding child exploitation. This includes the Crimes (Child Sex Tourism) Amendment Act 1994 which makes it punishable in Australia for Australian citizens or residents to engage in, promote, or encourage sexual activity with children under 16 years whilst overseas.

OUR COMMITMENT

Any form of abuse or neglect causes harm to the child's physical and mental health, survival, development and dignity. INA affirms its commitment to oppose all forms of child abuse and to continuously strengthen our child protection processes to mitigate the risk of abuse within our programmes.

WE COMMIT TO:

- Continuously develop, implement and review guidelines and practices that support the protection of children
- Network with other Non-Government Organisations and domestic agencies for the purpose of increasing awareness and support for the protection of children.
- Screen and provide orientation information to all individuals and groups visiting projects funded by INA including but not limited to staff, volunteers, board members, contractors, sponsors, ambassadors and donors
- Advocate for the protection of children from all forms of exploitation, especially sexual exploitation
- Be vigilant with protecting confidential information about children and their families in INA funded projects
- Share responsibility for child protection with implementing partners
- Adopt a 'zero tolerance' approach to child exploitation and abuse
- Recognise the best interests of the child
- Use fair and proper processes and procedures when making decisions that affect a person's rights or interests
- Demonstrate responsibility to and respect for children by being sensitive in all communications that involve them
- Ensure thorough recruitment and screening processes, which include criminal record and verbal referee checks prior to the engagement of all staff and volunteers
- Have a documented internal procedure for handling reports related to child exploitation and abuse including notification to relevant law enforcement agencies as appropriate

- Ensure Child Protection training for relevant personnel, particularly upon induction and prior to overseas visits
- Not permit a person to work with or visit children if they pose an unacceptable risk to children's safety or well-being
- Include a provision in all employment contracts that INA reserves the right to dismiss the employee or volunteer should he/she breach INA's Child Protection Code of Conduct
- Apply Child Protection Policy and Procedures equally in all situations, whether emergency or development
- Monitor internal and external compliance with this policy