

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1 RATIONALE

- 1.1 Children throughout the Nepal are at risk of child abuse and exploitation and recorded data illustrates that children living in poverty are at the greatest risk of a wide range of forms of child abuse and exploitation. These forms of abuse and exploitation include, but are not limited to, child prostitution, child trafficking, domestic violence, and the absence of a juvenile justice system. Children in emergency situations are especially susceptible to abuse and exploitation when they become part of a displaced or traumatised population.
- 1.2 While most child abuse occurs within families and communities, children also experience abuse and exploitation in organizations which provide them with support and services. Therefore, LWF Nepal is dedicated to promoting children's basic safeguarded and protected in accordance with international standards.
- 1.3 LWF Nepal regards children and young people as those who are under the age of 18.
- 1.4 LWF Nepal does not tolerate any form of child abuse or exploitation. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that LWF Nepal has procedures in place to prevent and deal with child abuse and exploitation by any affiliate, associate or country program of LWF Nepal. This policy will apply to LWF Nepal and partner organizations, particularly to minimize the risk of abuse of children.

2 **Objective: The policy objectives are:**

1. **To support only child safe and child friendly programs**

- a. by ensuring that LWF Nepal adhere to the Code of Conduct and follows appropriate staff and volunteer recruitment and selection processes by regularly monitoring child protection related issues in the field and making staff aware of changes and updates on relevant policy.
- b. by assuring the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child.¹
- c. by ensuring that in child focused projects, indicators and data are disaggregated by age and gender.

¹ UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

2. To ensure that protection and support to children does not discriminate

by recognising the personal dignity and rights of children towards whom is owed a special responsibility and duty of care, respect, protection and assistance, regardless of their gender, nationality, religious or political beliefs, family background, economic status, physical or mental health or criminal background.

3 To maintain professional standards of conduct in working with children

by establishing and maintaining clear professional boundaries that provide for the safety of everyone, provision of adequate education and training, access to staff support and supervision and processes to deal with allegations of a breach of standards and policy.

4 To ensure that the capture and use of children's images meet minimum standards

by:

- portraying children in a dignified and respectful manner;
- never posing children in a sexually suggestive, vulnerable or submissive way;
- composing photos of children in a context that properly represents the facts and within their local community setting; and
- not disclosing detailed personal information about the child with published images

5 To ensure that the capture and use of children's images follows appropriate procedures

by:

- where possible, seeking consent of a child and its parent or guardian for the taking and use of their images; disclosing, when seeking consent, details as to how and where the image will be used;
- where possible, obtaining confirmation that there are no local cultural restrictions on the reproduction of personal images;
- not revealing identifying information in file labels when sending images electronically;
- screening all photographs for their suitability and ensuring all images that breach minimum standards are destroyed.

IMPLEMENTATION

This policy will be implemented in the following ways:

- At the beginning of each project, during induction of new staff and on a continuous basis, all staff will consider and be informed of their responsibilities to individuals and communities in ensuring human rights and children rights are actively upheld.
- A documented child protection complaints management procedure to be adhered to by all LWF Nepal staff in the event of a case of suspected abuse or disclosure and; appropriate public dissemination of the LWF Nepal Complaints and Response Mechanisms
- A commitment that the organization will not permit to person to work with children if they pose an unacceptable risk to children's safety and wellbeing
- A recruitment procedure involving child protection policy will be followed by LWF Nepal in accordance with the code of conduct.
- Child protection policy and complaints and response mechanisms procedure to be adhered to by all LWF Nepal staff
- A provision in all employment contracts that the organization has the right to dismiss the employee if he/she breaches the child protection code of conducts, or fails to disclose a prior conviction or dismissal on child protection – related matter.
- Provision of policy review at least every three years which will taken into account implementation experience, as well as good practices standards and policies that are available at the time of the review and will be presented to the management committee for consideration and approval.

CHILD PROTECTION CODE OF CONDUCT

Lutheran World Federation Nepal commits itself to creating and maintaining an environment which promotes its core values and prevents abuse and sexual exploitation. LWF-Nepal employees and volunteers are expected to contribute to building a harmonious workplace based on team spirit, mutual respect and understanding. All employees and volunteers are expected to uphold the dignity of those we serve by ensuring that their personal and professional conduct is of the highest standard at all times.

LWF-Nepal strongly condemns all kinds of abuse and sexual exploitation. Abuse occurs when adults or other children hurt children or young people under the age of 18, either physically or in some other way. Sexual abuse occurs if a child or young person is pressured or forced to take part in any kind of sexual activity, whether or not the child is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. Sexual abuse includes incest, rape and fondling. It may also include non-contact activities such as showing pornography or internet-based activity. Sexual abuse may involve siblings or other family members, or persons outside the family.

1. Abuse and sexual exploitation constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment. All relevant legal steps should be taken corresponding to the legal and social conditions of the local situation.

2. Exchange of money, employment, goods, assistance or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour is prohibited.

3. Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not an excuse.

4. LWF Nepal Staff are prohibited to promote any form of child labour.

4. Where an LWF-Nepal employee or volunteer develops concerns or witnesses an incident regarding abuse or sexual exploitation she/he must report such concerns via LWF Nepal complaints and response mechanism.

5. LWF-N employees and volunteers are expected to behave in accordance with LWF-Nepal values at all times.

I have carefully read the LWF- Nepal Code of Conduct and discussed its contents with my colleagues in order to understand it clearly. I must comply with the values of LWF- Nepal and I am aware that LWF-Nepal expects me to uphold at all times the standards of behaviour described in the Code of Conduct above. I also understand that disciplinary measures and legal steps will be taken in case of non-compliance.

Singature....., Date :.....

Name