



## **Child Protection Policy**

Protecting children

Preventing abuse

Promoting ethical behaviour

24.7.06

## **Our Vision**

A society that provides a safe, loving, creative, empowering and fun environment for all children so that they can develop to their fullest potential.

## **Our Mission**

- To share our creativity, enthusiasm and commitment to child rights - as well as a broad range of specialist knowledge and transferable skills - with organisations and individuals working with children and young people around the world.
- To make child rights a reality through the development of high quality, holistic and coordinated strategies which are based on the experiences of children and young people, shared knowledge and participation.
- To adopt an ethical approach and promote learning in everything that we do.

# CREATE Child Protection Policy

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## SECTION I: IMPORTANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### I. 1. Definitions

#### **Child**

For the purposes of this policy, a “child” is defined as anyone under the age of 18, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

#### **Child abuse**

- According to the **World Health Organisation**, “Child abuse” or “maltreatment” constitutes ‘all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.’<sup>1</sup>
- **NSPCC** similarly specify “cruelty to children” or “child abuse” as ‘behaviour that causes significant harm to a child. It also includes when someone knowingly fails to prevent serious harm to a child. All forms of cruelty are damaging – it can be harder to recover from the emotional impact than from the physical effects.’<sup>2</sup>
- These definitions therefore point to **four types of cruelty**:
  - **Physical abuse**: including hurting or injuring a child, inflicting pain, poisoning, drowning, or smothering.
  - **Sexual abuse**: including direct or indirect sexual exploitation or corruption of children by involving them (or threatening to involve them) in inappropriate sexual activities.
  - **Emotional abuse**: repeatedly rejecting children, humiliating them or denying their worth and rights as human beings.
  - **Neglect**: the persistent lack of appropriate care of children, including love, stimulation, safety, nourishment, warmth, education, and medical attention.
- A child who is being abused may experience more than one type of cruelty.
- Discrimination, harassment, and bullying are also abusive and can harm a child, both physically and emotionally’.

#### **Child protection**

A broad term to describe philosophies, policies, standards, guidelines and procedures to protect children from both intentional and unintentional harm. In the current context, it applies particularly to the duty of organisations - and individuals associated with those organisations - towards children in their care. ‘Child protection’ is a term used by many organisations for the work and programmes they undertake in the community or broader social environment. This may lead to confusion when discussing the child protection responsibilities and issues involved in managing an organisation. This policy is about *organisational* child protection – i.e. building a ‘child-safe organisation.’

#### **Direct contact with children**

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<sup>1</sup> The WHO definition of Child Abuse as defined by the Report of the Consultation on Child Abuse Prevention WHO – 1999.

<sup>2</sup> Definition taken from *Are you worried about the safety of a child?*, NSPCC, 2002, available to download from <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/documents/safetyofchild.pdf>.

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Being in the physical presence of a child or children in the context of the organisation's work, whether contact is occasional or regular, short or long term. In the UK this could involve delivering talks to schools, churches and youth groups. Overseas this could involve project / site visits and attending conferences at which children are also present. [N.B. this list of examples is not exhaustive].

## ***Indirect contact with children***

1. Having access to information on children in the context of the organisation's work, such as children's names, locations (addresses of individuals or projects), photographs and case studies.
2. Providing funding for organisations that work 'directly' with children. Albeit indirectly, this nonetheless has an impact on children, and therefore confers upon the donor organisation responsibility for child protection issues.

[N.B. this list of examples is not exhaustive].

## ***Policy***

'A statement of intent that demonstrates a commitment to safeguard children from harm and makes clear to all what is required in relation to the protection of children. It helps to create a safe and positive environment for children and to show that the organisation is taking its duty and responsibility of care seriously.'<sup>3</sup>

### **Named person responsible for child protection:**

CREATE permanent consultants in rotation –

July – Dec 2006: Elanor Jackson

Jan – June 2007: Savina Geerinckx

July – Dec 2007: Marie Wernham

### **Second named person responsible for child protection (if main contact is unavailable):**

July – Dec 2006: Savina Geerinckx

Jan – June 2007: Marie Wernham

July – Dec 2007: Elanor Jackson

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<sup>3</sup> *Setting the Standard: A common approach to Child Protection for international NGOs*, Standard 1 (Policy).

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## I. 2. CREATE Overview

- Established in November 2005, **CREATE: Child Rights Evaluation, Advice & Training Exchange**, is a consultancy group of three dynamic individuals with extensive experience in the child rights sector. We work on all areas of child rights, specialising in child protection, juvenile justice, street children and child rights-based approaches to development.
- We offer a range of services including: monitoring and evaluation, research, policy advice, project cycle management, training and development of training materials on a range of issues.
- We provide flexible and extremely high quality services for a broad spectrum of clients ranging from small, grassroots organisations to governments and inter-governmental organisations.
- CREATE consultants take on individual and joint projects although where possible, CREATE promotes collaborative working amongst its consultants to encourage the best possible input into a project and exchange of skills and experience, tailored to suit the client's needs.
- We aim to take an ethical approach in our work, in terms of our Child Protection Policy - which all members are bound by - and our Code of Ethics which promotes a more holistic view of the way we approach human rights, development and the environment.

## I. 3. CREATE's core child protection principles and values

- **The legal basis – the UNCRC: CREATE's Child Protection Policy is firmly based on the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.** Taken holistically, the CRC provides a comprehensive framework for the protection, provision and participation of all children without discrimination to ensure their survival and development to the maximum extent possible. On the understanding that the CRC must be read as a whole, the following articles nevertheless form the specific basis of child protection: 1 (definition of 'child'), 2 (non-discrimination), 3.1 (the best interests of the child), 3.2 (duty of care and protection), 3.3 (standards of care), 6 (survival and development), 12 (participation), 13 (freedom of expression), 19 (protection from violence), 25 (periodic review of placements), 32, 33, 34, 36, 37(a) (protection from economic exploitation, substance abuse, sexual abuse and exploitation, 'all other forms of exploitation'; torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment), 39 (physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration).<sup>4</sup>
- **The moral basis – a non-negotiable duty:** CREATE believes that organisations and individuals working for children's rights have an absolute duty to protect this group from abuse, mistreatment, and exploitation from within organisations intended for their benefit. *This duty is imperative and non-negotiable. Without adequate standards and mechanisms of protection in place, an organisation is not only failing in its primary duty of care, but may also be negligently or recklessly*

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<sup>4</sup> For full text of these Articles see 'Child Protection Tools' (Policies and approaches / Child Protection) at [www.createsolutions.org](http://www.createsolutions.org)

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*fostering an environment of abuse.* Any organisation or individual that claims to be working for the benefit of children *must* make sure that it is not putting children at risk through lack of attention to child protection policies and procedures.

- **An end to silence:** Silence breeds abuse and exploitation of children. Child sex abusers will seek out organisations with weak communication structures and thrive where secrecy and shame prevail. Furthermore, without proper policies and explicit procedures in place, organisations and individuals are extremely vulnerable to false allegations of child abuse. CREATE therefore believes in:
  - creating an environment where issues of child protection are discussed openly and are understood between children and adults;
  - promoting open lines of communication both internally and externally within and between organisations and individuals to improve awareness and implementation of child protection policies and practices;
  - creating a framework to deal transparently, consistently and fairly with allegations concerning abuse.
- **Children’s participation – a space and a voice:** Child protection is not only about policies on paper. The best way to protect children is to empower them to protect themselves. Creating a space where children feel able and willing to speak out about abuse, free from abusers, empowers them to become actors in their own protection without further discrimination or shame. “Children have the right to communication – to enable them to receive information, to ask questions, to make choices, and to make decisions.”<sup>5</sup> CREATE believes that helping children to find a voice is an essential step to helping them to claim their individual rights. *Children will only benefit from this policy if they are aware of their rights and are given the proper environment in which to exercise them.* Appendix 2 of the ChildHope child protection toolkit includes suggested activities to assist organisations in this process.
- **Taking it further:** Child protection is not just about reading and signing a piece of paper: the policy sets out guidelines and standards that must be put into practice. These include, amongst other measures: recruitment procedures, review of management structures, creation of a space for children to speak out, staff training, and development of transparent protocols. *‘Above all, it must be remembered that it is the children, not the standards, that are sacrosanct; and although abuse must never be tolerated, the standards are no more than a tool in the service of promoting the welfare of children.’*<sup>6</sup>
- **Capacity building:** CREATE understands the need for capacity building on issues of child protection and appreciates the constraints and conditions under which organisations operate. CREATE is committed to undertake such capacity building in partnership with others. Supporting materials are available at [www.childhope.org.uk/toolkit.php](http://www.childhope.org.uk/toolkit.php) and [www.createsolutions.org](http://www.createsolutions.org)

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<sup>5</sup> Quoted from Sense International Child Protection Policy, Section 2.1.2

<sup>6</sup> *Setting the Standard: A common approach to Child Protection for international NGOs*, anonymous INGO quotation, p.6.

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- **Challenging complacency:** Resistance to addressing child protection issues may come from lack of understanding of the nature of child abuse, lack of commitment to the organisation / programme, and a sense that child abuse happens elsewhere. Organisations should ask themselves: "If safety and well being of children are not at the centre of the organisation's programme / activities, then why not?" 'It is unfortunate and unacceptable that it will take a horrendous incident to shock some organisations into action'. CREATE will challenge complacency as a matter of course.<sup>7</sup>
- **These principles underlie all of the following standards set out in this document.**

## I. 4. What is a Child Protection Policy?

A Child Protection Policy provides a framework of principles, standards and guidelines on which to base individual and organisational practice in relation to areas such as:

- Creating a 'child safe' and 'child friendly' organisation (in relation to environmental safety as well as protection against physical, psychological and sexual abuse)
- Prevention of abuse
- Personnel recruitment
- Education and training
- Management structure
- Guidelines for appropriate and inappropriate behaviour/attitude of adults towards children and of children towards each other
- Guidelines for communications regarding children
- Recognising, reporting and reacting to suspected and alleged abuse
- Ramifications of misconduct in relation to the policy and procedures

This policy is not solely directed towards sexual abuse, but rather encompasses all aspects of child protection including, but not limited to: proper recruitment, training and managerial procedures, health and safety measures, physical harm, disciplinary measures in relation to children, working with information about children, and the ramifications of misconduct.

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<sup>7</sup> Adapted, with selected quotations, from ECPAT Australia, *Choose with Care*, p.34.

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## 1. 5. What a Child Protection Policy is not:

Signing this policy does not absolve CREATE and its consultants from further action. It is the beginning, not the end of child protection. This policy is not exclusive to consultants working directly with children on a regular basis; it applies to every individual and organisation affiliated with CREATE in any way: *“Many organisations – especially those that do not work directly with children – do not believe the standards are relevant to them because of many factors. CREATE disagrees with this and upholds that every organisation (whether they work directly or indirectly with children, whether they are funding or being funded) must take responsibility for child protection.”*<sup>8</sup>

## 1. 6. Why do we need a Child Protection Policy?

*‘Any international NGO should have a child protection policy if its direct or indirect beneficiaries include individuals under the age of 18’*<sup>9</sup>

- As a group of consultants working for the rights of children, it is our duty to ensure that our promotion of children’s rights includes specifically protecting children from accidental harm as well as deliberate abuse within organisations - and by individuals - intended for their benefit. This policy will assist in fulfilling this duty.
- The children with whom we work are especially vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, and ill-treatment at the hands of carers, other project workers, and those with access to their personal information. In the case of children who have run away from home, many have already experienced ruptured relationships of trust or abuse of an adult-child relationship in the form of physical, psychological or sexual abuse.
- Organisations working with vulnerable children have been, are and will continue to be vulnerable to harbouring abuse until the issues are brought into the open.
- Organisations without protection policies, guidelines and systems are more vulnerable to false or malicious accusations of abuse.
- Without proper policies, guidelines and procedures in place, allegations of abuse, whether founded or unfounded, can destroy an organisation’s reputation. This will have serious implications for CREATE’s ability to function (thus undermining our entire portfolio of work, even beyond the scope of the particular project concerned) as well as damaging the reputation of the child rights sector as a whole.
- Because the potential for child abuse exists throughout the world, CREATE, as a group of consultants who have already done pioneering work in this field, is ideally

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<sup>8</sup> *Setting the standard: A common approach to child protection for international NGOs*, anonymous NGO quotation, p.4.

<sup>9</sup> *Setting the Standard: A common approach to Child Protection for international NGOs*, Standard 1 (Policy).

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placed to promote awareness, sensitisation and standards of child protection and to engage in capacity building on this important issue.

## 1. 7. Who is bound by the Policy?

Each individual and organisation working in the name of CREATE, or contracted by CREATE, is held accountable for good practice while working either 'directly' or 'indirectly' with children (see 'definitions', Section I.1). Each will be informed of the policy, and asked to sign a 'Statement of Commitment' to the principles contained in the policy.

### a. CREATE permanent consultants

- CREATE consultants, whether they are associated with CREATE either full or part-time, are bound to the commitment not only to abide by, but also to understand and promote the policies, guidelines, principles and practice of child protection in a child rights context. It is crucial that the consultants of CREATE uphold the highest standards of professional and ethical behaviour while associated with CREATE, including in their personal lives, because the actions of the consultants reflect the principles of the organisation.
- This document outlines the recruitment procedures for new consultants (see Section II.1).
- The format of management structure is outlined in Section II.3. Direct lines of communication throughout the consultants must be implemented and a specific person assigned to be in charge of child protection issues on a rotational basis.
- Each consultant will be:
  - Required to obtain a Criminal Records Bureau standard disclosure check (if geographical jurisdiction of the CRB applies);<sup>10</sup>
  - Expected to sign the appropriate Statement of Commitment to CREATE's Child Protection Policy as a condition of association with CREATE (see Section III (A));
  - Expected to sign a personal declaration stating any criminal convictions, including those considered 'spent';
  - Expected to attend all child protection training provided by the organisation;
  - New consultants will be expected to provide 2 contacts for referees that can be verified by telephone.

### b. Contractors

- Each individual or organisation whose services are used by CREATE, and which include direct or indirect contact with children<sup>11</sup>, such as contractors, will be made aware of CREATE's Child Protection Policy by being issued a copy of the contractor version of the Policy.

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<sup>10</sup> See 'Child FAQs' (Policies and approaches / Child Protection) at [www.createsolutions.org](http://www.createsolutions.org) for information on the CRB and descriptions of standard and enhanced disclosures.

<sup>11</sup> See Section I.1 for definition of 'direct' and 'indirect' contact.

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- If the type of work carried out involves **direct contact** with children, the following standards shall apply:
  - Each contractor will be:
    - Expected to sign the appropriate Statement of Commitment to CREATE's Child Protection Policy as a condition of the contract (see Section III (A)) (whether organisation and/or individual);
    - Required to obtain a Criminal Records Bureau *standard* disclosure check (if geographical jurisdiction of the CRB applies) (applies only to individual contractor);<sup>12</sup>
    - Expected to sign a personal declaration stating any criminal convictions, including those considered 'spent' (applies only to individual contractor);
    - Expected to provide 2 contacts for referees that can be verified by telephone (applies only to individual contractor).
- If the type of work carried out involves **indirect contact** with children and/or information regarding children, the following standards shall apply:
  - Each contractor will be:
    - Expected to sign the appropriate Statement of Commitment to CREATE's Child Protection Policy as a condition of the contract (see Section III (A)) (whether organisation and individual);
    - Expected to sign a personal declaration stating any criminal convictions, including those considered 'spent' (applies only to individual contractor);
    - Expected to provide 2 contacts for referees that can be verified by telephone (applies only to individual contractor).
- Individuals and organisations who work for CREATE more than once in any one year period are covered by their original Child Protection Policy commitments. Individuals or organisations who carry out work for CREATE again after one year will be required to recommit to our Child Protection Policy, conforming again with the requirements set out above.
- If the type of work carried out involves **no contact** with children, and no access to information regarding children, (e.g. accountant, auditor), then no formal procedure is necessary.

## c. Interns and Volunteers

- CREATE interns and volunteers are bound to the commitment not only to abide by, but also to promote the policies, guidelines, principles and practice of children's protection in a child rights context. It is crucial that the interns and volunteers of CREATE uphold the highest standards of professional and ethical behaviour whilst associated with CREATE, including in their personal lives, because the actions of the interns and volunteers ought to reflect the principles of the organisation.

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<sup>12</sup> See 'Child Protection FAQs' (Policies and approaches / Child Protection) at [www.createsolutions.org](http://www.createsolutions.org) for information on the CRB and descriptions of standard and enhanced disclosures.

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- Because interns and volunteers are often employed temporarily, managers of interns and volunteers must stress the importance of child protection issues during initial induction training, and assess the actions of these workers, as part of the organisation's general management and monitoring procedures, to ensure the policy provisions are understood and followed correctly.
- A copy of CREATE's Child Protection Policy will be included in CREATE's Intern Induction Pack which will be presented to every intern and volunteer.
- Each intern and volunteer will be:
  - Required to obtain a Criminal Records Bureau basic disclosure check (if geographical jurisdiction of the CRB applies and if timing allows);<sup>13</sup>
  - Expected to sign the appropriate Statement of Commitment to CREATE's Child Protection Policy as a condition of working with CREATE (see Section III (A));
  - Expected to sign a personal declaration stating any criminal convictions, including those considered 'spent';
  - Expected to provide 2 contacts for referees that can be verified by telephone.

## **d. Joint project partners**

- CREATE commits to raising awareness of child protection issues with partners on joint projects. CREATE will therefore incorporate child protection discussions into the development of all projects undertaken with external organisations.
- If, in any joint proposal, CREATE has overall responsibility for delivery of a project to the client, then CREATE will insist on all partners complying with CREATE's Child Protection Policy. This must be sensitively negotiated during the project development stage and support and advice must be given to partners throughout the project to assist them in complying with these standards.
- In any project where responsibility for delivery of a project to a client is held jointly / equally between the project partners:
  - CREATE's own personnel (consultants, contractors, interns and volunteers) are bound by this policy;
  - In addition, CREATE will ensure – to the best of its ability and in the given circumstances - that child protection concerns are addressed and monitored throughout the project overall;
  - CREATE will proactively offer advice and assistance on child protection issues to other project partners, and will encourage them to develop their own child protection policies if they do not have something already in place.
  - However, CREATE will not be responsible for the personnel of project partners in terms of child protection issues.

## **e. Responsibility for children brought from overseas to the UK, or children brought together within the UK**

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<sup>13</sup> See 'Child Protection FAQs' (Policies and approaches / Child Protection) at [www.createsolutions.org](http://www.createsolutions.org) for information on the CRB and descriptions of standard and enhanced disclosures.

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- In general, children’s participation is best developed by working with children within their own environments and in the context of their own social support structures. Children’s participation should be integrated into programming on an ongoing basis as much as possible rather than being confined to participation in one-off events and consultations, especially those that take place outside the child’s local context. With this in mind, any decision to invite children to attend events in the UK must be taken in the best interests of the child with serious consideration given to the objectives and implications.
- If CREATE undertakes any initiative (whether in a funding or facilitating role) to bring children from overseas to the UK, or together within the UK, for any purpose (e.g. attending conferences, exchange visits, consultations), both CREATE as a whole, as well as the individuals entrusted with the direct care of the children are responsible for ensuring compliance with all relevant aspects of this policy. The child / children will be accompanied by a designated chaperone at all times.
- The individuals entrusted with the direct care of the children must:
  - satisfy the procedures listed above in Section 1.7.b including signing the relevant Statement of Commitment to CREATE’s policy, undergoing standard CRB disclosure (if geographic jurisdiction applies), providing a personal declaration of criminal convictions and 2 contacts for referees that can be verified by telephone;
  - receive a specific briefing - in relation to the exact circumstances of the project - from the organisation’s designated child protection person / Officer; this briefing should include refresher training on the organisation’s Code of Behaviour, and ample opportunity for clarifying child protection principles and procedures;
  - be provided with contact details for 24 hour emergency support within the organisation for the duration of the child / children’s visit, as well as external emergency contact details (e.g. medical).
- Individuals within the organisation who are likely to come into contact with such children in the context of visits from overseas should, in addition to complying with the general policy requirements, receive refresher training on the organisation’s Code of Behaviour.
- Representatives of the organisation shall disseminate and promote copies of the Code of Behaviour in all situations where the organisation is responsible for bringing children in contact with adults<sup>14</sup>.

## **f. Individuals on project visits<sup>15</sup> (e.g. donors, journalists, and researchers):**

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<sup>14</sup> See also Section II.4

<sup>15</sup> I.e. those individuals not covered by other, specific sections of the policy: i.e. ‘researchers’ here would not include paid contractors who would be covered under Section 1.9.1.d.

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- Anyone travelling overseas either as a representative of CREATE, or where CREATE is responsible for that person, e.g. donors, journalists and researchers, and who will have direct or indirect contact with children during the project visit, will be:
  - required to obtain a Criminal Records Bureau standard disclosure check (if geographical jurisdiction of the CRB applies and if timing allows)<sup>16</sup>;
  - expected to sign the appropriate Statement of Commitment to the project visit version of CREATE's Child Protection Policy as a condition of the visit (see Section III (B));
  - expected to sign a personal declaration stating any criminal convictions, including those considered 'spent', and declaring any previous investigations or allegations made against them with respect to child protection issues;
  - expected to provide 2 contacts for referees that can be verified by telephone;
  - expected to receive a specific briefing - in relation to the exact circumstances of the visit - from the organisation's designated Child Protection Officer; this briefing should include training on CREATE's Code of Behaviour and CREATE's Communication Guidelines (including use of images); in the case of journalists, they will also be issued a copy of any additional media guidelines that may be produced in the future.

## SECTION II: CREATE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

**Our vision is to build a "child safe organisation". We will work towards this by developing and implementing policies and procedures, to the best of our ability, to ensure the respect and wellbeing of children who come into contact with CREATE. The implementation of this policy and the guidelines outlined below should be based on a spirit of positive commitment at all times to the best interests of the child.**

**Updating the policy:** This document will be reviewed 6 months after it comes into force and will thereafter be updated a minimum of once every year or whenever there is a major change in the organisation or in relevant legislation, to guarantee the best available policies for child protection.

**Further resources:** Members of CREATE have developed, in association with ChildHope UK and the Consortium for Street Children, comprehensive training materials for organisations - both in the UK and overseas - to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate child protection policies and procedures. This toolkit is available at [www.childhope.org.uk/toolkit.php](http://www.childhope.org.uk/toolkit.php) and [www.createsolutions.org](http://www.createsolutions.org). See also 'Child Protection Tools' (Policies and approaches / Child Protection) at [www.createsolutions.org](http://www.createsolutions.org) for additional information.

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<sup>16</sup> See 'Child Protection Tools' (Policies and approaches / Child Protection) at [www.createsolutions.org](http://www.createsolutions.org) for information on the CRB and descriptions of standard and enhanced disclosures.

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## II. 1 Personnel Recruitment Procedure

Existing CREATE consultants will:

- Read, understand and accept compliance with CREATE's Child Protection Policy and guidelines as part of the terms and conditions of association with CREATE. This process will include signing the appropriate Statement of Commitment as a condition of association (see Section III (A)).
- Obtain a standard or enhanced disclosure (depending on level of contact with children) through the Criminal Records Bureau<sup>17</sup> (if geographical jurisdiction of the CRB applies). "Police checks will be considered to be valid for 3 years, although repeat police checks should be requested before this time should suspicions arise."<sup>18</sup>
- Sign a personal declaration stating any criminal convictions, including those considered 'spent'.

If CREATE recruits any additional consultants, contractors, interns or volunteers, whether paid or unpaid, full time or part time, temporary or long-term, having direct or indirect contact with children, there will be a thorough and standardised recruitment process which shall include:

- Advertisements for vacancies that clearly state that a child protection policy, including screening procedures, is in place.
- A candidate specification that accompanies each job description, against which applicants are judged, to ensure that the best candidate for the job is selected, above and beyond child protection considerations.<sup>19</sup>
- The requirement for the potential associate to read, understand and accept compliance with CREATE's Child Protection Policy and guidelines as part of the terms and conditions of association with CREATE. This process will include signing the appropriate Statement of Commitment as a condition of association (see Section III (A)).
- A standard or enhanced disclosure (depending on level of contact with children) through the Criminal Records Bureau<sup>20</sup> (if geographical jurisdiction of the CRB applies). "Police checks will be considered to be valid for 3 years, although repeat police checks should be requested before this time should suspicions arise."<sup>21</sup>
- The requirement for the potential associate to sign a personal declaration stating any criminal convictions, including those considered 'spent'.

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<sup>17</sup> See 'Child Protection FAQs' (Policies and approaches / Child Protection) at [www.createsolutions.org](http://www.createsolutions.org) for information on the CRB and descriptions of standard and enhanced disclosures.

<sup>18</sup> Sense International Child Protection Policy, section 4.4.2.7.

<sup>19</sup> ChildHope Child Protection Policy, July 2001, section 2.2.

<sup>20</sup> See 'Child Protection FAQs' (Policies and approaches / Child Protection) at [www.createsolutions.org](http://www.createsolutions.org) for information on the CRB and descriptions of standard and enhanced disclosures.

<sup>21</sup> Sense International Child Protection Policy, section 4.4.2.7.

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- The required minimum of two character references (excluding family members and those who have known the applicant personally for less than 2 years<sup>22</sup>) that can be verified by telephone. "If [the] two referees are being used as an alternate arrangement to police checking [i.e. if geographical jurisdiction of the Criminal Records Bureau does not apply] then the existence of the referee must be confirmed [...] and the reference must be taken up."<sup>23</sup>
- An interview process which includes:
  - One member of the recruitment panel will have undergone recruitment training specifically focussed on the issues of child protection. See Child Protection Policies and Procedures Toolkit Appendix 9 – Guidelines on Recruitment [www.childhope.org.uk/toolkit.php](http://www.childhope.org.uk/toolkit.php) for sample interview questions.
  - Specific, standardised questions at interview on child protection and the candidate's commitment to, and respect for, child protection policies and procedures as well as the candidate's motivation for working with children.
  - Attentiveness to anything suspicious in employment history (including gaps), and the use of telephone references to clarify any areas of concern.

## II. 2 Education and Training

CREATE's permanent consultants will foster an environment that encourages opportunities to question and learn about child protection issues. There will be opportunities within CREATE to develop and maintain the necessary skills and understanding to safeguard children<sup>24</sup>. The opportunities shall include:

- An induction process for all consultants, contractors, interns and volunteers which includes: familiarisation with the Child Protection Policy and procedures<sup>25</sup>; opportunities to learn about the nature of abuse, the effects of abuse and how to recognise and respond to concerns about child abuse<sup>26</sup>; information and support on who to contact in the event of any concerns about child protection issues.
  - New consultants, contractors, interns and volunteers should receive child protection training as soon as possible (ideally within 3 months) of taking up their position.
  - Existing consultants should receive child protection training within a designated time period (ideally within 3 months) of the Child Protection Policy coming into force.
- Consultants, contractors, interns and volunteers who will have direct contact with children either in the UK (e.g. through school or youth group contact) or overseas (e.g. through project visits) must be fully trained on the organisation's behaviour

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<sup>22</sup> Adapted from Sense International Child Protection Policy, section 4.4.2.5.

<sup>23</sup> Adapted from Sense International Child Protection Policy, section 4.4.2.6.

<sup>24</sup> *Setting the Standard: A common approach to Child Protection for international NGOs*, Standard 8 (Education and Training) definition

<sup>25</sup> *Setting the Standard: A common approach to Child Protection for international NGOs*, Standard 8 (Education and Training), Criteria 8.1

<sup>26</sup> *Setting the Standard: A common approach to Child Protection for international NGOs*, Standard 8 (Education and Training), Criteria 8.2

# CREATE Child Protection Policy

protocols and guidelines and must be clear on who to contact in the event of any concerns.

- In a situation where CREATE consultants are on a long term assignment which involves building relationships with children, orientation will be given to children themselves on all relevant aspects of the CREATE's Child Protection Policy and procedures.
- Consultants, contractors, interns and volunteers who have access to information about children such as personal contact information, including their address, specific cases or incidents, or any other details of a child's personal life must be trained to fully understand what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable sharing of information regarding children.
- "It is recognised that lengthy training can be an additional burden on volunteers or on staff who work part time. Where possible, these limitations should be recognised and arrangements made to deliver the training in as accessible way as possible."<sup>27</sup>
- It is recognised that this training and the topic of child abuse are of a sensitive nature and may raise personal issues. It is not our wish to upset anyone and so CREATE will develop guidelines on how to cope with a training participant who becomes emotionally distraught. Amongst other things, this will include giving out referral telephone numbers for agencies with experience supporting survivors of child abuse.<sup>28</sup>
- A regular re-evaluation of circumstances regarding training and policy procedures will be administered, assuring an up-to-date awareness of child protection issues within CREATE.

## II. 3 Management Structure

There will be a specific management process adopted in order to facilitate implementation of the child protection policy and procedures. The structure shall include:

- CREATE will have open lines of communication where understanding abuse and listening and responding to concerns are the main priority. It will create an atmosphere of support and encouragement for those who feel it necessary to report concerns, as child protection is a difficult issue to confront. It will promote a positive environment for giving and receiving feedback.
- CREATE consultants will reflect the CREATE's core principles and values, upholding a professional approach toward child protection issues and demonstrating awareness of matters of abuse.
- Child protection will be implemented by all CREATE consultants. However, a person who is responsible for the implementation of the child protection policy will be

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<sup>27</sup> Sense International Child Protection Policy, section 4.4.4.5.

<sup>28</sup> Adapted from Learning for Life draft Child Protection Policy, September 2005 and Sense International Child Protection Policy, Section 4.4.4.6

# CREATE Child Protection Policy

designated. This role will reflect the nature and structure of the organisation and the person shall have sufficient seniority and support to carry out the role.<sup>29</sup>

- The responsibilities of the designated CREATE child protection person will include:
  - Promoting awareness and implementation of the policy throughout the organisation.
  - Monitoring implementation of the policy and reporting on developments at each CREATE monthly meeting.
  - The development of child protection training resources as required.
  - Maintaining knowledge of best practice and statutory requirements.<sup>30</sup>
- In a context of positive, overall organisational support for child protection, ongoing supervision, monitoring and support of individuals working directly with children, or with direct access to information on children will be provided by CREATE's designated Child Protection Officer and integrated into CREATE's regular meetings.
- In addition to child protection being a standing agenda item at monthly meetings, annual reviews and consultants' self-assessments will include an opportunity to discuss child protection issues with other members of the team.
- The disclosure of personal information about children, including legal cases, should be limited to those consultants, contractors, interns and volunteers who need to know.
- CREATE commits to raising awareness of child protection issues with its clients. CREATE will therefore incorporate child protection discussions into all projects undertaken with clients.

## II. 4 Behaviour Protocols

- There is a Code of Conduct to protect any child from abuse. The Code of Conduct includes guidance on appropriate / expected standards of behaviour of adults towards children<sup>31</sup>. Where CREATE comes into contact with children as part of its work, it will explain that it has a Child Protection Policy which guides its work with children and organisations working with children. If CREATE becomes involved in sustained work directly with children, then CREATE will work with the children themselves to develop a peer Code of Behaviour which outlines appropriate / expected standards of behaviour of children towards other children.
- The Code will be prominently displayed on CREATE's website and therefore easily accessible.

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<sup>29</sup> *Setting the Standard: A common approach to Child Protection for international NGOs*, Standard 2 (Procedures and systems), Criteria 2.4.

<sup>30</sup> Adapted from Tearfund Child Protection Policy, May 2001, Part Two (Implementation Plan – Child Protection Officer).

<sup>31</sup> *Setting the Standard: A common approach to Child Protection for international NGOs*, Standard 4 (Codes of practice and behaviour), Criteria 4.2 and 4.3.

# CREATE Child Protection Policy

- Representatives of the organisation shall disseminate and promote copies of the Code of Conduct in all situations where the organisation is responsible for bringing children into contact with adults<sup>32</sup>.

## CREATE Code of Conduct<sup>33</sup>

- The Code of Conduct should be interpreted in a spirit of transparency and common sense, with the best interests of the child as the primary consideration.
- CREATE associates must make an attempt to understand the local norms around physical contact between children and adults.
- **Minimising risk situations:**
  - **Try to:** avoid placing yourself in a compromising or vulnerable position; be accompanied by a second adult whenever possible; meet with a child in a central, public location whenever possible; immediately note, in a designated organisational Child Protection Log Book or incident report sheet, the circumstances of any situation which occurs which may be subject to misinterpretation; keep in mind that actions, no matter how well intended, are always subject to misinterpretation by a third party.
  - **Try not to** be alone with a single child, including in the following situations: in a car (no matter how short the journey); overnight (no matter where the accommodation); in your home or the home of a child. Do not show favouritism or spend excessive amounts of time with one child.
- **Sexual behaviour:**
  - **Do not:** engage in or allow sexually provocative games with children to take place; kiss, hug, fondle, rub, or touch a child in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way; sleep in the same bed as a child; do things of a personal nature that a child could do for him/herself, including dressing, bathing, and grooming; encourage any crushes by a child.
- **Physical behaviour:**
  - **Do:** wait for appropriate physical contact, such as holding hands, to be initiated by the child, except in situations where it is expected for adults to greet children by offering them their hand.
- **Psychosocial behaviour:**
  - **Do:** Be aware of the power balance between an adult and child, and avoid taking any advantage this may provide; be aware that as a consultant, your presence with children will often be temporary and you should therefore avoid creating bonds with children which encourage emotional or

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<sup>32</sup> E.g. In situations where the organisation is responsible (either in terms of funding or operational partnership) for field visits / consultations with children as part of overseas or UK conferences, all participants shall be provided with a copy of the Code of Conduct. Participants shall also have the opportunity to discuss any issues arising with a representative of the organisation.

<sup>33</sup> These behaviour guidelines are based on the child protection policies of World Vision, Save the Children UK, Tearfund, Sense International and Learning for Life.

# CREATE Child Protection Policy

psychological dependency: make it clear to children from the outset, in age-appropriate terms, that you will not be with them long-term.

- **Do not:** use language that will mentally or emotionally harm any child; suggest inappropriate behaviour or relations of any kind; act in any way that intends to embarrass, shame, humiliate, or degrade a child; encourage any inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour, such as tantrums, by a child; show discrimination of race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality, or political persuasion.

- **Peer abuse:**

- **Do:** be aware of the potential for peer abuse; develop special measures / supervision to protect younger and especially vulnerable children; avoid placing children in high-risk peer situations (e.g. unsupervised mixing of older and younger children).
- **Do not:** allow children to engage in sexually provocative games with each other.

- **Physical environment:**

- **Do:** develop clear rules to address specific physical safety issues relative to the local physical environment of a project (e.g. for projects based near water, heavy road traffic, railway lines).

## II. 5 Communication Guidelines<sup>34</sup>

- Access to printed and electronic personal information about children should be restricted to the minimum number of people who need to know within CREATE. Personal and physical information that could be used to identify the location of a child within a country and cause them to be put at risk should not be used on the organisation's website or in any other form of communication for general or public purposes.
- Every child has a right to be accurately represented through both words and images. The organisation's portrayal of each child must not be manipulated or sensationalized in any way. Children must be presented as human beings with their own identity and dignity preserved. Text and images included in any print, broadcast or electronic materials such as brochures, publications, reports, videos or websites should depict an accurate and balanced depiction of children and their circumstances. Sufficient information should be provided where possible as to their social, cultural and economic environment. Where children are indeed 'victims', the preservation of the child's dignity must nevertheless be preserved at all times. In these circumstances, 'before' and 'after' pictures are useful to depict a balance between victimisation and empowerment.

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<sup>34</sup> The majority of these guidelines are based on the following sources: Code of Conduct: Images and messages relating to the Third World, Liaison Committee of Development NGOs to the European Union, April 1989, *Practical Guidelines*; World Vision Guidelines on the Use of Images and Messages Relating to the Developing World; World Vision Child Protection Policy.

# CREATE Child Protection Policy

- As far as possible, people [including children] should be able to give their own accounts rather than have people speak on their behalf, and people's [including children's] ability to take responsibility and action for themselves should be highlighted.<sup>35</sup>
- Avoid:
  - Language and images that could possibly degrade, victimise or shame children;
  - Making generalisations which do not accurately reflect the nature of the situation;
  - Discrimination of any kind;
  - Taking pictures out of context (e.g. pictures should be accompanied by an explanatory caption where possible).
- In images, children should be appropriately clothed and not depicted in any poses that could be interpreted as sexually provocative.
- Always ask permission from the child / children themselves before taking photographs or moving images except under exceptional circumstances, based on the child / children's best interests, where this might not be possible or desirable.
- To the greatest extent possible, the organisation should acquire informed consent / the permission of the child, child's guardian and/or NGO responsible for the child in order to use the image for publicity, fundraising, awareness-raising or other purpose (which should be made clear to the consent-giver).
- Individuals or organisations requesting the use of CREATE's resources such as photographs should be required to sign an agreement with CREATE as to the proper use of such materials. The agreement could include a statement that any use of such materials for purposes other than what is agreed upon could subject the borrowing individual or organisation to legal action. Furthermore, failure to adhere to the agreed use of the material will result in the immediate termination of the organisation's permission to use the subject materials and/or require immediate return of all materials (including any copies made) provided by CREATE.<sup>36</sup>

## II. 6 Reporting and reaction protocol

There is a process for reporting and reacting to witnessed, suspected or alleged child abuse and/or violation of the Child Protection Policy which is made available to, and understood by, all consultants, contractors, interns and volunteers. If CREATE is working on a project which involves sustained, direct contact with children then the children themselves should be made aware, in a language and age-appropriate way that they understand, what to do if they feel uncomfortable and want to report something. The process includes:

- The guiding principle that the best interests of the child, the need to ensure the immediate physical and psychological safety of the child, and the desire to secure the best outcomes for the child should always govern decisions regarding what action

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<sup>35</sup> World Vision Guidelines on the Use of Images and Messages Relating to the Developing World, No. 3.

<sup>36</sup> Adapted from World Vision Child Protection Policy, section 8.4.

# CREATE Child Protection Policy

should be taken in response to concerns.<sup>37</sup> Child abuse disempowers children. CREATE aims to empower children by allowing them to govern as much as possible, decisions regarding action that is taken in light of concerns or allegations.<sup>38</sup>

- Guidance on dealing with allegations from a child that ensure that the child is treated with respect:

## **Allegations from a child<sup>39</sup>**

When a child informs you that he/she is uncomfortable or concerned with a specific person's (adult or child) behaviour towards them or another child, the following steps must be taken:

- Reassure them that they were right to report the behaviour.
- Listen carefully and calmly to them and ask questions to clarify the allegation so that you will be able to later report the incident correctly.
- During the conversation, try not to repeat the same questions to the child, as this gives the child the impression that they did not give correct information the first time and they are not fully believed.
- Do not promise secrecy to the child. Inform the child that you must report the incident or inappropriate behaviour as it is in their best interest.
- Take proper steps to ensure the physical safety and psychological well being of the child. This may include referring them for medical treatment or to a psychologist.
- Make certain you distinguish between what the child has actually said and the inferences you may have made. Accuracy is paramount in this stage of the procedure.
- Do not permit personal doubt to prevent you from reporting the allegation to the proper supervisor.
- Let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens.<sup>40</sup>

- Guidance on confidentiality and information sharing which clarifies that the protection of the child is the most important consideration<sup>41</sup>. This includes a standardised system for reporting incidents, concerns and referrals and storing these securely.<sup>42</sup> 'Records should be signed and dated. [...] Records must be kept securely in a locked place to which access is restricted. CREATE has a particular responsibility in maintaining the confidentiality of these records and must ensure that the records, or any information they contain, are made available only to relevant parties. The transfer of information – verbally, through the mail, electronically, etc. – should be done in such a way that confidentiality is maintained.'<sup>43</sup>
- CREATE must take appropriate steps within its power to protect the child / children in question from further harm. If your concerns involve immediate harm to a child, action

<sup>37</sup> Adapted from Tearfund Child Protection Policy, May 2001, Section D (Responding).

<sup>38</sup> Adapted from Learning for Life draft Child Protection Policy, September 2005.

<sup>39</sup> Based largely on Tearfund Child Protection Policy, May 2001, Section C.

<sup>40</sup> Anti-Slavery International draft Child Protection Policy, Oct 2002, 'Raising and reporting of child abuse'.

<sup>41</sup> *Setting the Standard: A common approach to Child Protection for international NGOs*, Standard 8 (Education and Training), Criteria 2.7.

<sup>42</sup> *Setting the Standard: A common approach to Child Protection for international NGOs*, Standard 8 (Education and Training), Criteria 2.5.

<sup>43</sup> Save the Child UK Child Protection Policy, 1999, Section 5.5 (confidentiality).

# CREATE Child Protection Policy

must be taken without delay, as inaction may place the child in further danger. If you know any information about the maltreatment of a child, it is your responsibility to tell someone. All consultants, contractors, interns and volunteers must therefore act immediately and report suspicions, however uncertain, to the designated person (or alternate designated person) in accordance with the organisation's reporting procedure (refer to flowchart and response form). The designated person may in turn seek guidance on further action in the local context (if overseas) or from local social services and the police (if in the UK).

- In certain instances there will be the obligation for CREATE and its consultants, contractors and others to report concerns to the appropriate external bodies. This will usually occur as a consequence of the reporting procedure. However, if urgent action is required in order to protect children then it may be prior to the reporting procedure.<sup>44</sup>
- Relevant contact details for child protection services, local social services department, police, emergency medical help and helplines (e.g. NSPCC) will be readily available and easily accessible to organisation representatives.
- Arrangements will be made for providing supervision and support to consultants, contractors, interns and/or volunteers during and following an incident or allegation.<sup>45</sup>
- **Action in the UK:** 'The responsibility for investigating allegations of child abuse in the UK (and many other countries) rests with the Police and local Social Service Department. The [organisation's designated child protection person / officer] will usually seek the advice of the Social Services, Police or NSPCC in deciding whether a formal referral to Social Services is necessary. Police and Social Services procedures will then be followed. If it is decided that external reporting should not take place then there must be a clear rationale for that decision which should be recorded. The decision not to report in such circumstances should be unanimously approved by [all three permanent consultants of CREATE]'.<sup>46</sup>
- **Action overseas:** If the incident takes place whilst a CREATE associate is on an overseas visit, then CREATE is obliged to raise the issue with the local partner in order to: ensure that the local partner is aware of the concerns raised; seek further clarification of the local organisation's Child Protection Policies and procedures; suggest or offer support in helping them to develop appropriate policies and procedures where appropriate<sup>47</sup>.
- See ChildHope Child Protection Toolkit, Appendix 13 p.152, at [www.childhope.org.uk/toolkit.php](http://www.childhope.org.uk/toolkit.php) or [www.createsolutions.org](http://www.createsolutions.org) for the **reporting form**.

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<sup>44</sup> Tearfund Child Protection Policy, May 2001, Section C (Reporting - Making Reports).

<sup>45</sup> *Setting the Standard: A common approach to Child Protection for international NGOs*, Standard 8 (Education and Training), Criteria 9.5. See also Sense International Child Protection Policy, section 5.3 for detailed guidelines on providing support.

<sup>46</sup> Tearfund Child Protection Policy, May 2001, Section D (Responding).

<sup>47</sup> Tearfund Child Protection Policy, May 2001, Section D (Responding).

# CREATE Child Protection Policy

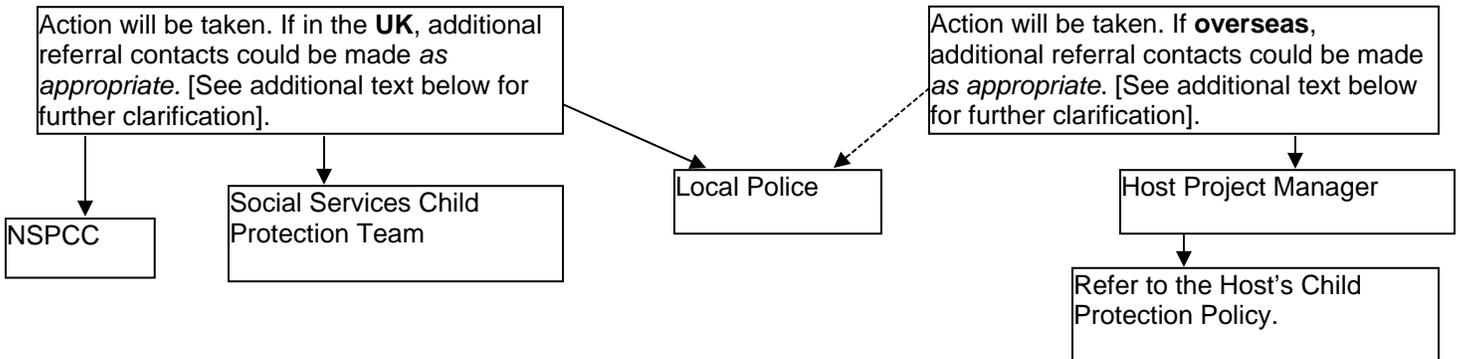
## Flowchart for Reporting Suspected Abuse<sup>48</sup>

Concerned about suspected, witnessed, reported or potential child abuse in either the UK (i.e. during a school or youth group talk), or overseas (i.e. during a project visit)?

Discuss your concerns with the designated person/main contact in your organisation (preferably on same working day). As CREATE is a very small group where each consultant is well-versed in child protection issues, and where the role of designated Child Protection Officer rotates every 6 months, you may contact any or all of the following. If your concerns involve this specific person(s), you may contact either of the other consultants in confidence.

<p><b>Name:</b> Savina Geerinckx  <b>Title:</b> CREATE Consultant  <b>Location:</b> London, UK  <b>Contact details:</b>  <a href="mailto:savina@createsolutions.org">savina@createsolutions.org</a>                      Mobile: +44 (0)7919 562 336</p>	<p><b>Name:</b> Elanor Jackson  <b>Title:</b> CREATE Consultant  <b>Location:</b> London, UK  <b>Contact details:</b>  <a href="mailto:elanor@createsolutions.org">elanor@createsolutions.org</a>                      Mobile: +44 (0)7815 871 735</p>	<p><b>Name:</b> Marie Wernham  <b>Title:</b> CREATE Consultant  <b>Location:</b> London, UK  <b>Contact details:</b>  <a href="mailto:marie@createsolutions.org">marie@createsolutions.org</a>                      Mobile: +44 (0)7901 554 860</p>
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The person contacted must then inform the other two consultants (unless they are implicated) of the concerns to discuss further action (preferably on same working day)



<sup>48</sup> Based on tools and resources found in the child protection policies of SENSE International, Save the Children UK and Tearfund. 'Host' refers to all organisations where staff and others are visiting or working.

# CREATE Child Protection Policy

## II. 7 Ramifications of Misconduct

- If an allegation of a violation of the policies, guidelines, principles or practice of child protection is made concerning a named individual from a verifiable source against any consultant, contractor, intern or volunteer, they may be suspended from all activity / association with CREATE pending the outcome of an independent investigation.
- Depending on the outcome of the independent investigation: 'If it comes to light that anyone associated with [the organisation] commits acts in relation to children – whether within or outside the context of [the organisation's] work – which are criminal, grossly infringe children's rights, or contravene the principles and standards contained in this document, *the organisation will take immediate disciplinary action and any other action which may be appropriate to the circumstances*'. This may mean, for example, for:
  - Consultant – disciplinary action / dismissal from association with CREATE
  - Volunteers and interns – ending the relationship with CREATE
  - Contractors – termination of contract
- 'Depending on the nature, circumstances and location of the case, [the organisation] will also consider involving authorities such as the police to ensure the protection of children and criminal prosecution where this is appropriate.'<sup>49</sup>
- The decision to suspend is not subject to challenge. When investigating and determining the concerns or complaints, the process should always be fair and any adverse determination should be open to challenge through an appeals process. This means that if a consultant, contractor, intern or volunteer has been accused of violating the Child Protection Policy and the complaint has been upheld as a result of an investigation, the accused has the right to appeal this decision (for example, they may feel that the original decision was unjust or based on misinformation or a personal grudge of the person who carried out the investigation). An appeal would mean that a second party would re-examine the evidence to double-check that no mistakes have been made. The decision from the appeals process would then be final once and for all.

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<sup>49</sup> Adapted from Save the Children UK Child Protection Policy, 1999, Section 1.4 (Responsibilities Under this Policy)

# CREATE Child Protection Policy

## STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

to CREATE's Child Protection Policy

### VERSION A:

### **CREATE – consultants, contractors, interns and volunteers**

"I, \_\_\_\_\_[name]\_\_\_\_\_, have read and understood the standards and guidelines outlined in this Child Protection Policy. I agree with the principles contained therein and accept the importance of implementing child protection policies and practice while working with CREATE.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Job title / role)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

# CREATE Child Protection Policy

## STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

to CREATE's Child Protection Policy

### VERSION B:

**Individuals on project visits (e.g. donors, journalists,  
and researchers)**

"I, \_\_\_\_\_[name]\_\_\_\_\_, have read and understood the standards and guidelines outlined in this Child Protection Policy. I agree with the principles contained therein and accept the importance of implementing child protection policies and practice while associated with CREATE.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\*(Job title / role)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\*(delete as applicable)