

CCFSA CLIMATE
CHANGE AND
FOOD
SECURITY
ASSOCIATION

Information Sharing Guidelines

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INFORMATION SHARING GUIDELINES

Member:	• all board members/trustees, board committee members • all association employees, secondees, interns and volunteers; and • all consultants/contractors/suppliers (including internal consultants with an association email address) • all association partners
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1. Introduction

The Climate Change and Food Security Association (CCFSA) recognises the significant impact of climate change and food insecurity on vulnerable communities, particularly children. These challenges compound existing risks to children's safety and well-being, including exploitation, abuse, and neglect. The CCFSA is firmly committed to ensuring that all its activities, from research and advocacy to programme implementation and fundraising, prioritise the protection of children. These guidelines provide a comprehensive framework for all staff, volunteers, partners, and individuals representing the organisation to understand, prevent, and respond to child protection concerns.

2. Guiding Principles

The following principles form the foundation of CCFSA's approach to child protection:

- A child-centred approach is adopted. All actions and decisions must be made with the best interests of the child as a primary consideration, taking into account their individual needs, rights, and evolving capacities.
- Universality and non-discrimination: It is our policy to ensure that every child, regardless of background, race, gender, sexual orientation, disability or other status, is treated with equal protection and respect.
- Meaningful Participation: It is essential that children are actively involved in decisions that affect their lives, with opportunities to express their views and influence programming in an age-appropriate manner.
- Safety and Protection from Harm: CCFSA is firmly committed to safeguarding children from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence, both within the organisation and in the communities it serves.
- Accountability and Transparency: CCFSA is accountable for ensuring that its work does not harm children and that any concerns are addressed promptly and effectively. This encompasses transparent reporting procedures and a culture of continuous improvement.

3. Scope and Applicability

These guidelines are binding for all individuals and entities associated with CCFSA, including staff members at all levels, volunteers, consultants, partners, and any other representatives acting on behalf of the organisation. These guidelines apply to all CCFSA activities, including research, advocacy, programme design and implementation, fundraising, communications, and any other engagement with communities and children.

4. Defining Child Protection Concerns

The term "child" refers to: For the purposes of this policy, the term 'child' refers to any person under the age of 18 years.

Child abuse is defined as: Any act, whether intentional or unintentional, that results in actual or potential harm to a child. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, as well as neglect.

Child neglect is defined as: The failure to provide for a child's basic needs, including physical, emotional, educational and medical needs, which results in significant harm or risk of harm.

Child exploitation is defined as: The exploitation of a child for the benefit of another party, whether financial, sexual or otherwise, with the result that the child is harmed. This encompasses child labour, child trafficking, child marriage and the utilisation of children in armed conflict.

- Child sexual abuse: This encompasses any act that involves the sexual exploitation or abuse of a child. This includes, but is not limited to, sexual touching, non-contact abuse, child pornography and child prostitution

5. Implementing Child Protection

5.1 Prevention is Paramount

A comprehensive risk assessment is the most effective way to protect children. All CCFSA activities must undergo a comprehensive risk assessment to identify potential hazards to children. This entails analysing the context, the nature of the activity and the potential for harm. It is essential to develop and implement effective risk mitigation strategies to minimise these risks.

- A robust code of conduct must be established and communicated to all relevant parties. It is essential to establish and communicate a clear and comprehensive Code of Conduct to all staff, volunteers, and partners. This code will set out the standards of behaviour expected of all staff, volunteers and partners, and will prohibit any form of child abuse, exploitation or harassment. It will also provide guidance on appropriate interactions with children.
- Mandatory Child Protection Training: All individuals associated with CCFSA must undergo comprehensive training on child protection principles, including the recognition and response to child protection concerns, as well as an understanding of their reporting obligations.
- Safe Programming: All programmes and activities must be designed and implemented with child protection considerations at their core. This entails the creation of secure environments for children, the provision of suitable supervision, and the encouragement of child involvement in a productive and safeguarded manner.
- Community Engagement and Empowerment: CCFSA will proactively engage with communities to enhance local child protection frameworks, raise awareness of children's rights, and empower communities to prevent and respond to child abuse and exploitation.

5.2 Reporting Mechanisms

It is a mandatory requirement to report as follows: It is the legal and ethical duty of all staff, volunteers, and partners to report any instances of suspected or disclosed child abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

Confidential reporting channels are available for use by all parties. It is essential to establish multiple, accessible, and confidential reporting channels to encourage individuals to report any concerns without fear of reprisal. This may include the designation of child protection focal points, the provision of hotlines, suggestion boxes, and online reporting mechanisms.

It is essential to maintain comprehensive documentation and records. It is essential to maintain comprehensive and confidential records of all reported concerns. These records should include details such as the nature of the concern, the individuals involved, and the actions taken in response.

5.3 Responding to Concerns

In the event of an immediate safety risk, action must be taken without delay. The safety and well-being of the child at risk must be the organisation's primary concern. This may entail providing immediate assistance, separating the child from the source of harm, and securing medical attention if required.

- Multi-Agency Collaboration: Effective collaboration with relevant authorities, child protection agencies and other stakeholders is essential to ensure a coordinated and comprehensive response to child protection concerns.

Access to support services is available for those who require it. Ensure that children who have experienced abuse, neglect or exploitation have access to appropriate support services, including psychosocial support, legal assistance and medical care.

6. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Continuous Improvement

The programme will be subject to regular review and updates. These guidelines will be subject to periodic review and update, or as and when required, in order to ensure their continued relevance, effectiveness and alignment with best practice in child protection.

Monitoring and Evaluation Framework: A comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework must be developed to assess the effectiveness of CCFSA's child protection policies and practices, track progress, and identify areas for improvement.

- **Learning and improvement:** Create a culture of continuous learning and improvement by regularly reviewing child protection incidents, analysing trends, and adapting strategies to enhance child protection efforts.

7. Addressing the unique challenges of climate change and food insecurity

Climate-sensitive child protection It is essential to recognise and address the specific risks to children associated with climate change and food insecurity. These include displacement, forced migration, child labour, early marriage and increased vulnerability to trafficking and exploitation.

- **The integration of child protection into climate and food security programming:** It is essential that all climate change adaptation and food security initiatives incorporate child protection considerations, addressing the unique needs and vulnerabilities of children in these contexts.
- **Empowering children as agents of change:** It is essential to promote child participation and empower children to play an active role in climate change mitigation, adaptation, and food security initiatives.

8. Dissemination and Accessibility

The guidelines will be distributed widely to all staff, volunteers, partners, and stakeholders. The guidelines will be made available in accessible formats, including local languages and child-friendly versions, to ensure that all parties understand their role in protecting children.

9. Commitment and Responsibility

CCFSA is fully committed to ensuring the creation and maintenance of a safe and protective environment for all children. The organisation acknowledges that child protection is a collective responsibility and will collaborate with all stakeholders to guarantee the effective implementation of these guidelines.