



# Child Protection Policy



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**CHILD RIGHTS INTERNATIONAL, GHANA**

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## Abbreviations

CRI	Child Rights International
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

## Glossary

child/children	“A child is a person below the age of 18 years” - Children’s Act 1998 (Act 560) and UNCRC.
child abuse	All forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse.
child protection	An activity or initiative designed to protect children from any form of harm, particularly arising from child abuse or neglect.
criminal record check	A check of an individual’s criminal history record.
partner	Any person who works directly with us with the intention of protecting children.
staff	The term staff applies to anyone who works for or on behalf of CRI on a full time or part time basis. As such it includes employed staff, interns and contract workers.
vulnerable children	Children who are particularly vulnerable to abuse, such as children with physical and mental disabilities, homeless children, child sex workers and children impacted by disasters.
volunteers	The term volunteers relates to anyone working for CRI on an unpaid basis.
working with children	Working in a position that involves regular contact with children, either under the position description or due to the nature of the work environment.



## Our commitment to child protection



- ▶ Instill and nurture in children a strong commitment to respect, protect and uphold the rights and welfare of other children when they find themselves in leadership position.
- ▶ Build the capacity of children to be able to effectively participate in addressing issues that affect the promotion and protection of their rights.
- ▶ Empower children to become initiators of ideas.
- ▶ Support children to be agents of positive change in their communities.
- ▶ Advocate, promote and monitor social protection programmes aimed at providing better livelihood for the wellbeing of children in Ghana.
- ▶ Educate children on their rights and responsibilities.

- ▶ All Child Rights International staff, its partners, volunteers and casual workers (local and international) shall sign up and abide by its tenets of the policy.
- ▶ Recruitment procedures for permanent staff, volunteers, casual workers shall include checks on suitability for working with children and any criminal record of abuse of a child.
- ▶ All parties shall be engaged in mandatory child protection policy training and our agency-specific child protection protocols.



**How we  
deliver our  
commitment**



## Our principles

- ▶ Best interest of the child at all times.
- ▶ Protection of children's right and promoting the dignity of the child.

## Our values

- ▶ To recognize children as social actors capable of making their own decisions and taking personal initiatives.
- ▶ Recognize the rights of every child in Ghana.
- ▶ Avoid discrimination against children on the basis of age, sex, ethnicity, religion.
- ▶ To create and maintain safe and healthy setting that foster children's physical, intellectual, social, emotional, moral and spiritual development.
- ▶ Bias towards the interest of the child when an offense is committed by a staff or a partner directly or indirectly working with CRI.

# Our operational standards

CRI, its staff and partners shall conduct their business within the following framework:

- ▶ All concerns about children are treated with outmost urgency and speed.
- ▶ The best interest of children must be protected at all times.
- ▶ Comply by the code of conduct in initiating or concurring with any process of investigation.
- ▶ Adhere to guidelines of child protection processes as stipulated by the welfare principle of the Children's Act, 1998 (Act 560).
- ▶ Pay attention to the views and wishes of children and treat them with respect.
- ▶ Facilitate joint collaborations with caregivers (parents/guardians and/or other professionals), community members, traditional authorities to ensure the protection of children.



# The MUST do

All CRI staff, individuals, casual workers, volunteers and organizations we work with must sign up to and abide by this Code of Conduct.

- ▶ Focus on the best interest of the child in telling the story.
- ▶ Seek consent from parents or guardians or a fit person of children, before engaging with children.
- ▶ Motivate children in a way that will inspire them to follow their dreams.
- ▶ Treat all children equally.
- ▶ Build the confidence of children to enable them develop and believe in themselves.
- ▶ Create an enabling environment that unearths the unique talents and abilities of children.
- ▶ Empower children, discuss with them their rights, what is acceptable and unacceptable, and what they can do if there is a problem.

# The MUST NOT do

All CRI staff, individuals, casual workers, volunteers and organizations we work with must sign up to and abide by this Code of Conduct.

- ▶ Publicly disclose a child's name and identity, personal address or other information.
- ▶ Publish health records of a child.
- ▶ Capture children in instances of in uncomplimentary circumstances such as child labour, abuse or neglect.
- ▶ Physically assault or abuse children or develop physical.
- ▶ Use abusive language, mock at and participate in a behaviour that makes the child vulnerable.
- ▶ To stay or work overnight in the same room with a child.
- ▶ Develop relationships with children which could in any way be deemed exploitative, abusive and sexual.
- ▶ Do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves.
- ▶ Carry out actions that are intended to shame, humiliate and degrade children, emotionally, physically and mentally abuse.

**This is not an exhaustive or exclusive list. Other actions that are inappropriate can be implied as child abuse.**





## What we do

- ▶ **Advocacy:** We ensure that all individuals and organizations we work uphold the rights of children with are aware of the problem of child abuse and the risks it poses to children.
- ▶ **Prevention:** We ensure, through sensitization and awareness creation, that good practices are employed by all involved parties to eliminate risks to children.
- ▶ **Investigation:** CRI, its staff and partners shall conduct high quality investigation, including safety and risk management for the protection of children.
- ▶ **Reporting:** Any matter reported to CRI, found by CRI, investigated by CRI shall consider the dignity, privacy and confidentiality of the child as well as any other partner.
- ▶ **Referrals:** To refer child protection cases that are specific to institutions and agencies that are mandated with child protection.
- ▶ **Responding:** Action shall be taken in support of and for the protection of children in collaboration with relevant state actors.



## I understand that, in the event of suspicions or allegations of my violation of the Code of Conduct:

Child Rights International will take any action it deems necessary, which may include, but is not limited to:

- ▶ Providing **assistance for the victim** and taking immediate steps to protect and support the child.
- ▶ Attempting to **establish the facts** in the most objective manner possible (the presumption of innocence prevails) while protecting the reputation and confidentiality of the adults involved.
- ▶ Undertaking **disciplinary actions**, which may result in my suspension or termination of contract.
- ▶ Initiating **judicial proceedings and/or reporting** to the competent authorities any violation of the Code of Conduct which may breach national legislation.



# Declaration of commitment

I, the undersigned,

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Declare I have received, read and understood the Child Protection Policy of Child Rights International and I commit and agree to work in accordance with it.

I understand that any failure to uphold the Code of Conduct may result in the termination of my engagement with CRI, or further disciplinary or judicial proceedings as mentioned above.

Also, I declare that I have no criminal records regarding an offence towards a child nor do I know of any reason why anyone would deem me unsuitable to work with children.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_



**Child Rights  
International**

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