

1. CONTEXT

Every child has the right to be safe from physical, sexual and emotional abuse and exploitation. This is enshrined in the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC), which constitutes the foundation of UNICEF and UNICEF Australia's vision and mission.

Nevertheless, each year millions of children suffer all forms of abuse, including physical, sexual, emotional and neglect¹. This occurs in every country, culture and context in the world.

The abuse and exploitation of children by humanitarian and development professionals is also a real and concerning phenomenon. The staff of humanitarian/development agencies and NGOs attain a position of trust and influence in communities, which ill-intentioned individuals may use to gain access to children. It is not uncommon for child sex offenders to seek employment or volunteer placements with UN agencies or NGOs for this specific purpose. In addition, staff of humanitarian/development agencies and NGOs may sometimes unintentionally harm children, due to limited awareness of risks, poor or absent internal systems to prevent and respond to child abuse, and in some cases, simply because they do not possess the right attitude or values to work in direct or indirect contact with children.

The seriousness of the phenomenon is demonstrated by the decision of the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) to establish a Task Force in 2002 specifically on "Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises". The first round of meetings of the Task Force ultimately concluded that:

*"Humanitarian agencies have a **duty of care** to beneficiaries and a responsibility to ensure that beneficiaries are treated with dignity and respect and that certain minimum standards of behaviour are observed. The goal is to create an environment free of sexual exploitation and abuse, through integrating the prevention of and response to sexual exploitation and abuse into the protection and assistance functions of all humanitarian workers".²*

2. CHILD SAFEGUARDING AT UNICEF AUSTRALIA

UNICEF's commitment to its *duty of care* is reflected in its global *Policy on Conduct Promoting the Protection and Safeguarding of Children* (CF/EXD/2016-006), which establishes internal measures to prevent and respond to child abuse and exploitation in its programmes and operations across the world. UNICEF's Executive Director further reiterated the Agency's commitment to child safeguarding in a public statement in early 2018, defining it as "an issue at the top of the agenda".

As part of the global UNICEF alliance, UNICEF Australia (UA) also takes its *duty of care* very seriously and has a *zero tolerance* approach to child abuse and exploitation. Acknowledging the existence of possible risks for children in its operations and work, UA has adopted a series of *preventative* and *responsive* measures which make child safeguarding an organisational priority and a shared responsibility for staff, associates and partners.

This *Child Safeguarding Policy (CS Policy)* articulates and puts into force these internal measures, affirming UA's commitment to child safeguarding and the Organisation's systematic approach to preventing and responding to child abuse and harm within operations and programs.

¹ Refer to **Annex 1** for UNICEF Australia's definitions of the various forms of abuse.

² UN IASC Task Force on Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises, 2002.

Note: Child Protection vs Child Safeguarding

UA makes the following distinction between **child protection** and **child safeguarding**:

- **Child Protection:** programs, measures and structures to prevent and respond to abuse, exploitation, neglect and violence affecting children in all sectors, contexts and environment (*essentially, the work conducted through UA and UNICEF's child protection programs around the world*).
- **Child Safeguarding:** the *duty of care* and responsibility of private and public organisations to adopt preventative and responsive systems, policies and practices to safeguard from harm and abuse all the children they come into *direct* and *indirect* contact with in their day-to-day operations and work.

This Policy focuses on *child safeguarding* and UA's responsibilities in this area.

3. OBJECTIVES

The objective of this Policy is to establish a set of internal **preventative** and **responsive** measures and procedures to:

1. **Safeguard children:** by minimizing the risk of *intentional* or *unintentional* harm, abuse and exploitation of children within UA and UA-supported programmes, and adequately responding in the event that harm and abuse occur.
2. **Safeguard staff:** by avoiding ambiguous workplace situations and behaviours, which may be misinterpreted and potentially lead to false allegations against UA staff and associates.
3. **Safeguard UA:** by showing its genuine commitment to safeguarding children and preventing cases of abuse from happening, UA protects its reputation and maintains supporter confidence and funding stability.

4. SCOPE

This Policy applies to:

- **All staff and associates of UA**, full time or part time, temporary or long-term, including, consultants, interns, volunteers, secondees, Board members and any other person associated or working under contract with UA in any capacity (hereon referred to as "**UA staff and associates**").
- **All UA partners and contractors**, including downstream partners, suppliers or any other entity under contract with or funded/supported by UA, including UNICEF Country Offices where UA funds/supports programs (hereon referred to as "**UA partners and contractors**").
- **All visitors to UA or UA-supported programs and activities conducted by partners** (including outside Australia), such as donors, supporters, ambassadors, or any other person visiting UA or UA-supported programs for any purpose (hereon referred to as "**visitors**").

5. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

UA's commitment to child safeguarding is guided by the following principles:

- **Zero tolerance of child abuse:** UA does not tolerate child abuse of any form by anyone who works for or is associated with the Organisation in any capacity.
- **Non-discrimination:** UA is committed to safeguarding children in its operations and programmes regardless of their nationality, sex, culture, ethnicity, religious or political belief, socio-economic status, family or criminal background, physical or mental health, or any other status.

- **Shared responsibility:** All UA, partner and contractors' staff and associates must commit to and uphold the principles and practices of the CS Policy, in order for it to be meaningful and successful.
- **Acceptance of risks for children:** It is important that as an Organisation, UA accepts that child abuse may happen within its operations and programs or the programs it funds/supports (acknowledging that child abuse is often a 'hidden' and under-reported phenomenon due to fear, stigma, discrimination, cultural norms or other sensitivities). The acceptance that child abuse happens is the first important step in order to take action and prevent it.
- **Confidentiality, safety and best interest of the child:** All matters raised and dealt with under the CS Policy will be kept as confidential as possible (with information being shared exclusively on a *need to know basis*), ensuring the safety of all involved (survivors, alleged perpetrators and reporters) and the best interest of the child at all times.
- **Accountability:** UA has systems in place to document, monitor and report on the implementation of the CS Policy, as well as mechanisms to ensure that management and staff are committed to, and are undertaking their child safeguarding roles and responsibilities to the best of their capacity.

6. KEY CHILD SAFEGUARDING ROLES

Executive Child Safeguarding Team

The *Executive Child Safeguarding Team (Executive CS Team)* comprises the Chief Executive Officer (**CEO**), the Chair of the Board, two members of the Executive Management Team (EMT) nominated by the CEO, and two Child Safeguarding Focal Points (see below). The Executive CS Team serves as the overall guarantor of the CS Policy and convenes:

- On an *annual basis* (or more frequently, if required) to discuss overarching matters related to child safeguarding and the status of implementation of the CS Policy; and
- On an *urgent basis* in the event of a child safeguarding incident or breach of the CS Policy, in order to discuss with, and support the CEO and the Chair of the Board to decide on relevant actions (including, but not limited to organising and initiating internal investigations, determining disciplinary measures, reporting to authorities, managing internally, etc.).

Child Safeguarding Committee

The *Child Safeguarding Committee (CS Committee)* comprises the Child Safeguarding Focal Points (see below) and a representative of each team/department across UA. The CS Committee convenes on a *bi-monthly basis* (or more frequently, if required) and serves as the operational arm of the Executive CS Team. More specifically, the CS Committee is responsible for:

- Implementing decisions of the Executive CS Team (developing relevant implementation and monitoring plans);
- Advising on and developing relevant child safeguarding approaches and strategies;
- Ensuring and supporting the process of integrating child safeguarding practices into their respective teams (especially risk management);
- Regularly reviewing the CS Policy, as required.

Child Safeguarding Focal Points

The CEO nominates *at least two* Child Safeguarding Focal points (**CS Focal Points**), one being the Director of People and Culture³. The CS Focal Points lead the CS Committee and are ultimately responsible for:

³ It is important that at least two CS Focal Points are nominated in order to ensure retention of knowledge and skills in the case of staff turnover. It is also recommended to select one female and one male since staff members may feel more comfortable to raise child safeguarding issues with a person of their same gender. The Director of People and Culture is necessarily one of the CS Focal Points given that many of the child safeguarding measures and practices are in the area of selection and recruitment, staff development and behaviour, and breaches of the policy involve disciplinary measures which are enforced by the People and Culture Team. In addition, it is important that at least one member of the Executive Management Team is part of the CS Committee at all times.

General

- Ensuring that the CS Policy is effectively put into practice across all programs, teams and operations (this requires working closely with each team, providing direct and practical guidance and support in understanding and implementing the child safeguarding procedures in their day-to-day work, and assisting in addressing any challenges or concerns which may arise);
- Monitoring UA's overall compliance with the CS Policy, and reporting back to the Executive CS Team, with recommended actions or adjustments;
- Conducting training for UA staff (and, when required, for partners, contractors and visitors) on child safeguarding and the CS Policy;
- Constituting the main information source on child safeguarding for all staff and associates, including partners, contractors and visitors;
- Keeping up-to-date with international developments in the area of child safeguarding, as well as with UNICEF, DFAT and ACFID requirements.

Incident Reporting

- Constituting one of the avenues (together with the CEO, the Chair of the Board and supervisors) for staff to immediately (and verbally) report child safeguarding incidents and breaches of the *CS Policy* and *Code of Conduct*;
- Ensuring that reporters subsequently compile a written Incident Reporting Form;
- As part of the Executive CS Team, discussing and advising on actions in response to child safeguarding incidents (*roles related to incident reporting are further detailed in the Incident Reporting Section of this Policy*).

7. IMPLEMENTATION FOR UNICEF AUSTRALIA

7.1. Child Safeguarding Recruitment and Screening of Staff

Rationale

Child offenders may seek to work or volunteer for organisation, such as UA and its partners, in order to acquire a status of trust and respect in communities, which they use to gain access to vulnerable families and children. In addition, children may also be harmed or abused unintentionally if staff do not have the right attitude or character to work in direct or indirect contact with children. UA is committed to ensuring that these people are not hired in any capacity.

Procedures and Practices

UA adopts solid recruitment procedures for the selection of all staff and associates, whether full time or part time, temporary or long-term. The procedures not only aim to identify possible child offenders and people not suited to work in direct or indirect contact with children, but also to deter these people from seeking work with UA in the first place.

UA's child safeguarding recruitment procedures include:

- Stating that UA has a CS Policy in the wording of job/intern advertisements and that successful candidates will be required to undergo a Police Background Check** (this intends to prevent child offenders from applying).
- Identifying positions that involve working 'with children', 'direct contact with children' and 'indirect contact with children'**, in order to determine and keep track of 'higher risk' positions and apply additional child safeguarding measures and procedures. The CS Committee identifies such positions and the People and Culture Team maintains a log, which is updated whenever a new positions is created or the duties of an existing position are changed.
- Conducting National Police Background Check for all new staff as a condition for employment:** UA looks out for charges, convictions or investigations related to violence against women or children, assault, domestic violence, child abuse of all forms, inappropriate social behaviour or similar. Candidates who were

residing outside Australia prior to employment with UA, are required to provide a police background check (or similar) from any country where they resided for more than 6 months within 5 years prior to employment with UA. If police background checks are not available or attainable from these countries, the Executive CS Team will consider alternatives, such as locally relevant options with similar effect (for example, but not limited to, a statutory declaration from local government authorities or from the candidate him/herself).

- (d) **Requesting a *Working with Children Check* as a condition for employment for all staff whose roles have been identified as ‘working with children’:** Candidates who were residing outside Australia prior to employment with UA, are required to provide a *Working with Children Check* or equivalent (if available) from any country where they resided for more than 6 months within 5 years prior to employment with UA. It is however recognised that, from time to time, staff or associates whose role has been identified as NOT ‘working with children’ may be required to engage in child-related projects or activities. In such cases, as a condition for commencing work on that project or activity, the staff member or associate will be required to obtain a *Working with Children Check* if the work involves ‘working with children’. The supervisor of the staff member or associate in question is responsible for flagging the matter to the People and Culture Team, who will ensure compliance.
- (e) **Conducting verbal or written referee checks with at least two most recent supervisors (or other supervisors selected by UA and based on the candidates work history) as a condition for employment for roles involving ‘working with children’ or ‘direct contact’ with children:** asking specific questions to draw out the candidate’s attitude and values towards children, child rights and child protection, and exploring whether the candidate has had any behavioural issues in his/her previous workplace.
- (f) **Asking specific interview questions to candidates for roles involving ‘working with children’ or ‘in direct contact’ with children:** Tailored behavioural-based questions to draw out peoples’ attitudes and values towards children, child rights and child protection, as well as requesting clarifications for inconsistencies and gaps in the candidate’s resume.
- (g) **Including a provision in employment contracts and in the CS Policy which considers a breach of the CS Policy or Code of Conduct as an act of “serious misconduct”, resulting in disciplinary measures** (including dismissal, suspension or transfer to other duties).
- (h) **Requesting formal and valid documentation** to confirm identity of candidate and proof of relevant qualifications and background.

Responsibilities

People and Culture Team is responsible for ensuring that the above procedures are followed and appropriately documented, with relevant support and guidance from the **CS Focal Points**, as required.

Supervisors are responsible for flagging to the People and Culture Team if a supervisee whose role has been classified as NOT ‘working with children’ or NOT involving ‘direct contact’ with children will be engaged in an *ad hoc* child-related project or activity.

7.2. Child Safeguarding Risk Management

Rationale

As an organisation, it is important that UA acknowledges and accepts that child abuse and harm may happen within its operations and programs. This is a first crucial step in order to take action and prevent it from occurring.

While it is not realistic to eliminate all risks for children, it is important that every effort is made to manage them, which includes identifying as many risks as possible within programs and operations and developing mitigation strategies and actions.

Procedures and Practices

UA's adopts a thorough child safeguarding risk management strategy which includes:

- (a) Integrating child safeguarding risks into existing risk management processes of each team within UA;
- (b) Conducting a child safeguarding risk management exercise before any team commences a program or conducts a new activity or event which may involve, target or affect children, the public or communities.

UA's child safeguarding risk management processes involve:

- Identifying risks (i.e. detecting the potential for something to happen that will have an impact on children, staff and associates, or UA as an organisation);
- Assessing the risks (i.e. evaluating the *likelihood* and level of *impact*);
- Mitigating the risk (i.e. developing strategies to minimize or address the risk, reducing the likelihood of harm and abuse from actually occurring);
- Clearly assigning responsibilities in the mitigation strategy;
- Regularly reviewing risks and mitigation strategies, especially when conditions/contexts change.

Guidelines to support implementing UA's child safeguarding risk management requirements and mechanism are available in **Annex 2**.

Responsibilities

Team Heads are responsible for ensuring that child safeguarding risks are integrated into team risk management systems and that child safeguarding risk management exercises are conducted for all programs and activities/events conducted by their team which involve, target or affect children, the public or communities.

The CS Committee monitors that child safeguarding risk management is happening at all levels and as per the processes above.

CS Focal Points remain available to provide guidance and support to teams in any of the above processes, when required.

7.3. Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct

Rationale

It is important that UA staff and associates, as well as partners, contractors and visitors, clearly understand what is expected of them in terms of behaviour and professional boundaries with children they come into contact with in UA operations and programs, as well as programs UA funds/supports (including outside Australia, through Directly-Supported Programs or other). It is also important that children and parents understand what is expected of UA staff and associates, as well as partners, contractors and visitors. This not only makes everyone accountable for their actions, but also ensures that children and parents are aware of how they should be treated.

Procedures and Practices

UA has a *Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct (CS Code of Conduct)*, which is an integral part of this Policy (in **Annex 3**), which:

- (a) Applies to (and is signed by) all staff and associates of UA (as well as partners, contractors and visitors);
- (b) Describes expected behaviours in relation to children, detailing what is appropriate and inappropriate conduct, prescribing professional boundaries and defining acceptable and unacceptable relationships;
- (c) Provides for disciplinary measures in the case of breach, which are determined based on the severity of the breach, and may include, but not limited to, suspension, dismissal, and reporting to authorities.

It must be noted that the *CS Code of Conduct* also serves to avoid ambiguous situations and behaviours in the workplace, which may be misinterpreted or misunderstood, and potentially lead to false allegations against UA staff and associates.

UA ensures that all staff and associates, as well as beneficiaries and targeted communities are made aware of the *CS Code of Conduct* and understand how to report breaches and cases of misconduct.

Responsibilities

People and Culture Team is responsible for ensuring that the *CS Code of Conduct* is signed upon recruitment of staff and associates, as well as any other individual engaged by UA in any capacity.

CS Focal Points are responsible for ensuring the *CS Code of Conduct* is understood by all staff and associates (as well as partners, contractors and visitors).

All staff and associates are responsible for maintaining, at all times, a behaviour which is in line with the *CS Code of Conduct*.

7.4. Child Safeguarding Incident Reporting

Rationale

Regrettably, even with all the preventive measures detailed above, child abuse may still happen. It is important that in these cases, a solid system is in place to respond in an appropriate, effective and timely manner, ensuring no further harm to the survivor.

For this to happen, it is crucial that all cases of child abuse or breach of the *CS Policy* or *CS Code of Conduct* are promptly detected and raised to the attention of relevant UA management staff, who will then take appropriate action based on established internal principles and procedures.

Procedures and Practices

It is **mandatory** for all UA staff and associates to internally report **witnessed, suspected or alleged cases** of:

- (a) Child abuse or exploitation by another staff member or associate of UA, partners or contractors, as well as any visitor to a UA or UA-supported program (including outside Australia);
- (b) Breaches of the CS Policy or Code of Conduct by another staff member or associate of UA, partners or contractors, as well as any visitor to a UA or UA-supported program (including outside Australia).

Refer to **Annex 4** for UA's *Incident Reporting Guidelines and Flowchart*, which provide more detailed guidance on how to report and who to report to.

At all times during the reporting process and subsequent actions, UA is committed to:

- Ensuring that the safety, wellbeing, dignity and best interest of the child remain the overriding concerns ;
- Taking every report of child abuse seriously, ensuring that all parties are treated fairly and procedures are transparent and in line with the law;
- Dealing with child abuse reports in a confidential and timely manner, with in mind the protection of the survivor, the reporter and the alleged perpetrator

Note: Cases of child abuse or exploitation in the community by someone outside the organization do not fall under this Policy. In the event that a staff or associate of UA, partners or contractors becomes aware of, witnesses or suspects such a case, he/she should report it immediately to relevant authorities. If for any reason, the staff or associate does not feel comfortable or safe to do so, he/she can immediately report the case to UA (as per the Incident Reporting Guidelines in **Annex 4**), who will bring the case to the authorities.

Responsibilities

All UA staff and associates are responsible for immediately reporting witnessed, suspected or alleged cases of child abuse or breaches of the *CS Policy* and *CS Code of Conduct*, as per the *Incident Reporting Guidelines*.

CEO, Chair of the Board, CS Focal Points and Supervisors are responsible for receiving verbal reports from staff and associates, and referring them to the Executive CS Team for consideration and action.

Executive CS Team is responsible for dealing with the reports and deciding on action plans in response (including, but not limited to, starting an investigation, deciding on disciplinary measures, reporting to authorities, referring the case to service providers, etc).

CS Focal Points are responsible for ensuring that the UA's *Incident Reporting Guidelines* and referral pathways are up-to-date and relevant at all times.

7.5. Training and Awareness for Staff

Rationale

All UA staff and associates have a role to play in safeguarding children. To fulfil that role effectively and with confidence, they are required to understand child safeguarding issues and risks, and maintain a good knowledge of UA's child safeguarding measures and procedures, internal roles and responsibilities, as well as broader attitudes and skills to keep children safe in operations and programmes.

Measures and Procedures

UA provides all staff and associates with regular and structured training and learning opportunities on child safeguarding, the *CS Policy* and *CS Code of Conduct*, as well as understanding their child safeguarding roles and responsibilities.

The learning opportunities include:

- **Induction training** – as part of the general induction/orientation when UA staff and associates are newly employed or engaged.
- **Regular training and refreshers** – on a yearly basis for existing UA staff and associates to ensure knowledge retention.
- **Specialized training, supervision and support** – for UA staff and teams who have a direct responsibility in implementing child safeguarding procedures (for example, People and Culture, Executive CS Team, CS Committee, supervisors) or whose work may have specific impacts on children (for example Communications, Policy and Advocacy, International Programs, donor relations).

Responsibilities

The **CS Focal Points**, in collaboration with **People and Culture Team**, are responsible for:

- Organising the trainings and ensuring they are delivered in a structured and systematic manner (i.e. following set criteria and standards of delivery, reaching every staff member on a regular basis).

- Effectively monitoring the trainings and participants (i.e. developing a system to document trainings and track participants, and flag when specific staff are up for a training or refreshers).

8. REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTNERS AND CONTRACTORS

All UA partners and contractors (as defined in **Section 4** of this Policy) have a shared *duty of care* and responsibility with UA to ensure children are safe in all programs and activities funded/supported by UA. This is reiterated in all partnership and contract agreements, as is the need for all partners and contractors to comply with the child safeguarding requirements set out below.

Compliance is a condition for entering into a partnership with, and receiving funds/support from UA.

For insight into the rationale for each requirement, please refer to relevant paragraphs in **Section 7** of this Policy.

8.1. Implementing Partners and Contractors

Procedures

When entering into an agreement with a partner or contractor, UA will assess the level of contact with children that the staff and associates of the partner or contractor are expected to have in the implementation of UA-funded/supported programs and activities. If the level of contact involves “working with children” or “direct or indirect” contact with children (refer to definitions in **Annex 1**), the partner and contractor is required to have certain child safeguarding systems in place as a condition for receiving funding/support, which include, **at the very minimum**:

- (a) **Child Safeguarding Policy:** Have a Child Safeguarding Policy which applies to all staff and associates, and downstream partners, and reflecting similar principles and commitment as UA’s *CS Policy*. The Policy (or other internal policies or procedures document) should include, at the very minimum, the standards set out in the points below.
- (b) **Police Background Check:** Ensure all staff and associates working on UA-supported/funded programs and activities undergo a formal police background check or locally relevant equivalent. If police background checks are not available or attainable in the local context, other locally relevant options with similar effect should be considered (for example, but not limited to, a statutory declaration from local government authorities, community leaders or the candidate him/herself).
- (c) **Working with Children Check:** if the program or activity involves “working with children”, ensure staff and associates are required to undergo a *Working with Children Check*. As with the police background checks, if *Working with Children Checks* are not available or attainable in the local context, in discussion with UA, other locally relevant options with similar effect should be considered.
- (d) **Referee checks:** for staff and associates newly recruited specifically for the UA-funded/supported program or activity, ensure that, as a condition for employment, *documented* referee checks are conducted with at least two of the most recent supervisors (asking specific questions to draw out the candidate’s attitude and values towards children, child rights and child protection, and exploring whether the candidate has had any behavioural issues in his/her previous workplace).
- (e) **Risk Management:** Conduct a *documented* child safeguarding risk management exercise for all programs and activities funded/supported by UA, which includes (a) identifying risks for children; (b) developing relevant mitigation strategies and actions; (c) defining clear responsibilities for the implementation of the strategies and actions; and (d) regularly reviewing and adjusting those strategies and actions (partners and contractors may refer to **Annex 2** for guidance on this process).
- (f) **Code of Conduct:** have a child safeguarding Code of Conduct which applies to (and is signed by) all staff and associates, as well as downstream partners, with provisions relevant to the organisation’s work and in line with UA’s *CS Code of Conduct* in **Annex 3** (alternatively, these provisions can be incorporated into a broader organisational Code of Conduct or similar).

- (g) **Incident Reporting Procedures:** have clear and documented internal procedures for staff and associates to report witnessed, suspected or alleged cases of: (a) child abuse or exploitation, or breach of the CS Policy or Code of Conduct by another staff member or associate, partner or contractor, as well any visitor to a UA or UA-supported programs. Reporting should be **mandatory** for all staff and associates and the procedures should include immediately informing UA of incidents occurring in UA-funded/supported programs and activities (and not after investigation has taken place). The partner or contractor should also have documented procedures ensuring that cases are dealt with in a safe, confidential and fair manner.
- (h) **Contractual provisions:** include a provision in employment contracts, the CS Policy, a statutory declaration or other binding policy or document, which considers a breach of the *CS Policy* or *CS Code of Conduct* as an act of “serious misconduct”, resulting in disciplinary measures (including, dismissal, suspension or transfer to other duties).
- (i) **Training for staff and associates:** ensure all staff and associates receive relevant and regular training on child safeguarding and internal child safeguarding policies and procedures.
- (j) **Evidence of compliance:** at any stage, provide factual and documentary evidence to UA that the above requirements are in place and being implemented.
- (k) **Downstream Partner and Contractors:** ensure that their own partners and contractors working on UA-funded/supported programs and activities have child safeguarding systems in place, in line with the above requirements (providing support in developing and strengthening child safeguarding procedures, where needed). UA partners and contractors are required to provide UA with evidence of their own partners’ and contractors’ child safeguarding systems, as well as document evidence of any support provided (for example, capacity building or support plans).

NOTE: One-Off, Short-Term or Small-Scale Partners and Contractors

In the event that UA engages a partner or contractor for a **one-off or short-term activity, event or project** (for example, a campaign, a community event, distribution of materials in communities, a research, etc) or the partner/contractor is a small-scale agency or entity, it is not realistic to expect compliance with all the requirements above.

In these cases, UA and the partner or contractor will firstly identify if the activity/event/project involves “working with children” or “direct or indirect contact with children”. Exclusively in the cases where it does, the partner or contractor will:

- (a) Ensure that its staff and associates working on the activity/event/project sign and abide by **UA’s Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct** and **Incident Reporting Procedures**;
- (b) Ensure that its staff and associates working on the activity/event/project undergo a **Police Background Check** (when contact with children is “direct or indirect”) or **Working with Children Check** (if the activity/event/ project involves “working with children”);
- (c) Conduct a **child safeguarding risk management exercise** (based on UA’s approach and methodologies detailed above) of the activity/event/project (UA remains available to provide support or jointly conduct the exercise);
- (d) Ensure **all downstream partners** or individuals engaged to conduct or participate in any capacity in the activity/event/project, follow the requirements in points a, b and c above.

Responsibilities

The **UA staff member managing a contract/relation with a partner or contractor** is responsible for ensuring compliance with the provisions above, providing guidance/support to partners and contractors, as required.

UA's CS Focal Points, in turn, provide support and guidance to the UA staff member in question and remain available to provide direct technical assistance to partner and contractors to develop and implement the child safeguarding requirements.

Partners and Contractors are responsible for complying with the provisions above and providing factual and documentary evidence of compliance, as well as openly requesting and accepting UA's support to strengthen child safeguarding systems and procedures. Ideally, partners and contractors will also nominate two child safeguarding focal points within their organisation/agency, who will, among other task, liaise directly with UA's CS Focal Points on all child safeguarding matters.

8.2. UNICEF Country Offices (*Directly Supported Programs*)

Procedures

UA engages with UNICEF Country Offices in Directly Supported Programs (DSPs), whereby UA funds/supports specific projects implemented by UNICEF Country Offices.

UNICEF's child safeguarding system is articulated in its global *Policy on Conduct Promoting the Protection and Safeguarding of Children* (CF/EXD/2016-006). The Policy is applicable to all UNICEF Country Offices and is in line with the principles and requirements for partners set out in UA's CS Policy.

Therefore, in regards to child safeguarding in its relationship with UNICEF Country Offices, UA applies the following:

- (a) **Joint commitment:** a statement is included in partnership agreements reaffirming the joint commitment to child safeguarding in all programs and activities funded/supported by UA;
- (b) **Support in implementation:** UA strives to ensure UNICEF Country Offices comply with the measures and procedures outlined in UNICEF's global *Policy on Conduct Promoting the Protection and Safeguarding of Children* (CF/EXD/2016-006) and, where needed, provides support to contextualise the Policy and facilitate local implementation (for example, by supporting the development of local implementation procedures/guidelines; building capacity of staff and management; assisting downstream partners to develop and implement child safeguarding procedures, and other tailored forms of support, as required);
- (c) **Risk management:** UA requests that a child safeguarding risk management exercise is conducted for every UA-funded/supported program or activity (in line with UA's child safeguarding risk management approach detailed in this Policy), which is reviewed, reported against and updated every 6 months;
- (d) **Incident Reporting:** UA requires Country Offices to *immediately* inform UA if a child safeguarding concern occurs in any UA-funded/supported program or activity (and not after investigations have taken place), and regularly keep UA updated on how the matter is being handled;
- (e) **Downstream partners:** UA requires Country Offices to screen its implementing partners and contractors; ensure they have in place and comply with relevant child safeguarding systems (providing support to develop and implement those systems, when required); and provide UA with evidence of partners' child safeguarding systems (for example their policy or implementation procedures) and compliance.
- (f) **Visitors:** before any visit to a UA funded/supported program, Country Offices are asked to brief visitors on the context for children and families, the Office's child safeguarding procedures, and what is expected of them in terms of behaviour and interaction with children. Country Offices should also ensure that all visitors sign a Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct.

Responsibilities

The Programs Team is responsible for working with partner UNICEF Country Offices to support them to comply with the requirements above, providing relevant support and guidance, when required.

Program Managers are responsible for monitoring compliance and providing guidance in their respective DSPs, as well as ensuring child safeguarding risk assessments are conducted in a systematic and meaningful manner, requesting reviews and reports at each project progress report (i.e. every six months).

CS Focal Points remain available to provide technical or other support to the Programs Team and partner UNICEF Country Offices in relation to any of the child safeguarding procedures and processes.

UNICEF partner Country Offices are responsible for complying with the requirements above and providing documentary evidence of compliance, as well as openly requesting and accepting UA's support to strengthen child safeguarding systems and procedures in their offices and of their partners.

9. VISITORS TO UA AND UA-FUNDED PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Procedures

Visitors to UA or UA-supported programs and activities (as defined in **Section 4** of this Policy), including visitors to partner UNICEF Country Offices, may come into *direct* or *indirect* contact with children. For this reason, UA adopts the following child safeguarding measures:

Prior to Visits

- (a) **Briefing:** Prior (ideally 2 months) to the visit, all visitors will receive a briefing from UA's CS Focal Points on UA's *CS Policy* and *CS Code of Conduct*, including taking and using images and social media; the context of the field visit; expected behaviours in relation to children encountered during the visit; and locally relevant incident reporting procedures (i.e. UA's, as well as UA's partner or UNICEF Country Office where the visit will take place).
- (b) **CS Policy and Code of Conduct:** all visitors are required to read, agree to abide by and sign UA's *CS Policy* and *CS Code of Conduct (Annex 3)*, as well as the Code of Conduct of UA's partner or UNICEF Country Office where the field visit will take place (this will be signed upon arrival at the visit site).
- (c) **Police Background Check:** all visitors are required to provide an official photo ID and undergo a *Police Background Check*. UA looks out for charges, convictions or investigations related to violence against women or children, assault, domestic violence, child abuse of all forms, inappropriate social behaviour or similar. Visitors who reside outside Australia, are required to provide a police background check (or similar) from their country of residence. If police background checks are not available or attainable from that country, the Executive CS Team will consider alternatives, such as locally relevant options with similar effect (for example, but not limited to, a statutory declaration from local government authorities or from the candidate him/herself).
- (d) **Clearance for the Visit:** After collecting and verifying all documentations and checks, the CS Focal Points will inform the UA staff member responsible for arranging the visit, if the visitor in question is cleared for the visit. If the visitor is not cleared, the CS Focal Point will maintain a record of the reasons and explain them to the UA staff member responsible for the visit (who will pass on the information to the applicant visitor).

During the Visit

- (e) **On Site Brief:** UA's partner or UNICEF Country Office where the visit will take place, will provide a n on-site briefing to visitors on the local context for children, local child safeguarding measures and procedures, and any other relevant child safeguarding, safety and health matter.
- (f) **Code of Conduct:** as agreed before the visit, all visitors are required to comply with UA's *CS Code of Conduct* and *Incident Reporting Guidelines (Annex 3 and Annex 4)*, as well as the Code of Conduct and Incident Reporting Procedures of partners or UNICEF Country Offices where the visit is taking place.
- (g) **Supervision of Visitors:** All visitors are supervised by UA, partner or UNICEF Country Office staff **at all times** and are never left unattended during the field visit. At least one member of staff is designated as *chaperone* and is responsible for supervising visitors and ensuring additional chaperone are designated depending on the total number of visitors. The chaperones (as well as all other UA, partner or UNICEF Country Office staff present) are responsible for monitoring the behaviour of visitors and their interactions with children and

families (ensuring it is in line with the *CS Code of Conduct*), immediately discussing/raising concerns with them, and reporting any breaches of the *CS Code of Conduct* as per UA's *Incident Reporting Guidelines (Annex 4)* or incident reporting procedures of partners or UNICEF Country Offices where the visit is taking place.

Responsibilities

UA staff responsible for arranging/organising the field visit should inform the UA CS Focal Points ideally 2 months prior to the visit (or as soon as it is known the visit will take place) to confirm relevant procedures and develop a checklist, based on the context and nature of the visit. The UA staff member in question will then liaise directly with the applicant visitor regarding all the pre-visit requirements, seeking guidance from the CS Focal Points, when required.

CS Focal Points will provide relevant guidance throughout the pre-visit and visit phases, conduct the pre-visit briefing for visitors and liaise with partners or UNICEF Country Offices where the visit will take place regarding locally relevant and applicable procedures that the visitor should be made aware of prior to the visit. The CS Focal Points will also review the documentation submitted by visitors (signed *CS Policy* and *CS Code of Conduct*, and *Police Background Check*) and provide formal clearance or non-clearance for the visit.

Visitors are responsible for abiding by UA, partner and UNICEF Country Office child safeguarding policies and procedures, providing relevant documentation and participating in scheduled briefings. Visitors should also be open to adapting to local cultural norms and settings during their visits.

10. BREACH OF THE POLICY OR CS CODE OF CONDUCT

By UA Staff and Associates

A breach of this Policy (as well as the *CS Code of Conduct*) by staff or associates of UA will be considered an act of "serious misconduct", resulting in disciplinary measures proportionate to the action, which may include:

- Meeting to discuss the breach and opportunity for the person to provide their account/understanding of the situation
- Performance management
- Further education on the CS Policy and Code of Conduct
- Formal warning and monitoring
- Transfer to other duties
- Suspension pending investigation
- Internal investigation
- Report to Police
- Dismissal of staff

By UA Partners and Contractors

Compliance with **Section 8** of this Policy is a condition for entering into a partnership or receiving funds/support from UA.

Once the partnership has commenced, a breach of the CS Policy will lead UA to revisit the partnership and take relevant actions, which may include:

- Meeting to discuss the breach and opportunity for the partner or contractor to provide their account/understanding of the situation;
- Further education or support to comply with the CS Policy;
- Formal warning and request to adopt measures to re-comply with CS Policy;
- Suspension of partnership agreement pending re-compliance;
- Report to police of a suspected case of child abuse (in the event that the partner or contractor has not taken appropriate action against its staff or associates suspected of child abuse);
- Termination of agreement if non-compliance is persistent or deliberate, or if no genuine effort is made to comply.

By Visitor to UA or UA-funded/supported programs

- Meeting to discuss the breach and opportunity for the visitor to provide his/her account/understanding of the situation;
- Further education or support to comply with the CS Policy and Code of Conduct;
- Termination of the visit in case of deliberate disregard or serious breach of the Code of Conduct;
- Report to police in the case of suspected or witnessed child abuse.

11. POLICY MONITORING AND REVIEW

The CS Committee is responsible for monitoring the overall implementation of the *CS Policy*, developing relevant and documented monitoring systems and consequently reporting monitoring results to the Executive CS Team on an annual basis (or more frequently, if required).

The CS Policy will be reviewed *every two years*, or earlier if there are changes in relevant national legislations, context or organisational structures and systems.