

Policy Number: OS05
Policy Area: Organisational Standards and Integrity
Policy Title: Child Protection Policy



1. Overview

Global Mission Partners (GMP) is committed to creating and maintaining a child-safe organisation in which children are respected, protected from harm, and supported to participate in decisions affecting them.

GMP will embed child safeguarding into organisational culture, leadership, governance, risk management, promotions, partner engagement and program delivery, including activities funded by institutional donors, in accordance with DFAT and ACFID standards.

2. Purpose

This policy establishes GMP's commitment to preventing, identifying and responding to child exploitation, abuse, neglect and harm and outlines the responsibilities of staff, volunteers, Board members, contractors, suppliers, partner organisations and visitors.

GMP adopts a zero-tolerance approach to child exploitation and abuse and seeks to ensure that the best interests of the child are central to all decisions and activities involving children.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Employees.
- Volunteers.
- Board Members.
- Consultants.
- Contractors.
- Suppliers whose work involves contact with children.
- Partner Visit Teams.
- Partner organisations.
- Any person acting on behalf of GMP.
- Downstream partners, sub-contractors, sub-grantees, implementing partners and any other organisations or individuals engaged through GMP-supported activities where those activities involve contact with, impact on, or risks to children.

4. Responsibility

- It is the responsibility of the Board, CEO and all staff to uphold this policy.
- The CEO will ensure the policy is communicated and understood by all stakeholders.
- The Policy Officer will ensure the policy is audited periodically as per the policy audit schedule. The Policy Officer also acts as the Child Protection focal point for the organisation.

5. Definitions

Abuse	Includes: physical abuse—the use of physical force against a child that results in harm to the child. Physically abusive behaviour includes shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, kicking, biting, burning, strangling and poisoning. neglect—the failure by a parent or caregiver to provide a child (where they are in a position to do so) with the conditions that are culturally accepted as being essential for their physical and emotional development and well-being. emotional abuse— a parent or caregiver’s inappropriate verbal or symbolic acts toward a child or a pattern of failure over time to provide a child with adequate non-physical nurture and emotional availability. Such acts have a high probability of damaging a child’s self-esteem or social competence. sexual abuse—the use of a child for sexual gratification by an adult or significantly older child or adolescent. Sexually abusive behaviours can include fondling genitals, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or any other object, fondling breasts, voyeurism, exhibitionism and exposing the child to, or involving the child in, pornography.
Child	In accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, ‘child’ means every human being under the age of 18 unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier. For the purposes of this policy a child is deemed to be a person under the age of 18 years.
Child exploitation and abuse	One or more of the following: committing or coercing another person to commit an act or acts of abuse against a child possessing, controlling, producing, distributing, obtaining or transmitting child exploitation material committing or coercing another person to commit an act or acts of grooming or online grooming.
Child exploitation material	Material, irrespective of its form, which is classified as child abuse material or child pornography material.
Child of mature understanding	A child who demonstrates understanding of the proposed use of their image when it is explained in plain language (or with printed/visual examples) and is willing to make a decision. This maturity does not match a particular age, but is more likely in children over 12 years.
Child protection	An activity or initiative designed to protect children from any form of harm, particularly arising from child exploitation and abuse.
Contact with children	Working on an activity or in a position that involves or may involve contact with children, either under the position description or due to the nature of the work environment.
Informed Consent	Consent given after the proposed action is explained (in plain language and/or with the aid of printed/visual examples) and understood.
Safeguarding	The proactive measures taken to prevent, identify, report and respond to harm, exploitation, abuse, neglect or misconduct affecting children and vulnerable people, and to promote environments that are safe, inclusive and respectful.
Working With Children Check	Australian state-based assessment of suitability to work with children. This includes a National Police Check as well as review of findings of workplace misconduct. Holders of a Working With Children Clearance are subject to ongoing monitoring for the validity period. (In ACT and Tasmania, the check is called Working with Vulnerable People (Children) and in South Australia it is called Child-related Employment Screening)

Policy Statements

6. General Principles

a. Zero-Tolerance and Do No Harm

- b.** GMP maintains an absolute zero-tolerance approach to child exploitation and abuse. All programs, organisational decisions, and activities are underpinned by a strict commitment to the "do no harm" philosophy, ensuring that the best interests, safety, and protection of the child are always the primary and overriding consideration. GMP takes its duty of care seriously, including responding to reports and complaints, and aims at all times to provide the safest possible programs and environments for children in all aspects of its work.

c. Trauma-Informed and Victim-Survivor Centred Response

GMP's safeguarding frameworks and incident response procedures are trauma-informed and victim-survivor centred. GMP is committed to establishing reporting pathways and support mechanisms that prioritise the safety, emotional well-being, dignity, privacy, and long-term recovery of the affected child.

d. Intersectional Approach to Vulnerability

GMP adopts a risk-based, intersectional approach to child safeguarding. We recognise that child vulnerability is compounded by intersecting factors—including but not limited to gender, age, disability, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, displacement, and geographic or systemic marginalization—and we actively work to identify, monitor, and mitigate these unique risks across all project designs and operations.

e. Extraterritorial and Legal Compliance

GMP is committed to full compliance with all applicable local, national, and international legal frameworks. This includes meeting mandatory reporting obligations for serious extraterritorial offences and ensuring that all personnel, representatives, and downstream partners are held fully accountable to these standards.

7. Screening and Recruitment

- a.** A current Working With Children Check (WWCC) and National Police Check is required for all personnel prior to commencement.
- b.** For personnel migrating or returning to Australia, or who are located internationally, GMP will require criminal record checks before engagement. Checks must be completed for each country where the person has lived for 12 months or longer in the past five years, and for each country of citizenship, where these checks are available and reliable.
- c.** Where a criminal record check is unavailable or unreliable, GMP will require an appropriate statutory declaration, local legal equivalent or other documented risk-based screening measure to the satisfaction of GMP, before the person is approved to work with or have contact with children.
- d.** Recruitment processes will include:
- o Behaviour-based interview questions relating to safeguarding.
 - o Verbal referee checks, asking about any known past incidents.

- o Verification of screening clearances.
- o Assessment of suitability to work with children.
- e. Partner Visit Team members must complete WWCC, National Police Check, Reference Check and Safeguarding Briefing before approval to participate in GMP activities involving children.

8. Training and Awareness

- a. All Board Members and personnel must complete child safeguarding training as part of induction.
- b. All personnel must complete mandatory safeguarding refresher training at least annually and Board Members triennially.
- c. Additional role-specific safeguarding training will be provided where required, including for:
 - i. Communications and fundraising personnel.
 - ii. International program staff.
 - iii. Partner Visit Team leaders.
 - iv. Staff responsible for managing child information and images.
- d. GMP will provide ongoing safeguarding awareness activities including:
 - i. Scenario-based workshops.
 - ii. Team discussions.
 - iii. Case studies.
 - iv. Emerging risk briefings.
 - v. Policy updates.

9. Code of Conduct

- a. All personnel must acknowledge they have read and understood:
 - i. OS05 Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
 - ii. OS06 GMP Code of Conduct.
- b. Any breach of the Code of Conduct involving child exploitation, abuse or grooming may result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination.
- c. Breaches involving Sexual Exploitation, Abuse or Harassment may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- d. Where a breach may constitute a criminal offence, GMP will notify relevant authorities.
- e. Where required under funding agreements or regulatory obligations, GMP will notify DFAT and other relevant bodies.
- f. Where an incident, allegation, suspicion or policy non-compliance relates to DFAT business, DFAT-funded activity or DFAT contractual obligations, GMP will report the matter immediately to DFAT at childprotection@dfat.gov.au or by telephone on +61 2 6178 5100, in addition to any other required reporting to police, statutory authorities, donors or regulators.

10. Child-Safe Communications and Image Management

- a. **Child Representation**
 - i. GMP material must portray children respectfully, accurately and with dignity.
 - ii. Children must never be depicted as helpless, passive, powerless or in a manner that may place them at risk.

- iii. Communications must uphold children's rights, privacy and best interests.
- b. **Informed Consent**
 - i. Informed consent must be obtained before collecting, using or publishing a child's image, story, voice recording or personal information.
 - ii. Consent must:
 - Be voluntary.
 - Be informed.
 - Be documented.
 - Be understandable to the child and/or guardian.
 - Reflect the intended use of the material.
 - iii. Where a child is considered a child of mature understanding, their views and wishes must be prioritised.
 - iv. A child of mature understanding may refuse participation regardless of parental or guardian consent.
- c. **Consent Management**
 - i. GMP will maintain documented records of image and media consent.
 - ii. Procedures shall address:
 - Consent renewal requirements.
 - Withdrawal of consent.
 - Legacy and archived content.
 - Partner-provided materials.
 - Social media usage.
 - Digital storage and security requirements.
 - iii. Requests to withdraw consent will be addressed as soon as reasonably practicable and future use of the material will cease where required.

11. Privacy and Information Protection

- a. Children's privacy will be protected at all times.
- b. Personal information that could identify or place a child at risk must not be disclosed.
 - i. File names, metadata, captions and electronic records must not contain unnecessary identifying information.
 - ii. Child-related information must be stored securely and only accessible to authorised personnel.

12. Reporting and Incident Management

- a. All safeguarding concerns, incidents, allegations, suspicions or policy breaches must be reported immediately to the complaints manager (complaints@gmp.org.au)
- b. Reports must be submitted using OS08.1 Incident Report Form.
- c. Concerns include:
 - i. Actual abuse.
 - ii. Suspected abuse.
 - iii. Child exploitation.
 - iv. Online grooming.
 - v. Child exploitation material.
 - vi. Breaches of child safeguarding requirements.

- vii. Emerging safeguarding risks.
- d. All reports will be treated confidentially and managed promptly, applying a trauma-informed and child-centred approach
- e. GMP will provide appropriate support to:
 - i. The child.
 - ii. The complainant.
 - iii. Witnesses.
 - iv. The subject of the allegation.
- f. Complaints will be managed according to OS02.1 Complaints Handling Process.
- g. Reporting and complaints mechanisms will be safe, accessible, confidential, child-focused, culturally appropriate and available to children, families, communities, personnel, partners and other stakeholders without fear of retaliation.

13. Partner Organisations

- a. Partner organisations must maintain safeguarding systems appropriate to their context and local legislation.
- b. Prior to project approval, partners must demonstrate they have child safeguarding arrangements in place.
- c. Partner agreements, memorandum of understanding, funding agreements or project arrangements will require partners and downstream partners to maintain appropriate child safeguarding policies, codes of conduct, reporting procedures, recruitment screening, training and risk management practices proportional to the level of child safeguarding risk.
- d. Partners must promptly report, within 24 hours:
 - i. Child abuse allegations.
 - ii. Child exploitation concerns.
 - iii. Safeguarding incidents.
 - iv. Serious Code of Conduct breaches.
- e. GMP will support partner organisations through:
 - i. Safeguarding orientation and training.
 - ii. Capacity strengthening activities.
 - iii. Safeguarding discussions during monitoring activities.
 - iv. Risk-based assessments.
 - v. Periodic compliance reviews.
- f. GMP will require corrective actions where safeguarding gaps are identified. GMP expects full compliance within a reasonable timeframe, 6–18 months for high-risk partners, those operating projects directly supporting or in contact with children.

14. Projects and Programs

- a. Partnership Managers apply comprehensive child protection standards when a project or partner has direct contact with children, or when the risk assessment identifies elevated child protection risks. These Standards include:
 - i. Detailed child protection procedures, including incident response protocols, victim-survivor-centred approaches, and specialised guidance for high-risk contexts.

- ii. Clear investigation procedures, survivor-centred reporting pathways, and protections for whistleblowers.
- iii. Activity-level risk assessments, mitigation plans, and continuous monitoring throughout implementation.
- iv. In-depth safeguarding training for staff working directly with children or in high-risk environments.
- v. Additional screening requirements, including checks for all countries lived in for 12+ months and documented verbal referee checks.
- vi. Systems to ensure subcontractors and downstream partners also meet Comprehensive Standards.
- vii. Regular audits, compliance reviews, and corrective action plan.

15. Supporter Partner Visits

- a. All Partner Visit Team members must hold a current WWCC or equivalent clearance.
- b. Team leaders must ensure completion of safeguarding training prior to travel.
- c. Team members must sign:
 - i. Child Protection Guidelines.
 - ii. Code of Conduct.
 - iii. Any additional safeguarding requirements for that partner or context..
- d. Partner Visit Teams must comply with local safeguarding measures and GMP safeguarding requirements at all times.

16. Continuous Improvement and Monitoring

- a. GMP will maintain a continuous improvement approach to safeguarding.
- b. Safeguarding systems will be reviewed periodically to ensure continuing effectiveness and compliance.
- c. Continuous improvement activities may include:
 - i. Policy reviews.
 - ii. Internal audits.
 - iii. Incident trend analysis.
 - iv. Lessons learned reviews.
 - v. Partner compliance assessments.
 - vi. Training evaluations.
 - vii. Staff surveys and feedback.
- d. Safeguarding performance and emerging risks will be reported to organisational leadership and governance structures as appropriate.
- e. The CEO and Board will oversee implementation of this policy, ensure safeguarding responsibilities are allocated, and support appropriate resourcing, monitoring and accountability for child safeguarding compliance.

17. Procedures and related forms

- a. OS06.1 GMP Code of Conduct – Simplified
- b. OS06.2 Conflict of Interest Register
- c. OS8.1 Incident Report Form

- d. B01.3 Service-Advice-Contacts by Board Members

18. References (other policies, legislation or codes)

- a. Related Policies
 - i. BG01 The Role of the GMP Board
 - ii. BG06 Boundary and Delegation Policy
 - iii. OS02 Complaints
 - iv. OS04 Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH)
 - v. HR12 Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination
- b. Related Documents
 - i. [ACFID Code of Conduct - Commitment 9.4.1](#)
 - ii. [DFAT Child Protection Policy \(2025\)](#)

TABLE 1.VERSION CONTROL TABLE GMP POLICY TEMPLATE

GMP Policy Template			
Version Number	Purpose/change	Author	Date
1	Adopted	Board	SEP2009
2	Amended: no details	Board	MAY2021
3	New Format with version control table, new EO address, Specified volunteer version for volunteers and paid version WWCC for staff. Staff will be reimbursed for employment WWCC.	EO	JUN2023
4	WWCC required for roles assessed to be contact/working with children	Board	SEP2023
5	Adopted new format and branding. Various updates to align with the new DFAT Child Protection Policy (2025) and as a result of our own policy audit (2026).	Board	SEP2026