

INF Australia Child and Vulnerable Person Safeguarding Policy v11

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1 Introduction

INF Australia (INFA) recognises that our work—and the work of our partner organisations in Nepal—can create risks to children and other vulnerable persons; this policy sets out how those risks will be identified, mitigated and managed.

Children and vulnerable persons are present in the communities where we work and are often at increased risk because of poverty, disability, age, caste, gender or other social and environmental factors. INFA and our partners intentionally work with marginalised communities and will apply extra safeguards where vulnerability is heightened.

INFA has zero tolerance for the abuse, neglect or exploitation of children and vulnerable persons and accepts responsibility for their safety and wellbeing in all INFA operations and programs. INFA accepts that contact or working with children is likely to occur in many of our projects; project design, approval and monitoring will therefore assess safeguarding risks and require proportionate prevention and mitigation measures.

This policy represents INFA's commitment to respond to safeguarding concerns and allegations seriously, fairly and in the best interests of the child or vulnerable person, and requires all INFA employees, contractors, consultants, volunteers, ambassadors and associates to be vigilant and to report any concern, however minor, to the appropriate authority.

2 Purpose

This policy provides guidance to INFA employees, Board members, partners, contractors, consultants, volunteers or ambassadors:

- to understand the criticality of safeguarding children and vulnerable persons;
- how to work respectfully and effectively with children and vulnerable persons;
- how to respond to concerns, incidents and allegations of abuse to children and vulnerable persons.

3 Scope

This policy applies to all INFA employees, volunteers (including board members and overseas workers), participants in INFA vision trips and treks, any contractors, consultants or ambassadors that have the potential to have contact or work directly with children or vulnerable persons in the course of their work in Australia or visit to Nepal. It recognises that partner organisations should have their own policies for child safeguarding, and that INFA will work with them to establish and maintain robust systems and processes (including training, risk assessment and minimisation, reporting and responding) for safeguarding children and vulnerable persons.

This policy will be distributed to all employees, contractors, consultants, volunteers and ambassadors of INFA, as well as our partners, and ongoing training and support will be offered for implementation of this policy.

4 Policy Statement

INFA, in all its settings, has a zero tolerance of child abuse, exploitation and harassment and commits itself to taking every possible action to ensure the safety of children and other vulnerable persons. This applies to every setting where INFA works, whether in Australia or in projects supported in Nepal.

INFA recognises that some children and persons are more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation than others, particularly in the communities where our partners work in Nepal. Children living in poverty, children with disabilities and children from marginalised castes and groups are often at higher risk.

INFA believes that all children should be equally regarded and will proactively encourage a culture where child safeguarding is acknowledged and discussed, all personnel are accountable, and that any allegations or concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a child are raised and reported.

5 Christian Basis for the Policy

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is the universal foundation for child safeguarding. The fundamental principle of the Convention is that children have their own indivisible rights. As a Christian organisation, INFA respects that scriptures teach that children are a gift from God and as worthy as adults and should be cared for and protected because of their innocence.

6 Procedures

INFA applies a range of measures to strengthen safeguarding, including:

- Staff and volunteer recruitment screening and criminal records checks;
- Participating in and providing safeguarding training relevant to staff and volunteer roles (including contact versus working with children);
- A Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers to abide by which outlines acceptable and appropriate behaviour around and working with children (Appendix A);
- Providing personnel with support and information on what and how to report child abuse or exploitation, including allegations and suspicions (Appendix B);
- Ensuring partner organisations have mechanisms for the reporting of allegations or suspicions of child abuse or exploitation;
- Ensuring appropriate responses to suspicions and allegations with a survivor-centred approach to support;
- Appointment of a Safeguarding Focal Point (or two) to act as a point of contact for all issues relating to this policy.

6.1 Recruitment

INFA will screen all employees, contractors, consultants, volunteers and ambassadors to minimise the risk to children and will not work with anyone who poses an unacceptable risk to children. All employees, contractors, consultants, volunteers and ambassadors will be required to understand this policy and sign the INF Australia Child and Vulnerable Person Safeguarding Code of Conduct (Appendix A).

A full list of the checks that will be carried out during recruitment can be found in Appendix B: INF Australia Child and Vulnerable Person Detailed Procedures, but will include verbal referee checks, the use of behavioural questions during interviews, a requirement for disclosure of any offenses relating to abuse or exploitation, and criminal records checks which include country of residence and citizenship.

All INFA employees, contractors, consultants, volunteers and ambassadors will undertake critical elements of safeguarding training to ensure understanding of principles. Where the context involves working with children, additional training will be undertaken to ensure a full understanding of safeguarding requirements as well as practice.

6.2 Safeguarding awareness and training

All INFA employees, volunteers, ambassadors, participants in INFA vision trips and treks, contractors and consultants will be made aware of the Child and Vulnerable Person Safeguarding Policy, including how to report concerns or allegations of exploitation, neglect or abuse of children in INFA or partner programs.

All staff and relevant volunteers are to undertake regular training and awareness of safeguarding and INFA supports partners to source and maintain training of childsafe principles, risk assessment and mitigation, reporting and responding.

Where the context is identified as ‘working with children’, the need for additional training and awareness will be assessed and applied.

6.3 Code of conduct

All INFA’s activities must be carried out in a way that minimises potential harm to children and ensures their privacy and dignity.

INFA’s CEO has responsibility for ensuring that all people associated with INFA, including employees, contractors, consultants, volunteers and ambassadors, are aware of the INFA Child and Vulnerable Persons Safeguarding Policy and sign a commitment to the Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct (see Appendix A).

6.4 What to do if there is suspicion of abuse or exploitation

A report can be made when any form of abusive behaviour, or risk of abuse or harm, is suspected or observed, or when an allegation is made or disclosed from a child, community member, staff or associate regarding the safety, abuse or exploitation of a child.

Any observation or concerning behaviour exhibited by INFA employees, contractors, consultants, volunteers and ambassadors or other associate that breaches the INFA Child and Vulnerable Person Safeguarding Code of Conduct or any suspicion of abuse or exploitation must be reported.

In the first instance, all reports should be sent to safeguarding@inf.org.au, which forwards to the INFA CEO and the INFA Chair.

In the event of a suspicion being reported, the INFA CEO will be responsible for immediately notifying the INFA Chair, the Australian Police and Social Services and the donor partner (DFAT) of any incident or allegation and, if appropriate, the Nepal Police. If the suspicions involve the INFA CEO, it should be reported directly to INFA’s Chair (chair@inf.org.au).

Allegations of child abuse, neglect and exploitation will be investigated under INFA's Complaints Policy.

6.5 Projects and Partners

INFA recognises that children in Nepal are especially vulnerable to abuse, neglect and exploitation. When travelling overseas, INFA employees, contractors, consultants, volunteers, ambassadors and associates are expected to abide by standards of behaviour that are acceptable in Australia.

Employees, contractors, consultants, volunteers, ambassadors and associates should not take pictures or moving images of children or vulnerable persons that are exploitative or in any way inappropriate. INFA will not use such images. In addition, where images may be published in a public context, ensure that the necessary permissions have been garnered in line with the Communications policy

Employees, contractors, consultants, volunteers, ambassadors and associates should not give gifts to children or vulnerable persons without the permission of parents (or guardians) and must never give drugs or alcohol to children.

INFA requires that all partner organisations have a child safeguarding policy that is actively implemented, including mechanisms for the reporting of allegations or suspicions of child abuse or exploitation. Where new partners do not initially have a policy, INFA will work with them to develop one.

When considering a new funding proposal or partnership, or reviewing an existing agreement, INFA will consider the potential risk to children directly and indirectly associated with the project or partner.

6.6 Risk assessment

INFA will undertake comprehensive child safeguarding (and vulnerable persons) risk assessments in all its project activities, identifying the risks, assessing those risks, developing mitigatory actions and ensuring those classified as high-risk are reviewed regularly to ensure necessary control steps are implemented. (See Appendix C.)

7 Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
INFA Board	• Approve and oversee implementation of the Policy • Ensure compliance with DFAT, ACFID, and legal obligations • Hold the CEO accountable for safeguarding performance • Review safeguarding reports and incidents regularly
CEO	• Provide overall leadership and accountability for safeguarding • Ensure all staff, volunteers, contractors, and partners are aware of and comply with the policy • Act as the primary recipient of safeguarding reports (unless conflicted) • Notify the Board, DFAT, and relevant authorities of any allegations or incidents

	• Ensure adequate resources for safeguarding training and implementation
Safeguarding Focal Point(s)	• Act as the first point of contact for safeguarding concerns • Maintain records of safeguarding training, checks, and incidents • Support staff and volunteers in understanding and applying safeguarding procedures • Coordinate investigations in line with Complaints Handling Policy • Provide regular safeguarding updates to the CEO and Board
All Staff, Contractors, Consultants, Volunteers, Ambassadors	• Read, understand, and sign the Safeguarding Code of Conduct (Appendix A) • Complete safeguarding training relevant to their role • Report any concerns, suspicions, or allegations immediately • Model safe and respectful behaviour towards children and vulnerable persons • Cooperate fully with investigations and safeguarding processes
Trip/Trek Participants and Visitors	• Comply with the Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct • Undertake required checks (e.g., Working With Children Check, AFP check) • Report any safeguarding concerns immediately • Respect cultural sensitivities and INFA's safeguarding standards while overseas
Partner Organisations	• Develop, implement, and maintain their own safeguarding policies and procedures • Ensure staff and volunteers are trained in safeguarding • Report safeguarding concerns or incidents to INFA promptly • Participate in safeguarding risk assessments and monitoring processes
Children and Vulnerable Persons (Beneficiaries)	• Have the right to be safe, respected, and protected • Be informed of their rights and how to raise concerns • Be listened to and supported in a child-centred, survivor-focused way

8 Related Documents and Policies

- ACFID Code of Conduct
- Communications Policy
- Complaints Handling Policy
- DFAT Child Protection Policy
- Grievance and Discipline Policy
- Prevention of Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Whistleblower Policy

9 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The policy is to be reviewed at a minimum every three years, or as a result of legislative changes and/or practice changes including sectoral.

10 Appendices

Appendix A: INF Australia Child and Vulnerable Person Safeguarding Code of Conduct

Appendix B: INF Australia Child and Vulnerable Person Detailed Procedures

Appendix C: Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Persons Risk Assessment

11 Definitions

Term	Definition
Children	For the purposes of this policy, children are defined as those under 18 years of age. This policy also applies to the prevention of abuse, neglect and exploitation of other vulnerable people such as the elderly, or those with physical or mental disabilities or simply because of circumstance. Where the policy refers to “child”, this will also apply to other vulnerable people.
Child safeguarding	Child safeguarding includes the actions, policies and procedures that create and maintain protective environments for children, including exploitation and abuse of all kinds.
Child abuse	Child abuse includes forms of physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, bullying, harassment, coercion, spiritual abuse, sexual abuse, economic exploitation or sexual exploitation, including making, accessing or possessing child pornography. Abuse can be inflicted by both men and women, and it is particularly relevant in the context of relationships of responsibility, trust and power – such as teacher/student, parent/child, carer/child, medical practitioner/patient. It can also manifest as peer on peer in certain contexts.
Exploitation of a child	Exploitation of a child, whether commercial or other exploitation, is the use of a person in work or other activities for the benefit of others that are to the detriment of the child’s physical and mental health, education or development. It includes, but is not limited to child labour, trafficking or sexual exploitation.
Survivor centred approach	Prioritisation of the rights, dignity, needs and wishes of survivors of exploitation, abuse and neglect above all other considerations. This means ensuring that the response is safe, confidential and survivor-led, empowering survivors to make informed decisions and providing them with access to comprehensive support services.
Vulnerable Person(s)	For the purposes of this policy, a vulnerable person is any individual who may be at increased risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or harm due to personal, social, or environmental factors. This includes, but is not limited to: • Adults with physical, mental, or intellectual disabilities • Elderly individuals

	• People experiencing poverty, displacement, or social marginalisation • Individuals affected by trauma, illness, or dependency • Persons whose circumstances limit their ability to protect themselves or access support Vulnerability may be temporary or ongoing, and can be heightened by factors such as age, gender, caste, ethnicity, language, legal status, or geographic isolation. INFA recognises that safeguarding measures must be proportionate to the level of vulnerability and risk, and that all vulnerable persons have the right to be safe, respected, and protected.
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12 Document Control

Date	Version	Summary of Changes	Sections Changed	Authorised By
Feb 2017	4	Inclusion of DFAT guidance	2.1 CoC: strengthen clause on informed consent	INFA Board
Mar 2017	5	Inclusion of ACFID and DFAT guidance		INFA Board
Nov 2017	6	Changes, additions	Dot points in CoC	INFA Board
Dec 2018	7	Revised Reference to drugs and alcohol Revised definition of child abuse, neglect and exploitation Included vulnerable people in scope of policy Updated references to “child abuse, neglect and exploitation”	2.4 and CoC 1.1 1 Throughout	INFA Board
Apr 2019	8	Included link to PSEAH policy Included references to “other vulnerable people” Extended definition of associates to explicitly include participants in “INFA-organised trips, treks, conferences and activities” Changed name of Code of Conduct to “INFA Child Protection & Safeguarding Code of Conduct”	Section 1 Section 1 Code of Conduct Code of Conduct	INFA Board

		Added references to PSEAH policy and to “vulnerable adults”		
Jul 2019	9	New child protection email details included	2.1	CEO
August 2024	10	Change title to from protection to safeguarding and include vulnerable persons Address requirements of ACFID COC and ACFID review Revised to align with ACFID Guidelines for the development of a Child Safeguarding Policy	All document	Board
Feb 2026	11	Reorganised policy to new template. Other revisions to strengthen the policy	All document	Board

Appendix A INF Australia Child and Vulnerable Person Safeguarding Code of Conduct

I, [], acknowledge that I have read and understood INFA's Child and Vulnerable Person Safeguarding Policy and agree that while representing INFA, I must:

- treat children and vulnerable persons with respect regardless of race, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status;
- not use language or behaviour towards children or vulnerable persons that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate;
- not engage children under the age of 18 in any form of sexual intercourse or sexual activity, including paying (or gifting) for sexual services or acts;
- wherever possible, ensure that another adult is present when working in the proximity of children or vulnerable persons;
- not invite unaccompanied children into my home, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger;
- not sleep close to unsupervised children unless absolutely necessary, in which case I must obtain my supervisor's permission, and ensure that another adult is present if possible;
- use any computers, mobile phones, or video and digital cameras appropriately, and never to exploit or harass children or vulnerable persons or to access child pornography through any medium;
- not use physical punishment on children, avoiding all forms of physical contact as far as possible;
- not hire children for domestic or other labour which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage, which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury;
- not give gifts to children without the permission of parents or carers, and never give drugs or alcohol to children or vulnerable persons;
- comply with all relevant Australian and local legislation, including labour laws in relation to child labour;
- immediately report concerns or allegations of child exploitation or abuse, or other sexual exploitation and abuse, and non-compliance with this policy in accordance with appropriate procedures;
- immediately disclose all charges, convictions and other outcomes of an offence, which occurred before or occurs during my association with INFA that relate to sexual exploitation and abuse.

When photographing or filming a child or vulnerable person or using their images for work-related purposes, I must:

- assess and endeavour to comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images before photographing or filming a child or vulnerable person;
- obtain informed consent from the child or vulnerable person and parent or guardian of the child/carer of the vulnerable person before photographing or filming a child or vulnerable person. As part of this I must explain how the photograph or film will be used;
- ensure photographs, films, videos and stories present children and vulnerable persons in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Subjects should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive;
- ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts;
- ensure file labels, meta data or text descriptions do not reveal identifying information about a child or vulnerable person when sending images electronically or publishing images in any form.
- I understand that the onus is on me, as a person associated with INFA, to use common sense and avoid actions or behaviours that could be construed as child exploitation and abuse or any form of sexual exploitation and abuse.

Print name: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Appendix B INF Australia Child and Vulnerable Person Safeguarding Detailed Procedures

This Procedure document describes how INF Australia's Child and Vulnerable Person Safeguarding Policy is implemented and provides some guidance for INFA staff and volunteers working with children in the following areas:

1. Recruitment checks relating to child protection and safeguarding
2. Possible signs and indicators of child abuse or exploitation
3. Responding to a child who wants to talk about abuse
4. Guidelines for self-protection of people working with children and vulnerable adults
5. Role of Partner organisations in child protection and safeguarding
6. Procedure for investigating allegations of abuse or exploitation

B1 Recruitment Checks Relating to Child Protection and Safeguarding

B1.1 Applications for long term Nepal or Australia based roles

- All applicants should provide a CV and complete an application form. They should be asked to declare whether they have ever been convicted, charged or cautioned for any activity relating to child protection.
- Any gaps in employment record should be checked.
- At least two verbal references should be taken (more for long term applicants). These must include a professional reference (recent or current employer), and a personal reference (person in position of responsibility, minister etc.).
- Risk assessment carried out on the person and role they are applying for. Need to recognise that some roles provide greater access to vulnerable people (such as children and adults with disability, children who have previously been trafficked or abused) and ensure that appropriate checks are carried out prior to employment, and that systems are in place to monitor behaviour and hold people to account in their roles and lives overseas. Also, recognise that some people present a higher risk (such as single males) and ensure that overall risk is appropriate.
- Police checks are made in order to confirm that the person has no record of child abuse or other convictions/charges which may render them unsuitable with working with children. If someone has spent a continuous period of more than six months overseas in the last 10 years a police check must also be carried out in that country. If the application is a citizen of another country, criminal records checks should also be made there.
- All Employees will be required to consent to and participate in a Working With Children Check (or similar depending on the state where they live). This check, administered by the state government, checks relevant criminal records, relevant apprehended violence orders (AVOs) and relevant employment proceedings which may render the person unsuitable for working with children.
- At interview, the applicant should undergo behavioural questioning to understand their attitudes and motivation for applying, plus detailed questioning on their

experiences with children and/or vulnerable persons. Scenarios should be set and their proposed actions given e.g. in the instance of a child injuring themselves in class, what would you do? This is to try to draw out whether they are aware of how to protect themselves against claims of abuse.

- Check birth/marriage certificates to check names if new to INFA, or not well known by current senior staff.
- Interview the worker about their past, and for long term Nepal based roles, ensure that a psychological assessment is undertaken, in order to confirm that the person has no unresolved issue from their past which may make them more susceptible to becoming an abuser.
- An open discussion about attitudes to children in Nepal, occurrence of child exploitation and abuse in Nepal and how they can respond if exposed to this.
- Required to sign INF Australia Child Protection and Safeguarding Code of Conduct (Appendix A).

B1.2 Applications to participate in an INFA-organised trip, trek, or other activity in Nepal

- All applicants will be required to provide two references, who will be required to comment on applicant's personal conduct and any concerns over child protection or other safeguarding issues.
- All applicants will be required to provide a valid Working With Children Check and will also be required to undertake and provide an Australian Federal Police check.
- Required to sign INF Australia Child Protection Code of Conduct (Appendix A).

B2 Possible Signs and Indicators of Child Abuse

The following signs and types of behaviour may be indicators that abuse has taken place. However, in themselves and in isolation they are not evidence of abuse though they may suggest abuse. Thus, the possibility should be considered, especially if a child exhibits several of the signs or a pattern emerges of when or how a child exhibits such signs or behaviour. Please note that this list is not exhaustive.

B2.1 Physical signs of abuse

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries that occur to the body in places not normally exposed to falls, rough games etc. For example, black eyes, unexplained facial bruising, torn inside upper lip (frenulum)
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Neglect – under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, untreated illnesses, listlessness etc.
- Reluctance to change for or participate in games or swimming
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc. which do not have an accidental explanation
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse

B2.2 Indicators of Possible Sexual Abuse

- Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and a detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour
- Inappropriate sexual play/language

- Child who is sexually proactive or seductive with adults
- Severe sleep disturbance
- Disturbed eating patterns e.g. anorexia, bulimia
- Escape attempts e.g. running away, refusing to go home
- Changes in behaviour e.g. bed wetting
- Recurrent urinary tract infections

B2.3 Emotional Signs of abuse

These can include (but not limited to):

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour e.g. withdrawal, becoming clingy, aggressive, or depressed
- Nervousness
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under achievement or lack of concentration
- Attention seeking behaviour
- Inappropriate relationships
- Persistent tiredness

B3 Responding to a child who wants to talk about abuse

It is difficult to give precise advice about what to do if a child opens up to you, as each situation will be unique. However, some general points are as follows:

- Show acceptance of what the child says, however unlikely it may sound
- Keep calm and look at the child directly
- Be honest. Tell the child that you will need to let someone else know (do not promise confidentiality).
- Even when a child has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse
- Be aware that the child may have been bribed or threatened not to tell
- Never push for information. Let the child know that you are always ready to listen if they want to tell you more.

Helpful things to say or show

- I believe you (or show acceptance of what the child says)
- Thank you for telling me
- It's not your fault
- I will help you

Don't say

- Why haven't you told anyone before?
- I can't believe it/Are you sure this is true?
- Who/why/when/where/how?
- I am shocked

When concluding

- Reassure the child they were right to tell you
- Let them know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know the outcome of these next steps

- Contact the person responsible in INF (HR Manager, Medical Officer or Executive Director in Nepal, INF Australia CEO if in Australia), following the procedure in the INF Australia Complaints Handling Policy if in doubt
- Ensure appropriate authorities are informed
- Consider your own feelings and seek pastoral support if needed
- Make notes as soon as possible after the meeting, writing down exactly what was said and what was happening immediately beforehand. Keep these records safely for an indefinite period.

B4 Guidelines for self-protection of people working with children or other vulnerable persons

- A Children's Worker should never try to take the place of a parent in providing physical comfort or support. Limited physical contact only should be displayed.
- Where First Aid is to be administered, ensure wherever possible that another child or adult is present in the room.
- Everything should remain public. E.g. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors. Touch should be related to the child's needs, not the worker's.
- The level of personal care e.g. toileting, must be appropriate to the age of the child whilst accepting that some children have special needs.
- Avoid any physical activity which is or may be thought to be sexually stimulating to the adult or child.
- Team members should monitor each other in the area of physical contact. It is recommended that workers have regular meetings, which are minuted, in order to keep each other accountable for their behaviour and work.
- Treat all children and adults with dignity and respect.
- Respect the privacy of all children and adults.
- Arrangements for transporting a child or vulnerable person should be made with the knowledge of the team and have parental/carer approval.
- Arrangements for residential holidays should be considered carefully, with respect to sleeping arrangements etc.
- Keep a Logbook. Note down any significant incidents which occur.

B5 Procedures for Project Monitoring and Evaluation

INFA's partner organisations must have actively implemented policies and practices for preventing the exploitation and abuse of children and other vulnerable people. This should be carried out and verified in the following ways.

- INFA will carry out risk assessments of all partners and projects to consider risk to children and vulnerable people (Appendix C).
- New partner assessments, capacity assessments, and field visit assessments will be carried out in line with standards defined in INF Australia's Partnership Manual.
- Assurance of compliance in partnership agreements and MOUs.
- Discussion during conversations with partner organisations.
- Practice to be monitored as standing item on committee agendas.

B6 Socialised Reporting Mechanisms

INFA recognises that safeguarding is only effective when children, vulnerable adults, and community members themselves know how to raise concerns. In addition to internal staff reporting pathways, INFA will ensure that reporting mechanisms are **socialised** — meaning they are visible, accessible, and understood by those we serve.

- **Awareness:** Children, vulnerable adults, and beneficiaries will be informed of available reporting channels in age-appropriate and culturally sensitive ways (e.g. orientation sessions, posters in community spaces, child-friendly leaflets).
- **Multiple entry points:** Reporting options will include trusted local staff or focal points, confidential email/phone contacts, and anonymous channels (such as suggestion boxes or secure online forms).
- **Safety and confidentiality:** All reporting mechanisms will be designed to protect the identity and safety of the person reporting, with clear assurances that retaliation will not be tolerated.
- **Transparency:** Communities will be informed about what happens after a report is made, including who will receive it, how it will be handled, and what support is available.
- **Continuous improvement:** Feedback from children, vulnerable adults, and partners will be used to strengthen reporting mechanisms and ensure they remain trusted and accessible.

B7 Procedure for Investigating Allegations of Abuse

All allegations of child abuse or exploitation or other sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment should be taken seriously, and the best interest of the child or survivor should always take precedence.

Allegations of child abuse or exploitation or sexual exploitation or abuse of a vulnerable adult by an Australian citizen or resident should be reported to the Australian Federal police no matter where the alleged incident took place. Any child abuse or exploitation, or sexual exploitation or abuse of a vulnerable adult, or not reporting such incidents will be considered serious misconduct and will be investigated under INF Australia's Grievance and Discipline Policy.

B7.1 Allegations of abuse in Australia

- Ensure the child or vulnerable adult is safe
- Contact the INFA CEO to check and verify that there is a cause for concern (unless the concern relates to the CEO, in which case either contact the Chair or go straight to the Police)
- Report to the Police and to relevant partner organisations (including DFAT).

B7.2 Allegations of abuse in Nepal

- Ensure the Child or vulnerable adult is safe.
- Check and verify that there is a cause for concern.
- The INF Australia CEO will (together with the INF Personnel Director in Nepal) be responsible for leading an investigation. Pending an inquiry, whether by the Police or INF, the adult may be suspended from work in accordance with the Grievance and Discipline Policy. INF's first responsibility must always be to the child.

- Contact relevant authorities (including Federal Police) and partners (including DFAT) in Australia and Nepal.
- Where emergency medical attention is necessary, INF will contact the INF Medical Officer or the local hospital and inform them of any suspicion of abuse. If considered appropriate, also contact the Nepali Police for cases of deliberate injury, sexual abuse or where there is concern for the child's safety.
- If the alleged incident happened in Nepal, and Nepali Police are unable to assist, a decision must be made as to whether the case may be investigated within Nepal or referred to the authorities in Australia.
- Key questions must be asked when a suspicion of child abuse or exploitation is raised.
- Is INF able to ensure the safety of the child or vulnerable adult?
- Is INF satisfied that the arrangements made will prevent further acts of abuse or exploitation?
- Can INF make an appropriate plan for the future of the child or vulnerable adult and his/her family?
- In response to the first two questions immediately above, the child or vulnerable adult should not normally remain under the same roof as the perpetrator. Where possible, the child or vulnerable adult should remain in their home, in order to retain some kind of normality.

Appendix C Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Persons Risk Assessment

C1 Purpose

This Risk Assessment framework provides INF Australia and its partners with a structured process to identify, assess, and mitigate risks to children and vulnerable persons in all projects, programs, and organisational activities. It ensures safeguarding is proactively embedded into planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

C2 Principles

- **Child-centred and survivor-focused:** The best interests of the child or vulnerable person are paramount.
- **Prevention first:** Risks should be anticipated and reduced before harm occurs.
- **Shared responsibility:** All staff, volunteers, contractors, and partners are responsible for identifying and reporting risks.
- **Continuous improvement:** Risk assessments are living documents, reviewed regularly and updated as contexts change.

C3 Risk Assessment Process

Step	Description	Responsibility
1. Identify Activities	List all project activities, travel, events, or interactions where children or vulnerable persons may be present.	Project Manager / Partner Organisation
2. Identify Risks	Consider potential risks of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or harm (direct and indirect).	Staff / Volunteers / Partners
3. Assess Risk Level	Rate each risk by Likelihood (Low/Medium/High) and Impact (Low/Medium/High).	Safeguarding Focal Point with Project Team
4. Mitigation Measures	Document strategies to reduce or eliminate risks (e.g., supervision, training, restricted access, codes of conduct).	Project Manager
5. Assign Responsibility	Allocate responsibility for implementing mitigation measures.	CEO / Managers / Partners
6. Monitor and Review	Regularly review risks during project implementation and update as needed.	Safeguarding Focal Point / Board Oversight

C4 Risk Assessment Template

Activity / Context	Potential Risk to Children / Vulnerable Persons	Likelihood (L/M/H)	Impact (L/M/H)	Risk Rating	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Person	Review Date
Example: Community health training in rural Nepal	Children present at venue may be unsupervised and	Medium	High	High	Ensure all staff/volunteers sign Code of Conduct; designate	Project Manager	Quarterly

	exposed to inappropriate behaviour				child-safe spaces; require parental supervision		
Example: Vision trip participants visiting partner projects	Participants may take unauthorised photos of children	Medium	Medium	Medium	Pre-departure safeguarding briefing; enforce photo consent policy; monitor compliance	Trip Leader	After each trip
Example: Partner organisation staff recruitment	Risk of hiring someone with history of abuse	Low	High	Medium	Police checks, reference checks, behavioural interview questions	HR Manager	Annual

C5 Review and Reporting

- Risk assessments must be completed **before project approval** and updated **at least annually**.
- High-risk activities must be reviewed **quarterly**.
- Significant safeguarding risks or incidents must be reported immediately to the CEO and Board, and to DFAT where required.