



Global Child Forum – Child Safeguarding Policy

FOR SAFE, RESPECTFUL AND RIGHTS-BASED ENGAGEMENT WITH CHILDREN

Approved by: The Board of Directors

Applies to: All staff, consultants, volunteers, board members, suppliers, and partner organisations

Effective from: April 2025

Review cycle: Every 2 years

Contact for safeguarding: safeguarding@globalchildforum.org

1. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Global Child Forum works to advance children’s rights by engaging global companies, convening high-level forums, producing data and insights, and consulting directly with children and youth.

This Child Safeguarding Policy outlines the standards of behavior, accountability, and procedures we require from anyone working on behalf of or with Global Child Forum to ensure children are protected from all forms of harm – physical, emotional, sexual, or online – and treated with respect, dignity, and equality.

The policy is aligned with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and draws on UNICEF’s Children’s Rights and Business Principles.

2. CORE COMMITMENTS AND VALUES

We believe that:

- Every child under the age of 18 has equal rights to protection from harm, regardless of background.
- Engaging with children must always prioritize their safety, well-being, and right to participate.
- We have zero tolerance for all forms of abuse, exploitation, discrimination, or neglect.

Global Child Forum staff, contractors, and partners commit:

- To act in the best interests of children in all professional contexts.
- To always treat children with dignity, empathy, and without bias.
- To create environments—physical or digital—where children can express themselves freely and safely.

3. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This policy applies to:

- All Global Child Forum employees, interns, volunteers, and Board members
- All consultants, contractors, researchers, and service providers
- All partner organizations engaged in collaborative projects
- Anyone representing Global Child Forum during child consultations, forums, workshops, or research activities
- All persons involved in communications, filming, photographing or publishing materials featuring children

4. DEFINITIONS OF CHILD ABUSE AND MISCONDUCT

Physical Abuse: Intentional injury or harm (e.g. hitting, shaking, burning)

Emotional Abuse: Constant criticism, humiliation, threats, or emotional manipulation

Sexual Abuse: Any form of sexual activity with a child or exploitation of power to coerce a child

Neglect: Failure to meet a child's basic physical or emotional needs

Online Abuse: Inappropriate digital contact, online grooming, misuse of images or data

5. EXPECTED BEHAVIOR AND PROHIBITED CONDUCT

All Global Child Forum representatives must:

- Maintain appropriate boundaries with children at all times
- Refrain from any action that could be perceived as abusive, exploitative, or disrespectful
- Never use private communication channels (e.g. personal email, social media) to contact children unless officially sanctioned
- Not take or share photos/videos of children without informed consent
- Not engage in private, unsupervised meetings with children unless necessary and pre-approved
- Never share or publish personal information about children without explicit consent from both the child and their guardian
- Avoid favoring specific children over others or forming inappropriate personal relationships

6. SAFEGUARDING MEASURES FOR CHILD CONSULTATIONS & EVENTS

Global Child Forum frequently engages children and youth as part of its research and advocacy efforts. In these settings:

- Informed consent from both children and guardians must be obtained before participation
- Staff must use child-friendly language and ensure the child's understanding
- Participation must be voluntary, and children can withdraw at any time
- Children must be given space to voice opinions, and their feedback must be respected
- Safeguarding risk assessments must be completed before any event or consultation
- A designated safeguarding contact must be present or on-call during all child-

inclusive activities

7. REPORTING CONCERNS

Anyone working with Global Child Forum has a duty to report suspicions, incidents, or concerns related to child safety, whether or not harm is confirmed.

Types of reports:

- Incident: A known or suspected violation of this policy
- Near Miss: A situation that could have caused harm but didn't
- Concern: Indications of possible harm outside of GCF's direct activities

Reports must be made within 24 hours to:

safeguarding@globalchildforum.org and your contact point in Global Child Forum.

All reports will be handled confidentially and in accordance with child protection laws and the best interest of the child. Global Child Forum may escalate cases to child protection authorities or the police where necessary.

8. TRAINING, RECRUITMENT & PARTNER RESPONSIBILITIES

- All staff and volunteers must complete child safeguarding training.
- Criminal background checks are required where legally permissible for roles with direct child contact.
- Contractors and partner organizations must either adopt this policy or present one of equivalent standard.
- Partner contracts must include a Child Safeguarding Addendum.

9. CONSEQUENCES FOR BREACH

Breaches of this policy may result in:

- Termination of contracts or partnerships
- Disciplinary actions, including dismissal
- Reporting to legal or safeguarding authorities

10. ONGOING MONITORING AND REVIEW

Global Child Forum is committed to learning and improving its safeguarding work.

This policy will be:

- Monitored by the Safeguarding Focal Point and the management.
- Reviewed biennially or after any serious incident