

COMMUNITY WORLD SERVICE ASIA CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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1. Introduction and Purpose

Community World Service Asia, formerly Church World Service-Pakistan/Afghanistan, is a regional non-governmental organization which implements humanitarian and development activities in Asia. We aim to address factors that set people apart by celebrating inclusiveness, shared values, diversity, and interdependence. Marginalized communities are assisted irrespective of race, faith, color, sex, economic status, or political opinion. Respecting the right to choose how to live, we work with marginalized communities in order for them to overcome inequality and lead dignified, peaceful, and resilient lives.

Community World Service Asia believes that children are precious human resources. They are hope of the nation and future of the country. The purpose of the policy is to set minimum standards on child protection and to make sure that Community World Service Asia works for the safest possible environment for children. Community World Service Asia is committed to protect children from acts of abuse – physical, sexual, emotional, neglect, Bullying/ Coercion and abuse of power/authority. (*Definitions of Child, Child protection, child abuse and types of abuses are mentioned in Annex 1*).

This policy is inline with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Additionally, it is inline with National Commission on the Rights of Children Bill, the Charter of Child Rights Bill, the Prohibition of Corporal Punishment Bill, Rights to Free and Compulsory Education Bill in accordance with Constitution of Pakistan and National laws on children's rights of Afghanistan.

2. Community World Service Asia's definition of "Child"

Community World Service Asia fully subscribes to the UNCRC, Article 1, which states "A child means every human being below the age of (18) eighteen years."

3. Scope of the Policy:

This policy applies to all staff (local / international),volunteers/interns (local / international), visitors, consultants / resource persons, implementing partners, contractors , suppliers and any other individuals working for or representing Community World Service Asia.

All those providing service to Community World Service Asia i.e. visitors, consultants / resource persons, implementing partners, contractors and suppliers etc. shall comply with the terms of this policy and shall ensure that employees and sub-contractors do likewise throughout the duration of the contract.

4. Statement on commitment to Child Protection and Guiding Principles

Community World Service Asia is committed to the safety and well-being of all children. Our organization takes its duty of care seriously and will aim, at all times, to provide the safest possible environment for children. This will be achieved by identifying and managing risk that may lead to harm, and dealing immediately with concerns and reports if they arise.

All staff (local / international), volunteers/interns (local / international), visitors, consultants / resource persons, implementing partners, contractors, suppliers and any other individuals working for or representing Community World Service Asia shall ensure that they will follow the Child Protection Code of Conduct (Annex 2) as well as report on any child protection concern about a child or staff's conduct towards a child.

Best interests of the child are paramount and shall be the primary consideration in our decision making. Community World Service Asia will make efforts to enhance and strengthen coping mechanism and resilience of communities highlighting child protection issues.

Children in emergencies are especially vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. All implementing organizations working with Community World Service Asia must comply with the Community World Service Asia child protection code of conduct.

Community World Service Asia fully subscribes to the UNCRC and draws the attention of the consultants / resource persons, implementing partners, contractors and suppliers to Article 32 of the Convention which inter alia requires that a child shall be protected from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, spiritual, moral, or social development. The consultants / resource persons, implementing partners, contractors and suppliers represents and warrants that they will adhere to child protection and that child will not be used in the performance of their obligations under agreement with Community World Service Asia.

5. Child Safe Recruitment Practices:

Community World Service Asia is committed to child safe recruitment, selection, and induction practices. Our practices aim to recruit the most suitable candidate to work for our programs. **A detail of child safe recruitment measures are mentioned in Annex: 6.**

- Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct (Annex 2) are uploaded on the official website of Community World Service Asia to promote Community World Service Asia's commitment to Child Protection.

- Community World Service Asia is committed to prohibit recruiting anyone under the age of 18 years.
- Screening measures are taken into selection processes for all staff (local / international), volunteers/interns (local / international), These include various references checking as per recruitment procedures.
- Targeted interview questions are asked during job interviews to make sure their understanding of the child protection policy and also to find out suitability to work with children.
- Employment shall only be offered to those applicants who possess official identification documents e.g. Computerized National Identity Card (CNIC), passport, birth certificate etc and same shall be legally verified before offering employment.
- All staff (local / international),volunteers/interns (local / international), visitors, consultants / resource persons, implementing partners, contractors and supplier will be given a copy of the Policy, and will sign the Code of Conduct, indicating they will abide by its requirements at all times.
- Child abuse is not acceptable by Community World Service Asia. Community World Service Asia reserves the right to refuse employment offer to anyone if they pose a risk to children.

6. Use of Children's Images:

Community World Service Asia will at all times portray children in a respectful and appropriate manner. *Guidelines on the use of children's images are included in Annex: 2 Child Protection Code of Conduct.*

7. Child Protection Risk Management:

Under this policy, Community World Service Asia will ensure that a child protection risk assessment would be done as part of designing a new program, and during monitoring of the project across Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Community World Service Asia ensures child development and protection through working with partners and stakeholders involved in any activity especially in Community World Service Asia's Child-Focused Projects. Community World Service Asia ensures that the children's voices are heard and are incorporated in the projects that are directly related children's interest.

8. Child Abuse Reporting Processes

Any known or suspected case of child abuse must be brought to the attention of Line Manager who then verbally informs the Child Protection Focal Person and/or Senior Management. In the event that staff members have concerns related to the behaviour of their Line Manager, they should raise these

concerns directly with Child Protection Focal Person and in absence of Child Protection Focal Person they can communicate with Internal Auditor.

To ensure that all such situations are handled appropriately and effectively, a reporting mechanism has been created:

- Community World Service Asia Child Protection Reporting Framework (Annex 3) must be followed for all child protection concerns and reports.
- Any known or suspected case of child abuse must be immediately reported and recorded in writing by completing the Child Protection Incident Reporting Form (Annex 4: HRD/3/047).
- 24 hours timeframe for sharing CP incidents to Act for Peace are mandatory process that has to be adhere to (if the CP incident relates to an AfP/DFAT funded program). According to this requirement, Child Protection Focal Person and/or Senior Management will report to Act for Peace about child protection incidents, whether they are only allegations or they are confirmed as fact.
- Further course of action/investigation report can be made by completing the Child Protection Investigation Reporting Form (Annex 5: HRD/3/048). Maximum time for investigation shall be 2- 4 working days.

All documentation on cases will be stored securely and privately and only shared with those involved in working on the case, or the authorities if the need arises.

9. Implementation and Training

For the sake of effective and coordinated implementation of this policy, Community World Service Asia will ensure the following steps:

- Community World Service Asia Child Protection Policy is included in staff orientation package and all new comers will be oriented about this policy. Regular re-orientation / refresher sessions will be conducted for the staff to brief them on Child Protection Policy, organizational commitment on child protection and job expectations towards child protection.
- All Program staff are expected to consider Community World Service Asia Child Protection Policy while planning, implementing and monitoring of their programs/projects.
- To ensure coordinated implementation of the policy, Community World Service Asia has designated a Child Protection Focal Person in the organization who is responsible to promote child protection throughout the organization, coordinate training for staff, monitor internal policy compliance and regular review of policy.
- Community World Service Asia Child Protection Policy is accessible for all staff on Community World Service Asia's official website and Human Resources Information System (HRIS) website.

- Using organization systems for child pornography is strictly prohibited and staff has to report to their immediate supervisor if any of the guidelines are violated by any other staff member. Community World Service Asia procedures on (computer, internet, equipment and email usage) are outlined the guidelines for effective use of hardware resources offered by the organization.

10. Accountability

Community World Service Asia's child protection responsibilities fall on each and every member of the organisation. All staff is responsible for ensuring that the activities that they are involved in during the course of their work are carried out in accordance with this policy.

Managers are committed to ensure that this policy is fully communicated and followed by their team members. It is their responsibility to ensure that the activities and services they provide have adequate procedures to protect and safeguard children.

11. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed by the Human Resource Development Department /senior management as and when required. Child Protection Focal Person will facilitate the process of review /update of policy in consultation with relevant managers. It is obligatory that this policy be revised at least every 2 years.

12. Guidance and Reference:

The policy should also be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Annex 1: Definitions
- Annex 2: Code of conduct of Child Protection (available on OM 8, Volume1)
- Annex 3: Child Protection Reporting Framework
- Annex 4: Community World Service Asia Child Protection Incident Reporting Form (available on OM 8, Volume3)
- Annex 5: Child Protection Investigation Reporting Form (available on OM 8, Volume3)
- Annex 6: Safe Recruitment Practices

Annex 1 to Child Protection Policy

Definitions:

Child: A child means every human being below the age of (18) eighteen years old.

Child Protection: Child Protection is defined as systems and mechanisms to prevent and respond to children from danger, hurt or impairment (physical, sexual, emotional, bullying and abuse of power/authority) from the people who work with Community World Service Asia.

Child Abuse: Child abuse is any action (or lack of) which endangers or impair a child's physical, or emotional health and development.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse occurs when a person purposefully injures or threatens to injure a child. This may take the form of slapping, punching, shaking, kicking, burning, shoving or grabbing and acid throwing. The injury may take the form of bruises, cuts, burns, or fractures.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is a persistent attack on a child or young person's self esteem. It can take the form of name calling, threatening, ridiculing, intimidating or isolating the child or young person. Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

Sexual Abuse/Commercial Sexual Exploitation

Child Sexual Abuse is one of the most serious violations of children's rights in Pakistan and Afghanistan. A growing number of children are being forced into a life of sexual abuse. Sexual abuse is defined as actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child. Sexual abuse includes rape, incest and all forms of sexual activity involving children, including exposing children to, or taking, pornographic photographs or other media/materials.

Commercial sexual exploitation is the act of providing children with money, goods or services in exchange for sexual acts of any kind, including involvement in pornography.

Sexual Abuse or commercial sexual exploitation may include non-contact activities and abuse through internet, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, abusive images or watching

sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Bullying/ Coercion

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the three main types are *physical* (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), *verbal* (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling) and *emotional* (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group).

Abuse of Power/Authority

Abuse of Power/Authority can be described as one in which one party is in a position of power or influence over the other by virtue of their work or the nature of their activity. An abuse of power/authority could be committed by, for example, a teacher/trainer/recourse person, humanitarian or development worker or faith leader.

Abuse of power/authority may also include to ignore and omit a child on the basis of race, faith, color, sex, economic status, or political opinion during delivery of services. This is particularly important in the context of humanitarian aid/services, when those in positions of power also control aid and resources.

Annex 2 to Child Protection Policy

Child Protection Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behavior towards children. The Code ensures that all staff (local/international), volunteers/interns (local/international), visitors, consultants / resource persons, implementing partners, contractors , suppliers and any other individuals working for or representing Community World Service Asia, understand clearly what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior towards children, in order to protect against false allegations by others. It also serves to protect children and reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm to occur. All staff (local/international), volunteers/interns (local/international), visitors, consultants / resource persons, implementing partners, contractors , suppliers and any other individuals working for or representing Community World Service Asia are expected to comply with the Code of Conduct.

I Will:

- Treat all children and young people with respect, regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, nationality, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.
- Listen to and value children's ideas and opinion.
- Welcome all children and include them in activities.
- Listen to children and take action to protect their well-being.
- Be aware of situations which may present risks and manage them effectively.
- Be visible when working with children, as far as possible. Whenever possible, I will ensure that another adult is present when I am working in the proximity of children.
- Talk to children about their contact with staff or others and encourage them to raise any concerns.
- Ensure that a sense of accountability exists between staff so that bad practices or potentially abusive behavior does not go unchallenged.
- Keep confidential all information that I am party to regarding child protection cases, disclosing such information only to those individuals as outlined in our organization's Child Protection Reporting Mechanism.
- Report any violation of these standards of behavior, in accordance with the organization's child protection policy and mechanism.

I Will Not:

- Hit or otherwise physically assault or abuse children. I will refrain from physical punishment or discipline of children (excluding my own children).

- Belittle, insult, shout at, or otherwise verbally or emotionally abuse a child
- Behave physically or say anything to a child in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative.
- Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for him/herself, such as assistance with toileting or changing clothes. If a child's disability means they need my assistance, I will inform a colleague in advance and ensure that I am as transparent as possible in my behavior.
- Hire children as domestic labour or for other work which is inappropriate to their age or development stage, which interferes with time available for education and recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury.
- Discriminate on the basis of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, nationality, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.
- Develop "special" relationships with specific children for my own needs.
- Develop physical / sexual relationships with children
- Give gifts or show favoritism.
- Have purely personal contact with children from the organisation's programs outside of work.
- Invite unaccompanied children into my home, unless there are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger.
- Sleep close to unsupervised children unless absolutely necessary, in which case I must first obtain my supervisor's permission and ensure that another adult is present if possible.
- Never be alone with a child in a room with the door closed. If absolutely necessary e.g. providing counseling, then I must notify my superior first.
- Spend excessive time alone with children away from others (this includes drivers of vehicles belonging to the organization).

Use of Children's Images:

Community World Service Asia will at all times portray children in a respectful and appropriate manner. As a member (staff (local/international), volunteers/interns (local/international), visitors, consultants / resource persons, implementing partners, contractors, suppliers) of Community World Service Asia, I agree to the following image guidelines:

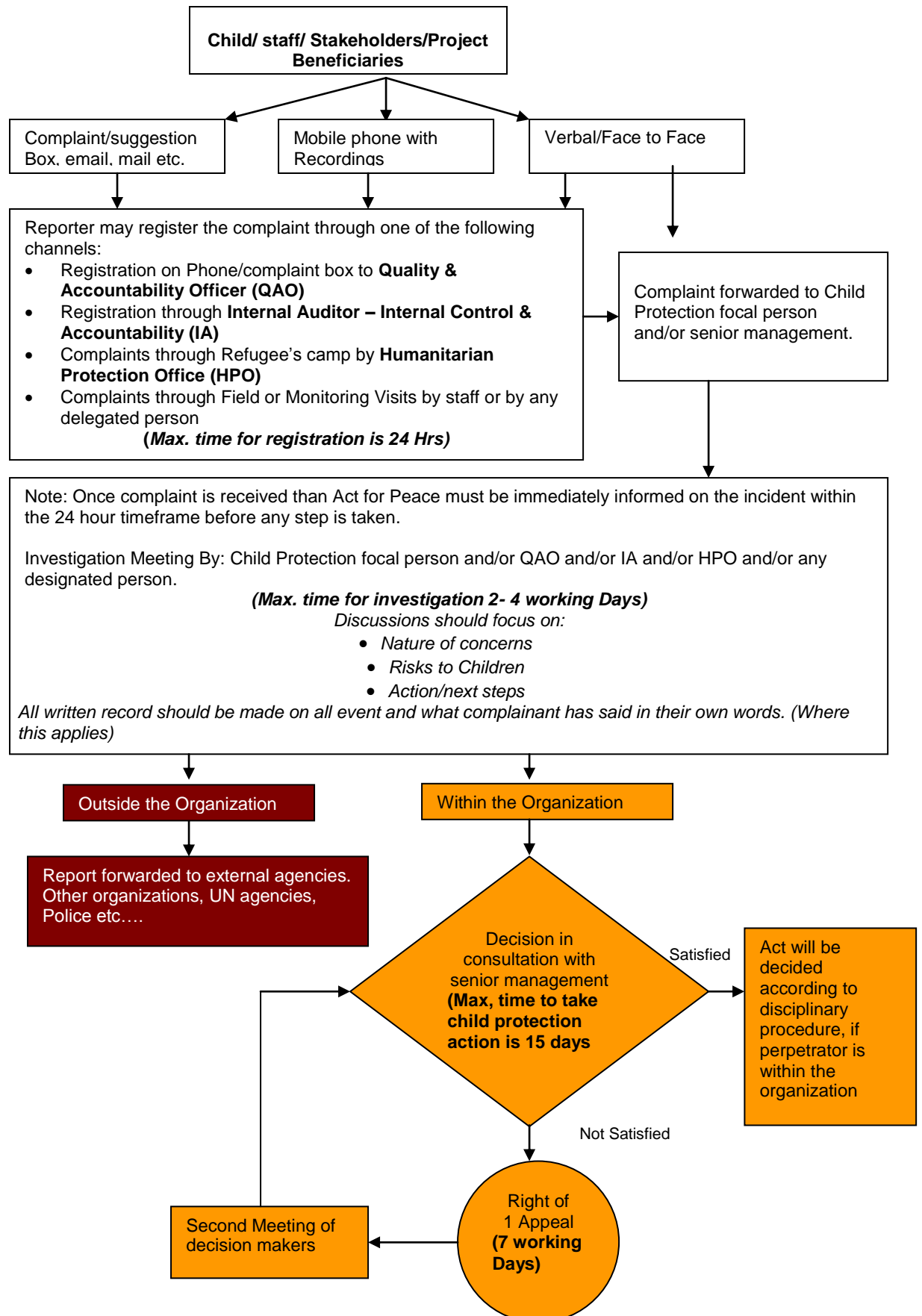
- A child should always be portrayed in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive. Amount of clothing will vary from culture to culture, but generally babies and children must be wearing pants or similar at a minimum. Girls beyond toddler should be wearing a top.

- A child and its family must always be asked for consent when using their images. When asking for consent to use the image, details should be given as to how and where this image will be used.
- Children should be portrayed as part of their community.
- Local culture traditions should be assessed regarding restrictions for reproducing personal images.
- Images should be an honest representation of the context and the facts.
- There should be no identification information of the child used in the publication of images with their location. All recorded identifying details are to be stored confidentially.
- When sending images electronically, file labels should not reveal identifying information.

This is not a complete list. The basic understanding is that staff should avoid actions or behavior which may constitute bad practices or potentially abusive behavior, and should use their own common sense in considering what may be acceptable and unacceptable behavior towards children.

Annex 3 to Child Protection Policy

Community World Service Asia Child Protection Reporting Framework



Child Protection Investigation Reporting Form
(To be filled by child protection investigation person)

Private & Confidential

1- Referral details: (Detail of person reporting concern)

Name:

Address:

Contact:

Occupation:

Nature and extent of contact with Child/Family:

Time:

Date:

Place:

2- Child's details:

Name:

Age:

Date of birth:

Gender:

Religion:

Address:

Household structure:

School Name:

Class:

Class Teacher:

Any disability:

3- Alleged perpetrator's details:

Name:

Age:

Gender:

Address:

Relationship to Child:

Occupation:

Any other information:

4- Details of concern(s), allegations(s) or incident(s) dates, times, who was present, description of any observed injuries, parent's view, child's view if known: (including child's words if possible)

5- What action has been taken internally to support the children and to minimize the risk of reoccurrence of such incidence? e.g. current safety of child, internal action of organization..

6- Which external agencies (if any) have been informed?

7- What action has been taken by external agencies (if any) to date?

Reported by: _____ **Date:** _____

Reviewed by: _____ **Date:** _____

Details of any conversation with the child or informant:

(Write down exactly what the child said and what you said (or another informant said. Remember, do not lead the child – record actual details. Please do continue on a separate sheet of paper if necessary)

Have you contacted anyone already about this concern: (e.g. Parents, Care Taker, Line Manager, Co-worker, Child Protection Focal Person or agencies etc...) If YES then please provide a detail such as: time, date of reporting and person to whom report was made.

Advice given by that person (If any):

Any action you may have taken so far:

Undertaking:

I can confirm that to the best of my knowledge the information provided above is correct, and that I will be available to answer any further questions on this matter.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Note: Please fill out as much information as possible and submit it to the Child Protection Focal Person immediately. Please remember that all information contained in this report must be kept confidential and must not be revealed to anyone except the person you reported to. Community World Service Asia cannot absolutely guarantee protection of the person reporting, but will do everything within its power to protect them. You will be informed of next actions that will be taken.

Annex 6 to Child Protection Policy

Safe Recruitment Practices/Measures:

Community World Service Asia employs the following measures in order to ensure safe and appropriate recruitment and screening of new job applicants:

- Professional references
 - Direct telephonic communication with HR/supervisor.
 - Most of the time, references are being taken from ex-employers with preference of reference from ex-supervisor.
- Personal references
- Reference check by Partners and/or feedback from Management/staff
- Educational documents verification
- CNIC / Tazkira Verification
- Online searching of candidate
- Reference letter for female staff
- Police Clearance Certificate / Reference from District Shura Council/ Wakil/Malik (Afghan Govt. Representative), District Administrators, councilor, 17grade office

While the above procedures are what Community World Service Asia strives for, the organization does recognize that however, that there are still challenges faced in implementing these in conflict/no go areas of Afghanistan.

Annex 2: Code of conduct of Child Protection is available on OM 10, Volume 1.

Annex 4: Community World Service Asia Child Protection Incident Reporting Form is available on HRD/3/047, OM 10, Volume 3.

Annex 5: Child Protection Investigation Reporting Form is available on HRD/3/048, OM 10, and Volume 3.