

‘setting the standard’



A common approach to
Child Protection for
international NGOs

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Jim Loring: Tearfund.

Preface

by Clare Short, Secretary of State for International Development

Everyone involved in working with children has a fundamental duty of care towards them. We must all recognise the risks to children and our responsibilities to keep them safe during humanitarian emergencies and as part of longer-term development efforts. If children are to be protected from abuse and exploitation, staff and other representatives of humanitarian and development agencies must conduct themselves with the utmost professionalism and integrity at all times.

For these aspirations to be realised, a systematic approach to child protection is required. I welcome this publication as an important contribution to efforts by non-governmental organisations to address child protection issues in a systematic way. The standards contained in this document provide the basis for agencies to develop effective safeguarding measures and to ensure that through awareness, good practice and robust systems and procedures, their staff are well placed to protect children.

Last year's reports from West Africa about allegations that aid workers were sexually exploiting women and children pushed child protection issues in poor countries under the media spotlight. I hope this publication will help ensure media attention translates into real action to secure the rights of children to protection from abuse and exploitation.

Clare Short

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.

Article 19 - United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

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 in humanitarian crises, through integrating the prevention of and response to sexual exploitation and abuse into the protection and assistance functions of all humanitarian workers.

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

What agencies have had to say about the standards:

“I can tell you now, that many organisations - especially those that do not work directly with children - do not believe the standards are relevant to them because of many factors. I disagree, and believe that every organisation (whether they work directly or indirectly with children, whether they are funding or being funded) must take responsibility for child protection.”

Foreword

By Mike Aaronson, Director General Save the Children UK

Setting the context

International agencies are becoming increasingly concerned about child protection in their work. No agency is immune from the issue and the extent to which organisations develop measures to protect children is a matter of increasing scrutiny. Work is being undertaken in some agencies to ensure that child protection frameworks are in place, but for the sector as a whole there is an urgent need to develop a common understanding of child protection issues, to develop good practice across the diverse and complex areas in which international agencies operate, and to ensure increased accountability in this crucial aspect of their work.

It is incumbent on all agencies working internationally to address the following key issues:

- Children may be at risk of abuse and exploitation not only from individuals in the communities in which they live but also by aid workers and volunteers
- Children in emergencies are especially vulnerable to abuse and exploitation
- Protection systems in the different countries in which INGOs work are often weak and leave agencies and staff facing complex child protection dilemmas
- There is little common understanding across agencies of child protection issues, standards of practice, or the organisational implications of these
- There are huge difficulties in applying child protection principles in the many different legal, social and cultural contexts in which international agencies work
- There are simple and basic human resources procedures which, if put in place, will strengthen an INGO's position vis-a-vis child protection

Supporting 'safeguarding' developments

The UNHCR/Save the Children UK report of 2002 that alleged sexual exploitation of children by aid workers in West Africa highlighted the sector's vulnerability to these issues and the need to develop robust protection for children. This expanded the group of UK-based relief and development agencies that had been working together on these issues with the National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) and latterly the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Geneva, in order to share experience and knowledge and to identify a common approach to child protection.

This initiative has resulted in the development of a standards-based approach that offers very practical assistance to agencies in addressing the issues identified above. Developing safeguards that protect children is a crucial element in operating ethically and in ensuring protection for staff and other representatives. This aspect of good governance is also important in maintaining the reputation and credibility of individual agencies and of the sector as a whole.

The following standards will assist any agency in meeting their obligations to protect children and are to be warmly welcomed. The planned training pack that will follow will also help in making these standards a practical reality for staff, volunteers and partners alike.

What agencies have had to say about the standards:

“The standardisation of ideas of child protection and the strength found as a group of NGOs work together to achieve them will benefit the children and the organisations involved.”

Setting the **standard**

A common approach to child protection for International NGOs

Introduction to the standards

These standards are designed to help agencies working internationally to safeguard the children with whom they or their partners work.

They contain the minimum standards for child protection to be effective and a structure to help agencies think through the issues and develop their own approach to child protection. The standards reflect the universal 'duty of care' that agencies owe children, as well as the difficulties agencies experience in developing protection measures due to the nature of the work and the cultural, legal and other differences that exist in different parts of the world.

Why Standards?

Standards can provide a benchmark against which practice can be measured and audited. By drawing together and describing what is needed they can assist organisations in reviewing and evaluating current practice and identify goals for development. They also make explicit to others what is expected in relation to child protection. This provides a basis for accountability and challenge if practice falls below a certain standard. This is particularly useful when working with partner organisations.

What is their Purpose?

- To provide a benchmark for INGOs in assessing and developing their internal child protection structures and procedures (including policy, reporting procedures and Human Resources arrangements) and to help work out their child protection approach internationally.
- To promote good practice and challenge practice that is abusive to children. By definition, INGOs and their partners work in difficult situations. INGOs want to ensure that all representatives work together to create a safe environment for children.
- To protect children from abuse and exploitation including that which may be perpetrated by representatives of humanitarian INGOs.

Adaptation to Local Context

In writing these standards the aim has been to make them relevant and achievable whilst at the same time recognising that different country and local contexts will at times make their application difficult and pose challenges. In recognition of the enormous variation in local practice and circumstances it is intended that agencies will adapt standards and criteria to fit local need.

While providing a comprehensive framework, the intention is that those with responsibility for child protection should make the document relevant to their own context and circumstances. However, it is hoped that the principles that underpin these standards will be readily endorsed by all wherever they work.

General Principles

The standard document is informed by a set of principles that derive from the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child:

- All children have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation
- All children should be encouraged to fulfil their potential and inequalities should be challenged
- Everybody has a responsibility to support the care and protection of children
- INGOs have a duty of care to children with whom they work and with whom their representatives work
- If agencies work through partners they have a responsibility to meet minimum standards of protection for the children in their partners' programmes

Advantages of implementing child protection standards

- Children are protected
Although no standards or process can offer complete protection for children, following these standards minimises the risk to children of abuse and exploitation
- Agency representatives are protected
By implementing these standards all representatives will have clear guidance on their own behaviour around children and on what to do if they notice or are told about inappropriate behaviour on the part of others
- The organisation is protected
By implementing these standards organisations are making clear their commitment to safeguard children. The standards will help them to move towards best practice in this area and deter those who would wish to abuse children from joining the organisation

Summary

In conclusion these standards are a unique attempt to ensure that INGOs can develop practice which safeguards children from abuse and exploitation. They are not intended to be wholly prescriptive but to provide a helpful basis for discussion and determining local standards and how they will be measured and achieved. At the end of this document there is a useful auditing tool to assist with implementation and monitoring of the standards.

What agencies have had to say about the standards:

“Above all, it must be remembered that it is the children not the standards, that are sacrosanct; and although abuse must never be tolerated, the standards are no more than a tool in the service of promoting the welfare of children.”

¹ Abuse and exploitation may result from sexual exploitation, physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, harm from bad practice or undue pressure that affects the child/young person's health and development.

² 'Representatives' means any person presenting themselves to a child due to their relationship with the agency. This includes staff, volunteers, board members, consultants and supporters.

³ The term 'children' will be used to refer to those individuals under 18 years of age as recognised in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Overview of standards

Standard 1

Policy

Standard 2

Procedures and Systems

Standard 3

Prevention

Standard 4

Codes of Practice and Behaviour

Standard 5

Child Protection Cross Culturally

Standard 6

Equity

Standard 7

Communication Systems

Standard 8

Education and Training

Standard 9

Access to Advice and Support

Standard 10

Implementation and Monitoring

Standard 11

Working with Partners

Standard 1

Policy

What

Any international NGO should have a child protection policy if its direct or indirect beneficiaries include individuals under the age of 18

Why

The policy is a statement of intent that demonstrates a commitment to safeguard children from harm and makes clear to all what is required in relation to the protection of children. It helps to create a safe and positive environment for children and to show that the organisation is taking its duty of care seriously

Criteria

- 1.1 The organisation has a child protection policy
- 1.2 The policy is written in a clear and easily understandable way
- 1.3 The policy is publicised, promoted and distributed widely
- 1.4 The policy is approved and endorsed by the relevant management body (e.g. Senior Management Board, Executive, Committee)
- 1.5 The policy is mandatory for all representatives
- 1.6 The policy is reviewed as a minimum every 3 years and/or is adapted whenever there is a significant change in the organisation or in relevant legislation
- 1.7 The policy explicitly addresses child protection in the different types of work undertaken: emergency relief; operational development; partner based and child sponsorship and advocacy
- 1.8 The policy clearly describes the organisation's understanding and definitions of abuse

Essential inclusions

All children have a right to protection

The welfare of children is paramount

Scope – it is clear to which individuals or groups the policy applies

Ways of providing evidence

Copy of policy

Policy translated into local languages

Circulation list to show distribution

Examples of ways in which policy was promoted, including to communities and especially to children

Signed statement of approval of policy or excerpt from minutes of relevant meeting to show approval

Written evidence of process and timetable for review

What agencies have had to say about the standards:

“The quality of staff will be raised as the standards are put in place and the selection process becomes more rigorous. Employment will not just be geared towards eliminating abusers, but getting the best possible employees for the job.”

Standard 2

Procedures and systems

What

Procedures provide clear step-by-step guidance on what to do in different circumstances. They clarify roles and responsibilities and lines of communication. Systems for recording information and for dealing with complaints are also needed, to ensure implementation and compliance. Reporting procedures and response mechanisms embody principles of confidentiality and thereby encourage concerns to be raised

Why

Procedures help to ensure a prompt response to concerns about a child's safety or welfare. They also help an organisation to comply with and implement legislation and guidance

Criteria

- 2.1 There are clear and unambiguous procedures in place in respect of child protection, which provide step by step guidance on what action to take if there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare
- 2.2 The child protection procedures are available to all (including children and their parents/carers) and actively promoted. Consideration should be given to language, different ways of communicating and accessibility
- 2.3 The child protection procedures are consistent with international standards and good practice in the protection of children. They should also take account of issues that arise as a result of different country contexts
- 2.4 There is a designated person/s⁴ with clearly defined role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, which are appropriate to the level at which he/she operates
- 2.5 There is a process for recording incidents, concerns and referrals and storing these securely
- 2.6 There is a process for dealing with complaints by parents/carers and by young people about unacceptable and/or abusive behaviour towards children, with clear time-scales for resolving the complaint
- 2.7 There is guidance on confidentiality and information sharing which clarifies that the protection of the child is the most important consideration

Essential Inclusions

Responding to a child who says either they or another child is/are being abused

Responding to allegations against a member of staff/volunteer or another young person

Responding to concerns about a child's welfare where there is no specific disclosure/allegation

Contact details for local child protection services

To whom procedures apply

Definitions of abuse

Particular vulnerability of some groups of children, including disabled children

Ways of providing evidence

Copy of procedures

Flow chart/process map

Name and responsibilities of designated person/s at different levels

Example of recording forms

⁴ INGOs should have a designated person/s who is/are responsible for the implementation of the child protection policy. This role should reflect the nature and structure of the organisation and should have sufficient seniority and support to carry out the role. At each appropriate level or setting there should be a named person/s to whom people can talk about child protection matters.

Standard 3

Prevention

What

Measures exist to help minimise the possibility of children being abused by those in positions of trust

Why

Some people who work in, or who seek to work in, relief and development agencies in a paid or voluntary capacity pose a risk to children. It is possible to minimise the risks and to prevent abuse by putting safeguards in place

Criteria

- 3.1 There are policies and procedures for recruiting representatives who have contact with children and for assessing their suitability to work with children
- 3.2 All those who have opportunity for significant contact with children or who are in positions of trust complete a self-declaration about previous convictions and are subject to safeguarding checks
- 3.3 There are well-publicised ways (internal & external) in which representatives can raise concerns, confidentially if necessary, about unacceptable behaviour on the part of other representatives
- 3.4 A safeguarding plan and guidance on risk assessment and management for activities in working with children is in place – including any time spent away from home
- 3.5 Where there is direct responsibility for running/providing activities, including institutional care, safeguarding measures are established to ensure children are adequately supervised and protected at all times
- 3.6 Where organisations are involved in placing children in the care of host families, there should be checks made that families are suitable and some basic standards of child protection are applied to ensure safe placements
- 3.7 Policy is in place for appropriate use of information technology (such as email, websites, internet) to make sure that children are not made vulnerable to abuse and exploitation

Essential Inclusions

At least 2 appropriate references are taken up for all representatives who have significant contact with children and evidence of identity and any relevant qualifications are seen

Application of recruitment policy to all those in contact with children

Prevention strategies reflect the fact that abuse may not necessarily be pre-meditated. Neglect or physical abuse of children may result from stress/inability of staff to cope in difficult circumstances, and sexual abuse may occur opportunistically

Basic guidelines on setting up websites, videos and photography of children

Ways of providing evidence

Copy of recruitment policy and procedure

Examples of application, reference and declaration form

Copy of Whistle blowing scheme and publicity about scheme

Use of risk assessment protocols in planning activities with children and development of safeguarding guidance/measures that address issues such as gender balance of supervising staff, privacy and physical contact, relationships/ conduct between children

Example of child welfare plan for transporting children or taking them on trips

Registration with or identification of agencies that are in a position to provide details of an applicant's past conduct, such as criminal records information

Standard 4

Codes of practice and behaviour

What

Codes of practice describe acceptable standards of behaviour and promote good practice

Why

Children should experience a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere. Standards of behaviour for all set a clear benchmark of acceptable conduct. They can help minimise opportunities for abuse and help to prevent unfounded allegations

Criteria

- 4.1. There is a code of conduct
- 4.2. The organisation provides guidance on appropriate/expected standards of behaviour of adults towards children, including those adults who are responsible for children in residential care and caring for disabled children
- 4.3. There is guidance on expected and acceptable behaviour of children towards other children
- 4.4. There are processes for dealing with behaviour that is unacceptable
- 4.5. All disciplinary measures/sanctions are non-violent and do not humiliate children
- 4.6. Managers and senior staff promote a culture that ensures children are listened to and respected as individuals
- 4.7. The consequences of breaching the code are clear and linked to organisational disciplinary procedures

Essential Inclusions

Codes for adults and for children

Discrimination; prejudice; oppressive behaviour or language in relation to any of the following are not acceptable – race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality or political persuasion

Where relevant, there are guidelines on intimate care of disabled children or young people, including appropriate and inappropriate touch

Guidelines for residential care workers and carers of disabled children

Ways of providing evidence

Copy of Codes of conduct for adult-child behaviour and for child-child behaviour

Guidance on physical contact

Standard 5

Implementation in different country and local contexts

What

Clear guidance on how and to what extent the organisation's policy can be adapted in different country and local contexts

Why

INGOs work in a variety of settings with great variations in understandings and arrangements for child protection. There are sometimes different cultural understandings of what constitutes child abuse. The organisation needs to give clear guidance to staff, partners and other organisations (including funding organisations) on how the child protection policy will be adapted and applied practically in these different circumstances. The policy must be applied in ways that are culturally sensitive but without condoning acts of maltreatment that are universally described as abusive

Criteria

- 5.1. Clear distinction is made between children in need of protection due to poverty, conflict or crisis and specific acts of maltreatment towards a child or children
- 5.2. The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is clearly identified as the basis for child protection
- 5.3. There is a process for resolving differences between culturally acceptable behaviour and the child protection policy
- 5.4. There is a reporting process that is practical in the different settings of our work
- 5.5. There is a clear mechanism for evaluating the existence and effectiveness of local child welfare/judicial infrastructure and clear process for deciding whether or not to work with it

Essential Inclusions

Advice on how to establish local understanding and definitions of abuse and child protection

A child is someone under the age of 18

Ways of providing evidence

Copy of procedures

Standard 6

Equity

What

Measures to ensure the needs of all children to be protected from abuse are addressed

Why

Abuse happens to male and female children of all ages, ethnicity and social backgrounds, abilities, sexual orientation, religious belief and political persuasion. Some children, such as disabled children, are particularly vulnerable. Prejudice and discrimination can prevent some children getting the help they need.

Organisations should take steps to combat discrimination and actively include all children in their safeguarding measures

Criteria

- 6.1 The child protection policy makes it clear that all children have equal rights to protection
- 6.2 The child protection procedures, guidance and training help representatives to recognise the particular risks faced by some children and the extra barriers they face to obtaining help, because of their race, gender, age, religion or disability, sexual orientation, social background and culture
- 6.3 Codes of conduct/behaviour include statements about the responsibility of adults and children to treat one another with dignity, respect, sensitivity and fairness
- 6.4 Codes of conduct/behaviour make it clear that discriminatory, offensive and violent behaviour are unacceptable and that complaints will be acted upon
- 6.5 Processes for dealing with complaints are fair and open to challenge through an appeals process

Ways of providing evidence

An equity policy/statement

Copies of excerpts from relevant policies, procedures and codes of behaviour

Examples of how training programmes address issues of equality and child protection

Copy of complaints and appeals procedures

Standard 7

Communication systems

What

Ways of informing, consulting and listening to all relevant parties about how children involved in the organisation's work are to be safeguarded

Why

Policies and procedures are only effective if people are aware of them, have some ownership of them and have the opportunity to express their views on how they are working

Criteria

- 7.1 Information about the organisation's commitment to safeguard children is openly displayed and available to all
- 7.2 Children are made aware of their right to be safe from abuse
- 7.3 Information for young people and for parents is made available about where to go for help in relation to child abuse
- 7.4 Information provided is in a format and language that can be easily understood by all service users including children
- 7.5 Everyone in the organisation knows who is the designated person for child protection and how to contact them
- 7.6 Contact details are readily available for local child protection services, such as social services department, police and emergency medical help and the NSPCC Child Protection Help line (for UK) and local help lines
- 7.7 Steps are taken to seek the views of beneficiaries on policies and procedures and how they are working

Ways of providing evidence

Examples of resources and materials

Mechanisms exist for children's views to be heard

Standard 8

Education and training

What

Opportunities to develop and maintain the necessary skills and understanding to safeguard children

Why

Everyone in contact with children has a role to play in their protection. They can only do so confidently and effectively if they are aware and have the necessary understanding and skills. Organisations working with children have a responsibility to provide training and development opportunities for representatives and to ensure that awareness raising programmes also target children themselves

Criteria

- 8.1 There is an induction process for all representatives which includes familiarisation with the child protection policy and procedures
- 8.2 All representatives are provided with opportunities to learn about how to recognise and respond to concerns about child abuse
- 8.3 Awareness raising initiatives are also aimed at children
- 8.4 Representatives with special responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children have relevant training and regular opportunities to update their knowledge and understanding
- 8.5 Training is provided to those responsible for dealing with complaints and disciplinary procedures in relation to child abuse and inappropriate behaviour towards children
- 8.6 Training and written guidance on safer recruitment practice is provided for those responsible for recruiting and selecting representatives
- 8.7 Formal mechanisms exist to identify and apply experience of operating child protection procedures in order to put 'learning back into practice'

Ways of providing evidence

Copy of training plans and/or programmes

Records of course attendance

Induction documentation/guidance

Course evaluations

Standard 9

Access to advice and support

What

Arrangements are made to provide essential information and support to those responsible for safeguarding children. Children who are being abused are assisted to get help

Why

Child abuse is distressing and can be difficult to deal with. Organisations have a duty to ensure advice and support is in place to help people to play their part in protecting children. Children need someone to turn to when they are being abused. Often they do not know where to turn for help

Criteria

- 9.1 Children are provided with information on where to go to for help and advice in relation to abuse, harassment and bullying
- 9.2 Designated child protection staff have access to specialist advice, support and information
- 9.3 Where appropriate contacts are established at a national and/or local level with the relevant child protection/welfare agencies
- 9.4 Arrangements are in place to provide support to individuals both during and following an incident or allegation of abuse or a complaint
- 9.5 There are arrangements for providing supervision and support to representatives during and following an incident or allegation

Ways of providing evidence

Copies of information for children about sources of support

Information about training, advice and support

Lists of contacts for specialist advice and information

Standard 10

Implementation and monitoring

What

Action taken to ensure that the intentions of the organisation in relation to safeguarding children are taking place and to monitor and evaluate action and effectiveness

Why

Policies, procedures and plans have to be implemented across and in all parts of the organisation. Checks are needed to ensure this is happening consistently. The views of those involved inside and outside the organisation can help to improve the effectiveness of any actions taken

Criteria

- 10.1** There is a written plan showing what steps will be taken to safeguard children, who is responsible for what actions and when these will be completed
- 10.2** The resources essential for implementing the plan are made available
- 10.3** Policies and practices are reviewed at stated intervals, ideally at least every 3 years, and revised in the light of differing needs; changes in legislation and guidance; experience and/or structured changes within an organisation
- 10.4** Processes/mechanisms are in place to consult children and parents as part of the review of safeguarding policies and practices
- 10.5** All incidents, allegations of abuse and complaints are recorded and monitored
- 10.6** Arrangements are in place to monitor compliance with child protection policies and procedures and with recruitment and selection policies and procedures

Ways of providing evidence

Copy of safeguarding/child protection plan

Date planned for review and who is responsible

Regular management meetings such as supervision and appraisal sessions and team meetings provide opportunity for ongoing monitoring of policy implementation

Mechanisms exist to gather the views of children on operation of child protection policies and procedures

Anonymous summary of number of incidents of abuse and number of complaints

Standard 11

Working with partners

What

Where agencies work with or through partners that are in contact with children, those partners must have or develop child protection policies and procedures, which are consistent with these standards

Why

INGOs have a responsibility when working in partnership to safeguard children who are the beneficiaries of the agency's work or financial support. Most partners working with children will already be concerned for child protection and many will have robust policies and procedures in place. A discussion based on these standards should allow for mutual learning and reflection

Criteria

- 11.1** There is a process of engagement with partners on child protection issues to ensure mutual learning and development of good practice
- 11.2** This standards document provides minimum standards for an agency's work with and through partners
- 11.3** Child protection policy and procedures form an essential part of partnership agreements
- 11.4** Agencies should consider capacity building work or grants for the purpose of developing child protection policies and procedures in partner agencies

Ways of providing evidence

Partnership agreements should reflect a commitment to child protection

Partner's own child protection policy

Ongoing training, discussions and monitoring

Setting the **standard**

Self-audit tool

The following is a simple self-audit tool to assist you in forming a picture of what level or standard your organisation (head office, international office) is currently operating at in relation to safeguarding children and in identifying gaps. The Checkpoints idea is based on the work of George Varnava with the Forum on Children and Violence. The NSPCC has, with permission, developed the material for use as an audit tool for child protection and the version presented here has been adapted for INGOs.

Using Checkpoints

The Checkpoints below extract key criteria that can be seen to represent a set of baseline minimum standards that all international agencies committed to protecting children should strive to meet. However, depending upon the nature of your organisation's work with children and the context, environment and conditions in which you work, some of the checkpoints may seem more relevant than others. This self-audit tool is intended to be a useful guide and you may wish to delete or add criteria to ensure relevance to your particular activity (the 'self-audit web' allows for additional criteria).

Before you start take a copy of the templates, date the copy and then follow the steps outlined below. You can then keep a record in order to review your progress at a later date. The Checkpoints each comprise a number of criteria relating to different aspects of an organisation's provision of services or activities and arrangements for ensuring children are safeguarded within these. They relate to:

1. **Philosophy and principles**
2. **Policies and procedures**
3. **Good practice and prevention**
4. **Implementation and training**
5. **Information and communication**
6. **Monitoring and review**

For each statement in Checkpoints 1-6, tick one of the boxes A (in place), or B (partially done) or C (not in place). Transfer the results to the 'self-audit web' (see below) to create a visual record of compliance with these standards that can then be used to help you draw up an action plan and subsequently review progress.

Once you have completed the web you can begin to address those areas that are not in place. Refer back to the Standards to check out where the gaps are and ascertain in more detail what is needed.

Setting the **standard**

Self-audit tool

1. Philosophy and principles	A	B	C
1. Organisational mission and/or other statements of purpose and direction reflect concern for the protection of children			
2. A culture of safety exists that ensures the welfare of children is paramount and policies and procedures demonstrate a commitment to protecting children from abuse			
3. The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is clearly identified as the basis for child protection			
4. Managers and senior staff promote a culture that ensures children are listened to and respected as individuals			
5. The child protection policy makes it clear that all children have equal rights to protection			
6. All disciplinary measures/sanctions are non violent and do not humiliate children			

2. Policies and procedures	A	B	C
1. The organisation has a child protection policy			
2. The policy is approved and endorsed by the relevant management body (e.g. Senior Management Board, Executive Committee).			
3. The policy is mandatory for all representatives			
4. There are clear and unambiguous procedures in place in respect of child protection, which provide step by step guidance on what action to take if there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare			
5. There is a designated person/s with clearly defined role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, which are appropriate to the level at which he/she operates			
6. The child protection procedures are consistent with international standards and good practice in the protection of children. They should also take account of issues that arise as a result of different country contexts			

3. Good practice and prevention	A	B	C
1. There is a code of conduct			
2. The organisation provides guidance on appropriate/expected standards of behaviour of adults towards children			
3. The consequences of breaching the code are clear and linked to organisational disciplinary procedures			
4. There are policies and procedures for recruiting representatives who have contact with children and for assessing their suitability to work with children			
5. Where there is direct responsibility for running/providing activities, including residential care, safeguarding measures are established to ensure children are adequately supervised and protected at all times			
6. There are well-publicised ways in which representatives can raise concerns, confidentially if necessary, about unacceptable behaviour by representatives			

Setting the **standard**

Self-audit tool

4. Implementation and training	A	B	C
1. There is clear guidance to staff, partners and other organisations (including funding organisations) on how the child protection policy will be adapted and applied practically in different circumstances			
2. The policy must be applied in ways that are culturally sensitive but without condoning acts of maltreatment that are universally described as abusive			
3. There is a written plan showing what steps will be taken to safeguard children, who is responsible for what actions and when these will be completed			
4. There is an induction process for all representatives which includes familiarisation with the child protection policy and procedures			
5. All representatives are provided with opportunities to learn about how to recognise and respond to concerns about child abuse			
6. This document provides minimum standards for an agency's work with and through partners			

5. Information and communication	A	B	C
1. Children are made aware of their right to be safe from abuse			
2. Everyone in the organisation knows who is the designated person for child protection and how to contact them			
3. Contact details are readily available for local child protection services, such as social services department, police and emergency medical help			
4. Children are provided with information on where to go to for help and advice in relation to abuse, harassment and bullying			
5. Contacts are established at a national and/or local level with the relevant child protection/welfare agencies as appropriate			
6. Designated child protection staff have access to specialist advice, support and information			

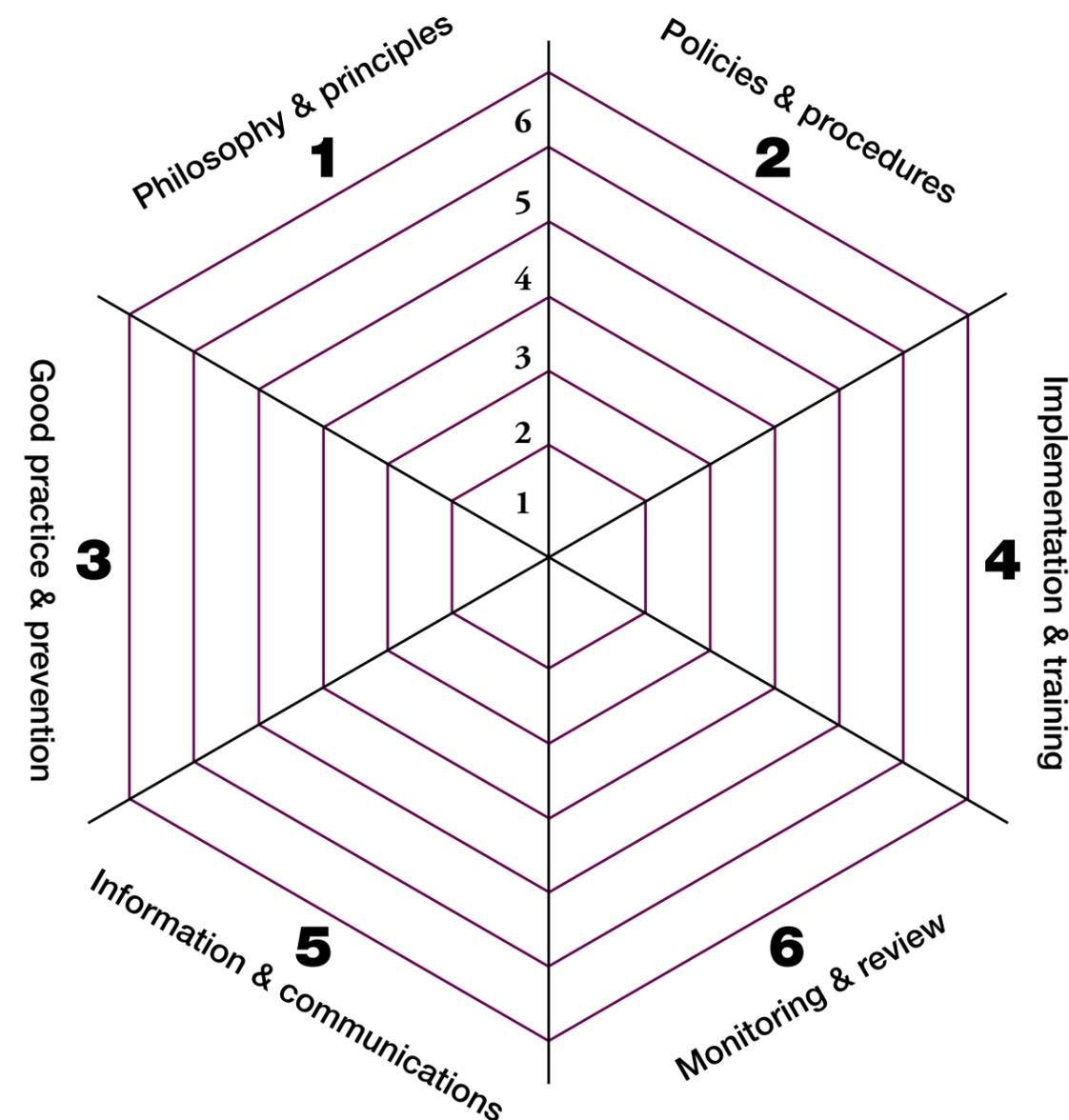
6. Monitoring and review	A	B	C
1. Arrangements are in place to monitor compliance with child protection policies and procedures and with recruitment and selection policies and procedures			
2. Steps are taken to seek the views of beneficiaries on policies and procedures and how they are working			
3. Formal mechanisms exist to identify and apply experience of operating child protection procedures			
4. All incidents, allegations of abuse and complaints are recorded and monitored			
5. Policies and practices are reviewed at stated intervals, ideally at least every 3 years			
6. Processes/mechanisms are in place to consult children and parents as part of the review of safeguarding policies and practice			

The self-audit **web**

Once the key criteria above have been read and ticked as either: **in place**, **partially done** or **not in place**, transfer the results to the web using the shading key below. The web illustrates visually the stage reached by the organisation in safeguarding children and highlights where further action needs to be taken.

Please note that there is no intended hierarchical progression from 1 – 6, the aim of this exercise is to reveal any gaps.

Shading Key



Acknowledgements

The standards set out in this document have been developed by a steering group comprising the following members:



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