

Cord Global Safeguarding Policy

Cord is an international charity working to make peace a reality where people don't have the freedom to exercise their rights. We are Inspired by our Christian faith, we envision a world where all people can prosper, living life to the full, in peace. We work to build the relationship between those in power and local communities. We predominantly work in partnership with local organisations seeking to build their capacity and support their long-term sustainability.

Our culture at Cord is driven by our values

- We are compassionate
- We value everyone
- We are interdependent
- We explore the root causes of conflict and violence

Cord's Global safeguarding policy¹ underpins all that we do and is a practical way that we live out our organisational values. In particular, in order to value everyone, we must ensure that we have a culture where we practically implement our safeguarding approach with integrity.

1. Cord's Commitment to Safeguarding

The Trustees and Senior Leaders of Cord are committed to providing a safe and caring environment for all those who are associated with our organisation. This includes children, young people, adults who may be vulnerable, leaders, staff, volunteers, partners and associates and trustees.

The Leadership undertakes to:

- Endorse and follow the principles of protection and non-discrimination enshrined in the international conventions².
- Ensure necessary risk assessment of our activities and new initiatives to ensure that they do not have a negative impact on the safety and well-being of children or adults at risk in our community.
- Appoint a 'Global Safeguarding Lead' to identify and support the protection of children and adults.
- Train our staff and all those who work for us on how to uphold those principles and what to do if they have concerns about the safety or welfare of a child or adult.
- Ensure that we offer a welcoming and inclusive environment to all members of the communities we work with and support.

¹Our safeguarding policy must be read in conjunction with **Cord's Global Code of Conduct** and our **Staff Handbook**.

²UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant of Human Rights and Convention on the Rights of the Child

The Role of the Global Safeguarding Lead

As an organisation operating in multiple countries, Cord has appointed a Global Safeguarding Lead who will work closely with trustees, leaders and partners to develop healthy cultures in which safeguarding underpins all that we do. They will ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures are reviewed annually and up to date and support the development of a shared understanding of safe practice and develop policies and procedures that take account of local contexts and jurisdictions as well as meet the standards required in the UK. They will also support safer recruitment and build understanding of what constitutes abuse and what the signs and indicators of abuse are in children and adults. Lastly, they will ensure that everyone is aware of how to raise safeguarding concerns; and ensure that all safeguarding concerns are responded to appropriately.

The Global Safeguarding Lead must be consulted if a Safeguarding incident arises within the organisation. The contact details for the Global Safeguarding Lead can be found on the footer of this document.

2. Understanding abuse and neglect

Defining child abuse or abuse against an adult is a difficult and complex issue. In order to safeguard vulnerable children, youth and adults in our organisations we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point as a definition of abuse. Ref. Article 19 and the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5.

3. Prevention

Safer recruitment

The Leadership will ensure all workers are appropriately recruited as well as trained, supported and supervised to ensure that they uphold the principles of protection and non-discrimination described above. This includes ensuring clear application processes and written job descriptions/person specifications and ensuring that candidates have expressed their commitment to these principles prior to appointment. Furthermore, shortlisting of candidates will be done against clear criteria and safeguarding will be discussed at interview. References will always be obtained and followed up where appropriate and criminal record checks will be completed as per the appropriate HR procedure. Successful applicants are required to sign a Code of Conduct which outlines the standards of behaviour expected of themselves and others. A suitable training programme will be provided for the successful applicant which will include safeguarding awareness training; The applicant will be given a copy of Cord's safeguarding policy and will know how to report concerns.

Safeguarding culture and training

Cord is committed to on-going training and professional development in relation to child and adult safeguarding. We aim to have policy and practice that is robust and accessible within the country(ies) where we work, and that also meets UK standards for organisations working overseas. All our workers will receive periodic training inputs about how to recognise signs of abuse and how to handle concerns in relation to protection and safeguarding.

The leadership will also ensure that children and adults at risk are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

Code of Conduct and Practice Guidelines

All workers will be issued with a Code of Conduct that outlines acceptable behaviour towards children, young people and adults at risk and will be given clear expectations about what is expected of them both within their job role and outside the work environment. They will also receive regular support and further training as necessary. All of Cord's workers and volunteers will sign up to a **Code of Conduct** which outlines the commitment expected of people. Cord's Global strategy reflects the expected demonstration of Cord values and how they are connected with our work globally. Cord's policies and procedures explain ways of working and expected behavioural standards for Cord staff, partners and volunteers, which apply across all areas of our work. Relevant documents may be found in the appendices at the end of the policy.

Risk Assessment

It is Cord's policy that a risk assessment should be carried out for any new project in order to assess the risks of trips to the field and the activities proposed by partners.

Safeguarding on international trips and field visits

Participants in all trips are subject to satisfactory completion of all vetting processes that will be undertaken. Such requirements include:

- A background check is undertaken and evidenced.
- Signed Code of Conduct.
- Two references.
- Briefing/ training on safeguarding expectations and processes that includes cultural awareness/competency.
- Briefing will include policy on the use of photographic material and social media.

4. Recognising, Responding and Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Responding to allegations of abuse

All staff and volunteers who work for Cord should be alert to signs that may suggest a child, young person or adult has been harmed or is at risk of harm and needs help. This will be communicated through this policy, the induction process, team briefings and training sessions.

Receiving a disclosure or concern

Dos	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen carefully • Try to be reassuring and remain calm. • Explain clearly what you will do and what will happen next. • Take action - don't ignore the situation. • Be supportive. • Explain that you would like to pass this information on to the appropriate people, who will seek to get them the help they need • Be open and honest. • Give contact details for report/questions /queries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promise confidentiality • Show shock, alarm, disbelief or disapproval. • Minimise what is being said. • Ask probing or leading questions or push for more information. • Contact the alleged abuser. • Investigate the incident any further. • Leave a child or adult at risk waiting to hear from someone without any idea of when or where that may be. • Pass on information to those who don't need to know.

Recording and reporting a disclosure or concern

Make notes as soon as possible (preferably within one hour of the person talking). Wherever possible use the reporting form³ should be used to record the information following the guidance in the reporting form. You should sign the record and pass on to the **Global Safeguarding Lead (GSL)** and the country leader should be copied into any correspondence (unless the concern involves the country leader). The **GSL** will decide the appropriate course of action and whether the matter needs to be referred to the statutory agencies such as Adult or Children's Social Services or the police in country and if it is safe to do so.

In dealing with disclosure of abuse, leaders will ensure that they maintain confidentiality of reports made and that there are clear internal procedures around the reporting, recording and storage of reports.

It is important that everybody reports low level concerns as well as clear allegations made by, or about, children, young people and adults at risk.

³A standard reporting form is available at the back of this policy as well as on Cord's internal IT network

Allegations against staff or volunteers.

Where allegations of abuse are made against members of staff or volunteers working for the organisation the leadership will undertake an internal investigation. The advice of the Global Safeguarding Lead must be sought prior to the commencement of any investigation.

Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is intended to encourage and enable anyone to raise serious concerns without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. Anyone can raise concerns about malpractice, wrongdoing and conduct of a person in the organisation via the Global Safeguarding Lead. **Please refer to the full Cord Whistleblowing Policy for more details.**

5. Working with International Partners

Cord sets out clear guidelines regarding our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership, whether in the UK or in other global locations. The CEO and Global Safeguarding Lead will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations and have a mutual commitment on safeguarding as part of the partnership agreement. This could include some of the following considerations:

1. Policy and procedures
2. Safe recruitment of staff/volunteers within the partnering organisation
3. Training and support at appropriate levels determined by roles and responsibilities within the organisation
4. Appropriate safe working arrangements (including risk assessments for activities, appropriate online and offline contact/interaction etc)
5. Reporting protocols on safeguarding concerns/incidents both at a local level where appropriate and also with commissioning organisations (and to regulatory bodies in relevant countries where appropriate)

Cord believes good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and adults and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.