



ACTED

Child Protection Policy

Version 1 – August 2016



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1. Purpose

As an NGO operating in 35 countries, ACTED recognises that children in the communities it works with or comes into contact with are a particularly vulnerable group as children are at greater risk of violence, neglect, abuse and exploitation – particularly in disaster and emergency contexts in which their protective environment has been severely impacted.

ACTED is aware that the goods and services provided through its programmes, especially in emergency and disaster contexts, can create a power imbalance between those who are employed or engaged by ACTED and other programme participants. ACTED acknowledges that there is potential for this power imbalance to be exploited.

This Child Protection Policy is ACTED's statement of intent that demonstrates our commitment to safeguarding children from harm within internal procedure, throughout all external coordination and particularly in the implementation of Child Protection programming and child protection mainstreaming within all sectors of intervention. Further, it makes clear to all individuals employed by, contracted to, coordinating with or involved in any way with the organisation and those who come into contact with ACTED what is required in relation to the protection of children, and that the contravention of the rights of the child in any form is unacceptable to ACTED.

This Policy has been developed to ensure the mainstreaming of protection and child protection at an institutional level in order to promote the maximum protection of children from violence, neglect, abuse and exploitation. The Policy ensures that ACTED has procedures in place to prevent and respond to any form of violence, neglect, abuse and exploitation, and non-compliance with the Policy and complementary global procedure and Policy.

ACTED's approach is founded in and aligned with International Humanitarian Law and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)¹ ensuring a consistent approach to promote child protection at a global, national and local level. With this, ACTED recognizes that within states willing and able to ratify and uphold the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) the rule of law and national legislation may differ in description and implementation, leading to inconsistent approaches and varying levels of regulation and safeguards in place. Therefore, while ACTED operates within the rule of law and legislative frameworks operative within areas of intervention, ACTED developed this Policy to ensure that we are consistent in our approach, work to mainstream protection and child protection, and firmly advocate child protection and safeguarding at the individual, community and state level.

ACTED is signatory to the Code of Conduct for The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement² and NGOs in Disaster Relief and a member of Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) Alliance³ in which child protection plays an integral part. Further, ACTED's Child Protection Policy and operations are firmly informed and aligned to the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action⁴, a companion standard to the Sphere Project's Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response⁵.

¹ General Assembly (20 November, 1989) *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, 1989. Retrieved from: <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>

² International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (31 December 1994) *Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief*. Retrieved from: <https://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/publication/p1067.htm>

³ Resource: <http://www.chsalliance.org/what-we-do/chs>

⁴ Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) (2012). Retrieved from: <http://cpwg.net/?get=006914%7C2014/03/CP-Minimum-Standards-English-2013.pdf>

⁵ Resource: <http://www.sphereproject.org/>

2. Policy Statement

ACTED defines a child as anyone who is under 18 (UNCRC, 1989) irrespective of the legal age of majority in the country where a child is (*refer also to Annex 1. Definitions*).

ACTED is committed to the well-being of children and that child-focused activities are based on the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 and the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights 1948⁶. These are:

- Best interest of the child;
- Non-discrimination;
- Freedom of expression;
- Respect for child opinion in matters affecting her/him;
- Participation of the child.

ACTED is committed to actively safeguarding children through prevention of and response to any form of harm. ACTED has a zero tolerance policy towards any form of child abuse, neglect, violence or exploitation. In accordance with this Policy ACTED undertakes to use reasonable efforts to ensure that children are protected from any form of harm within and through the implementation of ACTED's programming.

Child abuse and violence against children refers to all forms of physical and/or psychological ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, including use of children for military purposes, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power.

We will take positive action to prevent the recruitment of or involvement of perpetrators of any form of violence against children from becoming involved with ACTED, including anyone associated with ACTED which may include but is not limited to board members, staff, volunteers/interns, partners, consultants and contractors. All those involved directly or indirectly in the implementation of ACTED programming are bound by ACTED's Values and Guiding Principles, ACTED Code of Conduct, Child Protection Policy, Human Resources Policy, Anti-Fraud and Whistleblowing Policy and the terms of the ACTED employment contract

If it comes to light that anyone associated with ACTED commits any act of violence in relation to children - whether within or outside the context of ACTED's work - which are criminal, grossly infringe children's rights, or contravene the principles and standards contained in this document, ACTED will take immediate disciplinary action and any other action which may be appropriate to the circumstances.

⁶ General Assembly (10 December 1948), *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)*. Retrieved from: <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

3. Scope

This Policy applies to all ACTED board members, staff, volunteers / interns, partners, consultants and contractors and those associated with or involved in ACTED programming.

4. Sources of Authority

International and national regulations: ACTED's Child Protection Policy is based on the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. It provides a comprehensive framework for the protection, provision for and participation of all children without discrimination to ensure their survival and development to the maximum extent possible. ACTED also recognizes the IASC Six Core Principles Relating to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.⁷

ACTED's Headquarters (HQ) is based in France and observes the laws of France. ACTED is also present in more than 35 countries. ACTED Country Offices observe the laws of their own country. Furthermore, ACTED recognizes the regulations by which donor countries abide (*refer to Annex 2 Relevant Child Protection Legislation*). At the same time, ACTED has rules and standards that seek to create a consistent approach and which, in some cases, may be stricter than national or local laws. This Policy must, therefore, be followed in addition to the relevant national and local laws on Child Protection.

ACTED own policies include: ACTED's Values and Guiding Principles, Code of Conduct, Code of Ethics & Professional Conduct, Beneficiary Complaints and Response Mechanism, global Human Resources Policy and Anti-Fraud and Whistleblowing Policy. Media and communications are governed by ACTED Photo Policy Guidelines 2016 (*refer to Annex 3 ACTED Photo Policy Guidelines 2016 and Photo Release Form*).

5. Procedures

5.1. Approach

ACTED's approach to child protection is based on raising awareness of child rights, prevention and response.

Awareness

1. Training: ACTED trains all staff and partners on the ACTED Code of Conduct, the Child Protection Policy and reporting violations as part of their induction. Refresher training are provided as and when relevant to ensure staff are up to date on new developments in child protection best practice.
2. Staff and volunteers involved directly in in child-focused activities will receive additional specialised and technical training and skills development opportunities, including but not limited to Child Protection Policy, prevention of and response to violence against children, and child protection mainstreaming.

Prevention

1. Recruitment and selection of staff: ACTED prevents employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals through rigorous screening processes, incl. face to face interviews, employment and other reference checks, including – where applicable – obtaining additional third party reference checks (e.g. police/criminal record from country of nationality) for staff who are in direct contact with children (*refer to Annex 1. Definitions*). Persons who are listed on a national Child Protection Register or Persons who have been charged with or convicted of serious criminal activity are unsuitable to be in direct contact with children in an ACTED programme. Serious criminal activity includes, but is not limited to: murder; a sex offence; an offence committed by an adult involving intentionally wounding or causing grievous

⁷ Interagency Standing Committee (11 December 2015). Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse: Statement by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee.

bodily harm; indecency offences; kidnapping; offences connected with child prostitution or child pornography.

2. Selection of partners and contractors: ACTED prevents contracting with unsuitable partners or suppliers unable to enforce strict codes of conduct and professionalism by applying a “know your supplier” principle for procurement of all national, international and restricted tenders. All suppliers are obliged to sign an ethical declaration outlining clear responsibilities towards child protection before any contracts are signed.
3. Strict enforcement of behavioural codes: All staff and staff of partner organizations, as part of their contract, abide by *ACTED Values and Guiding Principles* and *ACTED Code of Conduct*. This code explicitly prohibits harassment, abuse, sexual abuse and exploitation of children.

More guidance about ways to minimize the risk to children and the standards of behavior and practice required of them at all times when they are in contact with children is outlined below. The onus is on each person associated with ACTED avoid actions or behaviours that could be construed as putting a child at risk.

Extract of the ACTED Code of Conduct’s relevance to Child Protection:

I will respect others includes:

- treating children with respect regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.

I will maintain high standards of personal and professional conduct includes:

- not using language or behaviour towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate. Sexual abuse and exploitation by ACTED workers constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment;
- not indulging in sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Not knowing the age of the child is not a defence;
- wherever possible, ensuring that another adult is present when working in the proximity of children. If this is not possible, the staff member must obtain their supervisor’s permission;
- not inviting unaccompanied children into the home, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger;
- not sleeping close to unsupervised children unless absolutely necessary, in which case the staff member must obtain their supervisor’s permission, and ensure that another adult is present if possible;
- not using physical punishment on children;
- complying with all relevant national and local legislation, including labour laws in relation to child labour.

I will work actively to protect ACTED’s beneficiaries includes:

- care for and protect the rights of children and act in a manner that ensures that their interests are of paramount consideration;
- not hiring 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;

- using any computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras or social media appropriately, and never exploiting or harassing children or accessing child exploitation material through any medium;
- immediately reporting concerns or allegations of child exploitation and abuse and policy non-compliance, whether concerning staff working for ACTED or another agency;
- immediately disclosing all charges, convictions and other outcomes of an offence, which occurred before or occurs during a staff member's association with ACTED that relate to child exploitation and abuse.

I will protect ACTED's resources, assets and confidentiality, covering all forms of communications and media related to children, includes:

- not taking pictures of children. Only persons authorised by the Country Director or ACTED HQ Communications Department may take pictures of children connected to ACTED projects. Authorised persons will be required to:
 - comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images before photographing or filming a child;
 - obtain written consent from the child and parent or guardian of the child before photographing or filming a child. As part of this, they must explain how the photograph or film will be used (see *Annex 3 ACTED Photo Policy Guidelines 2016 and Photo Release Form*);
 - ensure photographs, films, videos and DVDs present children 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 provocative or sexually suggestive;
 - ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts;
- obtaining explicit consent from the child and written consent from the parent or guardian of the child before using any image for off-line and online publication, publicity, fundraising, awareness raising or other purpose. Explicit (non-written) consent from the parent or guardian of the child is sufficient for pictures taken in private houses. The purpose will be made clear to the consent giver (see *Annex 3 ACTED Photo Policy Guidelines 2016 and Photo Release Form*);
- pictures displaying children shown from behind or at a distance (not identifiable) require obtaining explicit consent from the child, but do not require written consent from parent or guardian of the child;
- ensuring file labels, meta data or text descriptions do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically or publishing images in any form;
- not publishing pictures of identifiable children on private social networks or any other online media without formal approval by ACTED HQ Communications Department.

Responding and Reporting

1. ACTED will ensure appropriate investigation is carried out in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern.
2. The procedures are contained in *ACTED Global HR Policy, Code of Conduct, Beneficiary Complaints and Response Mechanism, Anti-Fraud and Whistleblowing Policy*.
3. ACTED may suspend staff or relations with other stakeholder during the investigation. This will not be subject to challenge.
4. Depending on the outcome of the independent investigation, if it comes to light that anyone associated with ACTED commits acts of any form of violence in relation to or towards children, whether within or outside the context of ACTED's work, which are criminal, grossly infringe children's rights, or contravene

the principles and standards contained in this document, ACTED will take immediate disciplinary action and any other action which may be appropriate to the circumstances. This may mean, for example, for:

- Employees - disciplinary action/dismissal;
- Volunteers, trustees, officers and interns - ending the relationship with the organisation;
- Partners - withdrawal of funding/support;
- Contractors and consultants - termination of contract.

5. Depending on the nature, circumstances and location of the case, ACTED will also consider involving authorities such as the police to ensure the protection of children and criminal prosecution where this is appropriate and necessary.

5.2. Enforcement

The Directoire and General Direction are responsible for

- Enforcing the Policy and reviewing it once every three years.

Country Coordination teams are responsible for

- Actively oversee the implementation of this Policy and disseminate related information, tools, training materials, etc.;
- Ensuring that ACTED and all staff members, volunteers and contractors comply with all relevant legislation, ACTED Code of Conduct and ACTED policies;
- Ensuring that all partner organizations and their board members, staff members, volunteers and contractors implementing aid and development projects funded by or through ACTED comply with all relevant legislation and policies;
- Leading investigation of complaints linked to breaches of this Policy and referring serious cases to responsible HQ Director(s);
- Managing media relations and communications in the field with approval of the Director of Communications.

Managers are responsible for

- Ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and ACTED policies;
- Communicating this Policy to all partner organizations and their board members, staff members, volunteers and contractors implementing projects funded by or through ACTED and ensuring that they comply with all relevant legislation and policies;
- Approving activities after all conditions have been met;
- Providing the Country Coordination team and/or HQ Director(s) with all relevant information which relates to breaches of this Policy.

All employees, volunteers, interns, partners, consultants and contractors are responsible for:

- Complying with this Policy and relevant legislation;
- Reporting suspected cases of abuse as defined by this Policy,
- Reporting any violation or suspicion of violation of this Policy.

ACTED **HR Department** is responsible for

- Recruitment of employees and volunteers, interviews, collecting and reviewing references and criminal record checks (from country of nationality) for employees and volunteers who are in direct contact with children with any additional third party reference checks in countries which require it and in sensitive and/or high risk countries;
- Oversee that each member of staff abides by ACTED Code of Conduct and related global Policy and procedure;
- Providing guidance to managers and other staff during any complaint or dismissal process.

ACTED **Programme Department** is responsible for

- Risk management through contextual analysis of vulnerable groups, including the specific impact of programme activities on these groups, and additional considerations/actions that may be needed;
- Due diligence and selection of partner organizations;
- Training and oversight of partner organizations (with support of above departments);
- Oversight of ACTED's *Beneficiary Complaints and Response Mechanism*.

ACTED **Logistics and IT Department** is responsible for

- Contractor/supplier compliance with the ethical declaration.

ACTED **Audit, Legal and Transparency Department** is responsible for

- Compliance with all ACTED procedures and management of ACTED's *Anti-Fraud, Corruption and Whistleblowing Policy*;

ACTED **Communications Department** is responsible for

- Managing media relations and communication and ACTED's *Photo Policy Guidelines* (see Annex 3).

5.3. Reporting

1. The reporting of suspected or actual abuse is a professional and legal obligation of all staff, volunteers and partners. Failure to report information can lead to disciplinary action (see *Annex 1. Definitions of Abuse* for guidance on what constitutes abuse).
2. ACTED encourages staff and stakeholders to report suspected cases which involve any ACTED staff, volunteers, consultants, board members, guests or staff of ACTED's partner organizations, their board members, staff and volunteers, or suppliers.
3. ACTED encourages staff and stakeholders to report suspected cases through the following means:
 - Staff, volunteers and interns can report contacting
 - standard lines of hierarchy (contained in staff *Terms of Reference*);
 - the HR Director;
 - the Security mobile and/or Security and Safety Director;
 - staff representatives if applicable;
 - confidential e-mail address: transparency@acted.org.
 - Beneficiaries and their representatives can report using ACTED's *Beneficiary Complaints and Response Mechanism*.

- Anyone can report using the confidential email address transparency@acted.org (ACTED's *Anti-Fraud, Corruption and Whistleblowing Policy*).
4. All reports will be treated as confidential in line with *ACTED Code of Conduct, global HR Policy and Anti-Fraud and Whistleblowing Policy, Beneficiary Complaints and Response Mechanism*.
 5. ACTED will not tolerate any form of coercion, intimidation, reprisal or retaliation against anyone who reports any form of abuse or exploitation, provides any information or other assistance in an investigation.
 6. ACTED will not tolerate false accusations which are designed to damage a member of staff's reputation. Anyone found making false accusations will be subject to investigation and disciplinary action.

This Policy was endorsed by the ACTED Directoire on 23.08.2016

Annex 1. Definitions

Child: For the purposes of this document, a “child” is defined as anyone under the age of 18, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Child Abuse and Neglect: all forms of physical and/or psychological ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power. Within this broad definition, seven subtypes are distinguished:

- **Physical abuse:** The actual or potential physical harm from an interaction or lack of interaction, which is reasonably within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power, or trust. There may be single or repeated incidents (WHO, 1999).
- **Sexual abuse:** The involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared and cannot give consent, or that violate the laws or social taboos of society. Child sexual abuse is evidenced by an activity between a child and an adult or another child who by age or development is in a relationship of responsibility, trust or power, the activity being intended to gratify or satisfy the needs of the other person. This may include but is not limited to the inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity; the exploitative use of a child in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices; the exploitative use of children in pornographic performances, internet pictures and materials (WHO, 1999). The use of information communication technology such as social media and similar forums by adults to entice children to meet or participate in virtual sexual activity is an abuse and constitutes sexual violence.
- **Neglect and negligent treatment:** The inattention or omission on the part of the caregiver to provide for the development of the child in: health, education, emotional development, nutrition, shelter and safe living conditions, in the context of resources reasonably available to the family or caretakers and which causes, or has a high probability of causing, harm to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. This includes the failure to properly supervise and safeguard children from harm as much as is feasible (WHO, 1999).
- **Emotional abuse:** The failure to provide a developmentally appropriate, supportive environment, including the availability of a primary attachment figure, so that the child can reach their full potential in the context of the society in which the child lives. There may also be acts toward the child that cause or have a high probability of causing harm to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. These acts must be reasonably within the control of the parent or person in a relationship of responsibility, trust or power. Acts include restriction of movement, degrading, humiliating, scapegoating, threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing, or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment (WHO, 1999).
- **Sexual exploitation:** The abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes; this includes profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the exploitation of another. Child prostitution and trafficking of children for sexual abuse and exploitation are examples of this.
- **Child labour:** Child labour includes full-time work done by children under 15 years of age that prevents them from going to school (getting an education), or that is dangerous to their health (International Labor Organization, Convention 138). Light child labour is permitted from 15 years old, except for activities that could in any way impede the child’s access to education or development. ACTED applies a minimum working age of 18 years.
- **Commercial or other exploitation of a child:** The use of the child in work or other activities for the benefit of others. This includes, but is not limited to, child labour. These activities are to the detriment of the child’s physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development (WHO, 1999). Children being recruited in to the army would also come under this category.

Direct Contact with Children: Being in the physical presence of a child or children in the context of the ACTED’s work, whether contact is occasional or regular, short or long term.

Annex 2. Relevant Child Protection Legislation

International

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child www.unicef.org/crc
- Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography www.unhchr.ch/html/menu2/dopchild.htm
- Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict www.unhchr.ch/html/menu2/6/protocolchild.htm
- Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/25.htm
- International Labour Organization Convention 182 Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/convdisp1.htm

Australia

- State and Territory laws for legal protection to children and families inside Australia.
- Criminal Code (Articles 272, 273 penalizes child sex offences and pornography outside of Australia and 474 for use of telecommunications in child abuse, pornography)
- Crimes Act 1914 governing conduct and protection of children in legal proceedings

Canada

- Provincial and territorial laws apply for protection to children and families in Canada
- Criminal Code penalizes sexual exploitation and trafficking of children

European Union (EU)

- Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union EU (2012) recognizes children's right to receive free compulsory education (Article 14 (2)), a prohibition of discrimination on grounds of age (Article 21), a prohibition of exploitative child labour (Article 32), a dedicated provision on children's rights (Article 24).
- 2003 Guidelines on Children and Armed Conflict
- Council of the European Union (2007), EU Guidelines for the promotion and protection of the rights of the child, Brussels, 10 December 2007 and other conventions.

Denmark

- Act No. 460 of 7 Jun. 2001- the Children Act (Børneloven)
- Act No. 441 of 31 May 2000 amending the Criminal Code and the Administration of Justice Act (combating the sexual abuse of children)
- Act No. 499 of 6 Jun. 2007 on Parental Responsibility

France

- Code Penal (Penal code) which penalizes sexual exploitation and abuse of minors, sale, trafficking. Pedophilic's act done abroad could be judge by French Tribunal.
- 1998 Law Increasing Protection for Minors against Sexual Predators
- Code du travail (Labour Code) which governs children and employment

Germany

- Federal Child Protection Act (Bundeskinderschutzgesetz – BKiSchG) and SGB VIII
- Criminal Code (Strafgesetzbuch – StGB) which penalizes sexual offences against minors, trafficking
- Youth Labour Protection Act (Jugendarbeitsschutzgesetz) which governs children and employment

Japan

- Constitution (1946), art. 27, para. 3. Protects against child exploitation
- Labor Standards Law has provisions to protect child workers under age of 15
- Child Welfare Law 1947 governing child protection
- Child Abuse Prevention Law 2000 obliging professionals to detect cases early
- Law for Punishing Acts Related to Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, and for Protecting Children 1999
- Penal Code 1907 penalizes sexual intercourse with girls < 13 years old.

Netherlands

Note: In the Netherlands, the term youth is applied to children and young people <24 years.

- The Social Support Act 2007 (Wet maatschappelijke ondersteuning - Wmo) holds municipalities responsible for setting up social support.
- The Youth Care Act 2005 (Wet op de Jeugdzorg) is the legal framework of youth care services for youth at risk and their families
- Reporting code domestic violence and child abuse 2009: obligation for professionals to report suspected cases

New Zealand

- Children, Young Persons and Their Families (CYP&F) Act 1989 modified by the Children's Commissioner Act 2003, which implemented the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Norway

- Child Welfare Act (1992) provides protection to all children in Norway, irrespective of background, nationality, resident status.
- Human Rights Act 1999 amended to incorporate the Convention of Rights of the Child into national law in 2003

Switzerland

- Constitution which affords special protection for children makes the federal government and the cantons jointly responsible for the development of child and youth policy.
- Penal Code (StGB) which contains various provisions relative to criminal offences against minors.
- Civil Code (CC) which contains a number of articles on the welfare of a child
- The federal law on victim support revised 2002 (OHG) which defines the relevant minimum requirements for victim support to be provide by the cantons.
- The federal law on the promotion of extracurricular activities (JFG) provides the legal bases for the support of various activities undertaken by many youth organizations in relation to leisure, sport, youth exchanges, culture, politics, health, environmental protection and social duties.

United Kingdom (UK)

- Children Acts 1989 and 2004 are the main legislative frameworks for child protection
- Other relevant legislation includes: *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006*, *Protection of Freedom Act 2012*, *Children and Families Act 2014*, *Education Act 2002*, *Adoption and Children Act 2002*, *Children and Adoption Act 2006*, *Childcare Act 2006*.
- Working together to safeguard children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (March 2015)
- Charity Commission Policy Paper Safeguarding children and young people 14 July 2014 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-young-people/safeguarding-children-and-young-people>
- Vetting procedure for all adults working in direct contact with children: require CRB check (police clearance)

United States of America (USA)

The primary responsibility for child welfare services rests with the States. Federal laws direct these:

- Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) in 1974, CAPTA Reauthorization Act of 2010
- Child Abuse Prevention and Enforcement act of 2000
- Adam Walsh child Protection and Safety act of 2006

ACTED Communication – Photo policy and guidelines

Version 2016

Executive Summary

Pictures are easy and straight forward communication materials meant to illustrate ACTED's activities, programmes and beneficiaries, the scope of implementation of our projects, our success and best practices. **Pictures are worth a thousand words.** They substantiate written reports of a crisis or of other situations by presenting it in more tangible - and often more human - graphic terms. Photography is a crucial form of visual evidence. Pictures are not an end in themselves but **a means to support our advocacy objectives.**

These ACTED photo guidelines focus primarily on **communication oriented pictures**, but should also apply to any picture taken by an ACTED staff in the framework of an ACTED activity, or by a partner.

In all its activities, ACTED is committed to respecting the privacy and to upholding the dignity of every individual. These Guidelines have been developed to ensure that all ACTED staff across all field operations are informed about and strictly adhere to this commitment. The guidelines should be applied by all ACTED implementing partners as well as by consultants/firms hired on short-term basis.

This note includes ACTED's photo guiding principles in terms of:

- **Content;**
- **Behaviour and consent;**
- **Information and captions;**
- **Standard crediting policy.**

1. A Short Presentation of ACTED Communication Policy

ACTED communication abides by ACTED's mandate and status as a non-profit humanitarian NGO. Independent, private and not-for-profit, ACTED respects a strict political and religious impartiality and operates according to principles of non-discrimination and transparency. Our communication policy is in line with ACTED's organizational values:

- Responsible;
- Enterprising;
- Impacting;
- Inspiring.

The values of human dignity, respect and truthfulness underlie all communications. Therefore, choices of images and messages will be made based on the principles of:

- Do no harm policy;
- Respecting the dignity of the people;
- Child protection policy;
- Preserving the security of our beneficiaries, people shown on the pictures and ACTED personnel;
- Ensuring the sustainability of our actions and engagement.

Accordingly, in all our communications we strive to:

- Choose images and related messages based on values of respect equality, solidarity and justice;
- Truthfully represent any image or depicted situation both in its immediate and in its wider context so as to improve public understanding of the realities and complexities of development;
- Avoid images and messages that potentially stereotype or discriminate against people, situations or places;

- Use images, messages and case studies with the full understanding, participation and agreement of the subjects;
- Conform to the highest standards in relation to human rights and protection of vulnerable people.;
- Protect the confidentiality of any person depicted or associated to ACTED communication.

Finally, ACTED communication messages are as follows:

- Positive;
- Impact oriented;
- Solution oriented;
- Reactive, balanced, relevant and efficient;
- Should highlight achievements and best practices;
- Should raise awareness on the humanitarian issues at stake and the context.

2. ACTED Photo Guiding Principles

The present ACTED photo guidelines abide by the guiding principles of ACTED communication referred above.

Content

- Photos should be positive and solution oriented;
- Photos should illustrate impact rather than focus only on the output;
- Photos should tell stories and the impact on people's lives;
- Photos should illustrate issues, situation, context and environment;
- People in the pictures should be in active rather than in passive situations;
- Only pictures showing individuals in a dignified situation/way should be taken and used;
- No pictures of nude individuals of any age should be used;
- No pictures of people smoking or holding a cigarette/pack of cigarettes, as well as pictures displaying the brand of tobacco companies should be used. The same applies to alcohol.

Behaviour and Consent

- First familiarize yourself with the local culture, customs, norms and practices related to personal identity and visual representation, before starting taking pictures.
- When approaching photo subjects in the field, briefly introduce yourself, be courteous, and explain the purpose of your visit or the reason you want to take photos, as well as the potential usage/dissemination of the picture (online, global communication).
- You must request and obtain their verbal consent prior to taking a photo. No pictures should be stolen or taken without the consent of the people taken.
- As a general rule, if you sense any reluctance, confusion, or disdain, refrain from taking the photo. Respect a person's right to refuse to be photographed.
- As a general rule, consent should be requested verbally as to avoid confusion/perception by the people of any commitment from ACTED for being taken in picture (compensation of any sort). If needed, a standard ACTED photo release form is available in Annex 1 should there be a specific need to formalize such an agreement in written format (not systematic/according to the context).
- Specific care should be taken when taking pictures of children to ensure their protection, as per ACTED's policy on child protection:
 - a) explicit consent of children and of the person in charge should be secured;
 - b) no close portrait of children should be taken nor disseminated internally or externally;

- c) extra attention should be paid on how the children are shown on the pictures: keep in mind that the overall context of the picture shall not be likely to be misinterpreted, *i.e.* children pictured while performing work-related activities;
 - d) pictures with children should be used with relevance, to illustrate a specific message and not be considered as a nice-looking illustration.
- In specific humanitarian settings such as for example a refugee camp, consult with the relevant actors (ex. camp management agency, representatives of the camp population, etc.) before you begin photographing facilities, etc.
 - Never take pictures of arms, military, police or any armed personnel under any circumstances

Information and Captions

- Photos should come with captions (Date, What, where, when, who, why, how). While a photo caption is usually concise, it should clearly describe/define the main elements contained in the picture.
- Never use/include the real names of individuals in the caption of pictures. The use of pseudonyms should be preferred over not naming the individuals in the pictures, as it helps make them real to the viewer, not just passive objects of violence, hunger, poverty, etc.
- Exceptions and granting.
- Pictures provided to the usage of ACTED from other sources than ACTED’s staff, including professional photographers (on ACTED assignment or not), journalists and staff from other organizations, will bear the adequate reference to the name and organization of their author upon request or according to their guidelines, as follows: © [name of photographer] / ACTED or © [name of photographer] / [name of organization]

Do's	Don'ts
Take photos that illustrate the issues, situation, context and environment	Only take portraits that show a face which is unrelated to a context or situation. Ensure that these portraits also provide elements of context. Never take portraits and close up of children.
Verbally ensure that whoever you are taking a photo of is consenting	Do not take photos of people without speaking to them first and asking their permission
Take photos of ACTED staff with ACTED visibility in action, at work (without sunglasses)	Don't take photos of ACTED staff taking a break, sitting down, eating or drinking
Make sure you include ACTED visibility	But don't stage it (i.e. giving an ACTED sign for a beneficiary to pose with in a photo)
Try and take photos that tell a story, or for example before and after photos, always including beneficiaries and showing that people are at the heart of what we do	Do not take photos of infrastructure, installations, farms etc. with no beneficiaries present in the photo – these photos don't tell a story. Take photos of beneficiaries making use of something that was produced or achieved
Send detailed interesting captions that add something extra to the photo	Do not send photos with no descriptions or captions that simply describe a photo without providing complementary information (i.e. a beneficiary in his or her newly rehabilitated home)
Send all your photos to HQ with captions via Skype or WeTransfer silvia.icardi@acted.org // skype: silvia.icardi.acted	Do not only send photos to accompany articles or flashnews, don't hesitate to share photos at any time as they can always be used for various purposes like photo stories



The picture aims at showcasing an activity, displaying both adults and children as active actors rather than passive recipients. The subject is the action, not the people. Children are not the main focus of the picture and their faces are not fully displayed and recognizable. The picture illustrates a balanced and respectful relationship between ACTED staff and children beneficiaries.



Children are utilized for communications purposes: the picture only displays children with clear marketing intentions, rather than illustrating a point or an action. Children's faces are recognizable and their identity not protected.



The picture shows what appears to be vulnerable children transporting humanitarian goods, thus apparently working, and not adequately clothed or shoed. The issue is in the interpretation that could be done of such a picture, out of context (they might adults, but difficult to tell).



ACTED Photo Release Form (template)

Permission to Use Photograph

Subject: _____

Location: _____

I grant to ACTED, its representatives and employees the right to take photographs of me and my property in connection with the above-identified subject. I authorize ACTED, its assigns and transferees to copyright, use and publish the same in print and/or electronically.

I agree that ACTED may use such photographs of me with or without my name and for any lawful purpose, including for example such purposes as publicity, illustration, advertising, and Web content.

I have read and understand the above:

Printed name _____

Date _____

Signature _____

(parent or guardian if under 18 years of age)