



FUTURE FOR NEPAL

Child Protection Policy

Future For Nepal (FFN) believes that all children have a right to protection, and that the welfare of the child is paramount. Good child protection practice protects not only children but also the staff and volunteers who come into contact with them.

In our attempt to create a safeguard culture, the following Child Protection Policy has been adopted by the Trustees of Future For Nepal. This Child Protection Policy is based upon the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

This Child Protection Policy will be updated at least every three years, and/ or whenever there is significant change in the organisation or in the relevant legislation.

This Child Protection Policy has been translated into Nepali, so that it can be understood by the Nepalese sponsored children and their families.

There will be four broad groups of people involved with FFN:

- a) UK based trustees, employees or sponsors who will come into direct contact with the children. UK style Child Protection Policies as detailed later in this document will apply.
- b) Employees in Nepal who will come into direct contact with the children. If these are UK citizens then the full Child Protection Policy detailed below will apply. If these employees are of other nationalities (e.g. Nepalese) and not resident in the UK, then UK practices cannot be directly applied to them. In these cases the Chairman of FFN, assisted by the other Trustees as he/she sees fit, will use sound judgement, following the principles of our Child Protection Policy.
- c) UK based trustees and/or sponsors of specific children who will have no direct contact with the children in Nepal. These people will be made aware of this policy and asked to sign saying they understand it, and will adhere to it. The key points are those concerning trustee responsibility for ensuring the Child Protection Policy is applied appropriately and the procedure about written communication between sponsor and child. Nothing else is required, as they will not meet any sponsored children.
- d) Donors and fund-raising volunteers who will have no contact with the children. Nothing will be done with this group with regard to this policy unless their involvement changes.

1. Recruitment and Training – applicable to group a) and applied appropriately adjusted to group b)

1.1 All applicants, including contractors, will be given a copy of FFN's Child Protection Policy and will be required to sign a declaration that they have received and understood it and will adhere to it.

1.2 For all applicants, a reliable character reference will be obtained, with attention given to any area of concern relating to child protection. During the interview process applicants will be asked about previous work with children.

1.3 All UK applicants who may come into direct contact with children will be required to have an enhanced disclosure performed by the Criminal Records Bureau. The results will be reviewed by the Chairman of the FFN, or his delegate, who must be a Trustee, and found satisfactory before the person has any contact with the sponsored children.

1.4 During employment with FFN, should an employee display unusual behaviour living rise to concern, this will be discussed with the trustees who will decide what action to take.

1.5 All staff involved in sponsor contact will be given induction training relating to:

- o security of information
- o confidentiality
- o procedures for sponsor visits
- o procedure to adopt if abuse or suspected abuse comes to light.

1.6 Any member of staff or volunteer traveling abroad in connection with FFN's business for the first time will be interviewed by the Chairman of FFN to ensure his or her suitability for the trip.

1.7 Any member of staff who discovers or suspects abusive practices should refer the matter immediately and in confidence to the Chairman of FFN.

2. Behaviour Protocols applicable to groups a), b) and c)

2.1 Behaviour protocols are rules of appropriate and proper behaviour, which are designed to protect children but also intended to protect adults from false allegations of inappropriate behaviour or abuse. These protocols apply to employees, volunteers, trustees, contractors, and sponsors.

2.2 FFN personnel and visitors must not stay alone overnight with one or more children or minors, whether in staff accommodation or elsewhere.

2.3 FFN personnel and visitors should not hire minors as 'house- help' or provide shelter for minors in their homes. A minor for FFN purposes is defined as a child under the age of 18 years.

2.4 FFN personnel and visitors must not fondle, hold, kiss, hug or touch minors in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way. To avoid misunderstanding, it is recommended that the child be asked for permission before holding hands.

2.5 Where possible and practical, the 'two- adult' rule, wherein two or more adults supervise all activities where minors or children are involved and are present at all times, should be followed. If this is not possible, FFN staff members are encouraged to look for alternatives such as being accompanied by community members on visits to children.

2.6 FFN personnel need to be aware that they may work with children who, because of the circumstances and abuses they may have experienced, may use a relationship to obtain 'special attention'. The adult is always considered responsible even if a child behaves seductively. The adult should avoid being placed in a compromising or vulnerable position.

2.7 Inappropriate behaviour towards children, including failure to follow FFN behaviour Protocols, is grounds for discipline. Disciplinary action will vary, depending on the offence, and serious offences including sexual abuse will be considered gross misconduct resulting in instant dismissal from employment, volunteer/internship or trusteeship. In the case of contractors, the contract will be terminated immediately.

2.8 FFN personnel must be concerned about perception and appearance in their language, actions and relationships with minors and children.

3. Sponsorship Planning – applicable to groups a), b) and c)

3.1 An assessment of the circumstances of children will be incorporated into all surveys conducted prior to initiation of any sponsorship. Where relevant such assessments will include plans to address the needs of children who are in situations of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

3.2 Plans for rehabilitation of children who have been abused and exploited will be developed in the best interests of the child by enhancing and maintaining safety and security, and reducing the risk of further harm.

4. Protection of Children in Sponsorship Programmes - applicable to groups a), b) and c)

4.1 All staff members directly involved in child sponsorship administration will be asked to sign receipt and understanding of FFN's Child Protection Policy; and to acknowledge that they understand procedures related to sponsor visits, including the need to report unannounced/ unaccompanied visitors.

4.2 All sponsor correspondence with a sponsored child must be reviewed for inappropriate or suggestive comments, requests or obscenities. In the event of inappropriate correspondence been discovered, FFN reserves the right to decline sponsorship or sever the sponsorship relationship.

4.3 At the time of sponsorship, sponsors must be advised that FFN's policy prohibits unannounced visitors.

4.4 A FFN sponsor and his or her sponsored child must not exchange home addresses.

4.5 Staff must be aware of FFN's policy on the use of the World Wide Web. Sponsors must be advised that information via the World Wide Web is provided as a service and is not to be downloaded or redistributed to another site. Any posting on the World Wide Web must have a clear warning that information is not to be downloaded or redistributed for any reason. Such activity could subject the user to legal action by FFN.

4.6 FFN will not facilitate the visit of any child to a sponsor's country or facilitate the adoption of children. Any requests for such assistance will be tactfully declined.

5. Sponsor Visits - applicable to groups a), b) and c)

5.1 In order to ensure that all possible steps are taken to protect sponsored children, and their families, from those who may wish to exploit or abuse them, all sponsor visits will be arranged through FFN's UK office.

5.2 Nepali staff are required to refer and report any sponsor, or friend of a sponsor, attempting to bypass this procedure to FFN's UK office.

5.3 While visiting children, sponsors must be accompanied by a member of FFN staff. During group visits, when there are more sponsors than members of staff to accompany them, child visits must be done in turn. Under no circumstances should a sponsor be allowed to visit a child's home alone.

5.4 FFN will retain the right to cancel a sponsor's visit at anytime. The Nepali office staff must be informed if FFN's UK office has any suspicions, so that the situation can be monitored.

5.5 Children and their families participating in sponsorship are advised of FFN's procedures regarding sponsor visits. They are encouraged to report immediately any visit that has not been arranged by FFN staff or any requests from a sponsor that encourages withholding information from FFN staff.

6. Procedures for reporting suspected or actual abuse – applicable to groups a), b) and c)

6.1 Should FFN identify or suspect a paedophile or child abuser before the visit takes place; permission for the visit will be cancelled or refused immediately. Details will be forwarded to the Nepali office, in case the sponsor attempts to visit the child independently.

6.2 Should the Nepali office identify a case of actual or suspected abuse by a visiting sponsor, this should be reported as a matter of urgency to the Chairman of FFN in as much detail as possible. It is the responsibility of FFN'S UK staff receiving any such information to inform the Chairman of FFN as soon as possible.

6.3 Chairman of FFN will then contact the relevant authorities within the UK, and inform the sponsor his or her sponsorship link has been cancelled. Letters must be worded carefully to avoid stating the reason for the cancellation and legal advice will be sought where necessary.

6.4 Trustees of FFN will be kept fully informed of all details.

6.5 Any member of staff who has knowledge or suspicion that a child is at risk must report this to the Chairman, who will determine what action to take.

6.6 Any other person who has knowledge of a potential child protection issue involving FFN must immediately contact the Chairman of FFN.

6.7 On being informed of an incident, the Chairman will immediately inform the other trustees. The matter and its outcome will be confidentially monitored and reviewed for the purpose of revising and refining child protection measures.

(Note: incidents involving a FFN employee may result in an internal investigation by FFN and corrective action be taken.)

Note: In the absence of the Chairman, the other trustees of FFN must be immediately notified of any information relating to an actual or suspected incident of abuse.

7. Communications about children – applicable to groups a), b) and c)

7.1 Communications about children should use pictures that are decent and respectful, not presenting them as victims. Children should be adequately clothed and poses that can be interpreted as sexually suggestive should be avoided. Language that implies a relationship of power should also be avoided.

7.2 FFN standard is that web sites and other promotional materials should not use scanned images of children without formal permission of the child's parent/Guardian.

This Child Protection Policy was last updated in April 2008.

Future For Nepal reserves all rights to change this child protection procedure without prior notice.