

WACC POLICY

CHILD PROTECTION

Issued by the General Secretary

Revised January 2008

Policy Statement

1. WACC recognizes that it has a duty of care towards any young people with whom it works, either directly or indirectly, and that it must take all reasonable precautions to protect such people from physical or mental abuse, mistreatment, neglect or exploitation.
2. WACC supports the principles outlined in the document 'Setting the Standard – A common approach to Child Protection for international NGOs' published by Tearfund and NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, UK).
3. WACC will not knowingly be a party to any activity which might result in child abuse.
4. WACC will not support any activity which involves working with children, unless it is satisfied that there are adequate measures in place to protect such children, including the existence of a child protection policy.

WACC Activities

5. Those being considered for work directly with children, both staff and volunteers, will be subject to investigation with respect to their suitability to undertake such work, and those who are considered to be unsuitable will not be permitted access to children.
6. The form of the investigation required will be determined by the usual practices in the country in which the person is to work*. As a minimum it will include the obtaining and checking of references, preferably with respect to previous work with children.
7. Procedures designed to limit the possibility of infringement of children's right to freedom from abuse will be developed for any activity involving children that WACC may undertake.
8. Such procedures will be specific to each activity which is to be undertaken, and may identify both actions that must be taken and actions that are prohibited.
9. Staff working directly with children, and the supervisors of such staff, will be made aware of the need for child protection, of the procedures which must be followed for the activities in which they will be involved, and of the steps to be taken to ensure that any concerns about the welfare of a child or group of children are addressed.

Project Administration

10. Where WACC is considering becoming a partner in a project that involves work with children, the responsible Programme Manager must obtain information from the proponent regarding the provision of child protection.
11. If child protection measures do not appear to be adequate, or if the proponent fails to provide requested information with respect to such measures, WACC will decline to be involved with the project.
12. Where there is any allegation that there has been child abuse in connection with any project in which WACC is a partner, or involving any project partner, WACC may, after investigation, withdraw from partnership in the project.

General

13. Responsibility for ensuring the effectiveness of the Child Protection Policy rests with the General Secretary
14. Any suspicion of inappropriate behaviour with respect to working with children, or other concern with respect to child welfare, must be reported promptly to a supervisor or to the General Secretary.
15. Any allegation relating to child abuse will be investigated promptly, and will be handled with due regard to the welfare of the child or children involved.
16. WACC will take disciplinary action against any member of staff who is found to infringe its Child Protection Policy, which may result in dismissal.

* In the UK, a clearance from the Criminal Records Bureau will be required.