



**Enhanced Rural Self Help Association  
(ERSHA)**

**Child Protection Policy**

*Protecting Children,  
Preventing Abuse*

**June, 2016**

**Addis Ababa**

## **Message from the Director**

It gives me great pleasure to forward to you the completed organizational child protection policy. The policy sets out very clearly ERSHA's position on working with children and the problem of child abuse, and contains a strong commitment to safeguard children wherever we are in contact with them, either through our work or in general. This policy aims to assist in recognizing that fact and responding to those children consistently and effectively whatever we can.

As an organization committed to the realization of children's interests and to working more closely with children, it is vital for ERSHA that across the whole organization there is awareness of the problem of abuse and of what to do to prevent it. Equally, where abuse is suspected, staff and others need to be clear about the responses they should make in reporting their concerns and offering support as much as possible.

ERSHA must also recognize that organizations working with children are susceptible to abuse from within. It is essential that ERSHA recognizes these risks and does everything it can to counteract them. The work done on recruitment and selection as part of the initiative on child protection goes a long way to achieving this. Strictness at the point of selection, awareness in the work place, and a formal process for raising concerns, are all key elements in ensuring ERSHA meets its commitments to safeguard children.

The policy has been developed with the full support of KNH and has been the subject of wide-scale consultation processes. I am confident that the resultant document is now one that is acceptable across the range of constituencies to which it applies, and can be adapted to the different local contexts in which it will be operated, while still adhering to common principles and standards.

The main elements of the policy document are: a statement of commitment, which represents a public declaration of ERSHA's intent to safeguard children wherever it can; a code of conduct which details the standards of behavior expected from staff and others in their dealings with children; and a framework which provides a clear process by which concerns regarding actual or likely abuse may be raised.

The policy sets out a mandatory internal reporting requirement which means all concerns must be raised through the management chain as described in the policy. Although this may sometimes feel like a difficult step to take, it is vital that all concerns regarding suspected or possible abuse are raised. To do otherwise may mean the abuse of a child continues unchecked.

Also, any concern that may have been around for some time, possibly relating to an ex-member of staff or a person no longer connected with ERSHA, for example, should still be raised as there may be current child protection issues which stem from these concerns.

The policy makes very clear the responsibilities of staff and others under this policy, and also highlights the fact that failure to act in accordance with the provisions set out in the policy may result in disciplinary action or whatever action is appropriate given the circumstances.

The implementation of the policy involves, at the very least, informing staff and others of the document's existence. In the main, however, there will also need to be discussions and planning activities aimed at putting in place the various measures required by the policy, in particular the local procedures which translate the policy into a practical working document that fits the local context.

Guidance notes have been produced to assist in managing the implementation process overall and are included as part of the policy.

The management is required to introduce the policy and to be responsible for adapting or developing the systems and processes necessary for operating it effectively in the future. The key requirements are that all staff and others are clear about their responsibilities to prevent abuse and have access to a detailed process by which they can raise concerns.

It is important for ERSHA to develop its practice in this area, and the launch of this policy will put in place a policy and management framework for the organization, but it is also crucial that staff and others continue to develop confidence and competence in dealing with the issue of child abuse.

To this end, implementation of the policy will be closely monitored as a way for tracking progress on implementation, but also as a way of identifying practical issues and concerns, support and development needs that arise, and also to assist in documenting examples of good practices. This information will feed in to regular review and evaluation exercise to be conducted to assess the progress. This will examine how the policy has been implemented, and any revisions that need to be made in the light of this practical experience, the practice and practice development issues that have arisen, as well as the support needs that have been identified.

Other initiatives designed to support effective operation of the policy are also planned. A major element in dealing with issues of abuse, especially abuse within the organization, is the provision of mechanisms by which concerns can be raised. The policy provides a clear process for this, but it is well understood that there are many reasons why individuals are unable or unwilling to report concerns through the line management process. ERSHA is planning to introduce a confidential reporting mechanism to assist staff and others in raising their concerns.

It is also important for ERSHA that children themselves have some means by which they can make representations to the organization, especially where they wish to raise concerns. Putting in place such provision across the whole of ERSHA's work would present a variety of challenges, not least practical ones, but would also offer a further means by which concerns could be raised regarding abuse or potentially abusive practice. ERSHA is committed to exploring ways in which such a mechanism might be developed.

The protection of children from abuse is a priority area for ERSHA and resources will be committed to ensure it meets its responsibilities as outlined in the policy. The policy and associated initiatives and developments represent a comprehensive set of measures which, taken together, will ensure a consistent, systematic and strategic approach to the management of child protection issues within ERSHA. The adoption of this policy marks a significant milestone in ensuring ERSHA is better able to make a practical reality of its commitments to children's rights in respect of the particular right to freedom from abuse.

Eshetu Yimer  
Executive Director

## **Acknowledgments**

ERSHA would like to extend its thanks to all staffs and partners who contributed to the preparation of this document, in particular to members of the Taskforce.

ERSHA is also grateful to KNH for the initiative and capacity building support Special thanks goes to W/ro Sinafikish Legesse for her input and assistance throughout the process of developing this policy.

## Table of Contents

I. Abbreviations.....	6
1. Introduction.....	7
1.1 Profile of ERSHA .....	7
1.2 Working definition of terms and types of abuses.....	8
1.3 Legal Framework.....	10
1.4 Purpose and scope of the Child Protection Policy .....	11
2. Responsibilities for following the child Protection Policy .....	12
3. Preventative Measures .....	15
3.1 Code of Conduct for staff.....	15
3.2 Code of conduct for people who are connected to the organization .....	16
3.3 Implications of non-compliance/disciplinary procedures .....	17
3.4 Human Resources Policy standards .....	19
3.5 Communication Standards.....	21
4. Case Management.....	22
4.1 ERSHA Case Management System: Structure and Parties.....	22
4.1.1 The Child Protection Focal Person and the Child Protection Committee.....	22
4.1.2 The Child Protection Legal Advisor .....	25
4.1.3 System for reporting.....	25
4.1.4 Case Investigation.....	27
4.1.5 Protection System for affected Children and for the individual involved in reporting/investigating process .....	30
5. Documentation and Development.....	32
5.1 Participation and Empowerment of Children.....	32
5.2. Follow-up/monitoring and evaluation:.....	32
5.3 Policy implementation strategy and review .....	32
6. Institutional Ownership.....	33
II. Annexes.....	34
Annex 1: Guideline for Orientation on Child Protection Issues .....	34
Annex-2: Recruitment and selection guidelines .....	36
Annex 3: Code of Conduct for ERSHA employees.....	37
Annex 4: Information for people visiting projects.....	39
Annex 5: Child abuse/allegation-reporting format .....	42

## **I. Abbreviations**

ACRWC	African Charter on the Right of the Child
CBOs	Community Based Organizations
CP	Child Protection
CPP	Child Protection Policy
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
ERSHA	Enhanced Rural Self Help Association
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
ILO	International Labor Organization
NGOs	Non Governmental Organizations
SNNPRS	Southern Nation and Nationalities People Regional State
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child

## **1. Introduction**

Enhanced Rural Self Help Association does not tolerate any form of child abuse or exploitation. The child protection policy is based on the principles of the Convention of the Rights of the Child 1989 (Article 19) and the Declaration of Human Rights 1948, among others, which include;

- Best interest of the child
- Freedom of expression
- Non-discrimination
- Respect for child opinion on matters affecting children
- Child participation

### **1.1 Profile of ERSHA**

Enhanced Rural Self Help Association (ERSHA) is a non-governmental development organization established in October 1997 and became operational in January 1998. The organization is re-registered in December 2009 as Ethiopian Residents Charities Association in accordance with the New CSO Proclamation 621/2009. It was established in Ethiopia with the aim of facilitating development process among disadvantaged grassroots communities including children and women

The vision of the organization is to see poverty free Ethiopia while the mission is to expand livelihood alternatives of the rural poor by supporting/implementing community based initiatives and building grassroots capacity. The values of ERSHA include solidarity with the poor and marginalized people, integrity (honesty, transparency, accountability) and partnership. ERSHA targets the rural poor households with special emphasis to women, women headed households, children and youths.

ERSHA is currently running five rural development programmes in Amhara, Oromia and SNNPRS Regional States. ERSHA is working around thematic areas Women, children and youth socio-economic development, promotion of social services, food and income security and & market promotion, grassroots capacity building of the target communities. Also as cross cutting issues the organization is working in the areas of disaster risk reduction, harmful traditional practices and all these interventions are more of child focused. ERSHA aspires to see disadvantaged communities overcome the problem of their poverty and build a sustainable self-development system which create friendly environment for children. Therefore as the involvement of children in the project is

significant and also the staffs, visitors and other parties might have direct contacts with children, it needs to have a binding child protection policy at organizational level

## **1.2 Working definition of terms and types of abuses**

For the purpose of this policy, “child abuse” is any action (or lack of action) that endangers or harms a child’s physical, psychological or emotional health and development.

For the purpose of this policy, *a child is defined as any person below the age of 18 years (UNCRC Article one)*

*Child protection is defined as* the responsibilities and preventative and responsive measures and activities to be undertaken to protect children ensuring that no Child is subject to Child abuse as a result of their association with us, their contact with staff, Associates and visitors and/or their participation in any activity, including our projects and programs. In addition, it incorporates our responsibility to ensure that where there are concerns over a Child’s welfare or where a Child has been subject to Child abuse, actions are taken to address this; concerns are reported and responded to appropriately and in line with the relevant global and local procedures; and incidents are analyzed so as to ensure continued learning and growth in the field of organizational child protection.

*Staff refers* to individuals who receive a regular salary for work in any part of the organization, including field offices

*Associates* refer to a range of paid and non paid individuals who have committed to work with or support ERSHA. It includes, among others, members of boards, volunteers, including community volunteers, interns, sponsors; researchers; donors, consultants and contractors; staff and/or representatives of partner organizations and local governments (when operating in partnership agreement with ERSHA).

*Visitors:* refer to a range of persons who are visiting our programs and may come into contact with children including journalists, media, researchers, and celebrities.

*Intern:* a trainee working to gain practical experience in an occupation

*Transitional Home Mothers/Guardians:* are volunteer mothers who are identified by the community to take care of children who are abandoned and lived in the streets transitionally until their extended or original families identified and reunification done

*Sponsorship/Fostership:* a system in which child letter exchange is a base for raising fund for the community development of a specified area

*Child abuse occurs in different ways and includes the following;*



- *Physical abuse* – any physical injury to a child that is not accidental, such as beating, shaking, burns, and biting
- *Emotional abuse* – emotional injury when the child is not nurtured or provided with love and security, such as an environment of constant criticism, belittling and persistent teasing
- *Sexual abuse* – any sexual activity between a child and an adult or between a child and another child at least four years older than the victim, including activities such as fondling, exhibitionism, intercourse, incest, and pornography.
- *Neglect* – depriving a child of his or her essential needs, such as adequate food, water, shelter, and medical care. It begins as soon as a child is denied the basic foundations for psychosocial development including those relating to health, nutrition, clothing, shelter, education, etc.
- *Exploitation*: the practice of taking selfish or unfair advantage of a person or situation, usually for person gain

### **Indicators of Abuse**

Listed below are a number of indicators; however they may vary by cultural and economic context. This is not exhaustive but is a guideline to help establish whether some form of child abuse or exploitation has taken place.

### **Indicators of Emotional Abuse**

- Changes or regression in mood or behavior, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging.
- Depression/aggression/extreme anxiety
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Attention-seeking behavior
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away/stealing/lying

### **Indicators of possible Physical Abuse**

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given to them.

- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to fall, rough games etc.
- Injuries which have not received medical attention.
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming.
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains.
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc which do not have a reasonable explanation.
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse.
- Infections and/or symptoms of sexually transmitted diseases.

### **Indicators of possible Sexual Abuse**

- Any allegations made by a child concerning child abuse.
- Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behavior, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play.
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults.
- Inappropriate bed sharing arrangements at home.
- Severe sleep disturbance, with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations.

### **Indicators of possible Neglect**

As poverty is often the cause of the following points, we need to look at it contextually and in comparison to the community average

- Under nourishment and failure to grow.
- Constant hunger, stealing or gorging food.
- Untreated illnesses.
- Inadequate care.

## **1.3 Legal Framework**

Children have the right to be protected from abuse and maltreatment. Most countries including Ethiopia have criminal and civil laws in place that protect children from and prosecute abusers and those who subject children to maltreatment.

For ERSHA, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), African Charter on the Right and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC), ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child

Labor and related national laws are the moral and legal foundations of its commitment to work with its partners, to protect children and ensure their well-being in the projects it supports.

- Ethiopia has ratified the UNCRC and the Convention was domesticated through a national legislation;
- The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child was ratified by the Federal Government;
- ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labor was also ratified by the Federal Government;
- FDRE Constitution Article 36 is devoted to child rights and protection
- Revised Family Code
- Revised Penal codes
- Labor proclamation and list of policies

All these serve as legally binding frame of references for this child protection policy.

#### **1.4 Purpose and scope of the Child Protection Policy**

Child abuse and exploitation of children happens in the community and societies across the nation. Therefore, ERSHA and all parties of the organization shall protect children from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse. Families of ERSHA have a commitment to the prevention of child abuse and protection of children. ERSHA, as one of the Ethiopian Residents Charity Organization, is not mandated to involve and implement activities directly related to children right issues and programs. However, it is mandatory to protect children whom directly or indirectly contact with us from exploitation and abuse by staffs and other actors participating in the project implementation. Hence, this policy is meant as organizational policy to protect children from individuals who are working around the organization in general and its staffs in particular.

We take seriously our responsibility to promote child safe practices and protect children from harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation in any form. In addition, we will take positive action to prevent those who abuse children from becoming involved in such acts and take stringent measures against any staff, Associates, Visitors who abuse a child. Our decisions and actions in response to Child protection concerns and breaches of this policy will be guided by the principle of ‘the best interests of the child’.

This Policy applies to all organization staffs, volunteers, part-time staffs, consultants, researchers, visitors, General Assembly, Board Members, partner NGOs and CBOs, and other individuals who have contact with children due to their involvement in the organization.

The policy also applies to all activities in which ERSHA staff, sponsors and donors interact with children. ERSHA interacts with children in;

- Programmes/projects (our work on the ground)
- Marketing and campaigns (using children's images, stories to promote our work or campaign purposes)
- Child sponsorship activities (e.g. child message collection)
- Supporter visits
- HR related matters (staff recruitment, induction, training staff and secondments)

Therefore, the policy intends to ensure that none of the above persons or partners engages in behavior or action that is considered to be child abuse, neglect and exploitation. All the stakeholders and individuals covered by this policy are required to read and sign the child protection policy and code of conduct. The policy set out in this document, however, relates to ERSHA's responsibilities regarding child or groups of children with whom it comes into contact, directly or indirectly, and who it suspects may be being abused or at risk of abuse

## **2. Responsibilities for following the child Protection Policy**

The way in which the policy applies to the different groups is highlighted below

### **Management Responsibility:**

The management of the organization is responsible for the implementation of the child protection policy specifically on:

- protecting children from abuse and exploitation;
- Nominating a staff member to be a focal person for raising awareness on child protection policy
- Ensuring all staff are trained on how to recognize child abuse and exploitation and taking appropriate action
- Integrating child protection with existing recruitment and selection, induction and appraisal procedures;
- Making sure that the policy is well understood by all the people whom this policy applies for;

- Making sure the reflection of child protection in any agreements with Donors, Consultants, Partner Organizations and others who are coming in contact with children;
- Assigning Child protection Focal Person at project and coordination office level;
- Making sure the recording and documenting of issues and process as well as outcomes properly;
- Making sure that the child protection policy implementation include children with disability and other vulnerabilities
- Reviewing and updating the child protection policy periodically.
- Disciplinary procedures/measures implemented for staff members found to have violated the Child Protection policy

### **Responsibilities of the staff**

Staff of the organization is responsible for the implementation of the child protection policy specifically on:

- Ensure that ERSHA's commitments to promoting children's rights and safeguarding children are upheld
- Working in line with the child protection policy, guideline and procedures
- Approach children with respect and listen and respect their Ideas
- Support children to protect themselves and know what they can do when they feel unsafe
- Recognize and respond to issues of abuse as they arise
- Maintain the highest standards of professional and ethical conduct, and act with integrity at all times when working with children
- Act with integrity at all times when working with children; in order to minimize the risk of abuse within ERSHA
- ERSHA staff have an 'ambassadorial' role outside work and the more senior the member of staff, the more important this role becomes
- Committed to the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and to ERSHA's work on children's rights and safety;
- Ensure community and children are aware of, and have easy access to reporting authorities and procedures for reporting concerns and complaints

- Develop working partnerships with community leaders and professionals with responsibility for child welfare and protection
- Ensure parental/guardian consent is sought for any activity with a child and encourage parental participation in all activities involving children
- Plan and organize the work and the workplaces so as to eliminate risk to children
- Empower children- discuss with them their concerns, what is acceptable and unacceptable, and what they can do if there is a problem
- ERSHA staff shall take adequate time to explain to the child the meaning and purpose of any marketing activities in a manner that will facilitate self confidence of the children's contribution to development in his/her community
- Staff should ensure meaningful participation of children in planning, implementation of projects/programmes accruing from funds collected through sponsorship for the benefit of the community

### **Partner Organizations:**

Partner organization is responsible for the implementation of the child protection policy specifically on:

- accept or respect the child protection policy and play their own role in establishing safe and healthy relationship with children;
- commitment to the implementation and take responsibility for the impact the work has on the children;
- the provisions of this policy and guidance should be reflected in the partnerships arrangements;
- Agreement should be reached with partners through discussion and negotiation, or as part of advocacy or capacity-building strategies - on a joint commitment to safeguarding children;
- It should be made clear to all existing and potential partners that ERSHA may be unable to continue a partnership relationship in the event that it has serious doubts about the actions and behavior of the organization or of any individual or individuals within the organization, and if these contravene the provisions of this policy.

**Others (consultants, visitors, donors, sponsors, researchers, journalist, Contractors, interns...)**

- accept or respect the child protection policy and play their own role in establishing safe and healthy relationship with children,
- sign letter of commitment to keep children safe and protect as per the organization's policy,
- Be aware of ERSHA's commitment to preventing child abuse,
- Perform in accordance with ERSHA's code of conduct,

### **3. Preventative Measures**

#### **3.1 Code of Conduct for staff**

The purpose of the code of conduct for interacting with children is to take joint responsibility for the safety of children. The aim is to protect employees and individuals who have access to children from false allegations regarding their conduct towards children.

All employees of ERSHA must sign this code of conduct and comply with it (Code of Conduct for Employees Annexed). By signing the code of conduct, the person commits to actively contributing to creating and maintaining an environment that is safe for children. Every ERSHA's staff is responsible for observing and spreading awareness for/on the code of conduct.

Every staff of the organization must sign up and abide by this Code of Conduct. *Organization staffs must never:*

- Exercise physical and/or emotional violence to children;
- Develop physical or sexual relationship with children;
- Develop any relation which seems exploitive or abusive with children ;
- Act in a ways that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse;
- Show physical behavior in a manner which is sexually provocative or inappropriate;
- Engage, encourage or support abuse in any terms;
- Use corporal punishment;
- Provoke towards any malpractice or addiction;
- Give any information regarding any child, sensitive incident;
- Take pictures and/or case stories without the consensus of children and concerned authorities and pictures should be taken appropriately (not when children are in a bath room or naked);
- Be with children alone in a separate class;
- Use abusive languages and slang;

- Give gifts directly to the child;
- Stigmatize or humiliate children;
- Wear clothes that are not appropriate with the local community context;
- do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves;
- condone, or participate in, behavior of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive;
- act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse;
- Discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favor particular children to the exclusion of others.

### **3.2 Code of conduct for people who are connected to the organization**

#### **Children**

- Respect all staff, parents and outsider;
- All relevant information should be given to relevant staff;
- Share information and learning with other children;
- Never physically assault or sexually abuse another child;
- Never tease another child or call out nick names;
- Never threaten another child;
- Never spread rumors about another child;
- Never use slang or abusive languages;

#### **Sponsors/donors**

The concept of child sponsorship is that of a link between an individual donor supporter, usually in the north and a child in the south. For ERSHA there is accountability at each end of the link. The purpose of this policy is therefore to provide standards for ERSHA to ensure that the implementation of child sponsorship is in alignment with the organization's commitment to protecting children. Therefore, sponsors/donors should abide by the respective code of conduct;

- Sponsors and donors are required to go through a background check should they wish to visit a sponsored child. The cost of this should be born by the supporter. As a matter of principle they should be requested to visit the community and not just the child
- Prior permission before the visit or interaction with children;
- Visitors must emphasize with the child rather than sympathize;
- Physical contact with the children must be appropriate;



- Never take picture of a child without consent of children and concerned authority;
- Visitors must not give gifts directly to any child;
- Visitors aren't allowed to take case histories without prior permission of a child or concerned authority;
- In case of case studies name of a child has to be changed and no personal information to identify location of a child to be given;
- Never use children's for pornographic or other inappropriate use

***Others (consultants, researchers, journalist, contractors, interns...)***

- Accept and respect the child, his parents and his living condition;
- Recognize the child with his name and must not use any nickname;
- Never stigmatize or humiliate children;
- Must possess a child friendly approach;
- Never take a child to any place independently;
- Before publishing any report or document on the organization the draft has to be approved by the organization;

**3.3 Implications of non-compliance/disciplinary procedures**

ERSHA will take immediate disciplinary action and any other action which may be appropriate to the circumstances. This may mean,

*For staff*

Any staff member found to be engaged in the following acts will be summarily dismissed, of course, after the case is investigated and proved to have happened

- Inducing or coercing a child to engage in any sexual activity.
- Any commercially exploitative activities with the children including child labor or trafficking.
- Use of children's photographs for pornographic or other inappropriate use.
- Subjecting any child to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
- Mistreating or depriving the child in any way for any reason including on the basis of the child's refusal to write a letter to a sponsor or to have his/her photograph taken.
- Sexual abuse

For other offences, such as emotional abuse and others, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken based on the investigation report

*For supporters and donors*

- Any donor/sponsor found to be engaged, or suspected of being engaged in the above acts will be reported to the relevant authorities in their country of residence.
- Their names will be removed from the supporter/marketing database in the relevant Funding Affiliate.

**For Volunteers-** ending the volunteering relationship

**For contractors** - termination of contract.

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

To summarize, while the Code of Conduct for Working with Children is compulsory for all parties to whom this policy applies, the procedures described below refer more specifically to remunerated and non-remunerated staff, visitors and collaborators and, essentially, any person likely to come into contact with the children.

Violations of the Code of Conduct related to communication, images and messages will be addressed separately. The Child Protection Focal Person at the Head Office will treat each case separately and their recommendations in this regard are binding.

Once the Child Protection Committee has undertaken the relevant investigation and made its assessment of the reported behavior, it will determine which type of offense it constitutes and which penalty should be applied in accordance with this disciplinary procedure.

## **Types of offences**

### **Minor offenses**

A minor offense will lead to a written warning, which the recipient will sign in order to bear witness that they are aware of the conduct they have been cautioned for and that they should avoid it in the future.

It may also lead to workplace and salary suspension for 1 to 10 days.

Minor offenses are accumulative. Two minor offenses or repetition of a minor offense may become a serious offense.

### **Serious offenses**

Serious offenses lead to workplace and salary suspension for 10 to 45 days. Repetition of a serious offense will become a severe offense.

### **Severe offenses**

Severe offenses lead to workplace and salary suspension for 45 to 60 days.

In those cases in which the Protection Committee deems it appropriate, severe offenses may also result in the dismissal of the accused person or immediate cancellation of the employment relationship, contract or agreement (freelance workers and partner organizations) or collaboration (sponsor or volunteer).

In those cases in which the reported conduct constitutes a crime, in addition to the internal penalties applied by ERSHA, the case will be deferred to the competent authorities and the family of the affected child. ERSHA will try to link the abused to institutions providing counseling service and guidance to the child and/or the family throughout the reporting process.

In those cases in which the child has been a victim of violence perpetrated by other children or persons from outside the organization, the Protection Committee will meet to study the case and decide the appropriate course of action.

## **3.4 Human Resources Policy standards**

### **3.4.1 Preventative measures in personnel policy**

In the effort to ensure a safe environment for children, ERSHA has instituted basic preventative measures as part of its Human Resources management. ERSHA is aware that a conscientious hiring and selection procedure does not provide 100-percent protection against potential abusers, but it can serve to dissuade people who seek to gain access to children via ERSHA in bad faith.

#### *Recruiting and selecting employees*

All employees have an obligation to actively contribute to creating a culture of safety not only for the children who are supported by ERSHA, but also for themselves and the organization.

New employees are recruited according to a consistent hiring procedure that takes into account child protection issues. (Child protection recruitment and selection guidelines Annexed)

The hiring and selection procedure addresses the extent to which the vacant position entails direct contact with children and where the corresponding risks for inappropriate conduct might lie.

#### *Job advertisements*

All of ERSHA's Job advertisements contain ERSHA's clearly formulated personal commitment to protecting children

#### *Application procedure*

All incoming applications are checked against clearly defined criteria using a checklist. In the interview, the candidates are assessed according to the following interview guideline.

#### *Interview guideline*

The interview, regardless of the position that needs to be filled, contains the following paragraphs that must be complied with:

- Explanation and check of the application documents for frequent changes of careers tracks or jobs without an obvious reason
- Questions about the person's interest in the working environment and the posted job
- Questions about the candidates' attitude toward ERSHA's child protection measures
- Questions about any other ideas the candidates might have about child protection or comments on examples of critical cases

#### *Expanded police record report*

All new and existing employees are required to submit an expanded criminal record report. This requirement is explained to employees and candidates

The expanded criminal record report must be updated and submitted by all employees every three Years

#### *Hiring*

All new employees and contracting consultants receive the Child Protection Policy and are required to comply with the principles outlined within it. A signed copy of the Code of Conduct for ERSHA Employees is also given to the Human Resource Department.

### *Recruiting and selecting volunteers, interns, and temporary staff*

If the position and agreed responsibilities involve contact with children, the recruiting and selection process does not differ from the approach used to hire permanent employees or consultants.

#### ***Personnel development***

##### **Training and awareness creation**

- ERSHA organizes a training and awareness raising programs for the newly and existing staffs on child protection policy; (Guideline for Orientation on Child Protection Issues Annexed)
- ERSHA organizes training on child protection policy for the staffs who are responsible for the recruitment and selection;
- ERSHA organizes awareness raising programs for its partners, volunteers, part-timers and consultants, the orientation points to be provided for the new staff is annexed herewith;
- ERSHA present its child protection policy available to all staffs and partners for easy access and reading;
- Every projects of ERSHA will clearly display contact details for reporting possible abuse and every staffs and stakeholders will have contact details for reporting;
- Training, exposure visits and support will be provided by the organization to ensure the commitments are met;
- Following the induction on the organizations child Protection Policy, a staff/intern/volunteer will sign off his agreement on the format annexed herewith.

### **3.5 Communication Standards**

Defining communication protocols regarding Children

- Images of children not to be taken while they are taking bath or changing clothes. They are to be properly clothed;
- Allow children to give their own account without interfering or asking leading questions;
- In case of case studies name of child has to be changed as well as no personal information to identify location of child to be given;
- There must be accurate representation of the statement made by staff and children;
- Never sensationalize and manipulate text and images and emphasis to be given on dignity of child;
- No information regarding the organization or any child to be obtained over telephone;

- The media will interact only with the organization head or unit heads or designated staff deputed by the heads;
- Prior information has to be given regarding date of publication/telecast/broadcast for management and children as well as all responsible bodies;
- The staff should not encourage viewing, downloading and distributing inappropriate materials such as pornography to children; and other staff or partner
- All staff involved in child sponsorship activities (message collection, photo taking) shall endeavor to make it a positive experience for the child with a potential for learning and enjoyment
- Avoid taking photos without the consent of the child and or guardian/family.

#### **4. Case Management**

ERSHA has an institutional system for dealing with and prosecuting cases of suspected child abuse and maltreatment. The goal of the case management system is to enable an appropriate and speedy investigation of any given case and to identify cases of abuse and maltreatment early on. It should also be ensured that the affected children are protected and that they are offered access to special support in order to guard against any further injury to them. Decision makers in the child protection system are provided with the frame of reference and the flow of information to relevant parties is ensured. All ERSHA employees are aware of this system. Furthermore all individuals, connected to the organization, are informed of its existence, the system's processes and the party to it. Children in the projects receive an explanation of the system's purpose and background and involved in establishing the system as part of the project activities. The welfare and safety of the child serve as the foundation for all the decisions made within the case management system.

#### **4.1 ERSHA Case Management System: Structure and Parties**

##### **4.1.1 The Child Protection Focal Person and the Child Protection Committee**

Within ERSHA, there are committees in the head office and in each project offices. These committees consist of three members who are active in any case of suspected abuse and they have to keep one another informed and make decisions together or depend on the case they will report to higher management body.

The Child Protection Committees both at head office and projects are lead by ERSHA Child Protection Focal Person at head office and projects respectively. The Child Protection Committees

ensures that the reported cases of suspected abuse and maltreatment are thoroughly investigated, prosecuted and appropriately documented. The Committees also ensures that the necessary steps for protecting the affected child are initiated. Regular reports from the Child Protection Focal Person of ERSHA's Projects enable ERSHA's Child protection Committees at head office to monitor how the child protection system works down at the project level.

All of these people are employees trained in child protection who have related expertise. They also receive training on regular bases. They are required to handle the reported cases in the strictest confidence and to protect the identity of the concerned child, informer and accused appropriately. If member of the Child Protection Committees has a personal relationship with anyone suspected of child abuse, they will be replaced by the delegate to avoid any conflict of interest. The Child Protection Focal Person has a duty to document each case of suspected abuse in writing up until it is closed and also insure that the child protection policy is put into practice

**Child Protection Focal Person Responsibility:**

- Be the first point of contact for personnel/staff, parents and children/young people where concerns about children's welfare, poor practice or child abuse arise;
- Ensures that the reported cases of suspected abuse and maltreatment are thoroughly investigated, prosecuted and appropriately documented;
- document each case of suspected abuse in writing up until it is closed and also ensure that the child protection policy is put into practice;
- Participate in the development and implementation of policies and procedures for inter- organization work to protect children;
- Participate in bottom-up discussions that will inform policy formulation and implementation;
- Encourage and help develop effective working relationship between the various institution and professionals involved in child protection, based on trust and mutual understanding;
- Undertake participatory action researches on child protection issues using PRA and other participatory methods and develop strategies to address issues coming out of the research;
- Improve the quality of child protection work and of interagency working through specifying needs for capacity building (training) and development,

- Ensure that appropriate records are maintained, appropriate agencies are notified and ERSHA procedures are followed;
- Maintain contact details for local Social Services and Police;
- Ensure synergy and integration among the different institutions and professionals involved in child protection;
- Promote ERSHA's best practice guidance and codes of conduct within the organization;
- Advise the Child Protection Committee on its approach to child wellbeing and ensuring that this is monitored and reviewed. \Ensure, along with the Child Protection committee, that confidentiality is maintained;
- Promote anti-discriminatory practice, in accordance with the ERSHA's child protection Policy.

**Child Protection Committee Responsibility;**

- Receive complaints and report to concerned body by consulting the child protection focal person ;
- Ensures that the reported cases of suspected abuse and maltreatment are thoroughly investigated, prosecuted and appropriately documented;
- Participate in bottom-up discussions that will inform policy formulation and implementation;
- Undertake participatory action researches on child protection issues using PRA and other participatory methods and develop strategies to address issues coming out of the research;
- Mediate in child protection cases in the community taking into account the best interest of the child;
- Follow – up on cases reported to the police, Department of social Welfare and other professional protectors to ensure that appropriate actions is taken on the case;



- With the assistance of local authorities, professional protectors, support and participate in the rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of abuse, violence and exploitation into the community;
- Ensure synergy and integration among the different institutions and professionals involved in child protection;
- Participate in the development and implementation of policies and procedures for inter- organization work to protect children;
- Encourage and help develop effective working relationship between the various institution and professionals involved in child protection, based on trust and mutual understanding;
- Mobilize resource for the effective functioning of the committee is able to implement identified activities.

#### **4.1.2 The Child Protection Legal Advisor**

ERSHA will ask advice its legal advisor for internal and external cases. The Child Protection focal person should closely work with the legal advisor. Particularly in case of serious cases and where there cases of suspected abuse involved accusations against ERSHA employees, the Child Protection Committees should involve the legal advisor in the investigation and seek legal advice in handling criminal matters/proceedings.

#### **4.1.3 System for reporting**

There are two different reporting systems. The first one is internal reporting system and the second one is external reporting system.

##### **1. Internal Reporting**

Concerns should, in the first instance, be raised to the Child Protection Focal Person at head office and projects in greatest proximity to the point of concern. Alternatively, and particularly where the programme staff may not feel comfortable in reporting to the appropriate CP Focal Person, all staff at any location may report their concern directly to the Programme Director/Executive Director located in Addis Ababa.

In the final instance, where the arrangements mentioned below are for whatever reason not convenient or practical, any staff member with concerns may report to any other senior colleague in

who she/he has confidence. The key requirement is that reporting takes place in response to concern being raised.

a) Programme Office Staff

Any Programme staff should make their concern known directly to their CP Focal Person. Reporting directly to the CP Focal Person, rather than the next immediate line manager, will help to speed information flows and will support confidentiality by minimizing in the first instance the number of people who need to be informed. Where the CP Focal Person is absent, staff should report to one of the CP Committee member (Program Manager or Expert) or report to the senior staff member delegated as acting for the Focal Person or to the head of CP Focal Person and or Executive Director.

b) Head office based Staff

Any staff member based at the head office in Addis Ababa should make their concerns known directly to the head office CP Focal Person. Reporting directly to the Program Director, rather than the next immediate line manager, will help to speed information flows and will support confidentiality by minimizing the first instance the number of people who need to be informed. Where the Focal Person is absent, staff should report to the one of the CP committee formed at Head office or to the senior staff member delegated as acting for CP Focal person and or Executive Director.

## **2. External reporting**

Concerns should be referred to relevant external agencies wherever possible, normally following internal discussions or prior to such discussions if urgent action is required. This step recognizes the fact that ERSHA doesn't have a statutory role in investigating child protection concerns, and also that it may not be agency best placed locally to respond to such matters. However, reporting concerns externally may not be possible or appropriate, according to the nature of the concerns and the local circumstances which prevail. The principle of 'best interests of the child' and the desire to secure the best outcomes for the child should always govern decisions regarding what action to take in response to concerns.

It should also be recognized that ERSHA staff, Child Protection Committee, Legal Advisor and others may have a continuing role to play following external reporting, in offering further support to the child/family: for example, by seeking therapeutic or practical support, in relation to any subsequent process of investigation.

ERSHA's potential partners can be governmental, nongovernmental and other actors. Governmental organizations which include; The Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs offices and The Federal Supreme Court Child Justice Project Office at Federal and Regional levels, Police and Justice

Office at all levels will normally be the appropriate authorities for external reporting. These authorities will give legal advice, referral service as well as following up of cases. The health offices also provide medical and psychological treatment for the abused child. The other partners also include different NGOs working on child protection. These NGOs also provide rehabilitation services for example; protection, psychological and medical treatment to the abused child. Other actors which consist of 'Idirs' Women Associations, Self Help Groups, Child Clubs etc also work with ERSHA for protection of children. After discussion with the Executive Director/the Management Body whoever is appropriate, the senior staff member at the relevant location will inform the relevant offices about the incidents. It will then be the responsibility of the same to inform the police and other appropriate government entities and take action.

ERSHA will establish a close working relationship with like-minded government and non government institutions for better result/for the prevention of and protection against child abuse and neglect.

#### **4.1.4 Case Investigation**

Where concerns do arise, it is important that these are responded to positively and that adequate discussion takes place, at Project level and with Head Office, to determine the nature of the concern, levels of risk, and subsequent actions.

ERSHA as an organization and the situations in which it works mean that often there may be a limit to what it can do to intervene in the lives of individual children and the extent to which it can afford them protection, even when it does take action. However, where concerns are identified, it is crucial that these are raised and discussed and that whatever action is practicable is taken in order to ensure the protection of children from abuse.

Once an allegation is made, there shall be an immediate response that protects the child from further potential abuse. The immediate response of the organization shall be addressing any health and protection need of the child parallel to the gathering of information. The abused child and his/her families shall be informed of the allegation and the proposed action and they should be consulted where possible as to the process to be followed.

Working with issues of abuse is particularly complex and demanding. Staff and others should raise concerns with their managers in order to discuss the problems fully as they arise and to access the support available.

It is also important for ERSHA to monitor all concerns regarding possible child abuse, and to be aware of any specific cases as they arise. In order to meet its commitments in this area, ERSHA must

ensure that everything is being done to support and protect the child/children in question, and that it is able to take or support any action necessary to also protect ERSHA as an organization, where this is a concern. Issues which at first appear to have only localized impact, may well have wider implications for the organization as a whole. Therefore require a coordinated response.

### **Internal First round Investigation**

Following the immediate reporting of cases, first round investigation is initiated when there is not enough information. The objective of this investigation is to collect missing information and to complete child abuse/ allegation-reporting format (Annex 5). This also helps to conduct quick decision. In the process of first round investigation any appropriate staff of ERSHA can be involved. It is crucial that the investigation be conducted immediately and in a case specific manner.

The First round investigation can lead to three findings;

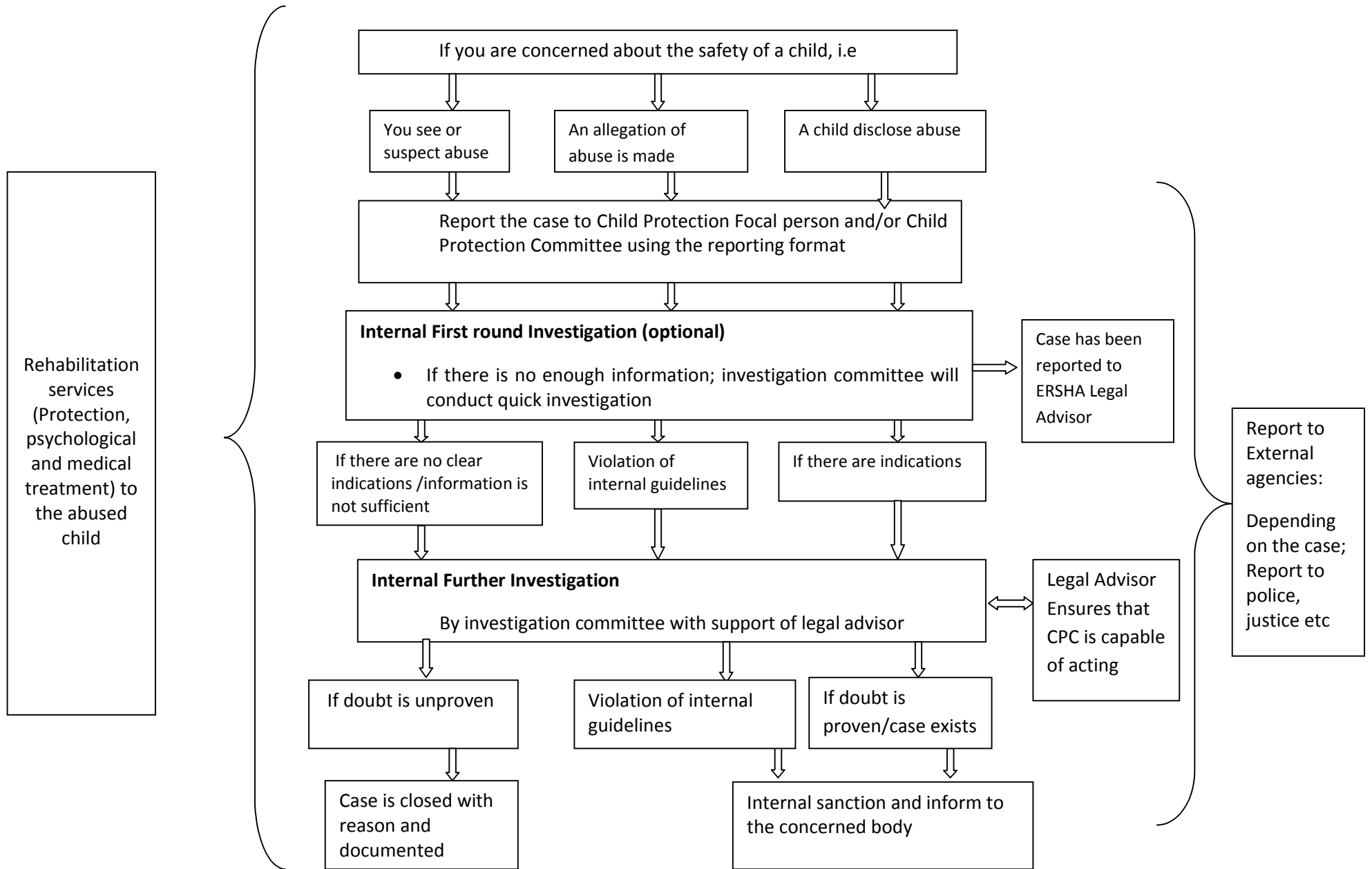
- If there are no clear indications or information is not sufficient; the case is documented in writing as closed and the involved parties are informed.
- If the internal Code of Conduct or other ERSHA guidelines have been violated but nothing has occurred that could activate criminal proceedings, a sanction will be issued corresponding with the individual's relationship with ERSHA. When ERSHA employees are involved, disciplinary measures may be instigated; where donors are concerned this may mean prohibiting any future project visits.
- If there are indications another extensive internal investigation is initiated

### **Internal further investigation**

The internal further investigation is led by the Child Protection Committee. The objective of the internal further investigation is to conclusively resolve reported cases of suspected abuse. The Child Protection Committee makes decisions what other parties need to be involved in the investigation going ahead. That may include senior management personnel and the child focal person, different ERSHA's stakeholders as well as ERSHA's Legal Advisor.

In the process of investigation, questioning the child and other witnesses with professional support is mandatory. Corresponding protective measures for the affected child must be initiated and maintained. If it is determined that the doubt is unproven, the cases are documented as stated in the first round investigation. If allegation is proved then administrative actions will be taken on the perpetrators. Termination of contract for staff, ending the volunteer relationship for volunteers, terminating contracts for external consultants and ceasing partnership for NGOs and CBOs.

**Figure 1: Cases involving ERSHA employees or people who have gained access to children via ERSHA**



#### **4.1.5 Protection System for affected Children and for the individual involved in reporting/investigating process**

Child abuse is distressing for all concerned and it is often difficult to accept that it may have occurred, to the point that there is denial or that warning signs are dismissed. The danger is that under-reaction resulting from this lack of acceptance may mean children remain unprotected and exposed to further abuse. If this policy is to achieve its intentions of preventing abuse and protecting children, it is essential that staff and others understand their responsibility to raise any concerns they may have regarding the safety of children.

Children on occasion may disclose that they are being abused. In such circumstances it is important to respond in a calm, caring and supportive manner. The child is never to blame in situations of abuse and should be reassured they have done nothing wrong, either in relation to the abuse itself or in reporting it.

The child needs to know that you are listening and taking seriously the information that is being divulged, and that you will respond positively to ensure their protection. Listen carefully and let the child tell you the information in their own way. It is important to record what is said - at the time if appropriate, or as soon as possible following the disclosure. It may not be appropriate to inquire into the details of the abuse at this stage. It is important, however, to listen and respond positively to the child and be supportive without asking direct questions.

The child also needs information and an explanation of what will, or is likely to happen, next.

Immediately following disclosure, it is crucial that staff or others report the alleged abuse in line with the set procedure, in order to discuss subsequent action and to consider how the support and protection needs of the child may best be met. Consideration also needs to be given to who should be informed of the disclosure/allegations, and by whom.

#### **Confidentiality and Confidential record-keeping**

##### **Confidentially:**

In all matters dealt with as part of this policy, it is essential to respect the need for confidentiality. In certain circumstances, any lack of confidentiality may have devastating effects for the lives of children and may also result in serious consequences for adults involved in the process.

In responding to issues and concerns regarding possible abuse, staff and others must exercise extreme vigilance in protecting information and must pass on this information via the reporting process described in this policy, only to those people who need to be aware of it.

On occasion, it may be that information offered by an individual has to be passed on, against the express wishes of the person concerned, in the interests of protecting a child or other children.

This is a particularly difficult issue when the individual concerned is a child disclosing or alleging abuse. For this reason, it is essential to make clear the fact that it may not be possible to keep such information wholly confidential. Ideally this should be done before any such matter arises - for example, by means of a written policy or statement - but certainly as soon as it appears that sensitive information may be disclosed. *Do not promise to keep secrets.*

It should also be made clear that the decision to pass on information will be discussed with the child concerned and their views sought on the release of information, the process for this, safeguards, and so on, but that it may not be possible to influence any subsequent process. Information on the process, likely sequence of events and possible outcomes should also be discussed with them. (It is also important to ensure the child continues to be informed of what is happening and has opportunities to discuss and influence the process.)

Where this issue is a particular concern, staff and others may wish to develop specific local guidance on the matter.

### **Record Keeping:**

Any concerns, allegations or disclosures must be written down at the time or as soon as possible after the concern is raised, and no longer than 24 hours afterwards. Records should be signed and dated.

Records should be as detailed and precise as possible, giving an exact account of what was said, especially where it is a child who is disclosing abuse or making an allegation. They should report the details as disclosed or alleged, including who was present and what happened, the sequence of events, and so on. All subsequent action should also be documented.

Records must be kept securely in a locked place to which access is restricted. Managers have a particular responsibility in maintaining the confidentiality of these records and must ensure that the records, or any information they contain, are made available only to relevant parties. The transfer of information - verbally, through the mail, electronically, etc - should be done in such a way that confidentiality is maintained.

In order to protect persons reporting child abuse concerns; the organization will ensure the safety of anyone who genuinely report child abuse case legally and administratively and take administrative measure to a person who makes false or misleading allegation against anybody;

## **5. Documentation and Development**

### **5.1 Participation and Empowerment of Children**

ERSHA and its partners will actively support the participation, empowerment of children and express their views in all matters affecting them in accordance with their gender, age, maturity, and capacity. They will be assisted to enhance their capacity in terms of creating better understanding what child abuse is all about, factors exposing them to abuses, legal issues protecting children from abuses and the mechanisms to avoid them and how to deal with the cases. Different participatory methodologies will be applied for different ages. They will also be encouraged to participate actively in all stages of a given project cycle from identifying problems, design interventions, implementing the plans and monitor and evaluate the performance. Effective participation recognizes children and builds their capacity and resilience, and allows them to protect themselves and their peers.

Child friendly version of child protection policy will be prepared. It is in the form of leaflets posters written in child friendly language, taking into consideration levels of understanding and literacy.

### **5.2. Follow-up/monitoring and evaluation:**

The monitoring activities will make sure that the child protection policy is effectively and efficiently implemented at all levels of the organization. This process will be an input to measure the impact of the child protection policy in safe guarding and protecting children. The result of the M&E also used for the revision and updating of the policy with respect to specific period and situations experienced. ERSHA and partners will ensure meaningful participation of children in planning monitoring and evaluation of the Child Protection Policy.

### **5.3 Policy implementation strategy and review**

ERSHA will apply the following strategy in order to implement the policy;

1. Internalizing Child Protection Policy: ERSHA will make sure the well understanding and commitment of the organization senior management (General Assembly, Board and Senior Management level staff both at Coordination and Project office on the policy. Awareness raising and induction trainings are the main activities to be done for creating common understanding. The policy document also put available to be accessed for all concerned.



2. Establishing Reporting Structure: child protection at the organization level is realized through establishing focal person and child protection committee at each project level and its coordination office. Child protection policy awareness provision and handling cases of child abuse is managed by this structure.
3. Integration of CPP in project cycle management: Child protection issues must considered in the organization project development, monitoring and evaluation process
4. Child participation: As one of the values of the organization “community Participation”, children participation in every aspect of development which concerns their life is important. Therefore, ERSHA is committed to make sure the functional participation of children and preparing child friendly version of this policy.
5. Networking and collaboration: with the objective of child protection and wellbeing ERSHA work in collaboration and networking with concerned bodies.

The child protection policy will be reviewed every two years or whenever there is a need to make a major change in the organization or any legislation regarding the child protection. Since this is the first policy regarding child protection, its effectiveness and efficiency will be assessed in the process and its gaps and shortages considered for further development of the policy.

## **6. Institutional Ownership**

Effective of 2014, which is the date of approval by ERSHA Board of Directors, all parties of ERSHA have fully endorsed this Child Protection Policy, and the Management will oversee its implementation and will take all necessary steps to ensure its adherence.

### **Board of Directors**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
1. -----	-----	-----	-----
2. -----	-----	-----	-----
3. -----	-----	-----	-----
4. -----	-----	-----	-----
5. -----	-----	-----	-----
6. -----	-----	-----	-----
7. -----	-----	-----	-----

## II. Annexes

### Annex 1: Guideline for Orientation on Child Protection Issues

All new staff, interns & volunteers should undergo orientation of joining. The main issues to be covered in the orientation are the following:

- The purpose of child protection (in brief)
  - Why ERSHA developing this policy?
    - To raise awareness across the organization of the problem of child abuse
    - To clarify expectations and offer guidance to staff and others on preventing, reporting and responding to abuse or suspected abuse.
    - To ensure at the point of recruitment, and generally in the management of ERSHA's work with children, that the risk of harm to children is minimized.

- What the does the policy say?

The key messages from the document overall can be summarized as follows;

- The abuse of children is a major issue which ERSHA is address in its work on children protection and in relation to individual children or groups of children in it is in contact with.
  - The roles and responsibilities of ERSHA staff and others are to protect children from abuse and to report any concerns in line with the process described in the policy document.
  - It is essential that everyone in ERSHA is aware of the problem of abuse and what to do should a child protection matter arise.
- How will the new policy affect staff and others?

The following developments will affect staff and others;

- Recruitment and selection procedures will be improved.
- An implementation process will be aimed at all staff and others.

- Mandatory reporting of concerns within ERSH is required.
  - Local procedures for reporting concerns will be developed which everyone will be expected to use as appropriate.
- The upbringing and the socio-economic background of the children with whom the Organization works.
- Child development
- Interviewing children
- Listening skills
- Psychological abuse
- New legislations
- Communication protocols
- Behavioral protocols
- Maintaining confidentiality
- Dealing with children sensitively
- All working laws and conventions regarding children in the Country. Child focused articles in the Constitution, the Family law and other related, articles and provisions

## **Annex-2: Recruitment and selection guidelines**

- Proposed action required for recruitment of relevant posts:
    - Child protection statement in advertisement for post
    - Child protection statement and specific responsibilities of the post holder included in the job description.
  - Information to all applicants for the post to include:
    - summary of Child Protection Policy
    - summary for applicants of Child Protection Recruitment and Selection Guidelines
  - Disclosure of Convictions form
  - Consent to Criminal Records Check form
  - Covering letter to applicants to highlight need for specific child protection procedures.
  - Measures at point of interview to include:
    - identification and resolution of employment gaps
    - questions on convictions/disciplinary record
    - questions on child protection issues relevant to role
  - criminal records checks for all applicants
  - Reference Enquiry Form to include specific reference to work with children
  - sight check on qualifications claimed on application form
  - job history checked through Contributions Agency
  - passport requested as proof of identity
  - Liaison with Staff Health Officer on outcome of medical examination.
- Job specifications/volunteer assignments/terms of reference for commissioning consultants, etc*
- All job specifications/volunteer assignments/terms of reference *must* contain a generic statement about ERSHA's commitment to child protection and the expectations it places on everyone to adhere to its principles and practices. In addition, job specifications/assignments/terms of reference *must* detail any other specific responsibilities for implementing and safeguarding ERSHA's corporate child protection policy.
  - All managers responsible for drafting these documents *must* include such statements in the future and should also give consideration to amending existing documents where it is felt particularly important to identify child protection responsibilities associated with certain posts.

### **Annex 3: Code of Conduct for ERSHA employees**

ERSHA is committed to ensuring that children are protected from abuse and maltreatment within the organization, at events and in connection with its work within in-country structures. Accordingly, preventative measures have been instituted within the organization and for sponsored projects to minimize the risk of violence and abuse. The aim of the Code of Conduct for interacting with children is to ensure ERSHA employees work together to take responsibility for the safety of children.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

By signing this document, I agree

- to comply with ERSHA's child protection guidelines.
- to be responsible for observing and spreading awareness for the Code of Conduct in my work environment.
- to respond immediately to any concerns, allegations and incidents, and to notify the ERSHA Child Protection Team without delay.

In this respect, I will

- contribute to creating a safe, nurturing and empowering environment for children.
- take children's beliefs and concerns seriously and foster their personal development.
- treat all children with respect.
- follow the „two adult rule“ whenever possible, which means making sure that another adult is present or nearby whenever individual training, education or medical treatment is taking place or whenever a child involved in a ERSHA-sponsored project is a guest at the home of a ERSHA employee. When an adult is having a private conversation with a child, care should be taken that both can be seen by a second adult. Whenever individual consultation or treatment is necessary, consent must be obtained from the child's legal guardian and another adult must be informed of when and where it will take place.
- respect children's human dignity and their need to be protected at all times when taking photographs, filming or writing reports for public relations work; in particular, this also applies to handling personal data with care and requiring that this is also respected by third parties who receive information about children from ERSHA or partner organizations.

I will also refrain from any and all forms of threats, discrimination, physical or verbal abuse or intimidation. This means that I will never

- abuse the power afforded to me by my position or office or abuse my influence on the life and well-being of a child.
- strike a child or assault them physically in any way; disciplinary measures will never entail violence or humiliation.
- abuse or exploit a child sexually, physically or emotionally; in particular I will never engage in sexual activities with a child or expose it to any pornographic material.
- hug, pat, kiss or touch a child in any manner that is inappropriate or culturally insensitive.
- use any language that is inappropriate, indecent or abusive.
- direct any sexual innuendo or suggestive act toward a child.
- provide a child with unsolicited help to perform intimate acts that the child can manage alone (such accompanying the child to the toilet, bathing the child or changing the child's clothing).
- Develop a relationship with children that could be regarded as exploitative or abusive.
- Spend a disproportionately large amount of time with a child away from other children.
- Tolerate or facilitate illegal, dangerous or abusive conduct toward children.
- ask for a favor or service that could be viewed as abusive or exploitative towards children.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Annex 4: Information for people visiting projects**

Would you like to visit ERSHA's projects? You may well have the opportunity to do so. Children really enjoy getting to know donors. And by visiting a project on site, you can see the developmental progress of the children and the project first hand. A visit is always an enriching experience and it can help to build bridges between different cultures.

This informational sheet is designed to provide you with some helpful information. At the end of the day, a lot of work needs to go into a project visit to make sure it is a positive experience for everyone involved. In addition to the important guidelines that we have instituted to protect children, we also have some organizational tips for your project visit.

As an organization dedicated to children's rights, ERSHA bears special responsibility for the girls and boys of this world. It is our highest priority to ensure the well-being, protection and safety of the children in our projects at all times.

As a ERSHA donor, you will come into contact frequently with children during the project visit you are planning, and so we would like to inform you about our guidelines for protecting children and visiting our projects over the next several pages. We kindly request, that you read them through carefully and sign to confirm that you are not only aware of them, but that you will also follow them.

Naturally you can contact us at any time should you have any questions. Please also feel free to bring up anything you might be unsure of due to an unfamiliarity with other cultures. We are happy to help.

In any case, we would like to take this opportunity to wish you an unforgettably positive experience – not only for you, but also for the employees, children and young people involved in the projects.

##### **Before the visit:**

- Whenever you plan a trip, please find out about any precautionary health measures and entry requirements for the country you are going to well in advance of your trip.
- For a project visit, please contact us at least one month beforehand. That way we can tell everyone involved on location about your visit. We certainly will also have a few helpful tips for your trip.
- You will receive a local contact address from us. Before your trip, please use this point of contact to get information about your visit and to make other arrangements.
- You should let this person know exactly when you will be travelling and how many people will be arriving.
- You are responsible for covering all the costs directly or indirectly associated with your journey and stay. This also applies to any interpreters who might be required. We work with our partners to help as many children in need as possible by stretching donated funds as far as possible. Accordingly, tight cost calculations do not permit us to reimburse receipts for transport, accommodation or telephone costs and other services – even as a one-off exception. If our

partners are willing in exceptional circumstances to temporarily cover an expense, we kindly request that you settle any amounts on location.

- Generally it is not possible to provide accommodation on project premises.

**General rules during your visit:**

- Donors are guests and visitors to the project and not delegates from ERSHA. Accordingly, we kindly request that you refrain from getting involved in project matters and avoid conflicts or complaints with project staff. You should also refuse any request for money as a rule.
  - Please observe project rules during your visit. Comply with local employees' requests. We are happy to address any critical experiences or observations with you once you get back.
  - The visit should be tailored to the children's general day-to-day routine so that it is not a disruption for the rest of the community.
  - Please refrain from smoking or consuming alcoholic drinks while on project premises or in the presence of children.
  - Respect children's religious beliefs and do not attempt to influence them in any way.
  - When you come into contact with children, a project staff member must be present at all times. Our project partners require this for legal reasons related to liability. Activities outside the project (e.g. field trips with a sponsored child) could be cause for unpleasant suspicion, even if these concerns prove to be unfounded.
  - If you would like to take a picture of anyone, particularly children, during your project visit, you may do so only after obtaining permission from the people in charge of the project and the children. This has to do in part with tightened legal requirements locally, though it also serves to protect children. When taking pictures, always respect the child's human dignity and need to be protected. Do not take pictures of children who are inappropriately clothed. Please also respect the child's personal rights by not posting any photos online after your trip (Social Media, etc.).
  - We request that you wear clothing that is appropriate for the country you are visiting and that you avoid drawing any unnecessary attention to your personal wealth by what you wear (such as expensive jewelry) or by spending conspicuous amounts of money.
  - In general, you should refrain from giving gifts to children or families involved in the projects. An alternative to individual gifts could be holding a small party or donating some equipment to the project (such as contributing game or sports gear) that all of the children in the project can enjoy.
- If you have any questions, we are happy to offer some advice before your trip.

ERSHA performs its important work for the benefit of disadvantaged children in light of the specific state, religious and socio cultural background of the country. This includes treating people's feelings, values and customs carefully, not damaging their sense of self-worth and not widening the gap between rich and poor.



With your visit, you can help to build bridges of understanding and support ERSHA's work. We would like to take advantage of this early opportunity to wish you a pleasant and safe journey filled with many unforgettable people and experiences.

With my signature I confirm that I am aware of ERSHA's information regarding project visits and that I will abide by it.

First and last name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Location/Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Annex 5: Child abuse/allegation-reporting format**

1. The incident has been disclosed by child/staff/others/ observed by reporting staff himself:

---

---

---

2. The incident was observed/suspected?

---

---

3. About the child

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Sex: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Project: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Incidental Details:

Date, time and place of incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Date when the incident came to the knowledge of the staff:

---

Name of the alleged person:

---

---

5. Details of the person: *(please put tick mark)*

- Staff: contractual staff, general assignment, trainee and community volunteers (paid)
- Intern/ Volunteer
- Supplier
- Contractor
- Donor
- Visitor
- Parents

6. Nature of allegation:

---

---

7. Personal Observation of the reporting staff (visible injuries, child's emotional state etc.):

---

---

---

8. Immediate action taken by the reporting staff:

---

---

9. Were there any other people or children involved in the incident:

---

---

10. Remarks (*if any*):

---

---

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Action taken by team leader:

---

---

[Confidential document; to be reported to the child Protection focal person/ team leader]