

# LOCAL CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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ARK DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION



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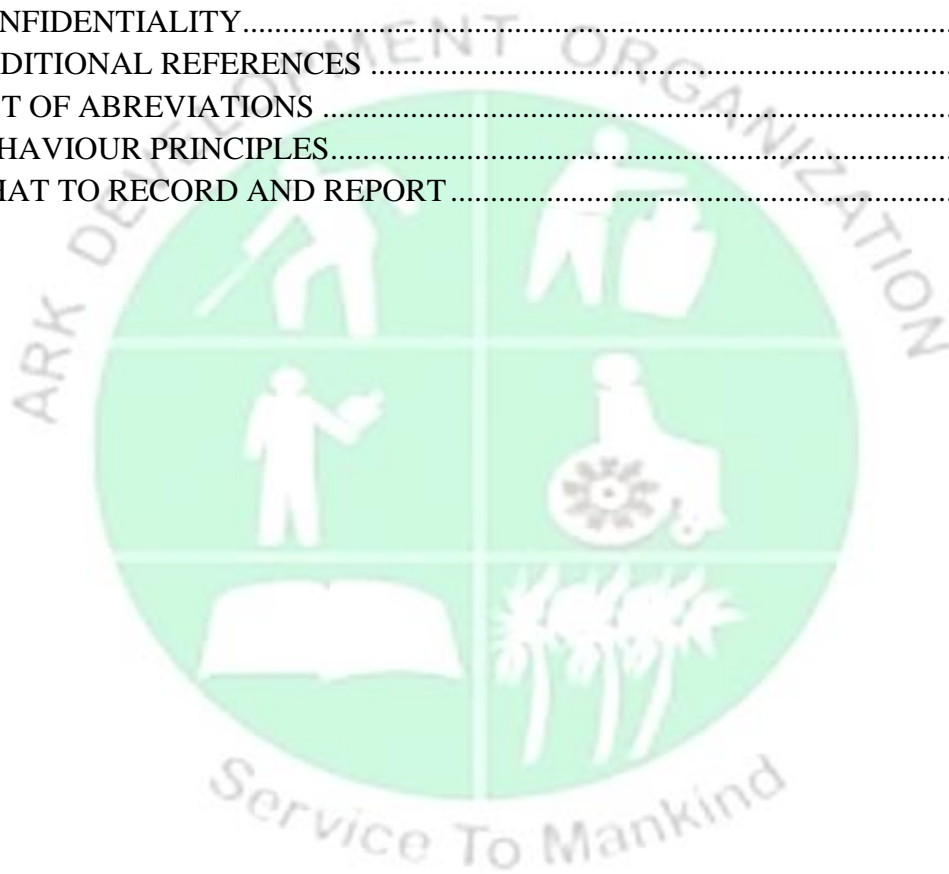
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## 1.0. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of **ARK DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION**'s Child Protection Policy:

A *child* means a person below the age of eighteen years.

*Child abuse* means contravention of the rights of the child which causes physical or mental harm to a child

## 1.2. WHO IS THIS POLICY FOR?

The policy applies to the whole of **Ark Development Organization (ADO)** – the field, National Headquarters and National Boards – in relation to **ADO's** board members, volunteers, sponsors, employees, consultants, contractors, teachers, supervisors and representatives of partner organisations / local governments who have been brought into contact with children while working for **ADO**. These people are referred to as "**ADO Associates**".

## 1.3 PURPOSE

As a child-centred development organisation, committed to the wellbeing of children and to supporting the Convention of the Rights of the Child, ADO does not tolerate child abuse.

It is ADO's expectation that its employees and others who work with ADO will have children's best interests and safety at heart in their involvement with ADO.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that ADO has procedures in place to prevent and deal with child abuse by any Associate of ADO.

## 2.0. POLICY

**ADO** promulgates zero tolerance of child exploitation and abuse.

**ADO** is committed to actively preventing child abuse.

**ADO** takes positive action to prevent child abusers becoming involved with **ADO** in any way and takes stringent measures against any **ADO Associate** who commits child abuse when this comes to the notice of **ADO**.

**ADO Associates should:**

- Familiarise themselves with situations which may present risks and learn how to deal with those situations<sup>1</sup>;
- Contribute to an environment where children are able to recognise unacceptable behaviour and feel able to discuss their rights and concerns;
- Wherever practical, ensure that they and others meet children openly in the presence of other adults;
- Raise concerns about any case of suspected abuse in accordance with the compliant procedures outlined below.

**ADO Associates must not**

- Disclose information that identifies sponsored families or children to unauthorised persons or make it available to the general public without the informed consent of the family and, when appropriate, the child.

### **3.0. DEALING WITH CHILD ABUSE**

Alleged cases of child abuse should be reported to the relevant directors (Regional, National, etc) depending on the location and nature of the alleged abuse. They will refer the matter to the local authorities and decide on other appropriate steps, including informing relevant ADO offices and/or supporting criminal prosecution.

### **3.1 COMPLIANT PROCEDURE FOR ADO**

The following procedures shall be followed in the event of any child abuse incident.

#### **Step 1**

Anybody with a concern about an abuse incident involving any ADO staff or associate shall report the case to the immediate Head or his/her designee of the area within which the incident occurred.

#### **Step 2**

The Child Protection Issue Reporting Form shall be filled and signed by the reporter to authenticate the report.

#### **Step 3**

Where it is clearly evident that a crime may have been committed e.g. serious physical assault resulting in serious injury or sexual abuse, the matter shall be referred immediately to the appropriate department authorized to investigate such cases to be

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to Annex 1 on Behavior Principles.

addressed. With reference to article 16 and 17 of the Children's Act 560 of 1998, this mandates any person with information on the contravention of the rights of the child to report the case to the department of social welfare who shall investigate such cases.

Alternatively, the case can be reported to DOVVSU (Domestic Violence Victims Support Unit) of the Police service for the appropriate investigation and action.

ADO may support the family of the victim to seek redress in the law courts of Ghana provided the family is prepared to pursue the case and provide evidence when required. **Where the family fails and refuses to protect the child, and ADO feels strongly about the particular incident, ADO may on behalf of the victim pursue the matter.**

On the other hand, if it is minor incident e.g. talking harshly or insulting a child, the incident will be recorded and addressed appropriately.

#### **Step 4**

The Programme Manager or his/her designee shall inform the Child Protection Point person at the Office who in consultation with the next senior officer will inform the Executive Director (ED).

#### **Step 5**

Where it is evident that a crime has been committed, the ED shall convene a case management committee to decide on appropriate actions and response to the incident. Particularly, regarding ADO's relationship with the suspect as well as addressing emerging issues. The ED will make an initial report to the Regional Office who will also subsequently report to BOT.

ADO will not entertain and condone any criminal offence whatsoever against any child and shall report any legitimate case of abuse to the appropriate authorities for investigations to be carried out. All actions taken by ADO with respect to child protection incidents will take the best interest of the child into consideration.

In the event of any incident external to ADO and or her associates but however comes to our notice, ADO shall advise the matter to be referred to appropriate law enforcing agencies for further action.

## Local Reporting Process – ADO

**Within 24 hours**

Child Protection Issue is received in District Office

Child Protection Issue is received in Programme Area

### Report to Programme Unit Manager

PUM name & contact details:  
.....

Focal Point name & contact details.....

### Report to Executive Director and/Focal Point

ED name & contact details: **EMMANUEL KWAFO MINTAH, ADO**  
Tel: 0244101915

FP name & contact details: **EUNICE ASANTE, ADO TEL: 0543911895**  
**ALBERT ASAMOAH, ADO TEL: 0547781659**

**Informs** External Agencies such as **DOVVSU, Unit/Dept of Social Welfare** if a crime has been committed.

### Report to District Focal Point

RCP name & contact details:  
Email address:

**Informs** Senior Managers at Regional Office

### Report to Child Protection Unit

Child Protection Manager:  
Child Protection Coordinator:

**It is anticipated that most cases will be dealt with at the Regional Office level. If the CP issue involves a staff member or Associate and is a criminal offence or serious violation of the CP policy, a strategic meeting will be convened.**

If an employee raises a **legitimate concern** about suspected child abuse, which proves to be unfounded on investigation, no action will be taken against the employee.

**Any employee who makes false and malicious accusations, however, will face disciplinary action.** ADO will take appropriate legal or other action against other Associates who make false and malicious accusations of child abuse.

An alleged perpetrator of child abuse will normally be suspended from their normal relationship with ADO during investigation of allegations. ADO will sever all relations with any Associate who is proven to have committed child abuse.

### **3.2. CONFIDENTIALITY**

An allegation of child abuse is a serious issue. In following this policy and local procedures, it is essential that all parties maintain confidentiality. Sharing of information, which could identify a child or an alleged perpetrator, should be purely on a ‘need to know’ basis. Unless abuse has actually been proved to have occurred, one must always refer to “alleged abuse”.

### **4.0. ADDITIONAL REFERENCES**

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The Children’s Act 560 1998.
- Domestic Violence Act 732, 2007
- ADO’s Mission, Vision and Attributes
- ADO’s Strategic Policy
- ADO’s Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Policy
- ADO’s Sponsorship Standards
- ADO’s recruitment, induction, training and development policies, Operational manual and administrative procedures.

### **5.0. LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ED	Executive Director
MT	Management Team
RO	Regional Office
CP	Child Protection
DOVVSU	Domestic Violence Victim Support Unit
DSW	Department of Social Welfare
PU	Programme Unit

## 6.0. BEHAVIOUR PRINCIPLES

The Behaviour Principles are rules of appropriate behavior for all ADO personnel and associates i.e. staff and volunteers involved in any aspect of an event where children are participating including those who are chaperone/escort, translator or accompanying adult.

The Behaviour Principles are based on ADO's Child Protection Policy. ADO personnel and associates are required to understand and have attended training on the ADO Child Protection Policy 'Say No to Abuse' and follow the Behavior Principles.

It is good practice to ensure that there is a more general understanding of the Behaviour Principles by all participants at an event. This could be done by the organizers making an announcement (written or oral) that explains the Behaviour Principles for both children and adults.

### **Underlying Principle:**

A key element in working to safeguard the welfare of all children is the promotion of their rights. The Convention on the Rights of the Child states children have the right:

- To have their health, safety and well-being, and their best interests considered **paramount**.
- To have their welfare and development promoted and safeguarded so that they can achieve their full potential.
- To be valued, respected and understood within the context of their own gender, culture, religion and ethnicity, and to have their needs identified and met within this context and within the context of their family wherever possible.
- To be listened to and to have their views given careful consideration, and to be encouraged and actively helped to participate in decisions which affect them.

In order that these rights are respected, when personnel are in contact with children, they should:

- At all times treat children with respect and dignity and recognize them as individuals in their own right.
- Regard them positively and value them as individuals who have specific needs and rights and a particular contribution to make.
- Work with them in spirit of co-operation and partnership based on mutual trust and respect.
- Value their views and take them seriously.
- Work with them in ways that enhance their inherent capacities and capabilities, and develop their potential.
- Strive to understand them within the context in which they live.



The Behaviour Principles are designed to protect children but are also intended to protect personnel from false accusations of inappropriate behaviour or abuse. In addition to reflecting behaviour requirements based on local sensitivities, the following basic principles should be followed:

ADO associates should never:

- Use language, make suggestions or offer advice that is inappropriate, offensive or abusive.
- Behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative
- Have a child/children with whom they are working stay overnight at their home unsupervised
- Sleep in the same room or bed as a child with whom they are working
- Do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves
- Condone, or participate in, behaviour 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 favour particular children to the exclusion of others
- Hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children
- Develop physical/sexual relationships with children
- Develop relationships with children which could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive
- Spend excessive time alone with children away from others
- Hire children as 'house help'
- Fondle, hold, kiss, hug or touch children in an appropriate or culturally insensitive way.

Where possible and practical, at least two adults, preferably including a female and male, must supervise all activities where children are involved and are present at all times. If this is not possible, staff and volunteers are encouraged to look for alternatives such as being accompanied by community members on visits to children.

Personnel must ensure children are protected from abusive and exploitative situations particularly by the media (images, interviews, video etc) This requires children being:

- fully informed on what is intended and giving their consent
- being reassured that they have the right to stop or withdraw and being given the practical skills to indicate this wish reassured that they will be supported by personnel

Staff and volunteers must be concerned about perception and appearance in their language, actions and relationships with children. They should seek to maintain ADO's professional reputation and uphold the principles of ADO's Child Protection Policy.

Staff and volunteers should be aware of situations that may present risks and manage these in consultation with the designated person. They should plan and organise work and the workplace to minimize risks.

ADO staff and volunteers should empower children-discuss with them their rights, what is acceptable and unacceptable and what they can do if there is a problem.

Staff should recognize and promote a sense of accountability to ensure that that poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour does not go unchallenged.

**Inappropriate behaviour toward children, including failure to follow the Behaviour Principles will be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from employment.**



## 7.0. WHAT TO RECORD AND REPORT

The following scenarios and guidance aim to clarify what situations need to be recorded and reported in line with ADO's CP procedures. These scenarios are only illustrations and there are many more situations that may arise where judgements need to be made on recording and reporting.

Nature of concern	Recording/reporting action
A minor incident is witnessed or reported to a staff member – e.g. a teacher is seen delivering a mild slap to a child's leg, a father is reported to have shouted harshly at his son in a village	A note of the incident should be made and kept locally. Recording of such incidents may in time give rise to a pattern of behaviours that may require some form of intervention, either with an individual or as part of a programme response to an identified protection issue that appears to be prevalent.
A serious incident is witnessed by a staff member – e.g. a teacher in a school with no association to ADO hits a child in his class resulting in the child receiving a broken arm	This represents a serious physical assault and quite probably a criminal matter. <b>This incident should be reported to the police and within ADO via the CP Reporting Form, including notification to RO</b>
A serious incident external to ADO (i.e. the alleged perpetrator and victim have no formal relationship to ADO) is reported to a ADO staff member. The staff member is therefore aware of a case of serious physical or sexual abuse in the community and ensures that this is reported to the local statutory agencies responsible for dealing with child protection cases. ADO may be active in making or supporting this referral.	Brief details of such cases and the actions taken by ADO should be recorded on the CP Reporting Form and held locally. <b>No reporting outside the RO is required although where the volume is significant a quarterly report of involvement in such cases (without details such as names) should be sent to RO to gain an overview of our work in this area.</b>
A minor incident, allegation, suspicion or rumour regarding a ADO staff or associate is reported but after initial fact-finding it is clear that there is a misunderstanding or that there is no information at all to support the concern	A record of this incident should be made locally using the CP Reporting Form and the outcome of the matter be clearly recorded. This should be held on file. <b>No reporting outside the CO/NO is required</b>
An apparent minor incident regarding a ADO staff member is reported. The incident relates to a breach of ADO 's CP Code of Conduct which is subsequently investigated and results in management action being taken to correct the staff member's behaviour towards children he is working with.	This incident should be recorded using the CP Reporting Form and held on file locally. <b>No reporting outside the CO/NO is required in this case</b>
A serious allegation is made against a ADO staff member or associate which requires formal investigation and suspension of the staff member	<b>This incident should be recorded using the CP Reporting Form and reported immediately in line with the local procedures.</b>



**ARK DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION**

**INCIDENT REPORT FORM FOR CHILD ABUSE ALLEGATIONS**

*CONFIDENTIAL: Please restrict access to this document and keep it stored safely (e.g. using passwords or encryptions for computers and locking lock offices when unattended). Always use code names when referring to individuals involved in the case, omit information that could reveal identities (e.g. date of birth, address, phone number, description of unique physical traits) and keep information on the identity and personal details of persons involved separate from incident and related reports.*

1. Details on how, when, and by whom, the allegation was received:

2. Description of alleged incident, including dates, times and locations:

3. Description of alleged or suspected survivors (e.g. name, age, gender, ethnic origin/nationality, specific needs):

4. Description of alleged or suspected perpetrators (e.g. name, age, gender, nationality, organizational affiliation/position, previous record of misconduct):

5. Actions taken by organization in response to allegations to date (e.g. referral for assistance, investigations, notification of UN/Host Government):



The logo of the Ark Development Organization is a circular emblem divided into four quadrants. The top-left quadrant shows a person walking with a cane. The top-right quadrant shows a person handing a bag to another person. The bottom-left quadrant shows a person holding a book. The bottom-right quadrant shows a person holding a gear. The text 'ARK DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION' is written in a semi-circle above the emblem, and 'Service To Mankind' is written in a semi-circle below it.

6. Actions taken by other organizations or entities (e.g. UN, Host Government) in response to the allegation:



The logo of the Ark Development Organization is a circular emblem divided into four quadrants. The top-left quadrant shows a person walking with a cane. The top-right quadrant shows a person handing a bag to another person. The bottom-left quadrant shows a person holding a book. The bottom-right quadrant shows a person holding a gear. The text 'ARK DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION' is written in a semi-circle above the emblem, and 'Service To Mankind' is written in a semi-circle below it.

7. Requested support from partners (e.g. support for SEA survivors, investigations)

Report transmitted by:	
Name:	Contact info (email, phone):
Title:	Date:



**ARK DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION**  
**REFERRAL FORM**



**CONFIDENTIAL: Please restrict access to this document and keep it stored safely.**

Note: Please share copies of filled out referral forms with the survivor and receiving agency and keep a copy for the organization's internal records and follow-up.

Referring agency	
Agency/org:	Contact:
Phone:	Email:
Location	

Receiving agency	
Agency/org:	Contact:
Phone:	Email:
Location	

Survivor information	
Name:	Phone:
Address:	Age:
Sex	Nationality:
Language:	ID number
If survivor is a minor (under 18)	
Name of primary caregiver:	Relationship to child:
Contact information for caregiver:	Is child separated or unaccompanied? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Caregiver is informed about referral? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (If no, explain)	

Background Information/Reason for referral and services already provided	
Has the survivor been informed of the referral?	Has the survivor been referred to any other organization?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (If no, explain below)	c Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (If yes, explain below)

Services requested		
<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Protection Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Shelter
<input type="checkbox"/> Psychosocial Support	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal Assistance	<input type="checkbox"/> Material Assistance
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Nutrition
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical Care	<input type="checkbox"/> Livelihood Support	<input type="checkbox"/> Support for children born as a result of SEA
Please explain any requested services:		

Consent to release information. (Read with survivor/ caregiver and answer any questions before s/he signs below. Sign on behalf of survivor/caregiver if consent is given verbally and survivor/caregiver cannot sign.)
I, _____ (survivor name), understand that the purpose of the referral and of disclosing this information to _____ (name of receiving agency) is to ensure the safety and continuity of care among service providers seeking to serve the client. The service provider, _____ (name of referring agency), has clearly explained the procedure of the referral to me and has listed the exact information that is to be disclosed. By signing this form, I authorize this exchange of information.
Signature of responsible party (survivor or caregiver if a child):
Date (DD/MM/YY):

Details of Referral
Any contact or other restrictions? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (If yes, please explain below)
Referral delivered via: <input type="checkbox"/> Phone (emergency only) <input type="checkbox"/> E-mail <input type="checkbox"/> Electronically (e.g., App or database) <input type="checkbox"/> In Person
Follow-up expected via: <input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> E-mail <input type="checkbox"/> In Person. By date (DD/MM/YY):
Information agencies agree to exchange in follow up:

Name and signature of recipient:

Date received (DD/MM/YY):

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