



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN IN OUR COMMS AND MEDIA WORK

KEY PRINCIPLES

- 1) Our WNCB guiding principle is DO NO HARM. The welfare of the child is paramount, and outweighs all other considerations, including the potential for a strong media story.
- 2) When identifying children who want to be involved in media and comms work, country staff should try to ensure their genuine consent and check that the child is resilient and able to talk about their own lives without risk of emotional or physical harm.
- 3) All interviews with children should be child-led, as far as possible, and children and their parents should feel empowered to say 'no' or stop the interview at any point and withdraw the content.
- 4) As far as possible, parents or guardians of children being interviewed should be consulted before the interview to ensure that they believe that their child will not be negatively emotionally affected by telling their story.
- 5) Comms staff should not interview a child if:
 - a. The child is severely distressed to a point that they are unable to engage in daily activities.
 - b. The child says they feel suicidal or they feel they are self-harming.
- 6) A brief reaction protocol should be set up before any particularly sensitive interview. If local counselling (or equivalent) services are not available, and the child is to name any sources of support within their community or family, the interview is unlikely to be in the best interest of the child.
- 7) Children who have recently experienced trauma of any kind are likely to be more emotionally vulnerable than children who have not. Consult the country office lead or child protection staff before starting communications work with these children.
- 8) Comms staff should leave the child and family with a way of contacting, such as the country office main number. This way they can contact if they want to withdraw consent at any time. It's important that they understand that once a story is published, WNCB's ability to stop the story being shared is very limited.