**Child Safeguarding Update Report**

**To: CEO Forum**

**From: Faith Nimineh, Child Protection Consultant, ChildFund Alliance**

**Subject: Update on the Child Safeguarding consultancy**

**Date: May 9, 2016**

**1.0 Introduction**

This consultancy work was commissioned by the Child Fund Alliance. The purpose of the consultancy is **to develop a new set of child safeguarding standards and align our policies with current standards and to liaise with and provide technical support to our member organizations, including in the upgrading of their internal safeguarding policies**. At the end of the consultancy, it is expected that a final **child safeguarding policy and code of conduct** will be developed and an application for **Associate membership** will be submitted to the Keeping Children Safe Coalition on behalf of the Child Fund Alliance Secretariat. The consultancy is for a period of five months effective March 1st 2016-July 31st, 2016.

This report, therefore, intends to provide highlights of this consultancy to keep members abreast of the progress made so far. It focuses on major activities that have been completed from the work plan, some observations, and recommendations for the next phase of the process.

**2.0 Topline Message**

* We are reviewing our current policies and procedures to reflect the changes in the global community of child-centered and development organizations.
* For Child Fund Alliance, this revision will also reflect the changes to our program standards which incorporate the new standards on keeping children safe.
* Going forward, we will have to ensure that the revised policy is implemented across the Alliance with the same standards. This should be a non-negotiable standard for all members.
* Creating a child safe organization is critical to our mission, vision, values and strategy.
* **The Importance of having a Child Safeguarding Policy and Global Code of Conduct**:
* In the wake of constant reports of allegations of abuse by staff of NGOs and UN personnel and more important than ever before as we begin to campaign against violence on children in all settings we must set our houses in order and ensure that we are doing the best we can to present a child safe organizations.
* **Consequences**:
  + Having a policy which sets out our collective commitment to protect children and our organizational reputation is critical to the work that we do. But if we do not act now, and there is an allegation of abuse against a staff and other representatives, we have failed in our effort to provide protection for children. Our collective reputation would be adversely affected; this could have long-term consequences on our program and brand.

However, we also know that inadvertent actions, the lack of preventative actions and other failings on our part can sometimes have the unintended consequence of causing harm. Plus, preventable accidents can happen. We have seen examples of this across the developmental, humanitarian; fundraising, campaigning and advocacy work where we work. Applying a safeguarding approach to the planning of programs or in a myriad of other forms of engagement we have with children can be effective in mitigating and removing those risks.

In other words, Safeguarding is our attempt to ensure that everything which lies within our control is done to ensure the safety and welfare of children that we work with.

**Next Steps**

* The ChildFund Alliance Secretariat has submitted the initial application to the Keeping Children Safe Coalition for an **Associate Membership**.
* Our Child Safeguarding Specialist will finalize the Child Safeguarding Policy and the Code of Conduct.
  + The policy will reflect our commitment to children, actions we take to protect them, how we define abuse and actions we will take if abuse is reported.
  + The Code of Conduct is the behavior that we expect from anyone who is associated with the ChildFund network: applies to all members, staff, and other representatives.

The first draft of the Policy and the Code of Conduct will be ready by the **end of May**.

* It will be shared with the Core Group of staff from across members
* Feedback will be accepted, incorporated and finalized by the **end of June.**
* It will be sent to the board for approval.
* The Secretariat must decide how it is communicated to all members.
* Implementation begins.