
Welfare Assistance and Development Policy

Version 3.2

Introduction

ChildFund Australia is an international development organisation that works to create community and systems change which enables vulnerable children and young people, in all their diversity, to assert and realise their rights.

The purpose of this policy is to guide ChildFund Australia and our partners to clearly separate development from welfare activities and ensure that funds are used for activities that contribute to sustainable development outcomes.¹

Frameworks

ChildFund Australia is guided by the following standards:

- Article 26, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) recognises the right of the child to benefit from social security.
- Article 27, UNCRC recognises the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.
- ACFID Code of Conduct (CoC) which requires that signatory organizations separate social welfare and development programming in fundraising, programs, reporting and public communication. It further requires this obligation to extend to any partner organizations that implement social welfare activities.

Key Principles

Welfare: ChildFund Australia defines welfare in accordance with the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. It is a minimum, essential level of benefits to individuals and families that enable them to acquire at least essential health care, food, basic housing, water and sanitation and basic forms of education. This essential care is typically provided by the state and is a one-way transfer of resources. While welfare is intended to alleviate the worst aspects of poverty, there is no clear expectation that it will address inequality, building lasting capacity or transform communities.

Community Development: ChildFund Australia has a rights-based approach to programming and we are guided by community development practice and principles:

- Empowerment
- Participation
- Self determination
- Equality
- Collaboration and shared purpose
- Inclusion and demographic diversity
- Sustained engagement

¹ This policy does not include social protection measures as part of emergency relief or emergency-response situations; see the Emergency Response Policy.

Policy Statement

ChildFund Australia operates to address poverty and to achieve sustained positive changes in the wellbeing of children through programs that do not perpetuate dependency.

ChildFund Australia's position is that welfare activities should be provided by designated duty bearers i.e. the state. ChildFund Australia supports duty bearers by better equipping them with the systems and resources they require to support their own populations.-ChildFund Australia may support projects that include welfare activities on a temporary basis, where a government is unwilling or unable to do so, and as part of a broader engagement process, that is phased out over time.

Direct welfare assistance will not be provided by ChildFund Australia. In the unlikely event that ChildFund Australia provides a form of welfare assistance, it must be part of a broader development program designed to enhance social and economic conditions for children and young people. It must also enhance individuals', organisations' and government's' capacity over the long-term. Welfare assistance will be delivered by a third party, other than ChildFund Australia, who is part of the national or subnational environment tasked with long-term social welfare, care and assistance to affected populations.

The design of such projects will be done in conjunction with national and subnational levels of government and compliment expressed efforts to strengthen the national social welfare system. Such projects may budget for contribution to the provision of basic service cost, however these services, direct or referral, will be managed by entities other than ChildFund Australia.

Policy Commitments

ChildFund Australia will:

- Assist staff and partners to understand the critical importance of strengthening local capacity in order to manage sustainable and community led development, as opposed to welfare.
- Establish local procedures which clarify to staff when and how direct welfare assistance will be provided.²
- Work to understand community, national and sub national priorities in the provision of social welfare to their population and the specific role of ChildFund in supporting these objectives
- Provide direct assistance through mandated entities to individual children and families only when this is delivered within a broader community development program that is designed to address the root causes of problems.
- Increase communities' capacity to advocate for government services.
- Ensure partners do not provide welfare assistance in the course of their work with children and communities supported by ChildFund Australia.
- Not discriminate between children in a community where we work on any basis, including enrolment or sponsorship status.
- If under special circumstances direct assistance must be provided by ChildFund, distribution and provision of services must follow procedures issued by senior management and undergo planned and rigorous monitoring.
- Plan to phase out any direct assistance activities not existing in a broader development program.

² These procedures must be in place whenever any direct assistance is provided.

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