

# Child Protection Policy

## Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to provide guidance in relation to contact with children during the course of carrying out projects and other activities for Water East Timor (WET).

## Scope

This Child Protection Policy applies to all members of WET, and any person who is engaged in carrying out WET projects and other activities – either in Timor-Leste or Australia.

## Definition

A child is any person under the age of 18 years.

## Child Protection Code of Conduct

The following Code of Conduct forms part of the WET policy in relation to child protection.

WET does not tolerate any actions or behaviours that might lead to, or be thought of, as child exploitation and abuse. WET prioritises the welfare of children in all interactions with the Timor-Leste community.

Anyone engaged in WET activities in Timor-Leste or in Australia will:

* treat children with respect
* not use inappropriate language, including language that is harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate
* not engage children in any form of sexual activity
* wherever possible ensure that another adult is present when working or socialising in proximity with children
* not use any digital device or social media inappropriately to exploit or harass children, or access child exploitation material
* not use physical punishment on any child
* not hire children for labour which is inappropriate to their age or development, or interferes with their education or recreational activities, or which places them at risk of injury
* comply with Timor-Leste and Australian legislation, including labour laws relating to child labour.

## Reporting child exploitation and abuse

If a person associated with a WET project or activity becomes aware of an actual or potential child exploitation or abuse situation, they must:

* make a report to the Secretary of WET at watereasttimor@gmail.com or report the matter to police in either Timor-Leste or Australia
* keep a written record of any actual or potential child exploitation or abuse.

## Risk assessment

Any project activities in Timor-Leste require a risk assessment to ensure that any actual or potential child protection risks have been addressed. Child protection risk assessment is part of the WET planning process, and no project or activity will be undertaken without consideration of the risks of vulnerable children. This may include an Australian-based Working With Children Check (WWCC).

## Photos and videos of children

WET will be cautious about publishing images of children, and will only do so where it enhances the goals of WET and where permission has been sought from parents or carers to use the images.

Where children are identifiable in the image, permission from parents or carers must be in writing and must entail informed consent where it is clear that the parents or carers understand the nature of their consent.

## Breaches of this policy

People engaged in WET projects or activities should be aware that breaches of this Policy may be punishable under local laws and regulations.

If WET becomes aware of any breaches of this Policy, action will immediately be taken to remove the person from the WET project or activity, and consideration will be given to reporting to law enforcement agencies.

## Communication

This Policy will be disseminated to all those people who are engaged in WET projects or activities.

Members of Committee of Management and Timor-Leste Project Leaders will be required to acknowledge that they have read, understood, and will comply with this Policy.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Version number  | 1 |
| Date approved by the WET Committee of Management | 8 April 2021 |
| Date of next review  | April 2024 |
| Related policies and documents  | ACNC Standards |