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Text in blue is attached as supporting documentation

Text in green contains links to publicly available materials
Opening Statement

On behalf of ChildFund Australia, I am pleased to share our Accountability Report for 2020-21. Accountability continues to be an essential component of our work with children, their families and communities and core to good development practice. In these unprecedented times where the COVID-19 pandemic continues to have devastating impacts that present a host of new challenges, we also see new opportunities to become a stronger and more effective organisation and aim to meet these opportunities and challenges head on. Guided by our interim Strategic Directions 2020 – 2021 which focussed heavily on our response to COVID-19, ChildFund Australia has strived to adapt and evolve over the last 12 months, with the commitment to create lasting and meaningful change for children, their families, and communities in these challenging times.

ChildFund’s COVID-19 response has focused on five key areas:

- Stop COVID-19 from infecting children and communities;
- Support children to continue learning;
- Keep children safe from harm;
- Ensure children get the food they need; and
- Support young people to play an active role in the response.

ChildFund Australia implemented projects across the Mekong and the Pacific in the reporting period, and a snapshot of COVID-19 response activities are as follows;

- ChildFund Laos partnered with the Ministry of Health and World Health Organisation to implement immunisation events and encourage widespread take-up of the vaccine.
- ChildFund Vietnam trained teachers across Cao Bang and Bac Kan Provinces on improved use of the internet so that they could teach children online and they could continue to study through the pandemic.
- In Myanmar, ChildFund distributed packages with food and other basic hygiene items while maintaining social distancing.

Over the reporting period, ChildFund Australia was successfully re-accredited with the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), our largest single donor. Accreditation with DFAT signifies an INGOs capability to deliver quality development outcomes and accountability to their stakeholders. The process enabled a while-of-organisation opportunity to reflect on accountability mechanisms and to improve and strengthen practices as well as create a stronger understanding and culture of accountability among staff.

During the last year ChildFund Australia has also continued to focus on strategy development for the next Strategic Plan, 2022-2025. Following the decision to pause the development of the Strategic Plan 2020-2024 and instead develop a set of interim Strategic Directions 2020 – 2021 that focused on response to COVID-19, there was the opportunity to deepen and broaden conversations and consultations with key stakeholders even further and to look at what an agile and ‘new normal’ strategy should contain. In the last 12 months, extensive consultation with the Board, Country Office staff, local partners and Sydney staff through workshops, interviews, focus group discussions and surveys have taken place. New understandings and responses to COVID-19 as well as research have been utilised, with the new strategy to be finalised and approved by the Board in early 2022.
Regarding the areas for improvement highlighted by the Independent Panel on the 2019-2020 report, some brief comments on our ongoing actions are included below with a more substantial updated provided in the body of the report.

Progress and challenges over the reporting period: in June 2020 a final report on progress against the ChildFund Australia 2015-2020 Strategic Plan was presented to the ChildFund Australia Board. Whilst acknowledging some of the data was incomplete, the findings in this report have informed the next Strategic Directions (June 2020 to December 2021). New KPI targets were set that are reported against quarterly, half-yearly and annually as relevant and inform progress and effectiveness reports. Attached as supporting documentation to this report is both the final report for the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan as well as the KPI report for FY20-21.

Sustainability of your work: ChildFund Australia welcomes the opportunity to share details of actual sustainability in our programs and projects in addition to “how” sustainability is achieved. The FY19-20 Program Effectiveness Report presents impact and outcomes of programs and projects strengthening the formal systems that are vital to children’s wellbeing, including evidence as to how targeting systems supports sustainability. This report seeks to demonstrate how ChildFund Australia’s programs have increased the quality, accessibility, or responsiveness of formal systems to the communities they serve, through our work in Child Protection, Disaster Risk Reduction, Education and Health. The report draws on project data from various year-end reports, end-of-project reports; case studies; and finding and learnings from the mid-term reviews, internal project reviews and external evaluations. Reflections of ChildFund Australia Technical Advisors also informed the sectoral learning included in this report. Also included is an analysis of sample project examples focusing on working with and through formal systems alongside local NGOs and CSOs.

Responsible stewardship for the environment: as noted in our report, ChildFund Australia largely focussed on assessment and analysis in the last reporting period, with the aim to determine priorities, identify a baseline and promote a common understanding which included a Green Audit. The findings of the Green Audit have now been published and shared across the organisation with commitments made by ChildFund Australia to: carbon offsetting; reducing CO2 emissions; and increasing awareness around positive environmental practices that can be adapted in our day-to-day work. The ChildFund Australia Green Team is responsible for leading and overseeing the implementation of recommendations and commitments.

ChildFund Australia would like to thank Accountable Now and the Independent Review Panel in advance for their time and feedback on this Accountability Report. We value the constructive and insightful feedback received and will continue to use it as an opportunity for internal reflection and continued strengthening of our accountability framework.

Margaret Sheehan  
CEO, ChildFund Australia
Cluster A: Impact Achieved

A. The impact we achieve

A1: Mission Statement and Theory of Change

ChildFund Australia’s vision recognises our child-centred approach to development, and the importance we place on children and young people having a voice on issues that impact their lives, and our mission increasingly recognises the growing portfolio of work undertaken to strengthen formal systems and inclusion.

Our Vision: a world without poverty where all children and young people can say: “I am safe. I am educated. I contribute. I have a future.”

Our Mission: we partner to create community and systems change which enables vulnerable children and young people, in all their diversity, to assert and realise their rights.

ChildFund Australia’s mission statement is aligned with the vision and mission of the ChildFund Alliance - a global network of 12 child-focused development organizations helping nearly 23 million children and their families in 70 countries around the world, of which ChildFund Australia is an active member - that states:

Vision: a world in which all children enjoy their rights and achieve their full potential.

Mission: together with children, we create sustainable solutions that protect and advance their rights and well-being.

ChildFund Alliance members work to end violence and exploitation against children and to overcome poverty and the underlying conditions that prevent children from achieving their full potential.

Theory of Change: for the reporting period, ChildFund Australia’s a Theory of Change included four drivers of poverty the organisation works to address, as informed by experience, technical expertise and knowledge:

Access to Assets: ChildFund Australia believes children, youth and adults are poor because they are deprived of key assets, including human, capital, environmental and social assets.

Voice, Agency and Power: ChildFund Australia believes children and youth are poor because they lack opportunities, experience discrimination or marginalisation in their societies and are prevented from contributing to decisions which affect their lives.

Protection: ChildFund Australia believes some people are more vulnerable due to their exposure to risk from economic shocks, environmental damage, lack of legal protection, civil and political unrest, armed conflict, corruption and displacement. Some children, youth and women are also more vulnerable to violence, neglect, abuse, and exploitation because others hold more power over them.

Formal Systems: ChildFund Australia believes children, youth and adults are poor because they lack access to formal systems through which social services are delivered. Services are often not accessible, lower quality and/or not responsive to needs.

As part of the development of the next organisational Strategic Plan (2022-2025), the Theory of Change has undergone significant review during the 2021 calendar year, involving a range of stakeholders across the organisation. The revised Theory of Change (to be approved together with the new Strategic Plan in 2022) will include three themes:

- Enabling, empowering, and protecting children;
- Localisation and partnerships; and
- Sustainable and fit for future organisation.
These three themes lay the foundation for the next Strategic Plan which will describe in detail what we will do, how we will do it and how we will measure success.

**A2: Key strategic indicators for success**

*ChildFund Australia*’s Strategic Plan (2015-2020) provided a clear overarching direction to advance ChildFund Australia’s mission between July 2015 – June 2020, with a final report against KPIs submitted to the Board in June 2020. The development of the next Strategic Plan (2020-2024) began in late 2019, with a plan expected to be finalised by July 2020. However, given the ongoing impact and scale of the COVID-19 pandemic, ChildFund Australia’s Executive Team (ET) paused the development of the new plan and instead a set of interim *Strategic Directions 2020-2021* were developed and approved. ChildFund Australia’s *Strategic Directions 2020-2021* identified four priorities:

1. Protect, empower and educate children
2. Sustain and strengthen our organisation
3. Optimise fundraising
4. Innovate and change

These four priority areas were designed to ensure ChildFund Australia had a roadmap in place to navigate a pathway from the COVID-19 crisis to the new normal. This roadmap continued the commitment to build human and social capacity in communities as well and commits to explore and develop models to increase localisation. As the diverse and severe impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to be felt, this changing environment presents a host of new challenges but also new opportunities. ChildFund Australia is seeking ways to adapt and evolve to meet these opportunities and challenges head on and continue to create lasting and meaningful change for children. Development of a new Strategic Plan 2022-2025 recommenced in June 2021 and is due to be submitted to the Board for approval by the end of the 2021 calendar year. Country Office staff have had opportunities throughout the process to ensure local voices are reflected and a validation exercise is planned for December 2021/January 2022 with external stakeholders across the Country and Regional Offices, within the ChildFund Alliance and also the broader sector in Australia.

A detailed *KPI reporting framework* was developed to measure, monitor and report progress against the priorities identified in the *Strategic Directions 2020-2021*. The framework outlines 12 key performance indicators aligned against the four priorities and ChildFund Australia reports against the framework to the Board on a quarterly basis. Deliberate efforts were made to align reporting against areas of insight, foresight and oversight, including an annual impact survey that assessed the impact of ChildFund’s work in ensuring that children and young people are safe, educated and able to contribute. A final report on progress against the ChildFund Australia *Strategic Directions 2020-2021* will be presented to the ChildFund Australia Board at the conclusion of the plan’s period.

**A3: Progress and challenges over the reporting period**

Progress against the *Strategic Directions 2020-2021* is reported to the Board throughout the year by the CEO and other Executive Team members at regular Board meetings and/or at Board Committee meetings. A full review of progress on the Strategy including review of progress on all KPIs, is conducted annually by the Board. Strategy is adjusted accordingly to respond to changing conditions, trends and factors internal and external to the organisation.
The following is taken from our *FY20-21 KPI Report* and provides a brief, high-level summary of ChildFund Australia’s progress and setbacks in the 2020-21 financial year in pursuit of our Strategic Directions and the targets contained in the KPIs.

1 - Protect, Empower and Educate Children: as the health, economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic continued to unfold, ChildFund Australia prioritised response and recovery through our child-focused development programs, with a particular focus on education, child protection and social and emotional learning (SEL). Four proxy indicators linked to these priority sectors were identified to generate top-level impact data across Country and Regional Offices over the reporting period. Whilst the heightened COVID situation in-country resulting in lockdowns, movement restrictions and school closures were the primary challenges in data collection and led to a less than ideal sample size and continued political unrest in Myanmar also meant data was unable to be collected there, the following progress and challenges were identified:

- Children across Vietnam and Cambodia exhibit high levels of self-protective behaviours. Children reporting to be “confident” or “very confident” in their ability to protect themselves or their friends who are at risk are also similar in both countries: 55% in Cambodia, and 56% in Vietnam. Girls in both countries also report higher levels of confidence than boys. Social workers and other duty bearers in both countries also exhibit high ability to identify protective actions for children.

- Investment in school governance and management structures in Cambodia have ensured that School Improvement Plans respond to children’s needs, and that activities to boost the quality of learning and teaching, school management and improvement, and budget management are prioritised. An area to address is the way training for teachers is delivered, with the data analysis suggesting that the provision of ongoing coaching / monitoring / learning support for teachers is preferable to the block delivery of training currently favoured by the Ministry of Education.

- Education survey results in Laos are consistent with the ongoing challenge that most students in early grades do not know how to speak and read in Lao as this is not the first language in target communities and ethnic minority teachers are only now being recruited in significant numbers. However, new Lao language curriculum and textbooks recently introduced with extensive in-servicing should improve teacher capacity in the future.

- In Timor Leste, additional training and support targeting skills development in the use of tablet devices, navigating and maintaining technology and using it as a classroom resource has been a necessary investment.

- Given the level of grant funding investment in education in PNG, the ChildFund Education team in more recent years has benefited from staff stability, with key staff demonstrating growth in capacity / confidence, the ability to recruit better qualified and more experienced new staff, and the team has developed very effective working relationships with the National Department of Education at national/sub-national levels, ramping up the system strengthening side of work in education.

- Small grant initiatives in Laos have increased engagement and participation of youth in school / community activities, their sense of responsibility and their self-confidence for being active actors of the positive change.

- The past year highlights an important example of a growing recognition that young rural women are at high risk of being adversely affected by the measures enacted by their families to manage COVID-19. Coaches in a sport for development project, for example, are at risk of losing their role as parents push them back into farming, players similarly may not have the chance to return to school as people become reluctant to give up the benefit their additional labour gives the family.
**2. Sustain and strengthen our organisation**: a focus during the year was on the diversification of funding with initiatives undertaken to support this including the commissioning of a social enterprise feasibility study linked to ChildFund's sport for development (S4D) work; participation in the establishment of the *Emergency Action Alliance (EAA)* made up of 16 Australian-based member charities who use their reach and resources to save lives around the world. Not only does membership represent a means to diversity income in terms of funds raised for emergency response, but ChildFund Australia also provides fee for services in accounting and administration to the EAA; and investment in a new Business Development Unit (including grants, philanthropy and new business).

**3. Optimise fundraising**: whilst COVID-19 meant a number of interruptions to traditional fundraising (e.g. face-to-face funded was suspended at different times during the year), our regular giving base has stayed stable, with slight growth from Q3 to Q4 due to strong acquisition numbers from March to the end of the financial year. The number of online gifts continued the year-on-year growth in the same period over the past three years, primarily driven by a successful tax appeal. Total Public and Corporate Revenue was at 96% of budget, following a strong performance in Q4. Single Giving, Regular Giving and income received from the ChildFund Alliance all exceeded target for the year.

**4. Innovate and change**: ChildFund Australia led a ChildFund Alliance-wide piece of external research into localisation and has also commissioned the same consultant to do further contextual research on localisation and implications for our ways of working across ChildFund Australia’s areas of operation. Findings will inform the ‘localisation pillar’ of our new strategy: we have engaged with S1T2 (Storytelling First, Technology Second) to digitise our online safety Swipe Safe curriculum and whilst this will be piloted in Vietnam initially, plans are underway to roll-this out across the Asia-Pacific region; and under our sport for development (S4D) programming, there has been an increase in partnerships and curriculum products are available across 4 sporting codes in face-to-face, hybrid and online-only formats, acknowledging that impact depth varies across these products. The number and range of partnerships will increase with a series of small, strategic partnerships linked into positioning for international event partnerships in FY2122.

**A4: Significant events or changes regarding governance and accountability**

A new Board Chair (Belinda Lucas) was appointed in November 2020 to replace the outgoing Board Chair (Mary Latham) who had completed two consecutive terms. Belinda has been on the ChildFund Australia Board since 2015 and had previously been the Chair of the Program Review Sub-Committee. Jo Brennan, Carolyn Hardy and Anita Parer also resigned from the Board in November 2020 with, three new members recruited between February to June 2021, including Lisa Hresc, Kobus Ehlers and Tureia Sample.

Within the Executive Team, the Public Engagement Director (Di Mason) resigned in April 2021 and a new Fundraiser Director (Corinne Habel) commenced in November 2021. The Director – People and Culture position was also elevated to the Executive Team during the reporting period, reflecting the priority and importance placed on our people. ChildFund Australia’s full Board met six times between July 2020 and June 2021, including two strategy focused meetings in August 2020 and March 2021. Each of the Board sub-committees (Program Review, Communications & Marketing and Audit, Risk & Nominations) met four times during the reporting period.

The *Strategic Directions 2020-2021* were introduced and a number of organisational policies underwent revision, including the *Child Safeguarding Policy* and *Gender and Inclusion Policy*, which has subsequently been replaced with an organisational *Inclusion Policy*. The challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic have also had significant implications for ChildFund Australia’s work, with travel restrictions impacting program delivery, technical support and oversight from Sydney-
based colleagues. This has been addressed, for example, through increased frequency of formal communication between Country Office and Sydney Office and the delivery of training online. A continued focus on e-programming and remote learning has been key to ensuring support and oversight can continue from Sydney despite travel restrictions.

In terms of ChildFund Australia’s accountability to staff, the organisation has been responsive to the impact of the pandemic on employee safety, security and wellbeing and has supported all staff to access COVID-19 vaccines. There has been a particular focus on staff security and well-being in Myanmar, with regular updating of security management and contingency plans.

B. Positive results are sustained

**B1: Sustainability of our work**

Sustainability is a key principle of our program approach, as documented in our Program Handbook. The Program Handbook and its accompanying documents includes minimum requirements to guide the consideration of sustainability throughout the project cycle, including consideration and planning in a dedicated section of our project proposal, end of year project reporting and evaluation terms of reference (ToR).

For example, ChildFund Australia’s Education Sector Change Model identifies strengthening education systems as a key outcome. This is reflected in projects such as *Easy to Learn*. *Easy to Learn* is implemented in Cambodia and works to strengthen formal systems by working through local governments schools and in partnership with the Department for Education Provincial Office of Education and Ministry of Youth and Sports. Government partners are actively engaged in the project’s implementation, monitoring and reflection and training sessions with school teachers. The capacity of District Training Management teams has also been strengthened through the project, to support school leadership more effectively, facilitate trainings and monitor school progress. *Easy to Learn* projects from the outset have been implemented in partnership with the Kampuchean Action to Promote Education (KAPE), and in more recent years ChildFund Cambodia has supported other local CSOs in Cambodia to implement projects using the Easy to Learn model.

A key focus for ChildFund Australia’s approach to sustainability relates to our understanding that sustainability and local capacity are fundamentally linked. If programs are to be sustainable, there needs to be sufficient local capacity to manage them without being dependent on external assistance. This was the primary focus of the recently concluded Enhancing Program Quality (EPQ) project, aimed at improving programming in Asia and the Pacific region by synthesising organisational learning and increasing in-country staff and local partners capacity to deliver inclusive and quality outcomes and ran from July 2017 to June 2021. The end-of-project evaluation conducted in June 2021 found evidence that the program was relevant, effective, and efficient, and had contributed to improved quality, building capacity, as well as achieving project outcomes leading to more sustainability. ChildFund Australia will continue to prioritise building local capacity through a new Strengthening Partner Capacity project (2021-2024).

The first Program Effectiveness Report under our new MEL framework (2018) was produced in November 2021 and sought to explore impact of our work to strengthen formal systems. Evidence of sustainability from projects reviewed include:

i) Vietnam Child Protection Software project (1/6/18-30/8/20) set up a national network on Child Safety online by collaborating with NGOs, businesses, CSOs and the Vietnamese government to develop user-friendly technology for case management and reporting child protections concerns. As directed by the Department of Child Affairs (DoCA), a Case Management Software and Child Protection Reporting Application developed through the project was handed over to the Vice
Director of Center for Child Counselling and Communications Services in charge of the National Child Helpline 111 (NCHL) to monitor all reports from local child protection workers.

ii) ChildFund Pass It Back project in Laos and Vietnam (1/7/17 30/6/20): one of the major outcomes of the project was the strong and mutually beneficial partnership further developed and maintained with the Lao Rugby Federation (LRF), responsible for delivering sport for development activities. The project was instrumental in building the capacity of the LRF, with a key focus of the partnership linked to staff capacity development around project cycle management, financial management and safeguarding. The sustained development of these capacities enabled the LRF to attract new donors and increase their reputation and credibility. Furthermore, the partnership has also contributed to the LRF’s leadership regarding its own development priorities and through both the partnership and the project, the LRF is considered as a leader in safeguarding within the rugby community (such as by World Rugby and Asia Rugby).

B2: Lessons learned in the reporting period

The past year saw continued work and pivoting of program delivery to address the impact of COVID-19, amid various restrictions in ChildFund Australia countries of operation. Key activities delivered include COVID-19 prevention and control; life skills (including through sport for development); child protection; counselling; distribution of food items and basic supplies; and advocacy related to children’s safe return to school and continuous learning at home. The ability of our Country Offices to deliver programs during COVID-19 were helped by the factors such as the ChildFund Australia sector focus areas meant we were well positioned to pivot to provide COVID-19 prevention information and referral to government services; collaboration with various actors from national to community level was a key factor in implementing COVID-19 response activities in areas of education, health, referral to emergency hotlines, psycho-social support, child safeguarding and child protection; existing presence in the community facilitated a quick response enabled us to contribute in multiple ways to the response. In particular, health interventions enabled quick engagement through its relationships with the Ministry of Health, as well as mobilisation of significant human and physical resources in project sites; strong relationship with community-based front-liners such as leaders, youth, volunteer parents, rugby coaches, drivers, health workers and volunteers, teachers, and police played a vital role in community-based awareness raising on prevention measures, installations of hand-washing facilities, distribution of preventive and hygiene supplies intended for children and their families; and lastly the flexible funding support by the donors, availability of sponsorship funds and unrestricted funds and being part of a consortium within the Australian Humanitarian Partnership (AHP) meant that we were able to respond quickly.

Key Learnings that informed ongoing stand-alone and mainstreamed COVID-19 interventions:

- **Risk management** - COVID-19 has become a standard risk in all projects to ensure that its impact is managed adequately and in a timely manner e.g., adherence to government’s guidance on travel and gathering of community members. In addition, **COVID-19 mainstreaming in projects** will have to continue as regular activity whenever applicable. Of particular significance is the messaging around COVID-19 vaccination as there are still places where misinformation is high across social media, as well as stigma attached to contracting the virus.
- **The positive relationships** between ChildFund, partners staff and communities are critical to being able to restart activities quickly and effectively and with the trust of community leaders.
- **Support to WASH activities should continue** - flexibility in budget should continue in order to fund construction of tippy taps and provision of water tanks.
• **Use of social media platform for communication, messaging coaching and mentoring has been proven effective during the height of pandemic.** For this to continue, it should be accompanied with investment on technology, capacity building for partners and other stakeholders, and life skills for young people.

• **Improved communication** - ChildFund Country Offices saw an improvement in communication and coordination with various government offices at all levels, e.g., through working with District COVID-19 Task Force.

• **Capacity building on emergency response** - ChildFund should continue capacity building activities for its staff and partners. An Emergency Preparedness Plan with scenario setting for COVID-19. In this plan, the roles, and responsibilities of ChildFund response team in all offices should be clear and updated regularly.

• **Needs assessments** must be done quickly to identify the needs of communities. This assessment relates to the desk-based assessment which reviews the guidance of the Ministry of Health, data provided by the local government and newspaper. It also relates to the consultation with other organisations that have similar activities. The initial needs assessment should be verified with local stakeholders.

• **Partnership with suppliers** - ChildFund Australia Country Offices should expand its suite of suppliers (e.g., hygiene and sanitation, PPEs) to cope with similar demands in future emergencies. In addition, a simple procedure of commodity procurement for an emergency should be available and provided to relevant people. Communication during this process should be very clear.

The report has been shared across the organisation and ChildFund Australia as well as ChildFund Alliance through the COVID-19 M&E Group.

### C. We lead by example

**C1: Leadership on strategic priorities**

ChildFund Australia continues to play a leading role in several national, regional and international networks and coalitions that demonstrate learning, impact and best practice around strategic priorities, especially those linked to education, child protection and child safeguarding. Some examples of our collaboration and cooperation with peers and key sector stakeholders over the reporting period include:

- ChildFund Australia is the co-convenor of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Education Community of Practice and Child Rights Community of Practice.
- ChildFund Australia remains actively engaged with ACFID and the CEO (Margaret Sheehan) was named as a keynote speaker at the Third Sector conference (November 2021).
- ChildFund Australia is an Executive Steering Committee Member for the Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood (ARNEC) and represents the ChildFund Alliance. ChildFund Australia has been asked to moderate numerous ARNEC webinars and asked to participate on the ARNEC Connections editorial committee.
- ChildFund Australia is a Steering Committee member of the Australian Child Rights Taskforce.
- ChildFund Australia co-chairs the INGO Forum in Papua New Guinea.
- ChildFund Australia is a member of the recently launched Emergency Action Alliance (EAA), made up of 16 Australian-based member charities and our Chief Operating Officer (Adrian Graham) is on the Board.
- ChildFund Australia is a working group member of the International Safeguards for Children in Sport; and a committee member of Safe Sport International UK.
Within the ChildFund Alliance, ChildFund Australia continues to play a leading role on Alliance bodies and committees. ChildFund Australia has a permanent place on the Alliance Board and the ChildFund Australia CEO is an influential member of the Alliance CEO Forum. ChildFund Australia actively contributes to the following ChildFund Alliance Taskforces and Committees:

- Advocacy Taskforce (Co-chaired by ChildFund Australia)
- Grants Support Committee (Co-chaired by ChildFund Australia)
- Alliance Program Committee
- ChildFund Alliance EU Office Steering Committee
- Child Protection in Emergencies and DRR Taskforce
- Child-Friendly Accountability Taskforce
- Strategic Implementation Taskforce.
- Communications and Marketing Committee

C2: Expertise is recognised and welcomed by peers and stakeholders

ChildFund Australia is a leading Australian international development agency, fully accredited with the Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and a member of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID). Examples of where ChildFund Australia’s expertise has been recognised and welcomed over the past 12 months include:

- ChildFund Timor Leste was selected by UNICEF and the Ministry of Justice as a civil society partner in a large-scale mobile Birth Registration campaign for four municipalities based on the recognised expertise; was involved in the joint review and development a parenting manual working with World Vision and Plan International and involved signing of a joint technical agreement with both organisations; and in July 2021 participated in the advocacy for the adoption of Child Protection legislation as part of the Child Rights network led by the Child Rights Commissioner and was invited to present our recommendations with regard to the draft ‘law for the Protection of Children and Youth in Danger’ to the parliamentary commission.

- In Vietnam, together with other child focused NGOs and UN agencies, ChildFund supported the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MoLISA) to develop a new national program for child protection, child labor prevention and the promotion of child participation. ChildFund Vietnam also worked with INGOs on recommendation papers proposed to the Ministry of Education and training (MoET) on the implementation of the post 2020 early childhood education curriculum with two focused areas: teacher professional development and language development and cultural identities for ethnic minorities; gender integration and social and emotional learning. The Cao Bang Provincial Department of Education and Training (DoET) has also applied our format of Individual Education Plans for students with disabilities into all preschools & primary schools in the province.

- ChildFund PNG has been present and visible at national forums, including the UN 75 Partnerships event where we were able to share strategic thinking on education as one of two civil society speakers; and at the National GBV Summit where we participated in a panel.

- In 2020, ChildFund began a two-year project working to support sports organisations to develop their safeguarding practices. In the context of the global pandemic, a Safeguarding in Sport: Online Learning Pilot Project was developed and delivered between August 2020 and January 2021. 31 organisations participated, representing regional member organisations, international federations, national governing bodies, athlete commissions and event organisers. The pilot was closely followed by the International Olympic Committee, UNICEF and a number of other key players in the sector with some joining sessions to observe.
C3: Inclusivity, human rights, women’s rights and gender equality

ChildFund Australia recognises that poverty alleviation and the realisation of human rights are interdependent. For ChildFund Australia, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is a foundation for our work. The UNCRC details a set of child rights in four basic areas: survival, development, protection, and participation. ChildFund Australia programs are designed to protect and advance these rights. Key documents which reflect our commitment to human rights and global human rights instruments include:

- Organisational Inclusion Policy
- Disability Inclusion Policy
- Gender Policy
- Proselytism, Politics and Development Policy
- Program Handbook - Gender Programming Toolkit
- Program Handbook - Disability Inclusion Programming Toolkit

A Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Advisor role was created in early 2021, and recruited by July, to work closely with key stakeholders and partners across the organisation to support equity of access, inclusion and participation across the project life cycle, with a focus on girls, children with disabilities, and those from ethnic or linguistic minorities. Linked to ChildFund’s new Strategic Plan 2022-25, a GEDSI work plan has been drafted with a focus on capacity strengthening across the program teams, building partnerships with civil society organisations led by or representing women, people with disabilities and other marginalised social groups to enhance participation and GEDSI outcomes of projects, piloting and implementing gender and disability transformative projects across countries and sectors, and strengthening GEDSI mainstreaming across all other projects. In addition, the GEDSI Advisor is supporting the People & Culture team to implement an action plan to strengthen organisational practices in relation to diversity, equity and inclusion.

From a programming perspective, the ChildFund Australia Program Handbook provides Disability Inclusion and Gender Toolkits to support better GEDSI programming by Country Offices. The toolkits contain specific information on how to incorporate gender and disability as cross-cutting issues throughout the project cycle, including gender analysis and disability analysis tools which are to be applied at the start of any new project design to ensure all staff are understanding and actively considering gender, disability and social inclusion barriers in any proposed activities.

ChildFund Australia’s organisational monitoring, evaluation and learning framework (MELF) specifies the collection of gender and disability disaggregated data across all relevant indicators. As projects are being designed, country teams are expected to complete a monitoring and evaluation plan in the project proposal format indicating what data will be collected over the course of a project, and how the project will be monitored and evaluated. This includes any GEDSI specific indicators, disaggregated data and a series of gender specific change questions at project level evaluation. Six-monthly reporting formats also have specific sections for program teams to document challenges and lessons learnt around addressing barriers to gender equality, disability and social inclusion in projects.

Examples of ChildFund Australia’s approach in practice:

• In early 2021, ChildFund Australia designed its August 2021 appeal campaign to focus on the empowerment of children with disability, with a key message ‘I am more than my disability’ to highlight the capabilities of children with disabilities, given the right support, to overcome barriers in their environment.

• ChildFund Timor Leste is implementing a maternal and child health project which has a specific focus on engaging men around women’s maternal health and child care. The project is helping to challenge gender roles and support positive norms around women and men engaging equally in child care and development.

• In Vietnam, a project that focused on empowering people with disabilities through self-help groups in Bac Kan province to engage with local authorities around the rights of persons with disabilities and implementation of disability inclusion policies has led to the successful registration of an organisation of persons with disabilities in September 2021.

• In May 2020, an external consultant conducted an assessment of ChildFund Australia’s disability inclusion practices to help determine additional measures to ensure practices reflect the commitments in our Disability Inclusion Policy. An action plan was agreed based on the report’s recommendations, progress against which is to be reported to the Board annually. Consequently, disability disaggregated data is now built into all relevant project indicators; projects increasingly incorporate activities using the Washington Group questions and similar tools to identify children with disabilities; in several countries ChildFund is working closely with organisations of persons with disabilities in order to strengthen inclusion of children and adults with disabilities across especially education projects; and the new GEDSI Adviser now provides specific feedback on all new project proposals around gender and disability inclusion.

• In June 2020, a short survey was developed for partners to self-assess annually their gender, disability inclusion and environmental management practices. A report prepared from the first assessment fed into a new project focused on partner capacity strengthening commencing in the second half of 2021, which has a specific outcome and activities around gender and disability capacity strengthening, mentoring and cross-learning.

C4: Minimising negative impacts on stakeholders

ChildFund Australia has a zero-tolerance approach to harassment, abuse, exploitation and is committed to minimising negative impacts on stakeholders, achieved through a strong policy framework, supporting procedures, training and regular assessment of practice. The framework includes the following policies and procedures:

- Organisational Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy & Procedure
- Whistleblowing Policy & Procedure
- Child Safeguarding Policy
- Prevention of Sexual Exploitation Abuse and Harassment Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Safety and Security Policy

Training for all staff and partners on the revised Child Safeguarding and PSEAH commenced in 2019 in all ChildFund Australia Country Offices, continued throughout 2020 and is an integral part of our on-boarding process for all new staff.

Regular risk assessments and reviews at Country Office operational, partner and project level continue to be carried out on a routine basis. This includes a contextual analysis of risks related to
discrimination, violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect and identifies relevant mitigation measures. Risks associated with child safeguarding and the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (PSEAH) are considered as part of the design phase of project proposals. The risk table specifically requires these risks and associated mitigation measures to be identified.

The 2020 DFAT re-accreditation process included an in-depth review of our child safeguarding and PSEAH policy and procedures and were recognised as meeting all related criteria. ChildFund Australia expertise in this area has also been recognised across the ChildFund Alliance and more broadly, with staff responsible for child safeguarding and child protection invited to review and strengthen respective policies of other organisations, in turn also helping to minimise negative impacts on stakeholders of other organisations in the sector.

C5: Responsible stewardship for the environment

ChildFund Australia’s *Environmental Sustainability Policy* commits the organisation to ‘monitor and manage the environmental impacts of its operations’. The policy includes a number of responsibilities for ChildFund Australia’s offices, such as reducing energy and paper consumption and assessing environmental impact. The Policy also considers environmental sustainability in projects. A substantial review and update of our Environmental Management Guidelines (to inform programming) was undertaken in August/September 2021 and will be reported against in the next report. Efforts over the past year have included:

- **Knowledge Promotion** – ChildFund Australia’s Sydney Office held sessions for staff to promote awareness and knowledge of responsible stewardship for the environment, including on topics such as recycling and a ‘Buy Nothing Swap’ initiative.
- **Assessment of Policy Implementation** – prior to updating the Environmental Sustainability Policy in September 2021, ChildFund Australia undertook an internal review of the policy and environmental management practices in our programmatic work. The review identified strengths, challenges, and recommendations which informed the revision of the policy.
- **Green Audit** – ChildFund Australia engaged 180 Degrees Consulting to conduct a green audit of the Sydney Office and provide recommendations to reduce carbon emissions. The audit provided a baseline of ChildFund Australia’s Sydney Office carbon emissions, identifying three key drivers: heating and cooling systems in the office, flights and paper usage. The report was shared with ChildFund Australia’s Executive Team in December 2020, and its recommendations and findings were adopted by the Executive Team, committing ChildFund Australia to carbon offsetting; reducing CO2 emissions (including a commitment to reducing travel by 30%); and increasing awareness around positive environmental practices that can be adapted in our day-to-day work.

The ChildFund Australia Green Team is responsible for leading and overseeing the implementation of recommendations and commitments. A similar exercise is planned for next year in order to allow reporting against changes against the baseline data.

**Cluster B: Stakeholder Involvement**

**D. Key stakeholders are identified with great care**

**D1: Key stakeholders and how they are identified**

ChildFund Australia’s priority stakeholders are children and young people. Therefore, ChildFund Australia works primarily with these groups, their parents and caregivers, the communities in which they live and the formal systems which impact them. Whilst always having been a child-focused
organisation, over the past few years, ChildFund Australia has increasingly worked with young people (ages 15-24), now captured under our Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) sectoral work.

Our geographic areas of operation are driven by contextual factors. In Laos and Vietnam, ChildFund operates in locations where there is a high demographic of ethnic minorities and data demonstrates evidence of deprivation, exclusion and vulnerability. Whilst identifying new locations for project interventions in Cambodia for example, ChildFund conducts a Child Rights Situational Analysis (CRSA) with findings used to inform interventions and approaches. At a project level, depending on the intervention, community consultation forms part of a broader needs assessment to support project teams identify target participants. An example of this is for a regional sport for development project that began in July 2020, where the project was developed in close consultation with stakeholders across the different countries and with key partners regionally (regional sports associations). In Laos, this included the implementing partner (Lao Rugby Federation), in Vietnam, senior coaches that have been engaged with the program for a number of years and in Cambodia, local partners. In each country, planning workshops were held with key staff, volunteers and coaches (except Cambodia due to COVID-19 restrictions) to look at delivery numbers, modalities and locations.

Over the past seven years, ChildFund has moved away from direct implementation with increased focus on working with and through local and regional partners. As a result, local and regional CSOs, CBOs and sporting organisations are a growing stakeholder group within ChildFund with processes for identifying local partners clearly outlined in our Partnership Toolkit.

Other key stakeholders include local, sub-national and national government, implementing partners, research institutions, INGOs, ChildFund Australia supporters, Networks and peak bodies, ChildFund Alliance and institutional donors.

D2: Reaching out to those impacted or concerned by your work

ChildFund Australia works in a participatory and inclusive approach, a commitment reflected in our Program Handbook. At a project level, this requires a participatory and consultative approach with a wide variety of stakeholders at each stage of the project cycle: project design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation. Tools and guidance to support effective consultation are available in the Program Handbook, such as the gender and disability analysis tools, guidance notes on project design workshops and the guidance notes on evaluation. ChildFund Australia employs a range of methods to reach out to those impacted or concerned by our work, including workshops, surveys, interviews and focus group discussions.

As an example of our approach, the end-of-project evaluation in PNG for a gender-focused project addressing Rights, Respect and Resilience sought out the opinions and reflections of a range of stakeholders and included key informant interviews, surveys with the target groups of students, semi-structured interviews and focus-group discussions. Adapting to the context at the time of the evaluation, elements of this was carried out remotely in order to ensure that key stakeholders were able to contribute.

Another example linked to our partnership work is the application of two tools in place to support the process of annual partnership evaluation: the Partnership Effectiveness Assessment (Tool 14 in the Program Partnership Toolkit Annex) provides partner staff with an opportunity to anonymously provide feedback on all aspects of the partnership, including the performance of ChildFund. This assessment contributes to the maintenance of open and transparent relationships, where feedback from our partners is encouraged and used to shape improved approaches to partnership. The findings of the assessment form the basis of discussions between ChildFund and the partner during their annual bilateral partnership reflection meetings; and the Annual Partnership Reflection Meeting Guidance (Tool 15 in the Program Partnership Toolkit Annex) provides the framework for
the annual reflection meetings. As well as prompting discussion over the partnership effectiveness assessment findings, it also promotes discussion on the future and sustainability of the partnership.

D3: Maximising coordination with others operating in the same space

ChildFund Australia coordinates with national and local actors in geographic locations where it works. ChildFund Australia and Country Offices are responsible for engaging with government partners at the national and sub-national levels to gain approvals to work in a geographic area, coordinate, and/or implement project activities. ChildFund endeavours to capture within agreements clauses on coordination and collaboration, the establishment of a project steering committee as well as the roles and responsibilities of both parties, and the commitment to involve local stakeholders in the project. An example of this can be found in our work in the Pacific, with recent project agreements with a large INGO and local partner in Solomon Islands including specific clauses and annexes detailing project specific roles and responsibilities and outlining ways of working and detailed committee meetings intentions and dates.

ChildFund Australia also participates in relevant coordination and working groups to avoid duplication of activities, ensure we are working to identified gaps and are able to benefit from the expertise of our peers. Over the reporting period, this has included:

- Co-chairing the INGO Forum in Papua New Guinea;
- Participation in the Health Cluster in Papua New Guinea (linked to COVID-19 response);
- Participation in the INGO Forum steering committee in Myanmar and the ACFID Myanmar Community of Practice;
- Membership of Joining Forces and the Child Rights Network in Cambodia and coordinating closely with other child-focused agencies on initiatives to end violence against children (EVAC) and to advocate against the closure of schools during COVID-19 lockdowns.
- Membership in the recently launched Emergency Action Alliance. made up of 16 Australian-based member charities who are experts in humanitarian aid and specialise in different areas of disaster response.

ChildFund Australia’s role in a specific partnership is driven by contextual factors (including the capacity of the ChildFund Country Office or partner organisation and project needs) and can include coordination, capacity building or providing technical expertise. ChildFund Australia reviews its role in a partnership periodically, recognising the increasing capacity of partners over time and the subsequent need for changing roles and responsibilities. With Localisation & Partnerships identified as a key pillar in our next Strategic Plan (2022-2025), research and consultation with local partners has also been commissioned (mid-late 2021) to help determine an appropriate role for ChildFund vis-a-vis local partners in the future.

E. We listen to, involve and empower stakeholders

E1: Stakeholder feedback

ChildFund Australia undergoes frequent dialogue with primary stakeholders and partners in planning, monitoring and evaluation. It is standard practice to engage with children, youth, women, local authorities and other development actors to seek their active engagement and encourage them to express their views on the impact of ChildFund Australia programs, in turn helping to inform program priorities.

Due to the specific nature and geographical location of project activities, ChildFund Australia’s Country Directors and Senior Managers are responsible for ensuring local communities and partners...
have an opportunity to provide feedback. Country Directors are also responsible for responding to complaints related to ChildFund Australia’s operations in that country, including Whistleblower complaints and those that relate to Child Safeguarding and PSEAH.

**Community Level:** community stakeholders are involved in day-to-day project monitoring, through online tools (e.g. Facebook and Zalo) and regular in-depth interviews with individuals and focus groups. Community stakeholders also participate in workshops to validate the information that has been provided. Critical issues are shared with partners and Senior Management Teams in-country for discussion and action. A specific example of a direct feedback mechanism is in Vietnam where ChildFund has a hotline mechanism that is advertised in all areas of operation for community members to provide ChildFund with feedback. Additionally, ChildFund Timor-Leste add stickers with ChildFund’s contact details on distributed items, in addition to placing posters in key, visible areas in the community and displaying contact details on ChildFund vehicles.

**Partner Level:** feedback is usually provided in person, over phone or by email. Regular opportunities to provide feedback include during monthly and/or quarterly coordination meetings; periodic M&E visits, annual reflection and review meetings, and annual partner workshops.

In addition to the above opportunities for provision of feedback from partners, a formal partnership evaluation process is carried out annually. This evaluation process consists of two components, the first being an online partnership effectiveness assessment completed by partner staff anonymously, with the second phase involving a bilateral partnership reflection meeting. The first phase of the evaluation process facilitates honest feedback from all partner staff engaged with ChildFund and allows for identification of issues relating to ChildFund Australia’s performance as a partner. The second phase meeting ensures that these issues are openly acknowledged and addressed, and that measurable, meaningful and appropriate action to be taken is agreed by both parties.

Since launching the annual partnership evaluation process in 2020, partners have responded positively to the opportunity to provide feedback on the partnership. Key trends are often discussed at yearly partnership workshops involving all partners, and broad actions can be agreed. An example of this is from Cambodia, where some assessment respondents indicated dissatisfaction with the clarity of roles and responsibilities within the projects, reporting requests and deadlines being issued too late, and the degree of motivation and engagement of partner staff by ChildFund. As a result, a firm commitment has been made that project officers establish a mechanism for regular monthly meetings with their counterparts to ensure consistent and clear communication and collaboration throughout the project lifecycle.

ChildFund Australia also provides annual training to partners on both its Complaints and Whistleblowing policies. These training sessions support partners to understand the range of mechanisms through which they are able to provide feedback, raise complaints and receive a response. During their most recent partnership effectiveness assessments, 93.7% of respondents in Cambodia stated that ChildFund’s communication and feedback mechanisms are very useful.

**Internally:**
- Regular staff meetings at Sydney, Regional and Country Office level;
- Monthly meetings between Country and Regional Office leaders and the Sydney Executive Team;
- Regular function-type meeting across Sydney, Regional and Country Offices (i.e. Finance, HR, Program);
- Regular 1:1s with managers; and
- Employee Grievance Policy and Procedure
E2: Stakeholder engagement

ChildFund Australia engages in frequent and periodic dialogue with primary stakeholders and partners throughout the project cycle: design, implementation, and monitoring, evaluation and learning. Our program management processes are participatory and inclusive, actively involving relevant stakeholders, including women and girls, persons with a disability and vulnerable and excluded groups. As a child-focused organisation, children and youth are a key stakeholder. Our approach to their participation is guided by our Child and Youth Participation Policy.

An example of how young people have been engaged in a project in Laos includes the Ready for Life (R4L) program, that worked to bring about real change in the life of children and youth in Laos, with children and youth the main actors of change, and developing their capacity and supporting participation in all contexts and at all levels of society the main purpose of the project. Findings from the end-of-project evaluation indicate that ideas and views shared by children and young people during Children's Forums resulted in opinions being: built into the local Commission for the Advancement of Women, Mothers and Children (CAWMC); used to develop the Education Plan at district and provincial level; taken into account to develop and improve 5 National Guidelines on children and youth capacity building. Furthermore, 100% of trained youth leaders demonstrated improvements in knowledge, attitudes and practices linked to leadership and community engagement; at least 50% demonstrated improvements in making decisions about the future; 80% have increased confidence to express their views and listen to others in community forums and groups; and 57% of key issues identified by individuals or as peer networks are addressed/solved through various initiatives and/or grants.

In terms of project delivery, children and youth led project implementation in their schools and communities, including youth leaders employing the peer-educator delivery model of the R4L curriculum (National Guidelines on life skills and development for child and youth in Laos) across 30 schools. Youth were also empowered and supported to implement a small grant initiative, used to conduct community level activities.

E3: Main likes/dislikes from stakeholders and organisation’s response

ChildFund Australia has a number of different systems and processes to respond to feedback from key stakeholders. Examples of the main types of feedback include:

**At community level:** as reported previously, regular and positive feedback from children, their families and communities relates to the sustained and integrated presence of ChildFund Australia within the community. For instance, ChildFund Australia takes the time to understand and embed itself within the areas we work, in turn ensuring that the needs, priorities and views of local people inform our project interventions and guide any subsequent changes required. An example of this is in Papua New Guinea where feedback from community members identified challenging attitudes displayed by Government health care workers in Waima, in turn resulting in reduced quality of services provided and reduced access for community members, with reports of children being turned away for vaccinations. The project team subsequently engaged with the closest health centre to ensure that essential services from mothers and children are provided.

**At partner level:** the growing number of donor-related compliance requirements continues to be a source of frustration for several partners who indicate that additional resourcing and support is needed in order for them to meet these. In response, ChildFund Australia revised and updated its Partnership Toolkit to assist Country Offices in their work with partners. Partnership Advisor and partnership focal points in Country Offices work together with partners to enable them to meet
compliance requirements, providing support as necessary. This often includes reviewing partner policies to identify compliance gaps, providing policy training to partners and supporting them in the revision or development of new policies. Where possible, ChildFund takes on some of the compliance requirements on behalf of the partner (e.g., counter-terrorism checking).

Work was also undertaken in 2021 to identify different partnership categories with reduced compliance requirements based on the type and level of engagement. The intent of this was to ensure that requirements are as commensurate and relevant as possible. This process has taken a principles-based approach to partnership and will continue to be refined as necessary.

ChildFund Australia has made deliberate attempts to further engage local partners as part of its commitment to localisation. Recent investments in this include the contracting of an external consultant to engage with Country Office and local partner staff as part of an analysis to inform the organisation’s approach to localisation.

At donor level: feedback from the successful DFAT re-accreditation process in November 2020 identified a need for strengthened documentation linked to our internal proposal appraisal process. In response and following consultation with Country and Regional Office staff, changes have been made to the process that seeks to:

- Streamline the design, proposal review and approval process;
- Increase efficiency and improve the Sydney Office (Program and Finance teams) and Country/Sport for Development Office collaboration during the whole process;
- Increase the level of quality control of project proposals, variations and concept notes;
- Improve the technical accuracy or soundness of the project ideas and design;
- Support a transparent process for allocating of project funding and strengthen the information management about new and priority projects across the Sydney International Program Team and operations; and
- Improve the documentation of ChildFund Australia project appraisal process.

E4: People and partners have gained capacities that last beyond your immediate intervention

ChildFund Australia implements a variety of projects in the countries where we work which focus on strengthening formal systems. Our Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework (MELF) and accompanying reporting processes seek to generate discussion, learning and decision-making to improve the effectiveness of ChildFund Australia’s projects and development approaches and bring about better outcomes for people in poverty.

An example of this is the Building Safe Environments for Children and Young People in the Pacific project (Phase 2). This project seeks to increase the protective environments for children by addressing limited professional capacity in child protection through an intensive training program on core protection concepts and launching holistic online safety projects with youth across the Pacific.

In terms of our approach to partners, ChildFund Australia forms partnerships with organisations in countries where we work to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable improvements in the lives of children and their communities. We believe that partnerships are essential to achieve transformational change at national and international levels, as well as achieving success in community level project delivery.

ChildFund Australia’s Partnership Toolkit guides staff in their engagement with partners, and includes detailed guidance on assessing partner capacity, developing capacity-strengthening plans and monitoring progress against these plans. ChildFund Australia works with partners to improve institutional capacities, not only project-related capacities, this can take the form of improved accounting systems or drafting of new policies or strategy papers, all of which have a long-term
impact on the partners operations. For example, the most recent update to the capacity strengthening plan for ACDA, a local partner in Laos, showed that with ChildFund’s support they had created and actioned a procurement training plan; revised their fraud and corruption prevention policy to meet compliance requirements; drafted a staff recruitment policy; and made progress towards finalising individual staff development plans. Additionally, ChildFund provided the partner with finance policy training, and supported them to conduct internal training on a new finance system. ChildFund staff worked together with partner staff to review financial reports and address any knowledge or practice gaps. ChildFund Laos also provided comprehensive policy and procedure training to ACDA, including on Child Safeguarding, PSEAH, Risk Management, Counter Terrorism, Fraud and Corruption Prevention, and Whistleblowing and Complaints.

F. Our advocacy work addresses the root cause of problems

**F1: Evidence regarding the root causes of the problems we address**

The ChildFund Alliance defines advocacy as “a series of planned and strategic actions to influence the formulation and implementation of public policies at the local, national, regional or global level.”¹ ChildFund Australia has a focus on the drivers and root causes of disadvantage and exclusion for children and young people. In conducting research and planning advocacy activities, ChildFund aims to deeply understand the key structural barriers and defining social norms that have a practical impact on children’s lives e.g., discrimination, exclusion, poverty and weak governance systems.

Our core advocacy products and tools include:

- Contextual and situational analyses to identify the root causes and drivers of problems that impact children and their families;
- Clear policy positions that are analytically sound and informed by reliable evidence;
- Empirical research that captures the lived experiences of children and young people, including child and youth focused participatory research;
- Quality policy and technical advice based on relevant international standards and data;
- Creation of new evidence and related advocacy interventions based on our own quality program data/insights;
- Targeted child focused public campaigns (e.g. Ending Violence Against Children; End COVID For All)
- Collaborative strategic partnerships, including research partnerships and networks.

Key examples of ChildFund Australia’s advocacy in 2021 have included:

- Technical advice and briefings to strengthen draft national child protection legislation in Timor Leste;
- ChildFund PNG led public advocacy to address critical health gaps for women and children throughout the COVID19 crisis;
- Policy advocacy led by ChildFund Vietnam to include child online safety curriculum as part curriculum at the provincial level; and
- ChildFund Australia led panel on increasing investment in Ending Violence Against Children in the Pacific at the UNICEF INSPIRE Conference.

**F2: Stakeholders support our advocacy work and value changes achieved**

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ChildFund utilises project design processes that are participatory and inclusive, actively involving relevant stakeholders, including women and girls, persons with a disability, vulnerable and excluded groups, helps ensure support for, and local participation in, our advocacy work and that changes achieved are valued. An example of this is our involvement in the ChildFriendly Accountable Initiative.

This initiative aims to support children in holding their respective governments and local authorities accountable for their commitments in SDG target 16.2, as well as advocate for international, national and local systems and policies on eliminating violence against children. The project engages a methodology that enables children to get involved in identifying problems and solutions and participate in the informed negotiation between decision-makers about the issues concerning them.

At a sector level we routinely work closely with peer agencies on priority issues on a routine basis. We seek feedback on standalone advocacy initiatives and plan joint activities through communities of practice and working groups linked to our industry peak body, the Australian Council for International Development.

G. We are transparent, invite dialogue and protect stakeholders’ safety

**G1: Availability of key policies and information on your website**

ChildFund Australia’s *Transparency Statement* documents our commitment to being ‘open, honest and transparent’ in all activities. ChildFund Australia shares detailed information on a regular basis with stakeholders, including children and their communities, the general public, donors, corporates and other interested individuals and organisations. Information is distributed via the organisational website, publications, direct mail, social media channels, email updates, and direct dialogue.

The organisational website holds a variety of information about the organisation, including blog stories, annual reports, media releases, strategic plans, as well as a range of publications on development issues, including maternal and child health, education, and child protection. Visitors to the website can also find the audited annual reports for ChildFund Australia and its Country Offices, as well as the full financial statements. A range of organisational policies can also be downloaded for review, including the *Complaints Policy, Privacy Policy, Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Harassment Policy, Whistleblowing Policy* and *Child Safeguarding Policy*. ChildFund Australia has some documents that are available in child-friendly formats, however we recognise that further work is required in this area to ensure a consistent approach across our countries of operation.

Information on our Board composition and Executive Team is available in our *Annual Report* (see page 36 - 37). The website also includes information on our membership of Accountable Now. In ChildFund Australia’s Country Offices, digital platforms have been rolled out to enable communication in relevant languages to local stakeholders and other interest parties in those countries of operation. This includes the use of websites and social media channels, for example *ChildFund Vietnam’s Facebook page*.

Whilst ChildFund Australia ensures key policies and procedures (i.e. Child Safeguarding and PSEAH) are available in local languages, ChildFund Australia has also identified resourcing during the reporting period for the translation of additional documents and policies. The additional documentation for translation includes our Strategic Plan, Partnership Toolkit and Risk Management Policy, amongst others. The intention is to ensure our local partnerships have a greater understanding of ChildFund Australia and our ways of working.

**G2: Pay scale, gender pay gap and top salaries**

ChildFund Australia Accountability Report 2019-20
The annual gender pay analysis for Sydney and the ChildFund Australia Country Offices does not show any systematic gender gaps in pay (correlations all close to 0), i.e. men and women are remunerated equally on different pay grades. These results are very encouraging as the 2020 analysis showed systematic higher salaries for men in Timor-Leste and in PNG.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th># Staff</th>
<th>Correlation, female =1</th>
<th>Average Compa Ratio</th>
<th>Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>105%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laos</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Sample too small for analysis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNG</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>102%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timor-Leste</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sydney</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A correlation analysis helps to identify systematic gender differences in pay. Correlation values range between -1.0 and 1.0. In our analysis, the correlation factor is 1.0 if women are paid higher than men and -1.0 if men are paid systematically higher than women. A value of 0 shows that remuneration does not differ between the genders. Our salary system works with systematic pay points attached to grades. Compa ratios determine the pay position for each individual in their respective job grade. Ranges for compa ratios between 80% and 110% allow to recognise differences in experience and performance. The results show that the system supports a fair remuneration approach, competitive in respective labour markets.

Five out of the six Executive Team members in Sydney are female, including the CEO. Their compa ratios range between 85% and 99%. Progression from one job grade to the next is around 17% and the ratio between lowest and highest salary in the organisation is 1:5.

G3: Ensuring privacy rights and protecting personal data

ChildFund Australia is governed by the Australian Privacy Act 1988 and by the thirteen Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) which are the cornerstone of this legislation. These principles were added to the Privacy Act in 2012. To further strengthen the regulatory landscape, mandatory reporting of notifiable breaches came into effect in 2018.

Our existing practices ensure that we meet the expectations of the APPs. We have a comprehensive, accessible and clear Privacy Policy which addresses the requirements of the APPs and provides clarity to supporters on how we manage their data, and their rights to access and control the data we hold. Key supporter rights outlined in the Privacy Policy are the right for pseudonymity, access and correction personal data. We also have a Privacy Collection Notice which describes the information we collect about supporters.

We have encrypted and password protected systems and processes, and strong controls on access. Hard copy files are minimised and stored in secured cabinets. Staff have access to data that relates to their work, but do not have access to data that does not.

ChildFund Australia strives regularly to improve and strengthen our protection of personal data. We work in consultation with our IT service provider to plan and implement these improvements to ensure they reflect high security standards of the organisation. Improvements have included new spam and phishing filters on our emails to increase security and reduce the risk of unauthorised access or impersonation. Multifactor authentication has been implemented on several key systems,
a practice which will continue to expand to more systems in 2022. Technology is an enabler of the FY22-24 strategy with data governance, privacy and security identified as a continued area of focus.

G4: Largest donors and their contributions

Below are details of the five largest donors in the reporting period and the monetary value of their contributions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor</th>
<th>AUD FY21</th>
<th>% of Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade</td>
<td>6,116,440</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ChildFund International</td>
<td>4,331,720</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ChildFund Korea</td>
<td>3,910,199</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ChildFund New Zealand</td>
<td>1,817,035</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barnfonden (ChildFund Sweden)</td>
<td>1,605,721</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whilst the majority of ChildFund Australia’s donor funding sources are drawn from institutional donors and other Alliance members, we do have some private donors that make financial contributions to our work. We received 65 anonymous donations totalling AUD3,400 last financial year, which is similar to FY20. Certain safeguards are in place to protect the organisation from undue influence on activities, including:

- Dedicated staff to manage relationships and the expectations of these donors in terms of how their funds are spent;
- Due diligence and screening processes are undertaken for any potential new corporate or major donor to ensure suitability criteria are met. This screening is undertaken prior to accepting any new funding. This requirement is stated in our Corporate Engagement Policy;
- Internal project development processes that require any project over AUD 150,000 to be appraised centrally to ensure a transparent process for allocating project funding.
- Key development policies that all projects must adhere to regardless of funding sources, e.g. Proselytism, Politics and Development Policy to help maintain the organisation’s guiding principles of independence and neutrality.

Cluster C: Organisational Effectiveness

H. Staff and volunteers are enabled to do their best

H1: Recruitment and employment is fair and transparent

With regards to fair recruitment and employment processes, the following steps were implemented during the reporting period:

Recruitment standards:
- Discovery meeting with managers ensures clarity about selection criteria and supports the selection to be targeted and not driven by personal bias
- Recruitment training for managers and recruiting staff to ensure familiarity with behaviour-based questioning and assessment as well as understanding of biases
- Recruitment questions library (with link to values) to ensure selection criteria are reflected and consistent questioning for all candidates and in all our offices.
An Organisational Diversity roadmap was developed by an HR task force in 2020 with the following criteria being prioritised related to recruitment:
- Diverse candidate pool
- Diverse interview panel
- Systematic behaviour-based questions and scoring

Leadership training was developed for ChildFund Australia and run in Sydney in 2019 and rolled out to Country Offices (PNG, Timor-Leste and Vietnam, with other countries pending due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, skill bites organised remotely in the interim). Leadership training will be a focus for FY21-22 again with special attention on diversity and inclusion.

Exit interview analysis was conducted in June 2020 and is monitored on an ongoing basis.

An Employee Engagement Survey was conducted in May 2021 across all ChildFund Australia offices. Managers and HR teams work with focus groups and champions to implement change. Our values system (Respect, Integrity, Collaboration, Change, Empowerment and Excellence). The acronym RICE is an analogy for the importance of our values, the need to nurture our values to grow as well as the connectedness between countries.) which was developed in 2019, came out as a very strong compass for behaviour in the organisation. All HR tools are linked to the values (e.g. learning library with on the job learning measures, mentoring program, performance management, recruitment question library). Other criteria involve systematic assessment of current state (see example below as well as gender pay gap analysis question G2) to inform areas where change is needed.

### Staffing Figures as of 30 June 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th># staff</th>
<th>% Female Staff</th>
<th>% Female Mgmt</th>
<th>30 or younger</th>
<th>31-40 yrs</th>
<th>41-50</th>
<th>51 and older</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laos</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNG</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timor-Leste</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21% of Sydney staff and 21% of management are working part time. There are no part time staff in any of the Country Offices.

**H2: Staff development**

In the employee engagement survey 2021 our staff identified development as a focus area. Developing a learning culture and supporting staff to learn and grow in line with strategic priorities around localisation and quality programming is a key priority for HR in all offices in FY21-22. This includes diversity, equity and inclusion training.

Training needs analysis is done with managers on the back of performance management discussions in July each year. On that basis, needs are consolidated and training identified which is relevant for a broader group of people vs. individual needs. For any individual needs, managers can discuss with HR if they need support or they organise training directly. For broader training needs, relevant
training courses are developed and delivered where possible in-house. This helps to strengthen our common understanding (e.g. project management) and it allows us to tailor training interventions according to our internal needs.

Training topics included:

**For leaders**: leadership training; recruitment training; remote management training; and support during COVID-19 lockdown.

**For staff (some are open for managers as well)**: project management; stakeholder management (problem solving, impactful collaboration, managing stakeholders, critical conversations); presentations; time management; and diversity, equity and inclusion.

A Learning Library (ppt document) is in place to support managers and staff in their development planning (linked to our values). The library gives guidance and provides supporting resources (videos, books) to strengthen on the job learning. A mentoring program was rolled out and opportunities to work with other organisations is explored at the moment.

Our new employee assistance program (EAP), which was implemented in March 2020, proved to be instrumental in times of stress and lockdown. UPRISE is an online platform which offers short learning videos and exercises and supports managers and staff to actively work on wellbeing and stress management.

**Performance Management**: was revamped in 2019 and we are currently rolling-out an online tool which adds self-reflection and peer assessment systematically into the process. Ongoing discussions and feedback will be recorded through the tool and reporting will provide more transparency on goal status and achievements.

Options to work with a simple and economical learning management system are currently explored to ensure access to relevant training material and an overview of learning progress.

**H3: Safe working environment**

Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) policy and focal points remain in place for all ChildFund Australia offices, and the Employee Assistance Program with learning, coaching and counselling options proved to be impactful especially during the lockdown periods.


A new Organisational Inclusion Policy was developed and approved by the board in June 2021. Major recommendations from our 2019 gender assessment with an external consultant were addressed, e.g., strengthening the focus on inclusion (e.g., LGBTIQA+, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People). The People and Organisational Development team works with our Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion Advisor to strengthen our practices across all areas of representation, structures, and policies. A project plan for the year was developed to work through the different areas of the organisation. Training for Child Safeguarding and PSEAH was also strengthened and is in place for all new joiners and with regular refreshers for all staff, including the board, country offices and partners.

**I. Resources are handled effectively for the public good**
I1. Resources are acquired in line with our values, globally accepted standards and without compromising independence

ChildFund Australia’s Corporate Engagement Policy and Due Diligence Process sets out the process by which Child Fund determines whether or not to accept donations from organisations. For face-to-face street fundraising there is a contractual obligation placed on supplier partners that adequate policies and training is in place around fundraising and vulnerable people. This is also a requirement of the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association (PFRA) standards. ChildFund Australia regularly conducts training sessions for our own staff and the staff of suppliers. Training is conducted to ensure all relevant staff are aware of Childfund Australia's obligations as articulated in the ACFID Fundraising Charter and the Fundraising Institute of Australia’s Principles and Standards. ChildFund Australia reports its compliance with the ACFID Fundraising Charter to the Communications and Marketing committee of the board on an annual basis.

ChildFund Australia has a procurement policy. From an ethical standpoint, the policy expects that procurement is always conducted in the best interests of ChildFund Australia in a transparent and accountable manner. Staff undertaking procurement must act ethically throughout the procurement. Ethical behaviour includes:

- Recognising and dealing with actual, potential and any perceived conflict of interest;
- Dealing with suppliers, potential suppliers and tenderers equitably by not accepting gifts and/or hospitality.
- Not entering into contracts that may be dishonest, unethical or unsafe.

The ChildFund Consent Policy requires all staff to obtain informed consent in a range of scenarios. This includes activities related to child sponsorship programs, when forming community partnerships, when implementing project activities, and when collecting stories and images. In order to achieve informed consent in communications activities, the guidance document ‘Where Does My Story Go?’ has been developed. Translated into local languages and used by all staff in the process of collecting images and stories, this document provides visual examples of how an individual’s story might appear in public communications: for example, in ChildFund publications, newspaper articles, online via websites and social media, and on television.

This document also supports ChildFund’s efforts to give children, youth and adults greater skills in media literacy. During the process of obtaining informed consent, community members are also advised of a range of options which will allow them to share their story while protecting their identity, such as photos which do not show their face, or changing small details within a story to protect the privacy of those being interviewed. As part of the Consent Policy, ChildFund staff also make it clear that community members are under no obligation to take part in the process of content collection.

Training materials have been developed to ensure that staff have an in-depth understanding of the concept of informed consent, and aware of the ethical principles which underpin all ChildFund communications activities. These are reinforced in ChildFund’s Communications Policy.

I2. Monitoring of progress and re-allocation of resources

Progress against the Strategic Plan is reported to the Board throughout the year by the CEO and the Executive Team at regular Board meetings and/or at Board subcommittee meetings. A full review of progress on the Strategy, including a review of progress on all key performance indicators (KPIs), is provided at each Board meeting.
Strategy and resourcing are adjusted accordingly to respond to changing conditions, trends and factors internal and external to the organisation. A good example of this is the impact of COVID-19 global pandemic on the organisation. ChildFund recently completed its 2015-2020 strategic plan. With the onset of the global pandemic in early 2020, and the high levels of uncertainty that came with it, the Executive Team and the Board made the decision to introduce a shorter-term strategic directions document that set the key strategic objectives of the organisation over the next 12 to 18 months. One of the primary strategic directives over this time was to pivot activities wherever possible to respond to COVID-19. The key strategic objectives include:

- Protect and empower children
- Sustain and strengthen our organisation
- Optimise fundraising
- Innovate and change

This pivot is a good example of resources being re-allocated to optimise impact. ChildFund is due to finalise its new strategic plan. This plan identifies flagship programs that ChildFund will look to allocate additional resource to ensure greater impact. More recently ChildFund made the decision to invest resource in new forms of revenue generation, mostly in relation to the opportunities arising from its Sport for Development work and related partnerships arising from this opportunity.

I3: Minimising risk of corruption, bribery and misuse of funds

ChildFund Australia operates in many challenging environments where fraud and corruption are significant risk factors. ChildFund Australia has a Fraud and Corruption Prevention and Awareness Policy and procedure in place across our Country Offices that outlines the responsibilities of staff in relation to fraud as well as the controls and procedures that are in place to mitigate the risk of fraud. Fraud risk is assessed at organisation level, partner level and project level before project commencement and regularly reviewed. We also have standardised financial management controls in place that mitigate such risk. These controls include but are not limited to segregation of duties, appropriate delegation of authority and payment controls, and rigorous acquittal processes.

ChildFund Australia also undertakes a number of assurance activities to provide additional confidence that internal controls and processes are operating as expected. These include annual external audits for each of our office locations and an internal audit review plan. Our Audit, Risk and Nominations sub-committee of the Board has oversight of findings and recommendations arising from these assurance activities. Anti-fraud and corruption awareness training to staff and partners is undertaken annually to remind and reinforce our policies and procedures. When incidents of suspected or detected fraud are reported, we investigate the matter in line with procedure and take actions such as reporting to donors, disciplinary action of involved staff and recovery of any funds lost. We also aim to learn from any findings and respond with measures to minimise the risk of such an event occurring again.

In the reporting year, three cases of fraud were reported. No loss was recorded and action was taken in line with policy and procedure. Follow-up actions to mitigate future instances form part of the investigation report and include strengthening internal control systems and continuing to engage staff and partners with fraud prevention training. There has been one case of fraud reported in the period since concerning a volunteer engaged by an implementing partner in Myanmar. The fraud was estimated to equate to approximately AUD250. As per the contract with the implementing partner, all funds will be recovered and no loss reported. There were an additional three cases of suspected fraud (two in the reporting year and one in the period since), which after a thorough investigation were found to be false or unsubstantiated. Training on key financial policies is undertaken annually and more regularly as needed. During the reporting period, seven sessions on
our Fraud Prevention and Awareness Policy were run for various groups, including: head office staff, Country office finance managers and implementing partners. Fraud Prevention Awareness Week was highlighted at an all-staff meeting in October 2021 and the associated resources are currently being distilled to be shared with the organisation.

ChildFund has a consolidated incident reporting mechanism in place that reports incidents at each board meeting. Incidents are reported in the following categories: Safeguarding, Work, Health and Safety, Employee grievances or complaints, fraud, bribery and corruption and other. This provides the Executive Team and the board oversight of incidents and any associated trends by country and category over time.

J. Governance processes maximise accountability

J1: Governance structure and recruitment of Board Members

The membership of the Board is governed by Article 12 of the Constitution, that defines the processes around directors’ appointments and terminations and Article 15.9 of the Constitution prescribes a Board appointed Nominations Committee.

The Directors Handbook provides guidance to assist the Nominations Committee (part of the Audit, Risk and Nominations sub-committee) in the identification and recommendation of individuals suitable to join the Board. The guidance states “every effort should be made to ensure that the Board as a whole has the range of skills and experience necessary to adequately discharge its governance responsibilities and duties”. The Board places appropriate consideration of gender, age and diversity in its composition and in the recruitment of new Board members. The Board maintains an up-to-date register of its current skillset, gender, age and diversity which it then uses as a reference point to inform and guide its recruitment process. Through its most recent assessment process, the Board identified a desire to expand the diversity indicia into the future and is reflected in recent recruitment (November 2021) with three new Board members including a young person and representation from countries where we operate.

ChildFund Australia is one of 12 members of the ChildFund Alliance with members united by a shared strategy and supported by common standards. The ChildFund Alliance adopts a lead agency operational model whereby members are responsible for the administration and management of designated country programs; other members can choose to support, and partner with the lead agency. ChildFund Australia has lead responsibility for programs and has a Country Office presence in Vietnam, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Timor Leste. Each country office has a Country Director who reports to the CEO in Sydney and their own respective senior management teams and staff.

ChildFund Australia supports other network members either through child sponsorship programs (in 19 countries across Africa, Asia and the Americas) or in times of emergency response. ChildFund Australia is represented on the Alliance Board and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Forum and further participates in the governance of the Alliance through participation on Alliance Standing Committees and Taskforces, including Alliance Program Committee, Grants Support Committee, Communications and Marketing Committee and Child Protection in Emergencies and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Taskforce. This representation enables ChildFund Australia to monitor and contribute to the review of the ChildFund Alliance strategy and influence decisions of the Alliance.

J2: Board oversight of adherence to policies, resource allocation, potential risks, and complaints processes

ChildFund Australia’s delegation of authority schedule requires that any new organisation-wide policies, and substantive amendments to existing organisation-wide policies be reviewed and
approved by the Board. These policies will often be reviewed and discussed at the relevant Board sub-committee meeting prior it going to the full board for approval. In the last reporting period, the board has reviewed the Organisational Inclusion Policy, Environmental Sustainability Policy as well as the Delegation of Authority Matrix. The Board then assesses compliance against organisational policies and procedures through review of assurance activities that are undertaken to ensure management and internal controls as defined in the policies are being complied with. Such assurance activities include, but are not limited to, annual independent audits at each Country Office, internal audit reviews undertaken at both Country Office and implementing partner level, as well as monitoring and evaluation activities that are undertaken at a program or project level. From a resource allocation perspective, the Board approves the annual budget and monitors performance and use of resource against this budget at each sub-committee and board meeting. Detailed papers are provided to the Board to support this oversight. The Board also has exposure to a formal bi-annual review of organisational risks that are being managed by the organisation. The Board is presented with the organisational risk register and heat map that identifies the more significant organisational risks and the actions being taken to mitigate these.

Complaints and grievances are reported to the Board through the People and Organisational Development Report as well as the consolidated incident report that is also provided at each board meeting. Any significant issues that may arise, whether it be risk related and or a complaint or grievance, can be communicated to the Board outside of the normal reporting timelines if the nature of the event requires it.

The internal audit process allows for the periodical checking of compliance against a broad range of organisational policies. Visits to Country Offices by technical experts or advisors also allows for review of compliance against specific organisational policies where required. Any instances of non-compliance are identified through either the internal audit review findings reports or reports form specific reviews and an action plan and timeline is developed and agreed with the relevant manager/Country Director.

**J3: Complaints handling mechanisms and overview of complaints (external)**

In all our project and program implementing locations, ChildFund Australia has a community validated reporting pathway that has been established in consultation with the beneficiaries and communities in which we work. This includes consultation with children. Using a community consultation and validation process ChildFund has created a reporting pathway that is community and child friendly, which is then further communicated and promoted more broadly in community using mixed mediums to ensure access to information for multiple ages, genders and abilities.

As noted above, in ChildFund Australia’s project and program implementing locations, we have established a community and beneficiary validated and facing reporting and response mechanism. ChildFund Australia promotes and explains its complaint policies to communities using mixed forms of communication including written, verbal and visual which are repeated in all implementing locations throughout the life of a project. The use of mixed methodologies for communication is aimed at ensuring access to information for multiple ages, genders and abilities.

For partners and staff internally, annual training and refresher trainings are used to communicate policy and procedures. Regular role specific refresher training on procedures for each specific role type and obligations to each policy follows up formal training. Furthermore, reporting pathways are reinforced on multiple forms of internal and external communication, for example, email signatures, posters, via organisational website and verbally during community meetings.

There are dedicated complaint/feedback email addresses established within the organisation for Child Safeguarding, PSEA and whistleblowing as per good practice standards. General complaints...
however not of this nature are encouraged to be reported to the info@-address and can be appropriately triaged to the relevant reporting line should the complaint be child safeguarding, PSEAH or related to other matters to do with the conduct of our staff and associates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No of Reported Incidents</th>
<th>Sydney</th>
<th>Vietnam</th>
<th>Cambodia</th>
<th>PNG</th>
<th>Laos</th>
<th>Myanmar</th>
<th>Timor-Leste</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child Safeguarding</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Child Protection</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHS</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Grievance / Complaints</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Suspected) Fraud</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All cases were dealt with and closed. For Community Child Protection cases, authorities were informed, cases closed and support for survivors facilitated. For Child Safeguarding cases, additional training was conducted with involved parties.

**J4: Complaints handling mechanisms and overview of complaints (internal)**

At ChildFund Australia we aim to provide staff and volunteers – regardless of their office location – with a safe, comfortable and motivating work environment that fosters good relations amongst Staff and Volunteers. We acknowledge that the satisfaction staff and volunteers experience in the workplace is reflected in their performance and in relationships with colleagues. ChildFund is committed to fostering a culture where staff and volunteers are encouraged to raise concerns if they have a legitimate grievance and can do so in a safe environment.

The *Grievance Policy* enables staff, interns and volunteers to lodge a claim with regard to any employment matter or if h/she feels adversity affected by the misinterpretation of misapplication of any of our ChildFund policies. It interacts with the *Whistleblowing Policy* which aims at encouraging employees and other who have serious concerns about any aspect of our work to come forward and voice those concerns where they feel other reporting mechanisms are not appropriate.

Depending on the severity of the issue and in the spirit of fostering an open feedback culture, we encourage our people to talk to the person causing the grievance first. If this is not an option or if the discussion does not help to resolve the issue, the case can be escalated to managers and or People and Organisational Development (POD) for support and to lodge a formal complaint. Confidentiality as well as the protection of the complainant and of affected colleague are guiding principles for all complaints raised through any of our complaints mechanisms, including the Grievance Procedure. We will take every effort to address any negative effects on the reputation and morale of staff members involved, should allegations be found to be unsubstantiated.

Measures will vary depending on the outcome of a formal investigation and can range from changes in behaviour to termination of employment. The Grievance Policy & Procedures are available to all
staff through our online HR Management system, Bamboo HR and in all respective languages. Translations of the anonymous Whistleblower mechanism, Whispli, are scheduled for 2021.

J5: Protecting confidentiality and anonymity of those involved in complaints

Confidentiality as well as the protection of the complainant and of affected victims/ survivors are guiding principles for all complaints raised through any of our complaints mechanisms. We also will take every effort to address any negative effects on the reputation and morale of staff members involved, should allegations be found to be unsubstantiated. If reportable conduct is raised under any ChildFund Australia policy, ChildFund Australia will endeavour to protect the complainant/whistleblower’s identity. In order not to jeopardise the investigation into the alleged wrongful act, the complainant/whistleblower is also expected to keep the fact they have raised a concern, the nature of the concern and the identity of those involved confidential. ChildFund Australia will not disclose the identity unless the whistleblower consents to the disclosure; the disclosure is required or authorised by law, and/or the disclosure is necessary to further the investigation.

ChildFund Australia will treat all complaints raised confidentially. However, when a matter is investigated it may be necessary to reveal its substance to people such as other ChildFund Australia personnel, external persons involved in the investigation process and, in appropriate circumstances, law enforcement agencies. For example, in cases of a suspicion of criminal offence and actions ChildFund Australia’s actions will be guided by them. Our anonymous reporting mechanism (Whispli) allows the complainants to decide if they want to disclose their identity or not. Any records or files relating to a matter of reportable conduct are securely stored and can be accessed by authorised people only.

Unauthorised disclosure of information relating to a matter, the identity of the whistleblower or information from which the identity of the whistleblower could be inferred will be taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action and may include dismissal.

K. Leadership is dedicated to fulfilling the 12 Commitments

K1. The governing body and management are held accountable for fulfilling strategic promises

At a macro level, as a registered charity of the Australian Charities and Not for Profit commission (ACNC) and a legally incorporated company limited by guarantee, the individual directors that make up the governing body have a legal and fiduciary responsibility to ChildFund Australia which includes expectations of accountability and governance. ChildFund Australia is also an accredited agency under the DFAT Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) and is a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct. Both have accountability expectations that the governing body is held accountable to, signs off on and ensures management adheres to on an ongoing basis.

At an operational level, the ChildFund Australia Board conducts a formal review and assessment process every four to five years, the most recent undertaken in September 2019. This process included one on one interviews conducted by the Deputy Chair with Board members (and key staff, such as the CEO) and a survey completed by Board members; both included topics such as Board effectiveness, composition and culture. The findings were documented in a Board Memorandum and reflected on at the February 2020 Board meeting, with follow-up tasked to the Governance Working Group. The tasks assigned to the Governance Working Group have been completed.

Management is held accountable by the Board for delivering on strategic priorities. The Board holds management to account by monitoring progress on the strategy and questioning the Executive Team
on progress against strategic indicators. ChildFund Australia is governed by a Board of Directors that meets six times per year (including an AGM). The Board’s responsibilities are facilitated by the work of three Board standing sub-committees: Audit, Risk and Nominations Committee, Program Review Committee and the Communications and Marketing Committee. Each Board committee has its own Charter, which is included in the Directors Handbook. The Committees meet quarterly in conjunction with the Board meetings and report to the Board on the outcomes of each committee meeting. The Board delegates responsibility to the CEO and senior management team according to a formal Delegation Schedule. The CEO undertakes a formal performance review process with the Chair on an annual basis with regular monthly check-ins.

As part of the board recent recruitment process, the board identified potential gaps in its skill set that would be necessary to support the delivery of ChildFund’s strategic plan. The board then undertook an external recruitment process to obtain the skillsets required.

K2. Inclusion of staff in discussing progress toward organisational accountability

The Independent Panel’s feedback and the areas identified for improvement from 2020 were discussed with ChildFund Australia staff, including the Executive Team. Additionally, the process of compiling this report included consultation with staff from across the Sydney and Country Offices, in particular seeking examples for inclusion in this report, and as an opportunity to foster discussion about accountability throughout the organisation.

ChildFund Australia seeks to empower staff and include them in key decision-making processes, including those related to accountability. Over the reporting period this has included:

- Preparation for and participation DFAT’s five-yearly re-accreditation process. This involved staff from across the Country, Regional and Sydney offices engaged as active members in the Accreditation Taskforce and scrutinising own systems and processes to enhance accountability and ensure this was appropriately documented and evidenced.
- Deliberate engagement of staff from across Country, Regional and Sydney offices in the development of a new strategic plan. This has been through the engagement of staff from across the organisation on working groups linked to the key strategic pillars; in the review of the theory of change; and numerous opportunities to provide feedback on the direction of the strategic plan. Throughout the process, surveys have also been deployed to get feedback on the process.
- Ongoing regular Sydney Office Leadership Team (SOLT) meetings; Country Office Leadership Team (COLT) meetings; and Executive Team (ET) meetings. A ToR for each group documents responsibilities of regarding the implementation and development of organisational systems, policies and procures, staff wellbeing, financial resource management and allocation, operational effectiveness in ChildFund’s offices of operation, the development philosophy, program policy development, implementation and the development of staff program-related and leadership capacity, development of the organisation’s strategy and reporting to the Board and external relations.

ChildFund Australia’s submits reports to its Board prior to Board meetings. These include reports from the Country Offices and each Sydney Office department (CEO, Public Engagement, Operations, International Programs and People and Organisational Development (POD)). These reports provide updates on investment decisions, diversity indicators and inclusion (in terms of gender, disability, ethnic minority groups) in our programs.

K3. Scope of this accountability report and influence of national entities

self-assessment level 3
This report was prepared by ChildFund Australia and reports on the policies, practices and experience of ChildFund Australia and our directly managed Country Offices: Cambodia, Myanmar, Vietnam, Laos, Timor-Leste and Papua New Guinea as well as initiatives supported in the Pacific. While ChildFund Australia is a member of the ChildFund Alliance, this report has been submitted on behalf of ChildFund Australia alone and is not representative of the ChildFund Alliance or Secretariat.
ChildFund Australia is a member of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) and a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct. The Code requires members to meet high standards of corporate governance, public accountability and financial management.

For more information, or to lodge a complaint, please contact ACFID on main@acfid.asn.au or email ChildFund Australia's Supporter Relations team on info@childfund.org.au.

ChildFund Australia is also a member of Accountable Now, a platform of international civil society organisations that strive to be transparent, responsive to stakeholders, and focused on delivering impact. As a member, ChildFund has signed 12 globally-agreed-upon Accountability Commitments and will report annually to an independent Review Panel on our economic, environmental and social performance according to the Accountable Now reporting standards.