

## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Version	Approved by	Approval Date	Author	Next Review
1	ELT HQ	October 2020	Head of People and Achievement	October 2022

This policy should be read alongside our Code of Conduct and Grievance and Disciplinary policy. It is supported by multi-year Diversity Action Plans for each location we work in<sup>1</sup>. The action plans, which will be reviewed on a regular basis, are the translation of this policy into practice and should reflect the different contexts and challenges of each location.

### Introduction

War Child values diversity and inclusion and seeks to ensure there are no discriminatory cultures or practices in our places of work. We also aim to take positive steps to support all our staff, trustees, volunteers and partners<sup>2</sup> from groups that are or have been disadvantaged. We know that many groups suffer disadvantages because of discrimination. We aim to be a positive force as society at large challenges prejudice and discrimination and aims to achieve equality and respect for all.

This policy:

- Outlines War Child's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity and fair and accessible treatment for staff, volunteers and trustees, free from any form of prejudice or discrimination.
- Details our commitment to diversity across all our staff, volunteers, trustees, and others working with War Child, in recognition of the benefits that diversity brings.
- Details our commitment to creating a safe and inclusive working environment, where all colleagues, especially those that are currently marginalised, underrepresented, or from a minority background can be themselves at work.
- Provides guidance on anti-discriminatory practice and create an environment in which diversity and inclusion are actively supported and encouraged.

### Equality, diversity and inclusion

Equality, diversity and inclusion are three concepts that are closely related, yet different. At times there may be tension between each of them, and it is therefore important to understand how they interact. We can create equality of opportunity only when we recognise and value difference and work together for inclusion.

**Equality** is about making sure that people are treated fairly and given fair chances to make the most of their lives and talents, and believing that no one should be disadvantaged because of where, as what or as whom they were born, or because of other characteristics. It is not about treating everyone the same, as that may result in reinforcing or even widening any existing gaps. Achieving equitable outcomes means meeting different needs in different ways.

<sup>1</sup> This action plan will be available on Phileas, our intranet. Copies may also be requested from local HR teams for our people unable to access the intranet.

<sup>2</sup> We will use the term 'our people' throughout this policy, which includes staff, trustees, volunteers and partners.

**Diversity** describes the process of valuing all the ways in which people differ and encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another - the full spectrum of human difference<sup>3</sup>. Diversity recognises and celebrates difference as something that is positive and beneficial to us all. Everyone is unique with a unique combination of characteristics and ways of being human.

**Inclusion** is not synonymous with diversity. An inclusive workplace has a culture where a mix of people come to work and feel that they are seen, heard, known and safe. Inclusion is authentically bringing excluded, under-represented or marginalised individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision-making in a way that shares power and creates a sense of belonging.

Equality, diversity and inclusion are not inter-changeable but inter-dependent. There can be no equality of opportunity if difference is not valued and harnessed and taken account of. We can strive toward diversity and still exclude people from conversations and implicitly or explicitly make people feel like they don't belong. Diversity without inclusivity is tokenism, giving the appearance of equality, but leaving individuals from marginalised or under-represented communities on the outside. Inclusivity without diversity is separation and exclusivity.

## Principles

- **Free from discrimination**

War Child is committed to ensuring that all our people and job applicants are treated fairly in an environment which is free from discrimination. We are an equal opportunity employer and seek to engage a diverse range of people regardless where, what or whom they were born, or because of other characteristics. We want to engage difference beyond characteristics protected by legislation, to observed and unobserved traits. We want to attract, develop and retain the most talented people, and make best use of their talents.

- **Tolerance and inclusivity**

Promoting equality amongst all is fundamental to War Child's mission. The principles of inclusiveness, tolerance and fairness are central to our work as an organisation that champions universal human rights. We respect the cultures, norms, practices, and traditions of all people and display cultural sensitivity to host communities and people in countries where War Child works.

At War Child we recognise and value the importance of diversity and inclusion. We believe our individual differences make us stronger, smarter and more innovative, which helps us better serve children and their communities affected by conflict. We acknowledge the benefit of having a range of perspectives in decision-making, encouraging individual differences to be valued at all levels, particularly in leadership roles within War Child.

- **Belonging**

We have an unwavering commitment to ensuring our people have a full sense of belonging at War Child and to its values. Every person at War Child has the responsibility to create and maintain an inclusive environment, where individuals:

- Feel safe to be themselves and give their best.
- Know that they are heard and their contribution matters.

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<sup>3</sup> We have chosen not to include a list of different characteristics, as this would never be exhaustive and as a result risks becoming exclusive

- Know that they can perform to their full potential.

An inclusive environment should enable War Child to be a great place to work, where everyone is able to achieve great things.

## Scope

War Child wants to provide a safe and inclusive workplace where all our people are treated with dignity, courtesy, and respect. We are committed to a positive policy of promoting equality of opportunity, providing an inclusive workplace, and eliminating discrimination. This policy applies and provides guidance across the range of employment policies and practices contained within the War Child HR Handbook<sup>4</sup>, including (but not limited to) those relating to:

- Hiring
- Terms and conditions of employment
- Performance management
- Disciplinary and grievance
- Compensation and benefits
- Learning and development
- Promotion and career development

The rights and obligations set out in this policy apply to all our staff in our country programmes and in the UK, trustees, volunteers, Global Ambassadors, contractors, consultants and partners. We will not accept discrimination or less favourable treatment of any person because of who they are. Likewise, we expect our people to treat others with dignity and respect.

**Everyone has a responsibility to:**

- Contribute to creating an inclusive working environment that values difference.
- Express and invite opinions constructively with sensitivity and respect.
- Stay informed by attending mandatory D&I training and development events.
- Help identify discriminatory practices or procedures and bring these to the attention of their line managers, senior leaders, or HR.
- Report discrimination, unfair treatment or harassment that they experience or witness.

**We expect our HR colleagues to:**

- Make sure that our policies and any associated processes are designed and implemented in an equitable and fair manner, whilst ensuring that new HR policies or processes are assessed for their potential impact on different groups of people, considering any potential for discrimination or missed opportunities to promote equality and greater inclusion.
- Conduct regular reviews and development of this policy as appropriate, and that any amendments or updates remain consistent with the diversity and inclusion principles.
- Champion the rights of our people by providing advice and guidance to individual members of staff and line managers.
- Take seriously any complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination.

This policy is of particular importance to our senior leaders, country directors, line managers and other staff members concerned with recruitment, development, management, and employment

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<sup>4</sup> The HR Handbook for each local War Child office is available on Phileas, our intranet. Copies may also be requested from local HR for our people unable to access the intranet.

decisions that affect others. Our leaders are expected to embody this policy, acting as role models and diversity and inclusion champions.

We expect our managers and leaders to:

- Create an inclusive working environment where people feel welcomed and valued for sharing their opinions and skills.
- Utilise the full potential of all people and build on complementary skills, experiences, and knowledge.
- Challenge and refuse to accept behaviours that attack the self-respect of others and confront people who stereotype others or display prejudiced behaviour.
- Facilitate training and discussion on equal opportunities and diversity issues as appropriate.
- Actively develop their personal skills, and ask for support, when needed, to ensure that they can include marginalised individuals and/or groups in decision-making and problem-solving processes.

## Identifying and addressing barriers

War Child's commitment to anti-discriminatory practices relates to all types of discrimination. We will not tolerate processes, attitudes and behaviour that amounts to direct or indirect discrimination, including harassment, victimisation and bullying through prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and stereotyping.

Discrimination does not necessarily occur because of a conscious decision. There are subtle and unconscious ways of discriminating. These can arise from making general assumptions about the capabilities, characteristics and interests of a particular group and from applying requirements, conditions or criteria without considering whether they advantage or disadvantage particular groups. We therefore need to take care to avoid all forms of discrimination and requirements, conditions or criteria. We should be alert to micro-inequities which are cumulative, sometimes subtle behaviours that result in discrimination, exclusion, demotivation and alert to unconscious bias. Stereotypes have the potential to lead to discrimination and so should be carefully examined and if necessary, challenged.

Exclusion and discrimination can also occur because of the relationship between privilege and power. Privilege is actual or perceived advantages that an individual or group receives due to some trait or characteristic they have. People with privilege have power. Power is the ability to direct policies and resources that shape people's lives. Some individuals or groups wield greater power than others, thereby allowing them greater access and control over resources. We must work to challenge the power structures, systems and practices that reinforce inequity. If we are not conscious of our own power and the power structures within which we work, we will inadvertently perpetuate inequities and widen disparities.

Our work in the humanitarian sector, protecting and defending the rights of children affected by conflict, depends heavily on locally recruited staff. We must do more to recognise their contributions and to ensure true participation and engagement in planning and decision-making processes alongside our UK and internationally recruited staff. In doing so we aim to address the tiered staffing system to redress power imbalances that fall along lines of race, ethnicity, nationality, language and cultural backgrounds. We know that we have further work to do to ensure we achieve a genuinely equal and inclusive environment for all our people and this policy commits us to this.

We understand that to do this we will need to address the root causes and impacts of stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, harassment and victimisation as well as the indirect discrimination that can unintentionally arise from our policies, practices and procedures.

This policy applies and provides guidance across the range of employment policies and practices contained within the War Child HR Handbook. Without concrete steps to complement this policy, it remains just a piece of paper. Therefore, we will develop and maintain our commitments and actions to identify and address barriers through our Diversity Action Plans.

Diversity and inclusion is a complex and multi-layered topic and as such, there are inherent challenges, as there will be issues that may be at odds with or contrasting others. We also recognise that an inclusive approach does not mean an equal approach. Achieving equitable outcomes means meeting different needs in different ways. Compromises may need to be found, so it is important to have open and honest conversations. We know that in order to deliver a truly diverse workforce with an inclusive environment we must embrace this challenge and we are committed to finding the best possible solutions and outcomes.

## Our values and behaviours

The four War Child values<sup>5</sup> underpin how we implement our Diversity and Inclusion policy, how we engage with and respond to diversity and strive for inclusion in all areas of our work.

Our Code of Conduct<sup>6</sup> outlines expected behaviour of all War Child representatives both inside and outside of the workplace. We expect our people to be able to foster a safe, respectful and collaborative environment. War Child has **zero tolerance** for discrimination, bullying, victimisation, and/or harassment. Our Code of Conduct is supported by appropriate disciplinary and grievance procedures. See [Reporting](#) for further information.

Legislation and the existence of a Diversity and Inclusion Policy alone cannot prevent discrimination and exclusion. It is crucial that all our people take personal responsibility to help ensure that the work environment respects the dignity of everyone and values the differences that exist between people and cultures (see [Scope](#)). In addition, we should be attuned to and seek to build on what we share and have in common consistent with our human rights aims.

## Training and communication

This policy is available on the intranet and War Child's website. The details of this policy will be proactively communicated and promoted to all current staff and new starters. All our people and new starters will be asked to sign-up to and agree with this policy.

This policy forms an integral part of our induction programme. We are committed to ensuring our people are trained in equality, diversity and inclusion, and encourage our people to participate in organisational and local training and awareness programmes.

The policy will be made available to current and prospective partners, suppliers, funders and others on request.

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<sup>5</sup> Accountable to children, Bold, Committed to each other and Transparent

<sup>6</sup> The Code of Conduct is available via our intranet. All new starters are required to complete training on our Code of Conduct, and refreshers are offered annually.

## Reporting

No matter who and where our people are, they are the voice of War Child and are encouraged to speak up and report actual or suspected breaches of this policy. War Child will hear and support them. We encourage anyone who witnesses or experiences unfair treatment or feels they have been subject to discrimination to raise their concerns so we can apply corrective measures. All complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated fairly.

In the first instance, issues should be raised with the line manager, or if this is not possible with HR. If the issue involves the HR team, the concern can be raised with any other member of the Extended Leadership Team, such as a Country Director, Head of, or member of the Senior Leadership Team. There are also anonymous reporting channels available where appropriate, more information about this is available in our Whistleblowing policy<sup>7</sup>. Any staff member who feels that the treatment they have received is not in keeping with our Code of Conduct and/or Diversity and Inclusion Policy has a right to register a complaint under our Grievance and Disciplinary policy.

Disciplinary action will be taken against any staff member who is found to have acted unfairly or unlawfully (where applicable under local legislation) in respect of this policy. Serious breaches of this policy may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal without notice. Staff members should refer themselves to our Code of Conduct and Grievance and Disciplinary policy for further information.

Our people must not be victimised or retaliated against for complaining about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Grievance and Disciplinary policy.

## Monitoring and review

Responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy stands with our CEO, our leadership team and Country Directors. However, everyone involved in War Child is expected to play their part in turning policy into practice. We must hold ourselves and each other to account.

This policy will be regularly reviewed in line with best practice. The review will focus on:

- Tracking progress, identifying challenges to delivery and devising ways to overcome these as well as checking that the policy aims and actions remain relevant.
- Reflecting any changes in internal structures, strategy, and role responsibilities as and when needed.
- Updates according to legislation and best practice, including changes in public discourse and within the communities in which we work.

We will regularly collect, monitor and analyse diversity data provided by employees and job applicants to make sure our employment processes are fair and are achieving the aims of this policy. This information will be collected and stored in line with relevant data protection legislation and will only be used to monitor compliance with the principles of diversity, inclusion and equality. The information will be analysed at regular intervals by the local HR team.

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<sup>7</sup> The Whistleblowing policy is available on Phileas, our intranet. Copies may also be requested from local HR teams for our people unable to access the intranet.