

Child Protection Policy

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RISDA-Bangladesh

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1. Policy Statement

RISDA-Bangladesh (“the Organization”) is committed to protecting children from any kind of abuse, neglect and exploitation and promotes their rights in agreement with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Globally, there is a legitimate concern among the government, donors and stakeholders about the protection of child rights in all levels. Therefore, every organization requires a child protection policy to improve the situation of children. It will assist the managers in making administrative planning, communicating, controlling and deciding over the program and organizational management.

The policy document presents the standard Policies and procedure of child protection of the Organization. This is a guiding instruction for all projects/programs, staff members of EC members, which serves the interest of all its stakeholders. Each section of this policy defines the policies and procedures of child protection issue; however, not all events can be incorporated. As such, under special cases management shall try to remain true to the intent of welfare of the stakeholders.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The primary goal of the policy is to protect the well-being of children that protect them from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The specific purpose of the policy is:

- ❑ To ensure a child-friendly environment where children directly and indirectly involved with the Organization are protected from any form of abuse and exploitation.
- ❑ To sensitize all level staff, board members, volunteers, interns, consultants, visitors and other individuals/organizations involved with the Organization to the child protection issue.
- ❑ To reflect child protection policy to all the policies, strategies, and planning of the organization as well as implemented and monitored.
- ❑ To empower children to be aware and challenge any kind of abuse against them.

3. Guiding Principles

This policy is informed by a set of principles that derive from the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child. Principles upon which the Child Protection Policy is based –

- a) **Non-discrimination:** All children have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation regardless of their race, religion, ethnicity or socio economic status in all activities of the Organization;
- b) **Best Interest:** Child’s best interest should be prioritized in all activities of the Organization;
- c) **Participation:** In all activities of the Organization, children should have opportunity to participate when and where relevant;
- d) **Survival and development:** Children’s survival and development issues should be prioritized in all activities of the Organization.

4. Responsibilities of all related persons

In order to ensure full protection of children in all activities, strategies and planning of all activities of the Organization, following code of conduct are taken as obligatory for all persons and organizations involved with the Organization directly or indirectly.

4.1. The Persons involved with the Organization activities must do:

- a) All people involved with the Organization must have awareness on child protection.
- b) To make children aware about their rights and responsibilities.
- c) To let know a child and its parents/ guardians about the Organization process of response to child abuse.
- d) To make a child capable in identifying difference between acceptable and unacceptable behavior.
- e) To make a child capable of protesting others unacceptable behavior with gentle manner.
- f) If a child's behavior is unacceptable, motivate him to change his mode of behavior.
- g) Create enabling environment where children can freely express their opinion.
- h) To help children in taking decision and respect their opinion.
- i) To ensure child friendly environment in the Organization head office and select risk free place for holding activities with children.
- j) Children should be provided healthful and hazardous free education or communication material.
- k) To create enabling environment where children will feel free to express their concern and participate in discussion.
- l) To ensure reflection of CPP in principle, strategy, procedure and process of activities of the Organization.
- m) To behave with children on the basis of equality, dignity and respect irrespective of their religion, caste, ethnic identity, socio economic status etc.
- n) Respect a child's rights to personal privacy.
- o) Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private and underserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- p) Provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow.
- q) Gain written parental consent for any significant travel arrangements e.g. overnight stays. Ensure that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff.
- r) Recognize that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people.
- s) Challenge unacceptable behavior and report all allegations/suspensions of abuse.
- t) Create enabling environment if there is chances to hide incident of abuse by a child due to awareness.
- u) Always give enthusiastic and constructive feedback to a child rather than negative criticism.
- v) To give priority to the need and capacity of children and not pushing them against their will.
- w) Gain written parental consent for using photograph and information of child for study, research or business purpose.

4.2. The Persons involved with the Organization activities must not do:

- a) Any discrimination to a child on the basis of its parent's profession, socio-economic status, religion, ethnic identity etc.
- b) Express annoyance for unwanted conduct of a child or force him to refrain from doing such a rebuke.
- c) Unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.

- d) Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children against their will.
- e) To call a child a humiliating name.
- f) Making a child do personal work.
- g) To use an abusive word in the presence of a child.
- h) Making sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- i) Watch nude photographs, porn videos or other materials with children.
- j) Let a child contact with hazardous equipment.
- k) Convince a child through lying to avoid his concentration on a specific issue.
- l) Physical or mental torture or any act that causes physical and mental torture.
- m) Any act that provokes a sexual feeling or sexual relation with a child.
- n) Show favoritism to any individual.
- o) Ensure that at any events adults should not enter the children's room or invite children to their rooms.
- p) Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
- q) Push children to attend in discussion, cultural program or competition against their will.
- r) Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- s) Smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of children.
- t) Involve child labor in the activities of the Organization.

5. Promotion of Child Protection

5.1. Training on Child Protection

Child Protection Committee (CPC) will assess the training need of all members of General Committee, Executive Committee and Staff Members and arrange orientation/training course on child protection among all level of organizational people of the organization. Refresher training will be organized for all employees after certain intervals.

5.2. Signing Code of Conduct

All level of Staff of the Organization, GC members, EC members, consultants, volunteers, interns, service providers must sign the code of conduct as soon as the agreement to be done with them.

5.3. Observation of National and International Days

Different national and international relevant days will be observed at the local and national level especially International Children Day, International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, Child Rights week, and International Day Against Child Labor.

5.4. Campaign from Digital Platform

Child Protection Committee (CPC) will create campaigns to support and create awareness among staff and stakeholders on regular basis with maximum support from digital platforms

5.5. Circulation of the Policy

Child Protection Committee (CPC) will circulate/display a short version of child protection policy at all locations within the establishment of the Organization

6. Response to Child Protection

6.1. Information flow

The Chief of the Child Protection Committee (CPC) will designate a person to collect all sorts of information collected from the bottom to the upper level related to any incidence of abuse and violation of the code of conduct. It will be considered a breach of the Child Protection Policy and in that case, necessary action will be taken for protection and prevention. Anyone can report to the Line Manager, the Functional Lead or the Chief of Child Protection Committee (CPC) for any violation of the policy.

6.2. Investigation

The Child Protection Committee (CPC) will form an investigation committee to investigate the incidence which was reported by any means. If possible, there is a female member in the committee. For serious issues, investigation will be carried out within six hours and for less serious issues, it will be done within three days of the incidence. The team will submit a report with proper evidence not more than three days after the investigation.

6.3. Action following Investigation:

The Child Protection Committee (CPC) will review the report and recommend taking necessary action for protection and prevention of abuse, neglect and exploitation against children. For any disciplinary measure, prior approval of Executive Director will be a must.

7. Implementation of Policy

7.1. The Child Protection Committee (CPC)

There will be a Child Protection Committee (CPC) comprising of 5 (five) members where at least 2 (two) members will be female. The committee will implement and monitor the policy. The chief of the committee will be the focal person of the organization in this regard.

7.2. Budget Allocation

As per recommendation of Child Protection Committee (CPC), the management of the organization will make necessary budgetary provision for undertaking promotion of protection activities of Child Protection Policy.

7.3. Monitoring & Evaluation

The Child Protection Committee (CPC) will review the progress of child protection issues at organization level at quarterly meetings and it will be documented in black and white. The management will publish a circular with the decisions of the meeting to all level of the offices.

Regular monitoring will be arranged with the help of proper specific guidelines and indicators to assess the present child protection issues. In that assessment a format will be developed involving some common issues and indicators. On the basis of the assessment report, CPC will review and make recommendations. After the recommendation of the committee, the management will take proper initiative and necessary action as per policy. An evaluation will be

arranged in each three years by a Child Protection Specialist and the recommendation will be included in the next review.

7.4. Confidentiality

All documents and information of child abuse will be kept in absolute confidentiality. No person or organization shall communicate any information concerning the alleged event except as necessary to ensure proper and neutral investigation. Limited additional disclosure can be made as an example to protect other children from harm in the near future. Any breach of confidentiality shall be cause for utmost punishment as per the policy of the Organization.