

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

*Our organization is fully committed and it recognizes the rights of all children to be protected from harm in conformity with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Hague Convention on Adoption. As it is reflected BRED fully see eye-to-eye with the terms "Children First" and creates it as safe for children and it will put in all efforts to protect children and prevent abuse, violence against them*

**BRED**  
**Bangladesh Rural Economic Development**

# Prologue

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The term safeguarding refers to overall welfare, development and protection of children. As far as its scope is concerned, it is broader than child protection and mostly relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm, decay. It is everybody's responsibility to save the children. BRED feels it as a part and parcel of its mission. The act with respect to safeguarding the children addresses primarily the protection of children from abuse, 2ndly, prevention of impairment of children's health and thirdly but not lastly, ensuring that children are growing up in safe and convenient environment consistently. Apart from health the safeguarding of children commonly includes wellbeing, human rights of individuals, which allow children, to live free from abuse, harm and neglect.

Children need safeguarding and their safeguarding should be imperative as they are one of the most affected groups. Their rights are piteously hampered and they grow in restriction. BRED has taken it in its organization's values and ethics and considered accordingly the children issues, above all their safety, security in all spheres. BRED by nature is a non-government voluntary development organization, committed to work with distressed and underprivileged people of the country including children in the society. BRED has several policies which it follows for running the programs. This child policy is one of those documents.

BRED's Child safeguarding/protection policy is its commitment towards protecting the children from different form of hazards, problems, obstacles such as; abuse, health hazards, exploitation, and deprivation. In particular, BRED as its organizational mandate takes the responsibility to develop children's attitude, education and well-being and create safe environments where children can grow up safely with their rights upheld.

This Child Safeguarding Policy outlines how BRED deals with child protection issues and is intended to safeguard the children who come into contact with our staff. Since then BRED has been planning to prepare a document that will talk about the child rights and protection from abuse.

The Child Bill of the People's Republic of Bangladesh passed on June 16, 2013 by the National Parliament and was published through a gazette notification on June 20. This new act is harmonized with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and has referred to the CRC in the preamble and replaced the Child Act 1974. BRED's policy reflects this in its Child safeguarding policy.

There are a group of people including staff have worked hard for preparation of this policy. This is a draft. There is provision that BRED will review it in every three years and improve the document. BRED expects that this will help organization and also others who will come in contact with this document.

### Purpose of the Policy:

The aim of the policy and procedures of this policy is to regulate how BRED will work as an organization, so that the children with which it will come into contact (either directly or indirectly) are safeguarded and have their wellbeing promoted, and that our actions.

### Principles underpinning our Safeguarding Policy:

BRED's Child safeguarding policy is based upon certain principle which includes:

- All children have equal rights to protection and to have their wellbeing and participation promoted.
- BRED will take all actions pertaining to child safeguarding in the best interest of children.
- Everybody has a responsibility for safeguarding. This policy is mandatory for all those who work for or on behalf of BRED, including staff, volunteers and partners.
- BRED will work in a transparent and open way where child safeguarding is made a priority, recognizing that situations of abuse and harm are able to flourish when staff, volunteers, partners, children, families and community members do not feel able to raise their concerns.
- US will take all reports of concern regarding the safety and protection of a child seriously and it will take necessary, appropriate steps to protect the child and to take action against the alleged perpetrator.
- BRED will work with other organizations, agencies (such as state departments and ministries with a mandate to protect children) and groups as necessary and appropriate in this regard.
- BRED will maintain confidentiality and do not disclose personal details of those involved in child protection.
- BRED will work in a transparent and open way where child safeguarding is made a priority, recognizing that situations of abuse and harm are able to flourish when staff, volunteers, partners, children, families and community members do not feel able to raise their concerns
- BRED will raise awareness and influence others on the importance of safeguarding children, using our policy and procedures as a way of both highlighting its commitment and also of explaining the values.

Child safeguarding, in particular, runs across the organization and is not just associated with program and projects or Human Resources. The concept of thinking about safeguarding and reducing risk is embedded in everything that BRED does, from recruiting a staff member or volunteer. Throughout the policy, a number of situations have been highlighted which specifically call for a risk assessment – such as when conducting an activity or when concerns are raised about a staff member’s references or police check. However, this does not mean that risk should only be considered at those times. BRED always reviews the Safeguarding risks regularly at all levels.

### Some operational definition:

#### **Child:**

Using the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, BRED defines a child as a child for this policy is anyone aged 18 or under regardless of the legal age of majority in the countries where-

#### **Abuse:**

Abuse is used in its widest sense and includes physical, emotional/psychological and sexual abuse, neglect and negligent treatment, violence and exploitation in all forms.

#### **Emotional Abuse:**

It refers to the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and long lasting effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless and unloved, inadequate, or valued only so far as they meet the needs of another person. It can also involve age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children, or causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

#### **Physical Abuse:**

This refers to some kind of attack or hurt physically. This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or career feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child who they are looking after.

#### **Neglect:**

Neglect is referred to the persistent failure to meet the child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s physical or cognitive development.

#### **Sexual Abuse:**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening or gives consent. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g., rape) or non-penetrative acts. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production

of, pornographic materials or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

**Child Protection:**

Child protection describes the work being undertaken to strengthen laws, policies, programs and systems, which are designed to protect children in a given country in his or her own family and community.

**Child Safeguarding:**

Child safeguarding is the responsibility that organizations have to ensure their staff, operations and programs “do no harm” to children and that any concerns the organization has about children’s safety within the communities in which they work are reported to the appropriate authorities.

**Exploitation:**

Child exploitation is the use of children for someone else’s advantage, gratification or profit often resulting in unjust, cruel and harmful treatment of the child. It covers situations of manipulation, misuse, abuse, victimization, oppression or ill-treatment.

**Child trafficking:**

Moving a child within a country, or across borders, whether by force or not, for someone else’s advantage, gratification or profit, is a form of both economic and sexual exploitation.

**Violence against Children:**

Violence against Children refers to all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of trust, responsibility, or power.

## BRED's Commitment to Children:

*Responsibility:* Recognize that child safeguarding is our responsibility, whether or not our individual roles involve working directly with children and youth;

*Accountability:* BRED actively holds itself accountable to child safeguarding commitments and responsibilities;

*Behavior:* BRED is acting as role models of child-friendly attitudes, behaviors and practices;

*Equality:* BRED treats all children and youth equally with respect and fairness regardless of age, culture, caste, nationality, creed, ethnicity, health status (e.g. AIDS), physical and Psychological ability, family situation, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual orientation;

*Participation:* BRED ensures that children are able and enabled to express their views on all matters which affect them and their surroundings, they are listened to, are active in decision-making processes, and their views are acted upon;

*Practices:* BRED is encouraging a positive discipline strategy to work with children;

*Punishment:* BRED prohibits corporal punishment, offensive or abusive language (including teasing and taunting), and the use of gestures or symbols that could be interpreted as insulting or provocative;

*Confidentiality:* Except where required by law, keeping details of the victims and alleged perpetrators of abuse in reported cases of abuse confidential;

*Partnership:* BRED will work in partnership with governments, communities, partner agencies, multilaterals, donors, children and families to promote the welfare, health and development of children, and to protect them from harm;

*Funding:* BRED, if it gets capacity, opportunity, will ensure adequate funding to realize its child safeguarding commitments.

## Child Protection Incidents:

It will apply to its meaning, when an allegation is made, even if it is unsubstantiated, that a child is being abused or is likely to be abused.

### **Zero tolerance:**

BRED will not tolerate any form of abuse and will take all necessary measures to implement the Child Safeguarding Policy.

## Safeguarding Policy Statement: BRED maintains

- All children, whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity should be able to participate in a fun and safe environment.
- Protect children from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings
- A suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- Ensure that a member of the organization having training on the appropriate guidance in good practice and child protection procedures
- Work in partnership with parents and children is essential for the protection of children
- Treat all young people equally and with respect and dignity
- BRED will always put the welfare of the Children young person first
- BRED will recognize the developmental needs and capacity of the young person
- BRED is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children who come in contact with BRED.
- BRED will not be engaged in any type of activities with other organizations whose practices endanger the wellbeing of children.
- BRED is committed to ensuring that all relevant parties are informed about its policy and understand the importance of safeguarding children.
- BRED will not employ children as “house help” or otherwise employ children below the age of 14 regardless of the legal working age in that country
- BRED will assist a child in tasks that he or she can do unaided (such as taking them to the toilet, bathing or changing clothes), unless help is requested, in which case the ‘Two Adult Rule’ applies;
- BRED will not hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children. If it occurred within the organization it will disciplinary measures.

- BRED will not act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse;
- DSUD will not discriminate against or favor particular children to the exclusion of others;
- BRED will not develop relationships with children that can in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive;
- BRED will not do anything with children, which are illegal, unsafe or abusive,
- BRED will not exploit children for their labor(e.g. domestic servants) or for sexual purposes (e.g. prostitution)<sup>14</sup> or trafficking of children;

### Implementation of the Child Safeguarding Policy

BRED will take the following measures to ensure the effective implementation of this policy:

- All staff members will be required to sign an acknowledgement and consent to the terms of this Policy prior to their appointment;
- BRED will integrate child safeguarding measures into relevant core internal processes such as: planning and program design, partner agreements, risk management, monitoring and accountability mechanisms and recruitment processes.
- Build capacity of likeminded organizations in the area of safeguarding child.
- Submit a summary of child safeguarding concerns received (without confidential details) annually to the BRED Executive Director, if and when required.

### Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct is designed primarily to protect children; however it also serves to guard representatives from false accusations; and the name and reputation of BRED.

#### Major areas:

All BRED's staff will understand the matters and policy and their ability to respond to keep children safe and abide by the following Code of Conduct.

All BRED staff is responsible for encouraging and promoting the dissemination of the Code of Conduct.

BRED's staff that are closely working with partners are also urged to encourage these partners to adhere to the standards set in the Code of Conduct and to join BRED staff in upholding them.

In line with the BRED Child Safeguarding Policy, the adherence to this Code of Conduct is mandatory for all BRED's representatives. Any violation of the Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary procedures which may include legal action where the severity warrants it.

Contribute to create and/or uphold an environment where children are listened to and respected as individuals and which is safe, positive and encouraging to them;

Use positive, non-violent methods to manage children's behavior.

Respect children's dignity and their need.

Relationship with children should not be developed in a way that can in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive.

Overall BRED's commitment relating to Child safeguarding is strictly followed. Children are kept safe. The children beneficiaries are well protected and explicitly prohibited from engaging in any activity that may result in any kind of Child Abuse.

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