



Zabarang Kalyan Samity Policy Cover Sheet

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Primary person responsible for updates to this policy:	Mathura Bikash Tripura
Job title:	Executive Director

Circulation: This policy has been approved by the executive committee members and is available to staff and general committee members. It is addressed to all staff members, volunteers and applies at any organizational services.

Reviewed by: 

Mathura Bikash Tripura
Executive Director
Zabarang Kalyan Samity

Date: 27 July 2024

Approved by: 

S Ananta Bikash Tripura
Chairperson
Zabarang Kalyan Samity

Date: 27 July 2024

Child Protection Policy



Zabarang Kalyan Samity

Khagrapur, Khagrachari Sadar
Khagrachari-4400
Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh
Phone: 0088 0371 61708
Email: info@zabarangbd.org


Mathura Bikash Tripura
Executive Director
Zabarang Kalyan Samity

Child Protection Policy


Chairperson
Zabarang Kalyan Samity

Zabarang Kalyan Samity Child Protection Policy

1. Introduction

The purpose of the Child Protection policy is:

- to raise awareness of the problem of child abuse and the risks to children
- to provide guidance on working more effectively with children to safeguard them from abuse
- to ensure that, when abuse is suspected, it is clear what action must be taken.

The policy makes very clear the responsibilities of staff and others. Failure to act in accordance with the policy may result in disciplinary action.

2. Policy Format

The policy is written in four parts

PART 1: A Commitment to Safeguard Children

This outlines the organization's commitment to safeguard the children with whom the organization is in contact.

PART 2: A Code of Conduct

This details the standards of behaviour the organization expects of its staff and others in their dealings with children

PART 3: A Local Procedure for Assessing & Reducing Risk

A risk assessment was undertaken by the organization for all situations of risk involving children and identifies appropriate action the organization and staff can take in each situation.

PART 4: A Local Procedure for Reporting Abuse & Taking Action

This provides a clear process by which concerns regarding actual or likely abuse may be raised.

Definitions used in the policy

Child

A child is referred to anyone under the age of 18.

Child Abuse

Child abuse is a general term used about situations where the child may experience harm and is normally categorised into four main forms - physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect

Child abuse consists of anything which individuals, institutions or processes do or fail to do which directly or indirectly harms children or damages their prospect of safe and healthy development into adulthood.

Report of the UK National Commission of Inquiry into the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect, 1996

Child Abuser

The child abuser is anyone who caused harm or distress to the child and may be one of the following, although this list is not exhaustive:

- A family member
- A teacher or someone working at the school
- A classmate
- A staff member of the organization
- A staff member of a partner organization
- A contractor working for the organization
- Another adult in the community or from outside the community
- Another child in the community or from outside the community

Child Protection

Child protection is the term used to describe the responsibilities and activities undertaken to prevent or to stop children being abused or ill-treated.

Significant Harm

The level at which harm to a child can be regarded as significant is difficult to define but should nevertheless form the basis of discussions of any concerns. Consideration must be given to the nature of the abuse and the level of concerns that exist, as well as to the context within which the abuse or harm takes place. It is important to discuss all concerns with managers and relevant others in order to assess the levels of risk to children.

3. Who will use the policy?

The policy applies to all members of the General Assembly, all members of the Executive Committee, Advisors, all staff (office and field based) and all volunteers (national and international) working for Zabarang Kalyan Samity.

The policy also applies to partner organizations. That is to say all organizations working in partnership with and with whom the organization has a formal or informal partnership contract, are required to adopt either this policy or the Child Protection Policy of Zabarang.

The organization will also use this policy to raise awareness of parents, guardians and other adults on the subject of child abuse, to prevent abuse and protect children in the community and in the home.

4. Values and principles adopted in this policy

Child Rights

A key element in working to safeguard the welfare of all children is the promotion of their rights. A child or young person has the right:

- To have their health, safety and well-being, and their best interests considered *paramount*
- To have their welfare and development promoted and safeguarded so that they can achieve their full potential
- To be valued, respected and understood within the context of their own culture, religion and ethnicity, and to have their needs identified and met within this context and within the context of their family wherever possible
- To be listened to and to have their views given careful consideration, and to be encouraged and helped to participate in decisions which affect them.

In order that these rights are respected, when staff and others are in contact with children, they should:

- At all times treat children with respect and recognise them as individuals in their own right
- Regard them positively and value them as individuals who have specific needs and rights and a particular contribution to make
- Work with them in a spirit of co-operation and partnership based on mutual trust and respect
- Value their views and take them seriously
- Work with them in ways that enhance their inherent capacities and capabilities, and develop their potential
- Strive to understand them within the context in which they live.

Duty of Care

In addition to the general principles of good practice in work with children, staff and others should recognise that they, as adults, have a responsibility, and in some cases a legal duty, to ensure the safety of the children with whom they work. Children can be at risk of harm or abuse from a range of sources. It is the responsibility of staff and others to minimise the risk of harm by promoting good practice and by identifying and managing potential risks.

Confidentiality

In all matters dealt with as part of this policy, it is essential to respect the need for confidentiality. In certain circumstances, any lack of confidentiality may have devastating effects for the lives of children and may also result in serious consequences for adults involved in the process.

In responding to issues and concerns regarding possible abuse, staff and others must exercise extreme vigilance in protecting information and must pass on this information via the reporting process described in this policy, only to those people who need to be aware of it.

Confidential record-keeping

Any concerns, allegations or disclosures must be written down at the time or as soon as possible after the concern is raised, and no longer than 24 hours afterwards. Records should be signed and dated.

Records should be as detailed and precise as possible, giving an exact account of what was said, especially where it is a child who is disclosing abuse or making an allegation. They should report the details as disclosed or alleged, including who was present and what happened, the sequence of events, and so on. All subsequent action should also be documented.

Records must be kept securely in a locked place to which access is restricted. Managers have a particular responsibility in maintaining the confidentiality of these records and must ensure that the records, or any information they contain, are made available only to relevant parties. The transfer of information - verbally, through the mail, electronically, etc - should be done in such a way that confidentiality is maintained.

PART 1: A Commitment to Safeguard Children

Our values and principles

The abuse and exploitation of children happens in all countries and societies across the world. All child abuse involves the abuse of children's rights.

The situation of *all* children must be improved through promotion of their rights as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This includes the right to freedom from abuse and exploitation.

Child abuse is never acceptable and a commitment to children's rights in general also means a commitment to safeguard the children with whom the organization is in contact.

What we will do

The organization will meet its commitment to safeguard children through the following means:

- Awareness:** Ensuring that all staff and others are aware of the problem of child abuse and the risks to children.
- Prevention:** Ensuring, through awareness and good practice, that staff and others minimise the risks to children.
- Reporting:** Ensuring that staff and others are clear what steps to take where concerns arise regarding the safety of children .
- Responding:** Ensuring that action is taken to support and protect children where concerns arise regarding possible abuse.

In order that the above standards of reporting and responding are met, Zabarang will also ensure that it:

- takes seriously any concerns raised
- takes positive steps to ensure the protection of children who are the subject of any concerns
- supports children, staff or other adults who raise concerns or who are the subject of concerns
- acts appropriately and effectively in instigating or co-operating with any subsequent process of investigation
- is guided through the child protection process by the principle of 'best interests of the child'
- listens to and takes seriously the views and wishes of children
- works in partnership with parents/carers and/or other professionals to ensure the protection of children.

PART 2: A Code of Conduct

It is important for all staff and others in contact with children to:

- be aware of situations which may present risks and manage these
- plan and organise the work and the workplace so as to minimise risks
- as far as possible, be visible in working with children
- ensure that a culture of openness exists to enable any issues or concerns to be raised and discussed
- ensure that a sense of accountability exists between staff so that poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour does not go unchallenged
- talk to children about their contact with staff or others and encourage them to raise any concerns
- empower children - discuss with them their rights, what is acceptable and unacceptable, and what they can do if there is a problem.

In general it is inappropriate to:

- spend excessive time alone with children away from others
- take children to your home, especially where they will be alone with you.

Staff and others must never:

- hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children
- develop physical/sexual relationships with children
- develop relationships with children which could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive
- act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse.

Staff and others *must* avoid actions or behaviour that could be construed as poor practice or potentially abusive. For example, they should never:

- use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive
- behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative
- have a child/children with whom they are working to stay overnight at their home unsupervised
- sleep in the same room or bed as a child with whom they are working
- do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves
- condone, or participate in, behaviour of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive
- act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse
- discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favour particular children to the exclusion of others.

PART 3: A Local Procedure for Assessing and Reducing Risk to Children

The risk assessment was undertaken by the organization for all situations of risk involving children and identifies appropriate action the organization and staff can take in each situation.


Mathura Bikash Tripathi
Executive Director
Zabarang Kalyan Samity


Chairperson
Zabarang Kalyan Samity

In the Home

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Action	Responsibility
Cooking in the kitchen	Low	Burns	Do not allow young children near the stove	Family members and neighbour
Using unhygienic water, unclean kitchen pots, etc.	Medium	Sickness	Supervise children in the kitchen Ensure the kitchen is kept clean	Family members
Falling off the roof	Medium	Serious injury or death	Supervise children on the roof Build a low wall or fence	Family members
Family members getting angry with the child	Medium	Mental shock	Ensure all family members are aware of the Child Protection Policy, abuse and the rights of the child	Family members
Playing with electric items: refrigerator, heater, iron etc.	Medium	Electric Shock	Do not allow children to play with electrical items Ensure electric items are kept in a safe place	Family members
Eating medicine	Medium	Sickness or death	An adult should always give the child the right quantity of medicine Ensure all medicines are kept in a safe place out of the reach of children	Family members
Playing risky games	Medium	Injury	Supervise children, particularly young children Discourage risky games and provide fun alternatives	Family members
Falling down latrine	Medium	Injury	Teach young children how to use the latrine properly	Family members


 Mathura Bikash Tripura
 Executive Director
 Zabarang Kalyan Samity


 Chairperson
 Zabarang Kalyan Samity

In the office

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Action	Responsibility
Falling off the office balcony/roof	Low	Serious injury or death	Supervise children at all times Build low wall or railings Keep all external doors shut	Staff*
Electric shock from office equipment and/or wall sockets and/or multiplex	Medium	Serious injury	Supervise children at all times Children should not be allowed to use office equipment Ensure all multiplex are tidy Use dummy plugs if available	Staff
Falling down the stairs	Low	Serious injury	Supervise children at all times	Staff
Staff getting angry, using bad language or shouting in the office or directly at the children	Low	Mental shock Fear	Raise the awareness of staff of the Child Protection Policy, abuse and the rights of children	Staff
Staff hitting a child or behaving in an inappropriate manner, physically	Very low	Mental shock Fear	Raise the awareness of staff of the Child Protection Policy, abuse and the rights of children and the Staff Disciplinary Policy	Staff

Notes

All staff have some responsible for the care of children in the office but most of the responsibility lies with the member of staff who invited the child into the office. Staff organizing workshop for children should ensure that there are enough adults to supervise the children at all times. inviting a child into the office staff should first seek the permission of the parent or guardian.

In the School

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Action	Responsibility
Injured by falling building material due to the poor construction of the	Medium	Injury	Ensure that the building is maintained and kept in good	Teacher Headmaster

Mathura Bikash Tripura
Executive Director
Zabarang Kalyan Samity

Chairperson
Zabarang Kalyan Samity

school or due to ongoing construction in the school grounds			order Ensure that children are not allowed on construction sites	School Helpers SMC
Teachers or school helpers getting angry, shouting or using bad language	Low	Mental shock May lose interest in attending school and may drop out	Raise awareness of the Child Protection Policy, abuse and child rights. Teach other methods of discipline and classroom control	Teacher Headmaster School Helpers
Being hit by a bus or other vehicle	Low	Serious injury or death	Supervise children during school hours and during outdoor activities Ensure that the school grounds are fenced or there is some other barrier between the school and the road Teaching children about road safety	Teachers Headmaster School Helpers SMC Family members
Falling down latrine	Medium	Injury	Teach young children how to use the latrine properly	Family members
Drinking unsafe water	Medium	Sickness and in some cases death	Ensure a supply of safe drinking water in schools Raise awareness among children and adults of the need to drink safe drinking water and practice good sanitation	Teachers Headmaster School Helpers SMC Family members


 Mathura Bikash Tripura
 Executive Director
 Zabarang Kalyan Samity


 Chairperson
 Zabarang Kalyan Samity

When arranging meetings, workshops, events or other activities with children the following procedure should always be followed:

- FIRST** Ensure that the parents are aware of the project, the purpose of your meeting, workshop, event or other activities, and the nature or details of your meeting, workshop, event or other activity (where, when, what, why, with whom and for how long).
- SECOND** Ensure that you have the permission of the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) before inviting the child to attend your meeting, workshop, event or other activity
- THIRD** Ensure that you have enough staff to supervise the children at all times
- FOURTH** Ensure that everyone involved in the meeting, workshop, event or activity is fully aware of the Child Protection Policy, and understand and agree to the Code of Conduct
- FIFTH** Ensure that everyone involved is aware of the risks of abuse to children and the procedures for reporting abuse.
- SIXTH** Ensure that your venue is safe and free from risks. Provide safe drinking water and food. Ensure that all external doors and gates are closed or locked. Remove electrical items from the room. Ensure that electrical wires are tidy and multiplex out of reach.
- SEVEN** Ensure that everyone in the building knows that children will be visiting (where, when, what, why, with whom and for how long).

PART 4: A Local Procedure for Reporting Child Abuse and Taking Action

The Local Procedure describes the specific action staff and others will take if there are concerns or suspicions of abuse. The procedure will list local information about who to contact and how, and will indicate the different responsibilities each individual has in relation to child protection.

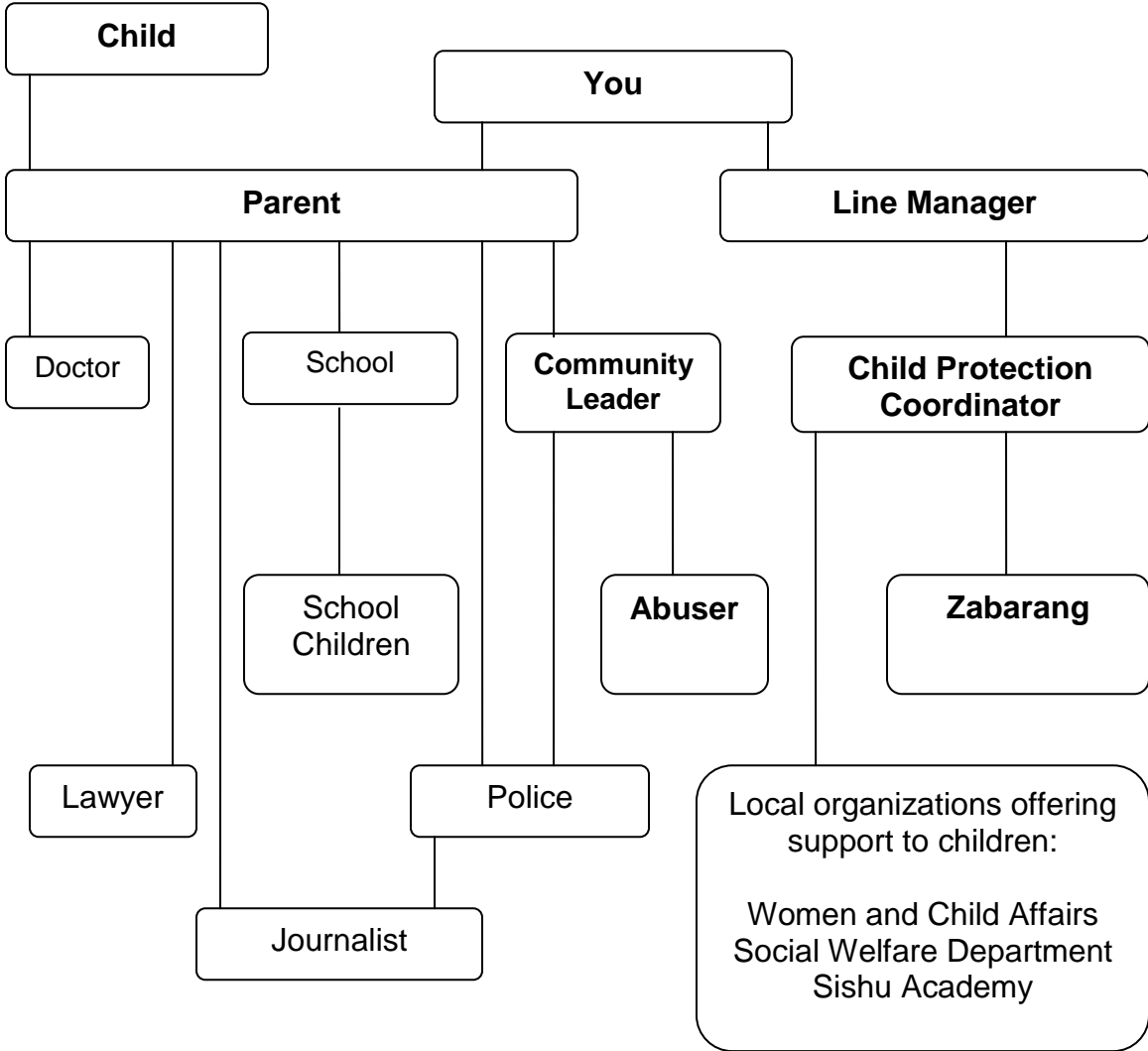
Local Procedures should map existing local systems and resources and assess which routes are most appropriate to take, should concerns be raised. Wherever possible, contacts should be established locally in advance of any case arising. Established local contacts can be used to discuss any concerns and to assist in decision-making in respect of particular cases.


Mithura Bikash Tripura
Executive Director
Zabarang Kaiyan Samity


Chairperson
Zabarang Kaiyan Samity

LOCAL REPORTING

If an abuse occurs or is suspected, the local reporting is as follows:



This reporting structure was agreed during a staff workshop held on 30th November 2006


 Mathura Bikash Tripura
 Executive Director
 Zabarang Kalyan Samity


 Chairperson
 Zabarang Kalyan Samity

INTERNAL REPORTING

If you are concerned about the safety of a child

You see or suspect abuse

An allegation of abuse is made

A child discloses abuse

Discuss your concerns with your Line Manager

If your Line Manager is suspected of abuse, discuss your concerns directly with the Child Protection Coordinator

Discussions should focus on:

Nature of concerns

Risks to child/ren

Action/Next steps

Concerns should normally be reported in the same working day.

Ensure detailed written records are made of all events & what the child has said

Your line manager must then inform the Child Protection Coordinator

The Child Protection Coordinator should then inform Zabarang Management/Respective Donor

And take action, as required, in line with this policy

Respective Donor will assist in assessing the situation and identifying appropriate action and support

Where serious concerns exist and there is immediate risk to the child, action must be taken immediately

*Mahura Bikasari
Executive Director
Zabarang Kaiyan Samity*

*Chairperson
Zabarang Kaiyan Samity*

ROLE OF CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATOR

If the abuser is someone from, or working with, or working for the organization

Then the Child Protection Coordinator should initiate disciplinary action, in accordance with the organization's Disciplinary Policy

Further advice should be sought from Save the Children

If the abuser is someone from the local community

Then the Child Protection Coordinator should support the child and the family

The coordinator maybe required to take part in discussions with the Community Leader(s), the Police, Lawyers and Journalists, on the request of the family

In such cases the coordinator should not take the lead but should act as a facilitator, and should always act in the best interests of the child

Further advice should be sought from Save the Children

If the abuser is a family member

Then the Child Protection Coordinator should seek advice from Save the Children


Mithura Bikash Tripura
Executive Director
Zabarang Kaiyan Samity


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Zabarang Kaiyan Samity

Roles and Responsibilities

Community	Responsibility	Role
Field Staff	Duty of Care	To protect children in the project To support the child To support the parents/family
Parents or Guardians	Legal guardians	To talk to the child To talk to other family members To decide what action to take
Family Members	Moral responsibility	To support parents, child & siblings
Neighbours	Moral responsibility	To provide a local support network
Doctor	Duty of Care	To provide treatment, counselling and care to the child & family
School	Duty of Care	To support the child in the school To talk to other children
Community Leader	Mediator	To meet with the abuser To arrange community meeting To recommend what further action should be taken
Police	Law Enforcer	To arrest the abuser To take legal action, on behalf of the Government, to enforce Bangladesh law
Lawyer	Legal Advisor	To ensure proper legal action is taken, in the best interests of the family & child
Journalist		To raise awareness of abuse

Office	Responsibility	Role
Line Manager	Staff management	To support field staff To advise, as appropriate
Child Protection Coordinator	Child protection	To support the family & child To advise, as appropriate
All Other Staff	Moral responsibility	To provide a supportive environment in the office

Other	Responsibility	Role
Donor agency	Zabarang Management	To provide advice to the NGO To support NGO staff To support the child & family
Women and Child Affairs		To assist in collecting evidence for the case
Social Welfare Department		To provide legal and financial assistance to the case
Sishu Academy		To assist in collecting evidence for the case