

Typ av styrdokument: Policy
Beteckning: 1-204 (replaces 2-003)
Fastställt av: Styrelsen
Senast uppdaterad: 2023-09-12

Child Safeguarding Policy

SUMMARY

- This policy affirms Barnfonden's commitment – that every child has the right to be protected and free from harm.
- Applies to all Barnfonden representatives and is central to our recruitment and staff training processes.
- Applies to all projects and programmes.
- Reinforces the content of the ChildFund Alliance Child Safeguarding Policy.

Introduction	3
Policy statement	3
Scope	4
Guiding Principles	4
Definitions	5
Policy in action	7
Roles and responsibilities	7
Recruitment	8
Education and training	9
Partnerships	9
Supporter relations	9
Project risk assessment and management	9
Humanitarian action	10
Marketing and communications	10
Raising concerns and incidents	10
Consequences	12
RELATED DOCUMENTS	12

Introduction

Barnfonden has a vision of *a sustainable world where children are listened to, cared for and respected. A world where every child can say: "I am safe, I am healthy, I am happy, I am educated, I have a voice."* Ensuring children's safety within our own work is therefore a primary consideration in all we do. This Child Safeguarding Policy outlines the minimum standards we apply in our work and with our people, to ensure we protect children – or, indeed, any other individual – from any harm, abuse or negligence that may be caused due to their coming in contact with Barnfonden or our representatives.

Barnfonden recognises that children are particularly vulnerable to safeguarding risks. We assiduously assess and manage recruitment, operational and program risks at all stages and across all levels of our work to ensure we, and our representatives, are providing safe programs for children. Barnfonden has zero tolerance for child abuse and sexual exploitation and abuse. This policy reinforces the ChildFund Alliance Safeguarding Policy, which applies to all ChildFund Alliance member staff and representatives who have access to children and child information. As such, some parts of this document duplicate the content of that policy.

This policy lays out the commitments made by Barnfonden, and informs staff and associated personnel of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

Policy statement

Barnfonden believes that everyone we come into contact with, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. Barnfonden will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by staff or associated personnel. This Child Safeguarding policy covers children aged under the age of 18. It should be read in association with our *Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy*. Both these policies are supported by Barnfonden's *Whistleblowing Policy*, and *Action Manual and Complaints Procedures*. Barnfonden commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the three pillars of prevention, reporting and response.

Barnfonden will comply with all laws in countries where we operate. However, our policy and procedures also sometimes go beyond local laws, with more rigorous expectations. Barnfonden respects, and will generally work to strengthen, the culture, traditions and practices of the communities in which it works. However, in instances where cultural practices are harmful to children's rights, we advocate for their elimination. The best interests and rights of the child are always central to our decisions.

Scope

Safeguarding children is the responsibility of all those who participate in the work of Barnfonden. This includes:

- Board members, staff (including volunteers and interns), supporters and any person representing the organisation at Barnfonden's request (including Ambassadors)

As a condition of organisational partnership, Barnfonden also expects compliance with certain safeguarding requirements when partners will have contact with children or access to children's personal information. This includes:

- Partner organisations, consultants (both organisations and individuals) and other suppliers and Contractors

Furthermore, the policy and procedures apply to 'other representatives' who may be engaged with Barnfonden. This includes:

- Journalists, sponsors, donors, supporters, celebrities and politicians.

Guiding Principles

ChildFund Alliance members, staff and representatives agree to the following values regarding children.

Dignity and worth of every child: We facilitate the creation of a safe environment that promotes the dignity and worth of each child, regardless of ethnicity, race, color, language, religion, opinion, gender, LBGTQI+, origins, birth status, ability, or membership in a particular group. We prohibit our representatives from discrimination.

Children's right to participate: We recognize that children are active and competent contributors to their development with the right to participate in decisions affecting their lives.

Empowerment: We encourage the empowerment of children to develop capacities for self-protection and to advocate for issues that concern them.

Respect for children's rights: We respect the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and promote the four core principles of the Convention: non-discrimination; the best interest of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and respect for the views of the child.

Do no harm: All children have equal rights to protection from harm. Everyone has a responsibility to support the protection of children. ChildFund Alliance has a duty of care to children that we work with and we will ensure all risks are mitigated

Definitions

Child – A child is any individual under the age of 18 years. While we acknowledge this includes youth, we use the term ‘child’ for ease of understanding in documentation.

Child abuse – includes all forms of physical and emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, and 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 responsibility, trust or power.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines the main categories of abuse as:

- physical abuse;
- emotional abuse;
- neglect and negligent treatment;

Child exploitation – Child exploitation is the use of a child in work or other activities for the benefit of others that is unacceptable because it deprives them of their childhood, education, development or dignity. It includes unacceptable child labour, child prostitution or trafficking, and child pornography.

Child abuse images – Any representation, by whatever means, of a child engaged in real or simulated explicit sexual activities, or any representation of the sexual parts of a child for sexual purposes.

Child labour – Work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, interferes with their schooling, or that is harmful to physical and mental development.

Child protection – An important part of safeguarding and refers to the actions taken to address a specific concern that a particular child is at risk of significant harm due to her or his contact with staff, partners, or other representatives. Child protection is only one part of child safeguarding, which is the umbrella that covers all the child-centered actions and measures an organization needs to have in place in order to prevent or reduce the likelihood of concerns arising (eg, codes of conduct, safe recruitment procedures, policies and safe recruitment practices, training and communication).

Child safeguarding – Refers to a set of organizational policies, procedures and practices employed to ensure that we do not harm children. Our aim is to ensure that everyone associated with Barnfonden is aware of and responds appropriately to issues of violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect towards children.

Bullying – Unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying can also happen online, in person and through texting and posts on social media.

Grooming – When someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them. Children and young people who are groomed can be sexually abused, exploited or trafficked.

Harassment – Consists of inappropriate comments or behavior that is demeaning, suggestive, offensive, or physically harmful. It may include physical harassment, assaults, impeding movement or blocking movements, unwanted attention or verbal harassment such as name calling and labelling.

Neglect/Negligent Treatment – Persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs; for example, failing to provide adequate food, clothing and/or shelter; failing to prevent harm; failing to ensure adequate supervision; failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment; and failing to provide a safe physical environment (exposure to violence, unsafe programming locations, unsafe sleeping environment; releasing a child to an unauthorized adult; access to weapons or harmful objects, etc.)

Online abuse, including grooming or online bullying, is exposure to inappropriate content or contact through for example online chatrooms or video games, or inadequate data protection.

Partner organisations – Includes local partners, networking agencies, contractors, and suppliers with which Barnfonden is involved for the delivery of services to children.

Representative – Includes employees, volunteers, interns, consultants, Board members, and others who work with children on Barnfonden’s behalf, visit Barnfonden or our partner organisation’s programs and have direct access to children or sensitive information about children in our programs.

Sexual abuse – Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This could also include an employee soliciting children for sex or a company employee downloading child sexual abuse images on their computer.

Sexual Exploitation of Children – Actual or attempted abuse of a child’s vulnerable position for sexual purposes based on a position of power or trust. In line with this policy, any sexual activity with a child who is under the legal age of consent of the country in which she/he lives

or in which the activity occurs regardless of whether they consent, is child abuse and may be a crime. Exploitation includes engaging with children in any sexual activity in exchange for money, gifts, food, accommodation, affection, status, or anything else that they or their family need. The terms “child prostitution” and “child sex tourism” describe forms of sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation also includes Online Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of Children (OSEAC), which is the production, for the purpose of online publication or transmission, of visual depictions (eg, photos, videos, live streaming) of the sexual abuse or exploitation of a minor for a third party who is not in the physical presence of the victim, in exchange for compensation.

Social Media – Forms of electronic communication and content used to share information publicly. Comments, messages, images, video, and other content delivered via social networks.

Supporter – For the purpose of this policy, supporters include donors, child and community sponsors, community fundraisers, potential donors as well as any members of the general public who have dealings with Barnfonden.

Policy in action

This section briefly describes how we apply safeguarding in our work. The *Action Manual and Complaints Procedures* provides in-depth detail of the procedures we have in place.

Roles and responsibilities

The Barnfonden Board is ultimately accountable for Child Safeguarding in accordance with this policy. The Secretary General of Barnfonden is accountable to ensure implementation of the policy within Barnfonden.

Senior management will:

- Ensure child safe recruitment, including screening of all staff;
- Monitor and ensure compliance with *Code of Conduct*;
- Induct new staff, including information and training on child safeguarding;
- Arrange regular child safeguarding refresher training;
- Conduct screening and risk assessment of partners, including corporate partners and local partners in the programme countries;
- Ensure monitoring and supervision of interactions between sponsors and children/communities;
- Undertake child protection risk assessment as part of programme design;
- Monitor child protection risks during programme implementation;

- Undertake humanitarian response in accordance with the [UN Global Protection Cluster's Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Emergencies](#);
- Ensure information held about children is safely stored; and
- Report to authorities suspected or known instances of harm or abuse in line with our procedures.

All Board members, staff, volunteers and interns will:

- Comply with this policy and *Code of Conduct*;
- Follow the *Action Manual and Complaints Procedures*;
- Be alert to child safeguarding risks and incidents in their work; and
- Identify and seek continued understanding of child safeguarding through training.

Partner organisations (including organisations engaged as contractors and consultants) will:

- Comply with this policy or have in place their own Child Safeguarding Policy that is at least as robust as this policy;
- Screen, risk assess and report and safeguarding concerns; and
- Follow Barnfonden's *Action Manual and Complaints Procedures*

Individual consultants and contractors will:

- Comply with recruitment and screening procedures;
- Commit to and comply with Barnfonden's *Child Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct* and *Action Manual and Complaints Procedures*.

Recruitment

Barnfonden will take all reasonable precautions to ensure that our staff, volunteers and interns do not pose an unacceptable risk to children.

As outlined in detail in the *Action Manual and Complaints Procedures*, Barnfonden will consistently apply robust recruitment procedures for all staff, volunteers and interns that include:

- Criminal record police check (or alternative in some country contexts);
- At least two verbal referee checks; and
- Behavioural-based interview questions.

Education and training

Barnfonden will provide all new staff, volunteers and interns with a child safeguarding briefing in which they will be introduced to the *Child Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct and Action Manual and Complaints Procedures* within three weeks of commencement. Refresher training on the policy and procedures will be provided every two years by the Safeguarding Focal Point.

Partnerships

When Barnfonden forms local partnerships for the delivery of programs, we will promote and provide support to these local organizations to ensure that corresponding standards are adapted across these programs. Barnfonden will ensure the local partners are providing safe programs to children and that the necessary program risks are mitigated. (See also Roles and Responsibilities of Partners).

Supporter relations

Barnfonden has an active supporter relations/ sponsorship programme and encourages communication between sponsors and children. We believe such communication has the potential to positively impact on the development of the child/sponsor relationship; the cultural education and awareness of the supporter or sponsor, child and community. Facilitating such communication is also an effective fundraising model.

The *Action Manual and Complaints Procedures* details the range of strategies that are in place to ensure that this contact takes place in the context of a safe environment for children. This includes:

- Welcoming supporters;
- Monitoring of all correspondence (including social media)

Where supporters will have in-person contact with children and communities, we will require:

- Criminal record checks;
- Commitment to comply with the *Child Safeguarding Policy and Behavioural Guidelines for Supporter Visits*;
- Staff supervision of contact at all times.

Project risk assessment and management

Barnfonden acknowledges that the work we do is associated with child safeguarding risks. We are committed to doing everything in our power to identify and minimise preventable risk, and mitigate the impacts of incidents when they occur.

In the interest of preventing risk, we conduct a detailed child protection risk assessment as part of the development of all new projects. This risk assessment is reviewed at least annually during project monitoring.

All new organisational partnerships include child protection screening. Partnership agreements include requirements to provide evidence of child safeguarding policies and active procedures or a commitment to develop these with support from Barnfonden within six months of engagement.

Humanitarian action

Barnfonden is committed to reducing children's vulnerability to emergencies, ensuring their right to have humanitarian assistance in crises, and their right to survival and development during and after an emergency. We align with the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs).

Marketing and communications

Barnfonden undertakes a range of precautions when sharing information about children in all our marketing and communications. Detail can be found in the *Action Manual and Complaints Procedures*, *Guidelines for Communications and Reporting on Children*, and *Consent Policy*. General principles include:

- Not disclosing information that could identify the location of a child (date of birth, full name, location, etc);
- Requirements explaining how images will be used and for obtaining formal consent; and
- Clear guidelines on how children are portrayed in images and reporting.

Raising concerns and incidents

All Barnfonden staff and representatives are obligated to report concerns. This is not a choice.

For example when:

- you see or hear about abuse or suspect a case of abuse or harm to a child
- an allegation of abuse or suspected harm is made known to you
- a child discloses an incident of abuse there is a breach of the *Code of Conduct* or *Child Safeguarding Policy*
- there is a breach of the *Behavioural Guidelines for Sponsor Visits*;
- child pornography is accessed through ChildFund electronic equipment.
- you are aware that an individual involved with Barnfonden or a partner organisation has abused a child outside of work (a family member, domestic worker or through prostitution);

- a child unconnected to Barnfonden programmes approaches a Barnfonden staff member, consultant, volunteer or partner for help with an issue of abuse or exploitation.

You should make all efforts to report within 24 hours of becoming aware of the concern or incident. You must:

- Report internal cases (which involve staff and other representatives) to the closest manager who in turn will involve Barnfonden's Secretary General and/or Safeguarding Focal Point. Suspicions can also be confidentially and anonymously reported through Barnfonden's [Whistle Blowing Mechanism](#). This Mechanism is also the most appropriate channel for use by the wider public.
- Report external cases (which involve community members and other agencies) to the relevant community authorities and the organization concerned. Serious external cases (eg, sexual violence, torture or severe physical abuse) where the alleged perpetrator is not a representative of Barnfonden must also be reported to the local authorities.

External cases where the alleged perpetrator is a staff member or representative of another organization should be reported to the designated person within that organization, but may also be raised to the closest manager who will involve Barnfonden's Secretary General and/or Safeguarding Focal Point.

Where the whistleblower does not want to talk to their manager, Safeguarding Focal Point or Secretary General on ceo@barnfonden.se, it is possible to instead inform Barnfonden's chair of the board on chair@barnfonden.se.

Concerns and incidents will be assessed, rated and logged in the Safeguarding Register using de-identified language. The rating will determine how the risk is managed.

You can inform in person, by phone or email. Verbal methods should be followed up with written notification as soon as possible.

An initial response will occur within 72 hours of learning of the report by the appropriate person. It is important for all staff to remember that their responsibility is to report concerns, not to conduct investigations. In all cases, maintain confidentiality by reporting concerns only to the appropriate person.

Barnfonden projects and programmes should have in place a child-friendly way for children to report concerns. They should also have child-friendly methods to demonstrate transparency and accountability.

Further detail on raising concerns and responding can be found in the *Action Manual and Complaints Procedures*.

Consequences

Barnfonden is committed to preventing a person from contact with children through their work if they pose an unacceptable risk. Following a formal investigation, a confirmed breach of the *Code of Conduct* will lead to disciplinary procedures, which may involve termination of employment or contract.

Barnfonden assures that no action will be taken against those who inform of incidents or risks in good faith. However, anyone who wilfully informs using false information may be subject to possible consequences as per disciplinary procedures.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- *Action Manual and Complaints Procedure* and *Barnfonden Codes of Conduct*
- Human Resources Policy (Personalpolicy)
- Recruitment guidelines, routines and check-list (Rutin för rekrytering och introduction av personal, volontärer och praktikanter, samt Checklista för rekrytering)
- Whistleblower Policy
- Policy to prevent sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (PSEAH)
- Behavioural Guidelines for Supporter Visits (Barnfondens policy för fadderbesök)
- Child Safeguarding Values for Supporters
- Social Media Policy for Sponsors (part of Policy för hantering av fadderskap)
- Fundraising and marketing policy