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Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse & Harassment (PSEAH) Policy

SUMMARY

This policy affirms Barnfonden's commitment to protect vulnerable people from any form of sexual abuse, harassment or exploitation.

- Applies to all Barnfonden representatives and is central to our recruitment and staff training processes.
- Applies to all projects and programmes.
- Aligns with our Codes of Conduct and Safeguarding commitments.

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Introduction

Barnfonden's representatives operate in a privileged position of trust and are sometimes working with children and other community members who are in less powerful and vulnerable situations. Barnfonden recognizes the serious obligation it holds to do everything possible to respect and protect the children and adults with whom it works. Sexual exploitation and abuse of the very children we aim to protect, or vulnerable adults in communities, are among the most grievous ways that Barnfonden can fail in its mission.

The Child Safeguarding Policy and *Action Manual and Complaints Procedures* sets out expectations, systems and processes aimed at preventing all abuse of children, including sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. The Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH) Policy sets out the expectations, systems and processes aimed at preventing sexual exploitation of other people we work with such as vulnerable adults and community members, as well as the actions that will ensue if incidents of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment are identified.

Harassment in this policy relates to people within and outside the organisation who may be the target of harassment by representatives of the organisation (definition, below).

Policy Statement

Barnfonden categorically prohibits, and has zero tolerance for, any actions by its representatives that constitute sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment of children and adults. Barnfonden's representatives have a strict obligation to take all possible steps to strengthen protection, prevent sexual exploitation and abuse, and to promote the rights of children and other community members with whom we work. If a Barnfonden representative acts in a way that is sexually exploitative or abusive, immediate steps will be taken to protect and support those affected, and to impose disciplinary action as outlined in this Policy and the related Procedure. Action will include referral to law enforcement agencies, while taking into account risks to those who have been affected.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Barnfonden's Child Safeguarding Policy and *Action Manual and Complaints Procedures*.

Definitions

Child/Children (sometimes referred to as Barnfonden “beneficiaries”). A child is any individual under the age of 18, irrespective of local country definitions of when a child reaches adulthood.

Fraternisation refers to any relationship occurring in the course of conducting Barnfonden business, that involves — or appears to involve — partiality, preferential treatment or improper use of rank or position including but not limited to voluntary sexual behaviour. It includes sexual behaviour not amounting to intercourse, a close and emotional relationship involving public displays of affection or private intimacy and the public expression of intimate relations.

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.

Staff refers to permanent or contract employees of Barnfonden.

Vulnerable Adults are defined as:

- those aged over 18 years
- who, due to their gender, mental or physical health, disability, ethnicity, religious identity, sexual orientation, economic or social status, or as a result of disasters and conflicts, are deemed to be at risk.

Sexual Exploitation means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, included but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.

Sexual Abuse means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

Sexual Harassment means the unwelcome sexual advance, or an unwelcome request for sexual favours, from one person to another, or the engagement in other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, in circumstances in which a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances, would have anticipated the possibility that the person harassed would be offended, humiliated or intimidated. Sexual harassment can take various forms. It can be obvious or indirect, physical or verbal, repeated or one-off and perpetrated by any person of

any gender towards any person of any gender. Sexual harassment can be perpetrated against programme participants, community members, citizens, as well as staff and personnel.

Workplace is the business location where Barnfonden representatives usually undertake work activities, or where they are working remotely undertaking work activities (for example, undertaking a field visit or overseeing a program at a partner's location). This includes working outside usual business hours and any work-related events including conferences and social events either at the usual business location or an external location.

Scope

Prevention of Sexual Abuse, Exploitation and Harassment 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 individual'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.

Policy Principles

Barnfonden adapts and applies the core principles as defined by the UNICEF 2019.

The children, women, men and communities that Barnfonden serves have the right to be treated with dignity and respect and to receive assistance without threat of exploitation and abuse;

There is zero tolerance at Barnfonden for inaction of incidents of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment. All Barnfonden representatives are obligated to report concerns.

Barnfonden has a responsibility to create and maintain an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and abuse and a responsibility to provide timely, confidential, and effective investigation, assistance and support to survivors. Where a Barnfonden staff or representative develops concerns or suspicions regarding Sexual Exploitation, Abuse or Harassment by

someone, whether in the same agency or not and whether or not within ChildFund, he or she must immediately report such concerns via established reporting mechanisms.

All Barnfonden representatives have the right to work in an environment free from sexual harassment.

All Barnfonden representatives are expected to act with tolerance, sensitivity and respect for diversity. They have the obligation to ensure that they do not engage in, condone or tolerate behaviour that would constitute sexual harassment.

Barnfonden representatives are typically in a position of power in relation to beneficiaries of assistance/ program participants. Any actual or attempted abuse of this power for sexual purposes is exploitative, undermines the credibility and integrity of the work of Barnfonden, and is prohibited.

Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment is a shared responsibility. Barnfonden representatives are obliged to help create and maintain an environment that prevents Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment. Barnfonden managers at all levels have a particular responsibility to support and develop systems that maintain this environment.

Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment by Barnfonden representatives is never acceptable and constitute acts of serious misconduct and therefore grounds for termination of employment, or professional relationship severing in the case of non-employees, and may require referral to law enforcement agencies.

Policy in Action

Reporting incidents or concerns

1. Any Barnfonden Person having reasonable grounds to suspect that Sexual Exploitation, Abuse or Harassment has occurred is mandated to report the matter immediately to their nearest manager, Secretary General or Safeguarding Focal Point. Any Person requiring advice can contact the Secretary General, Safeguarding Focal Point, or the Board chair.

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 (on any case, whether internal or external) 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*.

Responsibility

The Barnfonden Board is ultimately accountable for the prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment, in accordance with this policy. The Secretary General of Barnfonden is accountable to ensure implementation of the policy within Barnfonden.

The Senior Management Team is responsible for regularly informing our representatives, Partners and communities on the measures we take to prevent and respond to Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment.

The Senior Management Team is responsible for reporting all incidents arising under this Policy to the Barnfonden Board.

The Senior Management Team is responsible for reporting all incidents arising under this Policy to relevant donors in line with contractual and partnership obligations.

Confidentiality

Instances of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment raised under this Policy will be treated confidentially. However, when an incident is identified it may be necessary for those managing the incident to reveal its substance to people such as other Barnfonden

personnel, external persons involved in the investigation process or law enforcement agencies.

Where there is a reasonable belief that a criminal offence has occurred, the matter will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency while taking into account risks to those who have been affected. When a referral is made to law enforcement, any action by Barnfonden will be guided by such an agency.

Barnfonden will take reasonable precautions to store any records or files relating to a matter of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment securely and to permit access by authorised persons only.

Unauthorised disclosure of information relating to a matter will be taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action, which may include dismissal.

Awareness

- Barnfonden will publish this PSEAH Policy and Whistleblowing process on its websites.

Risk Assessment & Risk Management

- Management will include in the organisational **risk review process**, identification of risks relating to PSEAH and actions to mitigate such risks.
- The Programs team is responsible for undertaking SEAH **risk assessment** as part of project and program design. PSEAH risks and mitigation are assessed, documented and monitored throughout the life of a project/program.
- The Programs team is responsible for ensuring that partner due diligence and/or capacity assessments include an assessment of partner implementation of key safeguarding and risk policies including PSEAH.
- The Barnfonden Board has overall responsibility for all policies including Risk Management and PSEAH Policies. Should a significant instance occur that may have significant risk to the affected individual or the organisation, this will be directly reported to the Board Chair at the earliest opportunity and outside the normal reporting timelines.
- The Board will review the systems and processes every two years in order to continually strengthen the organisation's approach to the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.

Training and investigations

- This PSEAH policy shall be included in induction materials and related training courses for Barnfonden's representatives.

- Barnfonden will provide all new staff, volunteers and interns with a PSEAH briefing in which they will be introduced to the *PSEAH Policy, Staff 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.
- The Senior Management Team is responsible for ensuring Barnfonden's representatives know how to report allegations and concerns related to SEAH.
- The Senior Management Team is responsible for managing organisational investigations of allegations of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment. All investigations will be conducted in a timely and professional manner. Barnfonden may utilise the services of external experts to support any such investigation.
- The Senior Management Team will take swift and appropriate disciplinary action in relation to people who commit acts of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment. This will usually include suspension while investigations are conducted. Substantiated acts of SEAH are regarded as serious misconduct and will result in disciplinary action including dismissal and/or referral to relevant external authorities including referral to law enforcement agencies in the event of suspected criminal action.
- The Senior Management Team will transparently share misconduct information with other organisations who make a request as part of their own due diligence and integrity checks on their people and partners.

Partners

- The Senior Management Team and the Programs Team are responsible for ensuring that our Partners are aware of Barnfonden's expectations in regards to this policy and will highlight that any failure on their part to report or take action where Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment has occurred shall constitute grounds for the termination of any Agreement or partnership with Barnfonden. Contracts and Agreements with Partners will reflect this expectation in compliance with our commitment to PSEAH.

Support for survivors and non-retaliation

- All Barnfonden representatives are responsible for taking appropriate action to ensure that retaliatory actions are not taken against the survivor or reporter. Barnfonden Whistleblowing Policy assists with how to ensure this occurs.

Barnfonden Representatives:

- Will treat all beneficiaries/ programme participants with respect and not use language or behave towards them in an inappropriate way. Under no circumstance will abuse, sexually provocative behaviour, or behaving in a demeaning or culturally inappropriate manner be tolerated.

- Will not exchange money, employment, goods or services, protection or assistance for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour.
- Will not engage in transactional sex in the course of Barnfonden business.
- Will not participate in or support any form of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse or Harassment activity including, for example, people trafficking, or pornography.
- Will immediately (within 24 hours) report any concerns or suspicions regarding possible violations of this Policy via the defined reporting approach within the Whistle blower Policy and *Actions Manual and Complaints Procedures* or in the case of those under 18 years of age, the Child Safeguarding Policy. Failure to report such conduct could lead to disciplinary action.
- Will take all reasonable steps commensurate with their role to prevent, oppose and combat all Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment.
- Will immediately disclose charges, convictions and other outcomes of an offence that relates to Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment, including those that may be acceptable under traditional law.
- Will always strive to create and maintain an environment that promotes adherence to and implementation of this Policy.

Any substantiated violation of these expectations is regarded as a serious breach of policy and will result in disciplinary action which may include termination for our Staff, interns, volunteers, Board members, contractors and consultants, and could lead to the cessation of any partnership agreement with our Partners.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Action Manual and Complaints Procedures
- Whistle Blowing Policy
- Codes of Conduct
- Child Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Corruption Policy