

# *POPI Safeguarding Policy*



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*People's Oriented Program Implementation (POPI)*

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## Safeguarding Policy

### 1. Context

People's Oriented Program Implementation (POPI) is committed to provide an environment free from discrimination and harassment, where all individuals and other stakeholders are treated with respect and dignity and have equal opportunities at all level. POPI supports the principles contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the Constitution of Bangladesh. These policy is clearly state that no one can be discriminated on the ground of class, gender, caste, religion, profession, ethnicity and sexual orientation.

Safeguarding does safe POPI's approach, practice and culture to a comprehensively safe environment for all people that the organization engages with. It has a comprehensive set of policies and procedures, i.e., Human Resources policy, Procurement, Financial Management, Child Protection and Gender etc.

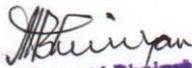
POPI recognizes that sexual exploitation and abuse to vulnerable people is a global phenomenon including in Bangladesh. An incident of sexual exploitation and abuse can stop the self-development process of a victim and also may be poses as a big threatening for the whole development process for the organization. As a development organization POPI wants to work with all individuals and stakeholders in discrimination, harassment violent free environment. Therefore, this Safeguarding Policy is adopted.

### 2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that POPI's activities are implemented in a safe and protective environment where harm, exploitation and abuse are effectively prevented as far as reasonably possible, and responded to effectively.

The policy has three specific objectives:

- Keeping children and adults safe
- Ensuring the highest standards of behavior from POPI's employees/representatives.
- Safeguarding the reputation of POPI, including guarding POPI's employees/representatives from false allegations or from operating within an unclear framework.

  
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- Recognize that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances and therefore potential risks to their safety or well-being;

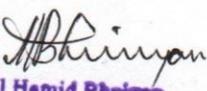
### **Sexual Exploitation**

Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. It defines the term "sexual abuse" as the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Any action or comment known to be offensive, embarrassing, humiliating, demeaning or unwelcome to the recipient with sexual overtones either direct or indirect notions. It includes

- a. Unwelcome sexually determined behaviour (whether directly or by implication) as physical contact and advances;
- b. Attempts or efforts to establish physical relation having sexual implication by abuse of administrative, authoritative or professional powers;
- c. Sexually coloured verbal representation;
- d. Demand or request for sexual favours;
- e. Showing pornography; Sexually coloured remark or gesture;
- f. Indecent gesture, teasing through abusive language, stalking, joking having sexual implication;
- g. Insult through letters, telephone calls, cell phone calls, SMS, pottering, notice, cartoon, writing on bench, chair, table, notice boards, walls of office, factory, classroom, washroom having sexual implication;
- h. Taking still or video photographs for the purpose of blackmailing and character assassination;
- i. Preventing participation in sports, cultural, organizational and academic activities on the ground of sex and/or for the purpose of sexual harassment;
- j. Making love proposal and exerting pressure or posing threats in case of refusal to love proposal;
- k. Attempt to establish sexual relation by intimidation, deception or false assurance.

  
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employees shall be provided safeguarding awareness through different trainings, meetings and discussions. There will also be training for designated staff members on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, including on specific areas of risk and safeguarding practice.

#### **8. Safeguarding Officer**

POPI, from its senior staff members, will designate one or more Safeguarding Officer. The Safeguarding Officer shall be responsible for implementation of this policy and related operational plan, and maintaining of the register of safeguarding.

#### **9. Prevention of Abuse**

##### **POPI's responsibilities**

POPI will:

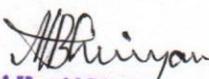
- Ensure all staff members have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within the framework of this policy;
- Design and undertake all its projects, programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with POPI. This includes the way in which information about individuals in POPI's programmes is gathered and communicated;
- Implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and associated personnel;
- Ensure staff members receive awareness/training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organization;
- Follow-up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process;

##### **Staff Responsibilities**

##### *Safeguarding of Children*

POPI staff and associated personnel shall not:

- Engage in sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18;
- Sexually abuse or exploit any child;
- Subject a child to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect;
- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children including child labour or trafficking;

  
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- Ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern;
  - Ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored;
  - Prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals;
  - Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation;
  - Keep a detailed register of safeguarding issues raised and process of dealing with them;
  - Not tolerate possession or access to any material that is abusive towards children, women and persons with disabilities;
  - Not engage children, women or persons with disabilities, in any form of sexual activity or acts, including paying for sexual services or acts, where under the law(s) applicable to the child, the child is below the age of consent or the act(s) are an offence under relevant laws;
  - Wherever possible, ensure that another adult is present with concerned staff member when working in the proximity of children;
  - Not allow any of the staff members to invite unaccompanied children into their home, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger;
  - Refrain staff members from physical punishment or discipline of children and from hiring children for domestic or other labour which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage, which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury.

The policy and procedures will be widely disseminated and are mandatory for everyone involved with the POPI. Failure to comply with this policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

## 12. Reporting and Responding Procedures

### Reporting

Reports may reach POPI through various means and ways. This may be in a structured format such as a letter, e-mail, text or message via social media. It may

  
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### **13. Roles and Responsibilities for Case Management**

The Safeguarding Officer will be the key person in managing the case.

If the report alleges a serious safeguarding violation, the Safeguarding Officer may wish to hold a case conference. This should include:

- Senior Management Team
- Head of HR

The case conference should decide the next steps to take, including any protection concerns and support needs for the survivor and other stakeholders.

### **14. Provide Support to Survivor where needed/requested**

The Safeguarding Officer, in consultation with the senior management, will provide appropriate support to survivor(s) of safeguarding incidents, if requested. This will be in line with the operational plan.

#### **Assessing protection or security risks to stakeholders**

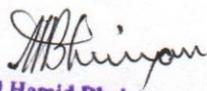
For the reports relating to serious incidents Safeguarding Officer will undertake an immediate risk assessment to determine whether there are any current or potential risks to any stakeholders involved in the case, and develop a mitigation plan if required. Safeguarding Officer will continue to update the risk assessment and plan on a regular basis throughout and after the case as required.

### **15. Decision on the Next Steps**

Safeguarding Officer decides the next steps. These could be (but not limited to)

- No further action (for example if there is insufficient information to follow up, or the report refers to incidents outside the organization's remit)
- Investigation is required to gather further information
- Immediate disciplinary action if no further information needed
- Referral to Senior Management Team (SMT)

If the report concerns associated personnel (for example contractors, consultants or suppliers), the decision making process will be different. Although associated personnel are not staff members, however, the POPI has a duty of care to protect anyone who comes into contact with any aspect of our programme from harm. POPI cannot follow disciplinary processes with individuals outside the organization; however, decisions may

  
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**Annexure**

**Acknowledgement Form**

Name of the Employee or Intern: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Department/Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

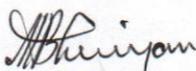
I have received, read and I fully understand all policies, guidelines and procedures included in the POPI Human Resources Manual/policy.

In particular:

I have read the POPI Safeguarding Policy and I fully understand its contents. I do hereby confirm that I am in complete compliance with all provisions of the policy and that I will continue to observe the spirit of the commitment in all my activities on behalf of POPI. I will comply with the guidelines set out in these policies and understand that failure to do so might result in disciplinary or legal action.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please sign and return to the HR Team. This document will be filed in the employee's or intern's personal file.

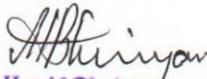
  
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- To update the risk assessment and plan on a regular basis throughout and after the case as required;
- To document all decisions made resulting from the case clearly and confidentially;
- To support the implementation and monitoring of the Safeguarding Policy by providing an annual progress report to the Senior Management Team together with a plan for further action required to implement the Safeguarding Policy at all levels.

### **Skills and Characteristics**

- Have knowledge and experience about safeguarding and protection of children, women and vulnerable people;
- Have respect and authority within the office so that her/his opinions are valued;
- Be approachable, with good communication skills with adults and children;
- Be able to keep calm when a concern is raised, especially if anyone needs assistance;
- Be able to work with others to ensure that the policy is implemented, and respond where an incident related to protection of children, women and vulnerable people occurs;
- Commitment to safeguarding children, women and vulnerable people and upholding their rights – together with the ability to advocate for and defend safeguarding;
- Training and presentation skills;
- Be able to keep information confidential.

  
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