

# CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

**HUMARA BACHPAN TRUST**



**HUMARA BACHPAN**

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## Foreword

Humara Bachpan Trust (HBT) takes the view that any form of violence against children is unacceptable. Whatever the type of violence used - physical, sexual, and psychological or violence due to negligence – only a clear and consistent policy framework can prevent and fight against such forms of abuse.

In all of our interventions, we are committed towards ensuring that each child enjoys the benefit of a protective environment in which their rights are respected. This is why we update our rules relating to children's rights on a regular basis, integrating the highest requirements according to international standards and current best practices. It is with this in mind that we decided to revisit the 'Child Protection Policy' (CPP) and wanted to give it the shape of a robust 'Child Safeguarding Policy' (CSP) which we wish to see applied to all of our organization's activities.

Dealing with the prevention of abuse and how to respond to suspected abuse, this policy aims to act as a guide to managing day-to-day activities with children.

Numerous references relating to the area of child protection and support tools complement this 'Child Safeguarding Policy'.

Therefore, particular attention is given, to hiring new staff, inclusion of media communication and new reporting and communication tools. A plan of action reflecting safeguarding measures within the delegations ensures that the system is implemented properly.

We are aware that the risk of harming children's integrity is very real and this is why we are committed to widely promoting our Child Safeguarding Policy, not only internally but also with partner organizations and stakeholders that represent children and with whom we operate. In case of abuse or suspected abuse, our fundamental principle calls for an immediate and professional response that respects the legislation in force.

We firmly believe that the systematic use of this Policy is the best way to ensure that all children receive the necessary protection to which they are entitled.



**Dharitri Patnaik**  
**Founder Chairperson**  
**Humara Bachpan Trust**

## About the Child Safeguarding Policy

### Introduction

Humara Bachpan Trust (HBT) is a not for profit organization advocating for safe and healthy living conditions with improved socio-economic status of communities living in poverty. It is led by children, adolescents, youth and women, who identify the issues, prioritize them and propose solutions to address those issues before the appropriate authorities.

HBT believes that children cannot become empowered change agents to improve their own lives and that of their families and communities if they are not safeguarded from abuse, discrimination and harm of any kind, be it physical, sexual, emotional, or neglect. Child protection is crucial to ensure that children have the rights, confidence and environment in which they can make choices, express their views and communicate effectively with other children and adults. Hence, it is very important to create a space where children feel free and are able to speak about abuse, are free from abusers and are empowered to become actors in their own protection without further discrimination or shame.

Consistent with its mission, HBT strives to create positive environments in which children grow up amidst respect, hope, and social justice. Recognizing the inherent potential in each child, HBT's initiatives focus on protecting the children from all forms of violence, exploitation, abuse, neglect, and ensure that children have access to appropriate development.

HBT has a clear policy framework under its Child Protection Policy to protect children from any forms of violence; be it physical, sexual, and psychological or violence due to negligence and to ensure each child enjoys the benefit of a protective environment in which their rights are respected.

### Purpose of the Policy

Child Safeguarding is the responsibility that HBT has to make sure that staff, operations, and programmes do not harm children, and that we do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse, and that any concerns the organisation has about children's safety are addressed under the policy purview.

HBT has a child protection policy in place which focuses on ensuring the well being of children and making all the child protection and development activities child-centred by promoting their active participation in the decision-making process.

The new Safeguarding policy is drafted to shape the existing protection policy towards strengthening the organisation's arrangements and resources to have the wellbeing of children promoted as well as their rights safeguarded. This policy includes both preventative actions to minimise the chances of harm occurring and responsive actions to ensure that incidents that may happen are appropriately handled.

## Scope of Policy

### Scope

The aim of the policy and procedures is to regulate how we work as an organisation so that the children with which we come into contact (either directly or indirectly) are safeguarded and have their wellbeing promoted, and that our actions while implementing programmes or institutional activities, do not cause any harm to children.

While the Safeguarding Policy aims to be comprehensive given the diverse range of settings and operations carried out by Humara Bachpan, it is likely that there may be circumstances that are not covered or where there is a question about the application of the policy and procedures.

This policy applies to:

- All staff employed or engaged by HBT, including paid full-time or part-time staff; Trustees and Advisors to the Board;
- Volunteers and Stakeholders, visitors to HBT programmes, who may also be in direct contact with children; and
- Interns and other contracted personnel, including consultants, who have been defined as 'working with children'.

### Principles

This policy is informed by a set of principles that are derived from the United Nations Child Rights Commission and include:

- All children have equal rights to protection and to have their wellbeing and participation promoted.
- Each child has the right to survival, development, protection and participation. HBT's child-centred community development approach provides a basis for ensuring the realization of children's rights to be protected from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation.
- All children should be encouraged to fulfil their potential, and inequality and discrimination should be challenged.
- Children will be assured the right to express their views freely and this will be given 'due weight' in accordance with their age and level of maturity. We will not discriminate against the child. The child will be treated with respect irrespective of gender, caste or ethnic origin, religion or, age, physical or mental health, sexual preference and gender identity, family, socio-economic and cultural background, or any history of conflict with the law.
- Everybody has a responsibility to support the care and protection of children.
- HBT has particular responsibilities to children who come into contact with us. No child must come to harm as a result of their engagement with HBT as a sponsored child, a participant in any HBT program or as part of any HBT fundraising or advocacy campaign.

- These particular responsibilities extend to those individuals or organizations that are associated with HBT. Therefore, **everyone** working for or associated with HBT's work must be aware of and adhere to the provisions of this policy.

## Code of Conduct (Dos' & Don'ts)

All the staffs/volunteers of Humara Bachpan must abide by this Code of Conduct.

### Do's:

- Ensuring the welfare, safety and well-being of the children those who are at service
- Reporting if any child is going through any awful incident or is at any kind of risk.
- Providing assistance to the children who are communicating with appropriate government officials
- Stipulating necessary help that is required for conducting any event or programme.
- Making safe and secured travelling arrangements during evening hours for the children, especially the ones who are attending Humara Bachpan's events/ any kind of meetings.
- Respecting the dignity and worth of every child and protecting their rights, irrespective of their physical appearance, gender, religion or cultural background.
- Making sure that before clicking any photographs or shooting videos of the children prior permission is taken from the children and their parents. Talk to children about their contact with staff or others and encourage them to raise any concerns
- Taking appropriate steps to ensure that in community developmental programmes equal opportunities are given to the children who are specially-abled.
- Staffs shall ensure that other children do not stigmatize or discriminate against the children having special needs
- Do inform the community and write community resolution before taking any child to local/national/international visit

### Don'ts

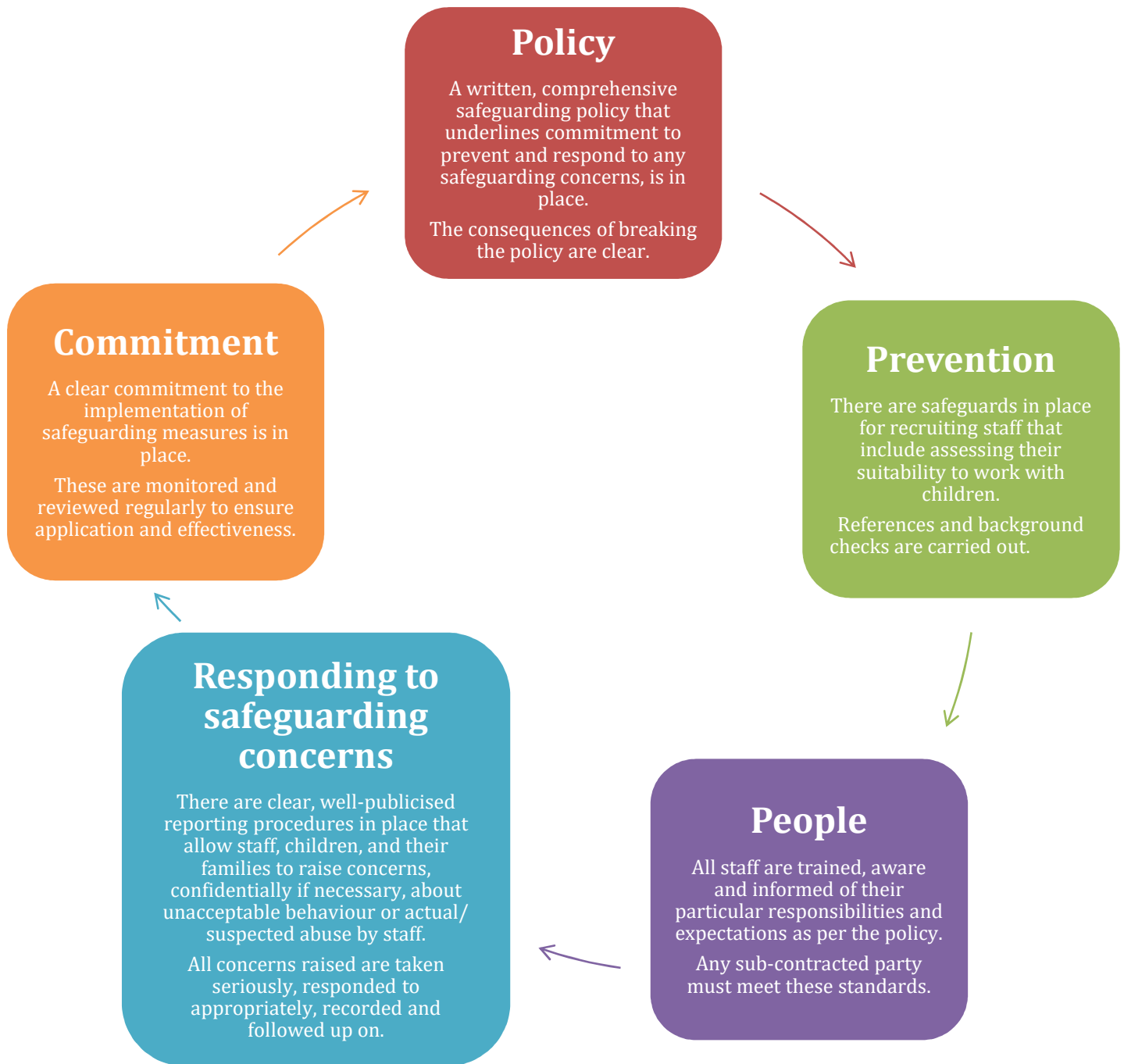
- Staffs must not show any kind of favouritism towards any child
- Staffs must refrain from any using abusive, derogatory or offensive language
- Staffs must refrain from developing any kind of personal relationships with children
- Smoking and consumption of alcohol is strictly prohibited during the service
- Don't hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children
- Don't act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse
- Don't spend a lot of time alone with any child isolating him/her from others
- Don't take any child to your home or any other lonely places, especially where they will be alone with you
- Don't patronize any child

## Safeguarding Standards

An overall approach to child safeguarding is rooted in understanding the risks to children from the organization, (its staff, programmes and operations) and addressing those risks with measures that create child-safe organizations. Acknowledging risks and implementing measures to address them is fundamental to HBT' strategies and governance with the understanding that the more this is recognized, the more risks are prevented.

The organization through the Child Safeguarding policy sets up safeguarding standards to strengthen the continued efforts, with the goal of ensuring that HBT's child safeguarding standards are clear, comprehensive and enforceable. In doing so, it builds on the international child safeguarding standards of Keeping Children Safe and the good practices of other foundations and international groups.

HBT holds itself accountable to the standards outlined in the Safeguarding policy document. We hold our all stakeholders accountable to the same standards, and we pledge to provide support for them to meet these standards.



## Prevention

Prevention is the cornerstone of the protection and safeguarding of children. HBT commits to preventing harm to children through the following areas:



## Risk/Vulnerability Mapping:

HBT carries out regular risk assessments to its staffing, programming and operations and develops appropriate actions to manage identified risks.

- ❖ While conceptualizing and planning programme activities, ultimate cautions are taken that they should be aligned to child safeguarding standards. Programmes and all types of actions undertaken by HBT, not just child protection programmes, focus on 'safeguarding standards' at all times and across all activities
- ❖ Child safeguarding is not considered as a separate activity, but rather a theme that runs through all work.
- ❖ In addition to programme design, when conducting specific activities, a risk assessment is to be undertaken to identify any potential dangers and a plan put in place to minimize these risks.
- ❖ The designated Child Protection Officer has to assess all programmes and activities periodically in order to ensure that the spirit of the Safeguarding Policy is met effectively.

## Child Safe Recruitments:

HBT acknowledges that creating safe environments for children starts with the appointment of suitably qualified and vetted staff who have the desired competencies and skills to carry out their function in an effective, efficient and safe manner. The recruitment processes used within the organization aim to be in the best interests of children and will reflect our commitment to protect children and prevent abuse. In addition to HBT's standard recruitment processes, the following child safeguarding measures are applied:

- ❖ All applicants will be required to undergo relevant vetting processes
- ❖ The successful applicant will only be offered a position subject to: (a) suitable references;
- ❖ (b) Proof of qualifications & experiences; (c) relevant vetting/ reference checking procedures; and (d) Positive proof of identification
- ❖ Starting employment with HBT, every newly recruited staff will sign the Child Safeguarding policy after proper orientation about the policy

The consultants, interns and visitors are required to be oriented about the child safeguarding policy and to sign the policy prior to deployment.

## Training and Staff Capacity Development:

HBT understands that, for the policy to be well understood and effectively implemented, it is essential that there are high levels of awareness and knowledge regarding the policy among the staff members so that they can be confident and competent in putting the policy into practice.

HBT, therefore, commits to

- ❖ Disseminate and promote the policy in a range of ways (e.g., website, hard copies and verbally). Copies of the policy will be made available and accessible to all stakeholders, both in hard copy and electronically.
- ❖ Regular briefings and trainings will be provided as part of the roll-out of the Policy and will be incorporated into standard induction processes for all staff
- ❖ Training on the policy is compulsory and will be carried out annually. Newly recruited staff and the entire staff of the organization will receive induction sessions and will sign the policy as part of the appointment process
- ❖ Staff and standing volunteers will be given the opportunity for regular updates on safeguarding

### Awareness Building:

- ❖ HBT works to build leadership among children in communities. As part of the leadership development activities, awareness building among children about child safeguarding standards will be done. Children – either formally, such as through training or more informally through participatory tools will be made aware of child safeguarding policy and ways in which they can help keep themselves safer.
- ❖ Communities, families, children and other stakeholders and all those working with/for HBT will be made aware of the Child Safeguarding Policy, and how to report a concern
- ❖ HBT encourages the involvement of parents/ community as much as possible through the training program and devises processes for ensuring children are consulted and listened to, to ensure their voices are heard

### Projects & Partners:

HBT as an organization has a range of partners, including donors, other NGOs, vendors, and suppliers. HBT will ensure that all its partners agree to the commitment to keep children safe that is appropriate to that partnership. This means making sure that:

- ❖ In all partnership relations, strong attention will be given to issues related to child safeguarding. As good practice, specific reference to child safeguarding measures should be included in partnership agreements and contracts.
- ❖ Understanding among partners will be there on how HBT and the partner will support one another to achieve compliance and competence around child safeguarding

### Child Safe Communication

HBT's work in the ground includes building agencies of child leaders, child protection and development, leadership building activities, education and sponsorship for which meetings, trainings, events and other exposure activities.

HBT ensures that through its publication and communication, the safety of the children is not compromised through the dissemination of their images, names, community or environment. This entails respecting their dignity and rights, including the right to privacy and their right to be heard.

HBT can take or use a child's photographs when we have a clear written record of informed consent of the child or his/her parents/caregivers. Consent is not required for crowd shots of children in different activities undertaken involving children.

Taking pictures or videos is reserved for strictly professional use. HBT will use the photographs depicting children on the organization's website, documents or official social media sites. Those photographs must not be posted or uploaded on personal pages of staff and volunteers.

Images captured for documentation purposes should present children in a 'positive way'. Similarly, stories about children should aim to report their strengths. HBT will ensure the child we are writing about has no issues with the way he or she is described.

Our standard practice is to protect the identities of at-risk children. This means that all names in a case study and photographs should be changed and we should also change details that could reveal a child's identity –especially details of where they live or can be found. The records/documents of such children maintained by the organization will be kept with utmost privacy.

## **Responding & Reporting to Child Safeguarding Concerns/Incidences)**

1. Where the concern relates to potential, actual or suspected abuse of a child by the family/community or in places where the child is open to - such incidents cannot be **managed** and handled under the policy. HBT can refer the child to a child protection/law enforcement agency and provide support to the child (if the family members give consent) to report the concern and seek legal assistance.

2. **Where the concern involves a staff member, volunteer, visitor or partner of HBT, or any representative of the organization**, such incidents **must be reported to the Child Protection Committee** who will work with Team Leads, Team Members, HR Manager and Senior Management Team (SMT) members to determine the appropriate action necessary.

This is not to avoid taking action, but to ensure that the action taken does not jeopardise organisational or individual reputation, and to ensure that appropriate support is given to the child and his/her family members as such incidents may not be appropriately managed at the organization level.

**3. Confidentiality will be respected all along the process.**

The process to be followed for responding to and reporting any child safeguarding concern is shown by the following chart.



**Child Protection Concern Identified**

Internal/External Report



Child Protection Officer

Immediate step to ensure safety of child

External Concern

Internal Concern



Concerns about community members or external stakeholders

Referral to appropriated Child Protection - law enforcement agency

Concerns about HBT staff or partner of HBT

Team Leader\*, Child Protection Officer and HR Manager+ Team Member (if necessary)

Written Incident Report

Child Protection Committee

No Cause of Complaint

Cause for Concern Identified

Case Closed

Senior Team Management

Concern likely to be criminal matter

Concern only violation of Child Safeguarding Policy

Referral to appropriated Child Protection – law enforcement agency

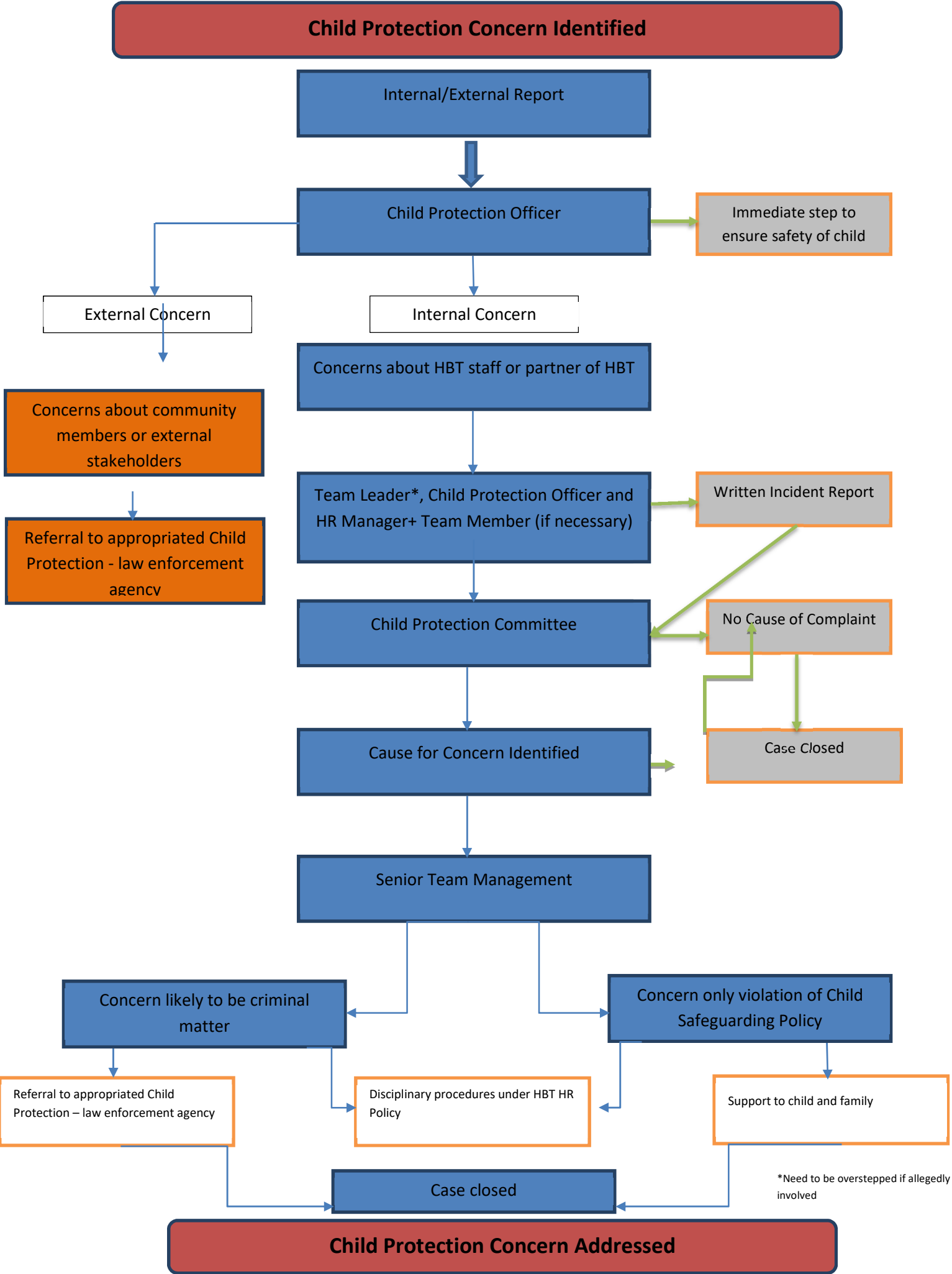
Disciplinary procedures under HBT HR Policy

Support to child and family

Case closed

\*Need to be overstepped if allegedly involved

**Child Protection Concern Addressed**



## Reporting Concerns and Child Protection Incidents

*This section covers the case where a concern is reported that the child safeguarding policy is not being implemented or a child protection incident is reported (i.e. where a child may be or is at risk of abuse and actions may be necessary to ensure that the child is protected).*

- Concerns and reports may be received from a number of sources – including staff, volunteers, partners, children and families/community members. All concerns and reports must be taken seriously.
- All concerns and reports must be passed to the Child Protection Officer.
- Decisions about child protection incidents must not be made by individual workers in isolation. However in exceptional circumstances – such as a life threatening situation – staff or volunteers may take whatever action they deem necessary to protect a child at immediate risk, but this must be reported as soon as possible in accordance with the reporting framework (i.e. in the first instance to the Child Protection Officer).
- Consideration on whether to refer a child to an outside agency for protection must always be made within the legal framework of the country and with consideration to the best interests and wishes of the child and his/her family members.
- When concerns are raised or reports made, importance must be placed on CONFIDENTIALITY, both of the referrer and also the child(ren)/adults involved. Information must be shared strictly on a need to know basis as necessary to ensure the child is kept safe and appropriate assistance is given.
- Referrals to local child protection agencies/police should be done in the prescribed manner (for example, there may be a particular format for reporting). Where the referral is made verbally it must also be confirmed in writing.
- Written records of all reports received (even if the report is vague) must be kept and maintained in a secure and confidential location by the Child Protection Officer. In some cases, such as where the programme/ project specifically addresses child protection and case management forms part of the intervention provided, as an alternative, records may be kept by the project team.

## Accountability, Monitoring and Review

*This section details how the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy will be monitored, and how the policy will be reviewed.*

- Everyone has a responsibility for ensuring that the Child Safeguarding Policy is implemented as set out in the policy and procedures outline in this document and as may be adapted to suit local conditions.

- The Executive Director, has overall responsibility for the Child Safeguarding Policy. Directors are responsible for determining policy and good practice and for implementation of the policy in all activities related to their areas of organisational responsibility.
- This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis, but not more than every five years. Such reviews will also include where possible, the views of children, their families as well as other local stakeholders.

## Implementation & Monitoring

HBT will ensure that the Child Safeguarding Policy is implemented as set out in the policy and procedures outlined in this document and as may be adapted to suit local conditions.

HBT will follow the following processes towards implementation and monitoring of the Child Safeguarding Policy.

- ❖ Periodic training and awareness campaigns for organization staff, volunteers, consultants and visitors will be organized about the policy. In project review meeting, the policy adherence will be reviewed by the project lead regularly.
- ❖ The monitoring of adherence to this policy will be made through the mandatory tracking of the Child Safeguarding Policy Implementation Standards and the Code of Conduct. Breaches of this policy and failure to comply with these responsibilities may incur disciplinary action.

The policy standard implementation and monitoring of the implementation will be conducted as follows.

### Senior Management Team:

- Ensures adherence of CSP standards in program design and implementation process
- Conducts appropriate enquiry into any case of violation of Policy provisions internally and pursue required corrective measures
- Ensures the capacity building and other prevention activities are being undertaken periodically
- Seeks legal opinion in cases of abuse reported, whenever required, makes the decision to undertake legal intervention and ensures further action

### HR Director/Manager:

- Provides every new employee with the following set of documents to read and sign and arrange for their training.
  - ✓ Child Safeguarding Policy
  - ✓ Sexual Harassment Policy
  - ✓ HR Policy
- Ensures recruitment of suitably qualified staff who have the desired competencies and skills after proper vetting/reference checking
- Maintains personal file of all staff and volunteers with required documentation
- Ensures the provision of appropriate supervision and support for staff and volunteers, including safeguarding training, a mandatory induction, and regular reviews of their practice with line managers

- Develops a culture and environment whereby staff and volunteers, are enabled to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding roles

### **Child Protection Officer**

The role of Child Protection Officer of the organization is to advise, support and assist teams in the implementation of the Child Safeguarding Policy. The responsibilities of Child Protection Officer is to

- Ensure safeguarding policy and procedures are in place, up to date and fit for purpose, including relevant HR safeguarding matters
- Actively promotes a culture and environment whereby all staff, volunteers, consultants and visitors are enabled to raise concerns and understand their safeguarding responsibilities
- Ensures that safeguarding concerns or incidents are being reported and addressed in appropriate manner and maintain proper documentation of the case and action taken
- Ensure all program activities are designed and implemented abiding the safeguarding code of conduct
- Provide information and advice on safeguarding to staff and volunteers
- Monitor compliance with the policy through different means and propose policy amendment if required

## **Amendment & Review**

HBT's Child Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed on a regular basis, but not more than every five years. Such reviews will include feedback from HBT board members, senior management team members, members of child protection committee, programme staff, and where possible, the views of children, their families as well as other local stakeholders.

- ❖ A review committee will be formed which will include Child Protection Officer, member from Senior Management Team, member from Child Protection Committee and project implementing staff.
- ❖ The review committee will review the CSP, measuring its outcome and exploring any problems in its implementation
- ❖ The committee will submit report about the implementation of the policy which will include updates and a summary of progress as well as key successes, challenges and obstacles to implementation along with any breaches of the policy, subsequent actions and outcomes.
- ❖ In case of any recommendation arising during the implementation of the CSP for amendments to this will be reported by the review committee. However, no amendment will be allowed in the Policy Statement of CSP of HBT, which may cause a policy shift in the policy statement, until and unless a consultative process is adopted



# Annexure

## Annex I: HBT Child Safeguarding Policy Reporting Format

### 1. DETAILS OF CHILD

Name:  Gender: Male  Female  Other

Age:  Date of Birth:

Address:

Language/s Spoken:

Additional factors that might increase risk:

Other relevant information:

Name and contact details of parents/legal guardians/care takers:   
(Delete as appropriate)

Name:  Gender: Male  Female  Other

Age:  Date of Birth:

ADDRESS:

Languages Spoken:

Any Disability:

### 2. DETAILS OF THE ALLEGED PERPETRATOR/SUBJECT OF CHILD PROTECTION CONCERN

Name:  Gender: Male  Female  Other

Age:  Date of Birth:

Address/Current Location

Language/s Spoken

Relationship to victim:

Occupation:

Employer:

### 3. DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT

What happened? Please describe the incident as closely as possible to what you were told or to what you witnessed? Mention time, location and persons involved:

### 4. DETAILS OF OTHER PERSONS/AGENCIES INVOLVED:

Name:

Gender: Male

Female

Other

Position in/relation to HBT:

Reported to:

Name:

Gender: Male

Female

Other

Position in/relation to HBT:

Reported to:

#### Details of Witness:

Name:

Gender: Male

Female

Other

Address:

Position in/relation to HBT:

Telephone:

Relationship to Child:

External Agencies of People contacted (if any):

Date:

Time:

Number and nature of child protection concerns the alleged perpetrator has previously been associated with:

Any other details (including physical description, current whereabouts):

Name of Agency:

Contact of Agency:

Any other details (including physical description, current whereabouts):

Name:

Gender: Male

Female

Other

Age:

Date of Birth:

Address/Current Location

Language/s Spoken

## 5. INVESTIGATION

Who was involved in the investigation, roles and responsibilities (investigation team, police/ state prosecutor/government authority, interviewees, representative of other agencies, etc.)?

## 6. OUTCOME AND ACTION

**Incident Occurred:**

Date:

Time:

Place:

**Incident Reported:**

Date:

Time:

Place:

**Main conclusion of the investigation:**

Allegation substantiated       Allegation not substantiated       Findings not conclusive

Victim response:

Action taken:

**7. LESSONS LEARNED; RECOMMENDATIONS; ACTION TAKEN AND APPENDICES**

Lessons learned (strengths and weaknesses in areas such as the policy and its implementation, management, recruitment, supervision etc): Recommendations (recommendations to prevent possible abuse and improve the investigation process in the future): List of appendices/other documentation (e.g. interview reports, file notes, correspondence):

Completed by:

Date:

Name:

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

## Annex II: Declaration for Staff and Consultants of HBT

To be appended to contract of employment or consultancy

- I have read and understood HBT's Child Safeguarding Policy and accompanying Procedures and Guidance.
- I agree to abide by HBT's Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- I also declare that I have disclosed to HBT any issue which could give rise to any child protection concern — real or perceived — regarding my suitability for employment or consultancy. I confirm that I have no criminal prosecutions pending, nor have I been previously convicted of any offence involving inappropriate conduct with children.

Name and Signature

Date

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### Annex III: Consent Form

Humara Bachpan Trust (HBT) is a not-for profit organization advocating for safe and healthy living conditions with improved socio-economic status of communities living in poverty.

We are proposing different activities involving children. Before starting this collaboration, we need your consent, and also some important information from you to ensure that you/your child can participate safely and your/their welfare can be promoted. All information will be kept confidential and only shared with adults who need to know to make sure that you/your child is properly cared for.

#### Activity Consent

I give my consent for me/my child \_\_\_\_\_ (record child's full name) to participate in HBT activities.

I authorize HBT to be responsible for me/my child during these activities and authorise them to make decisions concerning any emergency medical treatment for me/my child which may be required during this activity.

I affirm that I have full authority to give the consent provided for in this document.

#### Media Consent

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (record person's full name), do hereby consent to the use by HBT of my/my child's image, video, voice, story or all of them.

I agree that all such pictures, stories, video or audio recordings and any reproduction thereof shall remain the property of HBT and that HBT may use it as it sees fit. I understand that this consent is perpetual, that I may not revoke it, and that it is binding. I understand that these things may appear publicly as part of HBT's website and/or other publication materials.

*It is understood that this material will be used in a legitimate manner, both internally and outside HBT and is not intended to cause any harm or undue embarrassment to the parties involved.*

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I confirm that I have read and understood the Consent Form, and agree to abide by its contents.

Name of the child .....

Date ..... at .....

Name and Signature (*name of child/carer*) .....



HUMARA BACHPAN

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