

# Child and Young People's Safeguarding Policy

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**Srijonshil Gaibandha Foundation**

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The organization is registered with the Department of Youth Development (Reg. No. Gai-98/Sadar-20/22),  
Department of Social Services (Reg. No. Gai/Sadar/1541/2023), and RJSC (Reg. No. RAJS-557/2025)



## Background of the Organization

Srijonshil Gaibandha Foundation (SGF) is a youth-led voluntary organization established on 22 April 2019 with the aim of contributing to a humane, educated, and inclusive society. The organization works for sustainable and inclusive development of marginalized and underprivileged communities across Bangladesh, with a strong focus on youth empowerment, leadership development of women and adolescent girls, education, climate action, humanitarian response, social accountability, and community development. SGF follows participatory, rights-based, and community-centered approaches to ensure meaningful participation of young people and marginalized groups in development processes.

Srijonshil Gaibandha Foundation (SGF) is legally registered under the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. The organization is registered with the Department of Youth Development under the Ministry of Youth and Sports (Registration No.: Gai-98/ Sadar-20/22), the Department of Social Services, Government of Bangladesh (Registration No.: Gai/Sadar/1541/2023), and the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms (RJSC) (Registration No. RAJS-557/2025), officially registered on 22 December 2025.

## Policy Statement

We are fully committed to the gender responsive safeguarding of all children and young people from all forms of violence. We take very seriously our responsibility and duty to ensure that we, as an organization, and anyone who represents us does not in any way harm, abuse or commit any other act of violence against children and young people or place them at risk of the same.

We promote child and youth safe practices, approaches, interventions and environments which respects, recognizes and responds to the specific safeguarding needs and addresses the protection risks of the differing gender and other identities. We will challenge and do not tolerate inequality, discrimination or exclusion.

We respond to a child or young person who may be in need of protection and or psycho-social support and intend that their welfare and best interests will at all times be paramount consideration.

We ensure all who work with and engage with us understand and are supported in their meeting safeguarding roles and responsibilities. We take positive action to prevent anyone who might be risk to children and young people from becoming involved with us and take stringent measures against any Staff, Associate or Visitor who perpetrates an act of violence against a child.

We promote the active involvement of children and young people in their own protection.

## Purpose of the Safeguarding Policy

Our organization recognizes that violence against children and young people is prevalent throughout the world and in all societies. Violence against children includes physical or mental

violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment and sexual abuse. Furthermore, children and young people may be vulnerable and at risk due to, for example, reasons of gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, disability and age or illness.

Our aim of the policy is to regulate how we work as an organization so that the children and young people 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 them.

The resolution of this policy is to ensure that:

- all who work for and engage with us are skilled, confident, understand, and are well supported in meeting their responsibilities to safeguard children and young people from violence and engage positively with them in ways that enhance the achievement of our Purpose;
- we have in place procedures to prevent and deal with the actions/behavior of our Staff, Associates, Visitors or us as an organization that result in violence against a child or young person and/or places them at risk of the same; and
- children and young people we work with are aware our responsibilities to prevent and respond to any harm against them arising from actions and behaviors of our Staff, Associates and Visitors, and, the routes for reporting such incidents.

### Key Principles

Our Safeguarding Policy is based upon a number of principles and beliefs, including:

1. All children and young people have equal rights for protection and to have their wellbeing and participation promoted.
2. This policy is mandatory for all those who work for or on behalf of the organization, including staff, interns, volunteers, vendors, advisors, consultants and partners.
3. Everybody within our organization is responsible for safeguarding employees, participants, volunteers and community members. Everybody should intervene to stop abuse whenever possible. Everybody should report abuse.
4. We have a duty to identify groups of people among employees and participants that are at greater risk of becoming victims of abuse to mitigate the extra risks they face.
5. All actions regarding child and young people's safeguarding must be taken in the best interest of children and young people. We respect children's and young people's rights and do not cause harm.
6. We provide training to the staff, raise awareness and influence others on the importance of safeguarding children and young people. We will share our policy and procedures with others, and be open to feedback regarding its application and relevance.
7. We have a duty to make sure that, if abuse does occur, victims and witnesses have access to multiple safe reporting channels to follow up on reports of abuse, to

investigate them and to make sure that, if warranted, appropriate disciplinary action is taken. We have also a duty to protect whistleblowers.

8. We work in a transparent and open way where child and young people safeguarding is made a priority. We understand that situations of abuse and harm are increased when staff, volunteers, partners, children, families and community members do not feel able to raise their concerns.

9. We maintain confidentiality and do not disclose personal details of those involved in child and young people protection concerns, including the names of those raising concerns unless it is necessary to pass on information to ensure that a child or young person is protected.

10. All reports of concern regarding the safety and protection of a child and young person will be taken seriously. Where necessary, appropriate steps will be taken to protect the child and young person and to take action against the alleged perpetrator. This may include referrals to law enforcement and child protection agencies. In relation to allegations against staff, volunteers and partners, action may also include the suspension or termination of engagement or any type of cooperation.

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

#### **1. All Staff, Associates and Visitors shall:**

- a) commit and contribute to an environment where children and young people feel respected, supported, safe and protected.
- b) never act or behave in a manner that results in violence against a child or young person or places a child or young person at risk of violence.
- c) be aware of and adhere to the provisions of this Safeguarding Policy.

#### **2. All Staff shall:**

- a) comply with this Safeguarding Policy, including the Code of Conduct (Appendix 1); and
- b) report and respond to safeguarding concerns and breaches of the policy in line with the applicable procedures of the organization.

#### **3. Associates and Visitors shall:**

- a) agree, by signing, to complying with either:
  - i. the Safeguarding Code of Conduct (Appendix 1); or
  - ii. other appropriate guidance developed by the organization on appropriate behavior towards children and young people which uses the Safeguarding Code of Conduct (Appendix 1) as a guide; or
- b) comply with his/her own Code of Conduct, provided that it complies and is consistent with this Safeguarding Policy.

#### **4. Managers shall ensure that:**

- a) Children, young people and communities with which we engage, work or are in contact are made aware of the provisions of this Safeguarding Policy to ensure they have the confidence and ability to report any incidents occurring against children and young people (Appendix 3);
- b) Staff, Associates, and Visitors are aware of the Safeguarding Implementation Standards that are applicable to their role or engagement with us;
- c) they support and develop systems which maintains an environment which is safe for and prevents violence against children and young people; and
- d) they are accountable for ensuring that the policy is fully embedded within their areas of responsibility in accordance with the Safeguarding Implementation Standards (Appendix 2).

#### **5. Partners:**

Organizations that work with us in carrying out our programs, projects, processes, events and/or activities involving children and young people must comply with the Safeguarding Guidelines contained in Appendix 2.

#### **6. HR Department:**

The Human resource department of the organization will orient and train staff, associates and other person on the safeguarding policy. HR department will check references of the staff, check proof of identification, check police verification report and other verifications as necessary.

#### **7. Safeguarding Focal Person:**

The designated or assigned person who will act as the main point of contact within the delegation for child and young people's safeguarding, to ensure that staff and partners are aware of this policy. Ensure that the name and contact details of the focal person is made available so that people know how to raise a concern/where to seek advice. Keep an accurate record of any incidents with confidentiality.

## Appendix 1: Code of Conduct

### The Code of Conduct must be signed by all staff, associates, visitors and standing volunteers BEFORE commencing duties.

We consider all forms of abuse towards children and young people to be unacceptable, and recognize that it has a duty to safeguard children/young people – that is to keep them safe, promote their wellbeing and protect them from abuse and harm. Neglect, physical, psychological/emotional and sexual violence are the main forms of abuse.

**Our Child and Young People’s Safeguarding Policy and Procedures** set out the measures we will take to safeguard children/young people. This includes proactive actions to prevent situations of abuse and harm occurring and reactive actions to respond to situations where a child/young person is, or may be, suffering abuse.

**A child is any human under the age of 18 as stipulated by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989. A young person is any human being of the ages of 15 and 24 years as defined by the UN during preparations for the International Youth Year (1985).**

As part of this policy, it is a requirement that all staff, associates, visitors and standing volunteers (including consultants and interns), whether full or part time, agree to abide by this policy and specifically to agree to work in accordance with this **Code of Conduct** which sets out responsibilities for safeguarding children/young people and expected behaviors. **THIS IS A MANDATORY REQUIREMENT.**

Any form of unacceptable behavior which breaches this Code of Conduct must be reported. In the case of situations which are not covered by the Code of Conduct, we expect its representatives to apply common sense whilst focusing on the “child’s/youth’s best interests”. We respect the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the following five principles:

- I. **Children’s/Young People’s Rights:** All staff must respect and promote children’s/young people’s rights. Above all, they must protect the right of each child/young person to live in safety, without risk of abuse or exploitation and must act, at all times, in the child’s/young person’s best interests.
- II. **Zero tolerance:** We will not tolerate any form of abuse and will take all necessary
- III. measures to implement the Child and Young People’s Safeguarding Policy.
- IV. **Risk management:** We ensure that risks are identified and minimized from the planning stage through to the implementation stage of activities.
- V. **Everyone’s responsibility:** The successful implementation of the Child and Young Person’s Safeguarding Policy is based on the individual and shared responsibility of all representatives including staff. We will seek to ensure that partner organizations’ programs also comply with international safeguarding standards.
- VI. **v. The duty of notification:** Any suspected violation or any actual violation of the current Code of Conduct must be reported immediately to the supervisor/manager or the Safeguarding Focal Person or as specified by the organization. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the entire procedure.

**BY SIGNING THE CODE OF CONDUCT, I explicitly agree that:**

**I will always:**

- Treat children/young people with respect and equally, regardless of their age, sex, language, religion, opinion or nationality, ethnic or social origin, status, class, caste, sexual orientation, or any other personal characteristics.
- Help children/young people to take part in decisions which concern them according to their age and their level of maturity.
- Maintain a culture of communication and create trust with the children/young people and their families, communities, other staff and volunteers and representatives of partner organizations so that concerns may be shared and discussed.
- Use non-violent and positive behavior methods when supervising children/young people.
- Encourage children/young people and communities to speak openly about their interactions with adults and with each other.
- Inform children/young people and communities of their right to report any worrying situations and how they can raise a concern.
- Empower children/young people so that they are in a position to better protect themselves.
- Make sure that another adult is present or try to be visible when I am in contact with a child/young people.
- Try to preserve the child's/young person's autonomy and make sure that I do not do things that a child/young people can do for herself/himself.
- Plan activities and organize the work place in such a way so as to minimize the risk of harm taking into account the age and development of the child/young person.
- Ensure that information concerning children/young people, families and communities remains confidential.
- Behave in a way that sets a good example (avoid smoking, showing disrespect towards colleagues, etc.).
- Obtain permission from the child/young person and their parents before taking a photograph, recording or using the child's/young person's image, what they have said or their history. This includes explaining to children/young people and their parents how the photos or messages will be used.
- Ensure that the child/young person does not pose in a degrading manner or in a way that may be interpreted by others as having sexual connotations.
- Raise any concerns and queries concerning the Child and Young People's Safeguarding Policy with my manager/supervisor or the Safeguarding Focal Person.

- Immediately report any suspicions or allegations to my Line Manager or to the Safeguarding Focal Person about any behavior that goes against the principles of the policy and Code of Conduct including any form of child/Young Person abuse – even if the information or allegation is vague.

**I will never:**

- Engage in any form of sexual relations with anyone under 18 years old, regardless of the legal age of sexual consent, the law and local customs. Mistaking a child's age is not a defense.
- Exchange money, job, goods or services or humanitarian aid for sexual favors or subject the child/young person to any other kind of humiliating, degrading or abusive behavior.
- Touch children/young persons or use language or make suggestions in an inappropriate manner, to provoke, harass or degrade the child/young person or show disrespect for cultural practices. This includes acting in a manner which is likely to have a negative impact on the child's/young person's confidence and feelings of self-worth.
- Exploit a child/young person for labor (for example through domestic work).
- Discriminate against, treat children/young people unequally or unfairly for example by favoritism and excluding others.
- Invite a child/young person or their relatives to my home or develop a relationship with a child and/or their family which may be considered outside normal professional boundaries.
- Work with or transport a child/young person alone without the prior authorization of my manager, unless absolutely necessary for the safety of the child/young person.
- Be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while working with children/young people.
- Take photos or videos of beneficiaries for personal use that is not strictly professional.
- Watch, publish, produce, or share pornography showing children/young people, and/or show pornographic material to children/young people.
- Show the faces of children/young persons who are exploited sexually, victims of trafficking, abuse, in conflict with the law, living in brothels or who can easily be located even if their identity has been modified.
- Take or publish photos of children/young people entirely naked or dressed in a manner which is not adapted to the situation in which they are represented.
- Represent children/young people as victims (weak, powerless, unassisted, desperate, etc.).
- Publish a story or image which may endanger the child/young person, their family or community.
- Use photos which have not been checked and approved by my manager and/or Safeguarding Focal Person or post unofficial pictures or information about children/young people on personal websites or social networks (such as Facebook).
- Maintain contact with children/young people and their families via social networks, unless a specific project requires me to do so and I have been given express permission.
- Close my eyes to, ignore or fail to report any concern, suspected violation or violation of the Child and Young People's Safeguarding Policy and the Code of Conduct.

**I understand that, in the event of suspicions or allegations of my violation of the Code of Conduct:**

The Organization will take any action they deem necessary, which may include, but is not limited to:

- Providing assistance for the victim and taking immediate steps to protect and support the child/young person.
- Attempting to establish the facts in the most objective manner possible (the presumption of innocence prevails) while protecting the reputation and confidentiality of the adults involved.
- Undertaking disciplinary actions, which may result in my suspension or termination of contract.
- Initiating judicial proceedings and/or reporting to the competent authorities any violation of the Code of Conduct which may breach national laws/legislation.
- Taking appropriate measures in order to ensure that such incidents do not occur again, for example, informing other organizations which may apply for professional references regarding the termination of contract due to violation of the principles of the protection of children/young people (within the legislative framework applicable to the protection of information).

**Declaration of commitment**

I, the undersigned, ....., declare that I have received, read and understood the Child and Young People’s Safeguarding Policy and I commit to know and agree to work in accordance with it. I understand that any failure to uphold the Code of Conduct may result in the termination of my engagement with this organization, or further disciplinary or judicial proceedings as mentioned above. Furthermore, I declare that I have no criminal records regarding an offence towards a child/young person (which I have not previously declared) and nor do I know of any reason why anyone would deem me unsuitable to work with children/young people.

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

Signature.....

## Appendix 2: Organizational Guidelines for Implementing Safeguarding

The following guidelines outline the requirements for safeguarding children and young people that are applicable to organizations that work with us in carrying out our programmes involving children and young people.

The guidelines should be applied in relation to children and/or young people as appropriate, depending on the group the organization works with.

**1. Prevention:** The Organization must take appropriate measures to manage child and/or youth safeguarding risk factors and prevent abuse and exploitation before it occurs. Prevention measures should include organizational safeguarding policies, codes of conduct and associated procedures.

**2. Code of Conduct:** Each Organization is required to ensure that their personnel avoid any behavior or conduct that compromises the safety and protection of children and/or young people within its activities, operations and programs.

**3. Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination:** The Organization should ensure that all Safeguarding Children and/or Young People policies and procedures take into account gender equality and non-discrimination requirements. Recognizing that girls, boys, young women, young men, and children and young people of different gender identities may face different risks relating to their safety and protection and that all children and/or young people have an equal right to protection, irrespective of: age, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnic origin, color, race, language, religious or political beliefs, marital status, disability, physical or mental health, family, socio-economic or cultural background, or class.

**4. Screening Procedures:** There should be detailed screening procedures for all personnel (including unpaid volunteers) who will come into contact with children and/or young people (directly or indirectly). Screening procedures should be updated on a regular basis, where possible. Screening procedures may include: no claim certificate, character certificate, police reference checks or equivalent and other verifications.

**5. Awareness:** The Organization should ensure that all personnel, sub-contractors or consultants or affiliates involved with children and young people's programs are aware of safeguarding risks, policies and procedures; and their safeguarding responsibilities. In addition, children and/or young people engaged and their parents, guardians or chaperons should be informed of the same so that they know what behaviors to expect and how to report any concerns.

**6. Capacity Building:** The Organization should develop the capacity of all who work with and for children and/or young people to appropriately prevent, detect, report and respond to safeguarding concerns and particularly as they pertain to differing gender and other identities.

**7. Participation of children and/or young people:** Children and/or young people should be actively, meaningfully and ethically involved in the development of safeguarding measures in accordance with their evolving capacities. Children and/or young people must not be treated simply as objects of concern but rather listened to and taken seriously and treated as individual people with their own views.

**8. Reporting Mechanisms for children and/or young people and Staff:** Mechanisms should be established that enable the safe reporting of safeguarding concerns and it should be accessible, friendly and sensitive to their differing needs.

**9. Response and Follow Up:** Organizational policies and procedures should include appropriate measures to support and protect children and/or young people when concerns arise.

**10. Implementation, Monitoring and Review:** The implementation and monitoring the Safeguarding Children and/Young People Policy should be reviewed at regular intervals as determined necessary by the Organization.

**11. Sanction and Discipline of Organization personnel:** The Organization policies and procedures should provide for appropriate sanctions and disciplinary measures which ensures children and young people are protected from further potential harm.

**12. Informed Consent:** The Organization should provide children and/or young people (and their parent(s)/legal guardian(s) where applicable), with all necessary details (including on any associated risk,) to make an informed decision regarding their participation in programs and activities, including any voice recordings, video or photographs of children and/or young people (including how and where these will be used). Participation and/or usage of information and/or images should only take place after consent is obtained.

**13. Protection of Personal Information:** Personal information regarding any Child or children and/or young people, whether or not such information is obtained as part of the programs involving children and/or young people, should be treated confidentially. These should not be disclosed to any third party, except in accordance with the policies of the Organization or as required by applicable local laws.

**14. Working with partners:** The Organization should ensure adequate safeguarding assessments are made as part of its due diligence processes when it comes to partnership working. Third party entities that are contracted or supported to work with children must be subject to the same safeguarding principles and approach outlined in this policy and procedures. Vendors, suppliers and other contractors that may be in direct or indirect contact with children must also be subject to appropriate safeguarding measures.

## Appendix 3: Reporting Format for Abuse

### Sample Report Form for Suspected Abuse

If you have knowledge that a child's/young people's safety might be in danger, please complete this form to the best of your knowledge. Please note that child safeguarding concerns must be reported directly to the designated contact person immediately (preferably within the same working day). You may wish to complete this form *before* contacting the designated person in your organization's reporting process *or* you may wish to complete the report *after* contacting the designated person. This report is to be used as a tool to develop the most un-biased information-based report possible. For confidentiality reasons, the report should be written and signed solely by you. It should be sent *only* to the designated contact person. It will be held in a safe and secure place and treated in the strictest confidence.

#### 1. About You

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your job title: \_\_\_\_\_

Workplace: \_\_\_\_\_

Your relationship to the child/young person: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact details: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. About the Child/Young Person

Child's/Young Person's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's/Young Person's gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's/Young Person's age: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's/Young Person's address: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's/Young Person's guardians (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. About your Concern

Was the abuse observed or suspected? \_\_\_\_\_

Is this concern based on first-hand information or information divulged to you by someone else?

(If so, who?) \_\_\_\_\_

Did the child/young person disclose abuse to you? \_\_\_\_\_

Date of the alleged incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of the alleged incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of the alleged incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of alleged perpetrator: \_\_\_\_\_

Job title: \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of the allegation:

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Your personal observations (*visible injuries, child's/young person's emotional state, etc.*)  
[N.B. Make a clear distinction between what is fact and what is opinion or hearsay]

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*Exactly* what the child/young person or other source said to you [if relevant] and how you responded to him or her: [Do not lead the child/young person. Record actual details]

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Any other information not previously covered:

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Were there any other children/young people/person(s) involved in the alleged incident?

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Action Taken (if any):

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

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

## **Glossary:**

**Gender Responsive Safeguarding:** Gender Responsive Safeguarding is a safeguarding approach that:

- takes full account of gender in considering the specific safeguarding needs of girls, boys and other gender identities;
- integrates safeguarding measures that address protection risks for children and young people (girls, boys, young women, young men, and children of other gender identities) that stem from issues relating to gender bias and discrimination; and
- supports the empowerment and fosters the inclusion of girls, particularly in the safeguarding process, in a manner that promotes equality, equity and ultimately their increased safety and protection

**Harm:** 'Harm' is any detrimental effect on a child's or young person's physical, psychological, or emotional wellbeing. Harm may be caused by abuse or exploitation whether intended or unintended.

**Safeguarding children and young people:** This is the responsibilities, preventative, responsive and referral measures that we undertake to protect children and young people, ensuring that no child or young person is subject to any form of harm as a result of their association with the organization.

**Violence against a child or young person:** This includes all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, emotional ill-treatment or psychological violence, sexual abuse and exploitation, harassment, and commercial or other exploitation of a child or young person. Acts of violence can also take place online through, for example, the web, social media or mobile phones. It may be an intentional act involving the use of physical force or power or it may be failing to act to prevent violence against a child or young person.

**Young Person/People or Youth:** Individuals – young women, young men, and young persons of other gender identities - aged 15 years to 24 years old. This group spans the categories of 'children', 'adolescents' and 'adults' but regards young people as having particular safeguarding needs and requiring distinct consideration aside from younger children and older adults.

**Abuse:** The term abuse as used in this policy encompasses: sexual harassment, intimidation, violence, bullying, humiliation, discrimination, neglect and exploitation.

**Sexual harassment:** Any unwelcome direct, indirect, physical, verbal or nonverbal conduct of a sexual nature.

**Intimidation:** Intentional behavior that would cause a reasonable person to fear injury or harm and do something they would not otherwise.

**Bullying:** Behavior which seeks to belittle, dominate, target or single out someone. The behavior can be indirect, aggressive and/or threatening. The use of electronic communication/social media which is referred to as “Cyber bullying” is also covered under this policy.

**Humiliation:** Behavior that cause a person mortification or painful loss of pride, self-respect, or dignity.

**Discrimination:** The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially based on race, gender, marital status, religion, disability, sexual orientation and/or age.

**Neglect:** It is a form of abuse where the perpetrator, who is responsible for caring for someone, fails to do so. It can be a result of carelessness, indifference, or unwillingness.

**Exploitation:** The act of mistreating or taking advantage of someone to gain benef

