
Organizational Child Protection Policy & Code of Conduct

Owner/s of this policy

Grambangla Unnayan Committee

This version

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Review frequency

2 years

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Bangla and English

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Operational Definitions:

Child: The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a 'child' as a person below the age of 18, unless the laws of a particular country set the legal age for adulthood younger.

Child Protection: Child protection is the process of protecting individual children identified as either suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect.

Staff: Any person working for Grambangla against salary, honorarium, remuneration, fees, contract amount, or any other financial consideration.

Associates: All type of consultant, board members, researchers, partner organizations, apprentices are considered as associates.

Violence against Child: All forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse and commercial and sexual exploitation.

Verification: Making investigation about a person with the help of police to check his/her criminal record or by working with children, talking with familiar people or imposing question to analyze behavior.

Visitor: Any person visiting any of the sites or programmes of Grambangla. (This excludes anyone who is authorized by law/government or any other legal contract to visit without permission or prior permission, for example – visitors from the Municipal Corporation/State/Central Government (health, education, DWCD, etc.) and the legal and justice system.

Volunteer: Any person, who has chosen out of his/her own volition, to extend help to Grambangla, without any remuneration whatsoever, and who has signed an application cum undertaking to protect children's best interests at all times during the period of his/her association with Grambangla. This person will have acquired prior permission from Grambangla and will have formally met a Grambangla representative for a screening prior to commencement of the volunteer ship.

Donor: Any person in individual or representational capacity supporting the structure or activities or part thereof, of Grambangla

Corporal Punishment: The use of physical force with the intention of causing a child pain, not for the purpose of injury, but correction.

Child Abuse/Maltreatment/Assault: Maltreatment sometimes referred to as child abuse and neglect, includes all forms of physical and emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, exploitation that results in actual or potential harm to a child's health, development or dignity.

Code of Conduct on Child Protection: A form indicating the consent of the staff accepting the Code of Conduct on Child Protection

Policy: A course or principle of action adopted or proposed by an organization or an individual.

Child Protection Policy

1.1 Grambangla Unnayan Committee:

Grambangla Unnayan Committee (GUC) is a volunteer social development organization which has been working continuously to make a positive change in the life of children of Bangladesh. Our activities extend from conducting short term activities like providing relief in emergency period to different type of long term development activities. Grambangla admits that every child has the right to have health, education and protection and GUC is working indefatigably to establish those rights.

Our Vision:

A society without hunger, poverty, exploitation and injustice in which every person enjoys their right to a life with dignity.

Our Mission:

Our mission is “To work with poor and excluded people to eradicate poverty and injustice”.

1.2 Our Commitment to Ensure Child Protection:

Grambangla is committed to ensure protection for all children regardless of their nationality, religion, race or gender.

GUC is performing all its activities according to the principle of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). In the Convention, it has been stated that every child should be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse.

To fulfill the commitment, Grambangla will work to raise awareness to stop all type of physical punishment against children. GUC will arrange or facilitate training sessions on positive parenting and behavioral management for the staff and associates. Grambangla will encourage all the staff and associate to prevent themselves from giving corporal punishment to any child.

1.3 Objective of Child Protection Policy:

- Reducing risk of incidents of violence against children within the organization.
- Institute procedures that prevent, identify/detect, report, facilitate early and fearless reporting, investigate into, and take corrective action against incidences of child assault/ maltreatment/ exploitation be it physical, sexual or in any other form.
- Verifying candidates according to Grambangla’s Child Protection Policy during appointing them as employees. If any person is found risky s/he will not be appointed.

- Making the employees understand their responsibilities to ensure child protection and establish a child friendly environment.

1.4 Ground Policies:

- Giving first priority to the interest of children
- Zero tolerance in case of violence against children
- Treat children and young people with care, respect and dignity
- Leave no child out and will adopt an attitude of inclusiveness at all times
- Recognize that those working for/with Grambangla will be perceived by children as trusted persons and therefore, all staff must comply with this Policy;
- Ensure that the communication with children and young people is open, clear and two way; where children feel that their voices are heard.
- Assess the risks posed to children when undertaking activities
- Grambangla will ensure that all communication regarding children and their mothers/families portrays them with respect and dignity.
- Ensure staff avoids physical contact with children and young people except for reasons of training, health and safety
- Respond to any allegations appropriately and institute an appropriate inquiry and disciplinary process
- Distribution of responsibilities among GUC, partner organization and community people to ensure child protection
- Annually conduct a Child Protection Workshop for all existing employees wherein the Child Protection Policy is visited and discussed
- Review and update the Child Protection Policy once every two years

1.5 Applicable for whom:

The Policy will be applicable for the following stakeholders:

- Staff
- Board members
- Volunteers
- Consultants
- Partner organizations of Grambangla Unnayan Committee
- The representatives of government and non-government organizations with whom regular communications have to be maintained
- Visitors like journalists, representatives of GO, NGOs and donor agencies

1.6 Child Protection Policy:

The policy will be executed by conducting following activities:

- Ensure that all children are aware about the policy and the clauses therein
- The staff will get herself/himself thoroughly familiarized with the Policy. Ignorance of the Policy on any grounds shall not be acceptable as an excuse for inappropriate/unacceptable behavior/actions
- Submit the acceptance letter consenting to the Code of Conduct on Child Protection
- It shall be the responsibility of all the staff of GUC to promote the protection of children and young people and to comply with this Policy;
- Preparing and submitting obligatory report against the people who are accused or suspicious for any incident of child abuse. After investigation, appropriate action will be taken according to state law. In that case, the judgment will be unbiased and strict confidentiality will be maintained. If any staff accuse a person intentionally for such a crime, disciplinary action will be taken against him/her.
- Before recruiting, if it is disclosed that the candidate was convicted of any offence relating to children and young people; and/or disciplinary action or sanction relating to children; and/or other offences, will not be permitted to work in/with/for Grambangla
- Maintain a sense of proportion, apply common sense to situations before them and protect the child's welfare as priority.
- All the photograph and video of children will be preserved in a safe place and the accessibility to those documents will be restricted

1.7 Declaration of Staff and Visitors:

All the staff, visitors and associates will have to read, understand and sign the section 2.2 of Organizational Child Protection Policy and the signed copy will be preserved in office.

Reviews:

The Child Protection Policy will be reviewed and updated at least once in every two years.

Visitors, Associates and Donors

The following safeguards are in place to protect Children and those visiting the programme site:

- Visitors will need to provide Grambangla a form of ID before going on site; i.e. non Bangladeshi nationals will need to provide their passport details for visa letter. Residents of Bangladesh will need to provide ID before going on site.
- Visitors cannot to go on the Grambangla site without a formal letter, which can only be obtained by Grambangla. (This excludes anyone who is authorized by law/government or any other legal contract).
- Visitors will need to agree their objectives with Grambangla before going to the Programme site.
- Visitors will be briefed before going on the Grambangla Programme

- Visitors as a part of their briefing are advised to watch Grambangla/Childhope video to inform them on the history, reality of the site and respect the dignity of those inhabiting the site.
- Visitors will never be left alone with children, they will also be accompanied by a staff member at all times.
- There is emphasis for visitors NOT to touch children
- Visitors are advised not to take pictures but request project staff to do this as it enables community members and children to be comfortable to consent
- Ensure you speak to a staff member if you want to take a picture, you will have to be clear on what the image will be used for and ensure staff members gain the child's consent.
- Food items cannot be brought on site, discuss this with the Executive Director before you attend.
- Visitors will read the GUC's Child Protection Policy and sign the statement of commitment.
- Visitors who do not abide by GUC's Child Protection policy be terminated from visiting the site.

What I will Do:

- I will treat children and young people with care, respect and dignity regardless of their class, caste, race, creed, parentage, lineage, religion, faith, sex, disability, ethnic origin and sexual orientation
- I will secure a safe, spontaneous and friendly environment for all children, their parents, staff and the volunteers
- I will avoid physical contact with children and young people except for reasons of training, health and safety
- I will refrain from physical punishment or discipline of children
- I will immediately report concerns or allegations of child maltreatment in accordance with appropriate procedures
- I will comply with all relevant local, national and international legislations, including labour laws in relation to child protection
- wherever possible, I will ensure that another adult is present when working in the proximity of children
- If there is a possibility to misunderstand any organizational activity by community people, I will share the issue with my supervisor or manager
- If I become accused for any incident of child abuse where investigation will be needed, I will talk with my supervisor or manager

What I will not Do:

- I will not use language or gestures towards children that are inappropriate, harassing, sexually provocative, abusive, demeaning, belittling, or culturally inappropriate
- I will not marry any girl or boy who are not eligible for marriage (girls under 18 years and boys under 21 years old)
- I will not engage children in any form of sexual activity or acts, including paying for sexual services or acts
- I will not touch any child in inappropriate manure

- I will not invite unaccompanied children into my home, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger
- I will not show any discriminatory attitude to any child
- Without any official or important reason, I will not spend time with any child who has direct relation with Grambangla
- I will not hire 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
- I will not perform any activity that hampers child's education and amusement
- I will not be involved in the activities which can be done by children like using toilet, wearing cloths etc. (except Child with Disability)
- I will not sleep close to unsupervised children unless absolutely necessary, in which case I must obtain my supervisor's permission, and ensure that another adult is present if possible (not applicable for own children)
- I will not invite unaccompanied children into my home, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger
- In images, children should always be dressed appropriately and should never be depicted in any poses that could be interpreted as sexually provocative
- I will not use technology such as computers, mobile phones, or video and digital cameras inappropriately, and never to exploit or harass children or to access child pornography through any medium
- I will not take or post or publish any photograph without any oral or written permission from the child or parents
- I will not expose any information that could be used to identify a child or put them at risk
- I will not smoke, drink alcohol, take drugs, and consume paan / ghutka / misri in the presence of the children
- I will not indulge in littering, spitting, defacing plants and the physical environment in anyway

Media and Communications Guidelines

GUC recognizes the impact that pictures and case studies can have. Through showing different perspectives of children's experiences and lives GUC advocates for children and the successes of their support to beneficiaries. GUC believes in a "do no harm" when taking pictures, this means the child's welfare and well-being is paramount.

When taking pictures GUC follows the following approach:

Pictures will:

- Respect the dignity of the child
- Respect children's right to say no
- Be inclusive and nondiscriminatory
- Show balanced perspectives of children's realities such as the challenges and successes
- Have informed consent

Pictures will not be taken:

- If the child is not fully dressed or dressed appropriately
- Child is unconscious, sleeping or does not have the capacity to say no
- By visitors, so children are comfortable enough to say no. If visitors want to take pictures they should speak to staff first as children will be more comfortable with consent process.

GUC consent process

Verbal consent: Verbally a child will be asked if a picture can be taken. The child's right to say no is respected.

Written consent: If GUC decided to use the image, written consent will be obtained, by the child and the child's parent or caregiver.

Storage:

- Pictures that have no use will be deleted.
- In general, images will be stored up to 4 years. This approach is however reviewed on a donor basis as some images may need to be stored for a longer period due to funding agreements and audits.
- If old images are used and GUC wants to show its historical impact, it will be clear with timeline and dates.

Social Media: Organizational and Personal

All social media posts regarding GUC's organizational posts and staff's personal posts will follow GUC's communication guidelines.

Statement of the employee of Grambangla Unnayan Committee

I am _____. I have read and understood the Child Protection Policy and the Code of Conduct of Grambangla Unnayan Committee and without any pressure and in sound mental state I agree with all the policy and code of conduct.

For any kind of offensive activity, gesture or attitude to children, Grambangla can take any disciplinary action against me or can complain to penal court.

As part of the checking procedures Grambangla reserves the right to make reference to the local authority social services departments and police records to verify the information provided by me.

Signature:

.....

Name:

Address:

Contact Details:

Self-Disclosure Form

Note: All staff and volunteers working with or in contact with Grambangla's beneficiaries will be required to complete this self-disclosure form regarding their suitability to work with children, youth, and women, as part of their induction process. Anyone who refuses to do so will be deemed ineligible to work or assist with any activities associated with Grambangla. Please note that not all convictions will be relevant. Those that will preclude employment/volunteering include;

- ✓ Offences against children.
- ✓ Offences against women.
- ✓ Sexual offences or offences related to violence.
- ✓ Drugs and arms related offences.

Confidential and not for circulation

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a Caution or Bound Over order?

yes

No

If "YES", please state the nature and date (s) of the offence (s).

Have you ever been subject to any disciplinary action or sanctions relating to child or vulnerable adult abuse?

yes

No

If "YES", please provide details

You are required to self-certify that you are not known to ANY social services department/the police/the Judicial system/quasi legal system/civil society organization as being an actual or potential risk

to children or vulnerable adults; have not been disqualified or prohibited from fostering children or vulnerable adults or had any rights or powers in respect of any child or vulnerable adult vested in you assumed by a local authority; or have not had a child or vulnerable adult ordered to be removed from your care.

Signed: Dated:

Name:

Address:

Contact Details:

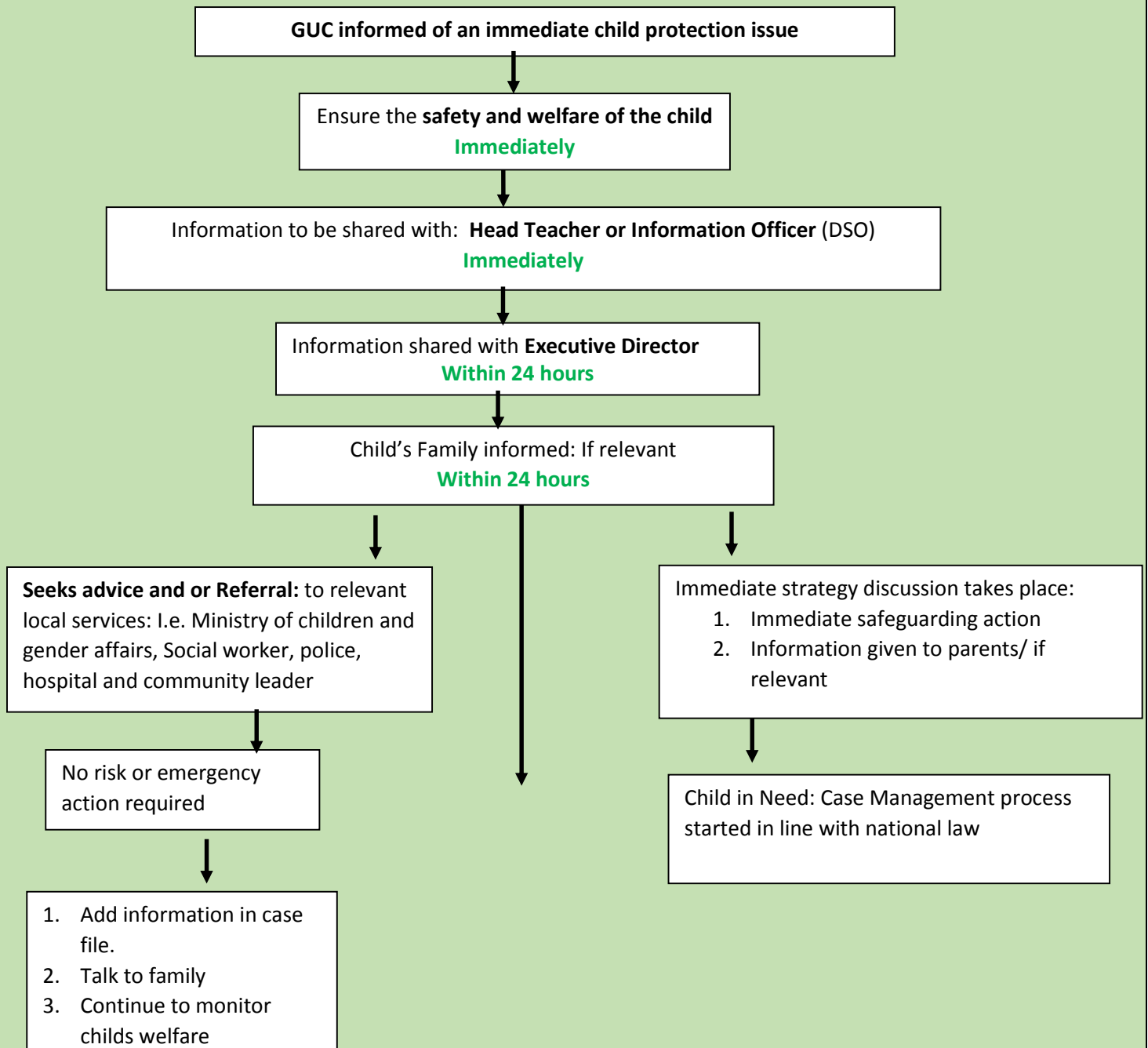
Contact Number (s):

Email:

As part of the checking procedures for all applicants for posts within Grambangla Unnayan Committee, you are also advised that we reserve the right to make reference to the local authority social services departments and police records to verify the information provided by you on this form.

Grambalnga: Reporting Protocol

Reporting flow chart A: *Alleged harm caused, or likely to be caused to a child or young person by a visitor (Donor, funder, trainer, consultant)*



Reporting flow chart B: Alleged harm caused, or likely to be caused to a child by organization staff or Visitor

GUC Receive an allegation of Harm and Abuse

Immediately

Ensure the safety and welfare of the child

Information shared with **Executive Director** and an action plan is devised **(Immediately)**

Information to be shared with: **Head Teacher or information Officer** **(Immediately)**

Talk to child's Family/ care giver

Inform: **GUC Board Members and share actions/investigation** **(48 hours)**

- Investigation conducted in line with national laws and relevant organisations are informed (i.e. including visitor's employer)
- During this period staff/visitor is suspended and not in contact with children.

(Investigation: 5 working days)

FALSE Allegation: No Action required

- GUC Board Members inform staff of outcome
- GUC informs child family
- National staff receives normal salary

True allegation: Staff/Visitor

- Police will be informed
- The employer of the visitor is informed of outcome
- Visitors employer will need to inform the relevant agencies in there locality (i.e. Police in home country)



Grambangla Unnayan Committee: Consent Forms for use of information and photos

My name is.....

Someone from GUC has explained to me that Grambangla Unnayan Committee are here to help children in Bangladesh.



I understand that GUC listens to children’s stories about their lives. They may take photos & videos to help people in Bangladesh and other countries understand the problems children face and to ask for their help to make things better



I am happy for GUC to take my photo and share my story



I understand that this might appear on their website or in reports and materials they might create

But I know that GUC will change my name and other details so one knows it is about me



no-



I know I can change my mind at any time and ask them to stop and not use my photos or any information about me. After 4 years, GUC stop using the images they have taken of me.

If we decide to use a photo with you in it, we will provide you with a copy of that photo.

Signed: (Child) Date:

Signed: (Parent/Guardian) Date:

ONE COPY TO BE KEPT BY GUARDIAN / PARENT/ CHILD; ONE COPY TO BE KEPT BY GUC