



Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse policy

Geographical scope-This applies to all our work in Zambia, Laos and the UK as well as associated personnel (this covers partners, contractors, volunteers and anyone else carrying out the work of Baraka Community Partnerships).

Policy statement

We believe all people have a right to live their lives free from sexual violence. We recognise we face an inherent risk of some staff or associated personnel exploiting their position of power for personal gain. By having access to goods and services, representatives of BCP are in a position of power over our beneficiaries. Unfortunately a minority of people use this imbalance of power to exploit and abuse those who are vulnerable.

BCP will not tolerate its employees or any associated personnel carrying out any form of sexual harassment, sexual abuse or sexual exploitation.

It is the responsibility of all to raise any concerns you may have or those which are reported to you according to this policy. It is not your responsibility to decide whether or not sexual harassment, abuse, or exploitation has occurred.

1. Purpose

Sets out our approach to preventing sexual exploitation and abuse. It sets out:

- Principles upon which we will base our decision making and actions
- Our expectations of all those who represent BCP
- Our commitments to ensure effective action is taken when problems occur.

All partners and associated personnel will be familiar with this policy.

2. Our principles

At Baraka Community Partnerships we believe all people have a right to live their lives free from, sexual harassment and abuse, sexual violence, bullying, exploitation and any abuse of power regardless of age, gender, sexuality, disability, religion or ethnic origin. BCP will not tolerate its staff or associated personnel carrying out any form of sexual harassment, abuse or exploitation.

Sexual harassment, violence, exploitation and abuse, as well as a range of non-sexual abuses of power, take various forms and can happen to anybody at any



time during their lives, but are more likely when one person is in a position of power over another.

Baraka Community Partnerships commitment is to:

- Create a safe working culture for all BCP's beneficiaries and those working for and representing the organisation.
- Ensure that all concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, abuse or exploitation are responded to in a timely and appropriate manner and there are multiple channels through which staff and associated personnel can raise concerns.
- Hold to account those who commit sexual exploitation and abuse.
- Offering support to survivors and victims.
- Adopting a survivor centric approach, that respects the confidentiality and decision making rights of survivors where possible and appropriate to do so.
- Be transparent about safeguarding issues occurring within BCP and be open to learning and improving.
- Build a culture where all those who BCP supports and who carry out our work feel empowered to insist on respectful behaviour from each other, where poor behaviour is not accepted and where power is not abused.

Baraka Community Partnerships adopts these principles to guide our safeguarding work:

- Survivor led. Listen to survivors and be led by their wishes where possible and appropriate to do so.
- Non-directive. Not imposing our own opinions on victims.
- Non-judgemental. We never judge survivors or complainants for their actions or decisions.
- Confidentiality. Information will not be shared outside the team or the organisation unless we believe that someone is in danger or a child has been or may be harmed.
- Investigative. We will investigate complaints thoroughly and objectively.
- Commitment to good practice. We are open to feedback and continual learning.

Baraka Community Partnerships will ensure that:

- All staff and associated personnel will have access to information about how to report concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation.



- Concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, abuse or exploitation will always be taken seriously, investigated and acted on if appropriate, in line with our safeguarding principles set out above.
- All staff and associated personnel will have access to, and be familiar with this policy and know their responsibilities within it.
- The Director of Operations and Safeguarding Lead are responsible for promoting awareness of this policy.

3. Roles and responsibilities

Creating a safe working environment is everyone's responsibility and failure to act on concerns or disclosures relating to sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation is not an option.

Baraka Community Partnerships Director of Operations-Andy McKee holds overall accountability for this policy and its implementation. Alex McKee is the Safeguarding Lead within the charity. She can offer support to staff and associated personnel on implementing this policy.

BCP's Board of Trustees are responsible for reviewing and updating this policy annually and hold overall accountability for BCP's PSEA work.

All contractors, volunteers, partners and other representatives of BCP are required to adhere to this policy and BCP's code of conduct at all times.

All BCP staff and associated personnel are obliged to report any suspicions of sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment of others. This should be done maintaining confidentiality.

4. Support for survivors and victims

Survivor centric support will be offered to survivors and victims, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out. Survivors and victims can choose if and when they would like to take up the support options available to them.

5. Policy Guidance

All staff and associated personnel are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the following core policies relating to their sexual and personal conduct.

5.1 Sexual Activity with Children



BCP strictly prohibits staff and associated personnel from having sexual relationships with children, which is anyone under the age of 18. Mistaken belief of age is no defence. Failure to adhere to this is a breach of BCP policy, and could lead to disciplinary and possibly legal action being taken.

5.2 Sexual Activity with Beneficiaries

BCP strictly prohibits staff and associated personnel from having sexual relationships with any beneficiaries of our projects. This includes children who attend the schools we support, sponsored students and sponsored teachers. Most of our beneficiaries are under the legal age of consent. Failure to adhere to this is a breach of BCP policy, and could lead to disciplinary or legal action being taken.

5.3 Buying or Transactional Sex

BCP prohibits the buying of sex or exchange of sex for other favours. There is an inherent imbalance of power in this and those who carry out our work should be aware that this is an unacceptable practice when working with vulnerable young people who we would like to protect from sexual exploitation. Failure to adhere to this is a breach of BCP policy, and could lead to disciplinary or legal action being taken.

5.4 Failure to Act Upon Suspected or Reported Sexual Harassment, Abuse or Exploitation

It is the duty and the responsibility of all staff and associated personnel to report in line with this policy any suspicions or incidences of inappropriate behaviour. This should be done confidentially. Failure to report suspicion of abuse relating to someone else is a breach of BCP policy and could lead to disciplinary action being taken.

6. How to raise a Complaint of Concern

6.1 Anyone can raise a concern or make a complaint to BCP about something they have experienced or witnessed.

You can do this verbally or in writing to the Director of Operations -Andy McKee (andym.baraka@gmail.com) or Safeguarding Lead - Louise McKee (louisem.baraka@gmail.com)

6.2 Whistleblowing

If you have any concerns about reporting an alleged breach, please refer to the whistleblowing policy.

6.3 Allegations against you

If you are working in partnership with Baraka Community Partnerships and an allegation is made against you, you must inform your manager immediately.



Your manager is responsible for informing the Director of Operations (or Safeguarding Lead if they are unavailable). Volunteers and contractors should inform the Director of Operations or Safeguarding Lead. You should create a signed and dated record of the details as you know them and send a copy of this to the Safeguarding Lead. All those accused will be treated with respect and all allegations treated confidentially.

6.4 Additional contacts

If you are unable or unwilling to discuss with the Director of Operations or the Safeguarding Lead, or your allegation concerns them, you may contact the chair of the board of trustees. Peter Skinner-Peterskinner138@gmail.com

7. Procedure for Handling Complaints, Disclosures and Concerns

See BCP's Safeguarding and PSEA reporting policy.

8. Further guidance for embedding PSEA across BCP

8.1 Inductions

All staff and volunteers must receive inductions on PSEA and Safeguarding when they join BCP, including a briefing on policies and values, information about how to report concerns and advice about where to seek further information about PSEA.

8.2 Training for Staff, Volunteers and Partners

Training in PSEA and Safeguarding will be mandatory for all staff and volunteers. This training will be carried out on a regular basis.

8.3 Awareness Raising for Beneficiaries

BCP's PSEA and Safeguarding policies should be promoted throughout our work with beneficiaries.

Feedback should be actively sought by seeking beneficiaries' opinions.

We will present feedback to communities on what changes have been made resulting from complaints. This could be through community meetings, sponsored student days out, through our website and emails or in one-to-one meetings with our staff and associated personnel.

Staff and associated personnel working directly with beneficiaries will receive training on how to receive complaints and disclosures.

Associated policies

Code of conduct



Whistleblowing policy

Safeguarding policy

Responding to safeguarding reports

Disciplinary procedure

Communications policy

Glossary

Sexual Abuse

The term “sexual abuse” means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

Sexual Exploitation

The term “sexual exploitation” means 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.

Sexual Violence

Sexual violence is:

- Any sexual act or attempt to obtain a sexual act
- Unwanted sexual comments or advances or acts to traffic that are directed against a person’s sexuality using coercion by anyone, regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including at home and at work.

Three types of sexual violence are commonly distinguished: sexual violence involving intercourse (i.e. rape), contact sexual violence (i.e. unwanted touching, but excluding intercourse) and non-contact sexual violence (i.e. threatened sexual violence, exhibitionism and verbal sexual harassment). While coerced sex may result in sexual gratification for the perpetrator, its underlying purpose is to express power and dominance over the other person.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. It can be directed towards one person, groups of people or towards everyone and can occur as a one-off incident or be a pattern of harmful behaviour. Anyone can experience sexual harassment, and BCP recognises the specific and varied challenges faced by women, men, transgender people and others when experiencing it.

The effect of sexual harassment is to violate the dignity of another person, and to create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for



them and others.

Sexual harassment can take many forms, including (but not limited to):

- Verbal comments of a sexual nature, such as remarks about someone's appearance, questions about their sex life or offensive jokes
- Non-verbal such as displaying pornographic or explicit images, staring, sexual gestures or written comments of a sexual nature such as offensive or inappropriate language.
- Physical such as unwanted physical contact, touching, and assault (this includes attempts and threats to do these things).

Coercion

Coercion covers a whole spectrum of degrees of force. Apart from physical force, it may involve psychological intimidation, blackmail or other threats. For instance, threats of being dismissed from a job or of not obtaining a job that is sought. It may also occur when a person is unable to give consent. For example, while drunk, drugged, asleep or mentally incapable of understanding the situation.

Child Abuse

A child is defined as **anyone under 18 years old**. The five most commonly defined types of child abuse are neglect, physical, sexual, emotional abuse and child sexual exploitation.

Vulnerable Adult Abuse

A Vulnerable Adult is defined as someone "who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation" Vulnerable Adult Abuse can take many forms including: physical, sexual, psychological, financial/material, discriminatory, domestic abuse and self-neglect.

Child Marriage

The custom of marrying off young children, particularly girls, is found in many parts of the world. This practice – legal in many countries – is a form of sexual violence, since the children involved are unable to give or withhold their consent.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic Abuse "is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality." This may include psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse, so called 'honour' based violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

Modern Slavery

Slavery is a situation where a person exercises (perceived) power of ownership over another person. Related terms include forced labour, which covers work or services that people are not doing voluntarily but under threat of punishment; human



trafficking, which involves deceptive recruitment and coercion; and bonded labour, which is demanded in repayment of a debt or loan. Modern slavery encompasses a spectrum of labour exploitation, ranging from the mistreatment of vulnerable workers to human trafficking to child labour and forced sexual exploitation.

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