

## BØRNEfonden's Ethical Guidelines

BØRNEfonden's Ethical Guidelines **complement** our Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct and include operational guidance for our work and behaviour.

BØRNEfonden's Ethical Guidelines **aims to** create and maintain a positive and enabling environment where everybody feels free to express them selves.

BØRNEfonden's Ethical Guidelines **build on** honesty, accountability, openness and transparency

BØRNEfonden's Ethical Guidelines **apply to** all BØRNEfonden's Board members, management, staff, contractors and volunteers.

### **Children have a right to privacy and safety:**

- Personal information is always handled with discretion and confidentiality preventing unauthorised use.
- Information enabling an exact localisation of the children must not be disclosed externally.
- Information about a child cannot be made public without consent of the parents.
- Representatives of BØRNEfonden are always present during a sponsors visit to a child
- At least two adults are present in activities involving children.
- A Child is a person below eighteen years of age. Sometimes a child remains in our programme after the age of 18. In such cases our Child Protection Policy and these guidelines must still be adhered to.

### **Adult will treat children with dignity, respect and courtesy**

- We inform children and their families/caregivers in a clear and honest way about the reciprocal commitments between BØRNEfonden and the children and families.
- We ensure a culture of openness so that children can voice any issue or concern they might have, also concerning the behaviour of BØRNEfonden representatives.
- We foster child participation by asking questions in an encouraging, respectful and child-friendly way.
- We listen carefully to children, take their views seriously and respond to any protection risk faced by a child.
- We pay attention to possible sign of abuse, neglect and exploitation and respond immediately to any suspicious sign by offering appropriate support and protection.

### **How to counter corruption and nepotism**

- Do not let your private interests take priority over the interest of BØRNEfonden.
- Do not place yourself in a situation, where your personal interest may conflict, or appear to conflict with the interests of BØRNEfonden or its beneficiaries.
- Do not hesitate to report a potential conflict of interest to your superior.
- Do not give or receive gifts or favours that may influence a decision or your performance of duty.
- Do not use your position to gain advantages for yourself, your family or your friends.
- Do not use your position to harass and abuse anyone sexually.

- Do not have sex with any person enrolled in BØRNEfondens programme.
- Always be honest, upright, open and transparent in all your actions.
- Always treat people, children and families equally regardless of race, gender creed/religion and ethnic, cultural, social or political affiliations or any kind of disabilities.
- Always work actively to prevent any kind of exploitation.
- Always treat your colleagues, partners and affiliates with respect and dignity.

## **Management responsibilities**

- Managers and senior staff lead by example.
- Managers and senior staff have particular responsibilities for creating a culture of compliance with these guidelines.
- Managers and senior staff are obligated to make themselves available to staff who wish to raise concern in a confident, impartial and sensitive manner.

## **Staff responsibilities**

- Staff are responsible for ensuring that they have read, understood and follow these guidelines.
- Staff are obligated to seek advice from a supervisor when in doubt about an action's conformity with BØRNEfondens' guidelines.
- Staff are obligated to honestly report any violation of these guidelines.

## **Reporting**

- Suspicions of violations of our Child Protection Policy and Guidelines shall be reported without delay.
- Reporting can be to a superior, or if the employee suspects that his/her superior is involved in any way in the suspected violation the person must notify a person higher in the chain of authority, or by e-mail to mail@bornefonden.dk.
- Reporting can be done in Danish, English, French, Portuguese and Spanish.
- All reporting will be treated with respect for everybody involved.
- All Development Units' notice boards must include a public note with guidance on where and how to report concerns or suspicions

## **Investigation**

- An investigation will be handled with discretion and impartiality.
- Neither the identity of the reporter nor the accused will be disclosed during the investigation.
- The accused is innocent until proven guilty.
- It may be necessary to suspend the person involved during the investigation.

## **Sanctions**

- An employee choosing not to report an incident will be subject to disciplinary action, including possible dismissal.
- False reporting is a breach of BØRNEfonden's principles and guidelines.
- If someone has raised legitimate concern in good faith and an investigation finds the concern to be unfounded, no action will be taken.
- If violations of BØRNEfonden's principles and guidelines are verified sanctions against involved individuals, be it BØRNEfonden's employees and other external individuals, will be invoked.
- The above mentioned sanctions include dismissal, notification of the police and/or other authorities with relevant jurisdiction if local laws are violated.

## Code of Conduct

BØRNEfonden's vision is of a world that respects the dignity and worth of each child; enables child participation; promotes well-being, hope, and resilience for children and families; and creates positive venues for social development. To achieve this vision, BØRNEfonden works in close collaboration with children and strengthens family, community, and societal systems that support children's healthy development and protection amidst difficult circumstances caused by poverty, social exclusion, or humanitarian crisis.

As a child focused organization, BØRNEfonden sets very high expectations regarding the ethical behaviour of its employees, Directors, volunteers and contractors. This Code of Conduct, which complements the Child Protection Policy, defines the core values and commitments that are the foundation of ethical conduct and practice. These values and commitments define our identity, establish accountability, require adherence to the highest standards, and promote an organizational environment supportive of our work to ensure children's well-being, rights, and protection.

BØRNEfonden has well-defined procedures and practices for implementing this Code of Conduct. This Code will be reviewed regularly and updated to comply with international standards and best practices for child focused agencies.

### B. Application

All BØRNEfonden representatives: staff, contractors, volunteers, partners, members of governing bodies (i.e. Board members), and other organizational representatives (all of whom are collectively referred to hereafter as "BØRNEfonden representatives") adhere to the common values and commitments set forth in this Code of Conduct in their work. This Code is meant to be used in tandem with its companion policy, the BØRNEfonden Child Protection Policy.

BØRNEfonden sponsors, donors and other supporters are required to comply with the Code of Conduct when interacting directly with children and beneficiary communities, for example, when visiting or communicating with sponsored children.

### C. Core Values

BØRNEfonden representatives adopt the following values:

**Honesty and integrity:** We see honesty and integrity as necessary for being accountable to sponsors, donors, partners, communities, and the children and families we serve.

**Cultural sensitivity:** We value cultural diversity and expect everyone associated with BØRNEfonden to be sensitive to the ways in which their own behavior, dress, and practices may be offensive to local people.

**Dignity and respect:** We view every child, fellow workers, and the governments, communities and families we work with as entitled to treatment with dignity and respect.

**Confidentiality and informed consent:** We work in an ethical manner that respects the principles of confidentiality and informed consent.

**International human rights:** We support international human rights standards, especially the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols, and we view BØRNEfonden programmes as a means of helping to fulfill children's rights.

**Humanitarian principles:** We see our work as humanitarian and seek to adhere to principles such as nondiscrimination, Do No Harm, gender equity, and neutrality, that is, not taking sides or playing favorites in a conflict.

## **D. Core Commitments**

BØRNEfonden holds these commitments to be inviolable:

**Integrity and honesty:** All BØRNEfonden representatives must be forthright, transparent, and accurate in their dealings with others; accurate and honest in their communications; and they must avoid involvement in crime, corruption or practices that could tarnish the reputation of BØRNEfonden or impair its work.

**Accountability/stewardship:** All BØRNEfonden representatives must be transparent, honest, and lawful in all financial matters; exercise moral and legal responsibility; and show good stewardship in managing sponsors', donors' and partners' resources.

**Respect:** All BØRNEfonden representatives must treat each other and those whom they serve with dignity and respect.

**Cultural sensitivity:** All BØRNEfonden representatives should demonstrate among themselves and with others an appreciation of the values and practices of different ethnic and religious groups. They should be aware of local cultural beliefs and norms, respect unharmed local practices such as norms of dress and behavior, and avoid demeaning local people and customs.

**Sexual conduct:** BØRNEfonden representatives must create a work environment free of sexual harassment. Also, BØRNEfonden representatives must not abuse their power and authority by tacitly or explicitly demanding sex from a subordinate or from a beneficiary or by engaging in other forms of sexual exploitation. Relationships that are based on a tacit or explicit abuse of power will be regarded as violations of this Code.

**Promote human rights:** All BØRNEfonden representatives must respect human rights, including gender equity, and nondiscrimination. Expressly prohibited are discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, and exploitation, including sexual exploitation. These terms are as defined in the BØRNEfonden Child Protection Policy and are extended here to adults.

## Child Protection Policy

### A. Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this document is to define BØRNEfonden's core values and commitments to children, who in line with the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), are defined as all people under the age of 18 years. These values and commitments define BØRNEfonden's collective identity, establish BØRNEfonden's accountability, require adherence to the highest standards, and promote an organizational environment supportive of BØRNEfonden's work to ensure children's well-being, rights and protection.

This policy will be reviewed regularly and updated to comply with international standards and best practices for child focused agencies.

### B. Application

All BØRNEfonden representatives: staff, contractors, volunteers, partners, members of governing bodies (i.e. Board members), and other organizational representatives (all of whom are collectively referred to hereafter as "BØRNEfonden representatives") adhere to the common values and commitments set forth in this Child Protection Policy in their work.

This policy is meant to be used in tandem with its companion policy, the BØRNEfonden Code of Conduct.

BØRNEfonden sponsors, donors and other supporters are required to comply with the Child Protection Policy when interacting directly with children and beneficiary communities, for example, when visiting or communicating with sponsored children.

### C. Core Values

BØRNEfonden representatives adopt the following values in regard to children:

**Dignity and worth of every child:** We facilitate the creation of a safe environment that promotes the dignity and worth of each child, regardless of ethnicity, race, color, language, religion, opinion, gender, origins, birth status, ability, or belonging to a particular group.

**Children's right to participate:** We recognize that children are active and competent contributors to their own development with the right to participate in decisions affecting their lives in accordance with their development or evolving capacities.

**Empowerment:** We encourage the empowerment of children to develop capacities for self-protection and advocate on their own behalf for issues that concern them.

**Respect for children's rights:** We promote the four core principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC): non-discrimination; the best interest of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and respect for the views of the child.

### D. Core Commitments

This policy commits BØRNEfonden representatives to the promotion of children's rights, the creation of safe, protective environments for children and the prevention of all forms of child abuse, exploitation, harm and neglect.

To ensure the highest standard of protection for children, BØRNEfonden commits to work proactively to promote children's safety, their common and equal rights, and their rights to participate.

BØRNEfonden specifically prohibits its representatives from the following:

## **Discrimination**

**Definition:** Discrimination consists of unequal treatment of children based on personal or group characteristics. There are many forms of discrimination based on characteristics such as, but not limited to:

### **Religion**

Religious discrimination is defined as treating a child less favorably than another on grounds of his or her religion or belief, or lack thereof.

### **Ethnicity**

Ethnic discrimination entails negative or degrading treatment on the basis of one's ethnicity (racial, cultural, national or tribal background).

### **Gender**

Gender refers to the social differences between males and females. Gender discrimination occurs when either males or females are privileged over the other group. In most societies, gender discrimination entails the privileging of males over females, who are denied equal power, status, access, and rights.

### **Language**

Language discrimination occurs when a child is treated differently and/or negatively for the way he/she speaks or the language he/she uses to communicate.

### **Disability**

Disability discrimination occurs when a child with physical, emotional, social or communicative impairment is denied equal right to education, health care, birth registration or recognition of legal capacity.

### **Commitments:**

- BØRNEfonden prohibits discrimination against children on the grounds of religion, ethnicity, gender, language, or any other characteristic
- BØRNEfonden supports religious, language and ethnic diversity and tolerance amongst its representatives and beneficiaries
- BØRNEfonden creates environments that protect and enhance the rights and opportunities for persons with disability in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with disability

## **Harassment**

**Definition:** Harassment consists of inappropriate comments; behavior that is offensive, demeaning, intimidating, or physically harmful. It may include physical harassment (assaults, impeding or blocking movement), unwanted attention or verbal harassment (labeling or use of nickname) Harassment can

be relative to race, ancestry, place of origin, color, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, gender, sexual orientation, age, record of offence, marital status, family status or abilities status.

## **Commitments:**

- BØRNEfonden prohibits all kinds of harassment of children by its representatives
- BØRNEfonden will endeavour to maintain an environment that supports the dignity and self esteem of all children it reaches through its representatives

## **Sexual Harassment**

**Definition:** Sexual harassment in regard to children is defined as conduct of a sexual nature. It includes, but is not limited to comments, leering, sexually suggestive gestures, or visual displays or degrading jokes of a sexual nature.

## **Commitment:**

- BØRNEfonden prohibits expressly sexual behavior and behavior that is sexually suggestive or oriented towards children

## **Sexual Exploitation**

**Definition:** Sexual exploitation is the abuse of power to entice or coerce others into sexual activity, exercised on a child by an adult or a child upon another child. It includes, but is not limited to, prostitution of children, sexual abuse, child pornography and forms of transactional sex wherein a child is coerced into sexual activities to obtain access to necessities such as food, shelter or education.

## **Commitments:**

- BØRNEfonden prohibits sexual activity between its representatives and children (people under the age of 18 years) regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defense
- BØRNEfonden prohibits exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex with children, including sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior. This includes exchange of assistance that is due to children and/or their families

## **Exploitation**

**Definition:** Exploitation is the abuse of power by coercing or leading children into activities or situations that humiliate and violate their rights. It includes but is not limited to all forms of child trafficking (selling or buying children for economic gain or in any way supporting such practices), hazardous forms of child labor or recruitment or use of children in armed forces or groups.

## **Commitment:**

- BØRNEfonden prohibits exploitation of children in any way or form

## **Neglect**

**Definition:** Neglect of a child occurs when there is a recurring failure to provide for a child's basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter and supervision to the extent that the child's health and development are placed at risk. It also includes abandonment and withholding of necessary medical treatment.

**Commitment:**

- BØRNEfonden facilitates the provision of basic needs and care for children to realize their full development potential
- BØRNEfonden prohibits neglect of children and endeavors to provide appropriate care and to meet basic needs for children through its representatives

**Abuse**

**Definition:** Abuse involves a sustained pattern of verbal, physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment that result in damage to the child's health and/or psychological development. It can take the form of threatening, ridiculing, ignoring or isolating the child. It may also include exposure to violence such as when a child witnesses domestic violence or is directly exposed to family violence civil violence, or armed conflict.

**Commitment:**

- BØRNEfonden prohibits all forms of abuse of children and endeavors to maintain a positive environment for healthy child development