

Enterprise Challenge Pakistan

Child Protection Policy

Vision:

To promote and create a protective environment in all of SEED's initiatives that are centred on children and ensure their protection against all forms of violence, abuse, and exploitation during the course of the initiative.

Introduction:

What is Child Protection?

Child Protection is defined as protecting the rights of all children to protection against physical, psychological, emotional, socio-cultural, and gender-based violence, abuse, exploitation, neglect, and discrimination.

The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan addresses child protection in the Chapter on Fundamental Rights: In Section 25, which states that:

1. All citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law.
2. There shall be no discrimination on the basis of sex alone.
3. Nothing in this Article shall prevent the State from making any special provision for the protection of women and children.

In line with the above and The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, SEED has developed procedures which have been created for implementation, and adherence in all projects/initiatives or organisations under SEED's umbrella working with or for children.

The Standard Operating Procedures have been developed with a special emphasis on the following underlying principles provided in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child:

1. Non-discrimination (Article 2): All rights apply to all children without exception.
2. Best Interests of the Child (Article 3): All actions concerning the child shall take account of his or her best interests.
3. Survival and Development (Article 6): Every child has the inherent right to life
4. Protection (Article 19, 32, 33, 34, 35 and 36)¹ : The rights of children to be protected against violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation, including sexual abuse and exploitation, economic exploitation and worst forms of labour, illegal use of drugs and

drugs trafficking, kidnapping, selling and child trafficking and protection during armed conflict are listed in the Convention.

5. **The Child's Opinion (Article 12):** The child has the right to express his or her opinion freely and to have that opinion taken into account in any matter or procedure affecting the child. Participation rights allow children to have a say in the decisions affecting their lives. They give children the possibility to express their views, to discuss issues they consider important, to assemble and to receive information that is relevant for them.
6. **Right to Identity (Article 7):** The child's name, nationality and family relations determine the child's identity. Establishing a child's identity is in essence an official acknowledgement of the child's existence. It makes the child visible to society and turns him or her into a legal being with rights and duties. It also secures the exercise of other child rights such as the right to education. It also reduces the danger of abduction, sale of or trafficking in children.

SEED's Child Protection Guiding Principles:

The following principles provide the foundations key for Child Protection:

1. **Best interests of the Child:** In all actions and initiatives concerning children, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.
2. **Ensuring Child Protection & Welfare rights:** SEED will ensure a protective environment that progressively enforces the right of children to be protected against violence, abuse and exploitation. SEED will ensure that it will protect children from any form of discrimination and to take positive action to promote their rights.
3. **Justice, Equity & Non-discrimination:** SEED will conform to conformity to the standards set out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and other international protocols to which Pakistan is committed. This includes the equitable distribution of resources to eliminate gender, social, cultural, and urban/rural disparities.
4. **Respect for culture and tradition:** Respecting the importance of norms and local culture when implementing initiatives is essential and SEED will ensure an all inclusive approach when dealing with children. The programmes, services and interventions aimed at child protection shall be appropriate and responsive to the range of cultural, social and economic conditions in communities, with an effort to overcome societal norms and values harmful to children.
5. **Integrated and Cross-sectoral:** All and any of SEED's partners part of an initiative focused on children shall be encouraged and supported to play an active role in working with children in a respectable manner, and to prevent misconduct or violation of SEED's Child Protection Procedures. SEED will also ensure that
6. **Accessibility, transparency and accountability:** SEED personnel will be held responsible in the case of any act of physical or emotional abuse, any act of

discrimination, exclusion from a group carried out a child during the implementation of any initiative. Action will be taken to build access for all where barriers exist. Focus shall be on the priority needs of the most vulnerable children with interventions that are financially viable, cost-efficient and effective.

7. **Disclosure of information:** SEED will ensure that any information collected about children extracted during research for a certain project is kept safe and is not released without the consent of the child, parent or guardian. In addition any pictures or footage, information will not be released on media or social media platform without the consent of the parent or guardian and child.
8. **Respect for personal space:** SEED personnel will strictly ensure that during an initiative a distance is maintained with the children preventing emotional dependence or an invasion of personal space.
9. **Child Development:** In all types of activities, projects, initiatives related to children , SEED will work towards promoting the achievement of diversified partnerships between institutions, between specialists and institutions, between professionals, between professionals and beneficiaries, etc in essence partnerships that can help create avenues and opportunities for child development in an educational capacity

Code of Conduct:



Our codes of conduct are built on four areas:

1. Protecting the mental health of the child by developing initiatives that improve their acumen and thinking capabilities
2. Creating an environment during all projects and initiatives where team members are trained to ensure that children with whom or for whom the activities are being conducted are safe from any kind of physical harm or far from the risk of any physical harm
3. Ensure respectability and dignity is maintained in implementing a project/initiative or conducting an activity where children are safe from any kind of emotional exploitation

4. Create and develop initiatives that can help the children improve their perspectives, increase of improve their acumen and build their abilities in a specific way and help to make them productive members of society

Based on the aforementioned principles all SEED staff members, mentors, internees and volunteers must abide by the following:

1. Maintain respectable physical distance from the child and never use any form of physical assault or abuse in any instance, this also includes avoiding, preventing and refraining from developing any kind of sexual relationship with the child
2. Must not indulge in any activity which exploits the child, or puts the child at risk of emotional or physical abuse or harm
3. The person handling, training and dealing with children must ensure that no unnecessary physical contact is made with the child that can make him or her feel uncomfortable or violated. This also includes maintaining respectable language (verbal and non verbal) when dealing with children; maintaining a proper tone in communication, and not giving any offensive, derogatory, sexual or vulgar comments.
4. Must not take pictures or videos of the child/children unless prior written or verbal consent has been sought of a well specified purpose form the parent/guardian and child through consent forms
5. Must not use information, or visual documentation about child on any website, social media, print or electronic media without the written or verbal consent of the parent/guardian and child
6. During any project/initiative team members working on a project/initiative must not leave the child/children unsupervised during an activity
7. During any project/initiative, team members working on a project/initiative must not make the child travel from one place to another, other than what has been specified for the course of the project without the written or verbal approval of the parent/guardian
8. During any project/initiative team members working on a project/initiative must not force the child/children to participate in any activity that he/she/they do not wish to participate in or do not have the permission from their parents to participate in
9. If movement between locations is necessary during a project, project managers and teams members are to ensure that they make the necessary transportation and security arrangements required to ensure that the children are transported safely from one location to the other
10. Must not force the child/children to indulge in an activity that does not conform or goes against their traditions, upbringing and social boundaries
11. Must not condone or support or participate in behaviour with children that is illegal, unsafe and abusive in an emotional, mental or physical way.

12. Must not ostracise or belittle children based on their gender ethnic background, social class or physical disabilities
13. Develop a relationship with child/children during a project/initiative where they feel free to express themselves, and maximise on their potential
14. At all times maintain a culture within the organisation where issues related to child protection can be brought to forefront, and procedures can be redefined to address and deal with new issues.
15. Team members must report any instances witnessed during any activity/initiative by a team member displayed by another team member from SEED or partner organisation during a project/initiative

How does SEED ensure compliance?

1. SEED ensures that all candidates hired provide relevant identification records. In addition background checks are conducted to confirm the same.
2. The code of conduct specified is shared and discussed with all new employees, interneers and the mentors
3. A complaint management process is being developed to taking care of the necessary issues and its resolution by the participant.
4. Project coordinators take notes on how a project is progressing and share their observations regarding any violations of codes of conduct specified above.
5. The Project Manager's or the Focal Person's email and phone number are ~~is~~ made available to the POC of the organisation where the project/initiative or programme is being conducted. Instances where mental, emotional or physical violations are reported by the child are directly communicated to the project Manager.
6. An investigation is carried out to confirm allegations, thereafter if confirmed the person under question is suspended and terminated from duty immediately.
7. Complete documentation process of any case/ issue/ query will be carried out and the action/s taken would be recorded for further guidance and reference.