

**THE KUTAMANI FOUNDATION
LIMITED**

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Introduction

The Kutamani Foundation understands the scope in which educational based Non for Profits, can impact a child's life, through its operations and activities. We have developed this policy, based on the UN rights of a child, to ensure we safeguard the children and adults who are impacted by The Kutamani Foundation. This policy acts as a guide to ensuring the risks of our impact is mitigated on all levels within our organization.

“Do no harm” is a principle that has been used in the humanitarian sector but can equally be applied to the development field. It refers to organizations’ responsibility to minimize the harm they may be doing inadvertently because of their organizational activities

Statement of Commitment to Child Safeguarding

The Kutamani Foundation takes its duty of care seriously and will always aim to provide the safest possible programs and environments for children. This will be achieved by identifying and managing risks that may lead to harm of children or adults.

As stated in the UN Convention for the Rights of a Child, Article 28, Children have the right to an education. Discipline in schools should respect children’s human dignity. Primary education should be free. Wealthier countries should help poorer countries achieve this (UNCRC)

The Kutamani Foundation recognizes that children must always be equally protected, regardless of race, religion, family background, culture, mental health, economic capital, age, sexual beliefs, political beliefs, or nationality.

Purpose and scope of the policy

This Child Protection Policy will outline how The Kutamani Foundation works with all members of the organization to ensure children remain protected and unharmed in all aspects of our work.

The Child Protection Policy applies to all staff within the organization, along with anyone who may be either directly or indirectly involved with any of The Kutamani Foundations school projects. This includes contract workers, teachers, drivers, volunteers, etc. The policy is designed to safeguard children from direct or indirect abuse, neglect, violence, or harm.

The Kutamani Foundation also understands it cannot be solely responsible for the safety of children and adults, as there are other agencies, governments, family groups and organizations which are compelled to ensure safety and equal opportunity.

Context

Child abuse, and neglect is a global issue. Some children are more vulnerable to child abuse and neglect than others, and The Kutamani Foundation works with some of these more vulnerable children who are being affected by poverty and may be living in emergency, or conflict areas. Whilst most child abuse does occur within the family structure; certain forms of abuse and neglect can take place within the organizations and institutions in which children are a part of. There are two main aspects of child abuse which can be a risk within organizations, including emotional abuse or neglect due to mismanagement, poor work practices and poor conditions. The other being premeditated abuse, such as child sexual abuse, and violence.

The risk of abuse within organizations unfortunately increases in developing countries, where there is less law and enforcement, to prevent either un-planned abuse, or premeditated abuse. Due to weaker laws, protection measures and enforcement, children in certain areas are more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

Definitions

When referring to 'children' or 'child', this is referring to anyone under the age of 18.

'*Vulnerable adults*' can be considered anyone who is of any age but is affected by other means such as mental illness, lower socioeconomic status, disability, or exploitation.

'*Child abuse*' or '*abuse*' can be understood as any form of abuse including physical abuse, mental abuse, verbal abuse, emotional abuse, or sexual abuse.

'Exploitation' can be understood as anyone who may take advantage of an individual or situation to gain benefit, at the detriment of the victim. This may range from larger scale exploitation such as human trafficking, to smaller forms of exploitation, including taking images of individuals without consent.

'Safeguarding' can be understood as the actions, policies, or procedures in place to protect children, or vulnerable adults from forms of abuse or neglect.

Roles and Responsibilities

Directors

The directors of The Kutamani Foundation are responsible for the oversight, and management of this policy and how it is implemented within each project. The directors are responsible for ensuring this policy fits the structure of each project, and ensuring it covers relevant topics that relate to safeguarding children in relation to The Kutamani Foundations activities and procedures.

Directors are responsible for ensuring every report is assessed and investigated. Also ensuring all disciplinary action is carried out.

The Directors are also responsible for the implementation of this policy, and ensuring it is understood by all parties which are involved with The Kutamani Foundation itself, or any of its projects.

Project Managers

The Kutamani Foundation appoints either one or multiple managers to be in-country during each project. Managers and other relevant staff are also responsible for the communication and understanding of this policy with those who are involved with any of the projects.

Project Managers are required to keep a record of each projects progress and must report any observations or concerns about child abuse, or breaches of this policy.

Teachers

Teachers are responsible for the day to day safety of each child whilst at school. Teachers are required to ensure every child is being treated equally within the classroom and is not at risk of being exploited or abused by potential outsiders, such as volunteers or other relevant stakeholders. Teachers must report any concerns or observations of mistreatment, discrimination, exploitation, or abuse of children by staff members, outsiders, or other relevant stakeholders to senior management. Teachers must also report any concerns or reports of abuse which may be occurring outside of school in a discrete yet serious manner.

Teachers must not use physical force to discipline the children, and must use fair, and rewarding discipline strategies. Teachers must also not use favoritism towards the students and must ensure they alleviate any forms of bullying or discrimination between students.

Teachers must follow curriculum guidelines, with reasonable exceptions, and ensure students are given adequate yet fair amounts of work, to extend their skill set, but not cause any unnecessary stresses for the children outside of school life.

Contractors and other project participants

Contractors, builders, security guards, cooks, maintenance workers, or anyone else which may be directly involved with a project must comply with this policy and are subject to conditions within their specific contracts.

It is also their responsibility to protect the safety of the children, and report any observations or concerns of abuse, neglect, or breaches of this policy to senior management.

Code of Conduct

Standard COC provisions

- All staff will treat each child equally, and ensure equal opportunity is shared among every child regardless of ability, background, race, religion, political beliefs, pregnancy, family background, and so on.

- Children are provided with an inclusive, welcoming, and safe environment when at school.
- Discipline and behavior management will be conducted in a fair, humane manner. Children will not be disciplined by physical force.
- Children will be assisted with work, particularly if they are struggling or are lagging behind other students. Children will not be forced to work harder or faster using physical force.
- Children will not be spoken to in any way that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, discriminatory, demeaning or culturally inappropriate
- Children will not experience behavior that is intended to shame, humiliate, belittle, degrade, or exploit children.
- Children will not be dealt with personally by any member of staff, or visitors outside of the program without consent from family, and appointed staff.
- Children, staff, and programs will not be spoken about in a degrading manner, or in a way which may encourage shame, pity, or cultural insensitivity.
- Open communication between all staff, children, teachers, and anyone else who may be involved with a project.
- All staff must be positive role models for children and encourage their abilities of all natures.
- Children will be encouraged to communicate feelings, thoughts, fears, or experiences, and will always be validated.
- Children who disclose alarming information about any topic, or information about child abuse, will be spoken to calmly, privately, will be understood, and validated.
- All staff will comply with all laws and legislation regarding children and child safeguarding.
- All staff must self-assess their behavior, and ensure they are not putting themselves in situations where allegations may become possible.

Communication Guidelines

The Kutamani Foundation gains and appreciates the magnitude of support it receives through public communication, and online engagement. The sharing of stories, and public relations is a core element of The Kutamani Foundation, its media presence, and fundraising aims. However, we do ensure the way in which information is shared and presented, is appropriate, non-degrading and positive.

- Children, programs, and staff will only be photographed with consent from program staff and/or parents.
- Parents and staff reserve the right to request photos to be deleted or removed from social and internet platforms.
- Take care to ensure the local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images are adhered to before photographing or filming a child.
- Children should not be portrayed as weak, isolated, and vulnerable. Images of children should portray them as resilient human beings and as partners in the development process.
- Children, staff, and projects will always be spoken about in a positive, dignified, and equal manner. Children, staff, and programs will not be spoken about in a way which may be degrading, culturally insensitive, provoke pity, abusive, demonetizing, or discriminatory.
- All photographs, films, videos, and DVDs present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner.
- All written communication, verbal communication and imagery must be honest and portray factual information.
- Any external communications must also abide by these measures, including all verbal communication, written communication, and imagery.

Recruitment, and screening of staff

- All staff and contractors within both The Kutamani Foundation, and/or any of its projects will be provided with a copy of this policy.
- All staff within The Kutamani Foundation must provide a clear Criminal Background Check.
- All teachers, maintenance workers, managers, program directors and anyone which may come into direct contact with the children must also provide a clear criminal background check.
- All Teachers, excluding TAs, assistant teachers or helping staff, must have their degree in Education to be employed.
- All staff will be interviewed and met with during the application process.
- Any volunteers who wish to attend a Kutamani Foundation School must have a valid Criminal Background Check. If they do not have a check, or are visiting for a shorter period, they must always be accompanied by a program director, or appointed member of staff.
- Any volunteers, partner organizations and visitors must agree and abide by this policy.

- The Kutamani Foundation reserves the right to immediately terminate anyone who breaches this policy.

Risk Management

Ongoing risk assessment and evaluation is a key element to safeguarding children's rights within all aspects of our organization. Despite much of our risk mitigation relying on trust and ability, we have several measures in place to regulate, monitor, and alleviate risk.

- The Kutamani Foundation has a 'risk assessment register' which is regularly revised, and applied to all projects, and is overseen by Directors and Management.
- Each individual school/project has their own 'risk assessment register' which is monitored, and evaluated by appointed staff at the project, and is sent to senior management on a regular basis.
- Internal or external communication (where possible) will be overseen by The Kutamani Foundation Staff.
- The Kutamani Foundation ensures a selected process for reporting potential risks, abuse, or policy breaches. Individuals or schools are to immediately fill out a 'reporting ccp form', which is then sent to senior management, and is assessed from there.
- Reporting and mitigation must also be carried out immediately when it is disclosed by a child.
- Any member of staff, regardless of hierarchy, may be temporarily suspended immediately, whilst an investigation of reported child abuse or policy breach is underway.
- All staff within The Kutamani Foundation, and each individual project, are trained in how they must mitigate potential harm towards children, and in how they must report concern or a breach of the Child Protection Policy.

Disciplinary action

Disciplinary action will be taken, depending on the outcome of each reported case of child abuse, or a policy breach.

Disciplinary action will be taken against any personnel or associate found to:

- Have failed to report a child protection concern, or policy breach.
- Have intentionally made a false allegation against a member of staff or the community.
- Have made a serious breach of the CPP and/or COC (minor breaches may result in action such as refresher training or increased supervision).

Disciplinary action may include the following sanctions:

- The Kutamani Foundation personnel – disciplinary action / dismissal.
- The Kutamani Foundation associates – up to and including termination of all relations including contractual and partnership agreements with The Kutamani Foundation.
- Where relevant – reporting to authorities.

Conclusion

Children are the focal point of The Kutamani Foundation and remain an integral part of our mission. Child protection and safeguarding is particularly important in school environments, and within organizations which have a direct impact on children. Unfortunately, children in developing nations are particularly vulnerable to forms of child abuse, and exploitation, along with many vulnerabilities regarding how they are perpetrated within organizations and the general public. We hold a strong commitment to safeguarding children against abuse and neglect, but also to protect them against increased discrimination, demonetization, and cultural insensitivity.

We take this policy, and the rights of a child very seriously, and will mitigate, and discipline any potential breaches.

For more information please contact The Kutamani Foundation Limited.