

	<h2>Safeguarding Policy</h2>		
<p>Approved By CAHURAST Board</p>	<p>Document No. CA/PO/02</p>	<p>Effective From December 2017</p>	<p>Publication Status Public www.cahurast.org</p>

Safeguarding policy is a statement of intent that demonstrates our commitment to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk. CAHURAST-Nepal believes the implementation of this safeguarding policy will have clear guidance on staffs, board members, volunteers and all the implemented networks and partner organizations, behavior to children and on what they do if they notice or are informed about inappropriate behavior on children, people with disabilities, women, all those who are at risk.

Aims of Safeguarding policy

The aims of the Safeguarding Policy are rooted in our vision to ensure children, young people and adults-at-risk are protected and safe and therefore able to pursue their basic human rights and reach their full potential and these include to:

1. Prevent children, women, people with disabilities and all young and adults-at-risk from experiencing violence, exploitation, abuse, and neglect.
2. Create a child and disability friendly environment where they are respected, protected and empowered.
3. Always act in the best interests of the child, and ensure no child is placed at risk of abuse as a result of their association with us.
4. Ensure staff engage positively with children, women, and people with disabilities and are skilled, confident and well supported in meeting their protection responsibilities.
5. Ensure that staff are protected during their interactions and activities conducted on behalf of the organization.

Commitment to the policy

CAHURAST-Nepal is committed to safeguarding all children, young people and adults-at-risk who comes in contact with our work.

CAHURAST is working with diversified people – children, people with disabilities, marginalized group in Nepali society, grass root communities, etc. During its work period, being convinced of

the importance and necessity for ensuring the secured and favorable conditions of our children who are at high risk of losing their basic rights and desiring to contribute with our joint effort for safeguarding and protecting their rights now and future, CAHURAST-Nepal ensures to bind and abide of this Safeguarding policy.

We are committed to a culture of safety that minimizes risk and harm to especially children, women and people with disabilities in regard to:

- Safe recruitment and vetting practices – helping to prevent those who pose a risk from holding positions of trust.
- Codes of behavior – having clear guidelines that set out what is and what is not acceptable behavior with regard to keeping children and adults who are at risk safe
- Running safe institution and activities for children, women and people with disabilities and our beneficiaries

All Board members, partners, associates and representatives will have a copy of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures document.

DEFINITIONS

A Child: According to United Nations Convention on Rights of the Child, a child is a person with the age of 18 years below.

People with disabilities: The World Health Organization proposes disability as an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations and the participation restrictions. Simply, people having functional limitation in organ level and activity limitation are termed people with disabilities.

A woman: A woman is a female human being. The word *woman* is usually reserved for an adult; *girl* is the usual term for a female child or adolescent. In a plural form its women.

An Adult: An adult is a person with the age of 18 years and above. Note that an adult with or without disabilities and with gender perspective too has the same legal capacity.

Adult-at-risk

- Any person aged 18 years and older who may be at risk of abuse or exploitation due to their dependence or reliance on others for services, basic needs or protection, and according to context, for example, in humanitarian situations.
- An adult may also be at risk/ vulnerable when in a relationship (social or work) with another who seeks to misuse their position of authority or trust to control, manipulate or dominate them.

- An adult may also be at risk if their decision-making capacity is impaired and/or they do not have the support to make a decision.

Child Protection

It consists of **reactive** procedures – usually prescribed and in some cases statutory – to be followed by adults to protect an individual child (either boy or girl; either child with or without disabilities) who has been harmed or is at risk. It includes CAHURAST-Nepal’s responsibility to ensure actions are taken to address and to report concerns of abuse appropriately and in accordance with international and local procedures.

Child programs, projects and advocacy measures designed for protection as a programming approach involving prevention and response to abuse, exploitation, neglect and violence against children. It generally focuses on risks and issues caused externally to the organization, while safeguarding focuses on those caused internally.

(a) Safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk

Safeguarding refers to a set of organizational policies, procedures and practices designed to ensure that no harm comes to people as a result of contact with CAHURAST-Nepal’s programs, operations or people. Safeguarding consists of **pro-active** responsibilities, measures and activities to protect children, creating a vigilant and transparent organizational culture to ensure that no child, young person or adult at risk comes to harm as a result of their association with CAHURAST, their contact with its staff, volunteers partners and associates.

(b) ‘Do No Harm’ (DNH)

This refers to our responsibility to ‘do no harm’ or minimize the harm we may be doing inadvertently as a result of inappropriate programming.

(c) Harm

It refers to physical or mental damage or injury; something that causes someone to be hurt, broken, made less valuable or successful. There are various harms as explained below under as Child abuse.

(d) Child Abuse

Child abuse is the misuse of power and authority by someone who is in a position of authority over a child. Broadly, Child abuse is defined as “all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment , sexual abuse, or commercial or other exploitation resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival development or dignity in the context of a relationship, trust or power. Abuse occurs when adults or other children seriously hurt children either physically

or in some other way. The different forms of abuse are as follows:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Forced marriage
- Child labor
- Discrimination
- Harmful cultural practice
- Spiritual abuse

Physical abuse is any intentional act causing injury or trauma to another person or animal by way of bodily contact. In most cases, children are the victims of physical abuse, but adults can also be victims, as in cases of domestic violence or workplace aggression. Alternative terms sometimes used include physical assault or physical violence, and may also include sexual abuse.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. defilement or sodomy) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving a child in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Forced Marriage includes a marriage without consent (16 years legally) of the marrying partners defined by the prevailing law of Nepal.

Child labor refers to the exploitation of children through any form of work that deprives children of their childhood, interferes with their ability to attend regular school, and is mentally, physically, socially or morally harmful.

Discrimination: Discrimination is prejudicial treatment of an individual based solely on their race, later generalized as membership in a certain socially undesirable group or social category.

Harmful cultural practice: Harmful Cultural Practice is the activities (e.g. teaching disobedience towards the elders) done by force or by luring the children with the intention of abusing the child or fulfilling the doers will. This type of activities may affect the child physically, emotionally, socially or sexually. He who teaches or compels the children to do so also includes the harmful practice.

Spiritual abuse: Spiritual abuse occurs when a spiritual leader, or someone in a position of spiritual power or authority misuses their power of authority, and the trust placed in them, with the intention of controlling, coercing, manipulating or dominating a child. It can be linked

to other kinds of abuse, such as physical, emotional and sexual abuse.

(e) Staff, volunteers and associates

This is used to apply to CAHURAST staff, volunteers, interns, Board members, associates, partners, contractors, facilitators, suppliers, sponsors, donors and anyone acting as a representative of, or on behalf of CAHURAST who may come into direct contact with, or be responsible for, bringing children into contact with adults.

(f) Confidentiality

For the purposes of this policy, confidentiality means that all reports and the information they contain will be handled with strictest concealment and sensitivity to protect the identity of the individuals concerned, the informer and the accused. Any information about each incident will only be shared on a need-to-know basis.

(g) Risk

Risk means the potential for something to go wrong (an incident or an accident), or the likelihood of a negative consequence to an action. It is a threat or hazard.

(h) Risk assessment

Risk assessment is a means of identifying potential risks. It entails reviewing the organizational risk appetite depending on the various factors surrounding or affecting the organization.

(i) Risk management

Risk management is identifying potential risks and putting measures in place to prevent, minimize and/or mitigate those risks.

(j) Free and informed consent

The voluntary agreement of an individual with sound mind has the legal capacity to give consent and who exercises free and informed choice.

[Code of behavioral conduct and ethics for safeguarding](#)

All CAHURAST-Nepal representatives are required to understand their responsibility to keep adults at risk and children safe, and to sign and abide by the CAHURAST-Nepal Code of Conduct, which lists acceptable and unacceptable behavior, primarily designed to safeguard others. It also serves to guard the name and reputation of CAHURAST-Nepal and its representatives from false accusations. All staff is responsible for encouraging and promoting the implementation of the Code of Conduct. The adherence to this code is mandatory for all CAHURAST-Nepal representatives. Any violation of the Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary procedures in

addition to any relevant legal action. To give maximum protection to beneficiaries, the organization and staff, the Code of Conduct is to be applied both within and outside of working hours.

The Code broadly gives guidance for professional conduct under the following two major headings:

DO

CAHURAST is fully aware that it works with children, women, people with disabilities, i.e. both adult and young people and that is why it has laid down a comprehensive list of appropriate professional boundaries expected of staff and volunteers. Every staff and volunteer is expected to:

- Strictly enforce this policy.
- Put the best interests of the child first following to special priority to women concerns and people with disabilities.
- Make the issue of child rights and child protection a top priority.
- Be respectful, kind, responsible, perceptive, patient and encouraging to children, women and people with disabilities.
- Respect children's, women's and people with disabilities dignity. Listen to them carefully and be sensitive to their needs.
- Demonstrate commitment to defend and uphold the rights of a child, child protection and of those at risk such as young persons and adults-at-risk
- Provide all necessary and appropriate assistance to members of the public, children and colleagues.
- Use our social media platforms to highlight the importance of child protection and draw attention to issues related to child protection.
- Be especially careful when reporting any events related to a child abuse to ensure that the child will not be harmed, either directly or indirectly.
- Encourage materials that can help raise awareness of strategies for child protection, protection of rights of people with disabilities.
- Acknowledge that some children, including children and young people with disabilities or those from ethnic minority communities, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.
- In a non-frightening way, provide children and parents with basic self- protection skills to protect them from any type of abuse, violence, exploitation or harm
- Be aware of situations which might present risks to everyone. Take a positive role in safeguarding and promoting their safety in the office and if engaged in "CAHURAST"

activities outside. Plan and organize the work schedule, outings, events and the workplace to minimize risks of abuse and risks to their personal safety.

- Recognize a person's developmental needs, whether a child or adult.
- Always put the welfare of a child first.
- Set and monitor appropriate boundaries and relationships when working with children, based on openness, honesty and respect for their personal space.
- Ensure a sense of accountability exists between staff and volunteers so that poor practice or potentially abusive behavior does not go unchallenged. At the same time, create a supportive environment in which staff and volunteers are able to help one another should one person be experiencing difficulty dealing with a particular situation.
- Empower children by discussing with them their rights, what is acceptable and unacceptable (morally and legally) and what appropriate measures to take in case faced with a problem.
- Support a child making a complaint or expressing concerns and respect confidentiality.
- Act fairly on matters that involve children and adults together.
- Seek parental consent before inviting children to take part in any CAHURAST activity.
- Treat all children and adults equally without discrimination of race, culture, age, gender, disability, family background, religion, sexuality or political persuasion.
- Be positive role models in a way that is in line with the Vision, Mission and Values of CAHURAST-Nepal.
- Be visible to others while working with children and maintain appropriate distance. If necessary, move to a place where both can be seen by other colleagues or other adults. Take prudent precautions.
- Always uphold the two-adult rule when meeting a child.
- Ensure that home visits, school visits or visits to review progress are conducted by a minimum of two adults, one of whom must be a staff member. All information collected must be documented in written form within 24 hours.
- Be aware of the potential for peer abuse and avoid placing children in high-risk peer situations such as unsupervised mixing of older and younger children. e.g. in the toilets.
- Challenge and report activities which are abusive or potentially abusive
- Help children to develop a sense of their own rights and to know what to do when they are violated.
- Develop a culture that enables children to talk openly about their contacts or situations where they need help
- Involve children and youth, women and people with disabilities in all matters and activities that involve them, taking deliberate measures to ensure involvement is age and development appropriate.

- Where physical contact is necessary, ensure it is in direct response to a person's need. It may be appropriate to hold someone's hand, to put a comforting arm around their shoulder or support/carry them if they have fallen. Contact must respect the age and individual stage of development. Adults should use good judgment, wisdom and caution in this respect.
- Ensure credibility and integrity in all actions and communications relating to child and adult abuse on a regular basis.
- Remember that CAHURAST-Nepal has an obligation to treat any accusation with seriousness and must investigate the matter fully once it is reported.

(ii) DON'T

Staff and volunteers should at all times remain professional and they should NOT in any way attempt to:

- Compromise the safety of children, young persons and adults-at-risk for rewards or personal gain.
- Undertake any inappropriate physical contact. This includes:
 - Demanding hugs and kisses
 - Touching chest, genital area, upper legs, buttocks, waist and stomach.
 - Sitting child in the center of the lap
 - Seductiveness or suggestive contact
 - Physical contact of any kind which is done for the pleasure or satisfaction of the adult and not the child
 - Touching when used to express power or control over a child
 - Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves or an accompanying adult can do for them
- Subject any child to any form of harm or abuse.
- Use any form of physical aggression on children e.g. slapping, pinching or spanking as a form of correction.
- Knowingly communicate with a child, young person or adult-at-risk in a sexual manner or manner intended to encourage a child, young person or adult-at-risk to communicate in a sexual manner.
- Knowingly expose a child, young person or adult-at-risk to any situation where there may be a risk of abuse or a risk to their personal safety.
- Participate in behavior of children, young people or adults-at-risk which is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
- Retain or lock children in the office after hours or leave children unsupervised.

- Keep children waiting at the office for unnecessarily long periods of time.
- Do not pass judgment on individuals on the basis of race, ethnicity, nationality, age, family connections, belief and other personal characteristics.
- Do not allow advertising and other commercial sensitizations to undermine accuracy, fairness and or independence of information or reporting child abuse.

CAHURAST Nepal SAFEGUARDING COMMITMENT FORM

I (name)_____ confirm that I have been briefed on, and have read the CAHURAST Nepal Safeguarding Policy document. I understand the standards and guidelines outlined CAHURAST Nepal Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and its Code of Behavioral Conduct for working with children and adults at risk.

The contents of this document have been explained to me, and I have had the opportunity to ask questions and to seek clarity on points that were not clear to me. I understand I can ask for clarification of any of the points in the policy document at any time.

I understand that of paramount importance is the welfare of children, women and PwDs and their right to protect from all forms of abuse, violence, harm and neglect.

I am fully aware of my obligations to act in accordance with the requirements of this policy document, including reporting instances of abuse or suspected harm that have been or are actually taking place. I understand that I will be informed immediately of any modifications to CAHURAST Nepal's Safeguarding Policy.

My Name (IN CAPITAL LETTERS)_____

My Job title / role and organization_____

Mobile number_____

Signature_____ Date_____

CAHURAST Nepal OFFICIAL USE ONLY:

Witnessed by: Name of CAHURAST Staff (IN CAPITAL LETTERS)_____

Job title / role _____

Signature_____ Date_____