



# បង្ហាញបណ្តុះបណ្តាលសហគមន៍អនាគតរបស់អ្នកថ្ងៃនេះ *Build Your Future Today Center*

About 200 meters behind Wat Polangka, # 0280, Group 7, Slakram Village and commune, Siem Reap Province

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## **Build Your Future Today Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy**

Date policy approved: (TBA) 2024

Policy owner: Founder & Board

To be reviewed: December 2026

### **Introduction**

BFT Cambodia is committed to the safety and well-being of all people who come into contact with our organisation and work, especially children and vulnerable adults. BFT is committed to the rights and protection of all people regardless of their age, nationality, religion or political beliefs.

We take our duty of care responsibilities seriously, ensuring that BFT Centre maintains a safe, nurturing and happy environment for all people, staff, students and children in our care. We recognise that any person working with children or vulnerable adults has a particular position with regard to their power and influence and we work diligently to prevent any abuse of this position.

This policy aims to raise awareness around safeguarding and child protection issues, provide clear guidelines for recruiting people who work for or support BFT's operations, and outline staff training procedures and clear incident reporting guidelines.

### **Principles, Values and Beliefs**

Our core principles are:

- Creating a safe environment, particularly for children, is a shared responsibility of all in BFT
- Strong leadership is essential to set organisational culture and accelerate change. Therefore all leaders need to set clear expectations and model respectful behaviour in their interactions at work.
- BFT particularly recognises that gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and poverty have powerful intersection points with power imbalances at play. This increases the likelihood of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH).
- Abuse will not be tolerated in any form.
- BFT has zero tolerance to inaction when it comes to sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment of children or adults.
- Survivor centred: we respect the safety, wishes and interests of the survivor first above all other considerations
- We are committed to address gender inequality and other power imbalances.

By implementing the practices listed below our main goal is to protect the children and vulnerable people who engage with BFT from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behaviour whilst also protecting our employees, volunteers, partners and others supporting BFT's programs.



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BFT Cambodia will not engage a person if they are deemed to pose an unacceptable risk to children or vulnerable adults.

## Policy Scope

This policy applies to all BFT Cambodia's employees, national and international volunteers including Board members, sponsors, visitors, contract workers and implementing partners.

## Definitions

Below are definitions that are important for BFT Cambodia's Safeguarding Policy

**Safeguarding:** Actions, policies and procedures that create and maintain environments to protect people from exploitation, harm and abuse.

**Child:** The term child or children includes all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years.

**Vulnerable Adult:** Those aged over 18 years who identify themselves as unable to care for themselves/protect themselves from harm and exploitation; or who, due to their gender, mental or physical health, disability, ethnicity, religious identity, sexual orientation, economic or social status, as a result of disasters and conflicts, are deemed to be at risk.

**Survivor:** A person who has experienced sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment (SEAH) or had attempted SEAH against them.

**Worker/Employee:** The term worker or employee (in country or overseas) includes both paid and unpaid persons who are engaged to undertake work for BFT.

**Partner Organisations:** Any organisation BFT works with to deliver its programs.

**Service beneficiaries:** Any persons, children or adults who benefit from the work of BFT.

**Physical Abuse:** the use of physical force, including hitting, shaking, punching, kicking, burning and poisoning, that causes harm to a person.

**Emotional Abuse:** Emotional injury when the child is not nurtured or provided with love and security, such as an environment of constant criticism, belittling, and persistent teasing from an employee or any other person who comes in contact with BFT. This includes both direct verbal and online abuse.

**Child Neglect:** Failure to provide a child with his or her needs essential to their development and wellbeing, such as adequate and healthy food, water and accommodation, when it is possible to do so.



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**Child Labour:** any exploitation of a child 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.

**Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH):** occurs between a child or an adult and can occur between people of the same or different genders. It includes situations such as:

- Sexual exploitation and abuse
- Sexual harassment
- Child sexual abuse and exploitation
- Women and men sexually exploited through sex work
- Possessing, controlling, producing, distributing, obtaining or transmitting sexually exploitative images of adults or children
- Possessing, controlling, producing, distributing, obtaining or transmitting photos or images that may not be explicitly sexual in nature however could be deemed sexual in nature if for instance the image would likely cause offense, humiliation or intimidation to the subject of the image.

**Sexual Exploitation:** Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, or for other personal or financial advantage. Includes benefiting socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another or producing, obtaining or distributing child or vulnerable adult exploitation material.

**Sexual Abuse:** The act or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions of a child or vulnerable adult.

**Sexual Harassment:** Any verbal or physical conduct or any conduct of a sexual nature that is unwelcome, uninvited and not reciprocated.

**Child Exploitation:** using children for profit, labour, sexual benefit, or for other personal or financial advantage.

**Survivor:** A person who has SEAH perpetrated against him/her/them or an attempt to perpetrate SEAH against him/her/them.

### Local, National and International Laws and Policies

BFT Cambodia will abide by all laws and policies implemented by the Government of Cambodia and international organisations. In the past decade, the Royal Government of Cambodia has made significant advancements in the protection of children's rights. However, no specific Cambodian laws protecting the rights of children are in place at this time.

**UNICEF:** UNICEF is a critical organisation in analysing and reporting on the rights of children in Cambodia.

**UN Convention on the Rights of the Child:** Article 19 provides for protection of children in and out of home.



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### Recruitment Procedures

Below is a list of steps that will be taken by BFT Cambodia to help safeguard children/vulnerable adults and BFT workers when recruiting new workers. The process includes but is not limited to the following:

**Criminal record checks:** prior to engagement all employees will need to provide evidence of a satisfactory criminal record check undertaken by the relevant government agency in the applicant's home country. The cost of the police check will not be reimbursed by BFT Cambodia. If the person comes from a country where criminal record checks are not reliable, BFT will request the person to sign a Statutory Declaration stating that they have not been charged or convicted of any child related offence.

**Referee Checks:** Each applicant will need to provide at least two referees who ideally will have worked with organisations where the applicant has worked with children or vulnerable people in the past. At least two referees will be contacted, their identity confirmed, and verbal feedback sought on the applicant. Referee checks will be written up and stored on the applicant's confidential personnel file.

**Interview Process:** For positions where an applicant will be working directly with children or vulnerable adults, a behavioural based interview will be conducted. Questions may include the following:

- What motivates you to work with BFT Cambodia?
- What do you like most about working with children/ vulnerable adults?
- What do you like least about working with children/vulnerable adults?
- How would you handle children/vulnerable adults who were not listening to your instructions?
- What boundaries are important when working with children and young people/vulnerable adults?
- How would you define 'cultural competence'?
- What would you do if you were concerned about the action/behaviour of a co-worker?

**Employee Contracts:** All employees who work with BFT Cambodia will be required to read and sign the Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Policy documents. Employment/Volunteer contracts will contain a clause advising that workers can be suspended, transferred or dismissed from their employment if they are under investigation for, or have breached, the Safeguarding Policy or the Code of Conduct.

**Safeguarding Training for BFT Cambodia Employees:** Discussion of BFT's Code of Conduct and Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy is included in the staff induction training package. This will include an educational session on cultural competence, information on how to distinguish signs of abuse, an outline of the incident reporting process, and who to contact with questions about safeguarding and child protection..

All employees will be given refresher training every two years.



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### **Safeguarding & Child Protection Code of Conduct**

BFT Cambodia is fully committed to protecting children no matter what gender, age, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion, family or social background, from harm. BFT Cambodia has a zero tolerance for child abuse. It is essential for employees to adopt and adhere to work practices that not only ensure the safety of children but also minimise the possibility of allegations of child abuse and neglect being made against them. Where allegations are made against an employee, BFT has a responsibility to investigate these immediately. BFT Cambodia will:

- Treat all people including children and vulnerable adults with respect.
- Not use language or behaviour towards children or vulnerable adults that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate.
- Wherever possible ensure that another adult is present when working with children or vulnerable adults.
- Not invite unaccompanied children or vulnerable adults into private residences unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger.
- Not sleep close to unsupervised children or vulnerable adults unless absolutely necessary.
- Not use any physical punishment on children or vulnerable adults.
- Not hire children for domestic or other labour which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage, which interferes with their time available for educational or recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury.
- Comply with all relevant local legislation, including labour laws in relation to child labour.
- Immediately report concerns or allegations of exploitation, abuse and/or policy non-compliance in accordance with appropriate procedures.
- Never use any computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras or social media to exploit or harass children, or access child exploitation material.
- Not involving children in sexual activities
- Be aware of behaviour that could be seen by others as child abuse.
- Revealing any previous charges or convictions relating to child abuse.

BFT Cambodia will ensure that information or images of children or vulnerable adults are never used in a way that places the person at risk or compromises their safety or dignity. When photographing or filming a child or vulnerable adult or using their images BFT Cambodia employees will:

- Ensure local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images are adhered to before photographing or filming.
- Obtain informed consent from the child or vulnerable adult, and parent or guardian of the child before photographing or filming a child.
- Ensure photographs and videos present people in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Children must be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive.
- Ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts.
- Ensure that a child or vulnerable adult's identity is not revealed when sending images electronically or in published form.



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BFT Cambodia respects the confidentiality of information regarding a person's health, family background and personal histories. This private information will only be accessed by authorised staff on a need to know basis.

Child friendly information will be provided to children to ensure children understand about safety and protection and feel comfortable speaking to someone if they have any concerns. Children will be made aware of an independent adult to whom they can refer any concerns. They will be encouraged to say at any time what they find acceptable and unacceptable in the way they are approached by an adult or other young people.

### **Incident Reporting and Response Procedures**

All BFT Cambodia employees and other people associated with BFT must report any concerns for a person's safety, allegations of abuse, or allegations of a breach of this policy. Failure of an employee to report a suspected abuse may result in criminal liability and/or termination of employment. When responding to concerns or allegations of harm or abuse the ultimate guiding principle will be the best interests and well-being of the person or people involved.

A person, adult or child, who reports concerns, or claims to be the subject of abuse will be protected, taken seriously and treated with respect. He or she will be reassured that they are not to blame and will never be treated in a way that might cause harm or embarrassment. BFT will immediately remove the person from an abusive environment and seek medical treatment and/or counselling for any injuries.

**What to report:** Report any concerns of allegations of abuse, exploitation, or any alleged breach of this policy. An incident may be disclosed to you by a child, vulnerable adult, parent or legal guardian, another employee, or external party. A disclosure of harm occurs when someone, including a child, confides in you about harm that has happened or is likely to happen. Phrases that may start the conversation include:

- I think I just saw..
- Somebody told me that..
- Just think you should be aware that..
- I'm not sure what I want to do...

**How to Respond:** When receiving a disclosure of harm:

- Remain calm and find a private place to talk.
- If the abuse is being reported by a child or vulnerable person, let the person take his or her time, and allow the person to use his or her own words. Reassure the person that it is the right thing to tell you.
- Don't promise that you'll keep the harm a secret. Tell them they have done the right thing in telling you but that you'll need to tell someone who can help keep them safe.
- Only ask enough questions to confirm the need to report the matter. Probing questions can cause distress, confusion and interfere and obstruct later enquiries.
- Do not attempt to conduct your own investigation or mediate an outcome between the parties involved.



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- Don't confront the person who has allegedly harmed the child.
- Let the reporting child know what you will do next.

**Who to report to:** any abuse that is noticed is to be immediately reported to the Founder of BFT, the BFT Cambodia Social Worker and the Program Director.

**When to report:** Any abuse that is noticed should be reported immediately, or at a maximum within 24 hours of the incident.

**How to report:** Reports should be submitted via email. The email should include:

- the nature of the purported abuse
- the names of the person reportedly abused and the name of the abuser
- the relationship between the person and the abuser
- the date the incident occurred
- where the incident occurred
- the names of any witnesses

The parent or guardian of the child or vulnerable person will be notified.

BFT Cambodia will fully cooperate with the investigation of the incident by civil authorities. Any person found guilty of the alleged abuse or misconduct will be removed from their position and will no longer be permitted to work or interact with BFT Cambodia. Where the perpetrator is a non-Cambodian citizen, the person's home country embassy will be contacted and advised of the abuse.

BFT Cambodia will provide appropriate trauma counselling for the person in question.

### Safeguarding Risk Assessments

| Risk                                                                             | Strategy to reduce risk                                                                                                                | Likelihood | Consequence | Current Risk Rating | Who is responsible. |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Recruitment of an inappropriate person                                           | Police check/criminal records<br>Two referee checks<br>Behavioural based questions                                                     | Low        | Major       | Low                 | BFT Founder:        |
| Child/vulnerable person in an environment created by BFT where people unknown to | Employees monitor children.<br>Train BFT Cambodia staff to detect inappropriate behaviour.<br>Employees monitor people unknown to BFT. | Medium     | Major       | High                | All BFT Staff       |



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|                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                               |        |       |      |                                            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|-------|------|--------------------------------------------|
| BFT are present.                                            |                                                                                                                                                                               |        |       |      |                                            |
| Ad hoc contractors who are engaged by BFT.                  | Maintain a log book of visitors who are working.<br>Train parents to be aware of risks.                                                                                       | Medium | Major | High | All BFT Staff and parents                  |
| Inappropriate behaviour that is not reported and addressed. | Train BFT employees to detect inappropriate behaviour.<br>Employees sign the Safeguarding Policy.<br>Train children and parents to detect and report inappropriate behaviour. | Medium | Major | High | All staff, and others associated with BFT. |

### Declaration

I confirm that I have read and understood this policy and understand that it is my responsibility to report any occurrence which leads me to suspect that this policy may be being breached. I understand that if I am found to be in breach of this policy it will result in disciplinary action or dismissal and any allegation will be thoroughly investigated in conjunction with the relevant authorities and prosecuted to the full extent of the law including but by no means limited to notifying the national embassy or any other relevant authority. I declare that I have never been accused, investigated cautioned or convicted of any offence, including any element of physical, emotional or sexual abuse of a child.

### Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy Review

BFT Cambodia will review the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy every two years. Any changes to the policy will be distributed and discussed with all BFT Cambodia employees. Each employee will need to provide BFT management with a signed hard copy of the revised policy.

Volunteer's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Director's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_