



# Child Protection Policy



সোসিও-ইকোনমিক এন্ড রুরাল এ্যাডভান্সমেন্ট এসোসিয়েশন (সেরা)

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC & RURAL ADVANCEMENT ASSOCIATION (SERAA)**  
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## **1. BACKGROUND:**

Socio-Economic and Rural Advancement Association (SERAA) is a regional based non-profitable, non-political and nongovernmental humanitarian development organization (NGDO) was established in the year of 1997 by a few like-minded social workers in Netrakona district with a view to improve the socio-economic condition of the rural targeted poor families especially ultra poor households. It has been working for the quality improvement of the underprivileged ethnic/tribal communities along with other minority and majority communities without distinction of caste, creed and religion for nearly 20 years and earned reputation in development sector.

SERAA has been functioning voluntarily since 1997. With the passage of time and involving with rural people through program implementation, the organization feels for its registrar's and through formal procedure registration had been taken from the DSS and NGOAB, GOB. With the efforts of its Executive Director and associates of the organization become healthy in respect of various project implementations.

SERAA believes that long-term sustainable change can only be achieved by first giving voice to the most vulnerable in society and listening to their concerns and child protection is very important for better tomorrow. We work in partnership with communities across North-East Region of Bangladesh to develop participatory programmes that respond to their needs.

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE POLICY:**

This policy has been developed honoring the Article 19 which provides that States Parties shall protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse. (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), Article 19).

SERAA has a common commitment to the prevention of child abuse and the protection of Children. The use and exploitation of children happens in all countries and Societies Across the World.

This policy sets out common values, principles, and beliefs and describes the steps that will be taken in meeting our commitment to protect children.

## **2. SERAA'S COMMITMENT TO PROTECT CHILDREN**

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

- At the light of this convention, SERAA is committed to promote the rights of all children without distinction or discrimination on account of age, race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, whether of himself or of his family.

- It whole heartedly believes that the situation of all children must be improved through promotion of their rights as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This includes the right to freedom from abuse and exploitation.
- It is our principle that the child shall be entitled from his birth to a name and a nationality and SERAA is committed to promote that;
- SERAA believes that all children shall enjoy the benefits of social security and for ensuring this, the organization will contribute for that;
- SERAA believes that all child abuse involves the abuse of children's rights.
- The organization strongly believes that all children have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation.
- Child abuse is never acceptable to SERAA Rather it believes that the child have the protection against all forms of neglect, cruelty and exploitation. He shall not be the subject of traffic, in any form.
- We have a commitment to protecting children with! for whom we work
- When we work through partners, they have a responsibility to meet minimum standards of protection for children in their programmes.

#### **Definitions-**

- i) "Child"
- ii) "Child Abuse"
- iii) Types of abuse (physical, emotional, sexual, sexual exploitation, neglect, harmful traditional practices,
- iv) Child Protection-
- v) Representative of Heed-

### **3. EFFORTS OF SERAA**

We Will meet our commitment to protect children from abuse and discrimination through the following means:

#### **Awareness Development**

It is our observation that a range of people of our societies are not aware about the of the children. Considering this through different awareness sessions/events we will ensure that:

- All staffs of SERAA are aware about the rights and entitlements of the Children;
- All the targeted beneficiaries are aware the problem of child abuse and the risks children aid
- All other stakeholders of the organization are honoring the rights of the children.



### **PREVENTION:**

SERAA will ensure, through awareness and good practice, that staff and others minimize the risks to children. It will ensure the responses of all other actors of the society to the risks to children.

### **REPORTING:**

SERAA is committed to ensure that staff and others are clear what steps to take where concerns arise regarding the safety of children. If needs, they will positively respond to the needs of the Children.

### **RESPONDING:**

SERAA will ensure that action is taken to support and protect children where concerns arise regarding possible abuse. In order that the above standards of reporting and responding are met, all branch/ Project offices of SERAA will also ensure that they:

- Take seriously any concerns raised;
- Take positive steps to ensure the protection of children who are the subject of any concerns;
- Support children, staff or other adults who raise concerns or who are the subject of concerns;
- Act appropriately and effectively in instigating or co-operating with any subsequent process of investigation
- Are guided through the child protection process by the principle of 'best interests of the child'
- Listen to and take seriously the views and wishes of children
- Work in partnership with parents/careers and/or other professionals to ensure the protection of children.

### **MEASURES TO ENSURE OUR COMMITMENTS ABOVE ARE MET**

- SERAA will take appropriate measures to diminish infant and child mortality;
- SERAA will take measures to ensure the provision of necessary medical assistance and health care to all children with emphasis on the development of primary health care;
- It will contribute within its programs to combat disease and malnutrition, including within the framework of primary health care, through, inter alia, the application of readily available technology and through the provision of adequate nutritious foods and Pure Drinking water, taking into consideration the dangers and risks of environmental pollution;
- The organization will be dedicated to ensure appropriate pre-natal health care for mothers;



- SERAA will contribute to ensure that all segments of society, in particular parents and children, are informed, have access to education aid and are supported in the use of basic knowledge of child health and nutrition, the advantages of breast-feeding, hygiene and environmental sanitation and the prevention of accidents;
- Along side the Government of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh, SERAA recognizes the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, the organization will:
  - ❖ Contribute to make access of the children organized by it to universal primary education available free to all;
  - ❖ Contribute to encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need;
  - ❖ Play effective role to make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means;
  - ❖ Have a glorious role to make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children and
  - ❖ Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.
- SERAA will play important role in ensuring birth registration of new born children of the geographically backward places;
- It will advocate to reduce and combat child marriage, torture and violence against women and child trafficking and
- Child rights and welfare issues will be included as cross-cutting issues in all other programmes and projects operated by SERAA.

## **5. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE STAFF OF SERAA:**

All SERAA staff must sign up to and abide by this Code of Conduct. This Code is binding on all representatives of SERAA at all times, including non-working hours.

### ***Staff and others must never:***

- Hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children
- Develop physically sexual relationships with children
- Develop relationships with children who could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive
- Act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse.

- Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive
- Behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative.
- Have a child/children with whom they are working to stay overnight at their home unsupervised
- Sleep in the same room or bed as a child with whom they are working
- Do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves.
- Condone, or participate in, behavior of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse.
- Discriminate against show differential treatment, or favour particular children to the exclusion of others.
- This is not an exhaustive or exclusive list. The principle is that staff should avoid actions or behavior, which may constitute poor practice or potentially abusive behavior.

**It Is Important for all staff and others in contact with children to:**

- Be aware of situations Which may present risks and manage these
- Plan and organize the work and the workplace so as to minimize risks
- As far as possible, be visible in working with children
- Ensure that a culture of openness exists to enable any issues or concerns to be raised and discussed
- Ensure that a sense of accountability exists between staff so that poor practice or potentially abusive behavior does not go unchallenged
- Talk to children about their contact with staff or others and encourage them to raise any concerns
- Empower Children- Discuss with them their rights, what is acceptable and unacceptable, and what they can do if there is a problem.

**A Code of Conduct should refer to the Bangladeshi Culture and Context.**