

Child Safeguarding Policy

This policy defines the responsibilities and procedures for child safeguarding for all Build Africa (Build Africa, Build Africa Uganda, Build Africa Kenya, Build Africa Inc.) staff, representatives and partners.

1. Build Africa's commitment to safeguarding children

Build Africa is committed to upholding its responsibility to ensure that all children are kept safe when participating in its project activities and all aspects of operations such as communications. Build Africa also has a duty to take action when there are concerns about the safety of children participating in its programmes, even when the risk has not occurred as a result of our own work. In these instances, Build Africa's role is limited to supporting these children by referring them to appropriate services which can keep them safe and give them the help that they need. Prioritising the safety of the children that we work with is fundamental to Build Africa's integrity as an organisation that aims to put "the wellbeing of children first, in everything we do".

Build Africa believes that all children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs, social background and/or sexual identity have the right to be protected from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence, as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Build Africa also recognises that some children may face particular risks and difficulties in getting help or accessing protective and responsive services as a result of age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs, social background and/or sexual identity.

Build Africa believes in placing the safety of children at the centre of all of our work, in particular ensuring that:

- a) All of our programmes are actively designed to avoid putting children at risk by means of our presence or programme activities;
- b) It is made absolutely clear to all of our staff that Build Africa does not tolerate child abuse, exploitation, neglect or violence in any form;
- c) All children involved with our work are made aware of their right to protection from abuse and have a safe mechanism through which they can report any abuse;
- d) All suspicions and allegations of abuse are taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

Abuse is always wrong and it is never the young person's fault.

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2. Definitions used in this policy

Term	Definition
Child	Anyone under 18 years of age
Child abuse	Child abuse includes abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence towards anyone under 18 years of age. For more information, see Section 4 of this policy.
Staff	All full-time and part-time Build Africa staff, including those working for Build Africa on short-term contracts (e.g. consultants and researchers etc.).
Representatives	All volunteers, Board members, Patrons and Ambassadors and all donors, celebrities and other people who visit Build Africa programmes and may come into contact with children. Also, all staff and representatives of partner organisations or of any other individuals, groups or organisation who have a formal or contractual relationship to Build Africa that causes them to have contact with children that Build Africa works with.
Associates	All staff and representatives as defined above.
Child safeguarding	Refers to the preventative measures to keep individual children who are engaged within BA programmes safe (i.e. ensuring that project activities are safe for children to participate in).
Child protection response/referral	Refers to the specific frameworks in place and actions taken to manage individual reports or concerns that a child is at risk. This will include referring the child to necessary services (such as medical, psychosocial support etc.).
Child protection programming	Refers to any (components of) programmes that are designed and implemented to improve children's safety within their own community. It includes any activities that are implemented with the community, police or local authorities to improve children's safety or any advocacy activities intended to influence district and national policies and legal frameworks.

3. Scope of policy

The policy defines the roles and responsibilities of Build Africa associates in upholding child safeguarding within Build Africa operations and in acting upon concerns of child abuse according to agreed procedures for child protection response/referral.

The policy applies to all associates involved with BA, with the exception of staff and representatives from partner organisations with which it has been agreed that the partner/contracted organisation may enforce its own safeguarding policy otherwise adopt and adhere to BA's CSG policy (see 6.3).

All Build Africa staff must sign a copy of this document, prior to or at the time of issuing an employment contract, to show that they are aware of this policy and will act in accordance with the contents of this document and with local child safeguarding procedures.

All Build Africa representatives must sign a copy of this document, prior to visiting Build Africa programmes, to show that they are aware of this policy and will act in accordance with this document and with local child safeguarding procedures.

4. What is child abuse?

Child abuse can take many forms, all of which can cause long term damage to a child. Examples are: physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect and sexual abuse and exploitation. Bullying and domestic violence are also forms of child abuse.

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Signs that a child may be experiencing abuse include:

- a) left in unsafe situations or without medical attention, constantly "put down", insulted, sworn at or humiliated
- b) seems afraid of parents or carers
- c) severely bruised or injured
- d) aggression towards others
- e) displays sexual behaviour which doesn't seem appropriate for their age
- f) neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, self-mutilation)
- g) constant tiredness
- h) lack of social relationships

This list is not exhaustive but as an NGO working extensively with children, Build Africa requires all of its associates to be constantly vigilant for signs that a child may be being abused.

This policy and accompanying procedures cover harm or risk that children might face by means of Build Africa's poor / inappropriate, in addition to the intentional abuses as listed above.

5. Context for this policy

Build Africa associates are most likely to encounter children during project delivery work or visits to programmes, particularly in schools, and in other interactions with communities with which we work. Additionally, associates may encounter children in Build Africa fundraising or awareness-raising events. They may also be responsible for children from the UK when visiting Build Africa programmes. Build Africa is committed to prioritising the safety, needs and feelings of children above other considerations and will work to ensure that none of its associates, programme activities or operations cause harm to children.

6. Guidance and standards for putting child safeguarding into practice

6.1 Development of procedures for each Build Africa office

Each country programme and the UK Support Office is required to have its own local procedures, consistent with this global policy. This will require a local mapping exercise to be carried out to analyse and to check the quality of the legal, social welfare and child protection arrangements and service providers in the local context. Based on this local mapping, a reporting and referral framework is to be developed for each geographical area that Build Africa operates in.

All local procedures must be formally approved by the International Senior Management Team and the local Boards of Trustees; and they must meet the following standards:

- a) Are clear for a child to know how to report abuse in safety.
- b) Are clear for an associate or any other person to report suspicions of abuse.
- c) Stipulate what happens after an incident of alleged child abuse is reported, including ensuring that all reported incidents are recorded and investigated.
- d) Ensure confidentiality.
- e) Are reviewed in consultation with children, dependent on the appropriateness of seeking feedback from children who are familiar with the procedures in practice.

6.2 Recruitment, inductions and capacity-building

- f) All associates are trained in Build Africa's child protection policy and procedures to the level appropriate for their activities.

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- g) Training is given to all staff responsible for recruiting staff and volunteers, so that child safeguarding is an integral aspect of recruitment at a level appropriate for the role being recruited.
- h) Recruitment of staff and volunteers must incorporate child safeguarding measures to a level appropriate for the activities of the role. This will include police checks or Disclosure Barring Service checks for roles that will come into direct contact with children.
- i) There is a named, trained person (“Child Safeguarding Focal Point”) responsible in each geographical location for supporting full adherence to this policy and local procedures
- j) Any associate likely to come into contact with children is required to sign the Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct and therefore adhere to Build Africa’s clarification of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.
- k) Specialist training is given to staff working directly with children as appropriate to their capacity building requirements and role.
- l) Training is given to any staff involved with investigations of alleged child abuse.

6.3 Integrating child safeguarding into programmes

- m) There are clear guidelines describing how we build child safeguarding into our programme design.
- n) Children are made aware of their right to be safe within Build Africa programmes and are made aware of where and how to go for help in relation to child abuse within Build Africa programmes.
- o) This information is given to children in a format that they can understand.
- p) Assessment of potential implementing partners’ child safeguarding policies and practice should be made. If a decision is made to partner with an organisation with low child safeguarding capacity, commitment must be made within the project to build capacity in this area and the partner organisation must adopt Build Africa’s Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct.
- q) Partnership agreements must clearly outline agreed procedures for reporting and investigating concerns involving breaches of the child safeguarding policy.

6.4 Generating and using information or images of children

- r) Images should only be used for clear purposes with an obvious benefit for Build Africa’s work
- s) Build Africa associates must not disclose information that identifies children to anyone outside Build Africa without the informed consent of caregivers and where possible the child.

6.5 Monitoring and learning from child safeguarding practice

- t) There is a mechanism for tracking Build Africa’s management and closure of child safeguarding cases.
- u) There is a mechanism for learning across all of Build Africa from all reported allegations of child abuse.

7. Reporting and responding to child safeguarding concerns

Alleged cases of child abuse should be reported according to the local procedures for the location of the alleged abuse. The involvement of international senior management team members will be dependent on the nature of the allegation and therefore the categorisation of the case.

If there is an allegation made against a Build Africa employee or volunteer, the relevant Country Director or Director of Strategy and Impact, dependent on the permanent location of the alleged perpetrator, will ensure that a thorough investigation is conducted in line with organisational procedures. If the alleged perpetrator of child abuse is a Build Africa associate, the alleged perpetrator will likely be suspended from the normal relationship with Build Africa during investigation of the allegation.

Build Africa will sever all relations with any associate proven to have committed child abuse and will

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support in full any related criminal prosecution.

If an employee raises a legitimate concern made in good faith about suspected abuse by an associate, that proves to be unfounded, no action will be taken against that employee. Any employee making false and malicious accusations of child abuse will face disciplinary action.

An allegation of child abuse is a serious issue. Sharing of information that could identify a child or an alleged perpetrator should only be done if it is strictly necessary to progress an investigation.

8. Responsibilities and accountability

Child safeguarding is the responsibility of all Build Africa staff. Build Africa staff and representatives are responsible for acting in accordance with the Code of Conduct and the Child Safeguarding policy and are responsible for reporting any child safeguarding concerns that they might have, according to the local procedures.

It is Build Africa's responsibility to ensure that all of its staff and associates are aware of this policy and relevant local procedures. There is a reciprocal responsibility on all Build Africa staff and associates to ensure that they are familiar with this policy and relevant local procedures before undertaking any activity that could involve meeting children or could involve accessing information or images about children with whom Build Africa works.

The Child Safeguarding Policy Owner is the Director of Strategy and Impact, who is responsible for ensuring that this policy is reviewed annually as a minimum and that additional reviews are carried out if there are significant changes to relevant laws or to the work that Build Africa delivers.

Ultimate responsibility for Child Safeguarding within Build Africa rests with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO); all members of the International Senior Management Team are expected to demonstrate leadership and high prioritisation of Child Safeguarding.

The Board of Trustees are responsible for holding the CEO to account for implementation of this policy.

9. Other relevant documentation in support of this policy

- a) Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct
- b) Categorisation of Child Safeguarding cases
- c) Child Safeguarding in Recruitment guidance
- d) Whistleblowing policy

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Defines the behaviour towards children that is deemed acceptable and not acceptable for all Build Africa (Build Africa, Build Africa Uganda, Build Africa Kenya, Build Africa Inc.) staff, representatives and partners.

1.0 Purpose

Build Africa's activities often create situations where adults are in direct contact with children. The Code of Conduct provides standards of behaviour to all Build Africa staff members and representatives to support them to behave appropriately around children. This means that Build Africa staff members and representatives, here known as "associates", are less likely to take actions that could be misinterpreted as an indicator of abuse or that could lead to false allegations of abuse. These rules help to ensure that Build Africa and all of its staff members and representatives comply with local laws and international standards as outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Code of Conduct supports Build Africa staff associates to ensure that they are meeting their responsibilities as outlined in the Child Safeguarding Policy.

BA considers child abuse unacceptable in all circumstances and is committed to keeping children safe within its projects. For this reason, BA has policies and procedures to prevent abuse and exploitation by any Build Africa staff member or representative who interacts with children.

2.0 Who does it apply to?

Build Africa's Code of Conduct applies to anyone (including Build Africa staff, volunteers, interns, Trustees, Patrons, Ambassadors, contractors and supporters) potentially interacting with children whilst visiting any of Build Africa's operations. Although most potential interactions with children will take place in Africa, this Code of Conduct applies equally to any contact with children in the UK.

Note: for non-staff visitors going on short visits to project sites, where they will be accompanied at all times by a Build Africa staff member, a Code of Conduct with slightly different wording has been approved for discretionary use.

Build Africa's Code of Conduct should be interpreted in a spirit of transparency and common sense, with the best interests of the child as the primary consideration.

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3.0 Codes of Conduct

3.1 As a Build Africa staff member or representative, you must:

- a) Identify and avoid potential situations of risk for children.
- b) Identify and avoid potential situations which may lead to your own behaviour being misinterpreted as abusive or harmful.
- c) Be alert to indicators of abuse among the children you are working with and act accordingly in line with the Child Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct and Procedures.
- d) Be aware of the power imbalance between an adult and a child and attempt to reduce the imbalance.
- e) Undertake induction or training on child safeguarding at Build Africa as appropriate to roles.
- f) When taking any images of children, e.g. photographs or video, that they are respectful, that the children are adequately clothed and that they do not include sexually suggestive / provocative poses. Appropriate consent should be obtained.
- g) Ensure that any image or recorded case history of a child does not place him/her at risk or render him/her vulnerable to any form of abuse.

As a Build Africa staff member or representative, there are some behaviours that you must never demonstrate.

3.2 In your interactions with children and communities in Build Africa project sites, you must never:

- a) Be alone with a child in an enclosed space.
- b) Spend excessive time alone with children away from others.
- c) Show favouritism or spend excessive amounts of time with one child.
- d) Take a child to your home or hotel accommodation or invite them to visit your home town
- e) Arrange to stay overnight with a child or their family.
- f) Spend time in a child's home unless exceptional circumstances apply and you have the prior approval of your line manager.
- g) Present gifts to any individual child or small numbers of children.
- h) Exchange contact details (such as email address, physical address, phone/mobile number) with a child.
- i) Condone, or participate in, behaviour of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
- j) Leave visitors to a programme who are not Build Africa staff unaccompanied by a Build Africa staff member (this is for the protection of the child and of the visitor).
- k) Introduce visitors to a community or individual members of a community without the prior approval of the Country Director, or Deputy Country Director in the absence of Country Director.
- l) Visit a community or individual members of a community except as part of work duties or an approved Build Africa project visit. Written agreement must be sought from Build Africa to stay with named family members / friends in communities covered by Build Africa programmes.

3.3 With regard to sexual behaviour, you must never:

- a) Have sexual intercourse, or engage in any sexual activity, seductive behaviour (grooming) with anyone under the age of 18 years old, regardless of the age of consent locally or nationally. Mistaken belief in the age of the child is not a defence.
- b) Engage in or allow sexually provocative behaviour to take place with or between children.
- c) Make physical contact with a child in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way.
- d) Sleep in the same bed as a child with whom you are working.
- e) Sleep in the same room as a child with whom you are working.
- f) Do things for a child of an intimate, personal nature that they can do themselves, such as toileting,

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bathing or dressing a child.

- g) Act as negotiator in or assist the process of financial settlement between the family of a child victim of sexual abuse or exploitation and the perpetrator.
- h) Encourage any crushes / inappropriate affection by a child.

These regulations apply to the behaviour of Build Africa staff members and representatives in both their professional lives and in their personal lives.

3.4 With regard to physical behaviour, you must never:

- a) Discipline any child by failing to provide the necessities of care such as food, shelter or medical attention.
- b) Condone or participate in behaviour by, or towards, any children which is unsafe, abusive or illegal
- c) Behave physically in a way that is inappropriate.
- d) Discipline a child with whom you are working by use of physical punishment.

These regulations apply to the behaviour of Build Africa staff members and representatives in both their professional lives and in their personal lives.

3.5 With regard to emotional behaviour, you must never:

- a) Display discriminatory, prejudicial or oppressive behaviour towards children.
- b) Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive.
- c) Shout at, call children unkind names or act in any way that intends to embarrass, shame, humiliate or degrade a child with whom you are working.

These regulations apply to the behaviour of Build Africa staff members and representatives in both their professional lives and in their personal lives.

4 Responsibility to report:

As a Build Africa staff member or representative, you have a responsibility and a requirement to report any concerns that you might have regarding the safety of a child in a Build Africa project or regarding the behaviour of a Build Africa staff member or representative.

If you have a concern regarding a child's safety, a BA staff member or representative's behaviour or if you receive a report of a case of abuse, you must:

- a) Take any concerns raised seriously.
- b) Complete an incident reporting form, according to local procedures.
- c) Always report abuse or suspected abuse immediately and in accordance with the local procedures and with the child's best interest and safety.
- d) Keep the content of the case confidential, only informing the necessary contact points according to local procedures.
- e) Cooperate fully and confidentially in any investigation of concerns and allegations.

In this situation, you must not try to investigate any aspect of the concern or allegation yourself.

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Declaration

I have read and understood the information in this Policy and Code of Conduct and agree to follow the measures set out in the Policy and Code.

For Build Africa staff:

I understand that failure to follow this Policy and Code is a serious breach of the conditions of my employment and will lead to disciplinary action. It may also lead to the breach being reported to relevant authorities.

For BA Trustees, volunteers, interns, Patrons and Ambassadors:

I understand that failure to follow this Policy and Code is likely to lead to the ending of my relationship with BA. It may also lead to the breach being reported to relevant authorities.

Signed:

Name:

Date:
