

Waste Concern Safeguard Policy

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1. Introduction to Safeguarding

Waste Concern for twenty-five years has made the safety of the participants¹ of all its programs as well as the safety of the employees, of all its entities, of principal importance. Waste Concern, in its core value and persistent management activities, ensures to value and preserve basic human dignity as a strategy to ensure collaborative growth of the entire program.

Safeguarding in the context of this policy is defined as protecting employees, participants and clients of all our programs and projects. This guard is designed to inform and be strictly against abusive actions, such as sexual harassment, creating environment of intimidation and violence, humiliation and discrimination, neglect and exploitation of colleagues, participants, partners and field workers of all sexes, races and irrespective of any religious affiliation.

It is important to note that Waste Concern has actively safeguarded all people involved (employees, participants of our various training programs) by ensuring "safety-first" principle of utmost primary consideration in all its programming activities. Waste Concern has a "zero-tolerance" view and action is taken on all forms of sexual harassment, intimidation through forceful coercive actions, all types of physical or mental violence, personal or public forms of humiliation, gender-based discrimination, and exploitation.

Should there be instances where the in-built systems to reduce risks adequately are not sufficient, Waste Concern has also designed a four-step secondary safeguarding mechanism. First, a reporting channel is established, followed by management monitoring of the concerned activities, investigation, followed by a strong course of action.

In the light of the increasing risks in the developmental sector, Waste Concern has taken upon the duty to ensure strengthening of its practices in the form of a comprehensive "Waste Concern Safeguarding Policy". Within the context of this policy, Waste Concern will re-articulate and revise its pledges that will further guide its continued efforts to ensure work place safety of all its employees, participants and partners.

1.1. Review, Monitoring, Revision and Approval

The policy and its procedures will be monitored periodically by the designated safeguarding person along with the executive director and director in collaboration with the program managers. The policy will be reviewed every 2 or 3 years, depending on organizational needs. All necessary procedures will be developed or modified as needed based on the periodical review of the risk assessment/register.

In addition, the aforementioned monitoring and revision, this policy will be reviewed, approved, and endorsed by the Waste Concern Board annually, or when there are applicable and regulatory guidance changes in Bangladesh or as per requirement of regulatory bodies and international organizations. Furthermore, Waste Concern will work with organizations, local and international government bodies (if the project(s) is international), and local partners, to further reinforce our practices and contribute wider efforts to prevent and respond to work place grievances.

¹ Participants are defined as the people who attend our meetings, workshops, seminars, conferences at Waste Concern



1.2 Scope of Application

This policy applies equally to all Waste Concern Board members, and all employees contracted by Waste Concern. The scope also extends to any associated contractors and sub-contractors while engaged with stipulated work or visits related under the Waste Concern Group; its Consultancy arm, and WWR (World Wide Recycling) Bio Fertilizer Bangladesh Ltd. The Group also comprises its four wings: Policy Formulation, Research & Development, Advocacy & Capacity Building, and Project Implementation. The application also encompasses, but not limited to, auditors, trainers, consultants, volunteers, program visitors, trainees. In addition, the scope also extends to Waste Concern Group's collaborative efforts which entails any visits and communication with all funding agency employees, journalists, government officers, data collectors, researchers, and politicians.

This policy does not cover:

- Bribery, fraud, corruption, extortion, money laundering
- Disciplinary methods based on employment contracts
- Safeguarding concerns in the wider community not perpetrated by Waste Concern or associated personnel.

These (except wider community issues) are dealt with under *Administrative, Discipline and Financial Rules and Procedures of Waste Concern* and Waste Concern's *Code of Conduct* booklet

This policy is not intended to replace Waste Concern's existing *Code of Conduct*. While it has overlapping elements with the *Code of Conduct*, this Safeguarding Policy takes precedent in any conflict between it and any other Waste Concern policy.

2. Safeguarding Principles of Waste Concern

Personal development and Empowerment We want to retain, develop and empower our employees. By offering continuous opportunities for development, and training, each employee can, not only acquire the skills required to achieve personal growth, but also be empowered to acknowledge and report work-related issues such as sexual advances, unwanted coercion, among others, by colleagues, and outside contractors.

Equality and diversity Our starting point is that everyone is equal and that all employees, participants of our programs, primary stakeholders and beneficiaries, should have the same basic opportunities, rights and options to report unwanted behaviors. Our work environment must be characterized by respect and fair dealings between individuals concerned. No one should be discriminated against based on their beliefs that has no ill-effect on the working environment.

Communication and Prevention With us, there is an open and constructive dialogue based on respect for each individual. All employees, primary stakeholders and beneficiaries, have access to information about the organization's overall objectives and strategies, and dialogue with their line manager and contributes to the overall wellbeing. All managers and employees have a shared responsibility to ensure access to the information needed for every employee to work safely and effectively.

Training of Employees and Beneficiaries All employees and beneficiaries will be trained according to proper guidelines of the Code of Conduct manual and Safeguard policy. This will be followed by an online or written evaluation that all employees, trainees and volunteers will have to complete. This system is Waste Concern's initial prevention of the trigger switch of the Safeguard policy.

Freedom of speech and freedom of association We respect our employees' right to choose whether to be represented by unions in collective bargaining or not. No employee should be discriminated for exercising this right as per labour laws in Bangladesh.



Partnerships Waste Concern will work with local communities and other organizations that are geared towards preventing and detecting abuse by or against our organization's primary stakeholders and beneficiaries.

Unfair working condition and forced labour We do not accept any exploitation of children or other vulnerable groups in the labour market. Please note definition of children as defined by the Bangladesh Government, in the glossary.

A good working environment All employees, primary stakeholders and beneficiaries, will be offered a sound, safe, and healthy working environment in which all can collectively contribute to its comfort, efficiency, and safety. A good working environment is not only safe, it also leads to personal development and job satisfaction. All grievances or concern which affects the wellbeing of the person and group will be addressed appropriately as mentioned in the "**How to Report a Safeguarding Concern**".

Accountability Waste Concern will take accountability and have complete transparency with the victim and authorities concerned in delivering safeguarding practices. Should there be instances where the in-built systems to reduce risks in the first place are not adequately met, then a four-step secondary safeguarding mechanism is initiated by the first responder. First, a reporting channel is established (under the "**How to Report a Safeguarding Concern**"), tracked by management monitoring of the concerned activities, an investigation, followed by a strong course of disciplinary action and/or dismissal from Waste Concern by upper-level management.

3. Risk Assessment

A risk assessment is a way of identifying the possibility of things happening that will have a negative impact on employees, primary stakeholders, project beneficiaries that Waste Concern comes in contact with. Waste Concern is committed to conduct periodical risk assessments and revising thereafter, to identify any existing or new risks through the organization's programs and activities; and accordingly find ways of mitigating such risks.

4. Communication Methodology

Waste Concern's work communicated through online means such as websites, e-newsletters, along with e-mails, also, newspaper articles, ads, radio or TV programs will be communicated in alignment with the safety of its program beneficiaries. This will be achieved through never using manipulated, stereotyped or sensationalized text and/or images, never using or employing discriminatory or derogatory language, no use of images of inappropriately clothed children and VAs², never feature children and VAs in reports, publications, websites, social media sites without the consent of the child and their parents or guardians or their own consent in case of VA or partner organization, to use their story, image, or disclose the identity that could harm or negatively impact the person in question or the family.

² VA is a vulnerable adult

whose ability to protect himself from violence, abuse or neglect is significantly impaired through physical or mental disability or illness, through old age or otherwise



5. Safe Recruitment

In order to minimize risks of hiring potential abusers as well as to support new recruits and existing staff in practicing safeguarding Waste Concern commits to provide periodical training of staff and employees-induction and refresher courses on safeguarding.

Waste Concern will ensure the following safe recruitment measures:

5. 1. Clearly define the job for any role which is particularly going to bring the potential staff in direct contact with children and vulnerable adult.
5. 2. The job description will clearly mention the importance and commitment towards safeguarding
5. 3. Clearly state Waste Concern's commitment for all its job advertisements
5. 4. Waste Concern will ensure at least two reference checks, with one referee to include the most recent employee or supervisor.
5. 5. Waste Concern will include direct safeguarding-related questions in the reference checks form.
5. 6. All new recruits at Waste Concern will be made to sign a self-disclosure form certifying that he or she has not been accused of any offences under any law; and that the candidate has no past records of any safeguarding concerns, whatsoever.
5. 7. Waste Concern will ensure all newly recruited staff to mandatorily undergo induction training on safeguarding prior to taking up their job roles so that they fully understand their safeguarding responsibilities in-line with the organizational policy.
5. 8. All newly recruited staff will have to read and understand the organization's safeguarding policy and procedures.
5. 9. Know what to do if they have any safeguarding concerns
5. 10. All staff should mandatorily undergo safeguarding training and should have periodical refresher training with updated information related to the organization's safeguarding policy and procedures.
5. 11. All Project Coordinator will ensure that their respective team members are supported in strengthening safeguarding knowledge and responsibilities. Appraisals will also include safeguarding related elements.

6. Standards of Behavior

Our standards of behavior are based on three major core principles that guide our daily activities - cooperation, commitment, professionalism (also includes respect to the cultural values in Bangladesh) to all local and foreign partners working with us. Our values, together with our vision and mission, form the basic foundation of our business.

Cooperation – Our work is important and we stress on working safely and collaboratively together to solve problems, share our knowledge and use smart solutions.

Commitment – We recommend listening to our employee family, and understand our clients' and beneficiaries' requirements and expectations



Professionalism – We encourage open sharing of challenges, while respecting societal and personal boundaries set forth by industry-wide values (such as, but not limited to, 6 feet of distance during the Corona virus pandemic, mask wearing, **cultural understanding** and mutual respect within and outside of the physical office space during tours, field data collection at government offices and stakeholder interviews.

7. Safeguarding Practices

Including our core Standards of Behavior, Waste Concern's aim is continuing to ensure that Safeguarding practices also reflects the United Nation's Global Compact's 10 principles. The principles are incorporated from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, The International Labour Organization's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and the United Nations Convention Against Corruption.

This inclusionary practice within the scope of the Safeguard begins with Waste Concern's core value of providing a resource to the communities involved. As a result, the operations of Waste Concern are able to meet the basic responsibilities in Human Rights, environmental responsibility, social responsibility, and anti-corruption methods.

Thus, Waste Concern ensuring that the group incorporates the Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact into its various "strategies, policies and procedures," enables the organization to establish a strong system of integrity and as a result, helps set the foundation for success.

7.1 Human Rights

Principle 1: Waste Concern shall support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights.

Principle 2: Waste Concern shall make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

7.2 Labour Conditions

Principle 3: Waste Concern shall defend the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining.

Principle 4: Waste Concern will eliminate all forms of forced and compulsory labour.

Principle 5: Waste Concern shall ensure the effective abolition of child labour in all its plants.

Principle 6: Waste Concern shall eliminate discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

7.3 Environment

Principle 7: Waste Concern shall support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges.

Principle 8: Waste Concern shall undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility.

Principle 9: Waste Concern shall encourage the development and dissemination of environmentally friendly technologies.

Principle 10: Bribery. This is covered in the *Waste Concern's Administrative, Discipline and Financial Rules and Procedure* booklet



8. Reporting System

Waste Concern recognizes the importance of raising concerns by the employees to the appropriate authorities within the organization.

Therefore, Waste Concern ensures that safe, appropriate and accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to employees and all partners involved.

To enable this, Waste Concern has appointed Ms. Merina Afrose, Finance Manager of Waste Concern as the Safeguarding Designated Person who is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding is given high priority within the organization.

Specific responsibilities of this role include:

- Adhering to organization-wide overview of safeguarding issues and monitoring the implementation of the safeguarding policy
- Being Waste Concern's focal point for registering, reporting and allegations of all incidents
- Providing support and advice to Waste Concern employees on all safeguarding matters
- Carrying out referrals and reporting to the relevant authorities where sexual exploitation or abuse, or abuse of an at-risk adult is reported or suspected
- Continuing to develop a vigorous safeguarding policy for Waste Concern

9. How to Report a Safeguarding Concern

All Safeguarding concerns are to be reported directly to Waste Concern. This can be accomplished by one of the established four different and safe channels.

1. An anonymous web-based form
2. An in-person visit to the designated Safeguard Person
3. Using the designated electronic hotline: **office@wasteconcern.org**
4. Calling the designated hotline +88-1771113762.

The Safeguarding hotline(s) are monitored by the Designated Person Ms. Merina Afrose, the Executive Director Mr. A.H. Md. Maqsood Sinha and a designated member of the Executive Committee. Please see diagram below:





Safeguarding Organogram of Waste Concern

10. Investigation and Response

Waste Concern will follow up all safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligations of the organizational handbook.

Waste Concern will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to employee, trainee, contractor, or volunteer found in breach of the policy. Depending on the severity of the situation, it is Waste Concern's policy to report serious crimes of bodily harm to the relevant law enforcement authorities. This is unless doing so may pose a risk to the party(s) and/or family involved in the situation.

Within its means, Waste Concern will offer support to the victim caused by employee, trainee, contractor or volunteer, whether a formal internal investigation or response was carried out. This could include medical assessment, personal protection through immediate relocation among other agreed upon arrangements. To ensure compliance, options to deescalate and alleviate the situation, will be laid out by Waste Concern to the person(s) involved. However, all final decisions by Waste Concern for the person affected will be decided upon by the victim first before implemented.

Any violation of this Safeguarding Code of Conduct will be noted as a serious concern and may result in either disciplinary action, and including dismissal, in accordance with disciplinary procedures of Waste Concern. All Waste Concern Employees, consultants, contractors, sub-contractors who are under Waste Concern's payroll system, including all volunteers must read and sign this Waste Concern Safeguarding Policy.

11. Confidentiality

To protect the integrity and safety of the person involved, it is critical that confidentiality is ensured at all stages of the safeguarding process. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management will be shared on a need-to-know-basis only and will be kept secure at all times.



12. Communicating Waste Concern's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

This policy and procedures involved are publicly available on Waste Concern's website. Waste Concern is committed to communicate the Safeguarding policy to all employees, trainers, trainees, collaborators, and volunteers as when needed. This also includes orientation on the policies for all people involved directly with Waste Concern's activities at all its facilities. The safeguarding policy is implemented by the designated safeguarding person along with the Executive Director of Waste Concern

Glossary of Terms

Child/Children In 2013 Bangladesh enacted new legislation for the benefit of its estimated 70 million children, repealing the Children Act, 1974. ... The law defines a child as anyone up to the age of 18 years (Section 4)

Grievances An official statement of a complaint over something believed to be wrong or unfair.

Safeguarding The measures, we are taking to preventing, to assist in reporting, and responding to harmful behavior and mental and/or physical abuse. This is to protect the health, well-being and human rights of anyone that comes into contact with Waste Concern, whether it is Waste Concern employees, partners, program participants and/or direct stakeholders.

VA (Vulnerable Adult) VA is a vulnerable adult whose ability to protect himself from violence, abuse or neglect is significantly impaired through physical or mental disability or illness, through old age or otherwise.

Questions about Waste Concern's Safeguard Policy

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