



SEXUAL HARASSMENT, EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE (SHEA) – SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE, AND VULNERABLE ADULTS AT RISK

- Overarching Policy -

1. APPROACH AND VALUES

Karuna Sri Lanka Inc. is committed to preventing any form of sexual harassment, exploitation, and abuse (including child abuse and adult at-risk abuse) and responding robustly when these harms take place.

Karuna Sri Lanka Inc. will not tolerate any of our Board and Committee Members, employees or other representatives carrying out any form of abuse or exploitation towards anyone we encounter through our work. Zero tolerance means we will always act when a safeguarding harm takes place, ensure that support is offered to all affected and that our organisation learns from the harm, so it does not happen again.

Karuna Sri Lanka Inc. is committed to ensure that the work of our organisation through the Committee ensures high-level oversight and accountability around its safeguarding efforts, with appropriate levels of dedicated capacity and allocated resources to all projects, policies and practice to prevent and respond to sexual harassment, exploitation, child and adults at risk abuse.

The Committee will include safeguarding and SHEA at every meeting. Where a safeguarding/SHEA incident is raised/identified then the Committee recognises its duty to act on concerns or suspicions appropriately.

Breaches of the Code of Conduct (outlined below) will be subject to an emergency Committee meeting where the incident will be assessed by the Committee. A decision will be made regarding any mitigation measures, legal actions, individual reprimand and/or exclusion of people involved in the incident.

2. CODE OF CONDUCT

Board and Committee members / employees / representatives **must**:

- Help create a safe work environment by treating everyone they meet through their work with kindness, decency, and showing respect for equality and diversity.

- Set a positive example by adhering in their work and out of work to the **Code of Conduct** (in their respective home countries and when travelling overseas for Karuna Sri Lanka Inc. business)
- Embed Safeguarding into the work of Karuna Sri Lanka Inc. by creating a safe environment for abuse to be raised.
- Not engage in sexual or romantic relationships with any person receiving support from Karuna Sri Lanka Inc.
- Not place themselves or others in a vulnerable situation where they are the only adult representative with an individual or group of people supported by Karuna Sri Lanka Inc.
- Karuna Sri Lanka Inc. **prohibits Board and Committee members, employees, and any other representatives from engaging in any kind of sexual activity with children**, defined as anyone under the age of eighteen or older if the law indicates this. (N.B. Overseas law may differ, however good practice for this organisation applies these parameters.)
- Ensure that information about people supported and their persona situation, donors, and supporters is kept confidential and safe in line with the Privacy Act 1988 (Privacy Act).
- Ensure that for work-related purposes when photographing or filming a child or young person local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images are complied with. Informed consent should be obtained from a guardian before photographing or filming where applicable. All images should present children and young people in a dignified and respectful manner.
- Ensure that children and young people are adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive.
- Ensure that Karuna Sri Lanka Inc. resources (human, financial and material) are used appropriately and not used to exploit, groom, or harass participants of Karuna Sri Lanka Inc. or others in communities in which the organisation works.
- Understand that it is prohibited for Board and Committee members, employees, and any other representatives to access, display or transmit offensive and/or pornographic material on any Karuna Sri Lanka Inc. provided or subsidised electronic device at any time or on any personal device promoting the organisation's work.

3. DEFINITIONS

Child Abuse

Child abuse is when a child or young person is intentionally harmed by an adult or another child. It can occur over a period of time but can also be a one-off action. Abuse can take place in person or online and can be physical, emotional, or sexual.

Types of abuse include:

- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Child sexual exploitation
- Commercial exploitation
- Child trafficking
- Criminal exploitations and gangs
- Domestic abuse

- Emotional abuse
- Female genital mutilation
- Grooming
- Non-recent/historical abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse

Neglect

Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child or young person's basic needs. Neglect can be difficult to spot and often the child or young person may not realise or understand that what is happening is wrong.

There are four types of neglect:

- Physical neglect
- Educational neglect
- Emotional neglect
- Medical neglect

Any child or young person can suffer neglect or abuse, but some are at more risk than others. These include children and young people who have a disability, are in the care system and/or have complex medical needs.