

## **BUILD Partners**

### **Safeguarding policy**

*To report a safeguarding concern, contact the BUILD Partners Trustees through [admin@buildpartners.org](mailto:admin@buildpartners.org)*

#### **1 BUILD Partners and its work in relation to safeguarding**

This section give important background to our safeguarding. It is essential reading for all those involved in BUILD Partners.

##### **1.1 What is BUILD Partners and who are our partners?**

BUILD Partners is a UK charity operating in the domain of Christian education. We work alongside select local partners in their development and delivery of BUILD-based church leadership training. Church leaders and educators of different sorts and at different levels are the main participants.

Our local partners are *almost* exclusively Anglican provinces, dioceses, parishes and institutions in East Africa, and their relevant programmes. That qualifying word *almost* is important: we cannot guarantee that Anglican churches and institutions are the only ones involved, nor is that even desirable. We recognise that there will be non-denominational and inter-denominational aspects to the work we are involved in, whether by accident or by design, and this is only to be welcomed.

##### **1.2 What are the safeguarding implications?**

This has safeguarding implications. We cannot assume that all instances of the use of BUILD methods and materials will be set within an Anglican context and that particular form of regulated environment. Nor can we assume, for a range of reasons, that our partners' safeguarding environments have consistently high standards or that they are regulated to the same degree. For example, the growth of the church and churches in the region that we relate to means that new dioceses are being formed, and their policies and practices may be in development, along with the appropriate training.

##### **1.3 Who are the participants in the BUILD programmes?**

Similar observations can be made around the fact that participants in BUILD programmes are adult learners. This means, technically, that BUILD Partners' work does not normally fall within the remit of formal safeguarding guidelines (because we do not work directly or intentionally with children or vulnerable adults). However, there will be points at which representatives of the charity do have such contact, for example during visits to dioceses in East Africa or churches in the UK. The holistic nature of the work of dioceses means that visitors are often invited to schools or outreach programmes of various sorts, where both children and vulnerable adults may be encountered. In addition, BUILD participants may in some situations decide to use BUILD materials or approaches in schools or youth settings, bringing BUILD Partners' representatives into such spheres.

##### **1.4 What vulnerabilities lie in our north-south relationships?**

Furthermore, power imbalances that can be at play in relationships between UK charities and their partners come into the foreground when scrutinising the need to safeguard individuals from harm. These power imbalances can be bound up with the financial gap between north and south. And it can be exacerbated by the fact that education, which carries currency locally, is on offer at different levels through BUILD. This can increase or reveal any existing or hidden vulnerabilities, which can be openings for abuse and exploitation.

## **1.5 Why is safeguarding so important to BUILD Partners?**

The context described above, one of limited but potentially significant exposure, makes our safeguarding policy more rather than less important. There is a very real danger in assuming that low exposure translates into a minimisation or eradication of risk. It does not. It simply means what it says: that our exposure is low and that we need to be all the more vigilant about that exposure.

Finally, we want to encourage the programmes we are connected with, who will certainly have contact with children and vulnerable adults, to be exemplary in their thinking and behaviour too and to do all we possibly can to serve them in this important area. We aim to demonstrate, model and promote good safeguarding principles and practice, knowing that God cares about the vulnerable and we will only flourish if we do too (Psalm 41:1).

## **2 BUILD Partners commitment in and to safeguarding**

Healthy churches are the principal desired outcome of all BUILD training, and safeguarding is integral to that objective. Because of that, and as a result of the context described above, BUILD Partners is committed, with and alongside our partners, to promoting environments that are safe for learning and growing together when involved with BUILD programmes, spaces in which individuals are respected and protected from harm.

As a charity that is committed to setting and expecting very high standards of behaviour in the area of safeguarding, BUILD Partners will:

1. Ensure that our representatives and partners are aware of and act in accordance with their personal responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and its importance.
2. Work to ensure that our speech and behaviour promotes freedom from harm and abuse, exploitation, neglect and discrimination.
3. Promote an awareness that abuse can take a range of forms, including physical, emotional, psychological and sexual (outlined in Section 3).
4. Work to eliminate discrimination including any sectarian, racist, sexist or disability prejudice.
5. Take steps to prevent any bullying, exploitation, or its precursors, and challenge it.
6. Make sure that any children and adults at risk of harm or parents know how to voice their concerns and obtain help if they are concerned.
7. Ensure that everyone knows how to report any alleged malpractice or negligence, and that they can do so and be supported in it (often known as 'whistleblowing').
8. Ensure effective procedures are in place for responding to complaints, concerns and allegations of suspected or actual abuse.
9. Ensure that everyone knows what their responsibilities are and what they should do.
10. Ensure that there is documentation of any event or instance of concern.
11. Ensure that approved recruitment procedures are followed, where applicable.
12. Ensure that all our representatives are familiar with and have access to a copy of this policy and know whom to contact for further information and advice.
13. Encourage and help our partners and partner programmes in the development of their own safeguarding approaches and policies, so that BUILD training promotes and encourages good safeguarding principles, and continue to work towards best practice in this area.
14. Ensure that, in relation to all the above, BUILD Partners trustees, volunteers and visitors to partners, projects or programmes have read and taken on board the BUILD Partners Code of Conduct (outlined in Section 4).

### **3 Understanding harm**

All BUILD Partners volunteers, trustees, consultants and visitors to projects are required to understand the potential harm that we seek to safeguard those involved from. Some of that is outlined in our commitment above, but to repeat and for further consideration the below applies.

**Harm is defined as** injury, hurt, damage or loss or a combination of any of these.

**Harm is caused by** abuse or exploitation which may be neglect, emotional or psychological, physical, sexual, financial or material, discriminatory or a combination of any of these.

**Neglect** is the failure to meet a person's basic physical and/or psychological needs that damages or impairs their health or development or failing to prevent harm.

**Physical abuse** involves deliberate injury to the person, however slight. This would include injuries that are inconsistent with explanations provided, unexplained fractures to any part of the body or spinal injuries but it might also be reflected in incontinence or the restriction of freedom of movement.

**Emotional or psychological abuse** is the emotional mistreatment of a person that adversely affects their behaviour, wellbeing or emotional or cognitive development.

**Sexual abuse** is the involvement of the person in sexual activities which they do not want or truly understand, or to which they are unable to give valid or effective consent. This may involve rape or other criminal behaviour; sexual assault or sexual harassment; overtly sexual behaviour, often inappropriate to age or development; exposure to inappropriate material.

**Financial or material abuse** is the theft or misuse of a person's money or property. Signs of possible financial or material abuse include unusual or inappropriate financial transactions or the withholding of a financial or material entitlement.

**Discriminatory abuse** occurs when someone picks on a person or treats them unfairly because something about them is different. This can include unfair or less favourable treatment due to a person's race, gender, age, disability, religion, sexuality, appearance or cultural background. Such behaviour may include harassment, threatening or obscene behaviour; bullying; or threatening, offensive or insulting language.

### **4 BUILD Partners code of conduct**

This Code of Conduct aims to ensure the maximum protection of programme participants from exploitation or inappropriate behaviour including: bullying; verbal, physical or sexual harassment; rape; exploitation; intimidation; racial or ethnic discrimination or harassment; behaviour that shows a lack of respect for the dignity of others; behaving in an obviously culturally insensitive manner; or attempt to commit fraud, blackmail or to accept or solicit a bribe.

This Code clarifies the responsibilities of BUILD Partners trustees, volunteers and visitors (to partners, projects or programmes), and the standards of behaviour expected of them. Those who do not adhere to this code of conduct or fail to report on others they know or suspect are not adhering to this Code of Conduct may be excluded from the work.

#### **4.1 Minimising risk situations**

**Do:** avoid placing yourself in a compromising or vulnerable position of any sort; report if a situation occurs involving a participant which may be subject to misinterpretation.

**Do not:** be alone with a participant in a closed space if possible (leave a door open unless the need for confidentiality is dominant); show favouritism; or spend excessive amounts of time with one participant.

## **4.2 Sexual behaviour**

**Do not:** engage in sexually provocative activities with participants; make physical contact with a participant in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way; sleep in the same bed as a participant; use your power and position to make sexual demands.

## **4.3 Physical behaviour**

**Do:** wait for appropriate physical contact, such as hugging or holding hands, to be initiated by the participant.

**Do not:** discipline participants by use of physical punishment or by failing to provide the necessities of care such as food, shelter or medical attention.

## **4.4 Psychosocial Behaviour**

**Do:** try to be alert to physical and emotional states of participants you are working with; avoid taking advantage of your position and authority; always report abuse or suspected abuse.

**Do not:** display discriminatory, prejudicial or oppressive behaviour or language towards participants; act in any way that intends to embarrass shame, humiliate or degrade a participant; or promise secrecy to a participant who discloses abuse to you.

## **4.5 Peer abuse**

**Do:** be aware of the potential for peer abuse; avoid placing participants in high-risk peer situations.

## **5 Further guidelines regarding BUILD Partners' practice of safeguarding**

### **5.1 Additional measures for BUILD Partners trustees or volunteers prior to visits**

All BUILD Partners trustees or volunteers must come under clear *additional* safeguarding measures if they are to visit partner projects. This might mean coming under the policy of a related mission agency. And/or under local diocesan safeguarding and its regular training course requirements and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. (In the UK every organisation that works directly with children or vulnerable adults is advised to follow a clearly defined safeguarding policy and individuals are required to hold a current DBS certificate.)

Trustees or volunteers who visit partners tend to be recognised clergy or lay church leaders who hold a DBS certificate due to the nature of their existing role. But to ensure this is the case, any team member will be asked to provide us with a copy of that certificate or, in the case of clergy, their licence or permission to officiate certificate (PTO).

When on visits these individuals also come under the oversight of the local bishop or their representatives, or under the appropriate provincial structures and officials who are aware of their itinerary.

### **5.2 Local partners and their safeguarding policies**

BUILD Partners will not enter into any formal partnership or relationship in our field of work unless there is evidence of local safeguarding policies being in place. As already noted, our local partners tend to be Anglican provinces, dioceses and institutions, and these invariably have their own well-developed policies. However, we do not take that for granted and we ask to view and potentially discuss those policies.

If there are omissions we recommend other local partners who have clear and effective local policies, who can then help others develop in this important area.

**6 Implementation of the policy and declaration of acceptance**

- All BUILD Partners trustees, volunteers, visitors, and partner-project leads are obliged to sign this safeguarding policy and are obliged to adhere to its contents.
- Partner projects will provide updates on their safeguarding practice, training and its updates in their written reports.
- This policy should be signed and dated prior to the commencement of these relationships.
- BUILD Partners will keep the Declaration of Acceptance on file.
- Please keep a copy of this policy to hand so it can be referred to at any time.

**I hereby declare that I have read and understand the BUILD Partners Safeguarding Policy and that I agree to abide by its contents.**

Print name: .....

Signature: .....

Role in relation to BUILD Partners: .....

Date: .....

**Witnessed by**

Name: .....

Signature: .....