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Agriculture Development Association (PARC)

Safeguarding Policy

Approved by the Board of Directors in
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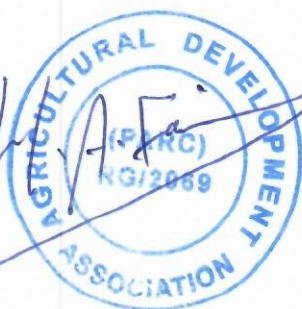


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1. Scope of Policy:

In line with PARC's desire to provide its services with maximum benefit to its beneficiaries and increase and support the resilience of the Palestinian people, and in line with the faith PARC has towards the international humanitarian protection measures, similar to those mentioned in the Protection Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), PARC media protection principles, and PARC internal related policies such as its complaint systems, and HAP policy, PARC puts in hand this Safeguarding Policy to guarantee best practices and best right protection for employees and beneficiaries. Also, to ensure complementarity to its internal procedures and policies.

This policy will be applicable to PARC staff at all levels, volunteers, interns, beneficiaries, parent organizations and all stakeholders.

2. Purpose and Relevance:

PARC is a nongovernmental institution that aims at helping the Palestinian people achieve economic growth and enhance their resilience in their lands, houses, and homeland.

PARC's programmes' beneficiaries includes individuals of all society's segments including children, youth, and adults of both sexes, and so, PARC follows a zero-tolerance policy towards misconduct, harm, abuse, harassment, or exploitation during the term of application of its projects whether from its staff, project workers, field workers, volunteers, staff of partner organizations, and other related personnel. This policy also aims at safeguarding PARC's official personnel and employees from any harm, abuse, harassment, or exploitation while acting in their roles for PARC.

3. Glossary of Terms:

WHENEVER MENTIONED IN THIS POLICY, THE FOLLOWING TERMS ARE DEFINED AS FOLLOWS:

3.1. Safeguarding:

is a broad term that refers to all the policies, procedures and actions that an organization takes and puts in place to ensure that anyone working on their behalf, and anyone benefiting from the work they are doing, does not come to any harm, wither intended or unintended, as a result of this work taking place. It includes both policies, procedures and the culture within the organization that either promotes or hinders best safeguarding practices.

3.2. Child:

any individual below the age of 18, irrespective of local definition.

3.3. Vulnerability:

a person who is or may be in need of care by reason of mental, physical, or other disability, age or illness, and who is, or may be, unable to take care of him/herself, or unable to protect him/herself against significant harm or exploitation or abuse. Social and contextual factors also contribute to people's vulnerability. These include discrimination and marginalization, contextual vulnerability which includes but is not limited to giving low status and power to women and young females, marital status, orphanhood, poverty, lack of land tenure, poor governance, ethnicity, class, caste, and religious or political affiliations.

3.4. Abuse:

the act of inflicting harm or failure to prevent harm. `This act is inclusive but not exclusive to:

3.4.1. Physical abuse:

actual or potential physical harm perpetrated by another person, adult or child, knowingly or not knowingly, or the failure to prevent this harm. It may involve hitting, shaking, poisoning, drowning and burning. Physical harm may also be caused when a

parent or care-giver fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

3.4.2. Emotional Abuse:

persistent emotional maltreatment that impacts on a child's or person's emotional development. Emotionally abusive acts include restriction of movement, degrading, humiliating, bullying (including cyber bullying), and threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.

3.4.3. Sexual abuse:

exploiting a person, child or adult, through rape, incest, and all forms of sexual activities including pornography, in addition to exchanging benefits such as goods, food, and money in exchange for sexual behaviours of any type.

3.4.4. Neglect:

where basic needs such as food, warmth, and medical care are not met, or when there is a failure to protect a person from exposure to any kind of danger, resulting in serious impairment of a person's health or development.

3.4.5. Sexual Harassment:

unwanted behaviour of sexual nature which violates a person's dignity, makes him/her feel intimidated, degraded, or humiliated, or created a hostile or offensive environment and includes:

- ☐ Sexual comments or jokes.
- ☐ Physical behaviour, including unwelcome sexual advances, touching and various forms of sexual assault.
- ☐ Displaying pictures, photos, or drawings of a sexual nature.
- ☐ Sending texts or emails with a sexual content.

4. Guiding Principles

PARC is committed to international and regional regulations of safeguarding, such as those enlisted in the charter of International Standards for Keeping a Child Safe, UN Convention on the Rights of a Child, and Core Humanitarian Standards, and obliges itself to commit to the following principles towards all its beneficiaries, children or adults, males or females:

- ☐ Safeguarding the wholeness and wellbeing of beneficiaries, staff, volunteers, and all those connected with the activities of PARC, ensuring they have equal rights to protection from Harm.
- ☐ Ensuring concerns or allegations are taken seriously, investigated and acted on as appropriate.
- ☐ Ensure all PARC's official personnel, staff, trustees, volunteers, partners, and any other related representatives are familiar with this policy and aware of their responsibilities within it.
- ☐ Ensuring all actions on protecting people are taken in the best interest of the person at risk.
- ☐ Ensuring proper reporting of criminal acts to the relevant local authorities.
- ☐ Ensuring actions of abuse are reported to donors and/or partners shall PARC decide it concerns them.
- ☐ Ensuring all projects implemented by PARC follow the "do-no-harm" principles.
- ☐ Ensuring all beneficiaries are fully aware of the of implementation of this safeguarding policy by PARC's staff, volunteers, trustees, consultants, and partners.
- ☐ Ensuring all personnel understand how to implement good safeguarding practice in their role by training them to PARC's safeguarding policy principles.
- ☐ Providing clarity about the corrective action process that will be followed when this policy is breached, as mentioned in the Disciplinary Action Procedure.
- ☐ Ensuring that alleged perpetrators of abuse are treated fairly and in accordance with the rule of local law of Courts of Palestinian Territories, and governing bodies in Gaza Strip.

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility at PARC, but we recognize that senior leaders have a particular responsibility to set the tone and culture of the organization to ensure best safeguarding practice is expected and normalized.

4.1 Media Specific Principles:

It is paramount for PARC that all its related personnel, staff, trustees, project workers, field workers, volunteers, consultants, and partners adhere to good practices when using media or media related content, and should seek to minimize the risk of inappropriate use of information, stories and visual images (photographs, video or social media) of all types of beneficiaries, children, adults, males, and females. Good media practices include the following:

- Ensure receiving the permission of adult beneficiaries upon taking his/her picture for the use of PARC's regular internal or external reports or annual reports.
- Ensure receiving the permission of the person responsible for a child beneficiary, whether parent or care giver, upon taking the child's picture for the use of PARC's regular internal or external reporting or annual reports.
- Ensure images of children or adults do not show them in a state of undress or in inappropriate posing.
- Ensure details attached to images and included in stories do not allow that a child or adult can be traced to his or her home or community.
- Ensure distinctive buildings, street signs, or landmarks are not included in an image if they identify where a child or adult lives or works.
- Geotagging of images should be disabled when taking photographs.
- Abide to PARC's photography guidelines as mentioned in its Photography Guidelines Document mentioned hereinafter as a reference.

4.2 Children-Specific Safeguarding Principles

In line with the Protection Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) policy, mentioned hereinafter as a reference, it is PARC's substantial and permanent goal to ensure the safety, wellbeing, and harmless treatment of all children beneficiaries enrolled within their applied projects. PARC adheres to zero-tolerance policy to any violation of children's rights physically, emotionally, or sexually.

When dealing with children, the following measures should be taken into consideration:

- ☐ Ensure all children are being treated fairly and without any signs of discrimination basis of age, colour, religion, ethnicity, gender, illness, or disability.
- ☐ Ensure all children are included in service provision regardless any signs of discrimination on basis of age, colour, religion, ethnicity, gender, illness, or disability.
- ☐ Ensure children's appropriate participation in all designed activities without discrimination on basis of age, colour, religion, ethnicity, gender, illness, or disability.
- ☐ Ensure a child's best interests are assessed and taken as a primary consideration during project implementation.
- ☐ Ensure children have the ability and freedom to express any concerns they might have about an aspect of a project under implementation that includes them.
- ☐ Guarantee confidentiality and safe reporting of a concern reported by a child.
- ☐ Conduct systematic monitoring of interventions to ensure that children, including those with disabilities, are not exposed to additional risks or harm.
- ☐ Ensure PARC employees, volunteers, or project workers are never alone with a single child in a closed room, car, or any other space.
- ☐ Ensure children within a project are not subject to any type of abuse as defined in article iv. of Heading 2. Glossary of Terms.
- ☐ Ensure proper disciplinary action is taken against violators of children's rights as explained under this policy.

- ☐ Ensure violators of children's rights as explained under this policy as referred to proper legal and official bodies for disciplinary actions, should the safeguarding committee at PARC see fit appropriate.

5. DISCIPLINARY ACTION PROCEDURE:

- ☐ Should the safeguarding committee receive a report of harm or abusive action towards a beneficiary child or adult, the following evaluation of this report is to be followed:
- ☐ The committee is to hold a meeting to discuss the relevance of the reported incident in accordance with the principles and measures enlisted in this safeguarding policy.
- ☐ The committee is to seek further assistance to evaluate the reported case should its members feel the necessity for further consultation.
- ☐ The committee is to hold hearing sessions for both the reporter and the person reported against to maintain a just objective status for better evaluation of incident. If any of the parties have evidence, he/she shall present them during the hearing sessions.
- ☐ The committee is to document the information disclosed during the hearing session in the shape of minutes.
- ☐ The committee is to decide if any further hearing sessions are necessary.
- ☐ The committee is to hold a meeting to come up with their decision regarding the reported incident.
- ☐ Should the person reported against plead guilty, the appropriate corrective action will be taken as per the recommendations of the safeguarding committee.
- ☐ Should the abusive action prove to be against PARC's code of conduct (COC) of, but does not include a genocide, the committee should decide on the appropriate internal disciplinary action to be taken against the person under investigation.
- ☐ The committee is to define the need to further explain the terms in this policy to its employees, should this measure help its employees avoid falling for abusive actions in the future.

- ☐ The committee is to decide the need to edit or amend any of this policy's articles, should this prove necessary.
- ☐ Should the abusive action prove to include genocide against a child or adult beneficiary within the scope of this safeguarding policy or the rule of law, the committee is to report the action to the proper local authorities for further legal action-taking.

6. Safeguarding Committee

The safeguarding committee is to consist of the following members:

- PARC's General Director.
- Head of branch/ Unit Director/ Department Director where the complaint was filed.
- MEAL Personnel.

7. Review and Amendment of Safeguarding Policy

The safeguarding committee is to ensure this policy is regularly reviewed and kept up to date every two years, and they are to also ensure the amendment of any articles or sub articles as necessary.

8. Policy Reference Information

Publication Number	1
Date Policy Created	March 2021
Date of Last Review	May 2021
Date of Next Formal Review	

9. Related Policies and Information

- PARC's code of Conduct.
- PARC's Hap Policy.
- PARC's Photography Guidelines.
- The PROTECTION AGAINST SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE (PSEA) POLICY.
- PARC's Complaint System Procedures.

- PARC's Complaint Feedback Process.