

# **BUHWEJU WOMEN AND CHILDREN’S RIGHTS FOUNDATION (BWCRF)**

## **CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

**Document Reference:** BWCRF/CPSP/2026/01

**Effective Date:** 20<sup>th</sup> March 2026

**Review Date:** 21<sup>ST</sup> March 2026

**Approved By:** Board of Directors / Executive Committee

### **1. POLICY STATEMENT**

Buhweju Women and Children’s Rights Foundation (BWCRF) is committed to creating and maintaining a safe environment that protects children, beneficiaries, staff, volunteers, and communities from abuse, exploitation, neglect, harassment, and any form of harm.

BWCRF adopts a **zero-tolerance approach** towards child abuse, sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), sexual harassment (SH), violence, neglect, and all safeguarding violations.

The organization recognizes its responsibility to ensure that all persons associated with BWCRF uphold the highest standards of conduct and protection.

### **2. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Protect children and vulnerable persons from abuse and exploitation;
- Promote safe programming and service delivery;
- Establish safeguarding standards;
- Define responsibilities for prevention and response;
- Provide reporting and response mechanisms;
- Ensure accountability.

### **3. OBJECTIVES**

This policy aims to:

1. Prevent abuse, exploitation, and neglect;

2. Promote child safety and dignity;
3. Strengthen reporting and response systems;
4. Ensure safe recruitment practices;
5. Protect whistleblowers and survivors;
6. Promote safeguarding awareness.

#### **4. SCOPE**

This policy applies to:

- Board members;
- Staff;
- Volunteers;
- Consultants;
- Interns;
- Partners;
- Contractors;
- Visitors;
- Community volunteers;
- Any person acting on behalf of BWCRF.

This policy applies during:

- Office work;
- Field activities;
- Trainings;
- Community meetings;
- Travel;
- Online engagements.

#### **5. GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

BWCRF safeguarding actions shall be guided by:

**Best Interests of the Child**

The welfare of the child shall be paramount.

**Do No Harm**

Programs shall not expose beneficiaries to risks.

**Confidentiality**

Information shall be protected.

**Non-Discrimination**

All children shall receive equal protection.

**Survivor-Centered Approach**

Responses shall prioritize safety, dignity, and wishes of survivors.

**Accountability**

All safeguarding concerns shall be acted upon.

**6. DEFINITIONS**

**Child**

Any person below **18 years**.

**Child Abuse**

Any act causing physical, emotional, sexual harm, exploitation, or neglect.

**Safeguarding**

Actions taken to protect people from abuse and harm.

**Sexual Exploitation**

Abuse of power for sexual purposes.

**Sexual Abuse**

Actual or threatened sexual intrusion.

**Neglect**

Failure to provide necessary care.

## **Emotional Abuse**

Actions causing psychological harm.

## **7. PROHIBITED CONDUCT**

The following are strictly prohibited:

### **Child Abuse**

- Physical punishment;
- Assault;
- Neglect;
- Emotional abuse;
- Child labour exploitation;
- Harmful practices.

### **Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)**

Including:

- Exchange of aid for sex;
- Sexual favors;
- Exploitative relationships;
- Sexual contact with children.

Sexual activity with a child is prohibited regardless of consent.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Examples:

- Unwanted touching;
- Sexual comments;
- Intimidation;
- Offensive messages.

### **Exploitation**

Including:

- Forced labour;
- Financial exploitation;
- Trafficking;
- Abuse of power.

## **8. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CHILD PROTECTION**

### **Personnel shall:**

Respect children;

Maintain professional boundaries;

Use child-friendly communication;

Obtain consent before photography where required;

Report concerns immediately.

### **Personnel shall NOT:**

Hit or humiliate children;

Sleep in same room with children unless authorized and necessary;

Use inappropriate language;

Engage in sexual relationships;

Exchange money or gifts for favors;

Share inappropriate images.

## **9. SAFE RECRUITMENT**

BWCRF shall implement:

- Reference checks;
- Interview screening;
- Safeguarding declarations;
- Code of conduct signing;
- Background verification where applicable.

All personnel shall sign safeguarding commitments.

## **10. RISK ASSESSMENT**

Programs involving children shall conduct safeguarding risk assessments covering:

- Activity risks;

- Travel risks;
- Digital risks;
- Community risks;
- Staff interactions.

Mitigation measures shall be documented.

## **11. REPORTING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS**

Any safeguarding concern shall be reported immediately.

Reports may be made to:

- Supervisor;
- Safeguarding Focal Person;
- Executive Director;
- Board representative.

Reporting channels may include:

- Verbal reports;
- Written reports;
- Telephone;
- Email;
- Suggestion boxes.

Anonymous reporting shall be permitted.

## **12. RESPONSE PROCEDURES**

Upon receiving a concern:

### **Step 1:**

Ensure immediate safety.

### **Step 2:**

Document concern.

**Step 3:**

Notify safeguarding focal person.

**Step 4:**

Conduct preliminary assessment.

**Step 5:**

Refer to authorities where necessary.

**Step 6:**

Provide support services.

**13. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Information relating to safeguarding shall only be shared on a need-to-know basis.

Confidential records shall be securely stored.

Unauthorized disclosure is prohibited.

**14. SUPPORT TO SURVIVORS**

BWCRF shall support referrals for:

- Medical care;
- Psychosocial support;
- Legal assistance;
- Protection services.

The wishes and dignity of survivors shall be respected.

**15. WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION**

No person shall suffer retaliation for reporting safeguarding concerns in good faith.

Retaliation may lead to disciplinary action.

**16. DIGITAL SAFEGUARDING**

Personnel shall:

- Protect children's images;

- Avoid inappropriate online communication;
- Secure electronic records;
- Obtain necessary permissions.

Children's personal data shall be protected.

## **17. PARTNER RESPONSIBILITIES**

Partners shall:

- Comply with this policy;
- Report safeguarding incidents;
- Train personnel;
- Adopt safeguarding measures.

BWCRF may suspend partnerships for violations.

## **18. BREACHES AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

Violations may result in:

- Warning;
- Suspension;
- Termination;
- Referral to authorities;
- Legal action.

Criminal matters shall be reported to relevant authorities.

## **19. TRAINING AND AWARENESS**

BWCRF shall provide:

- Staff induction;
- Safeguarding training;
- Refresher sessions;

- Community awareness.

Training records shall be maintained.

## 20. MONITORING

BWCRF shall monitor:

- Safeguarding incidents;
- Compliance;
- Training completion;
- Risk assessments.

Periodic reviews shall be conducted.

## 21. POLICY REVIEW

This policy shall be reviewed every **three (3) years** or when necessary.

## APPROVAL AND ADOPTION

This Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy was reviewed and approved by the Board/Executive Committee of BWCRF on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2026

and takes effect from 21<sup>st</sup> March 2026

Name	Position	Signature	Date
<b>Dr.Edyedu Isaac</b>	Chairperson	edyedu	20 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
Nambooze Jesca	Secretary	nambooze	20 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
Ssejjengo Kennedy	Executive Director	ssejjengo	20 <sup>th</sup> March 2026

**Resolution No.: BWCRF/CPSP/2026/01**

## ANNEXES

**Annex I:** Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form

**Annex II:** Child Consent Form

**Annex III:** Safeguarding Risk Assessment Tool

**Annex IV:** Code of Conduct Declaration Form

**Annex V:** Referral Pathway Template

**Annex VI:** Confidentiality Agreement Form

**Annex VII:** Safeguarding Training Attendance Form