



Whistleblowing Policy

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Organizational Profile

Bargad is a youth development organization actively working to promote peace, justice and cooperation amongst the youth¹ in Pakistan. The organization has focused on creating opportunities and amplifying the voices of the youth ever since its inception in 1997, leading to a vast network of around 3000 youth volunteers, known as the Bargad Volunteer Network (BVN) throughout the country.

Bargad's Vision:

Politically, socially and economically empowered youth and women, respect, protect and promote peace and harmony

Bargad's Mission:

1. Engage vulnerable youth and women in all diversity to their full potential through education, mentorship and innovative interventions designed to enhance their overall well-being.
2. To invest in youth-led and youth-centred ideas, to convene key stakeholders in the sector and advocate for systems and policy changes that meet youths' needs.
3. Engage youth to end violence against women.

Bargad has implemented more than 100 projects on youth training², youth mobilization and policy advocacy, including the provision of technical assistance to all the provincial governments of Pakistan, regions of Gilgit-Baltistan and the State of Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK) for the formulation of their respective youth policies. These policies have been approved by the provincial governments of Punjab (2012), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (2016) and Sindh (2018), resulting in governments' pledges to allocate 4% budget to sports and youth affairs, 15% on the women employment quota, implementation of the E-Rozgar programs, and on youth participation in the local governments, respectively. Bargad has also conducted Capacity Enhancement workshops on youth development with officials of the youth affairs departments of Punjab, Balochistan and Sindh.

Bargad has a youth network of 782 individuals, civil society organizations and government institutions, with Youth engagements with 76 Universities, 46 Colleges and 35 Higher Secondary Schools, 33 student societies in 84 Districts from 6 provinces and regions.

The organization has previously partnered with 26 membership based student organizations and 15 Youth Groups over Pakistan; producing the largest pool of researches and publications on various aspects of youth than any other civil society organization in Pakistan, while also pioneering a youth track of peace and diplomacy in the South Asian region.

¹ Adolescents: 12-19; Youth age bracket in Pakistan: 15-29

² Since 2003, the organization has trained 7880 youth activists and young faculty only through training workshops and peer sessions in issues of social development.

The hallmark of the organization is that its core youth volunteers participate in all aspects of the projects - from action-planning to project execution, while also mapping in the course of its work; issues as well as challenges identified by the youth across the country³.

³ The Youth in the mapping is part of the Youth Cohorts in the districts where Bargad has actively.

1. Objective

This policy seeks the support of Employees, Board members, General Body, volunteers or other partners and vendors to report significant deviations from key management policies and report any non-compliance and wrong practices, e.g, unethical behavior, fraud, violation of law, inappropriate behavior /conduct etc.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is as follows:

- To encourage the employees and other parties to report unethical behaviors, malpractices, wrongful conduct, fraud, violation of the organization's policies & Values, violation of law by any employee of BARGAD without any fear of retaliation.
- To build and strengthen a culture of transparency and trust within the organization.

3. Applicability

This policy applies to all the Employees, Board members, General Body, Volunteers or other partners and vendors (hereinafter referred to as 'Whistle Blower').

This policy encourages all the Whistle Blowers to report any kind of misuse of organization's properties, mismanagement or wrongful conduct prevailing/executed in the organization, which the whistleblower in good faith, believes, evidences any of the following:

1. Violation of any law or regulations, policies including but not limited to corruption, bribery, theft, fraud, coercion and willful omission.
2. Rebating of Commission/benefit or conflict of interest.
3. Procurement frauds.
4. Mismanagement or misappropriation of organization cash/funds/assets.
5. Leaking confidential or proprietary information.
6. Unofficial use of Organization's property/human assets.
7. Activities violating Organization policies. (Including Code of Conduct)
8. An abuse of authority or fraud
9. An act of discrimination or sexual harassment.

4. No Retaliation:

It is contrary to the values of BARGAD for anyone to retaliate against any board member, officer, and employee or volunteer who in good faith reports an ethics violation, or a suspected violation of law, such as a complaint of discrimination, or suspected fraud, or suspected violation of any policy governing the operations of BARGAD.

An employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to disciplinary action.

5. Reporting Procedure

BARGAD has an open door policy and suggests that employees share their questions, concerns, suggestions or complaints with their supervisor. If you are not comfortable speaking with your supervisor or you are not satisfied with your supervisor's response, you are encouraged to speak with compliance committee.

Supervisors and coordinators are required to report complaints or concerns about suspected ethical and legal violations in writing to the BARGAD's compliance committee, who has the responsibility to investigate all reported complaints. Employees with concerns or complaints may also submit their concerns in writing directly to their supervisor or the Executive Director or the organization's Compliance committee.

6. Compliance Committee

The BARGAD's compliance committee is responsible for ensuring that all complaints about unethical or illegal conduct are investigated and resolved. The Compliance committee will advise the Executive Director and/or the Board of Directors of all complaints and their resolution.

7. Accounting and Auditing Matters:

The BARGAD's compliance committee shall immediately notify the Executive Director of any concerns or complaint regarding organizational accounting practices, internal controls or auditing and work with the committee until the matter is resolved.

8. Acting in Good Faith

Anyone filing a written complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense.

9. Confidentiality

Violations or suspected violations may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

10. Handling of Reported Violations

On receipt of any written complaint, the BARGAD's compliance committee will acknowledge the receipt to complainant.

The CC will then summon the accused person for clarification on the accusation framed against him / her in writing.

After getting the written response from accused, the CC will investigate and suggest appropriate corrective action to the concern authorities.

The management will take necessary action if warranted by the investigation.

11. Complaint Resolution Committee

The Committee reference to Complaint Resolution Committee as mentioned in Complaint Mechanism Policy