



Conflict of Interest Policy

Created: September 2015

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Organizational Profile	3
1. Purpose	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2. Definitions	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3. Procedures	5
4. Annual Statements	6
Annexure I:	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Statement of Compliance with Conflict of Interest Policy	7

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:

- a. 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.
- b. 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.
- c. 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), and Balochistan (2024) 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 64 Universities, 40 Colleges and 35 Higher Secondary Schools.

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 worked or is presently working.

1. Purpose

Bargad may face situations where its financial and non-financial transactions with some parties including hiring decisions may benefit private/financial interests of its Board members or its principal office bearers or its members, thus arising a potential conflict of interest situation. This Conflict of Interest Policy (hereinafter called “the Policy”) offers a mechanism to address and resolve such situations.

This policy is to supplement, and not to replace, any existing provincial or federal laws governing conflicts of interest applicable to nonprofits, non-governmental organizations and charitable organizations in Pakistan.

2. Definitions

1. Conflict of Interest

In the context of Bargad (hereinafter called “Organization”), a conflict of interest will be deemed to be potentially present when:

- 1.1. A financial transaction (involving award of a contract for services or an investment decision, for instance) with a party is likely to benefit a board member or an office bearer of the Organization or his/her immediate family member;
- 1.2. A staff member of the Organization is engaged, whether with remuneration or without remuneration, with another organization;
- 1.3. A staff member of the Organization is engaged in a consultancy assignment regarding the Organization;
- 1.4. A hiring decision is likely to benefit a board member or an office bearer of the Organization; and/or
- 1.5. A member’s participation in activities of other activities may bring disrepute to Bargad’s vision and mission

2. Interested Person

Any individual office bearer, member of the Board of Directors or a registered member of the Organization which faces any of the possible scenarios of Conflict of Interest as explained in the Article II(1) is called “Interested Person.”

3. Procedures

1. **Disclosure:** It is the duty of the interested person to disclose all material facts that indicate possible conflicts of interest as defined above.
2. **Recusal of Self:** It is the right of the interested person to recuse himself or herself any time from participation in any decision making that may lead to a conflict of interest.

3. **Determination of Conflict of Interest:** It is the responsibility of the compliance committee referred to in the Complaint Mechanism Policy to undertake and evaluate a potential conflict of interest.
4. **Resolution of Conflict of Interest:**
 - a. The committee decides to formally investigate a matter involving a conflict of interest, it will call a meeting. The interested person may be asked to give a presentation in his defense. Later on, the person has to leave the said meeting.
 - b. The board or its delegated committee will deliberate on the available options and will make a decision on whether a conflict of interest situation exists or not.
 - c. The committee will deliberate reasonable alternatives to the transaction/decision under review. In case of a practical and reasonable alternative, the Board will select that option. In case of absence of such alternatives, given budget/time constraints, the Board may approve the transaction/ decision.
5. **Violation of the Policy:**
 - a. If the committee has reasonable cause to believe that a member/officer has failed to disclose conflict of interest, he/she will agitate the appropriate forum.
 - b. Upon a formal filing of a complaint, the procedure as elucidated in Section 3 (4) will be followed.
 - c. The board and/or senior management of the Organization has the right to take disciplinary action against a person found violative of the Policy.

4. Annual Statements

1. Each member of the Board and all office bearers of the Organization shall sign an annual statement of declaration, which will affirm that such a person has understood the Conflict of Interest Policy and has not made any violation. A template of this statement is attached at Annexure-I.
2. If, during the course of the year, a material change takes place in the annual statement, the signing person shall disclose such changes and revise the annual declaration form.
3. The Board and top management will periodically review the compliance status.

Annexure I:

Statement of Compliance with Conflict of Interest Policy

I _____ appointed as _____ in Bargad, do affirm the following:

- 1: That, I have received a copy of Bargad's Conflict of Interest Policy.
- 2: That, I have read and understood Bargad's Conflict of Interest Policy.
- 3: That, I agree to comply with the Policy.
- 4: That, at the signing of this statement, I do not have any conflict of interest as defined in the Policy.
- 5: That, in future, if any material change occurs in my circumstances raising the issue of conflict of interest, I will immediately inform the appropriate forum and sign a new statement.

Name

Date

Signature