



Do-No-Harm 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 organisation has focused on creating opportunities and amplifying the voices of youth since its inception in 1997, leading to a vast network of around 3,000 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:

- Engage vulnerable youth and women of all diversity to their full potential through education, mentorship and innovative interventions designed to enhance their overall well-being.
- 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.
- 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% of the annual provincial 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 across Pakistan, producing the largest pool of research 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.

Understanding Do No Harm

Do No Harm (DNH) is a framework which was devised to help development personnel apply conflict sensitivity to their programming, developed in the 1990s by a collective of international and local NGOs working in conflict and post-conflict settings. However, DNH approaches are helpful in any context in which development programmes are being implemented by outside agencies, to assist in preventing harm and increasing positive impact on those they are trying to benefit, as well as their families, communities and wider society. Before considering how to apply DNH to the GEC, it is important that we understand its meaning in the context of the GEC's mandate and countries of operation, and in light of the particular responsibilities of both the FM and fund recipients.

What is Do No Harm?

When we intervene somewhere we become a part of the dynamics and relationships in that place, whether through investing resources or simply through being there. In conflict-affected and fragile settings or places undergoing rapid social change, societal relationships are more fluid, social norms are contested, and competition within society can be heightened and violent. If we do not understand how our presence interacts with the wider environment in which we are working in such circumstances, and seek to avoid or mitigate negative impacts, our efforts can end up harming more than benefitting those we are trying to help. The basis of DNH is to ensure careful consideration is given so no harm is done intentionally or unintentionally. DNH does not mean avoiding all kinds of conflict or harm at all costs. If we are engaged in development work, our work will inherently create some kinds of conflict as existing power relations and structures are challenged and, perhaps, modified. There are situations in which there is a balance of benefits and harms, and while it may be possible to mitigate some of the harm it cannot be eliminated entirely. The challenge set by DNH is that we understand the potential benefits and harms that our interventions may cause, and take steps to mitigate those.

Purpose of the policy:

Core Principles: The core principles of BARGAD's "Do No Harm" policy include the following:

⁴ The Youth in the mapping is part of the Youth Cohorts in the districts where Bargad has actively worked or is presently working.

- a) The organization will always prioritize the safety and well-being of people and communities (stakeholders and Beneficiaries) it seeks to serve.
- b) Act on the unexpected situation occurs against or towards the interest of Bargad's stakeholders and beneficiaries.
- c) Thorough analysis on the DIVIDERS and CONNECTORS in lieu of the organization's strategy.

Contextual Analysis:

BARGAD is extensively working with the most vulnerable and excluded segments of the society and directly and indirectly engaging with the actors that are serving towards the society's betterment. Working in the diverse groups and communities always has potential risks and challenges. Religious sentiments, cultural disputes, political affiliations are amongst the harms and risks. Thus, it is of crucial importance how to best respond to the humanitarian imperative without compromising commitments to humanitarian principles, human rights-based approaches and the do no harm principle.

Mitigation Strategy:

- BARGAD will engage with all stakeholders, including communities, government departments, civil society organizations, and other actors, to understand their perspectives and concerns. The organization will engage in participatory decision-making processes and ensure that marginalized voices are heard.
- Further in order to prevent the risk and plan the work Bargad will conduct comprehensive contextual analysis before implementing any project or activity. This analysis will help the organization to understand the social, economic, religious, cultural, and political environment in which it operates. The analysis will also identify potential risks and negative impacts of the organization's activities and strategies to mitigate them.
- A stepwise extensive exercise to identify the DIVIDERS and CONNECTORS in respect to the organizational thematic areas and projects scope.
- BARGAD will conduct a risk assessment before implementing any project or activity. This assessment will identify potential risks and negative impacts of the organization's activities and strategies to mitigate them. The organization will work with stakeholders to develop risk mitigation strategies and incorporate them into project design and implementation.
- BARGAD will build the capacity of its staff, partners, and stakeholders to understand and implement the "Do No Harm" policy effectively.
- The organization will provide Capacity Building: training and resources to support effective implementation and ensure that all stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities.
- BARGAD will set-up a complaint mechanism to address the issues arising during, after or in execution of the project.