# ****SANASH WELFARE FOUNDATION****

# PROJECT OUTLINE

# “Child Safeguarding and Child Protection”

**What is child safeguarding?**

Child safeguarding refers to a set of proactive measures aimed at preventing any intentional or unintentional actions that could put children at risk of harm.

The primary objective of child safeguarding is to establish and sustain a secure environment that prioritizes the well-being of children. This involves continuous and meaningful engagement with children, their families, communities, and all relevant stakeholders.

**What is Child Protection?**

Child protection is an integral component of safeguarding practices. It involves the actions and measures taken to safeguard children who are at risk of or are currently experiencing substantial harm. In essence, child protection is the framework put in place to provide assistance and support to children who have endured harm, including abuse, neglect, sexual exploitation, or other forms of harm.

**Safeguarding is to prevent harm; child protection is how we respond to harm.**

**Who is a “child”?**

A child or children are defined as persons who have not attained age 18.

**Key Definitions:**

* **Child abuse, exploitation, or neglect** constitutes any form of physical abuse; emotional abuse, or ill-treatment; sexual abuse; neglect or insufficient supervision; trafficking; or commercial, transactional, labor, or other exploitation resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, well-being, survival, development, or dignity. It includes, but is not limited to: any act or failure to act which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm to a child, or an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm to a child.
* **Physical abuse:** Constitutes acts or failures to act resulting in injury (not necessarily visible), unnecessary or unjustified pain or suffering without causing injury, harm, or risk of harm to a child’s health or welfare, or death. Such acts may include, but are not limited to: punching, beating, kicking, biting, shaking, throwing, stabbing, choking, or hitting (regardless of object used), or burning. These acts are considered abuse regardless of whether they were intended to hurt the child.
* **Sexual Abuse:** Constitutes fondling a child's genitals, penetration, incest, rape, sodomy, indecent exposure, and exploitation through prostitution or the production of pornographic materials.
* **Emotional abuse or ill treatment:** Constitutes injury to the psychological capacity or emotional stability of the child caused by acts, threats of acts, or coercive tactics. Emotional abuse may include, but is not limited to: humiliation, control, isolation, withholding of information, or any other deliberate activity that makes the child feel diminished or embarrassed.
* **Exploitation:** Constitutes the abuse of a child where some form of remuneration is involved or whereby the perpetrators benefit in some manner. Exploitation represents a form of coercion and violence that is detrimental to the child’s physical or mental health, development, education, or well-being.
* **Neglect:** Constitutes failure to provide for a child's basic needs as per humanitarian index approved by Geneva Convention and UN resolutions that are responsible for the care of a child in the absence of the child's parent or guardian.

**Statistics 2023 (Within Pakistan)**

An average of **12 children per day**, or **one every two hours**, were subjected to sexual abuse in Pakistan in 2023, a report by a nongovernmental organization says. Most of the abuse cases involved children between **6 to 15 years**. Over **47 percent** of the cases were reported between this age group and among these, more **boys** were reported to be sexually abused **(593)** compared to **girls (457).**  About **75 percent** of these cases were reported from **Punjab**, the country’s most populous province. The **southern Sindh** province had **314 cases** while the federal territory of the national capital **Islamabad** saw **161** cases of child sexual abuse in the first six months of 2023.

**AWARENESS CAMPAIGN: CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING IN PAKISTAN**

* **Challenge (What is the problem)?**

Child safeguarding and protection in Pakistan faces several significant challenges, many of which are interconnected and complex. These issues can have serious consequences for the well-being and future of children in the country. Some of the key problems include:

1. **Child Abuse**: Child abuse is a pervasive problem in Pakistan, including physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. Children are vulnerable to abuse within their homes, schools, workplaces, and communities. Lack of awareness and social stigma often prevent reporting and addressing such cases.
2. **Child Labor**: Pakistan has a high prevalence of child labor, with many children engaged in hazardous and exploitative work. Child labor deprives children of their right to education and exposes them to health and safety risks.
3. **Child Marriage**: Child marriage is a widespread issue in Pakistan, with girls being married off at a young age, often before they reach the legal age of marriage. Early marriage can have detrimental effects on a child's physical and mental health, education, and overall development.
4. **No Access to Education**: While Pakistan has made progress in increasing school enrollment, many children still do not have access to quality education. Factors such as poverty, gender discrimination, and the lack of infrastructure contribute to low literacy rates and high dropout rates.
5. **Poverty:** High levels of poverty in Pakistan make children particularly vulnerable to exploitation, abuse, and neglect. Poverty can force children into labor, early marriages, and other harmful situations.
6. **Gender Discrimination**: Gender discrimination is a pervasive issue, with girls often facing disparities in access to education, healthcare, and other opportunities. Discrimination also contributes to early marriage and child labor.
7. **Lack of Legal Framework:** Pakistan has laws and regulations in place to protect children's rights, but enforcement can be weak. Implementation of child protection laws is often inadequate, and the legal system may not always prioritize the best interests of children.
8. **Child Trafficking:** Child trafficking is a concern, with children being trafficked within and across borders for various exploitative purposes, including forced labor, sexual exploitation, and organ trafficking.
9. **Insufficient Social Services**: There is a lack of adequate social services and support systems for children in need, including those who have been victims of abuse or exploitation.
10. **Cultural Norms and Traditions**: Some harmful cultural practices and traditions, such as corporal punishment and the acceptance of child labor, continue to pose challenges to child safeguarding efforts.

Efforts to address these threats involve a combination of legislative reforms, awareness campaigns, strengthening child protection services, improving access to education, and addressing poverty and gender inequality. NGOs, civil society organizations, and government agencies are working to make progress in child safeguarding and protection in Pakistan, but it remains a complex and ongoing struggle.

* **Solution (How will this project solve the problem)?**

**Goals Set by Sanash Welfare Organization:**

1. **Increase Awareness among Parents and Caregivers**:
   * Goal: Increase the percentage of parents and caregivers who are aware of common child protection issues and safeguarding measures from 40% to 75% within one year.
2. **Raise Awareness in Schools**:
   * Goal: Ensure that 90% of schools in the target area have implemented child protection awareness programs and policies within two years.
3. **Community Engagement**:
   * Goal: Engage 80% of the community in regular discussions and workshops on child protection and safeguarding practices within six months.
4. **Online Presence**:
   * Goal: Increase the reach of online awareness campaigns through social media platforms by 50% over the next year, measured by likes, shares, and comments on campaign content.
5. **Reach Vulnerable Populations**:
   * Goal: Ensure that awareness campaigns are accessible to and effectively reach vulnerable populations, such as rural communities and marginalized groups, within the target area.
6. **Collaboration with Schools**:
   * Goal: Establish partnerships with 100% of schools in the area to integrate child protection and safeguarding topics into the curriculum within one year.
7. **Increase Reporting:**
   * Goal: Increase the number of reported child protection concerns by 30% within six months, indicating that more individuals are aware of how to report issues.
8. **Measure Knowledge Gain:**
   * Goal: Conduct pre-and post-campaign surveys to measure the increase in knowledge about child protection and safeguarding topics, aiming for at least a 20% improvement.
9. **Multi-Lingual Campaigns**:
   * Goal: Create and disseminate awareness materials in multiple languages to reach diverse communities, ensuring that language is not a barrier to understanding child protection issues.
10. **Local Partnerships:**
    * Goal: Establish partnerships with local NGOs, community leaders, and religious institutions to support and promote child protection awareness campaigns.
11. **Awareness at Events and Festivals:**
    * Goal: Ensure that child protection awareness materials and information are present at community events and festivals attended by at least 75% of the local population within one year.
12. **Promote Reporting Mechanisms:**
    * Goal: Increase the utilization of reporting mechanisms, such as helplines and online portals, by 50% within six months through campaign promotion.
13. **Feedback and Adaptation:**
    * Goal: Collect and analyze feedback from the community to adapt and improve awareness campaigns continuously, ensuring they remain relevant and effective.
14. **Long-Term Sustainability:**
    * Goal: Develop a sustainability plan to ensure that child protection awareness campaigns continue to run effectively beyond the initial phase, with a clear roadmap for funding and implementation.
15. **Evaluation:**
    * Goal: Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the awareness campaigns, including their impact on child protection outcomes, within one year, and use the findings to inform future campaigns.

* **Long-Term Impact (How will this make a lasting impact in your community?)**

Carrying out awareness campaigns on child protection and safeguarding can have several long-term impacts that contribute to the overall well-being and safety of children in a community or society. These impacts can extend well beyond the duration of the campaign:

**Increased Knowledge and Understanding**:

Long-term awareness campaigns can lead to a sustained increase in the knowledge and understanding of child protection and safeguarding issues among parents, caregivers, teachers, and community members. This heightened awareness can help people recognize signs of abuse, neglect, and exploitation and take appropriate action.

**Behavioral Change**:

Over time, awareness campaigns can influence behavior change. People who are well-informed about child protection and safeguarding are more likely to adopt safe practices and behaviors, such as reporting suspected abuse, providing emotional support to children, and creating safer environments.

**Reduced Incidence of Child Abuse and Neglect:**

The long-term impact of awareness campaigns can be a reduction in the incidence of child abuse and neglect. As more individuals become vigilant and proactive in protecting children, fewer cases of abuse may occur.

**Strengthened Reporting Mechanisms:**

Awareness campaigns can lead to the establishment and strengthening of reporting mechanisms for child protection concerns. Over the long term, this can result in more effective and accessible avenues for reporting and addressing child abuse.

**Policy and Legal Reforms:**

Sustained advocacy and awareness efforts can influence policy and legal reforms related to child protection. Governments may be more inclined to enact and enforce laws that protect children's rights and punish perpetrators of child abuse.

**Institutional Changes:**

Schools, community organizations, and institutions may undergo institutional changes to prioritize child protection and safeguarding. This includes the development and implementation of child protection policies and the training of staff and volunteers.

**Empowerment of Children**:

Long-term awareness campaigns can empower children themselves by educating them about their rights, safety, and how to seek help when needed. Empowered children are more likely to recognize and respond to potential threats.

**Cultural Shift:**

Over time, awareness campaigns can contribute to a cultural shift in which child protection and safeguarding become deeply ingrained values within a society. Communities may become less tolerant of abusive behaviors and more supportive of child rights.

**Prevention and Early Intervention:**

The long-term impact of awareness campaigns includes a shift toward prevention and early intervention rather than reacting to cases of abuse. Communities become proactive in creating safe environments and addressing issues before they escalate.

**Improved Services**:

Increased awareness can lead to improved and expanded child protection services, including counseling, rehabilitation, and support for victims of abuse. These services may become more accessible and tailored to the specific needs of children.

**Reduced Stigma:**

As awareness spreads, there may be a reduction in the stigma associated with reporting child protection concerns, making it easier for individuals to seek help and support when needed.

**Positive Outcomes for Future Generations:**

The long-term impact of child protection awareness campaigns can extend to future generations. Children growing up in a community with a strong culture of safeguarding are more likely to have positive outcomes and lead healthier lives.

It's important to note that achieving these long-term impacts requires sustained effort, collaboration among various stakeholders, ongoing monitoring and evaluation, and adaptability to changing circumstances. Child protection and safeguarding awareness campaigns should be seen as part of a broader, ongoing effort to create a safer and more protective environment for children.