

TOOL 10

EXAMPLE: STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PREVENTION OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE (SEA) AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT (SH)

The highest standards of ethical and professional conduct are expected of all staff, representatives, contracted parties, volunteers working for the protection of and provision of services to concerned populations in the Americas Region.

This Code of Conduct applies to all [Name of service provider/agency] _____ staff/personnel and our partners, including all service providers, i.e., all people and organizations involved in the provisions of services including, contractors, sub-contractors, day laborers, and volunteers and all are expected to sign it. This Code of Conduct is based on the Secretary-General's Bulletins on 1. Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13) and on 2. Prohibition of discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority (ST/SGB/2008/15).

I, _____, understand that I have duty of care to beneficiaries and a responsibility to ensure that affected women, girls, boys, and men are treated with dignity and respect.

I understand that I have a responsibility to my colleagues and co-workers to ensure their right to be treated with dignity and respect and to be free from all forms of harassment in the workplace.

I commit to uphold the highest standards of professional and personal conduct, even when I am off duty or away from my duty station.

I understand that sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment¹ are all unacceptable forms of behavior and jeopardize the credibility and reputation of all agencies and their staff/personnel in [SITE] _____.

In order to prevent **sexual exploitation and abuse**, I commit to respect the six core principles of PSEA:

- I. Sexual exploitation and abuse are **serious misconduct** and grounds for **disciplinary measures**, including summary dismissal.
- II. Sexual activity with **children** (persons under the age of 18) is **prohibited**, regardless of the age of majority or local age of consent. Mistaken belief in the age of the child is not a defense.
- III. Exchange of **money, employment, goods or services for sex**, including any humiliating, degrading, or exploitive behavior is **prohibited**.

1. **Sexual Exploitation** is any actual or attempted abuse of a person in a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.

Sexual Abuse is the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

Sexual Harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favour, verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature, or any other behaviour of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another. Sexual harassment may occur when it interferes with work, is made a condition of employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

- IV. Any sexual relationship between those providing humanitarian assistance and protection and a person benefiting from such humanitarian assistance and protection that involves improper use of rank or position is **prohibited**. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of humanitarian aid work.
- V. Service providers, personnel providing assistance to concerned populations are obliged to create and maintain an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and abuse. Managers at all levels have an additional responsibility to do so.
- VI. Where service provider or personnel has **concerns or suspicions** regarding sexual exploitation or abuse by a service provider, personnel he/she **must report** such concerns. In [SITE – add specificity of the site/operation] _____ , a confidential complaint can be made by or on behalf of a survivor by contacting:
[Names, numbers, email etc. for complaint referral pathways].

In order to prevent **sexual harassment**, I commit to respect the following principles and conditions:

- I. Sexual harassment at the workplace, or in connection with work, constitutes unacceptable behaviour and will **not be tolerated**.
- II. Sexual harassment is a form of **sex discrimination** which negatively affects the working environment and adversely impacts the dignity and well-being of a person.
- III. Something can be considered sexual harassment even if the alleged harasser did not intend for it to be. It does not have to be intentionally directed at a specific person.
- IV. Failure to promote and maintain a respectful work environment may result in disciplinary action, including summary dismissal.
- V. All service providers and personnel are obliged to create and maintain an environment that **prevents sexual harassment**. Managers at all levels have an additional responsibility to do so.
- VI. Where an individual has concerns regarding an incident of sexual harassment, he/she should report such concerns. In [specific site/operation] _____ , a formal or informal process can be initiated by contacting:
[Specificities of office/operation]

By signing this Code of Conduct, I hereby agree to uphold its principles to the best of my ability at all times.

Name and Signature: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____