

POLICY TO PREVENT SEXUAL HARASSMENT, EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE

PREAMBLE

Being fully aware that the exploitation of the coercive position of beneficiaries and humanitarian stakeholders raising the risk of sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation (SHEA) poses a significant threat to the proper implementation of NGO's work we introduce this Policy, which clearly sets out the principles, expectations and measures that will be taken to prevent SHEA and the immediate actions with regard to reporting and responding to allegations of SHEA.

Being also aware that the culture of an organisation influences all aspects of the work, behaviour and experiences of our Beneficiaries and Stakeholders, we are committed to building a culture free of abuse, discrimination and harm.

We recognise that sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation is disproportionately experienced by women and girls, but our work also pays attention to the impact of sexual abuse on boys, men, transgender communities and people without gender identity. We are committed to treating equally in countering SHEA and giving equal support for marginalised groups, including ethnic, religious, national, racial or social minorities.

Alliance4Europe, represents highest standards against sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation introduced by the standards of international humanitarian organizations. We ensure that all necessary measures are taken to prevent inappropriate behaviour by staff, employees as well as collaborating individuals and organisations and other individuals involved in humanitarian assistance. We also ensure that all necessary measures will be taken to reduce the risk of incidents constituting a breach of the rules of Code of conduct introduced in the Policy..

Alliance4Europe commits to responding promptly to any suspicion of sexual abuse, harassment and sexual exploitation and to applying mechanisms to prevent and combat sexual abuse, harassment and sexual exploitation as well as to respect the rights and dignity of victims of sexual exploitation, based on the provisions set out in this Policy.

This Policy applies to all employees and associates of Alliance4Europe, irrespective of the legal basis of the collaboration in all its branches and subsidiaries and applies to all their activities both during and outside working hours.

ART. I DEFINITIONS

"Sexual Exploitation" Actual or threatened physical interference of a sexual nature, carried out by force or with the use of position or power. Includes sexual offences including, but not limited to: attempted rape and sexual assault.

"Sexual abuse" Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, power differential or trust for sexual purposes. Includes benefiting financially, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of others.

"Sexual harassment" unwelcome sexual propositions or unwelcome requests for sexual favours, or other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, in circumstances in which a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances, could foresee the possibility that the harassed person would be offended, humiliated or intimidated. Sexual harassment can take many forms. It can be direct or indirect, physical or verbal, repeated or one-off and committed by any person of any gender against any person of any gender.

"Associates" refers to persons contracted on a paid or unpaid basis to collaborate with or support Alliance4Europe in carrying out its tasks. This includes, but is not limited to, board members, volunteers (including community volunteers), interns, sponsors, researchers, donors, consultants and contractors, staff and/or representatives of partner organisations and local authorities.

"Child" under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and for the purposes of this Global Policy, is defined as any person - girl, boy, young woman, young man and children of other gender identity - under the age of 18.

"Child abuse" any form of physical and/or emotional maltreatment, Sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or any type of abuse resulting in actual or potential harm to the health, survival, development or dignity of a child in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power, online violence.

"Complainant" This is the person making the complaint; it may be the person who experienced what is being reported (victim/victim), or it may be another person (third party complainant) who learns of the violation and makes a complaint.

"Harm" is any harmful effect on the physical, mental or emotional wellbeing of a person (child or adult). Harm can be caused by Abuse or Exploitation, whether intentional or unintentional.

"Investigation" a process to gather information to determine whether misconduct has occurred and, if so, which individuals are responsible.

"Beneficiary" a direct and indirect participant in the Programme. A direct participant in the Programme is a person who is targeted by one or more Project outputs and will receive support from the Project. An indirect participant is a person who is not a direct participant but will benefit from the Project.

"Employees" refers to persons who receive regular remuneration for their work at Alliance4Europe as well as at affiliated entities.

"Stakeholder" is any person, organisation, social group or society in general that has a connection to our work, it can be the community of participants in our programmes, governments and donors.

"Victim" a person who has experienced Sexual Abuse, Exploitation or Harassment. The terms victim and victimised may be used interchangeably.

"Young person(s)" or "Young People" as defined by the United Nations includes persons - young women, young men and young people of other gender identity - between the ages of 15 and 24. This group includes the categories of 'children', 'adolescents' and 'adults', but considers that Young People have special protection needs and require separate treatment, in addition to younger children and older adults.

ART. II. OBJECTIVE OF THE POLICY

2.1. The purpose of this policy is to communicate to all employees and associates:

- the importance of the Prevention of Sexual Harassment, Exploitation and Abuse (PSHEA) and their responsibility to ensure that they, their behaviour and actions in their roles do not constitute sexual violence or cause harm to the beneficiaries and stakeholders of the organisation.
- their role in preventing sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse and the consequences of violating the Policy.
- their obligations to report any suspected sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse.
- clear guidelines on how to report suspected sexual abuse.

ART. III. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

3.1 This Policy is based on the following general principles:

3.1.1 Prohibition of Inaction, which means the obligation to take action and investigate any suspicion and allegation of sexual abuse, harassment or exploitation. It means carrying out an investigation without undue delay and respecting the dignity and privacy of the victim/person whose welfare has been violated.

3.1.2 Respect the dignity of victims, which means that any action taken under this Policy will be taken in the best interests of the victim/survivor of abuse, respecting their safety, rights, dignity, needs and privacy, including psychological support, notwithstanding the commitment to provide a fair outcome and a fair, transparent procedure.

Referral of criminal incidents to law enforcement or other appropriate authorities will be made after taking into account the wishes of the Adult victim/survivor, an assessment of the best interests of the Child victim/survivor and the welfare and safety of all parties.

3.1.3 Equity and inclusion, which means seeking to integrate into the community in which we operate without abusing power and privileged position. This is because we recognise that imbalance in positions, gender balance and abuse of dominant position, position of authority are the main causes that foster sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation (SHEA).

3.1.4 Shared responsibility which means that all employees and associates of the organisation are responsible for countering SHEA and adhering to the principles and procedures set out in this Policy.

3.1.5 Openness and accountability, which means transparency of activities, processes and procedures. The responsibility of the organisation's managers to create a safe and inclusive organisational culture. It also implies responsibility for reviews of this Policy, training of employees and colleagues, and familiarisation of Beneficiaries and Stakeholders with its principles and procedures.

ART. IV. PROCEDURE

4.1 All employees and associates are required to report any suspicions or allegations of SHEA and/or breaches of this policy immediately (or at least within 24 hours) using the reporting procedure outlined in this policy. Confidentiality of reporting applies.

4.2 All reports relating to SHEA will be treated with the utmost care and will be acted upon promptly in accordance with general principles and procedures. Where an investigation is initiated, it will be carried out by the general principles in a confidential manner.

4.3 Reports that constitute crimes will be referred to the appropriate authorities, taking into account the wishes of the adult victim/survivor, an assessment of the best interests of the child victim/survivor and the safety of all parties.

4.4.No one will be victimised for making a complaint and Alliance4Europe is committed to working with Complainants and victims/survivors to ensure that they are at the centre of any action, are not further harmed or disempowered by any process and receive appropriate support.

4.5 Notification is made to the responsible persons in the human resources department or Manager or director or Management of the organisation, who will act promptly to set up an internal independent Commission to investigate the reported matter.

4.5.1.The Commission shall conduct its investigation in a discreet manner

4.5.2.Any action to clarify the circumstances of a reported incident is undertaken with respect for the rights and dignity of the victim of abuse or sexual exploitation and ensuring the highest standards of welfare for the potential victim of abuse.

4.5.3 Minutes shall be kept of the proceedings of the Commission.

4.6 Any allegation/suspicion of a breach of the Policy made against a member of staff, Associate shall be dealt with without undue delay, in a fair and consistent manner that provides effective protection for the victim/survivor, whilst at the same time will support the person to whom the allegation relates.

4.7 A finding of a breach will result in sanctions, including disciplinary sanctions leading to possible dismissal, termination of any contracts binding the organisation to the offender and, where appropriate, appropriate legal action.

4.8 If, during the course of the investigation, the allegations prove to be unfounded, no action will be taken against the reporting person. However, in the case of deliberately false allegations, appropriate disciplinary sanctions will be applied where possible.

4.9 Support will be offered to victims/victims/complainants at each stage of the investigation. Support will also be offered where appropriate to others involved in the investigation process, for example witnesses and those accused of inappropriate or harmful behaviour.

4.9.1 Support may include referral to specialist psychosocial counselling, medical support, legal support and/or access to other specialist and appropriate support as required.

4.9.2 Victims/victims and complainants can decide on the form and timing of support.

ART. V INFORMATION

5. Alliance4Europe commits to inform all employees, associates and beneficiaries and stakeholders about the Policy and commits to run awareness campaigns and publish information on the website about compliance with the principles against sexual abuse and exploitation.

ART. VI SUPPORT OPTIONS

6.1 A4E is committed to working with local NGOs, women's rights groups, government ministries, agencies and departments to develop awareness of safe, intersectional and feminist support options and to ensure that the support options offered meet the needs of diverse victims/survivors.

6.2 We will ensure that cases are referred to appropriate professionals and organisations and that due diligence is undertaken to ensure that they act in accordance with our values and place the welfare of all stakeholders as the highest priority.