



Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Policy

Policy Objective:

Water for People has a Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Policy. The objective is to inform all Water For People employees and related personnel of zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and to ensure that roles, responsibilities, and expected standards of conduct in relation to SEA are known within Water For People. To create and maintain a safe environment, free from SEA, by taking appropriate measures for this purpose, internally and in the communities where Water For People operates, through robust prevention and response work.

1. Policy Statement:

1.1. SEA violates universally recognized international legal norms and standards and are unacceptable behaviors and prohibited conduct for all humanitarian workers, including Water For People *employees and related personnel*.

1.2. Water For People has a policy of zero tolerance towards SEA. All Water For People employees and related personnel are expected to uphold the highest standards of personal and professional conduct at all times, and to provide humanitarian assistance and services in a manner that respects and fosters the rights of people reached and other vulnerable members of the local communities.

2. Scope of Application:

2.1. This policy sets out Water For People's approach to prevent and respond to SEA. The policy applies to all employees and related personnel, including contractor, consultants, interns, or volunteers, both on-and off-duty.

3. Definitions:

3.1. For the purposes of the present policy the term '**sexual exploitation**' means any actual or attempted abuse of 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.

3.2. Similarly, the term '**sexual abuse**' means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

4. Commitment to PSEA:

4.1. Water For People will make every effort to create and maintain a safe environment, free from SEA, and shall take appropriate measures for this purpose in the communities where it operates, through a robust PSEA framework, including prevention and response measures.

4.2. This PSEA framework, affirms Water For People's commitment to the UN Secretary General's Bulletin on Special Measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13) and to achieving full, ongoing implementation of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Six Core Principles relating to SEA.

- **5. Six Core Principles:**

- 5.1. SEA by Water For People employees and related personnel constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment.

- 5.2. Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defense.
- 5.3. Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading, or exploitative behavior is prohibited. This includes exchange of assistance that is due to people reached.
- 5.4. Any sexual relationship between Water For People employees or related personnel and people reached of assistance or other vulnerable members of the local community that involves improper use of rank or position is prohibited. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of humanitarian aid work.
- 5.5. Where a Water For People employee or related personnel develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation by a fellow worker, whether in the same organization or not, he or she must report such concerns via established reporting mechanisms.
- 5.6. All Water For People employees and related personnel are obliged to create and maintain an environment which prevents SEA and promotes the implementation of this policy. Managers at all levels have particular responsibilities to support and develop systems which maintain this environment.

6. PSEA framework:

6.1. Prevention:

6.1.1. Vetting: Water For People systematically vets all prospective job candidates in accordance with established screening procedures.

6.1.2. Training: Water For People holds mandatory induction and refresher trainings for all employees and related personnel on the Organization's SEA policy and procedures.

6.2. Response:

6.2.1. Reporting: Water For People has safe, confidential, and accessible mechanisms and procedures for personnel, people reached and communities, including children, to report SEA allegations that and ensures that people reached are aware of these.

6.2.2. Investigation: Water For People has a process for investigation of SEA allegations in place and shall properly and without delay conduct an investigation of SEA by its employees or related personnel or refer to the proper investigative body if the perpetrator is affiliated with another entity.

6.2.2.1. Referral to National Authorities: If, after proper investigation, there is evidence to support allegations of SEA, these cases may be referred to national authorities for criminal prosecution.

6.2.3. Victim assistance: Water For People has a system to promptly refer SEA survivors to available services, based on their needs and consent.

6.3. Cooperative arrangements:

6.3.1. All Water For People contracts and partnership agreements include a standard clause requiring contractors, suppliers, consultants, and sub-partners to commit to a zero-tolerance policy on SEA and to take measures to prevent and respond to SEA.

6.3.2. The failure of those entities or individuals to take preventive measures against SEA, to investigate allegations thereof, or to take corrective action when SEA has occurred, shall constitute grounds for termination of any cooperative arrangement.