



**Help**

**Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe**

**Help – Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe**

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**Implementation Manual Chapter x.x.**

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**Code of Conduct:**

**Prevention of and Response to  
Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Policy**

**Revised Version as of 20.01.2017**

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**Effective Date: 21.06.2017**

## Background

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“Help – Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe” will not tolerate any sexual abuse or an act of exploitation being committed by any of Help’s team members or anyone associated with the delivery of our humanitarian projects. Help will ensure that allegations of sexual exploitations and abuse are investigated and that appropriate disciplinary measures are taken.

**Definition** (As per the UN Secretary General’s bulletin (ST/SGB/2003/13))

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**Sexual Exploitation** is defined as *the abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust* for sexual purposes; this includes profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.

**Sexual abuse** is defined as the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, including inappropriate touching, by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

This policy applies to all member of Help’s Board of Directors, Management Team, employees, volunteers, consultants, representatives and those connected to Help including our partner organizations. They should ensure that their conduct:

- is never influenced by personal gain or advantage that results in a risk or damage to Help
- will not raise any suspicion of improper motive,
- will respect and never violate the rights of vulnerable people

Therefore Help acknowledges and validates the 6 core principles of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises.

1. Sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian workers constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment.
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 defence.
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 beneficiaries.
4. Sexual relationships between humanitarian workers and beneficiaries are strongly discouraged since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of humanitarian aid work.
5. Where a humanitarian worker develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation by a fellow worker, whether in the same agency or not, he or she must report such concerns via established agency reporting mechanisms.
6. Humanitarian workers are obliged to create and maintain an environment which prevents sexual exploitation and abuse and promotes the implementation of their code of conduct. Managers at all levels have particular responsibilities to support and develop systems which maintain this environment.

## **Procedures to handle Allegations**

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Help will ensure that any allegation of sexual exploitation and/or abuse involving any of Help's Board of Directors, Management Team, employees, volunteers, consultants, representatives, and those connected to Help including our partner organizations, will be thoroughly investigated. Appropriate disciplinary measures in compliance with the relevant local laws will be taken to the perpetrator. Where this Policy and/or the Help Code of Conduct for staff or the country specific Help Internal Staff Regulations (if available) establish a stricter standard than local laws, this standard shall prevail. In such cases legal advice shall be sought to ensure that staff can legally be held to account if they breach the Help Code of Conduct (as a minimum in terms of termination of contract with Help).

Help's Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures, as approved by the Help Members' Meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2016, is valid and shall be applied to handle internal reports on sexual exploitation and/or abuse allegation.

Help's Complaints Policy and Procedures is valid and shall be applied to handle external complaints about sexual exploitation and/or abuse allegation.

## Annex

### Affirmative statement for Help staff

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I hereby confirm that I have received, read, and understood the Prevention of and Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Policy and Regulations which are part of Help’s Code of Conduct.

I declare that I shall carry out my duties to comply with the abovementioned rules of behaviour and work for the implementation thereof. This, to the highest professional standards and in the best interests of Help.

I am fully aware that failure to comply with the Code of Conduct requirements may be cause for disciplinary action, which may include contractual consequences and dismissal.

Employee name:

Position:

Date:

Signature:

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