



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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PREVENTION OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE

What is power?

- Force
- Influence
- Strength
- Pressure
- ?

Who holds power?

- Men or women
- Driver or manager
- Adult or child
- Beneficiary or government official
- Military or civilian
- Beneficiary or relief worker

What is power imbalance?

- When one person has a lot more leverage or opportunity to make another person do something.
- Result?
- The ability to make a person feel that he or she must do or believe what another person says.
- The ability to make somebody do something that they do not want to do or know to be wrong.

How does IFRC try to ensure that power is not abused?

- The Code of Conduct
- The Child Protection Policy
- The Anti-Harassment Guidelines
- International Conference Resolution 3 on Joint Action on Prevention of and Prevention to Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBV) during emergencies
- The Whistleblower Policy
- The PSEA Policy

Which particular abuses of power cause IFRC the greatest concern?

- Staff behaviour towards other staff
- Staff behaviour towards beneficiaries

Clarification on PSEA

- **"Sexual Abuse"** refers to the actual or threatened physical or psychological intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions when committed against Affected Persons.
- **"Sexual Exploitation"** refers to any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust for sexual purposes with respect to Affected Persons, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. Any payment (through cash or any other commodity or favour) for sexual services is considered to constitute sexual exploitation.
- **"Prevention and Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse" (PSEA)** refers to policy, rules and actions intended to prevent IFRC Personnel from engaging in any form of sexual exploitation and abuse and to respond where it has occurred.

Purpose

- IFRC takes every necessary step to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse by IFRC Personnel and to respond adequately to those incidents it cannot prevent. Ensuring the well-being of the survivor and accountability and integrity of our engagement with members of local communities is inherent to this aim. Ensuring fair treatment of personnel accused of SEA in accordance with the IFRC Internal Rules is inherent to this policy.
- Existing internal reporting, investigation and follow-up systems regarding possible SEA-related violations of the Code of Conduct and Staff Rules and Regulations are being strengthened via this policy and its procedures.

Purpose

- Strengthens and develops accountability systems in order for sexual exploitation and abuse survivors and IFRC and Third Party Personnel or anyone who becomes aware of SEA to feel comfortable to report and be protected from retaliation.
- Engaging with local communities, promoting community-based complaint mechanisms and providing assistance to survivors are important components of this policy's spirit, procedures and Action Plan.

Key Points

- ZERO Tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse
- The IFRC applies a survivor-oriented approach to PSEA. This entails the following principles:
 - a) Do no harm:** no action should be taken that would worsen the situation of a survivor of sexual exploitation or abuse.
 - b) Respect:** all actions taken are guided by respect for the choices, wishes, rights and dignity of the survivor.
 - c) Safety:** the safety and security of the survivor is the number one priority for all actors.

Key Points

- d) **Confidentiality:** There must be strict adherence to confidentiality regarding the survivor's identity and other identifying information in every aspect of case handling. All actions are to be taken to ensure that any matter is handled in full confidentiality.
- e) **Non-discrimination:** IFRC provides equal and fair treatment to anyone in need of help due to an SEA incident involving IFRC Personnel.
- f) **Child protection:** Children survivors are to benefit from a particular attention and their specific needs must be addressed. Child protection specialists are consulted regarding the care for children.

Key Points – Reference to 2007 Code of Conduct

- a) Not commit any act of sexual exploitation or abuse.
- b) Not engage in any sexual activity with:
 - Persons under the age of 18 years, regardless of the age of
 - majority or consent locally (ignorance of or mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defense).
 - Adults who look to benefit or already benefit from IFRC's protection or assistance.
 - Sexual activity includes all forms of activity and abuse of a sexual nature, with or without physical contact and whether either party is aware of such abuse.

Key Points – Reference to 2007 Code of Conduct

- Not exchange money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour. This applies regardless of the legal status of prostitution in the laws of the IFRC staff members' home country or duty stations.

- Not produce, procure, distribute or use pornographic material in IFRC offices or on IFRC equipment, including reading/surfing pornographic websites or message boards or sending or engaging with pornographic emails.

Responsibility of Senior Managers

Please review and report back in plenary

Internal Reporting Systems

- 1. There should be multiple avenues for reporting in order to reduce stigma.
- 2. People have knowledge of the procedure and easy physical access to it.
- 2. The procedure itself should be non-threatening.
- 3. There should be clear parameters in terms of what kinds of complaints are received (i.e. those directly related to the services that the given agency provides).
- 4. Complaints should be recorded and transmitted without changes made to the content.
- 5. Complainants should be given tangible (written) acknowledgment that the complaint has been received.
- 6. A time limit for the answer should be provided.

Internal Reporting Systems

- 7. All complaints should be dealt with confidentially.
- 8. The complainant should receive a clear response, including reasons for the decision and an explanation of the process undertaken.
- 9. The complainant should acknowledge that he or she has understood the answer.
- 10. The complainant and staff should be informed of alternative grievance channels.

Other initiatives and Best Practices

- Please see online examples