

Sexual exploitation and abuse *by aid workers*

- Sexual exploitation and abuse is endemic in all societies and walks of life
- A particular challenge for the humanitarian sector, because of the difficult environments we work in, and the exceptional vulnerability of the people we aim to assist
- It is a breach of our duty of care to communities and crisis-affected people
- Victims of SEA are ‘hurt twice’ – first by disaster and conflict, and second by the people who are there to help them.
- An ethical, practical and reputational challenge for aid organisations
- There is limited availability of information from NGOs on the scale of the problem. UN agencies reported 99 SEA allegations globally in 2015, and similar numbers in the preceding five years.
- Currently, worst-affected countries seem to be Central African Republic, followed by Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, and Haiti.

IASC Core Principles on SEA (S-G Bulletin, 2003)

- Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse are grounds for disciplinary measures, including dismissal.
- Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited.
- Exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour, is prohibited.
- Sexual relationships between staff and beneficiaries of assistance are strongly discouraged.
- Where a staff member develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual exploitation or sexual abuse by a fellow worker, he or she must report their concerns.
- Staff are obliged to create and maintain an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, with managers at all levels having a particular responsibility for this.

IASC PSEA Minimum Operating Standards

- Policy on PSEA
- PSEA focal point/department
- Code of conduct in employment contracts & partnership agreements
- Staff inductions and refresher training on code of conduct
- Awareness raising on PSEA with communities
- Reference checking as part of recruitment
- Complaints mechanisms and victim assistance
- Whistle blower policy for staff
- Investigation procedures

IASC PSEA MOS on investigations

- Investigation procedures in place
- Investigations to be undertaken by experienced and qualified professionals
- Information about the outcome shared with the complainant
- Substantiated complaints result in disciplinary action or contractual consequences

CHS Alliance services on investigations

- Investigation training – first level and follow up, open workshops and *ad hoc*
- Remote support and advice
- Approved investigations trainers and recommendations for investigators
- *Guidelines for Investigations*



GUIDELINES FOR INVESTIGATIONS

A guide for humanitarian organisations on receiving and investigating allegations of abuse, exploitation, fraud or corruption by their own staff

Revised November 2015



CHS Alliance investigations workshop, Bangkok, 30 Aug-2 Sept 2016

Meeting of investigation experts, Geneva, July 2016

- Where do PSEA and investigations sit within an organisation's structure?
- Control of rumours, management of confidentiality
- Recognising the potential overlap of allegations of SEA with fraud and corruption
- The challenges of following due process in our contexts
- Organisations' limited capacity on investigations
- Potential for prejudice and bias in investigations.