

## PREVENTION OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, SEXUAL ABUSE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT (PSEAH) POLICY

### SCOPE AND OBJECTIVE

Ärzte der Welt e.V./Doctors of the World Germany (hereinafter MdM Germany) places human rights at the center of its work. Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment violate human rights. We recognize that there are inherent risks due to unequal power dynamics across the organization and in relation to those we serve. MdM Germany is committed to creating a safe working culture, based on mutual respect and collaboration, for all those whom we serve and those working for and representing the organization. For this objective, this policy lays out principles and defines **structures, duties and procedures to prevent any form of sexual exploitation and abuse as well as sexual harassment.**

This policy sets out

- The principles upon which we will base our decision making and actions
- our expectations of all who represent MdM Germany

This policy must be known and followed by everybody affiliated with MdM Germany, including national and international staff, volunteers, interns, international and local consultants, partners and members. For beneficiaries of MdM Germany's domestic and international programs, the content of this policy will be made easily accessible and an adapted feedback and complaint mechanisms will be established. MdM Germany will follow up on all incidents and reports that come to our attention. We assume every report to be legitimate.

The reporting mechanism for incidents is laid down in a separate document. A specific policy on Anti-Fraud, Anti-Corruption and Misconduct has been developed for MdM Germany, based on similar principles. The structures and procedures of the reporting mechanism apply to all forms of misconduct.

## DEFINITIONS

**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. Sexual exploitation includes demanding sex as a condition for assistance or forcing someone to have sex with anyone.

**Sexual abuse** means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. Sexual abuse includes being forced, pressurized or tricked into having sexual intercourse, looking at sexual pictures or videos, doing something sexual or watching someone do something sexual.

**Sexual harassment** is defined as any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favor, verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature, or any other behavior of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another person. Sexual harassment can be physical, verbal or written. Its negative effects are aggravated if there is a hierarchical relationship or dependence between the harasser and the harassed person. Types of behaviors that can constitute sexual harassment could be for instance unwelcome touching, sexually explicit pictures or posters in the workplace, staring, requests for sex, intrusive questions about a person's private life or body or sexually explicit emails or text messages.

## CORE PRINCIPLES

### The core principles provide that:

- MdM Germany will not tolerate its employees, volunteers, consultants, partners or any other representatives associated with the organization carrying out any form of sexual harassment, sexual abuse or sexual exploitation.
- Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the local age of consent. Ignorance or mistaken belief in the age of the child is not a valid defense.
- Exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex or sexual favors is prohibited for MdM Germany employees when in a context in which they are

associated with the organization, even if legal in the respective setting. If sex work is prohibited, MdM Germany employees are obliged to follow the law.

- Sexual relationships between MdM Germany employees and beneficiaries in MdM Germany's programs and programs that it supports are strongly discouraged. MdM Germany employees have to inform their manager about such relationships who will decide on necessary steps to rule out negative consequences for beneficiaries or the project objectives.
- MdM Germany puts in place an effective and confidential complaints mechanism to allow and encourage individuals to report instances of SEA or sexual harassment easily, confidentially, and safely (see below).
- Where a person affiliated to MdM Germany develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation or sexual harassment by a colleague he or she should immediately report such concerns via the established reporting mechanism.
- All concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, abuse or exploitation are responded to in a timely, diligent and professional manner. Survivors and victims are offered support and responsible persons are held to account.
- MdM Germany will adopt a **survivor centric approach that respects the confidentiality and decision-making rights of survivors.**

## RELATION TO EXISTING POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

This policy is in line with and should be read jointly with the following MdM documents in effect:

- Code of Conduct, MdM Network
- Vision, Mission and Values – MdM Germany
- Anti-Fraud, Anti-Corruption and Misconduct policy
- Dienstliche Regelungen/Rules of Procedure – MdM Germany

Furthermore, MdM Germany follows the guidelines to prevent acts of sexual exploitation and abuse by employees and related personnel as outlined in the [Statement of Commitment on Eliminating Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN and Non-UN personnel](#) in December 2006. We are committed to achieving full implementation across our network of the [six core principles adopted in 2002 by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Force on Prevention and Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](#).