

ANGELS
CENTER OF
HOPE
FOUNDATION

Prevention of
Sexual
Exploitation,
Abuse and
Harassment
(PSEAH) Policy

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Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH) Policy

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Policy statement

ACOH Foundation is committed to a zero-tolerance approach to Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (SEAH).

All staff, volunteers, and partners must uphold the highest standards of integrity and ensure that no person, especially children and vulnerable adults, is subjected to exploitation or abuse.

This policy aligns with:

- Kenya Children Act, 2022¹
- Sexual Offences Act, 2006(Kenya)²
- The Employment Act, 2007,Kenya (sexual harassment provisions)³
- UN Secretary-General’s Bulletin on SEA (2003)⁴
- IASC Six Core Principles Relating to SEA⁵
- The Constitution of Kenya (Articles 28 & 53)⁶

Purpose and objectives

This policy ensures:

- Prevention of SEAH in all project activities
- Protection of beneficiaries, particularly women and children
- Safe, confidential, and accessible reporting mechanisms
- Timely, survivor-centered response to incidents
- Full compliance with ACOH Foundation safeguarding requirements

Scope

ACOH represents a breach of trust with the project communities ACOH operates in. This policy is applicable to every person who shares in the work of ACOH, including

- Employees (permanent, temporary, interns)
- Volunteers and board members
- Contractors and consultants
- Partners, Donors, and implementing agencies

It applies to conduct:

- At the workplace
- During fieldwork and community engagement
- Online/digital interactions
- Outside work where conduct affects beneficiaries

Definitions

1. **Sexual exploitation (SE):**Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, power, or trust for sexual purposes, including exchange of money, goods, or services for sex.
2. **Sexual abuse (SA):**Actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, including rape or sexual assault.
3. **Sexual harassment (SH):**Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal/physical conduct of a sexual nature that creates a hostile environment.

¹ <https://new.kenyalaw.org/akn/ke/act/2022/29/eng@2022-12-31>

² <https://new.kenyalaw.org/akn/ke/act/2006/3/eng@2024-04-26>

³ https://www.labourmarket.go.ke/media/resources/The_Employment_Act_2007.pdf

⁴ <https://docs.un.org/en/st/sgb/2003/t3>

⁵ <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/inter-agency-standing-committee/iasc-six-core-principles-relating-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse-2019>

⁶ https://www.parliament.go.ke/sites/default/files/2023-03/The_Constitution_of_Kenya_2010.pdf

4. **Child sexual abuse:** Any sexual activity involving a child (under 18 years), regardless of consent
5. **Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH):** SEAH occurs when a position of power is used for sexual purposes against a staff, beneficiary or vulnerable member of the community. It includes sexual relations with a child, in any context, defined as a human being below the age of 18 years.
6. **Vulnerable adults** are defined as those aged over 18 years and who identify themselves as unable to take care of themselves or to protect themselves from harm or exploitation; or who, due to their gender, mental or physical health, disability, ethnicity, religious identity, economic or social status, or as a result of disasters and conflicts, are deemed to be at risk.

Acts of SEAH

Acts of SEAH include but not limited to:

- Attempted or actual sexual assault (including non-consensual kissing and touching)
- Demanding sex in any context or making sex a condition for assistance.
- Forcing sex on someone or forcing someone to have sex with another person.
- Forcing a person to engage in prostitution or pornography
- Unwanted touching of a sexual nature.
- Refusing to use safe sex practices
- Attempted rape (including attempts to force someone to perform oral sex)
- Videotaping or photographing sexual acts and posting it without permission
- Unwelcome touching, including pinching, patting, petting, rubbing or purposefully brushing up against a person

Guiding principles

1. **Zero tolerance:** ACOH has zero tolerance Any form of sexual exploitation, abuse, or harassment is strictly prohibited. No excuses or exceptions are allowed, and all allegations must be taken seriously and acted upon.
2. **Survivor-centered approach:** The needs, safety, dignity, and wishes of the survivor come first. ACOH ensures that survivors are respected, believed, and supported, and decide how and whether to proceed with reporting or seeking services.
3. **Do no harm :** Actions taken must avoid causing further harm or distress to survivors, witnesses, or communities. This includes minimizing trauma, stigma, or risk during reporting and response processes.
4. **Accountability:** ACOH has a responsibility to prevent SEAH and respond appropriately. This includes enforcing policies, investigating allegations fairly, and taking corrective or disciplinary action.
5. **Confidentiality:** ACOH staff must ensure all Information related to SEAH cases is kept private and only shared on a strict need-to-know basis, with the survivor's consent, to protect their safety and dignity.
6. **Non-Retaliation:** No one should face punishment, intimidation, or discrimination for reporting SEAH or cooperating in an investigation. Protection must be provided to survivors, whistleblowers, and witnesses.
7. **Effective communication:** ACOH effectively communicates with all staff, volunteers, contractors, agents and partners in simple and accessible language to create a positive and accessible culture where responsibilities for PSEAH are concerned. ACOH will ensure accountability and transparency of handling of all cases of alleged breach of this policy.
8. **Dignity and Respect** ACOH creates a work environment where the principles of dignity and respect for all staff, Volunteers, Contractors, Agents and partners, in all locations are at the heart of what the organization does. A key principle within this is that of being non-judgmental when hearing the concerns and complaints of survivors of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.

9. **Gender Equality:** Gender equality principles will guide this policy. ACOH recognizes that sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment is a form of sexual and gender-based violence.

Legal Framework (Kenya)

This policy is grounded in:

- Sexual Offences Act, 2006 – criminalizes sexual abuse and exploitation
- Children Act, 2022 – protects children from sexual abuse
- Employment Act, 2007 – prohibits workplace sexual harassment
- Penal Code – provides criminal penalties
- Data Protection Act, 2019 – protects personal data

Failure to report sexual abuse, especially involving children, may constitute an offense.

Code of conduct

The following shall serve as a behavior protocol on SEAH for every person who shares in the work of ACOH including staff, volunteers/ facilitators, contractors and partners. These behavior protocols will reflect in ACOH Child Protection Code of Conduct.

Prohibited	Expected Conduct
All Personnel must: ▪ Never engage in sexual activity with anyone under 18 ▪ Never exchange money, employment, or goods for sex ▪ Never engage in exploitative or abusive relationships ▪ Never use sexually suggestive language or behavior ▪ Never harass colleagues or community members ▪ Never Access, possess, or share exploitative sexual content	All Personnel must ▪ Maintain professional boundaries ▪ Treat all individuals with respect and dignity ▪ Report any concerns immediately ▪ Promote a safe and inclusive environment ▪ Uphold dignity and respect for all beneficiaries

Prevention and Risk mitigation

ACOH will take steps to ensure the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment internally and externally. These measures will be as follows:

Safe recruitment

No offer of appointment will take place before:

- Conduct of background and reference checks
- Police clearance (Certificate of Good Conduct)
- Assessment of safeguarding attitudes during interviews
- Signing of Code of Conduct

Training & awareness

ACOH ensures:

- Mandatory PSEAH training for all staff
- Induction training for new staff
- Community awareness sessions
- Refresher training annually

Risk assessment & prevention measures

To prevent risks, ACOH:

- Conducts SEAH risk assessments before and during implementation
- Integrates safeguarding into project design and operations
- Ensures safe environments (lighting, supervision, transport)
- Conducts Gender-sensitive programming
- Conducts community awareness on reporting mechanisms

Reporting mechanisms

ACOH Foundation provides:

- Confidential reporting channels (phone, in-person, suggestion box)
- Anonymous reporting options
- Safeguarding of focal persons.

Reporting channels

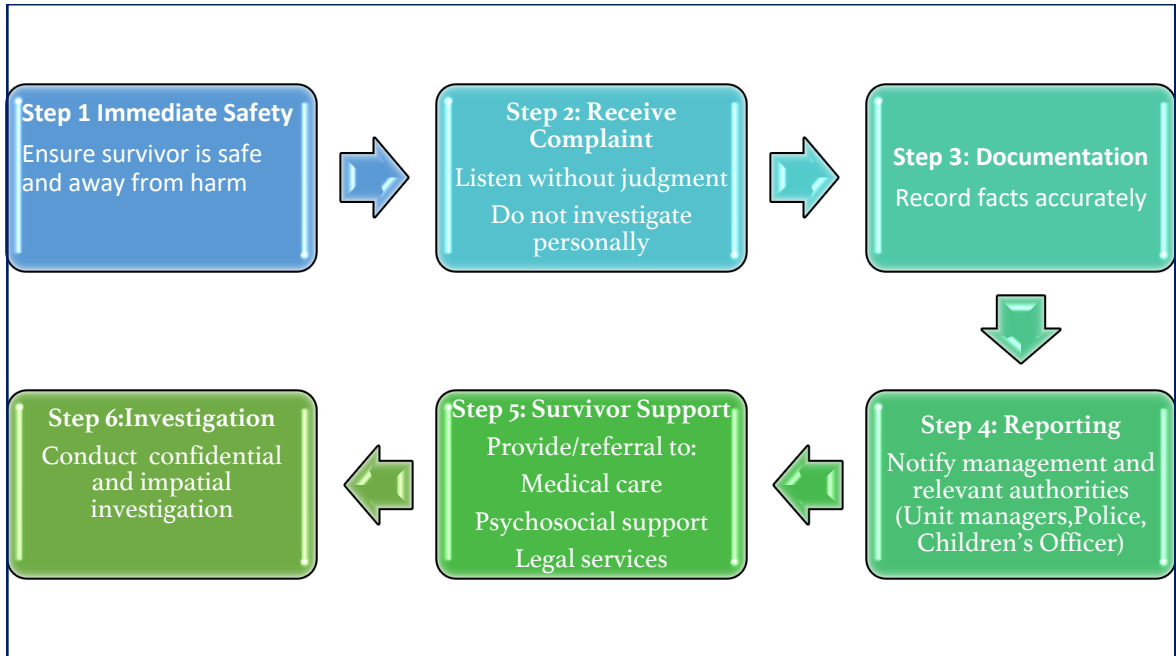
All SEAH allegations related to program activities must be reported:

- To the safeguarding or program officer
- Through the anonymous complaint box
- Through phone(hotline)/email
- To a trusted focal person
- To the relevant Kenyan authorities (Children’s Officer, police)

Mandatory reporting: All ACOH personnel must report immediately any suspicion or incident of SEAH. Failure to report may result in disciplinary action.

Response procedures

ACOH encourages those who have suffered SEAH in relation to our work to report incidents, as this enables us to investigate the complaint (unless this is against the wishes of the survivor), to mitigate risks of harm to others and to improve prevention and response strategies. ACOH’s process for reporting SEAH is as follows:



The Board Chair of ACOH shall be copied on all complaints. Upon Receipt, he/she shall designate a member of the Board to follow up on the complaint (s).

Survivor-centered approach

ACOH has a responsibility to ensure:

- Respect for survivor's choices
- Confidential handling of information
- No victim-blaming
- Access to support services

Confidentiality & data protection

ACOH ensures:

- Information is shared strictly on a need-to-know basis
- Secure storage of records
- Compliance with Data Protection Act, 2019

Protection from retaliation

ACOH will ensure that no individual shall suffer retaliation for:

- Reporting SEAH concerns
- Participating in investigations

Disciplinary measures

Violations may result in:

- Suspension or termination
- Referral to law enforcement
- Contract termination (for partners)

Partnerships & compliance

- All partners must adhere to this policy
- Include PSEAH clauses in agreements
- Conduct due diligence

Monitoring & Evaluation

ACOH's M&E process:

- Tracks implementation of SEAH policies, training, and reporting systems
- Monitors complaints, response timelines, and access to survivor support services
- Assesses effectiveness of prevention and response measures
- Analyzes trends to identify risks, gaps, and areas for improvement
- Ensures safe, confidential handling of data
- Promotes learning, accountability, and continuous system improvement
- Supports reporting to leadership, donors, and stakeholder

Roles and Responsibilities

Role/Group	Key responsibilities
Board / Senior management	▪ Provide leadership and commitment to zero tolerance ▪ Approve SEAH policies; allocate resources ▪ Ensure accountability and oversight
Management / Supervisors	▪ Enforce policies ▪ Promote safe culture ▪ Ensure staff training ▪ Respond promptly to concerns ▪ Support reporting mechanisms
SEAH Focal Point / Safeguarding officer	▪ Receive and manage complaints ▪ Ensure survivor-centered response ▪ Coordinate investigations and referrals ▪ Maintain confidentiality
Human Resources (HR)	▪ Conduct safe recruitment (background checks) ▪ Enforce code of conduct ▪ Handle disciplinary action ▪ Maintain staff records
Staff & Volunteers	▪ Adhere to code of conduct ▪ Prevent and report SEAH incidents ▪ Participate in training ▪ Treat all individuals with respect
Partners / Contractors	▪ Comply with SEAH policies ▪ Ensure their staff are trained ▪ Report incidents ▪ Cooperate with investigations
Community Members / Beneficiaries	▪ Report concerns or incidents ▪ Participate in awareness activities ▪ Help promote safe environments
M&E team	▪ Track SEAH indicators ▪ Ensure safe data collection ▪ Monitor system effectiveness ▪ Support learning and reporting
Investigations team	▪ Conduct fair, timely, and confidential investigations; ▪ Document findings; recommend actions
Donors / Oversight bodies	▪ Set compliance requirements ▪ Review reports ▪ Ensure accountability ▪ Support strengthening of safeguarding systems

Statement of Commitment

Commitment to Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH)

ACOH is firmly committed to maintaining a zero-tolerance stance on Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH). We actively foster a safe, respectful, and inclusive organizational culture that minimizes the risk of SEAH within our operations and the communities we serve.

To prevent SEAH, ACOH commits to the following:

- **Safe and ethical recruitment:** Implementing rigorous recruitment, vetting, and screening processes to prevent the engagement of individuals with a history of SEAH misconduct.
- **Awareness and capacity building:** Promoting continuous awareness among staff, volunteers, interns, contractors, and partner organizations on gender equality and women's rights, recognizing that SEAH is a form of gender-based violence rooted in power imbalances and inequality.
- **Stakeholder engagement and accountability:** Ensuring that all visitors, consultants, and stakeholders interacting with project communities are informed of and adhere to ACOH's zero-tolerance policy on SEAH.
- **Training and institutional strengthening:** Building organizational capacity through regular training on Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH) and safeguarding practices.
- **Accessible reporting mechanisms:** Establishing and maintaining safe, confidential, and accessible complaint-handling systems, including fast-track procedures for SEAH cases, available to staff and affected communities.
- **Effective response and investigation:** Promptly and thoroughly investigating all SEAH allegations in a confidential, survivor-centered, and impartial manner, with appropriate referrals to relevant authorities where necessary.

ANNEXES

Annex I: Incident Reporting Form

ACOH Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH) Incident Reporting Form

IMPORTANT:

- This form is confidential.
- Complete only what is safe and comfortable to share.
- Do NOT investigate, only record information.
- Obtain consent before sharing identifiable details.

SECTION 1: REPORT DETAILS	
Date of report	
Time of report	
Location of report(Office/Field/Community)	
Report received by(Name & Role)	
SECTION 2: REPORTER INFORMATION (Optional) (Leave blank if anonymous)	
Name	
Contact information	
Relationship to survivor	☐ Self ☐ Family ☐ Staff ☐ Community Member ☐ Other:_____
Preferred method of contact	
SECTION 3: SURVIVOR INFORMATION (if different from reporter)	
Name (or initials)	
Age / Date of Birth	
Gender	
Location	
Is the survivor a child (under 18)?	☐ Yes ☐ No
Does the survivor have any immediate safety concerns?	☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, explain:_____
SECTION 4: INCIDENT DETAILST	
Type of Incident (tick all that apply): ☐ Sexual Exploitation ☐ Sexual Abuse ☐ Sexual Harassment ☐ Attempted Abuse/Harassment ☐ Other (specify): _____	
Date of Incident (if known)	
Time of Incident (if known)	
Location of Incident	
Description of Incident (What happened?):	
Was the incident repeated?	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown
SECTION 5: ALLEGED PERPETRATOR INFORMATION	

Name (if known):	
Gender	
Role/Position	☐ Staff ☐ Volunteer ☐ Partner ☐ Contractor ☐ Community Member ☐ Other: _____
Organization (if applicable)	
Relationship to Survivor	
SECTION 6: IMMEDIATE ACTION TAKEN	
☐ No action taken yet ☐ Safety plan initiated ☐ Medical support provided/referred ☐ Psychosocial support provided/referred ☐ Report escalated to Safeguarding/SEAH Focal Point ☐ Other: _____	
SECTION 7: CONSENT & CONFIDENTIALITY	
Has the survivor given consent to share this information?	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable
Has the survivor been informed of available support services?	☐ Yes ☐ No
SECTION 8: REFERRALS MADE	
☐ Health/Medical Services ☐ Psychosocial Support ☐ Legal/Police Services ☐ Child Protection Services (if minor) ☐ Other: _____	
SECTION 9: ADDITIONAL NOTES	
SECTION 10: FORM COMPLETED BY	
Name	
Position	
Signature	
Date	
CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE This document contains sensitive information. It must be stored securely and shared strictly on a need-to-know basis in line with SEAH and data protection policies.	

Annex 2: Staff Declaration

STAFF DECLARATION FORM
Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment(SEAH) Commitment

SECTION 1: STAFF DETAILS	
Full name	
Position/Role	
Organization name	
Work location	
Employee ID Number(if applicable)	
Date of Employment/Engagement	
SECTION 2: DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT	
I, the undersigned, confirm that: - I have read, understood, and agree to comply with the organization’s SEAH Policy, Child Protection Policy, and Code of Conduct. - I understand that Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (SEAH) is strictly prohibited under a zero-tolerance policy. - I will treat all beneficiaries, colleagues, and community members with dignity and respect. - I will not engage in any form of sexual exploitation, abuse, or harassment, including exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sexual favors. - I will not engage in any sexual activity with children (persons under 18 years), regardless of consent or local laws. - I will report any SEAH concerns or incidents immediately through the appropriate reporting channels. - I understand my duty to maintain confidentiality and uphold a survivor-centered approach. - I will cooperate fully with any investigation related to SEAH allegations. - I understand that failure to comply with these standards may result in disciplinary action, including termination and/or legal action.	
SECTION 3: CONFLICT OF INTEREST & DISCLOSURE	
Have you ever been investigated, charged, or disciplined for SEAH-related misconduct?	☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, provide details: _____
Do you have any relationships that may pose a safeguarding risk in your role?	☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, provide details: _____
SECTION 4: TRAINING & AWARENESS	
Have you received SEAH/Safeguarding training?	☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, indicate date: _____
Do you understand how to report SEAH concerns?	☐ Yes ☐ No
SECTION 5: SIGNATURE	
I declare that the information provided is true and that I will uphold the highest standards of conduct and safeguarding. Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____	
FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY	
Received by (Name & Position): _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____	
CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE	
This form contains sensitive personal information and must be stored securely in line with data protection and safeguarding policies	