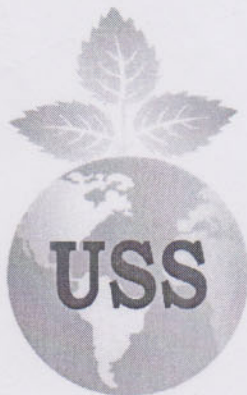


USS Prevention of Sexual Harassment, Exploitation and Abuse Policy'2021



Approved by

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Prevention of Sexual Harassment, Exploitation and Abuse is a high important area of an organization.

USS PREVENTION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT, EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE POLICY'2021

Objective of the policy:

1. Keep safe of children and young people from Sexual Harassment, Exploitation and Abuse(SHEA)
2. Control staffs from SHEA and increase trust as well as reputation to the organization.

What is PSHEA:

Preventing sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse (PSHEA) is therefore one aspect of safeguarding and so incorporates all the preventative and responsive measures and interventions to prevent SHEA. We make our work on PSHEA more explicit in recognition of the heightened risks that this aspect of safeguarding carries.

Harassment:

"Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favour, verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature, or any other behaviour of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another"

(UN SG's Bulletin 2008)

Sexual harassment happens when an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment is created for an individual. It can be a one-off act or a series of incidents.

What is Sexual exploitation:

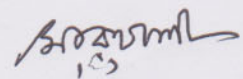
"The actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another"

(UN SG's Bulletin 2003)

Sexual exploitation is a broad term, which includes a number of acts including "transactional sex", "solicitation of transactional sex" and "exploitative relationship". (for example : trading food, gifts, accomodation, affection, status, engagment or benefits etc. for sex or sexual favors.

What is Sexual Abuse:

"The actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions" (UN SG's Bulletin 2003) Sexual abuse can involve an actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, power differential or trust for sexual purposes. It can be but is not limited to actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature. For example: Inappropriate touching / physical contact (penetrative or nonpenetrative, with or without force); involving a child/young person in looking at sexual images, encouraging an child/young person to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.



Why is PSHEA important?

Because sexual violence

- Is a human rights violation
- Is against our commitment and obligation to safeguard and protect
- Is against our organizational values

Undermines the work we do

Because-

- We have an obligation to 'do no harm.'
- We must be safe for children and young people with our behavior, activity process, programmes and intervention operations.
- Applies at all times professionally and you are expected to bear in mind the principles in your personal life
- We have an obligation to create a safe and protective environment for child and youth
- We have a legal obligation to respond to the needs of survivors and victims
- There is a legal responsibility to report those who have committed a criminal act

Understanding power relationships:

Power can be defined as the capacity to control people or things.

Power can be:

- Economic – Money, Employment
- Political – Access to Resources, Military
- Social – Education, Appearance, Status, Gender, Age, Religious Authority
- Physical – Armed Groups, Military, Bodily Strength, Size, Stature
- Psychological – Convincing, Verbal, or Threatening, Overbearing

Power can be used positively:

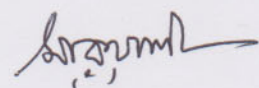
- In Educating, Protecting, Fair Decision Making, Being Accountable, Respecting Rule Of Law, Or Respecting Fellow Beings.

Power can also be used negatively:

- In Rape, Corruption, Harassment, Exploitation, Abuse, Violence, Denying Justice, Neglecting Human Rights, Altering Evidence, or False Accusations.



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- SHEA is a NEGATIVE USE OF POWER.

ROOTS OF SHEA:

- SHEA is rooted in power differences & unequal relationships or imbalance of power
- International and Local non-government Organisations (i.e INGOs and NGOs) are always in a position of power or trust in relation to those they are assisting
- This imbalance is heightened during emergency responses when humanitarian aid can appear to be the difference between life and death

Position of Power + Position of Vulnerability = Greater risk of Sexual Harassment, Exploitation Position of Power and Abuse.

- Abusers can be anyone associated with USS staff, volunteer, contractor or another such representative.

Who can perpetrate of SHEA?

- Donor staff
- Organization staff
- Volunteers
- Visitors
- Other NGO workers
- Government officials

- Abusers can be any gender, come from all classes, cultures, racial and religious backgrounds and sexual orientation.

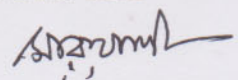
Understanding how sex offending behaviors happens:

In order to effectively prevent SHEA, it is important to understand how sex offending behavior happens.

1. Motivation: The potential abuser needs to have some motivation to sexually abuse.
2. Internal Inhibitions: The potential abuser must overcome internal inhibitions that may act against their motivation to sexually abuse.
3. External Inhibitors: The potential abuser must overcome external obstacles and inhibitions prior to sexual abuse. External inhibitors that may restrain the abuser's action include family constellation,



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neighbours, peers and societal sanctions as well as the level of supervision a child receives. Although a child cannot be supervised 24 hours per day, lack of supervision has been found to be a contributing factor to sexual abuse as has physical proximity and opportunity. External inhibitors are easily overcome if the potential abuser is left alone with an unsupervised child.

4. Resistance: Finally, the potential abuser has to overcome possible resistance to being sexually abused. This capacity to resist may operate in a very subtle covert way and does not necessarily involve overt protestations. Abusers may sense who are good potential targets, who can be intimidated or coerced/groomed, need something, age, ability to keep a secret or otherwise manipulated. Abusers report that they can detect knowledge and confidence in the child which would mean that their action will be reported.

GROOMING:

- Grooming: Behaviour builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them.
- Environmental grooming: The organisation of the environment in order to gain maximum access to the intended victim or victims with minimum risk of discovery.
- Some ways in which a person or the environment could be groomed
- Connecting with the person—befriending, texting, picking favorites, "a special" friend
- Meeting the person's needs, sometimes excessively and often for no apparent reason (gifts, money, affection, trips)
- Violating boundaries
- Allowing the person to get away with inappropriate behavior which is against set rules/norms of behavior
- Talking about inappropriate topics
- Frequenting areas where people are known to be available for sex
- Resistant to safeguarding policy/ restrictions on behaviour etc.

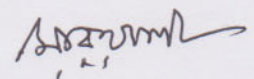
GROOMING MAY ALSO TAKE PLACE ONLINE:

Online grooming tactics: In order to get indecent images of children or contact with victims for sexual abuse

- Gathering personal details (contact details)
- Paying child to appear naked/perform sexual acts
- Bullying and intimidating – threaten to tell parents/school if exposed
- Asking sexually themed questions, sending sexually themed content
- Ask to meet offline
- Pretending to be a minor/using false identity to deceive a child

Sex offenders

- creating and distributing digital child abuse images/video



- Networking with each other.

Online world can be fast track to abuse and makes child abuse

ONLINE RISKS:

- Content risks: child exposed to unwelcome and inappropriate content e.g. sexual, pornographic and violent images; racist, discriminatory or hate-speech material; dangerous behaviours, such as self-harm, suicide and anorexia.
- Contact risks: child participates in risky communication, such as with an adult seeking inappropriate contact or soliciting a child for sexual purposes
- Conduct risks: child behaves in a way that contributes to risky content or contact, e.g. children writing or creating hateful materials about other children, or distributing sexual images, including material they have produced themselves.

THE IMPACTS OF SHEA:

For Survivor/Victim: physical, emotional, mental, and social harm

- The impact of SHEA can be traumatic and long lasting.
- Survivors/victims may have to deal with consequences such as pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), stigma in community, loss of education, financial hardship for years after an initial incident
- Survivors/victims are often ostracized by their families and communities
- SHEA fuels human trafficking for sex

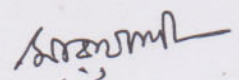
For Children Born As Result: stigma, raised by single parent, lack of or confusion of identity.

For Community: Breakdown of family structures prevents people from receiving services they need and are entitled to For the.

Organisation: Loss of trust amongst the community and government; damage the organization's credibility and reputation; loss of funding by donors, undermining of the organization's mission in the eyes of key stakeholders.

Why is PSHEA a particular concern during an emergency or humanitarian response?

- ❖ During a crisis affected communities vulnerability and risk levels are increased, this heightens the power differential between the community members and the aid organisations providing support.
- ❖ Individuals and families can lose their livelihoods, possessions and connections to traditional social security structures in times of crisis, this increases their risk and exposure to potential exploitation and abuse.

- ❖ Emergency responses can see an influx of new aid workers into affected communities, if new recruits are not aware of an organisation's policies, procedures and ethos it can lead to unintentional or intentional breaches of safeguarding standards.

USS POSITION ON PSHEA:

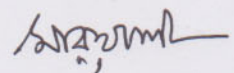
USS fully subscribes to and endorses the Secretary-General's Bulletin on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse(ST/SGB/2003/13)

- ✚ SHEA of any individual aged below 18 years, of beneficiaries and affected populations are acts of unacceptable behavior, acts of gross misconduct and prohibited conduct for all our staff and associates.
- ✚ USS Safeguarding and PSHEA approach seeks to prevent and respond to all forms of sexual harassment, exploitation, abuse and other Safeguarding harms carried out by Donor staff, representatives and associates against any individual aged below 18 years and anyone we come into contact with through our work.
- ✚ Any breach of the Safeguarding policy will be taken extremely seriously and responded to
- ✚ USS has zero tolerance for inaction. We believe that any form of exploitation, abuse and harassment is unacceptable and will not be tolerated and we will do everything we can to prevent this from happening. We recognize that there will be reports and incidents. We will take allegations of unacceptable conduct seriously and we will take action on every transgression. We will as standard practice fairly and impartially investigate such reports when received. Actions and disciplinary measures taken will be in accordance with our policies as proportionate to the nature of the misconduct – this may include termination of employment and reports to relevant local authorities where appropriate.

USS KEY PSHEA COMMITMENTS AND PROHIBIT:

- Any *sexual activity* with a *person under the age of 18 years* (regardless of age of majority in the country). Mistaken belief of age is not a defence.
- Any *sexual activity, inappropriate touch, sexually provocative behaviour* with a *beneficiary* (regardless of age).
- *Exchange* of money, food, employment, goods, assistance and/or services *for sex or sexual favours, including sex with sex workers.*
- Any *sexual activity* that is *forced* upon another person.
- Use of a child or adult to procure sex for others.
- Accessing, downloading, creating and/or distributing *child pornography or abusive images of children or young people.*

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It is important to prevent SHEA, be prepared and take action:

Preparation is Key:

- We ensure there are policies, procedures, definitions for reporting and responding to SHEA issues
- We identify roles and responsibilities on receiving reports and taking action
- We ensure staff briefed and trained
- We work on understanding the local environment, the internal and external factors that put individual at risk, the legal environment and service providers available to refer incidents to and provide support
- Build an effective complaint mechanism
- All staff and beneficiaries must be aware of Policies

PREVENTING HARM AND ABUSE:

Our Safeguarding Framework ensures a holistic approach to Safeguarding and PSHEA Furthermore we apply a gender and intersectional lens in implementing our framework.

The framework requires:

- Provision of core guidelines and tools for implementation;
- Creation of a culture of safeguarding and PSHEA awareness for staff, associates, and the children and young people that we work with and their families;
- Building the safeguarding and PSHEA capacity of staff and associates including ensuring that they are aware of the problem and risks of violence, including sexual violence and exploitation, of children and young people;
- Ensuring robust and confidential reporting (incl. whistle blowing) and responding pathways and that all are aware of how and where to report safeguarding and PSHEA concerns;
- Application of strict safe recruitment processes,
- Inclusion of safeguarding and PSHEA in our risk management processes;
- Identification of managerial and staff responsibilities for ensuring the implementation of safeguarding and PSHEA,
- Having in place a set of standards which guide the embedding of safeguarding (which includes PSHEA) in all aspects of our work
- Regular monitoring and evaluation of safeguarding measures to ensure their effectiveness, including audits involving staff, associates, children and young people we work with on their awareness of and attitude towards safeguarding; and

- Ensuring visible and committed leaders who role model our values and principles related to safeguarding and PSHEA

WE TAKE ACTION

- We have zero tolerance for inaction
- Staff are required to take all suspicions, rumours, allegations of unacceptable conduct seriously
- Staff are required to report all concerns immediately but within 24 hours
- We will take action on every transgression.
- We will fairly and impartially investigate reports received.
- Actions and disciplinary measures taken will be in accordance with our policies as proportionate to the nature of the misconduct – this may include **termination of employment and reports to relevant local authorities where appropriate**
- We will implement a Survivor/Victim support plan
- We will conduct a post incident review.

YOUR STRICT RESPONSIBILITY TO REPORT SHEA:

USS has zero tolerance for inaction

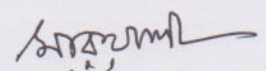
If you witness, suspect, hear of a SHEA concern perpetrated by Donor Staff, Associates and/or Visitors:

- It is your duty to report what you know; if you know of any concern you must report it (mandatory)
- It is not your duty to investigate if an allegation is true or not; it is your duty to report what you know
- It is not your duty to be 100% sure whether the concern constitutes SHEA; it is your duty to report what you know
- It is not your duty to identify witnesses, the victim or the alleged perpetrator; it is your duty to report what you know

You must report, through the proper reporting channels within 24 hours.

You must maintain confidentiality

Please do not embark on an investigation. Investigations will be handled by Safeguarding staff once reports have been received.



WHERE TO REPORT SHEA:

Report to the local Safeguarding Focal Point, your Line Manager

The contact details of the Safeguarding Focal Point ,ED

1. **SAFEGUARDING FOCAL POINT, MOBILE: +8801715235179, Email:**
uss.jaldhaka@gmail.com
2. **Executive Director: Mobile: +8801716290736, Email: uss.nilphamari@gmail.com**
3. **Report/Complain in USS website: www.ussnilphamaribd.org**

PSHEA policy preparation reference:

1. Global Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
2. Plan International documents.

