



SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, ABUSE AND HARASSMENT (SEA-H) POLICY

2023

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1.0. INTRODUCTION

FAROF is committed to principles of integrity, professionalism and respect for all persons. FAROF seeks to provide a safe working environment free from harassment including sexual harassment and free from sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) in its activities and responding promptly when it happens. FAROF has no tolerance towards acts of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEA-H) and takes action to prevent SEA-H from occurring in the first place. This policy provides guidance to anyone associated with FAROF so that all FAROF staff and other representatives understand the importance of preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEA-H) and their responsibility to ensure that they and their work do not deliberately inadvertently cause harm to others within the organization, within the framework of FAROF's programs and beneficiary populations.

We recognize that gendered forms of sexual violence disproportionately affect women and girls, and our work recognizes the impact on boys, men and girls. We are committed to working with marginalized and oppressed groups, recognizing the impact of sexual violence on people living in poverty and people of different ethnicities, religions, race, class and abilities. We will listen to and learn from them and work to ensure that our SEAH policy and approach supports the work they do to promote their rights and live lives with dignity.

The objective of this policy is to:

- Define obligation of FAROF staff and those individuals holding a work contract with FAROF with respect to Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEA-H).
- Set out FAROF's rules and procedures.
- Set out approach in preventing and responding to Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEA-H).

1.1. DEFINITIONS

Sexual exploitation is defined as an actual or attempted abuse of someone's position of vulnerability, differential power or trust, to obtain sexual favors, including but not only by offering money or other social economic or political advantages.

Sexual abuse means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

Sexual Harassment (SH) is defined as any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature (verbal or physical) that might reasonably be expected to be perceived to cause offence or humiliation. When such conduct interferes with work, is made a condition for employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Sexual harassment may occur in the workplace or in connection to work environment. While typically involving a pattern of conduct, sexual harassment may take the form of a single incident. In assessing whether the conduct causes offence, the perspective of the victim shall be considered.

Sexual harassment may take various forms – from looks and words to physical contact of any nature. Examples of sexual harassment include:

- attempted or actual sexual assault, including rape;
- sharing or displaying sexually inappropriate images or videos in any format;
- sending sexually suggestive communications in any format;
- sharing sexual or lewd anecdotes or jokes;
- making inappropriate gestures;
- unwelcome touching including pinching, patting, rubbing or purposefully brushing up against another;
- staring in a sexually suggestive manner;
- repeatedly asking a person for dates or asking for sex;
- rating a person’s sexuality;
- making sexual comments about a person’s appearance, clothing or body parts;
- name calling or using slurs with a gender/sexual connotation;
- making derogatory or demeaning comments about a person’s sexual orientation.
- Preferential treatment or promise of preferential treatment in exchange of sexual favors from a person;
- intimidation, threats or barriers to career progression because of gender of the person concerned,
- reprisals in response to sexual harassment complaint.

1.2. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

The policy applies to:

- All FAROF staff and governance members.
- May also be applied to any person employed by an entity that carries out missions for FAROF.

- In particular, this policy applies to implementing partners depending on specific clauses and conditions of grant agreement, suppliers, sub grantees, beneficiaries, stakeholders, consultants and other associated entities.

1.3. FAROF'S SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, ABUSE AND HARASSMENT (SEA-H) POLICY

1.3.1. Guiding Principles

- FAROF staff and other individuals holding a work contract with FAROF shall work and behave in a manner that respects and fosters each other's rights and the rights of the people they serve. This includes an obligation to abstain from any act of sexual harassment and promptly report any allegations of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment that may arise at FAROF or in the context of FAROF managed activity or operation. FAROF staff have the responsibility to create and maintain a work environment that helps prevent sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment to encourage reporting of allegations of SEA-H.
- FAROF has no tolerance for acts of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. FAROF is committed to facilitating the reporting of sexual harassment and ensuring a prompt and effective response to allegations of SEA-H including through timely objective investigations. FAROF is also committed to protecting reporting parties who act in good faith from retaliation. FAROF is further committed towards preventing SEA-H from happening through activities such as awareness creation, background checks and appropriate project design.

1.3.2. Responsibilities

FAROF staff and individuals holding a work contract with FAROF are expected to adhere to the highest ethical standards both in their professional and personal dealings and to abide by the core values of FAROF: transparency, accountability and integrity. This includes obligation not to sexually harass, exploit or abuse others. The following are responsibilities of FAROF staff and individuals holding a work contract with FAROF:

Responsibilities of all staff

- A staff must ensure their behavior is based on FAROF's values and adheres to this policy and FAROF's code of conduct and always promotes and upholds the rights and welfare of rights holders and the communities we work with including adults at-risk.
- Abstain from any sexual activities with beneficiaries, as such relationships are marked by inherently unequal power dynamics and may undermine the credibility and integrity of FAROF's activities.
- Contribute to a work environment that prevents sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment from occurring in the first place
- Obtain the requisite knowledge and skills to enable you fulfill your role in the prevention and response to SEAH, including completing mandatory trainings, role-specific trainings and participation in related awareness raising and engagement activities.
- Cooperate with investigations and share confidential information fully with and only the focal points team.
- Abstain from engaging in any act of SEAH. Acts of SEAH are considered serious acts of misconduct which could lead to summary dismissal, termination of contract or referral to law enforcement authorities.

Responsibilities of program managers

- Integrate SEAH policy in the graded emergency response operations in line with related tasks and performance indicators in emergency response framework.
- Ensure appropriate resource mobilization, allocation and staffing for the prevention of and response to SEAH throughout operations and integrate the SEAH risk mitigation plan into the strategic response plan and donor proposal.
- Provide management and administrative oversight, including supervision of the dedicated SEAH technical expert in the emergency response operations.
- Ensure that basic sexual misconduct safeguarding measures are conducted such as the screening of personnel, briefing and repeat training of response personnel and ensuring that all response personnel know of FAROF's standard code of conduct and are familiar with relevant policies.

Responsibilities of Chief Executive Officer.

- Create a safe environment where staff and others are free to raise concerns without fear of retribution.
- Ensure a SEAH and safeguarding focal point is in place, having undergone a selection process who will raise awareness for SEAH and act as a reporting point for suspicions, complaints and concerns.
- Work with the SEAH stakeholder panel to respond robustly when any concerns relating to SEAH is raised. Ensure that procedures for reporting and investigating suspected cases are followed and ensuring they are in line with this policy and local laws, including reporting to appropriate authorities for investigation and follow up.
- Ensure that all disciplinary measures are implemented for all staff who violate this policy.
- Ensure adequate funding is in place to support SEAH and safeguarding policies.

Responsibilities of focal points

- Work with others to create a safe environment where staff and others feel able to raise concerns without fear of retribution
- Ensure that summary of this policy is placed in prominent places within the office and online to make it accessible to all members of staff
- Ensure that staff orientation includes a discussion of this policy
- Deliver training to all staff on this policy and other policies that fall within the SEAH
- Work with others to ensure that the values, commitments and procedures set forth in this policy are embedded throughout FAROF's programs and activities and those of our partners.
- Work with the SEAH and safeguarding stakeholder panel to address concerns relating to SEAH and ensure that incident management is carried out in line with this policy.

Responsibilities of Human Resource Manager

- Work with others to create a safe environment where staff and others feel able to raise concerns without fear of retribution.
- Work with the SEAH and Safeguarding Focal Point to ensure that this policy is displayed at prominent places within the office, as well as online, and to make it accessible to all members of staff.

- Work with the SEAH and Safeguarding Focal Point to ensure that all inductions include a discussion of this policy.
- Ensure that the values, commitments, and procedures set forth in this policy are embedded throughout the employee life cycle (including safer recruitment, performance management, and exit).
- Work with the SEAH and Safeguarding Stakeholder Panel to address any concerns relating to abuse or exploitation of rights holders and communities, including adults at-risk by providing strong employment law and employee relations advice, and ensuring that all relevant ActionAid policies and processes are followed correctly throughout the incident management process.
- Set a positive example both on and off duty.

Partners

- FAROF's partners must abide by FAROF's code of conduct and SEAH policy. All memorandum of understanding (MoU) with partner organizations and consultancy agreements with consultants and suppliers will should include this policy as an appendix when starting a project. Breaches can lead to termination of contracts and/or partnership agreement.
- FAROF will work with partners to ensure they receive training on FAROF's SEAH policy and approach and to ensure that spaces are created to share knowledge on best practice to address SEAH and recognize the expertise of our partners in this area as well as our approach.
- Staff working with partners must ensure that partner organizations and their staff sign up and abide by FAROF's code of conduct. FAROF must work with partners to carry out SEAH risk assessment
- Concerns regarding partner staff members must be reported via reporting mechanism outlined in this policy

2.0. RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessment help identify areas in program or project design where there is risk of exploitation and abuse taking place, or not being responded to adequately. Safeguarding risk assessments must be carried out at the organizational and project level and integrated into the organizational risk matrix. Risk assessment should be carried out at the project inception stage and regularly reviewed as part of standardized monitoring activities and monitored by the Senior Management/Leadership Team and the Board.

Efforts should be made by all parties concerned to reduce the identified risks. Mitigation strategies must be developed and be incorporated into the design, delivery, and evaluation of all programs, operations, and activities which in any way involve or impact on community members, including children and adults at-risk. If this is not possible then the program/activity should not proceed. FAROF will develop risk assessment checklists that are relevant to their contexts and put in place risk mitigation plans at the program design stage.

3.0. OBLIGATION TO REPORT

- FAROF staff and individuals holding a work contract with FAROF who witness or become aware of potential acts of SEA-H or who have reasons to suspect that such are being or have been committed at FAROF or in connection with a FAROF managed activity have a duty to report this to FAROF through the appropriate reporting channels. The appropriate reporting channel for FAROF is info@farof.org
- Where a FAROF staff or an individual holding a work contract with FAROF witnesses, suspects and becomes aware of an act of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment and fails to promptly report this to FAROF, it is considered misconduct which may lead to disciplinary measures.
- The reporting of false accusations of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment made with the intent of harming the reputation of another person or FAROF or to take undue advantage of FAROF's reporting mechanisms for personal advantage is considered misconduct which may lead to disciplinary measures.

4.0. MECHANISMS FOR THE PREVENTION AND IDENTIFICATION OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, ABUSE AND HARASSMENT

Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH) can be prevented by creating an organizational culture which rejects and effectively acts upon any form of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH). FAROF has developed a body of procedures notably through its code of conduct reasserting the need to respect the dignity of all individuals.

4.1. Confidentiality

Confidentiality is vitally important to SEAH policy. We are committed to working with survivors/complainants and all others involved in an incident management process in a confidential and respectful manner. Breaches of confidentiality undermines confidence and trusts in FAROF's safeguarding and complaints management process and in the organization itself. From the point of disclosure to the final outcome of any investigation, every effort will be made to maintain and promote confidentiality, maintaining confidentiality around people's personal data and information is particularly important when managing issues relating to sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.

Information must be shared on a 'need-to-know' basis that is, only those who need to be informed so they can support an investigation or because they hold overall accountability will be given information and they will receive only as much information they will need to be effective.

If information is shared confidentially which relates to a child or suggests that someone's life is in danger, then action will need to be taken outside of standard confidentiality procedures in order to ensure that everyone is safe. This will be managed on a case by case basis and the safety and wellbeing of the child or adult in question is paramount. As noted above only those who need to know will be informed so they can take effective action.

4.2. Prevention and Identification Mechanism

FAROF has developed mechanisms that can contribute to prevent sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment:

- Signing of code of conduct by FAROF staff in order to clarify unacceptable behavior and in particular sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.
- Provision of information to FAROF's stakeholders on relevant existing mechanisms to ensure that the field teams maintain a respectful dialogue with beneficiaries.
- Implementation of trainings and awareness sessions in order to train and empower the team, particularly for staff working with minors and the most vulnerable populations.
- Identifying risk factors on an ongoing basis and in particular throughout the project lifecycle.

- Put in place evaluation procedures for FAROF partners by carrying out due diligence, particularly with regard to ethical commitments and past behaviors.

4.3. Reporting Mechanism

- FAROF makes available an immediate and confidential reporting mechanism to report potential acts of SEA-H in relation to the workplace at FAROF or in connected with a FAROF managed activity. External individuals including beneficiaries may rely upon the Human Resource office and confidential email address posted on FAROF's website. Existing reporting channels are monitored and strengthened where necessary.
- FAROF appoints and trains dedicated senior focal points in its offices to receive allegations of SEAH.
- FAROF staff or individuals working with FAROF are expected to report their allegations, observations or suspicions of potential acts of SEAH to the FAROF human Resource Office. External parties including potential victims of SEAH are encouraged to report their allegations, observations and suspicions to the confidential hotline or through the confidential email address where they can also receive confidential advice.
- Reports of SEAH may be filed anonymously with the reporting parties not providing their names. Where a report is filed anonymously, the reporting party is encouraged to provide at least an email address or a phone number for follow up questions.
- All reports of SEAH are treated with strict confidentiality. The identity of the reporting party will not be disclosed to anybody outside of the Human Resource Office.
- FAROF ensures a prompt response to all reported allegations of SEAH. The human resource office reviews and monitors reported allegations of SEAH. Upon the report of SEAH the Human Resource office conducts preliminary investigations of the allegation. If the investigation shows evidence of unacceptable behavior including SEAH that merits further proceedings the Human Resource office proceeds with further investigations.
- The reporting of SEAH may be difficult therefore, FAROF is committed to protecting persons who have acted in good faith reported an act of SEAH or cooperated with a SEAH investigation may seek protection from FAROF's whistleblower protection procedures.

5.0. INVESTIGATIONS

- The Human Resource Office is responsible for reviewing and investigating allegations of SEA-H. Cases involving SEA-H are considered high priority.
- The Human Resource Office conducts its investigations in line with best practices for SEA-H and is sensitive to the delicate nature of the allegations.
- FAROF staff or any individual holding a work contract with FAROF have a duty to cooperate fully with any review or investigations of allegations of SEA-H and shall respond to requests for information in a timely manner. They are also expected to provide additional relevant information that might be unknown to the investigating team. A failure to cooperate with investigation is considered an act of misconduct.
- FAROF staff or individuals holding a work contract with FAROF who are under investigation for potential SEA-H may be temporary removed from their position, pending the investigation.
- Upon the conclusion of an investigation, the Human Resource Office issues a final report to the CEO, explaining its findings and conclusions, if allegations are substantiated, a sanctions committee set up by FAROF will review the case in accordance with applicable disciplinary measures.

5.1. Investigation Team

An investigation Team headed by the head of the Human Resource with other team members as appointed by the CEO will carry out all preliminary investigations. An external investigator may be used where necessary. The investigation team is responsible for:

- Carrying out investigations
- Gathering and assessing any available evidence
- Producing an investigation report which they share with the survivor/complainant, the sanctions committee and subject of the complaint.

6.0. PROTECTION OF VICTIMS

Support will be offered to survivors/complainants regardless of whether a formal response is carried out (e.g. an investigation). Support will also be offered as appropriate to others involved in an incident management process, recognizing the impact this can have, for example on witnesses and those accused of carrying out inappropriate or harmful behaviors. This can include specialist psycho-social

counselling, medical support, legal support and/or access to other specialist and appropriate support as needed. FAROF will do everything possible in agreement with the victims of SEAH to protect them by:

- Maintaining all confidentiality on the handling of reports made in accordance with this policy.
- Starting without delay an investigation regarding the facts reported in accordance with this policy.
- Offering personalized support to victims of SEAH
- Informing the victims of the actions taken in response to reported cases of SEAH.

7.0. DISCIPLINARY MEASURES AGAINST FAROF STAFF OR ANYONE HOLDING A WORK CONTRACT WITH FAROF

The following are disciplinary measures taken against FAROF staff or anyone holding a work contract with FAROF:

- Disciplinary measures are applied to FAROF staff who are found to have engaged in acts of SEAH at FAROF or in connection with a FAROF managed activity. Acts of SEAH are considered serious acts of misconduct and can be ground for summary dismissal.
- Sanctions such as immediate termination of contract are imposed by the sanctions committee against individuals holding a work contract with FAROF who are found to have engaged in acts of SEAH.
- Disciplinary measures are also applied to FAROF staff or individuals holding a work contract with FAROF who fail to reports acts of SEAH in a timely manner or who encourages or condones acts of SEAH.
- Disciplinary measures are applied to FAROF staff or any individual holding a work contract with FAROF who knowing make a false report of SEA-H with an intent to harm the reputation of another person or FAROF.
- Where FAROF may have believed that the laws of the country have been violated, the CEO may decide to refer cases regarding SEA-H to national authorities for purpose of criminal proceedings as appropriate. In this case, the CEO may decide to waive the functional immunities of the implicated staff member or other persons or records relevant to the investigation.

8.0. PREVENTION AND MONITORING

The following measures are taken by FAROF for the prevention and monitoring of SEA-H:

- **Due diligence and background checks:** FAROF carries out appropriate background check before an offer of employment is given to an applicant who seeks to work with FAROF. The background check includes questions regarding criminal convictions, disciplinary measures, sanctions or investigations relating to SEA-H. FAROF reserves the right to withdraw any offer of employment or terminate any contractual agreement if an applicant is found to have provided untruthful information concerning any condemnation regarding SEA-H;

FAROF maintains a record of FAROF staff or other individuals who hold work contracts with FAROF who were found to have engaged in acts of SEAH in relation to their work with FAROF. FAROF also maintains a record of FAROF staff and other individuals who held a work contract with FAROF that have been convicted of acts of SEAH by national authorities or who have received disciplinary measures or sanctions for acts of SEAH by another organization;

FAROF also incorporates in its due diligence of vendors' background checks and disclosure requirements regarding criminal convictions, disciplinary measures or sanctions and investigations regarding SEAH of their personnel and sub-contractors.

- **Outreach and Communications:** FAROF ensures all robust communications to support effective implementation of this policy across the organization and its activities to raise awareness of the issue of SEAH and its potential on FAROF's developmental mandate;

The outreach and communication effort are monitored to ensure that SEAH materials are distributed at all levels of the organization, materials informing project staff, volunteers, stakeholders and beneficiaries are distributed and appropriate tools and channels are used to raise awareness on the issue of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment;

FAROF may liaise with other organizations, government agencies and non-profit organizations to jointly work on the prevention and response of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment in rural development. FAROF works to build commitment among its partners at all levels, including local

governments to protect vulnerable persons from SEAH related risks in development contexts;

- **Trainings and workshops:** The Human Resource department is responsible for training for all staff on a regular basis; specific workshops and refresher workshops are organized for all project staff, partners and volunteers. The trainings may include but not limited to:
 - FAROF’s SEAH Policy and principles
 - FAROF’s code of conduct and child protection policy
 - International laws relating to sexual exploitation and abuse and other forms of abuse
 - Information on how to recognize sexual exploitation and other forms of abuse.
 - Information on how to report sexual abuse, exploitation and other forms of abuse.

All programs must establish a training program including a stand-alone or refresher training on FAROF’s SEAH policy and approach so that all staff receive at least one training per year with further trainings for specific teams as required. Evidence of training must be provided (e.g. training attendance records, pictures, training materials). Informal discussions in team meetings are also encouraged. Further communications on FAROF’s SEAH policy and approach could include information campaigns, regular updates on new developments in the sector, or policy revisions.

Further specialist SEAH training will be provided depending on the nature of the work being undertaken, the context, donor requirements, and where staff and other representatives are in contact with adults at-risk or other vulnerable populations, such as displaced communities. The SEAH focal point, in line with the programs department, will work together to identify and address these needs.

- **SEA-H risk assessment in project design:** social, environmental and climate risk assessment are carried out for every FAROF project at an early stage of design and includes a SEA-H risk assessment. The assessment identifies potential SEA-H risks associated with the project, determines relevant measures to avert the risks and identifies service providers for the victims of SEA-H.

- **Staff Orientation:** The Human Resource department will ensure all joining staff, volunteers and other representatives undergo an orientation on FAROF’s SEAH policy no later than one month after they have been appointed. It is the responsibility of the individual’s supervisor to ensure that this briefing is carried out. Depending on the nature of the role, more extensive orientation on FAROF’s SEAH policy and community-specific risks and challenges should be carried out.

9.0. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

As part of embedding safety in our activities and program design, FAROF must ensure that all monitoring and evaluation activities address SEAH considerations and that data is analyzed and shared so that lessons can be learnt and best practices disseminated. It is necessary to make sure that monitoring and evaluation activities such as complaints mechanism, focus groups and surveys are accessible to all rights holders and community members, including adults at-risk, for example older people or people with disabilities. From initial needs assessments to final project reports, Monitoring and Evaluation is a vital part of safer programming and ensuring safe outcomes for rights holders and communities.

This policy is signed and approved by:

Chairman Board of Trustees:

Date: 7th November 2023

Signature



Chief Executive Officer

Date: 7th November 2023

Signature:



Next Scheduled Policy Review June 2025 or earlier

Review & Revision Policy –

The Data Protection Policies contained in this document will be reviewed every 2-years or earlier, as soon as practicable, if there is a material change in any matter referenced.