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# **Protection from Sexual Harassment, Exploitation and Abuse (PSHEA) Policy**

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## GLOSSARY

**Sexual exploitation:** is the exploitation of power, trust, or vulnerability for sexual purposes, including both actual and attempted exploitation. Using the position as a humanitarian worker to receive any sort of sexual favor is sexual exploitation.

**Sexual Harassment:** is any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offense or humiliation, when such conduct interferes with work, is made a condition of employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

**Sexual abuse:** is (threatened) physical intrusion of a sexual nature, including both actual and attempted abuse. It refers to abuse by force, but also under coercive or unequal conditions.

**Child:** A “human being below the age of eighteen years”. Sexual exploitation and abuse also includes sexual relations with a child, in any context.

**Background Checks:** As part of REDESO’s pre-recruitment practices for both potential staff and non-staff members, candidates are required to disclose any history of criminal verdicts including, as relevant, of disciplinary sanctions imposed by existing or former employers, and, where relevant, by disciplinary boards of professional organizations to which the candidate is or has been subject. In addition, specific questions on SHEA are systematically included in the questionnaires sent out to referees.

**Beneficiary population:** Refers to the people REDESO works with and/or serves or seeks to assist across the country, who are typically in situations of vulnerability and dependence vis à vis REDESO staff. Beneficiaries are individuals who are direct or indirect recipients of humanitarian/emergency or other REDESO action in any duty station. Among such individuals, women and children are particularly at risk of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA).

**Collaborators:** Individuals who work for REDESO as non-staff members including consultants, holders of Agreements for Performance of Work (APW), Special Service Agreements (SSA) or letters of agreement, Temporary Advisers, Interns, and Volunteers, as well as third party entities such as vendors, contractors or technical partners who have a contractual relationship with REDESO.

**Partner:** An organization, through its personnel and collaborators, executing a project or undertaking any other work in the name of, under contract with, or for the benefit of REDESO.

**Survivor:** the person who is, or has been, sexually exploited or abused.

## 1.0 PREAMBLE

Relief to Development Society (REDESO) is a Tanzania registered National NGO whose objectives is to focus on relief and community development programs. The core values of the organization are Professionalism; Responsiveness; Respect; Team Work; Volunteerism and Integrity. For over 20 years, REDESO has supported refugees, asylum seekers and local communities in Kagera, Kigoma, Tanga, Dar es Salaam, Mwanza, Tabora, Shinyanga, Simiyu and Katavi Regions in Tanzania. Essentially, the organization is engaged in Humanitarian and Community Development projects implemented under the humanitarian to development nexus concept.

### REDESO VALUES

- 🏆 Excellence
- 🏆 Service to marginalized individuals, especially smallholders and refugees
- 🏆 Cultural diversity
- 🏆 Indigenous knowledge
- 🏆 Environmental protection
- 🏆 Commitment to make an impact
- 🏆 Professionalism Responsiveness
- 🏆 Respect Team work
- 🏆 Volunteerism
- 🏆 Integrity
- 🏆 Innovation and creativity
- 🏆 Institutional and scientific integrity and accountability
- 🏆 Gender consciousness
- 🏆 Diversity of opinion and approach

## 2.0 SCOPE AND PURPOSE

This policy ensures that all REDESO staff, associates, and partners are aware of their role and responsibilities in keeping communities and stakeholders safe from any form of sexual exploitation or abuse. The policy further clarifies definitions and responsibilities regarding prohibited behaviour and the associated PSEA procedures outline, the reporting and investigation processes. This policy is named in line with the internationally used and recognised term 'PSEA'; however, it covers sexual harassment as well as sexual exploitation and abuse (SHEA)

This policy sets out REDESO's approach to preventing and addressing sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse. This includes:

- ✦ Our commitments to prevent SHEA and to ensure effective action is taken when problems occur;
- ✦ The principles upon which we will base our decision making and actions; ▪ Our expectations of all those who work on behalf of REDESO.

### 3.0 POLICY STATEMENT

REDESO has a zero-tolerance policy towards sexual harassment, exploitation, and abuse. In REDESO, we believe all people have a right to live their lives free from sexual violence and any abuse of power irrespective of age, gender, sexuality, sexual orientation, disability, religion or ethnic origin. We further recognise that there are unequal power dynamics across the organisation and in relation to those we serve, and that we face risk of some people exploiting their position of power for personal interests and gains. REDESO shall not tolerate its staff, associates, partners or any other representatives associated with the delivery of its work to engage in any form of sexual exploitation or abuse. Vulnerable adults, women, girls and children are particularly at risk of sexual exploitation and abuse.

Therefore, REDESO shall not tolerate its employees, volunteers, consultants, partners or any other representative associated with the delivery of its work carrying out any form of sexual harassment, sexual exploitation or sexual abuse. We commit to supporting survivors, improving safeguarding capacity, reporting, investigating, responding to, and preventing sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse.

### 4.0 REDESO PSEA PRINCIPLES AND COMMITMENTS

We are committed to achieving full, ongoing implementation of the Six Core Principles relating to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Working Group on Prevention and Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

#### 4.1 CORE PRINCIPLES ON PSEA

- a) Sexual exploitation and abuse by REDESO Employees and Related Personnel constitute acts of gross misconduct and are, therefore, grounds for termination of employment or contract/agreement. Sexual harassment by REDESO Employees and Related Personnel is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- b) Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of the majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief in the age of the child is not a defence.
- c) Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour by REDESO Employees and Related Personnel is prohibited at all times. This includes buying sex or the exchange of assistance that is due to programme participants.
- d) Sexual relationships between REDESO Employees or Related Personnel and beneficiaries are forbidden. Given the contexts where REDESO operates, such relationships may be based on inherently unequal power dynamics and may undermine the credibility and integrity of REDESO's relief and

development work. REDES0 Employees and Related Personnel must declare any previously existing relationships with beneficiaries to their line managers or HR focal point.

- e) Where REDES0 Employee or Related Personnel develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation or sexual harassment by a fellow worker, whether in REDES0 or not, he or she must immediately report such concerns via the established reporting mechanisms.
- f) REDES0 Employees and Related Personnel are obliged to create and maintain an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and abuse and child abuse and promotes the implementation of this Policy. REDES0 Managers at all levels have particular responsibilities to support and develop systems, which maintain this environment.

## 4.2 REDES0 COMMITMENTS

REDES0 is dedicated to fulfilling the following commitments to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment as highlighted in the six Core PRINCIPLES above.

### 4.2.1 SAFE ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

REDES0 will make every effort to create and maintain a safe organizational culture for all those who work for and with REDES0, as well as those in the communities where we operate through robust prevention and response work, offering support.

### 4.2.2 REPORTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT, EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE (SHEA)

- a) Ensure that we have multiple channels for REDES0 Employees, Related Personnel, beneficiaries, and others to safely report sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment. These channels should be designed in consultation with local communities and staff to ensure that they are safe and accessible.
- b) Ensure that everyone who works on behalf of REDES0 and those we serve have information about how to access these safe reporting channels. This should include posting reporting procedures in local languages and regularly explaining these channels.
- c) Provide training and information to all REDES0 Employees and Related Personnel, particularly focal points for receiving complaints, to ensure they understand their obligations and how to discharge their duties should they receive a complaint. A particular emphasis should be made on confidentiality.

### 4.2.3 RESPONDING TO SEXUAL HARASSMENT, EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE (SHEA) REPORTS

REDESO shall respond in a professional and timely manner to all concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, exploitation or abuse. All concerns or allegations will always be taken seriously, and investigated and acted upon where appropriate, in line with our safeguarding principles listed below.

- a) **Robust and accountable case management:** All allegations of SHEA, and subsequent follow-up, will be documented in a secure and confidential database to ensure accountability. The report will be officially acknowledged within 24 hours, and a safeguarding team will convene a case conference to assess immediate risks and next steps within 72 hours.
- b) **Investigations:** REDESO will carry out independent, safe, and discreet investigations, through trained investigators working with REDESO's Safeguarding Teams, recognising the rights of and duty of care to everyone involved, including the complainant and/or survivor, witnesses and the subject of complaint (SoC).
- c) **Accountable decision-making:** REDESO will take swift and appropriate action against REDESO Employees and Related Personnel who are found to have committed SHEA. This may include administrative or disciplinary action, and/or referral to the relevant local authorities if appropriate and safe to do so. An independent and gender representative decision making panel will be assigned in every investigation to ensure impartiality, transparency, and accountability. The decision making process will be subject to scrutiny by relevant Safe Guarding leads and/or advisors.
- d) **Survivor Support:** Survivors of SHEA are entitled to specialised support services. REDESO commits to refer survivors to competent support services as appropriate and available and according to the wants and the needs of the survivor. Support may include specialist psychosocial support such as counselling, medical assistance, legal counselling and access to REDESO's Employee Assistance Programmes (where available).

#### 4.2.4 EMBEDDING PSEA INTO REDESO WORK

- a) **Safer Recruitment:** In compliance with applicable laws, REDESO is committed to prevent perpetrators of SHEA from being (re)hired or (re)deployed. Managers and Human Resource teams will ensure robust recruitment screening processes for all personnel, including employees, volunteers, consultants and other representatives. As part of this, all application forms, interviews and references must address Safeguarding and equality requirements and attitudes.
- b) **Partnership Agreements:** REDESO will ensure that, when engaging in partnerships and collaborations with other institutions, these agreements: (i) incorporate this Policy as an attachment; (ii) include the appropriate



language requiring such contracting entities and individuals, and their employees and volunteers to abide by a Code of Conduct that is pursuant to the standards of this Policy; and (iii) expressly state that the failure of those entities or individuals, as appropriate, to take preventive measures against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, to investigate and report allegations thereof, or to take corrective actions when SHEA has occurred, shall constitute grounds for REDESO to terminate such agreements.

- c) **Staff and partner training:** REDESO Employees and Related Personnel must receive as part of their induction trainings on PSEA and Safeguarding when they join REDESO, including a briefing on REDESO's policies and values, the Code of Conduct, information about how to report concerns, and advice about where to seek further information about safeguarding and safer practices across the organisation. Anyone working directly with beneficiaries on behalf of REDESO must receive additional training on how to receive complaints and handle them in a safe and confidential manner.
- d) **Beneficiary Accountability:** REDESO commits to promoting accountability towards our beneficiaries and the communities where we work by: (i) being transparent about REDESO programming, activities, and services beneficiaries are entitled to; (ii) raising awareness about REDESO's Code of Conduct, safeguarding policies, and reporting channels; (iii) actively seeking feedback from communities on REDESO's work, individual behaviours, and complaints; and (iv) presenting feedback to communities on what changes have been made resulting from community feedback – ideally by a senior REDESO representative. The above steps should occur regularly throughout the lifecycle of the programme or activity.
- e) **Safe Programming:** REDESO Employees and Related Personnel are required to take proactive measures to avoid causing inadvertent harm to civilians, contribute to actively reduce existing threats and ensure programmes are conflict sensitive. This includes embedding good practice and SHEA prevention measures throughout the programme and project cycle, including project design, assessments, complaints and feedback mechanisms, and monitoring and evaluation.

## 5.0 PREVENTION AND MONITORING

### 5.1 Raising awareness, communication and dissemination of information

REDESO will prepare a communication strategy to support the determination and implementation of this policy and to raise awareness across REDESO of the issue of SEA and its potential ramifications. The plan will include:

- Availability of this policy on REDESO's internet website at all levels of the organization



- Communication material for staff across the organization and raising awareness/training program on SEA
- Communication material to inform REDESO collaborators and partner organizations of this policy, including measure such as introducing specific clause relating to SEA and external integrity Hotline in standard contractual agreements
- Communication compaign to inform REDESO beneficiaries in REDESO field officers and in REDESO program and direct delivery mechanism managed by, operating in the name of or funded by REDESO.

## 5.2 BACKGROUND CHECKS

- No offer of appointment is made by REDESO before the background check of an applicant has been completed. All applicants are required to truthfully answer standard questions concerning any existing history of criminal verdicts, questions about disciplinary measure or sanction imposed by any existing or former employer of the applicant, and, where relevant, existing history of disciplinary sanction imposed by disciplinary boards of professional organizations to which the applicant is or has been subject.
- All applicants are required to disclose any criminal record or, if relevant, or record of criminal sanction he or she may have, with the exception of miner traffic offenses. While employment will not be granted to candidates who fail to disclose this information, REDESO treat the disclosure of immaculate or incomplete information with regards to any act of SEA as misconduct. REDESO reserves the rights to withdraw any offer of employment or to terminate any contractual engagement if the applicant is found to have provided untruthful information concerning any condemnation regarding acts of SEA.
- REDESO will maintain a record of staff members found to have been convicted for acts of SEA or who have received a disciplinary measure or sanction imposed by any existing or former employer or by disciplinary boards of professional organizations to which the applicant is or has been subject. REDESO reserve the rights to disclose information about acts of SEA on records concerning an individual staff member ID so requested by another organization in a selection process.

## 6.0 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

### 6.1 POLICY MAP

This policy shall guide REDES0 staff through the definitions of sexual exploitation and abuse as well as governance and responsibilities. The associated procedures and resources will provide information on how to report any complaints, the format of the reporting, and how these complaints will be managed.

## 6.2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- a) Governance:** The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), together with the Board of Directors, has ultimate responsibility for this policy and the PSEA Framework and its proper management, using a systematic approach. As such, the CEO and the Board of Directors will receive a summary of any reported sexual exploitation and abuse incidents and follow-up measures taken at each Executive Team meeting and Board meeting, respectively.
- b) All REDES0 Employees and Related-Personnel:** Everyone who works on behalf of REDES0 is required to report any suspicions or incidences of SHEA of others (see section 6 below). Failure to report to a relevant person suspicion of SHEA relating to someone else is a breach of REDES0's policy and could lead to disciplinary action being taken against employees and the termination of REDES0's relationship with non-employees. There is no obligation for an individual to report any incident that has happened to them.
- c) Safe Guarding Focal Points:** Provide support to prevent and respond to SHEA alongside their substantive roles. Raising awareness and promoting best practices by receiving concerns, supporting survivors and reporting concerns in a confidential manner within their available channels.
- d) Safe Guarding Leads/Advisors:** Provide support to Focal Points, staff and programmes to prevent and respond to SHEA. Raising awareness, conducting training and promoting best practices, as well as receiving concerns, conducting referrals to specialized services and supporting investigations. SG

Leads/SG Teams/Advisors and senior management should offer further support to help implement this policy.

- e) Managers:** Responsible for promoting awareness of this policy with people they manage and for supporting/developing systems that create and maintain a safe working environment. This also includes the responsibility for ensuring that all staff and Related Personnel receive regular PSEA trainings, with a particular emphasis on staff who are in direct contact with the people we serve. Managers should prioritize PSEA awareness raising for themselves and their divisions, individual departments or teams, and provide budget lines for some activities.
- f) Program Teams:** Consult with beneficiaries (*in a safe, accessible, and culturally appropriate way*), to ensure that beneficiaries and those working on behalf of REDESO are familiar with REDESO's Code of Conduct, how to raise complaints and concerns, and that REDESO will take action when this happens. Programme Teams should also clearly explain what goods and/or services the beneficiaries are entitled to and how beneficiaries are selected.

## 7.0 RAISING A COMPLAINT OR CONCERN

REDESO Employees and Related Personnel have a responsibility to report any suspicion or concern of SHEA. Any individual can raise a concern/complaint to REDESO about an incident they have experienced, witnessed, or heard about concerning REDESO staff member or partner (suppliers, partners, contractor, etc.) without fear of retribution. REDESO Employees and Related Personnel *must not* investigate allegations or suspicions themselves.

### 7.1 REPORTING CHANNELS

Anyone (including REDESO's beneficiaries) can raise a concern or make a complaint to REDESO about something they have experienced or witnessed without fear of retribution. You can do this verbally or in writing to the CEO, Safeguarding Focal Point, Safeguarding Team or using the whistleblowing helpline service. If a Safeguarding Team does not exist, a dedicated whistleblowing helpline and the use of suggestion box available at the REDESO office. Employees can also choose to raise concerns with their Line Manager or Human Resources team member.

### 7.2 CONFIDENTIALITY

- a) Complaints can be made anonymously. Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality throughout the complaints process. Information that identifies individuals involved in a complaint will be limited to essential personnel and will not be shared further without obtaining the informed consent of those

involved, except if someone's life is at risk, a child is at risk, or as required by law in consultation with legal counsel and where safe to do so. Non-identifying information will be shared as per reporting requirements.

- b) Staff involved in the complaints process will be made aware of the importance of maintaining confidentiality and may be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement. Employees who breach confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, and others who work with REDESO may have their relationship with REDESO terminated. In some cases, such breaches may constitute breaking the law.

## 8.0 RETALIATION AGAINST COMPLAINANTS, SURVIVORS AND WITNESSES

REDESO will take action against anyone, whether they are the subject of a complaint or not, who seek or carry out retaliatory action against complainants, survivors or other witnesses. Employees may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Others who work with REDESO may have their relationship with REDESO terminated. Some examples of retaliation include but are not limited to the following:

- a) Termination, demotion, disadvantageous transfers or assignments, refusals to promote, threats, reprimands, or negative evaluations.
- b) Co-worker hostility or retaliatory harassment, which includes intimidation, gossip, rumors, insults, or otherwise offensive conduct that would subject a person to ridicule or humiliation.
- c) Any action or combination of actions that is reasonably likely to materially and adversely affect an employee's job performance or opportunity for advancement.

## 9.0 COMPLAINTS ABOUT REDESO'S PARTNERS

Where REDESO receives a complaint about a partner organisation, REDESO will expect the partner to respond safely, quickly and appropriately. REDESO will assist the partner to ascertain its reporting obligations.

Where appropriate, REDESO will work with the partner to address the issue through an appropriate independent investigation. If the outcome is that abuse has occurred, ongoing work with the partner cannot involve the individual(s) concerned. If there is reason to believe that an allegation of abuse has been dealt with inappropriately by

a partner, then they risk withdrawal of funding or ending the relationship (including networks and consortia).

## 10.0 RECEIVING COMPLAINTS ABOUT EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS/BODIES

Safeguarding complaints raised to REDESO about other organisations/bodies should be referred to the Management/ Board of Directors, who will report cases to the relevant organisations involved where safe to do so, as well as local PSEA working groups, networks, and/or the charity commission/police/donors where appropriate and safe to do so. REDESO will not investigate cases related to other organisations but does have an obligation to report.

## 11.0 POLICY REVIEW

To meet with sector best practice, REDESO agrees to review this policy and the entire PSEA Framework every two years, as a minimum. It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer to complete this review, in collaboration with any key internal stakeholders or external third-party providers.

## ANNEX 1: EXAMPLES OF ACTS OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE

### Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

- a) Sexual assault (defined as “any unwanted or forced sexual act committed without consent”) or threat thereof. Sexual assault can occur either against a person’s will, by force or coercion, or when a person is incapable of giving consent, such as when they are under duress, under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Force includes:
  - ✚ Actual physical aggression, including but not limited to: rape, forcible sodomy, forcible oral copulation, sexual assault with an object, sexual battery, forcible fondling (e.g., unwanted touching or kissing);
  - ✚ threats of physical aggression; ✚ emotional coercion; and/or ✚ psychological blackmailing.
- b) Unwanted touching of a sexual nature
- c) Demanding sex in any context
- d) Making sex a condition for assistance
- e) Forcing sex, forcing someone to have sex with anyone
- f) Forcing a person to engage in prostitution or pornography
- g) Refusing to use safe sex practices
- h) Videotaping or photographing sexual acts and posting it without permission
- i) Alleging or threatening to allege that anyone already has a history of prostitution on legal papers
- j) Name-calling with sexual epithets
- k) Insisting on anything sexual, including jokes that may be uncomfortable, frightening or hurtful
- l) Telling someone that they or anyone else are obliged to have sex as a condition for anything