

POLICY AGAINST SEXUAL VIOLENCE

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Approved by: Executive Board
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Binding on:

- All employees of Welthungerhilfe (Association and Foundation)
- All employees, executives, and committee members of partner organisations
- All employees, executives, and committee members of social businesses
- All freelancers working for Welthungerhilfe
- All persons and groups volunteering for Welthungerhilfe
- All suppliers and service providers of Welthungerhilfe

The current applicable version of this document is available in the intranet <https://bit.ly/2J5QvPH> and on the webpage www.welthungerhilfe.org/code-of-conduct.

1. Introduction

Sexual violence takes many forms and can affect anyone, although it is more common in situations where one person has power over another. Welthungerhilfe¹ is aware that development cooperation and humanitarian aid projects and programmes create an inherent power imbalance between project participants² and Welthungerhilfe's Employees or Contributors who provide aid supplies and services. This imbalance means there is a risk that some Employees and Contributors may abuse their position of power for personal gain, including for sexual favours.

Sexual violence by Employees or Contributors directly contravenes Welthungerhilfe's principles, harming the people whom it is committed to protecting. Welthungerhilfe therefore applies a zero-tolerance policy towards sexual violence by Employees and Contributors regardless of whom it is directed against.

2. Objectives

The objectives of this Policy are to:

- protect all project participants, Employees, and Contributors from sexual violence perpetrated by Employees and Contributors;
- establish rules of conduct for the prevention of sexual violence and thereby promote such preventative actions;
- raise awareness of risks in order to help identify misconduct;
- protect Employees and Contributors from false or malicious accusations;
- inform third parties and project participants about the conduct they can expect from Employees and Contributors of Welthungerhilfe; and
- express existing contractual obligations in clear terms.

3. Scope

The provisions of this Policy apply to:

- a) Welthungerhilfe (Association and Foundation) employees, regardless of their type of contract (including full-time employees, temporary personnel, interns and personnel on loan), the scope of their responsibilities and the location of employment.
- b) Employees, executives, and committee members of partner organisations³ receiving material or non-material support from Welthungerhilfe.
- c) Employees, executives and committee members of social businesses that Welthungerhilfe holds shares in.
- d) Freelancers working for Welthungerhilfe on a contractual basis.
- e) People and groups volunteering for Welthungerhilfe (e.g. members of the Programme Advisory Committee or action groups).
- f) Suppliers and service providers for Welthungerhilfe.

¹ **Welthungerhilfe:** this term refers to both the association Deutsche Welthungerhilfe e.V. and the foundation Deutsche Welthungerhilfe.

² **Project participants:** target groups (beneficiaries) of programmes and projects implemented by Welthungerhilfe or its partner organisations; members of communities in which Welthungerhilfe and its partner organisations are active; anyone who is actively participating in programmes or projects of Welthungerhilfe or its partner organisations and who is not categorised as either an Employee or an Contributor.

³ **Partner organisations:** all local, national, and international partners who have signed a memorandum of understanding or a partnership agreement with Welthungerhilfe, including community-based organisations, civil society groups, non-governmental organisations and advocacy partners.

Members of the Association's bodies (the General Assembly, Supervisory Board, and Executive Board) of Welthungerhilfe as well the Foundation's Executive Board and management commit themselves to respecting this Policy. Hereinafter, the persons specified in points b) through f) above are referred to as Contributors.

This Policy applies worldwide, serving as the minimum standard for each and every Employee and Contributor. It complements Welthungerhilfe's Code of Conduct as well as the policies, international standards, and codices mentioned therein. Employees and Contributors must also observe the laws that prevail at their place of deployment. In the event of discrepancies, the stricter standard will prevail.

Welthungerhilfe will not be liable for the actions of Contributors who violate this Policy despite having previously given their agreement to the Policy in writing.

4. Definition

Sexual violence takes many forms, including

- **Sexual abuse:** any actual or threatened physical act of a sexual nature whether effected through violence, under unequal circumstances or through compulsion.
- **Sexual exploitation:** any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, unequal power relationships, or trust in order to use someone sexually in order to gain financial, social or political benefits.
- **Sexual harassment:** any behaviour of a sexual nature that is unwelcome and that makes someone feel uncomfortable and offends their dignity. This includes suggestive remarks, unwelcome physical contact or proximity, displaying or sharing of suggestive material (e.g. via email or social media), and sexist conversations or jokes, whether in verbal, written or non-verbal form.

5. Rules of Conduct

All Employees and Contributors are explicitly prohibited from participating in activities that could result in sexual violence. Welthungerhilfe therefore commits to:

- selecting its Employees and Contributors with great care;
- sensitising its Employees and Contributors through appropriate means, e.g. training;
- offering various channels for Employees, Contributors, project participants, and third parties to report any suspicions;
- taking measures to protect survivors⁴;
- following up on any reported suspicions of sexual violence promptly, proportionately, and using trained investigators; and
- protecting victims of sexual violence by Employees and Contributors of Welthungerhilfe and offering them support. Such support may include expert psychosocial counselling and/or access to other professionals. The type and degree of support will be determined on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the Executive Board.

⁴ **Survivor:** someone who has experienced sexual violence.

5.1 No Abuse of Power

A scarcity of resources puts Employees and Contributors in a position of power over the people who receive support from Welthungerhilfe's projects and programmes or may depend on help from Welthungerhilfe for survival. This power must never be abused by Employees and Contributors.

Employees and Contributors are strictly prohibited from humiliating or exploiting anyone. This includes soliciting or receiving sex or sexual favours in exchange for money, employment, aid supplies, goods or services. The same applies to sexual coercion or obtaining sexual favours through threats or violence.

Such behaviour toward children⁵ is also prohibited. More information can be found in the following document:

- *Child Protection Policy*

5.2 Creating a Low-Risk Environment

Employees and Contributors of Welthungerhilfe shall counteract sexual violence by creating and maintaining an environment that counteracts sexual violence. This includes but is not limited to:

- educating project participants about their rights, about channels available to them to report violations of this policy, and about the contents of this policy;
- balancing the gender composition (male + female) of teams at Welthungerhilfe or its partner organisations at all levels of function and responsibility; and
- carefully reviewing potential new partner organisations, including the measures they take against sexual violence, before an agreement for cooperation is reached or a contract is signed.

5.3 Distributing Aid Supplies

Employees and Contributors shall ensure that the distribution of aid supplies and services to beneficiaries⁶ is always free of demands. Project participants must therefore be clearly and adequately informed of the criteria used to select beneficiaries, the type and amount of aid supplies and services, and distribution details (the time, place, method, etc.). Situations in which individual Employees or Contributors appear to have complete authority over the distribution of aid supplies and services are to be avoided.

5.4 Avoiding Sexual Relationships with Project Participants

Sexual relationships between Employees or Contributors and project participants can be perceived by third parties and the public as an abuse of power or a conflict of interest⁷ due to the power imbalances inherent in such relationships. This is the case even if the people involved in such a relationship see it as consensual and non-exploitative.

Entering into sexual relationships with project participants undermines the credibility and integrity of Welthungerhilfe's work. As a consequence, Welthungerhilfe strongly advises against such relationships. If in doubt, it is in the interest of Employees and Contributors to report such relationships to their respective superiors in order to protect themselves and the organisation from

⁵ **Child:** a person under 18 years of age (according to the UN convention).

⁶ **Beneficiaries:** the target group for programmes and projects implemented by Welthungerhilfe or one of its partner organisations.

⁷ **Conflict of interest:** a conflict between someone's private interests and official or professional responsibilities.

accusations. Employees or Contributors and managers they report to may also take advantage of the guidance services offered by the Compliance and Human Resources Units in Bonn.

More information can be found in the following document:

- *Policy against Conflicts of Interest*

5.5 Avoiding Commercial Sexual Services

Employees and Contributors are urged not to avail themselves of commercial sexual services as doing so undermines the credibility, reputation, and integrity of Welthungerhilfe and its work. This applies even in countries in which prostitution or the receipt of sexual services are not illegal.

Welthungerhilfe is against any exchange of money, goods, services or favours for sexual services.

6. Reporting Requirements and Consequences for Violations

Anyone with concerns, suspicions or knowledge of incidents regarding violations of this Policy is obligated to immediately report them to the Compliance Unit at Welthungerhilfe's Head Office (complaints@welthungerhilfe.de). Any report submitted to management or via national complaint lines to Welthungerhilfe must be passed on by them to the Compliance Unit. Welthungerhilfe also offers anonymous reporting online or via a telephone hotline for whistle-blowers. All information regarding breaches of this Policy is treated as strictly confidential in accordance with the *Organisational Directive on Whistleblowing*. Nobody who reports violations or submits information regarding violations with honest intent, needs to fear any disadvantage or other consequences, even if the report later turns out to be unfounded. It is not the responsibility of the Employees and Contributors or the whistle-blowers to conduct investigations, deliver evidence, or determine whether or not sexual violence took place.

Deliberately false accusations made for the purposes of harming others will not be tolerated. The failure to report an incident of sexual violence will also constitute a violation of Welthungerhilfe's policies; however, this onus is not put on the victims of the incident in question.

Violations of this Policy may result in disciplinary measures, up to and including immediate termination and/or the annulment of cooperation agreements. Welthungerhilfe will report criminal offences in compliance with applicable laws.

Additional information is provided in the following documents:

- *Complaints Response Mechanism Policy*
- *Organisational Directive on Whistleblowing*

Internet: www.welthungerhilfe.org/complaints

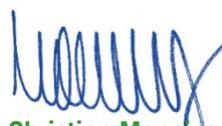
Confidential e-mail address: complaints@welthungerhilfe.de

Whistleblowing hotline: +49 (0)228 2288 577

The Policy has been approved by the Executive Board on 11. April 2019



Mathias Mogge
Secretary General



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