



# **Policy Against Sexual Exploitation, Abuse & Harassment**

**Samos Volunteers**

**2020 Onwards**

# I. INTRODUCTION

Founded in 2016 as a group of independent volunteers responding to the humanitarian crisis in Samos, Samos Volunteers operates following the principles of humanity, impartiality, independence and neutrality according to its core values: do no harm, do it for the many, facilitating community, the little things are the big things and work in progress.

Samos Volunteers are committed to addressing the humanitarian needs in Samos, through both hygiene and psycho-social activities, enhancing dignity and showing solidarity to residents of Samos RIC. Samos Volunteers aims to work sustainably with camp and local communities to offer immediate relief, build resilience and develop peoples potential. Samos Volunteers endeavours to do this in a responsible, sensitive, sustainable and inclusive way.

Our approach is guided by our 5 core values:

- **Do No Harm** We are committed to taking a critical approach to our activities to carefully consider our activities in order to minimise harm and maximise the positive impact of our services.
- **Do it for the Many** We are committed to using donor money to reach the maximum number of people in the community. To achieve this we strive for equality of access, meaningful inclusion and representation throughout our organisation.
- **Facilitating Community** We are committed to supporting the camp and local communities on Samos, responding to their needs and interests through listening, learning and adapting. We strive to facilitate the building of relationships between the communities to drive sustainable change.
- **The Little Things are the Big Things** We are committed to taking a thoughtful and reflective approach to the planning, implementation and evaluation of our work, acknowledging the wide ranging impacts that our operations can have for service users. We strive to provide considered and quality service users centred on our belief of humanity and solidarity.
- **A Work in Progress** We acknowledge that working in a dynamic environment requires us to adapt quickly in changing circumstances. We are committed to



doing our very best in these circumstances and to respond to lessons learnt where we fall short.

## A Policy Statement

Samos Volunteers is committed to respecting the highest standards in terms of efficiency, responsibility and transparency in its operations. To this end our policies:

Develop Awareness

- Encourage Prevention
- Promote Detection
- Set Out a Clear Response to Concerns

This policy is aimed at guiding should be considered in conjunction with Samos Volunteers:

- [SV Policies & Code of Conduct](#)

# II. Interpretation and Application

## Article 1- Scope of Application

1. The policy applies to all SV Volunteers and governance members.
2. The provisions of this policy may also be applied to any person employed by an entity that carries out missions for Samos Volunteers.
3. In particular, this policy applies to implementing partners depending on specific clauses and conditions of the grant agreement, suppliers, sub-grantees, beneficiaries (as victims), stakeholders, consultants, and other associated entities.

## Article 2- Definitions



## 1. Sexual exploitation and abuse:

For the purposes of this policy, the term “sexual exploitation and abuse” includes:

- Sexual harassment,
- Abuse of power for the purpose of obtaining sexual favours,
- Rape,
- Sexual assault,
- Sexual relations with a minor,
- Paid sexual relations,
- Human trafficking sex-related.

### i. Sexual Harassment

“Sexual harassment” is characterized by the repeated imposition of sexual comments or behaviours on a person that:

- are degrading because of their degrading or humiliating nature,
- or create an intimidating, hostile or offensive situation for the person concerned.

Any form of serious (even non-repeated) pressure with the real or apparent aim of obtaining a sexual act for the benefit of the perpetrator or a third party is considered as sexual harassment.

It is specifically prohibited to sexually harass any SV Volunteer or other entities referred to in Article 1 of this policy during or outside working hours.

- Sexual harassment includes a large number of prohibited behaviours such as: physical assaults of a sexual nature, such as rape or sexual assault, attempts to commit such acts or physical intent such as touching, pinching, fondling or any other gesture against the body of another individual;
- Sexual advances, sexual proposals or comments with sexual connotations such as equivocal gestures, noises, remarks, jokes or comments about a person’s sexuality or sexual experiences;
- Preferential treatment or promise of preferential treatment in exchange for sexual favours from a person including solicitation only, or explicit request for sexual intercourse in exchange for any reward;
- Intimidation, threats or barriers to career progression because of the gender of the person concerned;
- Reprisals in response to a sexual harassment complaint.

### ii. Abuse of power for the purpose or obtaining sexual favours.



The “abuse of power to obtain sexual favours” is characterized by a sexual relationship imposed by force or by a relationship of social or economic dependence or subordination.

Any relationship with a minor will be considered as sexual exploitation or abuse.

Abuse of power to obtain sexual favours also includes rape and sexual assault.

### **iii. Rape**

“Rape” is defined as any act of sexual penetration, of any kind, committed against another person, whether a minor or an adult, by violence, coercion, threat or surprise. Sexual penetration includes vaginal, anus or mouth penetration through the penis or any other part of the body, including penetration with an object.

### **iv. Sexual Assault**

“Sexual assault” is defined as any sexual assault committed against another person, whether a minor or an adult, by violence, coercion, threat or surprise.

### **v. Sexual relations with a minor**

“Sexual relation” with a minor is defined as sexual penetration (as defined in iii. Rape) or sexual assault (as defined in iv. Sexual assault) against a minor under the age of 18.

Sexual relation with a minor is considered as sexual abuse.

Any sexual activity with a child is prohibited because of the age of majority and lack of consent. A child is defined as any person under 18 years old, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Not knowing the person’s age is not a valid defense.

### **vi. Paid sexual relations**

“Paid sexual relations” is defined as the payment of a sum of money, an offer of employment, the provision of services in exchange for a sexual relationship or sexual favours for both minors and adults.

Solicitation alone is also prohibited.

### **vii. Human Trafficking sex-related**

“Human trafficking of a sexual nature” or procuring is defined as the recruitment, transportation, transfer or concealment of persons by the provision of means, threat or any other form of coercion, fraud or abuse of power or by taking advantage of the sexual activity of a minor or an adult.



2. **Governance:**

Under the terms of this policy, the term “governance” refers to any person elected by decision making bodies to participate in the managerial and administrative bodies of Samos Volunteers in particular, the members of boards of directors are Governance members.

3. **Stakeholders:**

Under the terms of this policy, “stakeholders” are individuals or groups, with or without a legal personality, who directly or indirectly, voluntarily or involuntarily, contribute to, participate in or benefit, in any way, from the actions, programmes and activities of Samos Volunteers.

4. **SV Volunteers:**

Under the terms of this policy, the term “SV Volunteers” refers to any person volunteering with Samos Volunteers.

5. **Service Users:**

Under the terms of this policy, the term “service users” refers to any person who benefits, directly or indirectly, from Samos Volunteers’ programmes.

6. **Supplier:**

Under the terms of this policy, a “supplier” is a third party, individual or group, with or without legal personality, who directly or indirectly provides any type of goods and/or services to Samos Volunteers, whether for a fee or not.

- This policy is published under the authority of Samos Volunteers. SV Volunteers, as well as the other entities referred to in Article 1 of this policy, are required to conduct themselves in accordance with this policy and must therefore be aware of and have understood its provisions and any changes. When they are unsure of how to proceed, they should seek the advice of a competent person, notably their line manager.
- SV Volunteers, as well as the other entities referred to in Article 1 of this policy, who are responsible to negotiate the terms of conditions of involvement of any SV Volunteers, must ensure that staff is aware of and commits to the full respect of this policy.
- It is the responsibility of SV Volunteers with managerial responsibilities, as well as the other entities referred to in Article 1 of this policy, to ensure that volunteers under their supervision comply with this policy; and to take or propose appropriate disciplinary measures as sanction against any violations of its provisions.



- This policy shall form part of the working conditions of SV Volunteers and the conditions of the involvement of the other entities referred to in Article 1 of this policy from the moment they certify that they have read it.
- Samos Volunteers will review the provisions of this policy at regular intervals.

## Article 4- The purpose of this policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Implement the prevention, reporting and sanction mechanisms necessary to comply with the rules relating to prohibited sexual behaviours and applying to SV Volunteers as well as others entities referred to in Article 1 of this policy.
2. Define the rules relating to prohibited sexual behaviours that apply to SV Volunteers as well as others entities referred to in Article 1 of this policy.
3. Inform third parties of the conduct they are entitled to expect from SV Volunteers as well as others entities referred to in Article 1 of this policy.

## III. General Principles

### Article 5- Neutrality

1. SV Volunteers and the other entities referred to in Article 1 of this policy, must fulfil their duties in a neutral and apolitical manner, in accordance with the law, legitimate instructions and ethical rules relating to their roles.

### Article 6- Impartiality

1. In the context of their professional roles and/or their projects, SV Volunteers and the other entities referred to in Article 1 of this policy, must act in accordance with the law and exercise their discretionary power in an impartial manner, taking only relevant circumstances into consideration.

### Article 7- Confidence of Stakeholders

1. SV Volunteers and the other entities referred to in Article 1 of this policy, have a duty to conduct themselves at all times in a way that reflects and upholds



SV's values of integrity, impartiality and efficiency and contribute to strengthen the confidence of all stakeholders.

## Article 8- Hierarchical responsibility

1. SV Volunteers staff report to the field coordination team, unless otherwise provided for by law. Field coordinators report to the project manager who in turn reports directly to the board of directors.

## Article 9- Confidentiality

1. Duly considering the stakeholders' potential right to access information, SV Volunteers and the other entities referred to in Article 1 of this policy, must process all the information and all the documents acquired during or as part of the exercise of their duties with the necessary confidentiality.

## Article 10- Protection of Privacy

1. All the necessary measures must be taken to ensure that the privacy of SV Volunteers and of the other entities referred to in Article 1 of this policy, is appropriately respected; as a result, the declarations provided for this policy must remain confidential, unless otherwise provided for by law.

## Article 11- Information Held

1. Considering the general framework of international law regarding access to information held by private individuals, SV Volunteers and the other entities referred to in Article 1 of this policy, should disclose information only in respect to the rules and requirements applicable to Samos Volunteers.
2. SV Volunteers and the other entities referred to in Article 1 of this policy, must take appropriate measures to guarantee the security and confidentiality of the information for which they are responsible or of which they are aware.
3. SV Volunteers and the other entities referred to in Article 1 of this policy, must not seek access to information which would be inappropriate for them to have. SV Volunteers, as well as the other entities referred to in Article 1 of this policy, must not make inappropriate use of the information they may obtain in or as part of the exercise of their duties.
4. In the same way, SV Volunteers and the other entities referred to in Article 1 of this policy, must not retain professional information that may or should be





legitimately circulated, or circulate information they know, or have reasonable grounds to believe, is inaccurate or misleading.

## **Article 12- Responsibility of line managers**

1. SV Volunteers in charge of supervising or managing other SV Volunteers must do so in accordance with the policies and objectives of SV. They are responsible for responding to acts and omissions of volunteers under their supervision who violate these policies and objectives, and to take due diligence measures expected from a person in their position to prevent such acts or omissions.
2. SV Volunteers tasked with supervising or managing other SV Volunteers must take the necessary measures to protect children and prevent staff under their supervision from engaging in acts likely to generate child ill-treatment or negligence. These measures may be: to draw attention to and implement the laws and regulations; to ensure adequate training related to child ill-treatment or negligence and to set an example of integrity through their personal conduct.

# **IV. Mechanisms to fight sexual abuse and exploitation**

## **Article 13- Importance of Prevention**

1. Fully aware that sexual exploitation and abuse can be most effectively avoided by creating an organizational culture which rejects and effectively acts upon any form of sexual exploitation and abuse, Samos Volunteers has developed a series of internal awareness trainings aimed at preventing and identifying sexual exploitation and abuse.
2. In parallel, Samos Volunteers has developed a body of practical procedures, notably through its Code of Conduct, its induction process and guidance, re-asserting the need to respect the dignity of individuals.

## **Article 14- Prevention and identification mechanism**



1. Although, through its actions, Samos Volunteers is faced with the most diverse cultures and belief systems, Samos Volunteers fully upholds principles of freedom of speech and of protection of victims of sexual abuse and exploitation. As such, Samos Volunteers has developed mechanisms that can contribute to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse such as:
  - Signing of the Code of Conduct by the volunteers in order to clarify unacceptable behaviour and in particular sexual exploitation and abuse;
  - Information to the beneficiaries of existing remedies (notably through the Complaints and Response Mechanisms - CRM) allowing to sensitize all the stakeholders of a project and to ensure that the field teams maintain a respectful dialogue with the beneficiaries;
  - Implementation of trainings and awareness sessions in order to train and empower the teams, particularly for staff exposed to working with minors or the most vulnerable population;
  - Identify risk factors on an ongoing basis and in particular throughout the project cycle;
  - Put in place evaluation procedures for Samos Volunteers partners by carrying out due diligence, particularly with regard to their ethical commitments and past behaviours.
  
2. Samos Volunteers staff responsible for recruiting, monitoring or directing others employed by Samos Volunteers must be careful to prevent the hiring or deployment of inappropriate individuals in direct contact with children. This includes:
  - Incoming coordinators who are required to provide a recent criminal records check prior or two references to commencing their role.
  - Incoming volunteers who are required to provide either a recent criminal records check and/or a reference (a previous employer, education professional or other upstanding member of the community).
  
3. As soon as Samos Volunteers is aware of, any person who has been convicted of, or registered on lists or registers, for offences of child ill-treatment or negligence, within the meaning of this policy and regardless of the legal qualification retained by the national courts, shall not be in direct contact with children, within the framework of Samos Volunteers' programmes.
  
4. Any Samos Volunteer partner or subcontractor in direct contact with children must certify that they have read and comply with the provisions of this policy.



## Article 15- Prohibition of all sexual exploitation and abuse

1. Any direct or indirect participation in sexual exploitation and abuse as defined in this policy is prohibited for SV Volunteers and the other entities mentioned in Article 1 of this policy.
2. Under no circumstances shall SV Volunteers and the other entities mentioned in Article 1 of this policy, take undue advantage of their professional position for their personal interest or to obtain a favour of a sexual nature.

## Article 16- Action to be taken in the event of sexual exploitation and abuse

1. In the case of sexual exploitation and abuse committed as part of an employment relationship:
  - If an SV Volunteer believes that they are a victim of or witness to any of the conduct set out in Article 2 of this policy, they shall have a direct contact with the perpetrator in order to end such behaviour, provided that the facts are not far too serious to exclude such an approach.
  - If the inappropriate behaviour does not cease or if the volunteer is unable to address the perpetrator directly, they must report the facts in accordance with Article 17 of this policy.
  - It is advisable to note the day and time as well as details related to the facts and the names of any witnesses. In any case, the Volunteer Coordinator must be informed.
  - If appropriate, the Project Manager must also be informed of the facts in order to take appropriate measures and to conduct an internal investigation in a timely manner.
2. In the case of sexual exploitation and abuse committed against a service user of Samos Volunteers' action:
  - If sexual exploitation and/or abuse committed against beneficiaries are noted by the person signing this Policy, the latter undertakes to report it without delay to the project manager and/or through [concerns@samosvolunteers.org](mailto:concerns@samosvolunteers.org)



- It is advisable to note the day and time as well as details related to the facts and the names of any witnesses. In any case, the Volunteer Coordinator must be informed.
- If appropriate, the Project Manager must also be informed of the facts in order to take appropriate measures and to conduct an internal investigation in a timely manner.

## Article 17- Obligation to report for Samos Volunteer Staff

1. Samos Volunteers intends to respond/come up with an answer/bring an (appropriate) response to any sexual exploitation and abuse. To contribute towards this, Samos Volunteers has designated a focal point via a specific email address [concerns@samosvolunteers.org](mailto:concerns@samosvolunteers.org)
2. SV Volunteers who consider to be a witness or victim of sexual exploitation and abuse which may be in violation of or contravenes to the present policy, must report it to the project manager and/or to [concerns@samosvolunteers.org](mailto:concerns@samosvolunteers.org).
3. SV Volunteers must report to the volunteer coordinator and/or the project manager and/or to [concerns@samosvolunteers.org](mailto:concerns@samosvolunteers.org) any evidence, allegation or suspicion of sexual exploitation and abuse of which they are aware of in the course of their duties. The investigation of the reported facts is Samos Volunteers' responsibility, in accordance with the provisions of Article 19 of this policy.
4. If reporting to the field coordination team is not appropriate, SV Volunteers should report through [concerns@samosvolunteers.org](mailto:concerns@samosvolunteers.org).
5. SV Volunteers may use the Incident Reporting (IR) format and/or the grievance form to report.
6. Samos Volunteers must ensure that SV Volunteers who report a case as described above on the basis of reasonable suspicions and in good faith does not suffer from any harm as a result.
7. Cases of misuse of complaint mechanisms may be subject to sanctions.

## Article 18- Report for the stakeholders



1. Samos Volunteers wishes to support people who are witnesses or victims of violations of the present policy. To this end Samos Volunteers intends to facilitate stakeholder reporting for any violation of this policy. Thus, any stakeholder, as defined in the present policy, who is a witness or victim of the violation of the present policy can report to Samos Volunteers through the Complaints and Response Mechanism.
2. Samos Volunteers must ensure that any stakeholder who reports a case as described above on the basis of reasonable suspicions and in good faith does not suffer from any harm as a result.

## Article 19- Samos Volunteers investigation in the case of report by SV Volunteers

1. In accordance with Article 17 of this policy, SV Volunteers must inform their project manager and/or to the volunteer coordinator and in any case at [concerns@samosvolunteers.org](mailto:concerns@samosvolunteers.org) in case of suspicion of sexual exploitation and abuse.
2. An e-mail response is sent by [concerns@samosvolunteers.org](mailto:concerns@samosvolunteers.org) upon receipt of the complaint. This answer: details the process to be followed in the event of suspicion of sexual exploitation and abuse; requests, where appropriate, to provide further clarification and evaluation of the complaint.
3. The management of the complaint is done either at field coordination, or board level depending on the seriousness of the reported facts. This evaluation is carried out by the Protection Lead on the board team [concerns@samosvolunteers.org](mailto:concerns@samosvolunteers.org).
4. SV Volunteers and other entities mentioned in Article 1 of this policy must:
  - Cooperate in any investigation conducted by Samos Volunteers;
  - Keep all records of any suspected involvement that may be required for further investigation;
  - Preserve the confidentiality of all allegations.

## Article 20- Samos Volunteers investigation in case of report by a stakeholder



1. In accordance with article 18 of this policy, stakeholders may report through the Complaints and Response Mechanisms (CRM) any cases of suspected sexual exploitation and abuse.
2. A response via the Complaints and Response Mechanisms (CRM) will be provided upon receipt of the complaint. This response:
  - details the process to be followed in the event of suspicion of sexual exploitation and abuse;
  - requests, where appropriate, to provide further clarification and elevation of the complaint.
3. SV Volunteers and other entities referred to in Article 1 of this policy must:
  - cooperate in any investigation conducted by Samos Volunteers;
  - keep all records of suspected involvement in such cases that may be required in case of investigation;
  - preserve the confidentiality of all allegations.

## Article 21- Investigating Authority

1. The Protection Lead is responsible for the independent oversight of policy against sexual exploitation and abuse and is responsible for its implementation within Samos Volunteers.

## Article 22- Sanctions against sexual exploitation and abuse

### 1. Disciplinary Sanction

The violation of the present policy, which constitutes in particular a violation of Samos Volunteers' Code of Conduct, may result in sanctions ranging from warning to termination of the volunteering agreement for serious misconduct, with no notice and no payment of compensation.

### 2. Reporting to the Competent Authorities

Samos Volunteers has the right, depending on the seriousness of the facts found, to report to the competent prosecution authorities the facts constituting child ill-treatment or negligence.

## Article 23 - Protection of Victims

1. Samos Volunteers undertakes to do everything possible, in agreement with the victims of prohibited practices, to protect them, in particular by:



- maintaining all required 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 incidents reported in accordance with this policy;
- informing the victim of the action taken in response to the reported incidents in accordance with this policy;
- adapting the present policy, in order to allow a better understanding and adherence of Samos Volunteers to these principles.

## V. Implementation of the policy

### Article 24- Implementation date of the policy

1. The Policy Against Sexual, Abuse & Harassment comes into effect after approval from the Samos Volunteers board on 25/02/2021

### Article 25 - Adherence to the Policy

1. SV Volunteers and the other entities referred to in Article 1 of this policy, certify that they adhere to these principles by signing the Samos Volunteers Volunteer Agreement Form.

## End of Policy

