

# **ANTI-HARASSMENT AND NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**



# ANTI-HARASSMENT AND NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

## Objective:

To provide a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment free from harassment and discrimination, ensuring all employees, volunteers, and stakeholders feel valued and protected.

## Policy

### 1. Zero-Tolerance

- **Strict Prohibition:** SOSNEEDS strictly prohibits any form of harassment or discrimination based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law, as supported by the *WHO's Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy* and the *UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)*.
- **Inclusive Environment:** Foster an environment that promotes equality, respect, and dignity for all individuals, in alignment with *SDG 5 and SDG 10*, which emphasize gender equality and reducing inequalities.
- **Consequences:** Any employee or volunteer found engaging in harassment or discrimination will face immediate and appropriate disciplinary action, which may include suspension/termination of employment or volunteer status.

### 2. Reporting

- **Multiple Channels:** Employees and volunteers can report incidents of harassment or discrimination through various channels to ensure accessibility and convenience. These channels include:
  - **Supervisors:** Report directly to immediate supervisors or managers.
  - **Human Resources:** Report to the HR department via in-person meetings, phone calls, or email.
  - **Anonymous Hotline/Email:** Use an anonymous hotline number or dedicated email address to report incidents confidentially.
- **Accessibility:** All reporting channels will be easily accessible to all employees and volunteers, including those with disabilities.
- **Confidentiality**
  - **Privacy Protection:** All reports of harassment or discrimination will be handled with the highest level of confidentiality to protect the privacy of all parties involved.

- Limited Disclosure: Information about the report will only be shared with individuals who need to know in order to conduct a thorough investigation and take appropriate action.
  - Secure Handling: All documentation related to the report will be securely stored and only accessible to authorized personnel.
- No Retaliation
- Non-Retaliation Policy: SOSNEEDS enforces a strict non-retaliation policy to protect individuals who report incidents of harassment or discrimination in good faith, reflecting the *UN's commitment to protecting whistleblowers* and ensuring that all individuals can report misconduct without fear.
  - Protection Measures: Protection measures shall be provided to protect reporters from any form of retaliation, such as demotion, dismissal, harassment, or any other adverse action.
  - Reporting Retaliation: A clear process for reporting any instances of retaliation shall be provided and the reports of retaliation treated with the same seriousness and confidentiality as the original harassment or discrimination reports.
  - Disciplinary Action: Immediate and appropriate disciplinary action shall be taken against anyone found to have engaged in retaliatory behavior.
- Reporting Process
- Initial Report:  
The individual experiencing or witnessing harassment or discrimination should report the incident through one of the designated channels.  
The report should include detailed information about the incident, including date, time, location, individuals involved, and any witnesses.
  - Acknowledgment:  
The receipt of the report shall be acknowledged within a specified time frame of 24-48 hours) and assure the reporter that the incident will be investigated promptly and confidentially.
  - Assessment:  
The designated personnel (e.g., HR) shall conduct an initial assessment of the report to determine the appropriate course of action.
  - Investigation:  
A trained investigator shall be assigned to conduct a thorough and impartial investigation of the reported incident.  
The investigation shall include interviews with the reporter, the accused, and any witnesses, as well as a review of relevant documents or evidence.

- **Resolution:**  
Based on the findings of the investigation, appropriate action shall be taken, which may include disciplinary measures against the accused if the allegations are substantiated. Inform the reporter of the outcome of the investigation, while maintaining confidentiality regarding specific details.
- **Follow-Up:**  
Follow-up meetings with the reporter shall be conducted to ensure their continued safety and well-being.  
Ongoing support shall be provided as needed, such as counseling services or adjustments to work arrangements.
- **Communication and Training**
  - **Training Sessions:** Regular training sessions shall be conducted for all employees and volunteers on the reporting process and their rights and responsibilities under the anti-harassment and non-discrimination policy.
  - **Policy Awareness:** Ensure that all employees and volunteers are aware of the reporting guidelines and understand how to access the reporting channels.
  - **Support Resources:** Resources and support shall be provided for employees and volunteers who may need assistance with the reporting process or require additional information about their rights.

### 3. Investigation

- **Immediate Action:** Immediate action to investigate all reported incidents of harassment or discrimination shall be taken.
- **Thorough Investigations:** Thorough and impartial investigations shall be conducted, involving trained personnel who understand the sensitivity and importance of these issues.
- **Documentation:** Detailed records of all reported incidents, investigations, and outcomes shall be maintained, ensuring transparency and accountability.
- **Fair Resolution:** Investigation process shall be fair and unbiased, and appropriate actions are taken based on the findings.

### 4. Support

- **Victim Support Services:** Support services shall be offered to victims of harassment and discrimination, including counseling, legal advice, and medical assistance if needed, as recommended by the *WHO's Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy*.
- **Accommodations:** Necessary accommodations shall be provided to victims to ensure their safety and well-being, such as changes in work assignments or schedules.
- **Follow-Up:** Follow-up meetings with victims shall be conducted to ensure their continued safety and to provide ongoing support as needed.

## **Implementation and Enforcement**

- Training and Awareness
  - Regular Training: Mandatory training sessions shall be conducted for all employees and volunteers on anti-harassment and non-discrimination policies, reporting procedures, and the importance of maintaining a respectful and inclusive workplace.
  - Awareness Campaigns: Awareness campaigns shall be launched to educate employees and volunteers about the different forms of harassment and discrimination, and the importance of reporting incidents.
- Monitoring and Evaluation
  - Regular Reviews: The effectiveness of the anti-harassment and non-discrimination policy shall be reviewed and assessed regularly. Necessary adjustments shall be made based on feedback, changes in laws, or best practices.
  - Feedback Mechanisms: Feedback mechanisms shall be implemented to allow employees and volunteers to provide input on the policy and its implementation.
- Disciplinary Actions
  - Clear Consequences: Clear consequences for violations of the policy shall be outlined, ranging from warnings and mandatory training to suspension or termination of employment or volunteer status.
  - Enforcement: Consistent and fair enforcement of disciplinary actions shall be ensured for all violations, regardless of the offender's position within the organization.
- Support Resources: Access to counseling and support services shall be provided for those affected by harassment or discrimination.