

PROTECTION AGAINST SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, ABUSE AND HARASSMENT POLICY (PSEAH)

Reviewed by the Board of Directors on November 4, 2021

PREAMBLE

Première Urgence Internationale (PUI) is a non-profit, non-political and non-religious international NGO.

Première Urgence Internationale provides assistance to civilian victims, marginalized or excluded by the effects of natural disasters, wars and economic collapse. Its objective is to provide a global response to all the fundamental needs of populations facing humanitarian crises, from the emergency phase to enabling them to recover their autonomy and dignity.

Première Urgence Internationale applies a policy of **zero tolerance** towards all forms of abuse, exploitation, mistreatment and moral or sexual harassment. All persons entering in contact with Première Urgence Internationale collaborators, members, partners, suppliers and associates in relation with its activities must be protected to the greatest extent possible against deliberate or involuntary actions and failures which would expose them to risks of abuse, harassment or sexual exploitation and any other prejudice.

This policy focuses on protection from sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, and the responsibilities of Première Urgence Internationale in this area.

They are additional to the requirements and standards of behavior expected of all PUI employees detailed in the Code of Conduct and Internal Staff Regulations (headquarters and mission).

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment policy is to outline the association's commitment to:

- 1. Protect the rights of individuals** by minimizing the intentional or unintentional risk of harm, harassment, sexual abuse and exploitation of all persons directly or indirectly affected by the actions of Première Urgence Internationale, of all persons with whom PUI works and is in contact, and to respond appropriately to all reported cases.
- 2. Protect collaborators** by preventing any ambiguous situation or behavior that could be misinterpreted or generate false allegations against Première Urgence Internationale or its collaborators.
- 3. Protect the organisation** by demonstrating its commitment to protection against sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation, and its preventive actions. Première Urgence Internationale thus protects its reputation and maintains trust and transparency with all its partners.

SCOPE OF APPLICATION

All Première Urgence Internationale employees are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of behavior in both their personal and professional lives. They have a responsibility to understand and promote this policy. They must make every effort to prevent, report and respond appropriately to any concerns or potential violations of the policy.

Première Urgence Internationale's Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy applies to **all Première Urgence Internationale collaborators**, including:

- **All employees, members, administrators and associates of PUI**, hired on a full-time or part-time basis, on an ad hoc or long-term basis, regardless of their status and location.
- **All PUI partners and contractors**, including suppliers and any other entity under contract with the association or funded/supported by PUI, regardless of location.
- **All visitors** to PUI's areas of operation and activities, regardless of the location or purpose of the visit. Visitors include donors, sponsors, media representatives, families or relatives of PUI employees and associates, etc.

This policy remains in force during and after working hours, and applies to all persons, primarily those under the mandate of PUI. It defines the responsibility of all collaborators of Première Urgence Internationale.

This policy is applicable in all countries in which Première Urgence Internationale intervenes, is present, and where there are collaborators. It includes all PUI premises, workplaces, living spaces and accommodations provided for collaborators. The principles and norms detailed in this Policy also apply to all collaborators on business trips in other places, regardless of the local and national laws, customs, or practices in place.

PREMIERE URGENCE INTERNATIONALE COMMITMENTS

All representatives and collaborators of Première Urgence Internationale undertake in all circumstances to respect the provisions, norms, and commitments to:

1. Behave respectfully, courteously and ethically toward individuals regardless of their sex, ethnic or social origin, language, religious or other beliefs, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or any other status.
2. Use appropriate language and behavior, and in no way harassing, abusive, sexually provocative or demeaning.
3. Due to the potential conflict of interest and abuse of power inherent in being a PUI collaborator, sexual relations with beneficiaries of PUI activities (activities, programs, training, etc.) are prohibited.
4. Never engage in sexual activity with, or solicit sexual favors from children (anyone under the age of 18). This prohibition applies regardless of the local legal age of consent, local and national laws applicable in the workplace, and regardless of the legal age of consent in the country or locality of origin of the PUI collaborator. Ignorance or mistaken belief of the age of the child is not a mitigating factor or defense.

5. Never exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual services, including sex, sexual favors, or any other form of humiliating, degrading, abusive or exploitative action. In this way, sex with sex workers is prohibited under all circumstances, regardless of local or national laws, customs, and practices relating to sex work and prostitution in the country in question.
6. Not to commit any act or form of moral or sexual harassment against any person, whether a beneficiary, collaborator or other. Declaring not to have had bad intentions is not an acceptable excuse;
7. Report any concerns, suspicions, or allegations of sexual abuse, harassment, and exploitation, and any violations of this Policy in accordance with the whistleblower mechanism and recommended timelines¹.
8. Participate in mandatory awareness sessions, and any other training related to this Policy.
9. Address all alerts made under this policy in accordance with the principles of a victim-centered approach. The safety, health, and well-being of those involved, should be a priority, including addressing their emotional, psychological, and physical needs.
10. Create and maintain a work environment that prevents inappropriate behavior and communicate the existence of the Code of Conduct. Managers should promote and support any system that enables the maintenance of such a work environment.

RESPECT OF THE STANDARDS IN FORCE

This policy is based on the applicable provisions of the French Labor Law, the French Penal Code, the organization's duty of care, and international norms, principles, and standards relating to the prevention of and response to sexual abuse and exploitation, including the Secretary-General's Bulletin on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13).

Première Urgence Internationale is also committed to implementing the 6 principles adopted in 2012 by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) regarding the prevention and response to sexual exploitation and abuse:

- Sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian workers constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment.
- Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defence.
- Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour is prohibited. This includes exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries.
- Any sexual relationship between those providing humanitarian assistance and protection and a person benefitting from such humanitarian assistance and protection that involves improper use of rank or position is prohibited. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of humanitarian aid work.
- Where a humanitarian worker develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation by a fellow worker, whether in the same agency or not, he or she must report such concerns via established agency reporting mechanisms.
- Humanitarian workers are obliged to create and maintain an environment which prevents sexual exploitation and abuse and promotes the implementation of their code of conduct. Managers at all levels have particular responsibilities to support and develop systems which maintain this environment.

¹ These procedures are detailed in PUI Ethical Framework

PUI has adopted a standards-based approach to protection against sexual abuse and exploitation. These standards of safeguarding and behavior of collaborators are often higher than those of national laws and community customs or traditions followed in the places of intervention of the association. Nevertheless, it is these standards that collaborators accept when they join Première Urgence Internationale, and it is to these standards that they will be held accountable. Those who are at fault may be subject to administrative or disciplinary sanctions which may lead to immediate dismissal without compensation, in accordance with the disciplinary procedures and laws in force in the countries and intervention areas of PUI and which its collaborators visit.

In addition to internal sanctions, Première Urgence Internationale reserves the right to refer to any competent authority to follow up on the most serious cases of sexual abuse and exploitation, in accordance with its legal obligations. These referrals include legal proceedings before the competent jurisdictions, and if applicable, in the countries and intervention areas where the facts occurred.

Prior to referring to external authorities, even if required by applicable local or national law, all cases must be referred to headquarters to ensure that the security risks to which all parties involved would be exposed are analyzed and considered.

Dated at Asnières-sur-Seine

Date of policy: Reviewed on November 4, 2021

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vincent Basquin', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Vincent Basquin

President

DEFINITIONS AND ANNEXES

Child: any person under the age of 18

Human rights: agreed international standards that recognize and protect the dignity and integrity of every individual without distinction.

Humanitarian worker: any person working on behalf of a humanitarian association, whether international or national, official or unofficial, within the recipient community.

Person under PUI's mandate: Any person to whom PUI or its collaborators provide any form of protection, assistance, service or other intervention. Persons directly and indirectly affected by PUI's interventions are included.

Protection: all activities aimed at guaranteeing the fundamental rights of all individuals, in accordance with the spirit and the letter of the applicable legal texts, in particular international humanitarian law, human rights, and refugee law.

PUI collaborators: all members and adherents of the association, national, expatriates or headquarters employees, consultants, volunteers, hosted visitors, suppliers and service providers - in short, all natural or legal persons in contact with Première Urgence Internationale.

Sex worker: generic term used internationally to designate people engaged in occupations or practices that involve sexual performance, which in most cases is a service in exchange for monetary compensation.

Sexual abuse: any sexual assault, including inappropriate gestures and contact, committed with force, coercion, or unequal power. The threat of such an act also constitutes sexual abuse.

Sexual exploitation: Abuse or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically - United Nations Secretary-General's bulletin (ST/SGB/2003/13).

Sexual harassment: remarks or behavior with a sexual connotation, imposed repeatedly, which violates dignity because of its humiliating or degrading nature, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive situation. Any form of serious pressure, even if not repeated, with the real or apparent aim of obtaining a sexual favor, for the benefit of the perpetrator or a third party, is considered sexual harassment.