

UPR Info Sexual Harassment Policy

1. Policy Statement

UPR Info is committed to providing a safe environment for all its employees free from discrimination or harassment on any ground. *UPR Info* operates a zero-tolerance policy for any form of sexual harassment, abuse or exploitation in the workplace. All complaints of sexual harassment, abuse or exploitation will be taken seriously and treated with respect and in confidence. No one will be victimised for making such a complaint.

Anyone can be a victim of sexual harassment, abuse or exploitation, regardless of their sex and of the sex of the aggressor. *UPR Info* recognises that sexual harassment, abuse or exploitation may also occur between people of the same sex. All sexual harassment is prohibited, whether it takes place within *UPR Info* premises or outside, including within Switzerland as well as all countries where *UPR Info* is participating in or sponsoring activities. This includes at training sessions, conferences, social events or other meetings where *UPR Info* is engaged.

UPR Info is committed to treating seriously all incidents of sexual harassment, abuse or exploitation, and will instigate prompt investigations into any such allegation. Anyone, including employees of *UPR Info*, board members, interns, volunteers, national focal points, contractors, partners, colleagues, or visitors, who sexually harasses, exploits or abuses another will face sanctions.

2. Definition of sexual harassment, abuse or exploitation

Sexual harassment, abuse or exploitation covers situations of unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature which makes a person feel offended, humiliated, coerced, intimidated, and/or physically

or mentally aggressed. It includes situations where a person is asked to engage in sexual activity as a condition of that person's employment, as well as situations which create an environment which is hostile, intimidating, humiliating or aggressive for the recipient.

Sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation can involve one or more incidents and actions of physical, verbal and/or non-verbal nature. Examples of conduct or behaviour which constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

Physical conduct

- Unwelcome physical contact including patting, pinching, stroking, kissing, hugging, fondling, or inappropriate touching; and/or
- Physical intimidation or violence, including sexual assault.

Verbal conduct

- Comments on a worker's appearance, age, private life, *etc.*;
- Sexual comments, stories and jokes;
- Repeated and unwanted social invitations for dates or physical intimacy;
- Insults based on the sex of the worker;
- Condescending or paternalistic remarks;
- Sending sexually explicit messages (by phone or by email); and/or
- The use of job-related threats or rewards to solicit sexual favours.

Non-verbal conduct

- Display of sexually explicit messages (by phone or by email);
- Sexually-suggestive gestures;
- Whistling; and/or
- Leering.

3. Scope

All *UPR Info* staff and its affiliates are subjected to and protected by this policy against sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation. Included in the coverage are: staff members, interns, volunteers, contractors, board members, national focal points, and other national and international partners. Where *UPR Info* has entered into a

partnership agreement with a national partner organisation, the latter agrees to uphold the tenets of this policy at the national level and to implement a comparable national mechanism to address sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation.

4. Complaints procedure

Anyone who is subject to sexual harassment, abuse or exploitation should, if possible, inform the alleged aggressor that the conduct is unwanted and unwelcome. *UPR Info* recognises that sexual harassment, abuse or exploitation may occur in unequal relationships (*i.e.* between a supervisor and his/her employee and vice-versa) and that it may not be possible for the victim to inform the alleged aggressor. If a victim cannot directly approach an alleged aggressor, he/she can approach one of the designated staff members responsible for receiving complaints of sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation. In the case of *UPR Info*, the designated staff members are:

- 1) Mona M'Bikay, Executive Director
- 2) Saïda Laurent, Finance and Administration Manager

When a designated person receives a complaint of sexual harassment, abuse or exploitation he/she will:

- immediately record the dates, times and facts of the incident(s);
- ascertain the views of the victim as to what outcome he/she wants;
- ensure that the victim understands the organisation's procedures for dealing with the complaint;
- discuss and agree the next steps: either informal or formal complaint, on the understanding that choosing to resolve the matter informally does not preclude the victim from pursuing a formal complaint if he/she is not satisfied with the outcome
- keep a confidential record of all discussions;
- respect the choice of the victim; and
- ensure that the victim knows that they can lodge the complaint outside of the organisation through the relevant country/legal framework

4.1. Informal complaints mechanism

If the victim wishes to deal with the matter informally, the designated person will:

- give an opportunity to the alleged aggressor to respond to the complaint;
- ensure that the alleged aggressor understands the complaints mechanism
- facilitate discussion between both parties to achieve an informal resolution which is acceptable to the complainant;
- ensure that a confidential record is kept of what happens;
- follow up after the outcome of the complaints mechanism to ensure that the behaviour has stopped; and
- ensure that the above is done speedily and within 5 days of the complaint being made.

4.2. Formal complaints mechanism

If the victim wishes to make a formal complaint or if the informal complaint mechanism has not led to a satisfactory outcome for the victim, the formal complaint mechanism should be used to resolve the matter.

The designated person who initially received the complaint will refer the matter to a senior the President of the Board to instigate a formal investigation. The board member will refer the matter to an external investigator in accordance with this policy.

The person carrying out the investigation will:

- interview the victim and the alleged aggressor separately;
- interview other relevant third parties separately;
- decide whether or not the incident(s) of sexual harassment, abuse or exploitation took place;
- produce a report detailing the investigations, findings and any recommendations;
- if the harassment, abuse or exploitation took place, decide what the appropriate remedy for the victim is, in consultation with the victim (*i.e.* an apology; a change to working arrangements; a promotion if the victim was demoted as a result of the harassment, abuse or exploitation; training for the aggressor; discipline; suspension; or dismissal);

- follow up to ensure that the recommendations are implemented, that the behaviour has stopped and that the victim is satisfied with the outcome;
- if it cannot determine that the harassment, abuse or exploitation took place, he/she may still make recommendations to ensure proper functioning of the workplace;
- keep a record of all actions taken;
- ensure that the all records concerning the matter are kept confidential; and
- ensure that the process is done as quickly as possible and in any event within 10 days of the complaint being made.

4.3. Outside complaints mechanisms

A person who has been subject to sexual harassment, abuse or exploitation can also make a complaint outside of the organisation. They can do so through the [Office cantonal de l'inspection et des relations du travail](#).

5. Sanctions and disciplinary measures

Anyone who has been found to have sexually harassed, abused or exploited another person under the terms of this policy is liable to any or a combination of the following sanctions:

- verbal or written warning;
- adverse performance evaluation;
- reduction in wages;
- demotion;
- suspension; and
- dismissal.

In the event, the partner organisation or contractor *UPR Info* is working with committed acts of sexual harassment, abuse or exploitation, its contract will be terminated.

Members of *UPR Info* Board who committed acts of sexual harassment, abuse or exploitation will be excluded.

The nature of the sanctions will depend on the gravity and extent of the harassment, abuse or exploitation. Suitable deterrent sanctions will be applied to ensure that incidents of sexual

harassment, abuse or exploitation are not treated as trivial. Certain serious cases, including physical or psychological violence, will result in the immediate dismissal of the aggressor.

6. Implementation of this policy

UPR Info will ensure that this policy is widely disseminated to all relevant persons, including staff members, interns, volunteers, contractors, board members, national focal points, and other national and international partners. All new employees and affiliates must be trained on the content of this policy as part of their induction into the organisation.

Every year, *UPR Info* will require all employees to attend a refresher training course on the content of this policy. It is the responsibility of every manager to ensure that all his/her employees and partners are aware of the policy.

7. Monitoring and evaluation

UPR Info recognises the importance of monitoring this sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation policy and will ensure that it anonymously collects statistics and data as to how it is used and whether or not it is effective. Supervisors, managers and those responsible for dealing with sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation cases will report on compliance with this policy, including the number of incidents, how they were dealt with, and any recommendations made. This will be done on a yearly basis. As a result of this report, the organisation will evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and make any changes needed.

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