

## **Request For Proposal (RFP): Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Analysis and Support to the CALL Consortium for Integrating GESI Actions into Project Design**

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### **1. Background**

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**1.1 Background of CALL (Climate Action at Local level) Programme:** Bangladesh is among the most climate-vulnerable countries in the world, facing rising threats from flooding, salinity intrusion, heatwaves, and extreme weather events. These hazards jeopardize livelihoods, food security, health, and economic stability – especially for the country’s most at-risk populations. Although the Government of Bangladesh has introduced several policies and frameworks to address climate change, implementation remains challenging due to predominantly top-down approaches and limited local engagement. The combined impacts of climate stressors and unsustainable industrial practices have deepened vulnerabilities, underscoring the urgent need to build green skills, promote sustainable livelihoods, and enhance community resilience.

In response to this pressing need for locally driven, coordinated, and systemic action, **a consortium of nine Swiss NGOs has joined forces to implement the CALL programme. This multi-year initiative, launched by the Embassy of Switzerland in Bangladesh, is led by Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation and co-led by Swisscontact.** CALL is guided by a Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) and aims to foster a climate-smart and disaster-resilient Bangladesh by empowering communities and local actors. It focuses on key climate hotspots across the country – including southwest coast, northwest riverine areas, Jamuna River basin, Cox’s Bazar, and urban-industrial hubs in Dhaka and Chattogram. The Programme targets most vulnerable, such as climate-affected rural and urban communities, migrants, women, children, persons with disabilities, indigenous groups, factory workers, small enterprises, and local institutions.

**The initial phase of CALL began in November 2024 and runs for two years. CALL builds on 12 ongoing projects across the consortium to foster shared learning, strengthen local leadership, promote inclusive green economic transitions, and support coordinated, evidence-based advocacy.** Nine Consortium Partners (CPs) are implementing 12 projects through 18 local Implementing Partners (IPs) across 18 districts. A dedicated Programme Management Unit (PMU) based in Dhaka coordinates implementation and ensures strategic alignment among consortium partners. By bridging local innovation with systemic change, CALL aligns with the Government of Bangladesh’s climate priorities and contributes to Switzerland’s broader development cooperation goals of inclusive growth, resilience, and sustainability.

**1.2 Background of GESI Study for CALL Programme:** CALL Consortium is committed to ensuring the programme is gender-responsive and transformative across all components. The consortium comprises partners and projects with varying levels of GESI integration and capacity. It is therefore essential to harmonise approaches, promote best practices, and build shared capacities to ensure a cohesive, inclusive, and transformative impact. It means programme will focus beyond participation and include shifting power relations, changing gender and social norms and enabling left-behind groups in the decision-making process that affect their lives. To this end, a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) analysis is planned **to assess both project-level and institutional practices and capacities for integrating GESI principles.** The analysis will help identify existing strengths, gaps, and opportunities to enhance GESI mainstreaming across the consortium.



**Findings from the GESI study will help assess the current GESI status of the 12 projects. They will guide the development of project-specific GESI Action Plans and GESI Theories of Change (ToC).** The study will also provide organisation-specific recommendations for both Consortium Partners (CPs) and Implementing Partners (IPs), along with overall recommendations for CALL Consortium. These plans will serve as roadmaps to strengthen GESI within Project Cycle Management (PCM). It will build on the consortium's shared resources, technical expertise, and commitment to inclusive development.

By undertaking this GESI analysis, CALL seeks to mainstream, scale, and amplify GESI practices throughout the programme and consortium. This process will support each participating project and partner to move toward more GESI-responsive and ultimately GESI-transformative programming.

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## 2. Objectives of the Study

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The overall objective of GESI study is to conduct a comprehensive, participatory analysis across 12 projects under the CALL programme, aimed at assessing current levels of GESI integration at both project and institutional levels, and facilitating the development of project-specific GESI Action Plans.

The specific objectives are to:

1. **Assess current GESI practices** within each of the 12 projects being implemented by nine Consortium Partners (CPs) and their respective 18 Implementing Partners (IPs).
2. **Identify strengths, gaps, and areas for improvement** in mainstreaming GESI in project planning, implementation, monitoring, and organisational culture.
3. **Provide tailored recommendations** for each CP and IP, and overarching guidance for the CALL Consortium and PMU, to enhance GESI integration throughout the Project Cycle Management (PCM) process.
4. **Facilitate a participatory process** involving CPs and respective IPs to validate findings, recommendations and co-develop project-specific GESI Action Plans and Theories of Change (ToC) that are fully aligned with overarching CALL Programme ToC.

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## 3. Scope of Work/Deliverables

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**3.1 Scope of Work:** Consultant (individual/firm) will be responsible for leading and delivering GESI Primary Analysis across the 12 projects implemented by the nine Consortium Partners (CPs) and their Implementing Partners (IPs) under the CALL Programme. This analysis will include both institutional and project-level assessment and provide actionable guidance for GESI integration.

The key tasks include:

- 1) **Desk Review:** Review relevant project documents, proposals, organisational GESI/Gender Markers, and any prior GESI assessments across all nine Consortium Partners (CPs) and their Implementing Partners (IPs). Additionally, collect and examine GESI/Gender Markers used by other organisations nationally and globally for reference. Analyse social norms, power relations, and cultural barriers that influence the participation of women and other marginalised or left-behind groups – considering intersectional factors – in decision-making processes and climate actions.



- 2) **Adapt or Develop a Common GESI Tool/Marker:** Adapt or develop standardised GESI analysis tools (e.g., scorecards, checklists and/or markers with indicative scores) tailored to CALL Programme context drawing from international best practices and local relevance. Validate the tools/marker in consultation with CALL PMU and representatives from the relevant Thematic Working Groups.
- 3) **Data Collection and Collective Analysis:** Conduct a participatory process to facilitate collective GESI analysis for each of the 12 projects, engaging CPs and their respective IPs. Ensure the participation of gender focal points, programme leads, MEAL staff, and frontline managers in the consultations. Additionally, gather data on institutional-level GESI practices through consultations or interviews with all nine CPs and 18 IPs. To incorporate diverse perspectives, direct project participants from key geographic clusters will also be consulted.
- 4) **Data Analysis and Interpretation:** Assess current practices, capacities, gaps, and opportunities for GESI integration within project design, implementation, and monitoring. Identify how well GESI is embedded in each project's Programme Cycle Management (PCM). Additionally, analyze broader GESI dynamics and institutional practices across all 9 CPs and 18 IPs. SEAH (Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment) prevention and ethical considerations will be integrated throughout all data collection and analysis activities. Integrate safeguarding, ethical data management, and do-no-harm principles throughout the assessment process to ensure safe, confidential, and culturally sensitive engagement with all stakeholders.
- 5) **Development of GESI Action Plans and ToC:** Guide each project (12 project) team in collaboratively developing context-specific GESI Action Plans and Theories of Change. These should include measurable outcomes, responsible parties, and implementation timelines. Provide overall recommendations to CALL PMU on coordination, capacity-building, and learning priorities.
- 6) **Facilitate Validation and Dissemination events:** Present findings in validation and dissemination meetings and workshops with CPs, IPs and CALL Consortium. Capture feedback from the events and finalise deliverables.
- 7) **Reporting and Documentation:** Prepare and submit a comprehensive GESI Study Report, including findings, project-specific action plans, GESI ToCs, and consolidated recommendations. Submit all tools and raw data collected in usable formats.

**3.2 Deliverables:** The consultant/firm is expected to produce the following key deliverables:

- 1) **Inception Report:** Includes study framework, detailed methodology, tools, timelines, stakeholder engagement plan, and consolidated report outline.
- 2) **GESI Analysis Tool/Marker:** A practical, context-specific marker or tools to assess project-level GESI status across all 12 projects, along with instruments to capture institutional-level GESI practices. These will be developed through desk reviews and consultations with CALL PMU and Thematic Working Groups and will be validated prior to implementation.
- 3) **Consolidated Final GESI Study Report:** A comprehensive report consolidating key analyses, findings, GESI Action Plans and ToC aligned with the overall CALL ToC, along with evidence-based recommendations for projects, partners, and for CALL consortium. The report must annex the final GESI framework and tools used, project-specific action plans with ToC and accountability frameworks, customizable action-learning templates, and key feedback with responses from validation workshops. All findings should be triangulated using both primary and secondary data sources and clearly illustrated where relevant.



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## 4. Responsibilities

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**4.1 Consultant (Individual/Firm) Responsibilities:** Consultant will lead and coordinate the desk review, GESI primary analysis for all 12 projects, develop necessary tools and methodologies in consultation with CALL PMU and Thematic Working Group. They will facilitate participatory assessments with CPs and IPs to identify existing strengths, gaps, and opportunities. They will support and ensure CPs and IPs in developing project-specific GESI Action Plans and ToC. They are also responsible for preparing final consolidated reports. Additionally, consultants will be responsible for validating findings and recommendations through meeting/workshop to be organized by CALL PMU. The consultant is also responsible for ensuring ethical and culturally sensitive data collection and analysis throughout the process.

**4.2 Consortium Partners (CPs) and Implementing Partners (IPs) Responsibilities:** Ensure the availability of focal staff and active participation in validation workshops and GESI planning. CPs and IPs are expected to actively participate in the GESI assessment process by providing required data and information. They will support consultants in organizing consultations and workshops and collaborate in the development and implementation of project-level GESI Action Plans. Furthermore, they will facilitate the integration of GESI recommendations within their project management and reporting systems.

**4.3 CALL PMU Responsibilities:** CALL Programme Management Unit (PMU) will oversee and coordinate the overall GESI analysis process, ensuring effective communication among the consultants and CPs. PMU will review and provide feedback on all deliverables and support the dissemination and follow-up of GESI Action Plans and recommendations across the programme.

**4.4 Thematic Working Group (TWG) Responsibilities:** TWG on Gender and Inclusion will actively engage in the GESI analysis process in coordination with CALL PMU and provide technical input to the consultant. Additionally, CALL PMU may invite representatives from the TWG on Localisation to contribute to the process, ensuring input from a GESI localisation perspective and supporting mutual learning.

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## 5. Indicative Methodology

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- 1) GESI primary analysis will begin with a thorough desk review of internal practices, guidelines, and documents across all 9 Consortium Partners (CPs) and 18 Implementing Partners (IPs), covering both project and institutional levels. This review will also consider relevant external GESI standards and best practices.
- 2) Field-level assessments will follow a participatory approach, involving joint reflections and consultations with CPs and their respective IPs to assess current GESI sensitivity, capacity, and readiness. The process will explore existing practices, identify gaps, and uncover opportunities for improvement through workshops/collective assessments, and targeted interviews with relevant stakeholders from each partner.
- 3) No last-mile surveys with individual project participants are required. Instead, the methodology will be qualitative, focusing on engagement with the nine Consortium Partners (CPs) and 18 Implementing Partners (IPs) through participatory methods such as workshops, consultations, interviews, and joint assessments to gather necessary insights. Additionally, consultations or group discussions will be conducted with direct participants from key geographic clusters.

The outcome will include a comprehensive summary of the GESI landscape within the CALL Programme, alongside project- and organisation-specific findings. Actionable recommendations will be provided at both the programme level and tailored to individual CPs, IPs, and projects to guide development of GESI Action Plans and integration within project management. All findings and recommendations will be triangulated and validated to ensure accuracy and ownership by project stakeholders.

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## 6. Reporting Requirements

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**6.1 Reporting Timeline and Frequency:** Consultant/firm is expected to submit following reports:

- 1) **Inception Report** – Due **within 2 weeks** of contract signing. This should outline the approach/ analytical framework, methodology, and work plan.
- 2) **GESI Analysis Tool/Marker and instrument:** Due **by Week 4** of the assignment. This should include context-specific tool or marker to assess project-level GESI status across all 12 projects, along with instruments to capture institutional-level GESI practices.
- 3) **Draft Project-specific GESI Analysis (12 Projects) and draft consolidated GESI Analysis Report** – Due **by Week 8** of the assignment. This version will present initial overall findings, project-level GESI status, and draft action plans and ToCs for feedback.
- 4) **Consolidated Final GESI Study Report** – Due **by Week 10**, incorporating feedback from TWGs, CALL PMU, CPs, and IPs.

In addition, brief progress updates can be requested by CALL PMU during the assignment. The frequency and format of these updates will be determined after contract signing.

**6.2 Format and Content of Reports:** All reports must be concise, clearly structured, and submitted in editable formats in English. Content and structure will follow a standard format, to be finalized during the inception report stage. All submissions should be made electronically to designated CALL PMU focal points.

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## 7. Duration, Locations, and Cost Coverage

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- 1) The assignment will be carried out from **September to November 2025**. Primary engagements will take place at the head offices of the nine Consortium Partners and the CALL PMU in Dhaka and selected field locations.
- 2) To ensure time and cost efficiency, assessments/interview with Implementing Partners will be conducted either online or by inviting them to the respective CP offices. Respective CPs will cover any costs related to inviting their IPs and organizing in-person meetings or workshops for developing their project-specific GESI plans.
- 3) For any validation and dissemination workshops or meetings at central level, CALL PMU will take the lead in organizing those events.
- 4) Consultant should not include any costs related to organizing meetings or workshops with CPs or CALL PMU in their budget. However, all costs related to field visits, including interviews and group discussions with direct project participants and partners, should be included as per the proposed methodology and plan.



## 8. Budget and Payment Schedule

The budget and payment milestones for this consultancy will be negotiated and finalized during the contracting process, based on the proposed methodology, level of effort, and deliverables.

**Total Consultancy Fee:** The total fee will be inclusive of professional services, all travel-related expenses, insurance, and any other relevant costs. It will also cover applicable taxes and VAT as per Bangladesh government regulations, along with all deliverables outlined in this ToR. No additional costs will be borne by CALL Programme to fulfil the assignment.

**Payment Milestones:** 30% upon submission and approval of the inception report and GESI Analysis Tool/Marker and instrument (deliverables 1 and 2). 70% upon submission and approval of the final consolidated report, including recommendations and all agreed deliverables.

## 9. Eligibility Criteria

The consultant (individual/firm) must meet the following minimum criteria:

- 1) Advanced **degree** in Gender Studies, Social Sciences, Development Studies, or related field.
- 2) Proven **expertise and track record (minimum five years)** in conducting **participatory qualitative research** in development programmes, additionally on GESI analysis.
- 3) Demonstrated **knowledge of GESI-sensitive PCM** (Project Cycle Management) and familiarity with **gender/GESI markers**.
- 4) Demonstrated understanding of gender equality, social inclusion, and relevant frameworks and tools.
- 5) Experience **working with multi-stakeholder consortia** in areas such as climate change, disaster risk reduction, or livelihoods will be an added advantage.
- 6) **Strong analytical and report-writing** skills using qualitative approaches.
- 7) **Strong facilitation and communication** skills to engage with diverse teams and partners.
- 8) Ability to deliver quality outputs within the agreed timeframe.
- 9) **For consultant (firms):** Must be legally registered in Bangladesh with valid TIN, VAT, and trade licence.
- 10) **For consultant (individual):** Must have a valid TIN and be eligible to work in Bangladesh.

Failure to meet any of above criteria may result in disqualification from the evaluation process.

## 10. Evaluation Criteria and Proposal Submission Structure

Consultant will be selected based on a combined evaluation: 70% for technical proposal (experience, methodology, team, and relevance) and 30% for financial proposal (cost-effectiveness and value for money). The process aims to ensure both quality and efficiency in delivering the assignment.

Evaluation Criteria	Description	Weight (%)
<b>Technical Proposal</b>		
Criteria 01: Relevant Experience of Consultant	Narrate in one page maximum – It should include relevant experience of the Team Lead and Co-researchers, and, if applicable, the consulting firm.	10%
Criteria 02: Qualification of Consultant	Narrate in one page maximum – It should include the relevant qualifications of the Team Lead and Co-researchers for this assignment.	10%
Criteria 03: Detailed Methodology and analytical framework	Narrate in three pages maximum	20%
Criteria 04: Team Composition	Narrate in one page maximum – it should include Team Lead and need based 2-3 co-researcher (qualitative research background – highlight quality and diversity)	10%
Criteria 05: Time-bound work plan	Narrate in one page maximum – Mention main activities, brief description of each activity, actual days required to accomplish each activity, estimated time length, and responsible – <b>following timeline mentioned in 6.1</b>	10%
Criteria 06: Presentation ( <b>only from top ranking bidders</b> )	Prepare 5-7 slides for 20 mins presentation	10%
<b>Financial Proposal</b>		
Criteria 07: Financial proposal	As detailed as possible: Line item, unit description (should include estimated days – where applicable), unit cost (should include daily rates – where applicable), total cost, and Total. All cost should be inclusive AIT and VAT.	30%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

**Note: The Team Lead (individual or firm) must meet the eligibility criteria outlined in Section 9. This person will be solely responsible for all aspects of design, analysis, and report writing, as well as for correspondence and coordination with the CALL PMU, Thematic Working Groups (TWGs), and Consortium Partners (CPs).**



## 11. Potential Risks and Mitigation Plan

The table below outlines key risks that may arise during the assignment and proposed mitigation strategies to address them by the selected consultant.

Key Risk	Mitigation Plan
Limited availability of CP and IP staff for consultation	Schedule meetings well in advance; offer flexible formats (e.g., online, smaller group sessions).
Varied understanding and commitment to GESI among partners	Provide a short orientation at the start; use a consistent, participatory approach to build shared ground.
Reluctance to openly share institutional or project-level gaps	Ensure confidentiality, build trust, and frame the study as an opportunity for growth and learning.
Tight timeline for completing field visits and validation	Prioritize key partners and locations; keep tools focused; allow for a short time buffer in the workplan.

## 12. Contact Person

- 1) Name and contact details for supervision and regular communication will be shared with the selected consultant upon agreement.
- 2) It is to be noted that a supervisory contact will be nominated from the CALL PMU, to whom the consultant will report and share updates.
- 3) In addition, the consultant will be expected to receive technical inputs from the CALL Thematic Working Groups – primarily Gender and Inclusion, and secondarily Localisation.

## 13. General Terms and Conditions

The following terms and conditions apply to the present procurement:

- 1) CALL Consortium reserves the right to accept or reject any applications without giving any verbal and/or written rationale.
- 2) All reports, and documents prepared in relation to the assignment will be treated as CALL Consortium property.
- 3) The reports/documents, or any part, therefore, cannot be sold, used, and reproduced in any manner without prior written approval of CALL Consortium.
- 4) The selected consultant shall implement the work in close coordination with the focal person of CALL Consortium. The consultant shall inform the focal person on the schedule and programme of the assignment and shall only perform the assigned tasks upon approval of the focal person.
- 5) CALL Consortium or its representatives reserve the right to monitor the quality and progress of the work during the assignment.
- 6) The consultant shall be paid upon successful completion of the assignment, or after successful completion of individual tasks, if so, agreed in the agreement.



## 1. Annexes

The Code of Conduct (Annex 1), the Declaration CRFM Contracted Parties (Annex 2), the Regulations on SEAH (Annex 3), and the Regulations on Child Protection (Annex 4) form an integral part of this contract. In the event of any discrepancies, the provisions of this contract shall take precedence. The Annexes form an integral part of this contract.

## 14. Submission Requirements

The Technical and financial proposals must be submitted as **two separate PDF files** to the following email address: [procurementbgd@helvetas.org](mailto:procurementbgd@helvetas.org). Deadline for submission is **16 August 2025, by 05:00 PM** (Bangladesh time). Late or hard copy submissions will not be accepted.

Please mention “**GESI Analysis – CALL Programme**” in the email subject line.

### MAIN PROPOSAL

- 1) The consultant (individual or firm) must submit both the **technical and financial proposals as per Section 10** (Evaluation Criteria and Proposal Submission Structure).
- 2) The technical proposal addressing criteria 01 to 05 must be within **7 pages**, and the financial proposal based on criterion 07 must be within **1 page**.
- 3) The proposal must use A4-size paper, 11-point font, single space, and 1-inch margins on all sides.

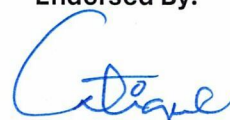
### ANNEX WITH MAIN PROPOSAL

- **For Consultant (Individual)**
  - With Technical Proposal – **Include** detailed CV of the Team Lead (maximum 3 pages including 2 referees), CVs of co-researchers (maximum 1 page each including 2 referees), and a **sample report** related to a similar assignment conducted by the same Team Lead.
  - With Financial Proposal – **Include** Team Lead’s TIN certificate, and their latest income tax return receipt.
- **For Consultant (firm)**
  - With Technical Proposal – **Include** detailed CV of the Team Lead (maximum 3 pages including 2 referees), CVs of co-researchers (maximum 1 page each including 2 referees), the **firm’s profile** (maximum 3 pages including example of similar assignment), and a **sample report** related to a similar assignment conducted by the same Team Lead.
  - With Financial Proposal – **Include** copies of **TIN, VAT, and trade license**.

Approved By:

  
Prashant Kumar Verma  
Country Director

Endorsed By:

  
Md. Atiqur Rahman  
Head of Finance

## Annexure- 1

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# CODE OF CONDUCT

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## 1. Introduction

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This Code of Conduct defines basic ethical principles, attitudes and behaviour which are binding for all employees of HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation, hereinafter named HELVETAS. It is based on the Mission Statement, the Human Resource policy and our Personnel Regulations. It thereby reflects foundational values and principles of our organisation, to be applied irrespective of cultural contexts. The Code of Conduct expresses the commitment of each collaborator to adhere to and to promote high ethical standards in our work and as part of our working culture. It constitutes a compulsory annex to the employment contract.

The individual and collective conduct of employees is of specific relevance to HELVETAS. First, the intercultural context in which collaborators of HELVETAS operate makes their conduct particularly exposed and sensitive. Unethical conduct of a collaborator can, beyond its direct consequences, have far reaching negative impacts on the effectiveness of our work and on our reputation. Second, as a development organisation receiving donations from thousands of individual and institutional donors, our organisation and its employees are accountable to these donors and subject to a high degree of scrutiny by the public and the media.

This Code of Conduct is binding for all employees worldwide in any contractual relationship with HELVETAS (including interns & volunteers, Board of Directors and its Advisory Panel as well as consultants) at all times during their assignment with HELVETAS. It is expected that principles of this Code of Conduct are also respected outside the workplace and working time. Furthermore, all partners HELVETAS collaborates with must commit to follow the key principles of this Code of Conduct.

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## 2. Loyalty, confidentiality and civic duties

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My actions are consistent with the goals, the values and principles of HELVETAS as expressed in its mission statement and strategy; I have received a copy of both documents and I am aware of their content.

Particularly, I commit to

- contributing positively to the implementation of the policies and strategies of HELVETAS;
- reflecting regularly upon my actions and behaviour, those of my colleagues and those of my environment;
- handling all information received through my employment with the necessary discretion; never using it to the detriment of HELVETAS including after termination of my contract;
- abiding by the national laws, as a citizen or resident of a specific country or as a short-term visitor.



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### **3. Commitment and respect towards organizational culture and integrity**

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I am aware of my contractual obligations with HELVETAS and strive to fulfil them to the best of my ability, knowledge and capacity.

In particular, I commit to

- contributing actively with my work and through my behaviour to the strengthening and to the public trust of our organisation;
- contributing to our objectives not only as an individual professional, but as a member of the team(s) to which I belong;
- using my competences and capacities to support my colleagues;
- making use of the means and assets of HELVETAS and its partners effectively and efficiently, according to legal stipulations, internal regulations, contractual agreements and in conformity with project goals;
- treating the material entrusted to me with diligence and due care, using it and the official logo only for professional purposes;
- actively supporting knowledge sharing within our organisation and with our partners.

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### **4. Culturally sensitive behaviour**

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I am aware that even as a private person I am subject to public interest and that I have to consider this in my behaviour and in my statements.

In particular, I commit to

- respecting local norms and conventions in contacts with authorities, partners and local people as long as they don't contravene HELVETAS policy;
- taking into account in my appearance, my manner of dress, my behaviour and my style of communication the customs and culture of the country and the function that I perform;
- avoiding indecent or offensive behaviour, insulting or accusing statements, or spreading rumours;
- avoiding giving information to the media, policy makers and donors or the public, without an explicit assignment to do so.

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### **5. Highest standards in inter-personal relations and professional conduct**

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My relations with all persons irrespective of their sex, age, origin, cultural background, religion, social position, physical ability or sexual orientation are characterized by respect, fairness and equity. I am aware that as an employee of HELVETAS I have a privileged and often powerful status vis-à-vis partners and beneficiaries.

In particular, I commit to

- behave and represent the organization at all times in such a way that the reputation of HELVETAS is not damaged;
- never request any service or favour from primary stakeholders, beneficiaries or other persons of concern in return for support or protection. I will never engage in any exploitative relationships – sexual, emotional, financial or employment-related – with primary stakeholders, beneficiaries or other persons of concern;
- using my competences in the interest of the people for and with whom we work;
- rejecting any form of disrespectful social interaction and abstaining from anything that could be interpreted as degrading or putting others down;
- refraining from abusing my hierarchical, material, or social position in any way;

- protect the rights and integrity of children and youth and refrain from all unacceptable behaviour towards them;
- refraining from actions which may place me and/or others in a dangerous situation, as well as from those which may endanger our activities as a whole;
- respecting the physical and mental health of my colleagues;
- respecting the private sphere of my colleagues;
- providing explicit reference to the sources of my information/experiences, in any public communication;
- if in a decision-making position, applying decisions in a responsible, transparent, and unprejudiced manner that is not self-seeking, but in keeping with the mission of HELVETAS.

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## 6. Mobbing and Sexual Harassment

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I abstain from mobbing<sup>1</sup>, sexual or sexist harassment<sup>2</sup> of colleagues, partners or beneficiaries.

In particular, I commit to

- refraining from any form of sexual or other type of exploitation, and striving to counter such behaviour in a decisive manner, in particular in situations involving children, young or disabled people;
- refraining from degrading or exploitative behaviour such as exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex or sexual favours, or other forms of humiliation;
- countering observed and confirmed mobbing, sexual or sexist harassment of colleagues by other employees, taking appropriate action and/or informing my supervisors immediately on becoming aware of it;
- informing a person designated by the organisation for this purpose should I feel uncomfortable to disclose suffered or observed infringements to my supervisor.

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## 7. Conflicts of interest

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I am aware that professional interests can conflict with personal interests.

In particular, I commit to

- striving to make my own interests transparent and to avoid any behaviour which could be perceived as biased towards my own interests;
- not using my position to obtain personal benefit or to provide advantage to third parties;
- in the case of professional interests conflicting, or being potentially perceived to conflict, with personal interests, to step back and to pass the decision to the next higher level in the organisation: this applies in particular to relationships with relatives and friends and refers to matters such as recruitment, consultancy and procurement of contracts, purchase and lease agreements (also for personal purposes), or others;
- as a full time employee, not engaging in paid professional activity outside my contract with HELVETAS, unless it has been specifically permitted.

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<sup>1</sup> **Mobbing** means to pick on, pester or exclude a person or a group systematically at work in verbal or non-verbal attacks which affect the physical or mental health as well as the self-esteem of the person(s) concerned

<sup>2</sup> **Sexual or sexist harassment** is an action with sexual reference or undertones unwelcome to the person addressed. Sexual or sexist harassment can be expressed in the following ways: suggestive remarks; remarks about physical advantages or weaknesses or about sexual orientation; sexist talk and jokes in any form of verbal, written or non-verbal communication; sharing suggestive material over email or social media; ambiguous invitations; making bodily advances; making advances together with promises or threats of advantages or disadvantages at work.



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## 8. Fraud and Corruption

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I am honest in all my professional activities. I avoid and counter any kind of corruption or fraud. I abstain from abusing for personal gains or for third parties financial, material and intellectual assets to which I have access as an employee of HELVETAS.

In particular, I commit to

- not compromising my integrity, freedom of action and my impartial judgement through accepting or providing gifts or other advantages (like money, loans, invitations, rewards, reduced prices or fares etc.) from or to collaborators, officials, partner organisations, beneficiaries;
- bringing to the attention of my supervisor if I am approached with demands or promises by collaborators, partners organization, consultants or officials,
- informing my supervisor in case of acceptance of a present, and using it for business or humanitarian purposes or sharing it with other employees;
- If demands, gifts or advantages have to be declined, informing the person making the advances of the standards and practices applied in HELVETAS;

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## 9. Final remarks

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The breach of this Code of Conduct, in its letter or its spirit, leads to disciplinary actions as specified in the *HELVETAS Guidelines on Dealing with Mobbing, Sexual Harassment, Child Abuse & Abuse of Authority*, and *HELVETAS Guidelines on Dealing with Corruption, Fraud and Conflict of Interest*, including warnings, dismissal with contractual notice and in severe cases dismissal without notice and withholding of terminal benefits. Additionally, HELVETAS may take further legal action according to the respective national law.

HELVETAS endeavors to ensure that employees can report suspicions without fear of reprisal and that individuals who express a suspicion are adequately protected (cf. Whistleblower Policy).

The responsibility to follow this Code of Conduct rests with each employee. All supervisors are responsible for promoting and enforcing it.

The Code of Conduct is issued in German, French, English and Spanish. It is also made available in our partner country programs, in the national language. In case of any doubts, the English version prevails.

I hereby declare to acknowledge and abide to the:

- *HELVETAS Regulations on Child Protection*
- *HELVETAS Regulations on Mobbing, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority*
- *HELVETAS Regulations on Corruption, Fraud and Conflicts of Interest.*

Irrespective of employee signature, the Code of Conduct is binding.

Read and agreed:

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Name of the Employee

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Place and date






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Signature

Owner (Function & Name):	Kathrin Indermaur, Co-Head Personnel Services
Version (First/Latest):	17.10.2018/19.05.2022
Original Path:	O:\FS\Teams\PES\Public\Regulation Sexual Harassment and Mobbing\Final CoC Regulations\English

## Reporting Channel of the Complaint Report and Feedback Mechanism

To ensure respectful working environment while upholding HELVETAS values, principles, Bangladesh country programme established the Complaint Report and Feedback Mechanism (CRFM). HELVETAS Bangladesh highly encouraged to initiate preventive measurement and raise concerns, any forms of misconduct, unethical practices through the established reporting channel of HELVETAS Bangladesh CRFM –

	<p><b>Speak to a 'Person of trust'</b></p> <p>Share the concerns with a person you trust to seek initial advice. This can be a peer colleague, a supervisor, or a Case Management Unit member</p>
	<p><b>Report by phone, SMS, or WhatsApp</b></p> <p>Report a concern using a secure and dedicated 'CRFM' hotline number: <b>0170 644 0263</b> (during working hours).</p> <p>The same number can be used for SMS or WhatsApp to raise any concern. The CMU will reach back for detail record of the concern.</p> <p>If you feel uncomfortable, you may reach out directly to the <b>designated woman CRFM focal person</b>.</p>
	<p><b>Send an e-mail</b></p> <p>There is a secured and dedicated email inbox to receive and deal the concerns with strict confidentiality. Write a simple email or send the report on the complaint form.</p> <p>Please report any concern to <a href="mailto:feedback.bgd@helvetas.org">feedback.bgd@helvetas.org</a></p>
	<p><b>Send a letter</b></p> <p>Send a complaint by courier/post to following address:</p> <p><b>CMU, HELVETAS Bangladesh</b></p> <p>House 30 CWN (A) (10<sup>th</sup> floor), Road 42/43, Gulshan 2, Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh.</p>
	<p><b>Use a complaint box</b></p> <p>Depending on the office or project, there might be complaint boxes available, in office premises or community. It should be noted that complaints deposited in complaint boxes may be seen by persons that are not members of the Case Management Unit.</p>

HELVETAS Bangladesh is committed to keep the identity of the whistle-blower / plaintiff confidential and take appropriate measures to protect all rights of concerned parties.

**Authorized by – HELVETAS Bangladesh CRFM Committee.**  
 January 2025.



## ANNEX: 3

# REGULATIONS ON RESPONSE TO SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, ABUSE AND HARASSMENT (SEAH), MOBBING & ABUSE OF AUTHORITY

## 1. Purpose and Principles

These regulations reflect the principles and responsibility of HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation<sup>1</sup> to prevent and address sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (PSEAH), mobbing, and abuse of authority.

All forms of SEAH, mobbing and abuse of authority are explicitly forbidden. Such behaviour or conduct manifest a considerable encroachment on the basic principles of equality and fundamental rights of those affected and is contrary to the principles and values of HELVETAS as stated in the Human Resource Policy, Code of Conduct, Gender and Social Equity Diamonds and Policy and our mission statement.

HELVETAS promotes the respect and protection of all its employees, partners and primary stakeholders against all forms of emotional, physical and sexual misconduct and/or aggression. Everyone has a right to their physical and mental integrity, while those in breach will be held accountable. Employees of HELVETAS or any other person involved in our activities responsible for such behaviour or conduct shall be subject to sanctions and/or disciplinary measures.

### **HELVETAS is committed to the following principles:**

#### **Zero tolerance**

HELVETAS prohibits all forms of SEAH, mobbing and abuse of authority.

#### **Protection**

All employees of HELVETAS or any other person involved in our activities have a right to work in a harassment-free and respectful environment.

#### **Prevention**

HELVETAS consciously promotes a positive work environment to prevent inappropriate behavior in the workplace.

#### **Reporting**

HELVETAS establishes appropriate reporting mechanisms to respond to suspicions and formal allegations of SEAH, mobbing and/or abuse of authority and to protect whistleblowers, preventing retaliation related to the reporting of allegations.

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<sup>1</sup> In the following HELVETAS

**Rigorous sanction**

HELVETAS is committed to address inappropriate behavior by or towards its employees, by or towards partners and/or towards primary stakeholders. If a case of SEAH, mobbing and/or abuse of authority is proven, involved employees or any other person contracted by HELVETAS are to be sanctioned.

**Neutrality**

Measures to deal with inappropriate behavior will be based on principles of fairness and impartiality.

**Confidentiality**

Whistleblowers who express a suspicion of inappropriate behavior are protected. Information concerning a suspicion is confidential. The presumption of innocence applies to suspicious persons.

**Adequate information**

All persons directly involved are informed openly about cases of SEAH, mobbing, and/or abuse of authority while protecting the whistleblowers.

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## **2. Definitions**

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### **2.1. Mobbing**

Mobbing means to pick on, pester and exclude a person or a group systematically and to harass a person repeatedly and over a longer period of time at work. Mobbing can be expressed in verbal or non-verbal attacks which affect the physical or mental health as well as the self-esteem of the person(s) concerned.

### **2.2. Sexual harassment**

Sexual harassment is an action with sexual references unwelcome to the person addressed. It can happen between peers, between a supervisor and subordinate level, between members of the opposite or same sex, between an older and younger person among others.

Sexual harassment can be expressed in the following ways (non-exhaustive list):

- remarks about physical advantages or weaknesses or about sexual orientation
- suggestive remarks
- sexist talk and jokes, in any form of verbal, written or non-verbal communication
- sharing suggestive material over email or social media
- ambiguous invitations
- making bodily advances
- making advances together with promises or threats of advantages or disadvantages

### **2.3. Sexual exploitation and abuse**

Helvetas and its partners must fully adhere to the IASC<sup>2</sup> six core principles as defined as follows:

- 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 defense.

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<sup>2</sup> The Inter-Agency Standing Committee



- Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior 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 benefiting 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.

HELKETAS applies these principles across all areas of its work, including both humanitarian and development contexts. Reporting and enforcement follow HELKETAS' established reporting mechanisms and align with the HELKETAS' Code of Conduct.

## **2.4. Abuse of authority**

Abuse of authority means the improper use of a position of influence, power or authority by an individual against another colleague or group of colleagues, stakeholders or beneficiaries. This is particularly serious when an individual misuses his/her influence, power or authority to negatively influence the career or employment conditions (including - but not limited to - assignment, contract renewal, performance evaluation or promotion) of another. It can include a one-off incident or a series of incidents. Abuse of authority may also include misuse of power that creates a hostile or offensive and/or submissive work environment, which includes - but is not limited to - the use of intimidation, threats, blackmail or coercion.

## **2.5. Conclusion**

SEAH, in addition to any and all other forms of abuse and harassment including mobbing, and abuse of authority violate universally recognized international legal norms and standards and as such are unacceptable and prohibited behavior for all HELKETAS employees. SEAH and mobbing constitute acts of serious misconduct and are therefore reasons for disciplinary measures, including dismissal and legal prosecution.

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# **3. Prevention & Responsibility**

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## **HELKETAS as employer**

HELKETAS at Head Office and in partner countries consciously promote a safe, respectful and equitable working atmosphere at all levels and across all offices, teams and programmes and all its activities.

HELKETAS carefully screens possible partners and employees in key functions as defined by the vetting concept before starting collaboration. The "Regulations on response to sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH), mobbing and abuse of authority" as well as any other policies and regulations are actively discussed with all partners.

In implementing the present regulations, HELKETAS shall act consistently and undertake the appropriate investigative and disciplinary actions required. HELKETAS ensures that persons who report alleged incidents in good faith (whistleblowers) are not put at a disadvantage. Their identity is kept anonymous as far as possible and if necessary, also after the ending of an investigation. HELKETAS ensures that in cases of alleged SEAH, mobbing and/or abuse of authority the reputation of suspects is not damaged unnecessarily. Persons who maliciously raise suspicions or damage the reputation of others are liable to face sanctions. HELKETAS ensures full adherence to its whistleblower policy at all times.

HELKETAS provides training to their employees regarding prevention of SEAH, mobbing and abuse of authority. All employees are required to participate in the training.

### **Supervisors**

All supervisors should act as role models by upholding only the highest standards of conduct in order to achieve a harassment-free environment. All supervisors are responsible for ensuring that new collaborators are made aware of the SEAH, mobbing and abuse of authority regulations and guidelines during their introduction and/or on-boarding. They provide guidance on prevention and respond to such form of misconduct.

Supervisors commit themselves to both prevent and address SEAH, mobbing and abuse of authority within their sphere of responsibility. They follow up any signs of SEAH, mobbing and/or abuse of authority according to HELKETAS organizational principles, policies and regulations, and governing legal framework as relevant. Should an incident occur during or after work, the supervisors ensure that the incident is promptly and adequately addressed. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

### **Employees**

HELKETAS demands that all employees value and safeguard basic principles of equality and fundamental rights. Reporting of incidents is essential to prevent the continuation of SEAH, mobbing and abuse of authority. Cases are normally detected quickest in the immediate environment where they occur. Any concerns or suspicions regarding SEAH, regardless whether or not within HELKETAS, must be reported through the established mechanisms in the guidelines.

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## **4. Confidential advice and initial support**

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Collaborators subjected to or witnessing SEAH, mobbing and/or abuse of authority are encouraged to seek emotional, professional and legal support, first and foremost from a person of trust. This person can be internal to the organization (Supervisor, People & Culture Director at Head Office, HR responsible in the country or Personnel Committee (PEKO) where existing and/or external (e.g. Be-Trieb in Switzerland offers confidential advice in English and German). Supervisors and the Human Resource Team have a duty of care to take action if required.

The person of trust can provide direct or indirect assistance by means of emotional support, accompanying support, information support, redirecting to relevant services or authorities and more. The internal as well as the external confidants are bound by confidentiality. In all cases across the organization, the People & Culture Director at Head Office is to be informed.



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## 5. Investigation and Sanctions

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Employees have the right to seek informal advice or lodge a formal complaint. For feedback and complaints HELKETAS has established reporting and investigation mechanisms (see “Guidelines on reporting of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH), mobbing, child abuse and abuse of authority”). In case of a formal complaint and depending on the severity of the incident the Management (Management Board member at Head office or Country Director) can decide about building a grievance committee with internal and/or external specialists. The grievance committee leads the investigation. To the extent possible, safety, impartiality, and confidentiality during the course of the investigation is ensured.

In case of a proven incident, pending its severity, different types of sanctions are applicable; from apologies to warnings to summary dismissals.

The right to civil or criminal prosecution is reserved. The same sanctions apply to anyone knowingly accusing someone falsely of SEAH, mobbing, and/or abuse of authority.

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## 6. Area of applicability and date of enforcement

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These regulations apply to all employees worldwide in any contractual relationship with HELKETAS (including interns & volunteers, Board of Directors and its Advisory Council as well as consultants) at all times during their assignment with HELKETAS – both during and after working hours. The regulations are an integral part of the employment contract.

These regulations will be supplied to all employees and become effective from July 01, 2025.

Owner (Function & Name):	People and Culture
Version (First/Latest):	17.10.2018/16.06.2025

## Annexure: 4

# REGULATIONS ON CHILD PROTECTION

## 1. Purpose and Principles

HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation recognizes that especially in situations of poverty, humanitarian crisis and/or conflict, children can be extremely vulnerable and acknowledges its fundamental duty to protect them.

These regulations have been developed to ensure maximum protection of children within our activities from all forms of abuse and exploitation. It ensures that HELVETAS has procedures in place to prevent and deal with child abuse, child exploitation and breach of regulations. Additionally, HELVETAS aims at protecting HELVETAS staff from false or malicious allegations of misconduct. Furthermore, HELVETAS seeks safeguarding of HELVETAS' organisational integrity and reputation, as well as that of its partners, by introducing sound Child Protection Regulations.

In all aspects of our work, HELVETAS is committed to the key principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, specifically:

- guaranteeing, without any form of discrimination, the rights of children.
- considering the best interests of children in all actions relating to them.
- recognising the right to life, survival and development of each child.
- reflecting children's views in matters affecting them.

## 2. Definitions

HELVETAS defines a child as any person under the age of 18 years as laid down by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

**Child protection** is an activity or initiative designed to protect children from any form of harm, particularly arising from child abuse or neglect.

**Child abuse** is the physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, child labour, military use of children, neglect of a child resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development, dignity or integrity.

- Physical abuse occurs when a person purposefully injures or threatens to injure a child or young person. This may take, among others, the form of slapping, punching, shaking, kicking, burning, shoving or grabbing. The injury may take the form of bruises, cuts, burns or fractures. It can also include tasks and errands which clearly exceed the capacity of the child to manage safely.
- Emotional abuse is a chronic attack on a child or young person's self-esteem. It can take, among others, the form of name calling, threatening, ridiculing, stalking, intimidating or isolating the child or young person.

- Sexual abuse is when a child is used by another child, adolescent or adult for his or her own sexual stimulation or gratification.
- Child labour refers to the employment of children in any work that deprives children of their childhood, interferes with their ability to attend regular school, and that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful. Legislation across the world prohibit child labour.
- Military use of children means engagement of children in or exposed to military activity, including as soldiers or human shields.

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### **3. Prevention & Responsibility**

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HELVETAS upholds the rights and obligations of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and is dedicated to protect children engaged in its programmes from harm, exploitation and abuse. Accordingly, HELVETAS is committed to implement and maintain child protection measures. These include introduction of regulations to all new HELVETAS staff, interns & volunteers, partners, consultants and service providers as well as organisation of regular refreshers for staff directly working with children. Furthermore, appropriate recruiting processes are established for functions directly working with children.

Prior to commencement of activities involving children directly or indirectly, HELVETAS will analyse potential risks to children that can arise as part of the implementation of HELVETAS programmes. These activities can include training attended by children, data collections including discussions with children etc.

Where potential risks to children are identified, the project team must address them in the project risk analysis and mitigation strategy. If risks cannot be reduced to the required level and the project activities could cause harm to children, the project team must bring this issue to the country programme management who decides on further measures to be taken in order to address the risk(s). Activities with any risk to harm children must not be implemented.

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### **4. Standards of conduct and forms of unacceptable behaviour**

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The following behaviour should be observed and/or avoided by all HELVETAS staff and contracted partners, consultants and/or service providers when in direct contact with children.

#### **Standards of conduct**

- Make public and raise awareness of primary stakeholder groups e.g. implementing partners, consultants, service providers and local authorities in regard to HELVETAS regulations and accountability mechanisms.
- Treat children with dignity and respect regardless of ethnicity, gender, age, language, religion, sexual orientation, education, differently abled or other characteristics.



- When working in the proximity of children be visible and, wherever possible, ensure presence of another adult.
- Comply with all relevant legislation, including labour laws in relation to child labour.
- Raise and report concerns about child protection and safety.

When collecting data from children (during assessments, monitoring and evaluation, etc.) reduce the risk of potential harm by using culturally appropriate ways of communicating, obtaining informed consent e.g. from parent(s) or guardian in case of minor, ensuring confidentiality and being gender, conflict and trauma sensitive. If distressing data has to be obtained, endeavour to facilitate sensitive methods and consider options for professional psychosocial intervention and care.

When getting and/or using children's images for visibility purposes (i.e. photographing or filming a child/children):

- Comply with the standard approach as explained in the HELKETAS communication and photos taking guidelines.
- Ensure that the products (e.g. photographs, videos) present children in a dignified and respectful manner, with children being adequately clothed and not in poses that could be misleading or seen as sexually suggestive.
- When taking an image of a particular child for a specific purpose (media, advocacy, fundraising, etc.), explain in advance how the product will be used.
- Ensure that images of children is only used for the public with explicit consent of the child and from a parent or guardian.

### **Forms of unacceptable behaviour (non-exhaustive list)**

- Touch a child in an unwanted, inappropriate or culturally insensitive manner.
- Use language or demonstrate behaviour that is harassing, abusive, demeaning, sexually provocative or culturally insensitive towards children.
- Engage children in any form of activity that is demeaning, offensive, sexually provocative, abusive or culturally inappropriate or insensitive.
- Physically assault or punish children.
- Engage children in any form of sexual activity or acts, including paying for sexual services or acts.
- Access, produce or spread child pornography through any medium.
- Invite unaccompanied children without their and parent's or guardian's approval into solitary places, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger.
- Sleep in close proximity to unsupervised unrelated children.
- Hire children for domestic or other labour which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage and which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or which puts them at risk of injury.
- Act or facilitate interactions in gender biased or discriminatory manner.
- Exclude or favour a particular child in context of our activities without objective reason.

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## **5. Reporting on child abuse**

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HELKETAS strives to create an environment in which children and persons concerned about the child's safety within HELKETAS programmes feel free to report on it. HELKETAS therefore requests all HELKETAS staff, interns & volunteers, contracted partners, consultants and service providers to report to HELKETAS any suspicion or disclosure of child abuse within HELKETAS programmes/projects.

For feedback and complaints HELKETAS has established reporting and investigating mechanisms, as described in the guidelines on mobbing, sexual harassment, child abuse and abuse of authority.

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## **6. Area of applicability and date of enforcement**

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These regulations apply to all employees worldwide in any contractual relationship with HELKETAS (including interns & volunteers, Board of Directors and its Advisory Council as well as consultants) at all times during their assignment with HELKETAS – both during and after working hours. The regulations are an integral part of the employment contract.

All partners we collaborate with are made aware of our policies and regulations during partnership negotiations.

These regulations will be supplied to all employees and become effective from March 02, 2018.