

## PARTNERSHIP POLICY: Harassment Prevention



APPROVED BY:	WVI Board	RESPONSIBILITY:	People Committee
POLICY OWNER:	Chief People and Culture Officer	POLICY DELEGATE:	Director, People & Culture Executive Office
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### 1. OVERVIEW

#### 1.1. Purpose

To outline and define World Vision's global policy regarding harassment prevention in the workplace throughout the Partnership.

#### 1.2. Scope

This policy applies to all WV entities and their employees of all categories, interns and volunteers regardless of location, and non-employees such as vendors, independent contractors (consultants), visitors and others doing business with WV including donors and beneficiaries. This policy governs conduct in the workplace (any place where WV employees perform work for WV) as well as off-premises situations with a relationship to the workplace or that affect the workplace.

#### 1.3. Effective Date

The effective date of this revised policy is 19 May 2011.

#### 1.4. Retired/Related Policies

#### 1.5. Contextualisation

Contextualisation of policies is addressed in the Contextualisation Guidelines available on [wvcentral](#). (Alternatively, please search for Contextualisation Guide on wvcentral in the event that the direct link provided does not work.)

### 2. POLICY

2.1. World Vision (WV) endeavors to promote a global culture of dignity, respect and courtesy, in line with WV's Core Value -- "We value people." In keeping with this concept, WV entities shall be committed to providing a work environment that is free of discrimination\* and shall prohibit harassment including sexual harassment and harassment based on race, color, national origin, age, gender, disability or any other unlawful or inappropriate basis. WV is also committed to compliance with local laws in the communities in which it operates and all WV entities shall comply with such laws related to harassment in the workplace. WV expects all its personnel

and others doing business with WV to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with this goal.

- 2.2. Accordingly, all World Vision entities will develop and maintain a policy on harassment prevention, which ensures that the entity will:
  - 2.2.1. Take appropriate measures to prevent harassment;
  - 2.2.2. Rigorously investigate all complaints of harassment in a timely and thorough manner;
  - 2.2.3. Take appropriate corrective action in cases of substantiated harassing behavior in accordance with local policies, procedures and laws regarding disciplinary and corrective action;
  - 2.2.4. Take appropriate corrective action in cases of false claims (also in accordance with local practices and laws);
  - 2.2.5. Provide clear guidelines on how cases of alleged criminal offenses (such as sexual assault) will be managed;
  - 2.2.6. Provide access to a safe place where personal support and counseling can be obtained.
- 2.3. Such policies shall contain the following elements at a minimum, subject to adjustment if required by applicable local law:
  - 2.3.1. All allegations of harassment will be investigated promptly, impartially and confidentially by an individual or team, normally appointed by the Human Resources or People & Culture department. Any employee of WV found to have acted in violation of the policy shall be subject to corrective action, up to and including termination.
  - 2.3.2. WV will not tolerate retaliation against anyone who complains of harassment in good faith or who participates in an investigation. (See Definitions, below.)
- 2.4. Legal Aspects
  - 2.4.1. In some countries, employees of WV could be held personally liable in certain cases of substantiated harassing behaviour. Employees in Supervisory/Managerial positions could also be personally liable for failing to act upon a complaint made to them.
  - 2.4.2. WV will also take into consideration local national law and consult appropriate local legal counsel as to the applicability of the local national law. To the extent that the WV policy is inconsistent with national law on this issue, national law will prevail. Where national law is consistent with the WV policy or is silent, the WV policy will apply.
- 2.5. Harassing Conduct - Non-employees:

WV expects its customers, vendors, contractors/consultants and partner organisations to refrain from harassing behaviour when engaging with WV. These individuals are expected to meet the same behavioural standards as WV personnel. Conversely, WV personnel shall refrain from harassing behaviour towards such individuals, the same as if such individuals were WV employees. Such individuals can report to WV any harassing behaviour toward them by a WV staff member.
- 2.6. Criminal Offenses (e.g., Sexual Assaults):

In the event of alleged criminal offences (such as rape and other forms of assault) WV will report the incident to appropriate local authorities, local law enforcement and/or diplomatic authorities. WV employees who are victims of such offenses in connection with their employment will be provided by WV with appropriate and timely physical, medical and psychological support.

## 2.7. Reporting and Investigating Harassment Complaints:

Procedures for reporting and investigating incidents of harassment are to be defined in local policies in keeping with the stated objectives of this policy and local employment laws and processes.

## 2.8. Investigation Results:

The complainant and the alleged harasser will be informed as soon as reasonable of the findings of the investigation and the final determination.

2.8.1. If harassment is not established, there will be no permanent record made of the incident in the employee's file. However, the investigation report will be maintained in P&C/HR. Appropriate counseling may be provided to both complainant and alleged harasser.

2.8.2. If there is a reasonable basis to believe that harassment did occur, appropriate corrective action will be taken and full documentation will be kept on record.

2.8.3. If it is established that knowingly and intentionally false allegations have been made, full documentation will be kept and corrective action will be taken against the complainant as appropriate.

## 2.9. Treatment of the Complainant:

The complainant will be treated respectfully and with dignity. Statements made by the complainant will be kept in appropriate confidentiality. The complainant will be:

2.9.1. Given the opportunity to provide relevant information.

2.9.2. Given the opportunity to participate in the investigation by providing names/identities of other witnesses and also recommend questions to be asked by the investigators during the investigation.

2.9.3. If complainant desires, counseling may also be available.

## 2.10. Treatment of the Alleged Harasser:

The alleged harasser will be treated respectfully and with dignity. Statements made by the alleged harasser will be kept in appropriate confidentiality. The alleged harasser will be:

2.10.1. Advised of the allegations, orally or in writing.

2.10.2. Given the opportunity to provide relevant information and respond to specific allegations. This response may be made verbally or in writing.

2.10.3. Given the opportunity to participate in the investigation by providing names/identities of other witnesses who may have knowledge of the specific allegations and also recommend questions to be asked by the investigators during the investigation.

2.10.4. If alleged harasser desires, counseling may also be available.

## 2.11. Retaliation:

Retaliation against any employee for filing a complaint covered under this policy or assisting in the investigation of a complaint covered under this policy is prohibited. Persons who believe that they have been retaliated against for reporting a complaint or assisting in the investigation process, should report the incident to their P&C/HR Representative or to the WVI Integrity and Protection Hotline (or comparable local hotline).

## 2.12. Harassment Prevention:

In a continued effort to prevent harassment, all employees will be educated about the harassment policy during new hire orientation, and regular reminders or training will be provided to staff on a periodic basis.

2.13. Nothing in this policy should be read as negating or contradicting World Vision's desire for lawful faith-based employment practices, as described in the Partnership Policy on Witness to Jesus Christ.

### 3. DEFINITIONS

#### 3.1. *What is Sexual Harassment?*

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, making unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where either:

- Submission to such conduct is made an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individuals
- Or such a conduct has the purpose of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Note: Because WV is a diverse organisation, it is important that staff exercise cross cultural sensitivity. Conservative professional decorum should be exercised to prevent misunderstandings.

#### 3.2. *What are Other Types of Harassment?*

Harassment is conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion towards an individual, or creates a hostile work environment because of his/her:

- Race, ethnic origin, ancestry, nationality or color
- Age
- Gender
- Religious convictions\*
- Denominational allegiance
- Disability
- Military service
- Other legally protected basis

\* See provision 2.13 above.