

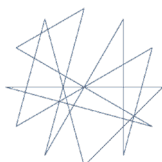
SECURITY INCIDENT INFORMATION MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK

TOOL 7: GOOD PRACTICE IN GENDER-SENSITIVE INCIDENT REPORTING & COMPLAINTS MECHANISMS FOR REPORTING SEA



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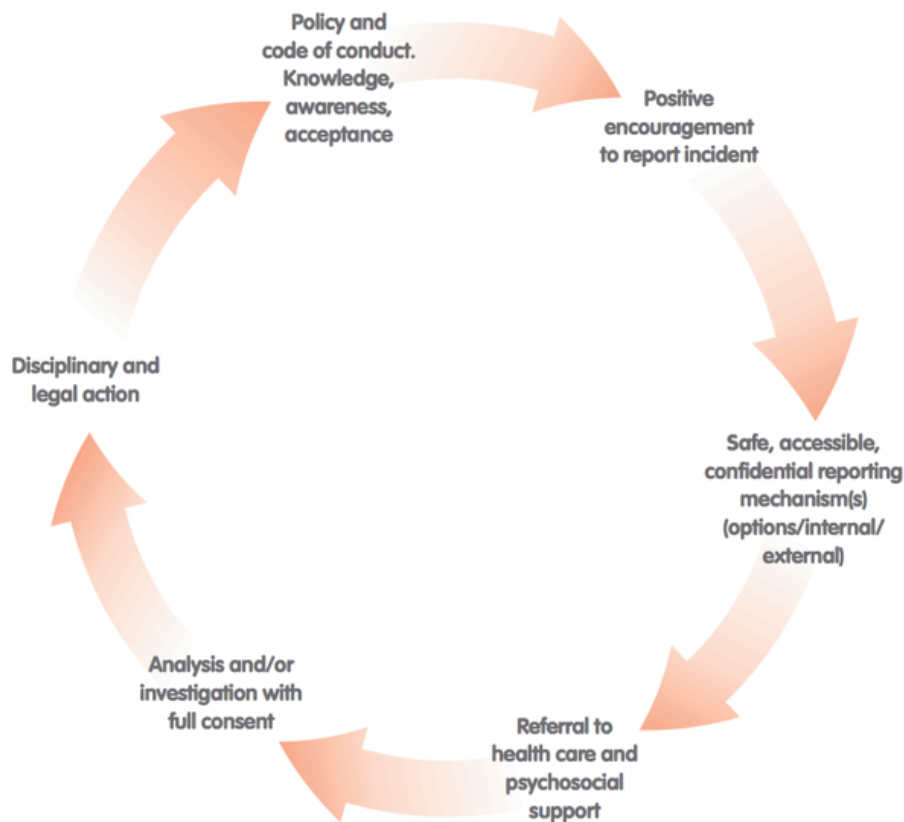
Data on People in Danger



TOOL 7: **GOOD PRACTICE IN GENDER-SENSITIVE INCIDENT REPORTING & COMPLAINTS MECHANISMS FOR REPORTING SEA**

This tool offers a summary of good practices in reporting and follow-up of gender sensitive incidents and SEA. This should guide organisations in developing and adapting their systems.

Sensitive incidents reporting cycle³⁹



³⁹ This tool is extracted from Persaud, C. (2012). *Gender and Security: Guidelines for Mainstreaming Gender in Security Risk Management*. EISF.

Policy:

Policy is at the foundation of good incident reporting and may include a whistleblowing clause. Special emphasis should be placed on promoting incident reporting. There should be mandatory reporting for specific incidents, except situations where it is an option for an individual, such as incidents of harassment and gender-based violence (GBV). (Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) falls under a different code of conduct and policy. Staff members have a duty to report incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse or possibly face disciplinary measures. See below for more information.)

Awareness:

Staff should be aware of what constitutes an incident with particular emphasis on the less talked about situations such as harassment, GBV, near misses, or smaller incidents. Awareness can be raised while creating comfort and trust in encouraging incident reporting during induction, orientations, trainings, at meetings etc. Staff must know their rights and options.

Incident reporting options/procedures:

Several channels should be established for incident reporting. This offers additional options for personnel depending on their comfort level or need for confidentiality. Options include (but are not limited to): online reporting through agency intranet, phone hotline (reverse charges or toll-free), focal points, channels that bypass some levels of management (in cases where they are being reported on) etc.

Use of focal points:

Focal points must be carefully selected and trained based on their personal profile, capability, ability to maintain confidentiality and objectivity. Having a number of diverse focal points (international and national, male and female) can increase comfort and access to reporting.

Analysis/investigations:

Follow up on incidents will subsequently inform risk analysis, risk reduction measures or levels of staff awareness. Some level of internal investigation, conducted by extremely well trained individuals, may be necessary in the case of breach of internal policies. This will warrant notifying the local authorities /police for external investigation in case of a confirmed breach of local laws.

Disciplinary procedures:

Should there be misconduct by a staff member (depending on the severity of the incident, and local laws including labour laws) disciplinary measures should be taken and must be applied consistently across local/national/international/male/female staff members.

Institutional memory:

Avoid hiring any person with a history of perpetrating any type of serious incident including corruption, sexual harassment, or sexual violence, including sexual exploitation, sexual abuse and domestic violence. This may seem obvious, but there is a long history, through anecdotal evidence, of perpetrators being re-hired in a different country office – sometimes even by the same agency. If relevant

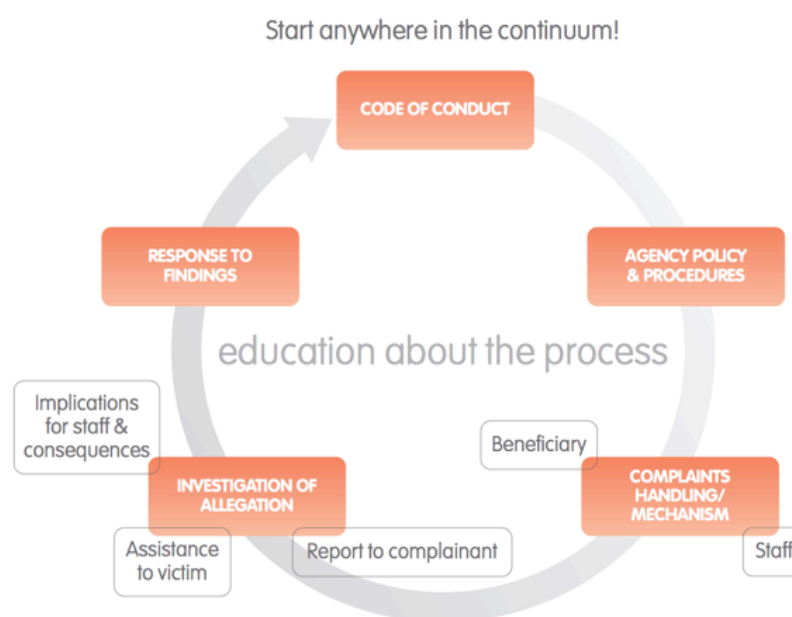
laws governing employers and employees permit, coordinate with other agencies to establish a system for sharing information about employees whose contracts have been terminated for engaging in harassment, sexual violence and/or SEA. Careful hiring practices that include reference checks and vetting are imperative.

Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) Framework

SEA Principles defined by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)

- 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 in 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;
- Sexual relationships between humanitarian workers and beneficiaries are strongly discouraged since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics. 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, s/he must report such concerns via established agency reporting mechanisms;
- Humanitarian workers are obliged to create and maintain an environment that 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 that maintain this environment.

Reporting cycle SEA⁴⁰



Source: InterAction SEA Learning Modules and Guidance

⁴⁰ InterAction. (2010). *InterAction Step by Step Guide to Addressing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse*. InterAction.