

IASC Six Core Principles

Relating 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 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 which prevents sexual exploitation and abuse and promotes the implementation of their **codes of conduct**. **Managers at all levels** have particular responsibility to support and develop systems which maintain this environment.