

# PSEAH BASICS

## An Introduction to Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment

### WHAT IS PSEAH?

PSEAH stands for the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment. Within the international humanitarian and development sector, the term sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (SEAH) refers to harm perpetrated by humanitarian and development workers against program participants, community members, or staff. SEAH is a form of **gender-based violence**, and like all forms of GBV, is rooted in gender inequality, the abuse of power, and harmful norms.

### WHY IS PSEAH IMPORTANT?

Central to the mission of all humanitarian and development organizations is serving people in need. Oftentimes, the populations that humanitarian and development workers are working with have been affected by conflict, disaster, or poverty. It is a basic responsibility of all humanitarian and development organizations to ensure that their staff do not inflict further harm on these individuals.

The impact of SEAH on a survivor, their family, and the surrounding community is immeasurable. While each survivor is affected differently, many experience lasting psychological trauma or physical harm. Others may experience social stigma or be ostracized from their community.

SEAH undermines the trust that communities put in our organizations to deliver essential goods and services.

### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- ▶ **Make sure you know your organization's reporting procedures.** Every organization has a different reporting procedure for SEAH-related concerns. Oftentimes, SEAH concerns will be reported to your PSEAH focal point or lead. If you do not have one, check with your organization to ensure you know who to go to if any PSEAH concerns do arise.
- ▶ **Report when you see something.** If you see something that goes against your organization's code of conduct, report it through the proper channels.
- ▶ **Training.** If your organization does not provide basic PSEAH training, encourage your senior leaders to do so. InterAction developed a free **training**, and additional resources can be found in InterAction's **Resource Library**.
- ▶ **Encourage senior leaders to prioritize this issue.** Organizational priorities are set by senior leadership. Use staff forums or town halls to communicate the importance of PSEAH to your CEO and other decision makers.

If you have any questions, please reach out to [Meriwether Beatty](#) or [Kirsten Mullin](#).

Sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment exist on a continuum of sexual violence, depicted below.

