ADRA Protection Policy

Including Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

POLICY DOCUMENT AND GUIDANCE

Effective as of: December 18, 2012
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Glossary

**ADRA**
Adventist Development and Relief Agency

**BSO**
Building Safer Organizations

**GBV**
Gender Based Violence

**HR**
Human Resources

**IASC**
Inter-Agency Standing Committee

**NEPRP**
(ADRA) National Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan

**PCWG**
Protection Cluster Working Group

**PSEA**
Protection Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

**SEA**
Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

**TOT**
Training of Trainers

**UN**
United Nations
Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Protection Policy Including Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Policy Document and Guidance

Category: Global
Responsibility: Vice President for the Network; Vice President for Programs
Authorization: Board of Directors Executive Committee
Approval Date:

Purposes and Scope

The ADRA Protection Policy Including Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA), referred in this document as “Policy”, flows from ADRA’s desire to display God’s love and compassion and its obligation to protect its beneficiaries and those within its sphere of influence from violence or coercion emanating from external sources or from its own employees and related personnel. While the primary responsibility for protection lies with the State, where the capacity and/or willingness of authorities to fulfill their responsibilities is insufficient ADRA may take an important supportive and complementary role. Poorly planned work or neglect places vulnerable people in jeopardy, in particular women and children. Therefore, effective protection must respect and incorporate commonly agreed minimum international professional standards. In addition, ADRA has a duty to recognize the power differential which is a consequence of the position of power and influence held by ADRA employees and related personnel in relation to beneficiaries, and to rigorously counteract the inherent potential for any abuse of that trust or power.

Anyone could be in danger from violence or coercion and require protection. This Policy is inclusive of all women and men, girls and boys, regardless of gender identity, disability status, religion, ethnicity, age, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, geographic area, migratory status, forced displacement, or health status. However, the global evidence indicates that women and children are most often victimized. Therefore in the context of this Policy ADRA’s focus is primarily on women and children.
The Policy serves three broad functions:

**Protect Beneficiaries:**
- Remind ADRA employees and related personnel of their absolute obligation to protect all people against violence and coercion, and in particular ensuring that vulnerable groups are protected;
- Provide guidance for ADRA offices world-wide for prioritizing protection activities in all activities and interactions and especially in humanitarian settings;

**Address Gender-Based Violence:**
- Set a benchmark for ADRA offices to incorporate the results of gender analysis and mainstream gender equality in all activities, starting with emergency responses and distributions and from there roll-out to all activities, in order to identify and mitigate imbalances in male-female relations that generate violence against and undermine the wellbeing of vulnerable segments within target populations—usually but not always or exclusively women and girls;
- Ensure that those most likely to suffer violence and abuse have key roles in decision-making that impacts their lives;

**Address Beneficiary Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) by ADRA Employees or Related Personnel:**
- Prevent acts of SEA and respond forcefully to such acts by delineating a clear and non-negotiable ADRA Code of Ethics which is binding on all ADRA employees and related personnel world-wide;
- Affirm ADRA’s endorsement of the Statement of Commitment on Eliminating Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN and Non-UN Personnel adopted by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Working Group in July 2002 by incorporating its six core principles addressing SEA into ADRA’s Code of Ethics;
- Provide guidance in hiring/contracting, orienting, and/or training ADRA employees and related personnel around the world in order to prevent SEA;
- Delineate responsibilities and procedures for ADRA employees and related personnel world-wide to report on SEA;
- Enable ADRA offices to fairly handle SEA complaints against ADRA employees and related personnel, to conduct investigations, and to provide care and treatment.
Definitions

Abuse:

Child abuse:
According to the World Health Organization Report of the Consultation on Child Abuse Prevention, 1999, “child abuse” or “maltreatment” constitutes ‘all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power’.

Sexual abuse:
The actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions (IASC).

ADRA employees and related personnel:
This broad term encompasses those who are employed/engaged by ADRA and those who represent ADRA. This includes all employees of ADRA International, ADRA Regional Offices, ADRA Country Offices and ADRA projects, plus accompanying family members. It includes all related personnel such as board members, volunteers, interns, international and local consultants, non-ADRA entity employees and individuals who have entered into partnership, sub-grant or sub-recipient agreements with ADRA, individual and corporate contractors of these entities as well as any accompanying family members. It also includes individuals formally or informally retained from the beneficiary community to conduct ADRA activities.

Child:
A child is defined as anyone under the age of 18, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Gender Based Violence (GBV):
GBV is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person’s will, and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between males and females (IASC).
Gender equality:
Gender equality, or equality between women and men, refers to the equal enjoyment of rights, socially valued goods, opportunities, resources and rewards by females and males of all ages and regardless of sexual orientation (IASC).

Humanitarian:
The practice of promoting human welfare (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). The term is often used in emergency response, often called “humanitarian response”, whether due to a natural disaster or a man-made disaster such as war or other armed conflict. ADRA is a “humanitarian organization” which seeks to save lives and alleviating suffering.

Protection:
Protection is a concept that encompasses humanitarian operations in response to complex emergencies or natural disasters aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and spirit of human rights, refugee, and humanitarian law. Protection can involve either removing individuals or groups from a risk, threat, or situation of violence which may adversely affect their fundamental human rights and freedoms, or intervening at the source of the violence to reduce or stop it. This can be accomplished through fostering and contributing to the creation of an environment — political, social, cultural, institutional, and legal — conducive to the sustainable exercise and respect of fundamental freedoms and human rights (IASC).

PSEA:
As used in this document and elsewhere in the literature this acronym refers to protection from sexual exploitation and abuse perpetrated by humanitarian workers.

SEA:
As used in the document and elsewhere in the literature this acronym refers to sexual exploitation and abuse perpetrated by humanitarian workers.

Sexual exploitation:
Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from the sexual exploitation of another (IASC).
Vulnerable group:

In any emergency, there are groups of individuals more vulnerable to sexual violence than other members of the population. These are generally females who are less able to protect themselves from harm, more dependent on others for survival, less powerful, and less visible. They include, but are not limited to, single females, female-headed households, separated/unaccompanied children, orphans, disabled and/or elderly females (from IASC Guidelines for Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings, 2005).
ADRA Guiding Principles

ADRA’s Belief Statements and Operating Principles’ form the foundation for this Policy. A central ADRA belief states:

“That all people—in particular, woman and children—have the right to protection and a life free from violence, sexual exploitation, and all other forms of abuse.”

Key Operating Principles underpinning this Policy are:

“ADRA demonstrates respect for diversity, treating people with equality, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, or economic, political and religious differences.”

“ADRA advocates for the basic rights of the people with whom it works, empowering them to speak for themselves.”

The Policy outlined in this document is also in harmony with international principles and guidance on protection and addressing GBV including SEA, specifically:

▶ The four Protection Principles in the Humanitarian Charter underlying the Sphere Standards, which address how humanitarian agencies can contribute to the protection of those faced with the threat of violence or coercion;
▶ The UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Gender Handbook and Guidelines on Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings;
▶ The UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Working Group’s six core principles relating to sexual abuse and exploitation².

ADRA Policy Statement

ADRA is a global humanitarian organization that seeks to display God’s love and compassion. ADRA affirms its commitment to protect its beneficiaries including all women, children and vulnerable persons so that their lives are free from violence, sexual exploitation, and all other forms of abuse.

1 Refer to Annex 1 for the ADRA Beliefs and Operating Principles, which were approved in 1992 and most recently revised in 2010.
2 Refer to Annex 2 for a list of the four Sphere and six IASC relevant principles. The link for the IASC Gender Handbook and Guidelines on Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings is at http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/pageloader.aspx?page=content-products-products&productcatid=3
ADRA Commitments

ADRA believes that GBV, and in particular sexual violence, is a serious and life-threatening protection issue that commonly exists in humanitarian settings. Therefore, ADRA is committed to:

▶ Taking all reasonable steps to protect all beneficiaries including women and children from GBV, discriminatory or degrading treatment and to respect their rights;
▶ Taking action from the earliest stages of an intervention to prevent sexual violence and provide appropriate assistance to survivors/victims;
▶ Working in partnership with other partner agencies in protection and preventing GBV including SEA;
▶ Conducting background checks;
▶ Hiring employees and selecting related personnel and partners who respect this Policy;
▶ Ensuring employees and related personnel are trained to recognize/respond to GBV including SEA;
▶ Taking very seriously all suspicions and allegations of SEA and responding swiftly and appropriately;
▶ Instituting a mechanism for every employee and related personnel to sign the ADRA Code of Ethics Acknowledgement, attesting through their signature that they will abide by the standards of behavior that ADRA requires;
▶ Adopting a management process in order to facilitate the implementation of this Policy.

ADRA Code of Ethics

The ADRA Policy described in this document is a portrayal of God’s love and compassion. It is a binding, agency-wide Policy which highlights ADRA’s concern for all people. It includes an ADRA Code of Ethics consistent with ADRA’s Belief Statements and Operating Principles.

Refer to Annex 3 for the ADRA Code of Ethics and Acknowledgement. The Code incorporates the Policy outlined in this document.

The Policy meets international standards on protection and addressing GBV including SEA.

ADRA International and all ADRA Regional and Country Offices shall adopt the Policy and
ADRA Code of Ethics and utilize the guidance contained in this document to incorporate the Policy into all ADRA processes and procedures.

Regional and Country Office staff are invited to engage in dialogue aimed at understanding the Policy and ADRA Code of Ethics in view of the cultural and programmatic context in which they operate. If there are anomalies in a Country Office which would countermand the Policy or ADRA Code of Ethics³, this can be addressed at a Working Group level.

The Policy and ADRA Code of Ethics along with the consequences for violating the ADRA Code of Ethics shall be incorporated into each ADRA office’s administrative policies and procedures, for example, its Human Resources (HR) policies and procedures.

The Policy and ADRA Code of Ethics are to be accessible in each Country Office’s predominant language(s).

All employees and related personnel shall be oriented to the Policy and ADRA Code of Ethics as well as to addressing protection, gender equality, GBV and SEA. The intent is to mainstream protection and to prevent GBV and SEA within ADRA’s sphere of influence.

Every ADRA employee or related personnel shall sign the ADRA Code of Ethics Acknowledgement as a contingency of employment or association with ADRA and resign it annually. A witness in each ADRA office, for example, the Human Resources (HR) department, will attest through their signature. The signed documents are kept in each employee or related personnel’s file.

Compliance on an ongoing basis is verified by the presence of signed ADRA Code of Ethics for all ADRA employees and all related personnel, reported annually by HR departments and included in the internal audit function.

This policy was approved by the ADRA International Board on December 18, 2012.

³ An example of an anomaly would be sex workers whose clients include beneficiaries and who also work in an ADRA program on HIV prevention outreach.
Annex 1: ADRA Belief Statements and Operating Principles

ADRA Believes . . .

▶ That through humanitarian acts we make known the just, merciful, and loving character of God.
▶ That to work with those in need is an expression of our love for God.
▶ That the compassionate ministry of Jesus is its own abundant motive and reward.
▶ That we are an agency of change and an instrument of grace and providence.
▶ In expressing concern, compassion, and empathy through our work.
▶ That equitable partnership with those in need will result in sustainable change.
▶ That differences in age, gender, race, culture, and families enrich the communities in which we work and are assets to be respected and affirmed.
▶ In nondiscrimination and in respect for differences, accepting people as equals, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, and political or religious affiliation.
▶ In participatory development that utilizes both men’s and women’s capabilities and provides equal opportunities to individuals of differing ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds.
▶ That all people have the fundamental right to basic care, goods, and services.
▶ That all persons, especially children, have the right to a life of opportunity and the freedom to choose their own future.
▶ In enabling partners to create participatory and sustainable community structures for information sharing and civil engagement.
▶ That all resources, opportunities, and advantages are gifts which must be managed responsibly.
▶ That all people—in particular, woman and children—have the right to protection and a life free from violence, sexual exploitation, and all other forms of abuse.
▶ In demonstrating integrity and transparency in our work at every level.
Operating Principles:

- ADRA’s decisions and strategies are consistent with its beliefs, mission, and vision.
- ADRA demonstrates respect for diversity, treating people with equality, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, or economic, political and religious differences.
- ADRA is active in civil society, engaging in appropriate and empowering partnerships to identify, facilitate, and effect durable solutions to human need.
- ADRA conducts its operations and delivers its programs with environmental sensitivity.
- ADRA documents and applies operational learning to enhance individual and organizational effectiveness and innovation.
- ADRA maintains a work environment and systems that enable staff to achieve professional, personal, and spiritual growth.
- ADRA practices the highest principles of transparency and integrity, adheres to professional standards and requirements, and demonstrates fiscal and legal responsibility by implementing rigorous control and compliance systems.
- ADRA enlarges its resource base to meet humanitarian needs in accordance with managerial, technical, and organizational capacities.
- ADRA shares plans, information, resources, and learning within the ADRA Network, enhancing efficiency, effectiveness, and flexibility.
- ADRA advocates for the basic rights of the people with whom it works, empowering them to speak for themselves.
Annex 2: Sphere’s Four Protection Principles; IASC’s Six Core Principles Regarding SEA

Four Protection Principles (Sphere Handbook, 2011)

▶ Avoid exposing people to further harm as a result of your actions.
▶ Ensure people’s access to impartial assistance – in proportion to need and without discrimination.
▶ Protect people from physical and psychological harm arising from violence and coercion.
▶ Assist people to claim their rights, access available remedies and recover from the effects of abuse.

Six Core Principles Regarding SEA (IASC, 2002)

▶ 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 defense.
▶ 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.
▶ 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.
Annex 3:

ADRA Code of Ethics for Employees and Related Personnel

ADRA <International>, <Region>, <Country>

Compliance with laws rules and regulations: Employees and related personnel are required to comply with all laws, rules and regulations that govern ADRA<Country> in the conduct of its business. Consult with ADRA <Country> administration for clarification of any legal requirements.

Conflicts of interest: Employees and related personnel are required to adhere to the organization’s conflict of interest policy and to sign acceptance statements annually.

Respect for organization-owned assets: Employees and related personnel will respect the property of the organization, including any intellectual property that is developed in the course of employment which will remain the property of ADRA unless board approved. Employees and related personnel will use ADRA property, facilities and resources solely for the benefit of the organization mandate.

Efficiency and attention on the job: The hours of employment shall be devoted to the work assignment entrusted to employees and related personnel. Employees and related personnel shall not use employer’s time for personal business or for the advancement of personal interests unrelated to ADRA. Employees and related personnel will not enter into other employment or activities which impair their performance for ADRA. Employees and related personnel will aspire for greater efficiency, effectiveness and excellence.

Maintaining an honest, courteous and ethical environment in the workplace: Employees and related personnel will not engage in theft or fraud of any kind, including misuse of expense accounts, falsification of time reports, and misapplication of resources. Employees and related personnel accept the obligation of maintaining ethical standards in their personal life and in the workplace. Employees and related personnel accept that it is their personal responsibility to report such acts through established reporting mechanisms, and are accountable for any behavior that is inappropriate or which undermines the ethical and moral environment in the work place. Employees and related personnel shall practice honesty, fairness, courtesy, upholding the highest ethics in dealing with each other and when representing ADRA in dealing with other parties.
Respect for colleagues: Employees and related personnel will respect and uplift colleagues. They will refrain from intentionally placing another in a position of embarrassment, disrespect, or harassment. Sharp personal criticism, malicious gossip and behavior that that may be construed as sexually inappropriate is prohibited. Employees and related personnel will honor the privacy and guard the security of others. Respect for colleagues as outlined in this code does not in any way counteract the requirement for employees and related personnel to report on unethical, dishonest or abusive behavior including suspected or actual sexual exploitation and abuse, through the established reporting mechanism.

Confidentiality: Employees and related personnel shall safeguard confidential or proprietary information of ADRA, individuals and other entities that come into their possession or knowledge by virtue of their ADRA employment duty or association. This includes confidentiality to protect against disclosure or retaliation of any complainants of sexual abuse and exploitation against ADRA employees or related personnel. Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information during the period of employment or association with ADRA or after leaving ADRA employment or association is strictly prohibited.

Accurate and honest reporting: Employees and related personnel shall ensure that they record and report accurately on matters pertaining to their respective job duties. Each employee or related personnel has a personal responsibility to carry out his or her job conscientiously, efficiently and honestly.

Beneficiaries are to be protected and treated with dignity and respect at all times: Employees and related personnel are obligated to create and maintain an environment that protects and prevents violence and abuse of any type including child abuse, gender-based violence, and sexual abuse and exploitation. Any abuse or perceived abuse of power and authority by employees and related personnel undermines the credibility and integrity of the employee and related personnel and ADRA <Country>. At no time will an employee or related personnel use their position or role of authority to humiliate, degrade or exploit a beneficiary of any age, gender or belief.

- Sexual exploitation and abuse by ADRA employees or related personnel will result in termination of employment or involvement with ADRA.
- Sexual contact or activity with a child (person 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 defense. Sexual activity with a child by ADRA employees...
or related personnel will result in termination of employment or involvement with ADRA.

- 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. Such acts by ADRA employees or related personnel will result in termination of employment or involvement with ADRA.

- Sexual relationships between humanitarian workers and beneficiaries are based on inherently unequal power dynamics. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of humanitarian aid work. Sexual relationships between ADRA employees or related personnel and beneficiaries will result in termination of employment or involvement with ADRA.

- Where an ADRA employee or related personnel develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation by a fellow worker, whether in ADRA or not, s/he must report such concerns to a designated ADRA focal point person.

- ADRA employees or related personnel are required to create and maintain an environment that prevents exploitation and abuse and promotes implementation of ADRA’s Code of Ethics. ADRA managers at all levels have particular responsibilities to support and develop systems that maintain the environment.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I have received and read the ADRA <International>, <Regional>, <Country> Code of Ethics for employees and related personnel, and I understand its contents. I agree to comply fully with the standards, policies and procedures contained in the ADRA Code of Ethics and ADRA <International>, <Regional>, <Country> related policies and procedures. I certify that, except as noted below, I am otherwise in full compliance with the ADRA Code of Ethics and any related policies and procedures. Exceptions:

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Annex 4: Sources Used in Policy and Guidance Development

The following sources of information available to the public or generously shared have provided valuable background and language in formulating and articulating this policy document:

- 02-Code of Conduct-Activity-Session Plan-(final)-Save the Children
- ADRA Child Protection Policy, ADRA Zimbabwe, revised September 2011
- CARE Emergency Toolkit: PSEA Chapter
- CARE, Final PSEA Policy, September 2009
- Child Protection Policy, ADRA Australia-funded overseas projects (2008)
- Child Protection Working Group http://cpwg.net/
- Child to Child’s Child Protection Policy
- Gender-Based Violence Responders’ NETWORK (IRC) http://gbvresponders.org/

IASC Gender Marker Tip Sheet: GBV Response and Prevention Projects (www.oneresponse.org)


OCHA on Message Protection

People in Aid Code


Professional Standards for Protection Work (ICRC, October 2009)

Resource Center on Child Protection and Child Rights Governance http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/


USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy, March 2012

Resource Center on Child Protection and Child Rights Governance http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/


USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy, March 2012