

OXFAM GB Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Policy

Title:	Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Policy
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Confidentiality:	The policy statement will be made public. Other Policy details are available internally to employees and volunteers.

Policy Statement

Oxfam GB will not tolerate sexually abusive or exploitative acts being perpetrated by our employees, volunteers or anyone associated with the delivery of our programmes. Employees and managers are bound to uphold this policy and to report people or incidents that they believe contravene it. Oxfam GB managers have a duty to ensure that allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse are investigated and that appropriate disciplinary measures are taken. Oxfam GB also has a duty to provide appropriate assistance to any victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by our staff.

Principles

Definitions of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and our responsibilities

Definitions of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Oxfam GB defines the term sexual exploitation as 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 exploitation of someone else. The term sexual abuse means actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force, coercion or under unequal conditions

Oxfam GB has a zero-tolerance stand on exploitative and abusive relationships. We will also not tolerate behaviour that endangers the security of employees or the organisation or brings either into disrepute. It follows, therefore, that employees should have:

- No sexual contact with children under the age of 18 (mistaken belief of age being no defence) – please see [Child Protection Policy](#).
- No transactional sexual contact with Oxfam GB beneficiaries.

Oxfam GB recognises that sexual exploitation and abuse of vulnerable people is a global phenomenon and from our own and others' experience, it is clear that working with vulnerable individuals can entail dealing with issues of sexual exploitation and abuse. It is vital that sexual exploitation and abuse are not perpetrated or compounded by those who Oxfam GB puts in contact with vulnerable people. It is therefore crucial that we all understand the problem of sexual exploitation and abuse and our own role and responsibility in preventing it. Employees need to consider how their sexual conduct might bring Oxfam GB into disrepute.

Who the policy applies to

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, consultants, representatives and those connected to Oxfam GB including, for example, partners, incentive workers, journalists and researchers. They should ensure their conduct:

- Is never influenced by personal gain or advantage that results in a risk or detriment to Oxfam GB.
- Could not give rise to suspicion of improper motives.
- Is in keeping with Oxfam GB's policies and procedures
- Respects and never violates the rights of vulnerable people.

All those associated with Oxfam GB must act in a professional and ethical manner in accordance with the [Code of Conduct](#).

Our responsibilities

It is the responsibility of our managers, employees and anyone who works with us to report incidences of incorrect behaviour being perpetrated by anyone within Oxfam GB or working for other agencies. Managers, in particular, are responsible for creating and maintaining an environment in which employees, volunteers and contractors know what Oxfam GB expects from them and feel able to report any suspicious or inappropriate behaviour.

Our Partners

Oxfam GB is clear that any partnerships we have with others is based on mutual respect for values and beliefs (please see [Partnership Policy](#)). When Oxfam GB employees assess partner capacity to carry out projects this should include an assessment of the partner's capacity to meet our requirements in upholding this policy and the [Code of Conduct](#).

Making a complaint

Anyone has the right to make a complaint about the behaviour of those associated with Oxfam GB and its programmes including any inappropriate behaviour of other

employees or volunteers using the [Disclosure of Malpractice in the Workplace Policy](#). Any manager who suspects inappropriate behaviour should refer to the [Dealing with Problems at Work Policy](#) and seek advice from their HR representative immediately. Complaints from people external to Oxfam GB will be dealt with under the [Complaints Policy](#). We recommend that complaints be made within 3 months of an incident taking place. We recognise that this may not always be possible or likely with allegations of such a sensitive nature. An investigation can go ahead no matter how long ago an incident occurred (but obviously the sooner the better) and no matter whether the alleged victim wishes to take an active part.

Investigations

Oxfam GB has comprehensive procedures for carrying out investigations into allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse and trained investigators to implement them. Guidance and support to investigators and those managing investigations is essential and is available from your HR team, from your regional Focal Point or from the SEA lead.

Investigations are an internal administrative process and would not therefore involve the police or judiciary. Investigations are carried out so that Oxfam GB can have the best information possible on which to base its decisions concerning employee conduct and consequences thereof. Please see [Carrying out an Investigation](#).

We might then alert the appropriate authorities if, following an investigation, we judge that:

- A crime has taken place,
- Confidentiality can be ensured
- The victim is in agreement and
- Those associated with the case will not be subject to further abuse, disrespect or violence,

Victim Assistance

We will pursue investigations and take appropriate disciplinary procedures. Victims will receive immediate support as necessary, in line with the wishes and needs of the victim and to levels appropriate locally (and to a level deemed acceptable to appropriate professional staff).

Consequences

Employees who contravene Oxfam GB's clearly stated expectations of their sexual conduct will be subject to disciplinary action that may result in dismissal. Volunteers and incentive workers will have their relationship with Oxfam GB terminated. Partners whose employees contravene our expectations and those expressed in partnership documentation must conduct appropriate investigations. Failure to do so will result in funding being withdrawn and their relationship with Oxfam GB will be terminated. Contractors who contravene our expectations will have their contract ended.

As outlined above (in Investigations), the appropriate authorities might become involved under certain circumstances.

Learning

Corporate Human Resources keeps a database from which analysis for trends in behaviour, investigation outcomes and problems will be regularly analysed. Regular reporting of incidents to them is obligatory. A regular report of incidents will go to Oxfam GB's Director and Council.