



ELIX
Veranzerou 15, 10677 Athens,
Greece

PSEA Policy

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Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Policy

Introduction

ELIX is a Greek Non-Governmental organisation committed to promote personal development and everyone's evolution as citizen of the world through active participation in public life. Founded in 1987, ELIX has supported and educated more than 10,000 people to participate in innovative actions in Greece and more than 40 countries around the world. ELIX cultivates voluntary conscience and promotes voluntary offering. It is a civil, nonprofit association, and its main activity is the organisation of international programs of voluntary work and youth exchange, which are focusing on the environmental protection, preservation of cultural heritage, promoting cultural and social contribution.

Mission

Since 1987, Non-Government Organisation ELIX has been cultivating voluntary conscience and promoting voluntary service. ELIX's main target is the contribution in the development of the individual and his evolution as citizen of the world through his active participation in public life.

ELIX realises international actions of voluntary participation with main targets: the protection of the environment, the preservation of cultural heritage, the promotion of civilization and social service. In order to realize its actions, the organisation cooperates with Local Authority Organisations, Government Bodies, Companies, Institutions as well as local environmental and cultural clubs and associations.

ELIX is registered organisation at the list of the First Reception Service (F.R.S) in Greece, also is member of the international network Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organisations since 1991, of the Pan-Hellenic Network of Ecological Organisations, Conservation Volunteers Alliance and of the Network Volunteerism and Environment.

Since November 2016, ELIX has been implementing the project "Quality Play-Based Learning and Non-Formal Education, Enhanced Psychosocial Well-Being and Positive Integration for Refugee Children Aged 3-17 Years in Greece" in different locations. Through this project, refugee children, and their parents, have gained access to a flexible and reliable framework offering non-formal educational activities, such as courses of Greek, English, Mother Tongue, Mathematics, Civic Education and Life Skills, in order to enhance their potential and learning pathway.



Key terms and definitions

For the purpose of this PSEA, the following definitions apply:

Child means any individual under the age of 18, irrespective of local country definitions of when a child reaches adulthood.

Abuse of power includes any abusive behavior (physical, psychological, sexual, or emotional) by a person in a position of authority and trust against someone in a position of vulnerability and/or dependency.

Exploitation is using one's position of authority, influence or control over resources, to pressure, force or manipulate someone to do something against their will or unknowingly, by threatening them with negative repercussions such as withholding project assistance, not approving an employee's work support requests, threatening to make false claims about an employee in public.

Sexual abuse is actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, including inappropriate touching, by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

Sexual exploitation is any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, sexually or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.

Bullying is aggression expressed psychologically and emotionally rather than physically. The term is used to describe a repeated pattern of negative intrusive violating behavior against one or more targets and comprises constant trivial fault-finding criticism, refusal to value and acknowledge, undermining, discrediting and a host of other behaviors.

Discrimination means exclusion of, treatment of, or action against an individual based on social status, race, ethnicity, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, national origin, political affiliation, or disability.

Harassment means any unwelcome comment or behavior that is offensive, demeaning, humiliating, derogatory, or any other inappropriate behavior that fails to respect the dignity of an individual.

Some examples include, but are not limited to:

- Humanitarian/development worker demanding (or accepting) sex in exchange for material assistance, favors, or privileges.
- Teacher insisting on (or accepting) sex in exchange for passing grade or admission to class.
- Refugee leader demanding (or accepting) sex in exchange for safe passage.
- Driver demanding (or accepting) sex to give a female person a seat in the vehicle.



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PSEA Policy

Sexual harassment means any unwelcome sexual advance, comment, expressed or implied sexual demand, touch, joke, gesture, or any other communication or conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal, written or visual, by any person to another individual within the scope of work. Sexual harassment may be directed at members of the same or opposite sex and includes harassment based on sexual orientation. Sexual harassment can occur between any one or more individuals, employee, or beneficiary, regardless of their work relationship.

Protection means ensuring that individual basic human rights, welfare, and physical security are recognized, safeguarded, and protected in accordance with international standards.

1. Introduction

ELIX is committed to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation, harassment, and abuse of power in any form. ELIX as an organisation and all ELIX staff members personally are responsible for upholding and promoting the highest ethical and professional standards in their work.

The management of all organisational units in ELIX has a responsibility to ensure that all staff is aware of this PSEA, that they understand what it means in concrete behavioral terms and how it applies to their program context.

2. Purpose

The main purpose of this PSEA is to promote accountability to all our stakeholders, especially the people we work with in our programs. It seeks to protect staff as well as every woman, man, girl and boy with whom we work from abuse by individuals or groups within ELIX. The PSEA is intended to serve as a guide for staff to make ethical decisions in their professional lives and at times in their private lives.

3. Scope

The ELIX PSEA applies to all ELIX staff, including national and international, permanent, or short-term employees, as well as volunteers, consultants and any others who work for ELIX. The word Staff is used in this document hereinafter in this purpose.

The PSEA shall be signed by all Staff, and it is an integral part of their individual employment contract.

ELIX will promote the spirit and principles of the ELIX PSEA among its partner organisations. ELIX has set out relating partner requirements in the ELIX Accountability Framework.



4. ELIX PSEA

This PSEA is designed to assist Staff to better understand the obligations placed upon their conduct, as to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse, and all forms of harassment.

Therefore, all staff shall always:

- Demonstrate integrity, truthfulness, dedication, and honesty in all actions,
- Respect and promote fundamental human rights without discrimination,
- Treat all communities with whom we work fairly and with respect, courtesy, dignity and according to International Laws and Standards,
- Promote the implementation of the ELIX PSEA by contributing towards the creation and maintenance of an environment that prevents abuse of power, corruption, and sexual exploitation and abuse,
- Report immediately any knowledge, concerns or substantial suspicions of breaches of the PSEA to her/his line manager and/or senior management of ELIX, who is in turn expected to take prompt investigative action,
- Be aware that failure to disclose or knowingly withhold information about any reports, concerns or substantial suspicions of breaches of this PSEA constitutes grounds for disciplinary measures,
- Feel protected by ELIX's commitment to providing a safe environment through which to voice a concern, without fear, reprisal, or unfair treatment,
- Uphold the highest standards of accountability, efficiency, competence, integrity, and transparency in the provision of goods and services in the execution of their job,
- When sharing images and messages (e.g. in social media) to respect the rights and dignity of the persons in concern, and not to compromise safety of these people, Staff, or any other stakeholder,
- Cooperate when requested with any investigation into alleged breaches related to this PSEA.

4.1 Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Sexual exploitation and abuse are forms of gender-based violence. ELIX recognizes that sexual exploitation and abuse can occur in any development or humanitarian setting. In humanitarian crises, however, the dependency of affected populations on humanitarian agencies for their basic needs creates an additional ethical responsibility and duty of care on the part of all staff.

To protect ELIX stakeholders in all situations, Staff shall while on duty and off duty:

- Understand that sexual exploitation and abuse by staff involved in development and humanitarian work constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment,



- Never engage in any sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Sexual activity with children is prohibited within the ELIX. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defense.
- Not accept, solicit, or engage in the “buying” of or profiting from sexual services. This is applicable to staff both within and outside of working hours.
- Never exploit the vulnerability of any target group in the context of development and humanitarian work, especially women and children, or allow any person/s to be put into compromising situations,
- Know that the 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,
- Never abuse a position to withhold development or humanitarian assistance, or give preferential treatment; in order to solicit sexual favors, gifts, payments of any kind, or advantage,
- Given the increased vulnerability of populations in crisis situations, Staff are prohibited from engaging in sexual relationships with members of crisis-affected populations since such relationships are based on inherently unequal power dynamics and undermine the credibility and integrity of humanitarian aid work,
- When working with children, avoid actions or behavior which may constitute poor practice and never act in ways that may place a child at risk of abuse,
- In countries where ELIX undertakes long-term development work, an employee who engages in a long-term sexual relationship with a member of the community which is benefiting from an ELIX program, and/or with another employee, is encouraged to inform his or her manager about the relationship to prevent the perception of a conflict of interest.

4.2 Harassment

Staff shall never commit any act or form of harassment as it results in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to individuals, especially women and children. ELIX does not tolerate any form of workplace violation such as harassment (including sexual, gender and racial harassment), bullying and discrimination, that is, any unwelcome comment or behavior that is offensive, demeaning, humiliating, derogatory, or any other inappropriate behavior that fails to respect the dignity of an individual.

Therefore, all Staff shall:

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect in the workplace. Speak with civility and kindness, listen carefully, and consider others wellbeing,
- Never commit any act or form of harassment as it causes physical, sexual, psychological, or emotional harm or suffering to individuals, especially women, children and people with disabilities,



- Never engage in any behavior, deliberate or otherwise, that makes the recipient feel persecuted, vulnerable, and powerless,
- Understand what constitutes harassment, recognize early signs of sexual, gender and racial harassment (among others) and take swift action to prevent and resolve,
- Understand what constitutes bullying, empower Staff that are affected by it, develop strategies for reducing and stopping it, and take necessary disciplinary action against those found to have committed an act or form of harassment,
- Violent, harassing, or discriminatory behavior of any kind directed toward another person in the workplace or in the communities with whom ELIX works is unacceptable and shall not be tolerated.
- Undergo adequate mandatory online training on PSEA on the AGORA online training platform, and also on a face to face presentation seminar.

4.3 Equal Opportunities – Children Safeguarding

- Ensure that each beneficiary will have the same opportunities and/or equal access to digital learning services.
- Every child who attends an online course has the right to leave the virtual learning environment at any time if that does not suit their learning needs. Not all children are familiar with the internet and using it can cause stress or anxiety. The possibility of leaving is open at any time according to the will of the child.
- The risks involved in harassing a child online are increased compared to a school's usual routine. Monitoring of the virtual learning environment will be vigilantly active. Reporting mechanisms are in place on behalf of social media, as much as on behalf of ELIX.
- ELIX has developed a PSS (Psychosocial Support) intervention plan for emergencies. Teachers can use this support if they realize that a child needs help and support.
- Through the PSS process, no quality data is recorded, unless it is indicated otherwise by the PSS professional in charge, when it is absolutely necessary in regard to the wellbeing of the student/beneficiary. And then again, the process of the PSS documents will not be made known, unless there is a consent by the parents.

5. Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures

Violation of this PSEA will not be tolerated and may, in accordance with relevant legislation, lead to internal disciplinary actions, dismissal or even criminal prosecution.

The head of the organisational unit or mission, as appropriate, shall be responsible for creating and maintaining an environment that prevents fraud and corruption, sexual exploitation and abuse, harassment, and abuse of power. S/he shall be responsible for taking appropriate action in cases where there is reason to believe this PSEA has been violated.



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PSEA Policy

All staff are obliged to report to managers or to HO concerns or suspicions regarding criminal or ethical activities that are in conflict with this PSEA and which may compromise ELIX.

Each member of the ELIX has a responsibility to handle and respond to any allegations of misconduct they receive from their stakeholders about their employees in line with their organisational policies and related disciplinary measures. ELIX has the responsibility to develop and maintain proper systems for investigating, recording, and dealing with misconduct. Breaches of the PSEA should be reported immediately to senior management and in line with ELIX complaints handling procedures.

Those who wish to lodge a complaint about an alleged breach of the PSEA by a member of Staff should lodge their complaint to his/her line manager or designated complaints focal point as soon as possible after s/he becomes aware of the concern.

Any Staff person purposely making false accusations on any action by another Staff which is breach of the PSEA will be subject to disciplinary action at the discretion of the employer.

The PSEA reporting, and disciplinary procedure will be made available to all ELIX staff members as a process tool in case any PSEA violations are observed, and this is also available on every workspace.

6. Personal Declaration - Understanding the PSEA

I confirm that I have read, understood, and shall abide by the PSEA principles for the entire period I am working or associated with, and or represent, ELIX. I understand that violation of any of the above PSEA can, depending on the degree of severity, result in immediate disciplinary action which can include dismissal.

I will raise through appropriate channels any matter which appears to break the standards contained within this PSEA document.

Place and date:/...../20.....

Signature:

Print Name: