

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

(w.e.f. 01/04/2022)



ASSOCIATION FOR DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE (ADI)

GA-94, GA Colony, Bharatpur, Bhubaneswar, Pin - 751029

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1. Preamble

Association for Development Initiative (ADI) believes that every individual has the right to a safe and dignified workplace, free from any form of sexual harassment or intimidation. Recognising sexual harassment as a serious violation of human rights and a barrier to occupational equality, this policy is framed to create and maintain an environment where employees can work without fear of prejudice, gender bias, or unwelcome behaviour. ADI adopts a zero-tolerance approach towards sexual harassment and commits to preventing, prohibiting, and redressing such incidents in line with the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 and applies to all employees, interns, volunteers, consultants, and visitors associated with ADI.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Prevent any form of sexual harassment at the workplace.
- Define mechanisms for complaints, inquiry, and redressal.
- Promote a culture of dignity, equality, and mutual respect.

3. Policy Guidelines

3.1 Definition of Sexual Harassment

(As per Vishakha Guidelines & Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2013)

Sexual harassment includes any unwelcome act or behaviour of a sexual nature, whether directly or by implication, such as:

- Physical contact and advances
- Demand or request for sexual favours
- Making sexually coloured remarks
- Showing pornography
- Any other unwelcome physical, verbal, or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature

It also includes any such behaviour that creates an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or offensive work environment, or interferes with an individual's dignity and right to work with equality.

3.2 Scope

This policy applies to all employees, including permanent, contractual, temporary, part-time staff, interns, volunteers, consultants, and members of the Executive Council of ADI. It covers all workplaces — head office, project offices, field locations, partner sites, and any place

visited during the course of employment such as meetings, trainings, travel, and social events related to work. It also applies to any incident of sexual harassment involving third parties or stakeholders in connection with ADI's work activities.

3.3 Prevention Measures

To prevent incidents of sexual harassment at the workplace, ADI will:

- Conduct regular awareness and sensitisation programs for all employees, including gender equality and respectful workplace behaviour.
- Display the policy and complaint procedure prominently in offices and field locations.
- Ensure newly joined staff receive orientation on the policy during induction.
- Encourage a culture of mutual respect, dignity, and zero tolerance towards inappropriate conduct.
- Promote open communication, so that employees feel safe to report concerns without fear.

3.4 Complaint Mechanism

ADI shall constitute an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) to receive and redress complaints of sexual harassment in a fair, confidential, and timely manner. The ICC will include:

- A senior woman employee as the Presiding Officer
- At least two members from the organisation committed to women's issues
- One external member from an NGO or professional body familiar with sexual harassment matters

The ICC will be responsible for accepting complaints, conducting inquiries, recommending actions to management, and ensuring support to complainants. The committee will function independently and meet regularly to uphold a safe work environment.

3.5 Complaint Procedure

- Any aggrieved woman may file a written complaint of sexual harassment to the ICC within 15 days of the incident (extendable in special cases).
- The complaint must be signed and submitted in person, via post, or email.
- On receipt, the ICC will send a copy of the complaint to the respondent and initiate an inquiry within 7 days.
- The ICC will conduct a fair, confidential hearing of both parties and witnesses, completing its inquiry within 60 days.
- Based on findings, the ICC will recommend suitable action to the employer, which must be acted upon within 60 days.
- The complainant may request conciliation before inquiry, provided no monetary settlement is involved.

3.6 Consequences of Sexual Harassment

If an individual is found guilty of sexual harassment as per the ICC inquiry, **disciplinary action** will be taken, depending on the severity of the misconduct. Actions may include:

- Written warning or apology
- Withholding of promotion, salary increment, or privileges
- Transfer or suspension
- Termination of employment
- Legal action under applicable laws

Such consequences aim to create a strong deterrent and maintain a safe, respectful workplace for all. ADI will fully cooperate with legal authorities in any criminal proceedings.

3.7 Support for Victims

ADI is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment to victims of sexual harassment. Upon request, the organisation will offer:

- Confidential counselling and emotional support
- Assistance in lodging police complaints, where required
- Workplace adjustments, such as temporary transfer or leave for the complainant during inquiry
- Protection from retaliation and ensuring no adverse impact on the complainant's work or career

These measures ensure dignity, safety, and well-being of the victim throughout the redressal process.

3.8 Protection Against Retaliation

ADI strictly prohibits any form of retaliation, victimization, or adverse action against a complainant, witness, or anyone assisting in the investigation of a sexual harassment case.

No employee shall be demoted, harassed, threatened, or discriminated against for filing a complaint or participating in proceedings under this policy. Any retaliatory behaviour will be considered a serious misconduct and will attract disciplinary action by the organisation.

3.9 Confidentiality

ADI maintains strict confidentiality in all sexual harassment cases. The identity of the complainant, respondent, witnesses, and any information related to the complaint or inquiry proceedings will not be disclosed to anyone not involved in the process.

All ICC proceedings, documents, and outcomes will be kept secure and confidential, except where disclosure is legally required. Breach of confidentiality by any party shall invite disciplinary action.

3.10 Awareness & Training

ADI will conduct regular sensitisation programmes and workshops to educate all staff, volunteers, and stakeholders about the prevention of sexual harassment and the provisions of this policy.

New employees will receive orientation on workplace conduct and complaint procedures during induction. Posters, notices, and policy summaries will be displayed prominently at offices and project sites to create continuous awareness and build a culture of mutual respect and zero tolerance towards harassment.

3.11 Review and Amendment

This Sexual Harassment Policy will be periodically reviewed, or earlier if required due to changes in legislation or organisational needs. Any amendments will be recommended by the Internal Complaints Committee or Management and must be approved by the Executive Council of ADI.

Once approved, the revised policy will be circulated to all employees and implemented immediately to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness in safeguarding a respectful workplace..

