

PREVENTION OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, ABUSE & HARASSMENT (PSEAH) POLICY



Reference	LH021	Date approved	25 th July 2024
Approved by	Board of Directors	Date for review	25 th July 2026

STATEMENT OF POLICY

LiteHaus International has zero tolerance for sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH) in any form. We are committed to preventing and responding to SEAH through robust safeguarding measures, staff and partner training, and a survivor-centred approach. This commitment applies to all personnel, operations, and partnerships in Australia and overseas.

LiteHaus International will comply with the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) PSEAH Policy, the ACFID Code of Conduct, and all relevant laws in countries where we operate. We expect all individuals and partners who engage with or represent the organisation to uphold the highest standards of personal and professional conduct.

INTRODUCTION

Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH) are serious violations of human rights that undermine the fundamental principles of dignity, equality, and respect for all individuals. These behaviours are not only morally reprehensible but also erode trust, damage relationships, and jeopardise the integrity of international development work.

Due to the nature of our operations and the contexts in which we work (often with vulnerable individuals, including children, women, and marginalised communities), LiteHaus International recognises the heightened risks of SEAH occurring. We acknowledge that power imbalances between staff, volunteers, partners, and community members can increase the likelihood of abuse or exploitation, whether intentional or unintentional.

As such, LiteHaus International is committed to creating and maintaining a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all people we serve and work with. We take a proactive approach to prevent SEAH and respond to any incidents with urgency, transparency and accountability.

We are committed to:

- Working to prevent SEAH through comprehensive education, awareness, behavioural expectations, and proactive risk management;
- Taking immediate and proportionate action in response to all allegations, suspicions, or concerns, including disciplinary, legal and reporting measures;
- Supporting survivors with empathy, confidentiality, and access to appropriate, trauma-informed support services and referral pathways.

We believe that maintaining the highest standards of personal and professional conduct is essential to advancing human dignity and trust. Creating safe and respectful environments is essential for achieving sustainable development outcomes and delivering our mission with integrity.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- All LiteHaus International Board members;
- All staff, including interns and volunteers;
- Partner organisations and their representatives;
- Contractors, consultants, suppliers, and donors engaged by or with LiteHaus International.

All individuals are required to sign the Code of Conduct and comply with the expectations outlined in this PSEAH Policy.

DEFINITIONS

- **Sexual Exploitation** – Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes, including profiting monetarily, socially, or politically.
- **Sexual Abuse** – The actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.
- **Sexual Harassment** – Unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour of a sexual nature that is likely to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation.
- **SEAH** – A collective term referring to sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment.
- **Survivor** – A person who is or has been affected by sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment.
- **Complaint** – A report of behaviour that is inconsistent with LiteHaus International's policies or standards.

ACTIONS

In working towards the prevention of SEAH, LiteHaus International will:

- Embed safeguarding and PSEAH risk assessments into all program designs and partnership agreements;
- Train all staff, volunteers and partners on PSEAH at induction and annually thereafter;
- Include SEAH awareness and expectations in all partner agreements, project risk registers and monitoring plans;
- Conduct due diligence on implementing partners regarding their safeguarding and misconduct history;
- Design programs to minimise dependency and power imbalances between staff and communities;
- Ensure appropriate gender representation in leadership, program delivery and complaint handling;
- Prohibit transactional sex and sexual activity with beneficiaries;
- Require criminal background checks and referee screening for all staff and representatives;
- Implement safe recruitment practices, including behavioural-based interview questions related to safeguarding;
- Monitor personnel and partner adherence to PSEAH obligations through regular field reviews;
- Ensure all individuals understand and agree to the Code of Conduct, which prohibits SEAH behaviours.

LiteHaus International prohibits the exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour. This applies in all contexts and regardless of local cultural practices.

INCIDENT REPORTING & RESPONSE

All personnel must report any concern, suspicion, allegation, or incident of SEAH within 24 hours of becoming aware. Reports can be made in person, by phone, or by email to:

incidentreporting@litehausinternational.org

This inbox is monitored by the Chief Executive Officer and the Chair of the Policy & Risk Committee.

LiteHaus International encourages reporting in good faith and will protect individuals who report from retaliation. Anonymous reports may be accepted where appropriate.

We will respond to all allegations promptly through:

- Immediate safety and medical support for survivors;
- Internal investigation or referral to external authorities, depending on jurisdiction;
- Disciplinary actions, including dismissal or termination of contracts if breaches are confirmed.

Where required, LiteHaus International will report incidents to DFAT and other relevant bodies within the required timeframes.

LiteHaus International will prioritise the rights, needs and wishes of survivors in all responses. We commit to:

- Treating survivors with dignity and respect;
- Providing access to psychosocial, medical, and legal support services as needed;
- Ensuring confidentiality, privacy, and sensitivity throughout the investigation and resolution process;
- Engaging appropriate local services and culturally competent support when available.

CONSEQUENCES OF POLICY BREACH

Any confirmed breach of this policy may result in:

- Termination of employment or volunteer engagement;
- Termination of partnership or consultancy agreements;
- Legal action, including referral to law enforcement authorities.

LiteHaus International will also prevent future contact with beneficiaries or communities for anyone deemed to pose an unacceptable risk.

RELATED POLICIES

- LiteHaus International – Code of Conduct (Staff & Volunteers)
- LiteHaus International – Whistleblower Policy
- LiteHaus International – Child Protection Policy
- LiteHaus International – Human Resources Policy
- DFAT Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy
- ACFID Code of Conduct