Organization for Promotion of
Health & Community Development

Gender Based Violence Policy

2024

OPHCD

Organization for Promotion of Health &Community Development

Table of Contents

1. Introduction and legal status 3
1.1. Vision 4
1.2. Mission Statement 4
1. Purpose of the Policy 4
2. Scope of the Policy: 4
3. Definitions: 4
4. Guiding Principles: 5
5. Reporting Procedures: 5
6. Investigation Procedure: 5
7. Victim Support System: 6
8. Preventive Measures: 6
9. Monitoring and Evaluation: 7
10. Role and Responsibilities: 7
11. Change control history 7
12. APPROVED BY: 7



AOUNT OPHCD:

1. Introduction and legal status

Organization for Promotion of Health & Community Development (OPHCD) is a non-government, non-profit, non-political, impartial and independent organization registered with:

- the NGOs Department of the Ministry of Economy of the Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan with license No 4160,
- the Ministry of Public Health of the Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan with the registration No 762

The organization established to serve the community and advocate for better coordinating and directing the available resources and activities for provision of quality services to the communities with an equitable manner. OPHCD, as a non-governmental organization committed for a joint mission with having dedicated and expert staff in public health, Water Sanitation and Hygiene, education, community development as well as volunteers who have been working in technical and managerial positions with national and international NGOs since more than one and half decade.

The members of the Board of Directors, senior Management Team (SMT) as well as the volunteers of the organization having appropriate experience, dedication and voluntarism which is a professional contribution to the health, education and development sector for achieving of more sustainable results. The core staff of OPHCD have more than one and half decade of successful experience of being directly involved in **developing** different policies and strategies as well as **designing** and **implementation** of projects in the areas of health, WASH, education and community development sectors such as; Primary Health care (PHC), Basic Package of Health Services (BPHS), Essential Package of Health Services (EPHS), Water & Sanitation and Hygiene, Primary education and Literacy programs, youth awareness and development, Public Nutrition, emergency preparedness and response and disaster risk reduction, trainings and coordination of different humanitarian Aids. Furthermore, the SMT and core Technical, Administration and Finance staff of the organization have up to date knowledge and rich experience of Grant Management, Project Management as well as conducting professional tasks of supportive Supervision, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Researches. Likewise, developing and on-time reporting (monthly, quarterly, annual, end of project and ad-hoc reports) to the donors and stakeholders, presenting the results of the aforementioned programs at the community, organizational, national and international levels are the expertise of the organization's technical and administrative staff.

1.1. Vision

An empowered society with sustainable and self-reliance health, social and economic stability at the community level.

1.2. Mission Statement

OPHCD, as a non-governmental organization is striving for well-being of the society with promotion of health and sustainable development of the communities through advocating for better coordinating and directing the national policies and strategies as well as available resources and activities for provision of quality health, educational, social safety, human right and social welfare, economic, environmental and development services to the communities with the focus on the women and children, drugs users, IDPs and other marginalized group of the society with an equitable manner.

1. Purpose of the Policy

The Organization for Promotion of Health and Community Development (OPHCD) is committed to fostering a safe, supportive, and respectful environment for all individuals, particularly vulnerable groups such as women, children, and marginalized communities. Gender-Based Violence (GBV) violates human rights and undermines the safety, dignity, and health of individuals. OPHCD has established this GBV Policy to ensure the prevention of GBV in all its operations and to provide a clear framework for reporting, investigating, and addressing GBV cases.
The purpose of this GBV policy is to:

- Establish a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of Gender-Based Violence, including sexual violence, harassment, abuse, and exploitation.
- Ensure that all stakeholders, including staff, beneficiaries, volunteers, and partners, are aware of their rights and responsibilities regarding GBV.
- Provide clear procedures for reporting GBV incidents.
- Outline the victim support system and procedures to ensure that survivors of GBV receive appropriate care, protection, and assistance.
- Ensure that OPHCD takes all necessary actions to prevent GBV, respond effectively to cases, and promote accountability.

2. Scope of the Policy:

This policy applies to:

- All OPHCD staff, volunteers, and contractors.
- Beneficiaries and communities served by OPHCD.
- Partners and stakeholders working with OPHCD on projects and programs.
- Visitors, donors, and consultants engaged with OPHCD.

The policy addresses all forms of GBV, including but not limited to:

- Sexual exploitation and abuse.
- Sexual harassment.
- Physical, emotional, and psychological abuse.
- Domestic violence.
- Child sexual abuse and exploitation.
- Harmful traditional practices such as early and forced marriages.

3. Definitions:

For the purposes of this policy:

- Gender-Based Violence (GBV) refers to any harmful act directed at an individual based on their gender. It includes physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological abuse, and can take place in public or private spaces.

- Sexual Exploitation is any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, power, or trust for sexual purposes, including profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.
- Sexual Harassment refers to any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
- Survivor/Victim refers to an individual who has experienced or been subjected to any form of GBV.
- Perpetrator refers to a person, group, or institution that directly or indirectly inflicts, supports, or condones violence or other abuse against a person or group of persons.

4. Guiding Principles:

The implementation of this policy will be guided by the following principles:

- Confidentiality: All reports of GBV will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality, protecting the identities of survivors, witnesses, and anyone involved.
- Non-discrimination: All individuals, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status, have the right to be protected from GBV.
- Survivor-Centered Approach: The needs and wishes of survivors will be prioritized. All actions and decisions will be made with their safety, well-being, and recovery in mind.
- Zero Tolerance: OPHCD has a zero-tolerance policy toward any form of GBV. Any allegations of GBV will be thoroughly investigated, and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.
- Accountability: All OPHCD staff, volunteers, and partners are responsible for upholding this policy and ensuring that GBV is prevented and responded to in an effective manner.

5. Reporting Procedures:

5.1. Submission of Complaints and Feedback

OPHCD offers multiple channels for stakeholders to submit complaints and feedback to ensure accessibility:

- In-Person: Complainants can submit their complaints directly to OPHCD staff or at designated feedback collection points at project sites.
- Feedback Boxes: Anonymous complaints can be submitted using feedback boxes located at OPHCD offices and project locations.
- Hotline: A dedicated telephone number (0093791904424) and AWAAZ Afghanistan (OPHCD has an MoU with AWAAZ Afghanistan) is available for individuals to lodge complaints or provide feedback.
- Email*: Complaints and feedback can be sent to the designated email address (PSEAH@ophcd.org) that collects complaints of all types and is managed by the Complaints and Feedback Committee.
- Third-Party Reports: Complaints can also be lodged through community leaders, local authorities, or partner organizations acting on behalf of the complainant.

5.2. Confidentiality and Protection of Survivors

- All complaints and reports of GBV will be handled with strict confidentiality.
- Information will only be shared with individuals involved in the investigation on a need-to-know basis.
- Survivors have the right to remain anonymous if they choose, and all efforts will be made to protect their privacy and safety.

5.3. Immediate Response

- Upon receiving a GBV report, the designated focal point or manager will immediately assess the situation and take the necessary actions to ensure the survivor's safety.
- If the survivor is in immediate danger, appropriate steps will be taken to remove the survivor from the harmful environment and provide emergency medical or psychosocial support.

6. Investigation Procedure:

6.1. Assigning Investigators

- Once a report of GBV is received, an investigation team will be appointed, consisting of trained staff with no conflict of interest in the case.
- Investigators will follow a survivor-centered approach to ensure the survivor's needs and dignity are respected throughout the process.

6.2. Fact-Finding Process

- The investigation will involve gathering all relevant information, including interviews with the survivor, witnesses, and the alleged perpetrator.
- Evidence collection will be done in a manner that respects the rights of the survivor and ensures that the investigation is impartial and fair.

6.3. Timeframe

- GBV cases will be treated with urgency, and investigations will be completed within a set timeframe (typically 30 days from the date of the report).
- If the case requires more time, the survivor and all parties involved will be informed of the extension and the reasons for the delay.

6.4. Outcome and Disciplinary Action

- Based on the findings, appropriate action will be taken, which may include disciplinary measures such as termination of employment, suspension, or legal action if warranted.
- The outcome of the investigation will be communicated to the survivor, ensuring that their privacy is protected.

6.5. Appeals Process

- If any party involved in the case disagrees with the findings or the action taken, they may appeal the decision to a higher authority within OPHCD (such as the Executive Director or Board of Directors) for further review.

7. Victim Support System:

7.1. Medical and Psychological Support

- Survivors of GBV will be provided with immediate access to medical services, including treatment for physical injuries and referrals to specialized healthcare providers if necessary.
- Psychological support, including counseling and trauma care, will be available for survivors. OPHCD will partner with local mental health professionals and organizations to ensure access to these services.

7.2. Legal Assistance

- Survivors who wish to pursue legal action will be provided with legal assistance and guidance. OPHCD will coordinate with local authorities and legal aid organizations to support survivors in navigating legal procedures.
- Survivors will not be forced to engage in legal action but will be supported in making informed decisions about their options.

7.3. Safe Shelter and Protection

- In cases where the survivor's safety is at risk, OPHCD will coordinate with local authorities or NGOs to provide temporary safe shelter and protection services.
- Relocation assistance will be offered if the survivor needs to move away from the area where the violence occurred.

7.4. Empowerment and Rehabilitation

- Survivors will be offered long-term support, including livelihood assistance, skills training, and community reintegration programs to help them regain their independence and dignity.

8. Preventive Measures:

OPHCD
Organization for Promotion of Health & Community Development

8.1. Awareness and Training
- OPHCD will conduct regular awareness campaigns in communities and among beneficiaries to educate individuals about GBV, their rights, and how to report cases of violence.
- All OPHCD staff, volunteers, and partners will receive mandatory training on GBV prevention, survivor-centered approaches, and reporting mechanisms.

8.2. Safe Work Environment
- OPHCD will implement internal policies and procedures to ensure that its workplace and field operations are free from harassment, exploitation, and violence.
- Clear guidelines for staff behavior and professional conduct will be established, with a focus on preventing abuse of power and authority.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation:
9.1. Case Management
- All GBV cases will be documented and managed using a secure, confidential database to ensure proper case tracking and follow-up.
- Regular monitoring of GBV cases will be conducted to assess the effectiveness of response actions and support services.

9.2. Policy Review
- This GBV Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant and effective in addressing emerging GBV challenges.
- Feedback from survivors, staff, and partners will be incorporated into the policy's improvement and adaptation.

10. Role and Responsibilities:
10.1. OPHCD Management Team
- Ensure the implementation of the GBV Policy across all operations.
- Provide adequate resources and support for GBV prevention, response, and survivor support.

10.2. GBV Focal Points
- Serve as the first point of contact for GBV survivors and oversee the reporting and response process.
- Ensure that all staff are trained and aware of their responsibilities under the GBV Policy.

10.3. Staff, Volunteers, and Partners
- Actively contribute to the prevention of GBV by upholding the standards set

11. Change control history

Version No:	Approval date:	Approved by:	Change:
001	January, 2024	Board of Trustee General Director	

Signature..... Date.....

12. APPROVED BY:
After the review of the policy, on behalf of the OPHCD Board of Trustees, the said manual is hereby approved and ready to be implemented henceforth.

Reviewed and Approved: Board of Trustee.