



Somaliland Community Action Network (SCAN)

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SCAN Gender and Protection Policy

Purposes and Scope

The SCAN Protection Policy Including Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA), referred in this document as "Policy", flows from SCAN's desire to display God's love and compassion and its obligation to protect its beneficiaries and those within its sphere of influence from violence or coercion emanating from external sources or from its own employees and related personnel. While the primary responsibility for protection lies with the State, where the capacity and/or willingness of authorities

to fulfill their responsibilities is insufficient SCAN may take an important supportive and complementary role. Poorly planned work or neglect places vulnerable people in jeopardy, in particular women and children. Therefore, effective protection must respect and incorporate commonly agreed minimum international professional standards. In addition, SCAN has a duty to recognize the power differential which is a consequence of the position of power and influence held by SCAN employees and related personnel in relation to beneficiaries, and to rigorously counteract the inherent potential for any abuse of that trust or power.

Anyone could be in danger from violence or coercion and require protection. This Policy is inclusive of all women and men, girls and boys, regardless of gender identity, disability status, religion, ethnicity, age, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, geographic area, migratory status, forced displacement, or health status. However, the global evidence indicates that women and children are most often victimized. Therefore in the context of this Policy SCAN's focus is primarily on women and children.

The Policy serves three broad functions:

Protect Beneficiaries:

- ▶ Remind SCAN employees and related personnel of their absolute obligation to protect all people against violence and coercion, and in particular ensuring that vulnerable groups are protected;
- ▶ Provide guidance for SCAN offices world-wide for prioritizing protection activities in all activities and interactions and especially in humanitarian settings;

Address Gender-Based Violence:

- ▶ Set a benchmark for SCAN offices to incorporate the results of gender analysis and mainstream gender equality in all activities, starting with emergency responses and distributions and from there roll-out to all activities, in order to identify and mitigate imbalances in male-female relations that generate violence against and undermine the wellbeing of vulnerable segments within target populations—usually but not always or exclusively women and girls;
- ▶ Ensure that those most likely to suffer violence and abuse have key roles in decision-making that impacts their lives;

Address Beneficiary Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) by SCAN Employees or Related Personnel:

- ▶ Prevent acts of SEA and respond forcefully to such acts by delineating a clear and non-negotiable SCAN Code of Ethics which is binding on all SCAN employees and related personnel world-wide;
- ▶ Affirm SCAN's endorsement of the Statement of Commitment on Eliminating Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN and Non-UN Personnel adopted by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Working Group in July 2002 by incorporating its six core principles addressing SEA into SCAN's Code of Ethics;
- ▶ Provide guidance in hiring/contracting, orienting, and/or training SCAN employees and related personnel around the world in order to prevent SEA;
- ▶ Delineate responsibilities and procedures for SCAN employees and related personnel world-wide to report on SEA;
- ▶ Enable SCAN offices to fairly handle SEA complaints against SCAN employees and related personnel, to conduct investigations, and to provide care and treatment.

Definitions

Abuse:

Child abuse:

According to the World Health Organization Report of the Consultation on Child Abuse Prevention, 1999, "child abuse" or "maltreatment" constitutes 'all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power'.

Sexual abuse:

The actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions (IASC).

SCAN employees and related personnel:

This broad term encompasses those who are employed/engaged by SCAN and those who represent SCAN. This includes all employees of SCAN International, SCAN Regional Offices, SCAN Country Offices and SCAN projects, plus accompanying family members.

It includes all related personnel such as board members, volunteers, interns, international and local consultants, non-SCAN entity employees and individuals who have entered into partnership, sub-grant or sub-recipient agreements with SCAN, individual and corporate contractors of these entities as well as any accompanying family members. It also includes individuals formally or informally retained from the beneficiary community to conduct SCAN activities.

Child:

A child is defined as anyone under the age of 18, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Gender Based Violence (GBV):

GBV is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will, and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between males and females (IASC).

Gender equality:

Gender equality, or equality between women and men, refers to the equal enjoyment of rights, socially valued goods, opportunities, resources and rewards by females and males of all ages and regardless of sexual orientation (IASC).

Humanitarian:

The practice of promoting human welfare (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). The term is often used in emergency response, often called "humanitarian response", whether due to a natural disaster or a man-made disaster such as war or other armed conflict. SCAN is a "humanitarian organization" which seeks to save lives and alleviating suffering.

Protection:

Protection is a concept that encompasses humanitarian operations in response to complex emergencies or natural disasters aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and spirit of human rights, refugee, and

humanitarian law. Protection can involve either removing individuals or groups from a risk, threat, or situation of violence which may adversely affect their fundamental human rights and freedoms, or intervening at the source of the violence to reduce or stop it. This can be accomplished through fostering and contributing to the creation of an environment — political, social, cultural, institutional, and legal — conducive to the sustainable exercise and respect of fundamental freedoms and human rights (IASC).

PSEA:

As used in this document and elsewhere in the literature this acronym refers to protection from sexual exploitation and abuse perpetrated by humanitarian workers.

SEA:

As used in the document and elsewhere in the literature this acronym refers to sexual exploitation and abuse perpetrated by humanitarian workers.

Sexual exploitation:

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 sexual exploitation of another (IASC).

Vulnerable group:

In any emergency, there are groups of individuals more vulnerable to sexual violence than other members of the population. These are generally females who are less able to

protect themselves from harm, more dependent on others for survival, less powerful, and less visible. They include, but are not limited to, single females, female-headed households, separated/unaccompanied children, orphans, disabled and/or elderly females (from IASC Guidelines for Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings, 2005).

SCAN Guiding Principles

SCAN's Belief Statements and Operating Principles¹ form the foundation for this Policy. A central SCAN belief states:

"That all people—in particular, woman and children—have the right to protection and a life free from violence, sexual exploitation, and all other forms of abuse."

Key Operating Principles underpinning this Policy are:

"SCAN demonstrates respect for diversity, treating people with equality, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, or economic, political and religious differences."

"SCAN advocates for the basic rights of the people with whom it works, empowering them to speak for themselves."

The Policy outlined in this document is also in harmony with international principles and guidance on protection and addressing GBV including SEA, specifically:

- ▶ The four Protection Principles in the Humanitarian Charter underlying the Sphere Standards, which address how humanitarian agencies can contribute to the protection of those faced with the threat of violence or coercion;
- ▶ The UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Gender Handbook and Guidelines on Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings;
- ▶ The UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Working Group's six core principles relating to sexual abuse and exploitation².

SCAN Policy Statement

SCAN is a global humanitarian organization that seeks to display God's love and compassion. SCAN affirms its commitment to protect its beneficiaries including all women, children and vulnerable persons so that their lives are free from violence, sexual exploitation, and all other forms of abuse.

SCAN Commitments

SCAN believes that GBV, and in particular sexual violence, is a serious and life-threatening protection issue that commonly exists in humanitarian settings. Therefore, SCAN is committed to:

- ▶ Taking all reasonable steps to protect all beneficiaries including women and children from GBV, discriminatory or degrading treatment and to respect their rights;
- ▶ Taking action from the earliest stages of an intervention to prevent sexual violence and provide appropriate assistance to survivors/victims;
- ▶ Working in partnership with other partner agencies in protection and preventing GBV including SEA;
- ▶ Conducting background checks;
- ▶ Hiring employees and selecting related personnel and partners who respect this Policy;
- ▶ Ensuring employees and related personnel are trained to recognize/respond to GBV including SEA;
- ▶ Taking very seriously all suspicions and allegations of SEA and responding swiftly and appropriately;
- ▶ Instituting a mechanism for every employee and related personnel to sign the *SCAN Code of Ethics* Acknowledgement, attesting through their signature that they will abide by the standards of behavior that SCAN requires;
- ▶ Adopting a management process in order to facilitate the implementation of this Policy.

SCAN Code of Ethics

The SCAN Policy described in this document is a portrayal of God's love and compassion. It is a binding, agency-wide Policy which highlights SCAN's concern for all people. It includes an *SCAN Code of Ethics* consistent with SCAN's Belief Statements and Operating Principles.

Refer to Annex 3 for the *SCAN Code of Ethics* and Acknowledgement. The Code incorporates the Policy outlined in this document.

The Policy meets international standards on protection and addressing GBV including SEA.

SCAN International and all SCAN Regional and Country Offices shall adopt the Policy and

SCAN Code of Ethics and utilize the guidance contained in this document to incorporate the Policy into all SCAN processes and procedures.

Regional and Country Office staff are invited to engage in dialogue aimed at understanding the Policy and *SCAN Code of Ethics* in view of the cultural and programmatic context in which they operate. If there are anomalies in a Country Office which would countermand the Policy or *SCAN Code of Ethics*³, this can be addressed at a Working Group level.

The Policy and *SCAN Code of Ethics* along with the consequences for violating the SCAN Code of Ethics shall be incorporated into each SCAN office's administrative policies and procedures, for example, its Human Resources (HR) policies and procedures.

The Policy and *SCAN Code of Ethics* are to be accessible in each Country Office's predominant language(s).

All employees and related personnel shall be oriented to the Policy and *SCAN Code of Ethics* as well as to addressing protection, gender equality, GBV and SEA. The intent is to mainstream protection and to prevent GBV and SEA within SCAN's sphere of influence.

Every SCAN employee or related personnel shall sign the *SCAN Code of Ethics* Acknowledgement as a contingency of employment or association with SCAN and re-sign it annually. A witness in each SCAN office, for example, the Human Resources (HR) department, will attest through their signature. The signed documents are kept in each employee or related personnel's file.

Compliance on an ongoing basis is verified by the presence of signed *SCAN Code of Ethics* for all SCAN employees and all related personnel, reported annually by HR departments and included in the internal audit function.

This policy was approved by the SCAN International Board on December, 2010

Annex 1: SCAN Belief Statements and Operating Principles

SCAN Believes . . .

- ▶ That through humanitarian acts we make known the just, merciful, and loving character of God.
- ▶ That to work with those in need is an expression of our love for God.
- ▶ That the compassionate ministry of Jesus is its own abundant motive and reward.
- ▶ That we are an agency of change and an instrument of grace and providence.
- ▶ In expressing concern, compassion, and empathy through our work.
- ▶ That equitable partnership with those in need will result in sustainable change.
- ▶ That differences in age, gender, race, culture, and families enrich the communities in which we work and are assets to be respected and affirmed.
- ▶ In nondiscrimination and in respect for differences, accepting people as equals, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, and political or religious affiliation.
- ▶ In participatory development that utilizes both men's and women's capabilities and provides equal opportunities to individuals of differing ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds.
- ▶ That all people have the fundamental right to basic care, goods, and services.
- ▶ That all persons, especially children, have the right to a life of opportunity and the freedom to choose their own future.
- ▶ In enabling partners to create participatory and sustainable community structures for information sharing and civil engagement.
- ▶ That all resources, opportunities, and advantages are gifts which must be managed responsibly.
- ▶ That all people—in particular, woman and children—have the right to protection and a life free from violence, sexual exploitation, and all other forms of abuse.
- ▶ In demonstrating integrity and transparency in our work at every level.

Adan Abdi _____
Director of SCAN



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