

Position statement on exploitation and abuse, including zerotolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse

Introduction

Trócaire's Vision, Mission and Values state that we believe in the intrinsic dignity of every person, celebrate difference and aim to create relationships of mutual respect wherein the rights and dignity of every person are respected.

Trócaire's work is inspired and informed by Catholic Social Teaching, one of the fundamental principles of which is the dignity of each individual. The right to freedom from all forms of exploitation and abuse is implicit in this principle.

Statement

Trócaire recognises that abuse of power has led, and continues to lead, to many forms of exploitation and abuse. The nature of our work creates a power differential between those employed by or working with Trócaire and programme participants and partners. We acknowledge that the potential exists for those who work with programme participants and partners to abuse their position of power. Trócaire's commitment to safeguarding is inclusive of its staff and all those with whom it comes into contact through its work.

Sexual Exploitation and abuse

Trócaire has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual exploitation and abuse of any person, child or adult, involved with its programmes, including:

- Any sexual activity with children under the age of 18, regardless of the age of consent locally (mistaken belief of age being no defence)¹.
- Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour. This includes exchange of assistance that is due to partners and programme participants.

Any staff member or third party (volunteer, visitor, consultant and other contracted party) who becomes aware of an incident or an allegation of exploitation or abuse, of a child or an adult, has a

¹ The sole exception to this may be where a staff member is legally married to a person under the age of 18. See the Staff Guide - Policy on Child Safeguarding - International Programmes.

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mandatory duty to report this immediately. The management of a report of an incident or an allegation of exploitation or abuse will follow the lines set out in Trócaire's Child Safeguarding Policy - International Programmes and Trócaire's Child Safeguarding Policy - Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Trócaire is committed to ensuring its policies are fit for purpose and that the actions of its staff, contracted parties and other third parties including visitors and volunteers are always appropriate. We require that our partner organisations demonstrate a similar commitment.

Status and scope of this statement

This document provides an overarching statement by Trócaire of commitment to ensuring that exploitation and abuse do not occur in any way in its activities and programmes. It is intended to span all of our work internationally (taking account of our particular model of working through partner organisations) and in Ireland/Northern Ireland.

This position statement does not seek to replace existing policies, but rather to provide an umbrella under which sit more specific policies focusing on priority considerations such as Safeguarding Children, Humanitarian Protection, Gender, Dignity at Work, and the Code of Conduct for Trócaire staff and third parties.

This position statement applies to all those involved with Trócaire, including paid staff, volunteers, board members, trustees, consultants, other contractors, and visitors to our programmes, both overseas and in Ireland/Northern Ireland.

Our commitment to freedom from exploitation or abuse, including sexual exploitation or abuse, is guided by a number of key international principles and standards as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR); the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989); the UN Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979) and in the national laws of the countries in which Trócaire works. We aim also to uphold the commitments made under the Statement of Commitment on Eliminating Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN and non-UN personnel and the UN Secretary-General's Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (PSEA) (ST/SGB/2003/13)2.

Signed:

Date:

Bishop William Crean Chairman of Trócaire

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22nd Oct 2016

Éamonn Meehan

Executive Director

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