

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Title: Evidence-based advocacy under ACCESS Project

1. Background

HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation is a development organization anchored in Switzerland. Our vision is a just world in which all men and women determine the course of their lives in dignity and security, sustainably using environmental resources. Helvetas's vision in three words: "life in dignity". The promotion of good governance gender equality and social equity is an integral part of the overall organizational policy of Helvetas Bangladesh, through which we seek to ensure that our organizational culture and practice reflect our commitment to social change. It supports disadvantaged people and communities in developing countries to determine the course of their own lives and provide help for them to help themselves.

HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation is active in 30 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Eastern Europe. In Bangladesh, it started work in 1997 and in 2000 registered with NGOAB. The organization implemented a variety of projects with a focus on livelihoods/value chains, enterprise development, migration, skills development, local governance, disaster reduction, and climate change. Helvetas works in three broad working areas (domains): 1) Ensuring Basic Rights: Water, Food, and Climate (WFC); 2) Strengthening Good Governance: Voice, Inclusion, and Cohesion (VIC); 3) Creating New Perspectives: Skills, Jobs, and Income (SJI). In Bangladesh, Helvetas is active in 28 districts to promote sustainable and inclusive development, resilience to climate change, safe and informed migration, and good governance. Since 2017 Helvetas has been working in humanitarian response, especially for the Rohingya refugees and host communities. Helvetas works in partnership with civil society organizations, government actors, and the private sector to reinforce their autonomy and strengthen local ownership of social and economic development.

Under the Water, Food, and Climate (WFC) domain, Helvetas Bangladesh focuses on Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management, Climate Justice and Governance, and Inclusive Water Access. It has successfully implemented various projects including the Panii Jibon (Water is Life) project in the Southwest part of Bangladesh. Based on lessons learnt from Panii Jibon (Water is Life) (2015-2023) and Recovery in Dignity projects implemented respectively in southwest and northwest part of Bangladesh, the "Actions to Climate Change Ensuring Sustainable Solutions (ACCESS)" project has been designed with the aim to continue strengthening the resilience of climate-vulnerable communities in Bangladesh, particularly marginalized groups facing increasing risks from climate-induced disasters, water scarcity, and governance challenges. It is being funded by the Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation and Embassy of Switzerland.

1.1 Project overview

The ACCESS project is one of the 12 projects under the Climate Action at Local Level (CALL) programme, a consortium of Swiss INGOs and local partners, supported by the Embassy of Switzerland, promoting community-driven, inclusive, and locally led climate action. The project works in three main fields: 1) Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management, 2) Climate Justice and Governance, and 3) Inclusive Water Access.

Under “Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management,” the project works through three entry points: Resilient Livelihoods, Climate- Induced Migration, and Disaster Risk Management. For “Climate Justice and Governance”, the project works through the entry points: loss and damage, climate finance, and climate governance. Under "Inclusive Water Access", the project works on access to inclusive WASH and water resource management. The ultimate goal of the project is that ‘climate-vulnerable communities in selected hotspots in Bangladesh are advancing with increased resilience and reduced risk’.

The project operates in both the southern and northern regions of the country, covering four districts and eight upazilas in total—Bagerhat, Khulna, and Satkhira in the south, and Kurigram in the north. The project duration is four years, spanning from 2024 to 2027.

2. Objective of the assignment

The project integrates evidence-based advocacy and policy dialogue as a core implementation approach, supporting HELNETAS’ strategic objective of fostering inclusive climate action and advancing climate justice through collective action at both local and national levels.

More specifically, one of the project outcomes aims to contribute to a supportive environment for practitioners and policymakers through the generation, dissemination, and uptake of knowledge-based actions to respond effectively to the climate crisis. This includes conducting issue-based action research on emerging issues of climate migration, loss and damage, and decentralized climate financing. The project also seeks to sensitize policymakers, practitioners, and academicians by sharing lessons learned and good practices at local, national, regional, and international levels. By engaging in national and global platforms, the initiative aims to influence informed decision-making and policy formulation. Activities under this outcome include organizing dialogues, workshops, and conferences, developing policy briefs and knowledge products, and participating in relevant coalitions and networks.

Henceforth, the **main objective** of this assignment is to design and implement systematic programme-level advocacy and policy engagement initiatives, through evidence-based approaches and best practices that inform national and sectoral policies in 2026, while enhancing institutional collaboration and embedding climate action within public systems and planning mechanisms.

3. Scope of Work

The selected firm will focus on generating evidence-based advocacy outputs and facilitating policy dialogue to strengthen locally-led climate governance, climate justice, institutionalization of loss and damage and decentralized climate financing.

The assignment shall include, but not be limited to, the following tasks:

1. Intellectual and Strategic Advisory Support

- Review key strategic documents (concept notes, proposals, research findings, policy frameworks and position papers, and relevant national strategies)
- Support narrative development on different thematic areas (such as climate change adaptation, climate mobility, locally led adaptation, climate justice, loss and damage) and identify advocacy priorities/strategic entry points aligned with ACCESS project outcomes, WFC domain, CALL, and national climate and development agendas

- Develop a comprehensive advocacy and policy engagement strategy and implementation plan for 2026.
- Participate in strategic reflection meetings with the ACCESS team, CALL, and/or Embassy of Switzerland

2. Research and Evidence Support

- Conduct research/assessments and generate evidence-based advocacy products, including policy briefs, discussion papers, case studies, fact sheets, presentations, communication materials, and advocacy messages.
- Evidence synthesis for national and global positioning (including COP processes)
- Documentation of innovative approaches and learning from ACCESS's interventions

3. Policy Engagement, Institutional Dialogue, and National-Level Intellectual Capacity Building

- Facilitate constructive engagement with relevant government institutions and national policy actors in alignment with evolving national priorities
- Organize and conduct structured policy dialogues, seminars, roundtables, and/or academic-policy dialogues connecting ACCESS's evidence with relevant ministries, parliamentary bodies, academia, civil society, and private sector actors. This will include, but not be limited, to the following project activities:
 - i. integration of climate migration-sensitive approaches into local government planning and public systems
 - ii. integration/institutionalization of loss and damage assessment mechanisms at sub-national and national levels
 - iii. advocacy for policy and program support to include households affected by extreme loss and damage, including potential climate migrants, under social protection schemes to ensure their financial and livelihood security
- Support preparation of concise policy briefs and discussion notes tailored for decision-makers.
- Contribute to positioning CALL-ACCESS within relevant national consultation processes and policy forums.
- Ensure HELVETAS's engagement with relevant international, national and sectoral platforms, coalitions, and networks to promote climate-responsive policy actions.
- Facilitate knowledge-sharing opportunities and enhance Helvetas and CALL's visibility among like-minded actors, embassies, foundations, and donors.

4. Any other strategic/policy guidance/support required

4. Deliverables

The consulting firm shall produce the following deliverables:

Deliverables	Tentative deadlines
a. Analytical review report Deliverable: Submission of 1 analytical review report with strategic recommendations and policy entry points, with thematic advocacy narratives/message packages on priority themes such as climate mobility, loss and damage, climate justice, locally led adaptation, and climate-resilient livelihoods.	Within 15 days of contract signing

b. A comprehensive advocacy and policy engagement strategy of ACCESS project for 2026 Deliverable: 1 strategy document and implementation roadmap, including stakeholder mapping, advocacy priorities, key messages, engagement pathways, timeline, and monitoring indicators.	Within 30 days
c. Evidence and Knowledge Products Develop key evidence-based products to support advocacy priorities. Deliverable: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Up to 2 assessment reports 2. Up to 2 policy briefs (based on assessment and/or project evidence) 3. Up to 1 case study/learning document 4. 3 presentation decks/knowledge products for national and/or global engagement processes 	As per agreed engagement schedule
d. Technical Support for Policy Engagement Processes Provide technical support for selected engagement opportunities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and facilitate up to 4 strategic events (national or regional) Preparation of agenda, background notes, key discussion points, and documentation (no logistics or management support is needed) • Government and stakeholder engagement support: Engagement with at least 3 relevant ministries (MoEFCC, MoDMR, MoSW/MoP) and facilitate the process to ensure that a formal MoU between Helvetas and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) • Technical and coordination support provided for participation in at least 2 national/international policy forums, coalitions, or sectoral platforms 	As per agreed engagement schedule
e. Meeting Participation and Strategic Advisory Inputs Participation in a maximum of 3 strategic reflection/coordination meetings with ACCESS, CALL, HELNETAS, and/or the Embassy of Switzerland, with submission of actionable recommendations where applicable.	Throughout assignment
f. Documentation of Learning and Advocacy Progress Documentation of the evidence, lessons, and advocacy outcomes throughout implementation. Deliverable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 brief progress updates 	Bi-monthly
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 final learning and advocacy report 	Within 7 days of assignment completion

* Deliverables maybe modified as per the **advocacy and policy engagement strategy and workplan** developed by the selected firm.

5. Methodology

The consulting firm is expected to propose a participatory, evidence-based, and policy-oriented methodology. The methodology should include both qualitative and quantitative approaches where appropriate.

6. Duration and Location

The duration of the assignment is expected to be completed within 30 November 2026, according to the approved work plan and timeline agreed upon with HELVETAS Bangladesh.

National-level activities (Dhaka-based policy engagement and intellectual forums)
Programme districts under CALL-ACCESS (as required for high level dissemination, research etc.)
Regional or international engagement platforms where relevant.

7. Reporting and Coordination

The selected firm will submit brief periodic progress notes outlining activities undertaken, outcomes achieved, and strategic recommendations. Coordination meetings will be held regularly to ensure alignment with evolving priorities.

8. Budget

The budget for this consultancy will be determined based on the proposal submitted. Consultants/consulting firms are requested to provide a detailed budget breakdown, including professional fees, travel expenses, and any other costs.

9. Eligibility Criteria

Interested firms/organizations must meet the following eligibility requirements:

Organizational Experience

1. Minimum 7-10 years of demonstrated experience in policy advocacy, climate governance, climate change adaptation, loss and damage, climate migration, and climate finance.
2. Proven experience in conducting policy analysis, advocacy campaigns, stakeholder engagement, and facilitating policy dialogues with government and development actors.
3. Experience working with national and local government institutions, development partners, NGOs, and civil society organizations in Bangladesh.
4. Demonstrated experience in producing high-quality policy briefs, advocacy materials, research reports, and knowledge products.
5. Prior experience working in climate-vulnerable regions, especially coastal and northern Bangladesh, will be considered an advantage.

Technical Capacity

6. Extensive demonstrated expertise in:
 - Climate change adaptation and resilience
 - Climate-induced migration
 - Climate governance and climate justice
 - Loss and Damage
 - Decentralized climate finance
 - Disaster risk management

- Inclusive WASH and water governance
 - Local government systems and public planning processes
7. Proven Capacity to conduct high level consultations, multi-level stakeholder engagement, and evidence documentation.
 8. Strong organizing and facilitation and report generation

Team Composition

9. The proposed team should include qualified professionals with expertise in:
 - Climate policy and governance
 - Advocacy and communications
 - Migration and social protection
 - Disaster risk management
 - Research and policy analysis
 - Community engagement and facilitation
10. Team members should possess relevant academic qualifications in environmental science, climate studies, public policy, development studies, social sciences, water resources, disaster management, or related disciplines.

Administrative Requirements

11. Valid and updated trade license, TIN and updated PSR, BIN/VAT registration, and other applicable legal documents.
12. Submission of organizational profile, technical proposal, financial proposal, and references for similar assignments completed in the last five years.
13. Firms must not be blacklisted by any government or development organization.
14. Safeguarding clearance

10. Contact Information

For further information or to submit proposals, please contact:

Proposals should be sent to procurement.bgd@helvetas.org with the subject line “**Evidence-based advocacy under ACCESS Project**” by 9th June, 2026.

11. Evaluation Criteria

The assessment of the quotations will start with an assessment of the administrative criteria. That means that if these criteria aren't met in your quotation, this quotation will be put aside, and the award criteria of this quotation will not be assessed.

The quotations that meet the administrative criteria will be assessed against the award criteria. The award criteria are assessed according to the following distribution of points.

Evaluation Criteria	Description	Weight (%)
Technical Proposal		
Criteria 01: Understanding of the assignment, objectives, and context		10%

Criteria 02: Proposed methodology and implementation approach; Work plan, timeline, and quality assurance mechanism	15%
Criteria 03: Relevant organizational experience in climate advocacy, governance, migration, DRM, climate finance, WASH, and policy engagement	15%
Criteria 04: Experience in conducting policy dialogue, stakeholder engagement, and evidence-based advocacy	15%
Criteria 05: Qualifications and competency of proposed team members	15%
Criteria 06: Presentation (only from top ranking bidders)	10%
Financial Proposal	
Criteria 07: Financial proposal	Assessment of the financial proposal, focusing on the cost-effectiveness and realism of the budget plan in relation to the services proposed. 20%

12. Mode of payment

- The payment for the assignment will be deliverable-based according to section 04 of this ToR.
- The payment would be made through Bank transfer or account payee cheque by the consultant's name.
- VAT and TAX will be deducted from the source during payment as per government rules.

13. Other Terms and Conditions

The following terms and conditions apply to the present procurement:

- HELNETAS Swiss Intercooperation reserves the right to accept or reject any applications without giving any verbal and/or written rationale.
- All reports, and documents prepared in relation to the assignment will be treated as HELNETAS Swiss Intercooperation Bangladesh property.
- The reports/documents, or any part, therefore, cannot be sold, used, and reproduced in any manner without prior written approval of HELNETAS Swiss Intercooperation Bangladesh.
- The selected consultant shall implement the work in close coordination with the focal person of HELNETAS Swiss Intercooperation. The consultant shall inform the focal person on the schedule and programme of the assignment and shall only perform the assigned tasks upon approval of the focal person.
- HELNETAS Swiss Intercooperation Bangladesh or its representatives reserve the right to monitor the quality and progress of the work during the assignment.
- The consultant shall be paid upon successful completion of the assignment, or after successful completion of individual tasks, if so, agreed in the agreement.

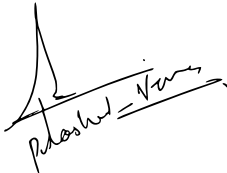
14. Submission Requirements

Interested consultants/consulting firms should submit the following:

- **Deadline for submission:** 9th June 2026

- **A technical proposal:** not more than 5 pages, with the following sections:
 - a. Presentation and relevant experience of the consultant/consulting firm
 - b. Understanding of the assignment, objectives, and context
 - c. Proposed approach and timeframe; work plan, timeline, and quality assurance mechanism
 - d. References of similar assignments (including contracting body, scope, budget, duration, contact).
 - e. Share relevant sample work as an attachment (not included in the main body)
- **A financial proposal:** 2 page maximum. The budget shall be provided in Bangladeshi Taka, developed as fixed amount budget per deliverable (i.e. fixed cost per deliverable). The budget shall be divided per the deliverable, and show the total amount, plus taxes. The consultant/firm shall indicate modalities of payment.
- **Required documentation:** detailed CV of the (lead) consultant, Company profile (if applicable as annex), Copy of Tax Identification Number (TIN) / Business Identification Number (BIN) and updated PSR/acknowledgement slip of the recent financial year, copy of VAT Registration Certificate (as annex), copy of updated Trade License Certificate (if available).

Approved By:



Name: Prashant Verma

Designation: Country Director

Date: 24/05/2026

Prepared By:



Name: Mohammad Mahmudul Hasan

Designation: Head of Programme - WFC

Date: 24/05/2026

Annex 1

CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Introduction

This Code of Conduct defines basic ethical principles, attitudes and behaviour which are binding for all employees of HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation, hereinafter named HELVETAS. It is based on the Mission Statement, the Human Resource policy and our Personnel Regulations. It thereby reflects foundational values and principles of our organisation, to be applied irrespective of cultural contexts. The Code of Conduct expresses the commitment of each collaborator to adhere to and to promote high ethical standards in our work and as part of our working culture. It constitutes a compulsory annex to the employment contract.

The individual and collective conduct of employees is of specific relevance to HELVETAS. First, the intercultural context in which collaborators of HELVETAS operate makes their conduct particularly exposed and sensitive. Unethical conduct of a collaborator can, beyond its direct consequences, have far reaching negative impacts on the effectiveness of our work and on our reputation. Second, as a development organisation receiving donations from thousands of individual and institutional donors, our organisation and its employees are accountable to these donors and subject to a high degree of scrutiny by the public and the media.

This Code of Conduct is binding for all employees worldwide in any contractual relationship with HELVETAS (including interns & volunteers, Board of Directors and its Advisory Panel as well as consultants) at all times during their assignment with HELVETAS. It is expected that principles of this Code of Conduct are also respected outside the workplace and working time. Furthermore, all partners HELVETAS collaborates with must commit to follow the key principles of this Code of Conduct.

2. Loyalty, confidentiality and civic duties

My actions are consistent with the goals, the values and principles of HELVETAS as expressed in its mission statement and strategy; I have received a copy of both documents and I am aware of their content.

Particularly, I commit to

- contributing positively to the implementation of the policies and strategies of HELVETAS;
- reflecting regularly upon my actions and behaviour, those of my colleagues and those of my environment;
- handling all information received through my employment with the necessary discretion; never using it to the detriment of HELVETAS including after termination of my contract;
- abiding by the national laws, as a citizen or resident of a specific country or as a short-term visitor.

3. Commitment and respect towards organizational culture and integrity

I am aware of my contractual obligations with HELVETAS and strive to fulfil them to the best of my ability, knowledge and capacity.

In particular, I commit to

- contributing actively with my work and through my behaviour to the strengthening and to the public trust of our organisation;
- contributing to our objectives not only as an individual professional, but as a member of the team(s) to which I belong;
- using my competences and capacities to support my colleagues;
- making use of the means and assets of HELVETAS and its partners effectively and efficiently, according to legal stipulations, internal regulations, contractual agreements and in conformity with project goals;
- treating the material entrusted to me with diligence and due care, using it and the official logo only for professional purposes;
- actively supporting knowledge sharing within our organisation and with our partners.

4. Culturally sensitive behaviour

I am aware that even as a private person I am subject to public interest and that I have to consider this in my behaviour and in my statements.

In particular, I commit to

- respecting local norms and conventions in contacts with authorities, partners and local people as long as they don't contravene HELVETAS policy;
- taking into account in my appearance, my manner of dress, my behaviour and my style of communication the customs and culture of the country and the function that I perform;
- avoiding indecent or offensive behaviour, insulting or accusing statements, or spreading rumours;
- avoiding giving information to the media, policy makers and donors or the public, without an explicit assignment to do so.

5. Highest standards in inter-personal relations and professional conduct

My relations with all persons irrespective of their sex, age, origin, cultural background, religion, social position, physical ability or sexual orientation are characterized by respect, fairness and equity. I am aware that as an employee of HELVETAS I have a privileged and often powerful status vis-à-vis partners and beneficiaries.

In particular, I commit to

- behave and represent the organization at all times in such a way that the reputation of HELVETAS is not damaged;
- never request any service or favour from primary stakeholders, beneficiaries or other persons of concern in return for support or protection. I will never engage in any exploitative relationships – sexual, emotional, financial or employment-related – with primary stakeholders, beneficiaries or other persons of concern;
- using my competences in the interest of the people for and with whom we work;
- rejecting any form of disrespectful social interaction and abstaining from anything that could be interpreted as degrading or putting others down;
- refraining from abusing my hierarchical, material, or social position in any way;

- protect the rights and integrity of children and youth and refrain from all unacceptable behaviour towards them;
- refraining from actions which may place me and/or others in a dangerous situation, as well as from those which may endanger our activities as a whole;
- respecting the physical and mental health of my colleagues;
- respecting the private sphere of my colleagues;
- providing explicit reference to the sources of my information/experiences, in any public communication;
- if in a decision-making position, applying decisions in a responsible, transparent, and unprejudiced manner that is not self-seeking, but in keeping with the mission of HELVETAS.

6. Mobbing and Sexual Harassment

I abstain from mobbing¹, sexual or sexist harassment² of colleagues, partners or beneficiaries.

In particular, I commit to

- refraining from any form of sexual or other type of exploitation, and striving to counter such behaviour in a decisive manner, in particular in situations involving children, young or disabled people;
- refraining from degrading or exploitative behaviour such as exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex or sexual favours, or other forms of humiliation;
- countering observed and confirmed mobbing, sexual or sexist harassment of colleagues by other employees, taking appropriate action and/or informing my supervisors immediately on becoming aware of it;
- informing a person designated by the organisation for this purpose should I feel uncomfortable to disclose suffered or observed infringements to my supervisor.

7. Conflicts of interest

I am aware that professional interests can conflict with personal interests.

In particular, I commit to

- striving to make my own interests transparent and to avoid any behaviour which could be perceived as biased towards my own interests;
- not using my position to obtain personal benefit or to provide advantage to third parties;
- in the case of professional interests conflicting, or being potentially perceived to conflict, with personal interests, to step back and to pass the decision to the next higher level in the organisation: this applies in particular to relationships with relatives and friends and refers to matters such as recruitment, consultancy and procurement of contracts, purchase and lease agreements (also for personal purposes), or others;
- as a full time employee, not engaging in paid professional activity outside my contract with HELVETAS, unless it has been specifically permitted.

¹ **Mobbing** means to pick on, pester or exclude a person or a group systematically at work in verbal or non-verbal attacks which affect the physical or mental health as well as the self-esteem of the person(s) concerned

² **Sexual or sexist harassment** is an action with sexual reference or undertones unwelcome to the person addressed. Sexual or sexist harassment can be expressed in the following ways: suggestive remarks; remarks about physical advantages or weaknesses or about sexual orientation; sexist talk and jokes in any form of verbal, written or non-verbal communication; sharing suggestive material over email or social media; ambiguous invitations; making bodily advances; making advances together with promises or threats of advantages or disadvantages at work.

8. Fraud and Corruption

I am honest in all my professional activities. I avoid and counter any kind of corruption or fraud. I abstain from abusing for personal gains or for third parties financial, material and intellectual assets to which I have access as an employee of HELVETAS.

In particular, I commit to

- not compromising my integrity, freedom of action and my impartial judgement through accepting or providing gifts or other advantages (like money, loans, invitations, rewards, reduced prices or fares etc.) from or to collaborators, officials, partner organisations, beneficiaries;
- bringing to the attention of my supervisor if I am approached with demands or promises by collaborators, partners organization, consultants or officials,
- informing my supervisor in case of acceptance of a present, and using it for business or humanitarian purposes or sharing it with other employees;
- If demands, gifts or advantages have to be declined, informing the person making the advances of the standards and practices applied in HELVETAS;

9. Final remarks

The breach of this Code of Conduct, in its letter or its spirit, leads to disciplinary actions as specified in the HELVETAS *Guidelines on Dealing with Mobbing, Sexual Harassment, Child Abuse & Abuse of Authority*, and HELVETAS *Guidelines on Dealing with Corruption, Fraud and Conflict of Interest*, including warnings, dismissal with contractual notice and in severe cases dismissal without notice and withholding of terminal benefits. Additionally, HELVETAS may take further legal action according to the respective national law.

HELVETAS endeavors to ensure that employees can report suspicions without fear of reprisal and that individuals who express a suspicion are adequately protected (cf. Whistleblower Policy).

The responsibility to follow this Code of Conduct rests with each employee. All supervisors are responsible for promoting and enforcing it.

The Code of Conduct is issued in German, French, English and Spanish. It is also made available in our partner country programs, in the national language. In case of any doubts, the English version prevails.

I hereby declare to acknowledge and abide to the:

- HELVETAS *Regulations on Child Protection*
- HELVETAS *Regulations on Mobbing, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority*
- HELVETAS *Regulations on Corruption, Fraud and Conflicts of Interest.*

Irrespective of employee signature, the Code of Conduct is binding.

Read and agreed:

.....

Name of the Employee

.....

Place and date






.....

Signature

Owner (Function & Name):	Kathrin Indermaur, Co-Head Personnel Services
Version (First/Latest):	17.10.2018/19.05.2022
Original Path:	O:\FS\Teams\PES\Public\Regulation Sexual Harassment and Mobbing\Final CoC Regulations\English

Reporting Channel of the Complaint Report and Feedback Mechanism

To ensure respectful working environment while upholding HELNETAS values, principles, Bangladesh country programme established the Complaint Report and Feedback Mechanism (CRFM). HELNETAS Bangladesh highly encouraged to initiate preventive measurement and raise concerns, any forms of misconduct, unethical practices through the established reporting channel of HELNETAS Bangladesh CRFM –

	<p>Speak to a 'Person of trust'</p> <p>Share the concerns with a person you trust to seek initial advice. This can be a peer colleague, a supervisor, or a Case Management Unit member</p>
	<p>Report by phone, SMS, or WhatsApp</p> <p>Report a concern using a secure and dedicated 'CRFM' hotline number: 0170 644 0263 (during working hours).</p> <p>The same number can be used for SMS or WhatsApp to raise any concern. The CMU will reach back for detail record of the concern.</p> <p>If you feel uncomfortable, you may reach out directly to the designated woman CRFM focal person.</p>
	<p>Send an e-mail</p> <p>There is a secured and dedicated email inbox to receive and deal the concerns with strict confidentiality. Write a simple email or send the report on the complaint form.</p> <p>Please report any concern to feedback.bgd@helvetas.org</p>
	<p>Send a letter</p> <p>Send a complaint by courier/post to following address:</p> <p>CMU, HELNETAS Bangladesh House 30 CWN (A) (10th floor), Road 42/43, Gulshan 2, Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh.</p>
	<p>Use a complaint box</p> <p>Depending on the office or project, there might be complaint boxes available, in office premises or community. It should be noted that complaints deposited in complaint boxes may be seen by persons that are not members of the Case Management Unit.</p>

HELNETAS Bangladesh is committed to keep the identity of the whistle-blower / plaintiff confidential and take appropriate measures to protect all rights of concerned parties.

Authorized by – HELNETAS Bangladesh CRFM Committee.
 January 2025.



Annex 3

GUIDELINES ON DEALING WITH MOBBING, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, CHILD ABUSE & ABUSE OF AUTHORITY

1. Purpose and Principles

These guidelines provide instruction on reporting and addressing alleged incidents of mobbing, sexual harassment, child abuse and abuse of authority. The guidelines provide practical guidance on the implementation of our regulations and outline practical steps to be taken recognising the diverse contexts and modalities we work in. Reporting mechanisms and internal as external confidants are described in order to provide enough guidance for HELVETAS employees to be able to make informed and objective decisions to both preventing and addressing mobbing, sexual harassment, child abuse and abuse of authority in their working environment and seek additional support as relevant and required.

2. How to report misconduct

Misconduct is defined as the failure by an employee or another person involved in our activities to abide by the “Regulations on Mobbing, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority” as well as the “Child Protection Regulations”. Anyone having concerns or suspicions about possible misconduct by a HELVETAS employee (or anyone with a contractual relationship to HELVETAS), regardless of their position, should report such concerns directly to the supervisor or a person of trust. This person can be internal to the organisation (national Human Resource responsible or Human Resource Team Leader at Head Office, Personnel Committee (PEKO) where existing or another person of trust dedicated by the organisation (see National Personnel Regulations) and/or external (e.g. BeTrieb in Switzerland offers confidential advice in English and German).

Internal persons of trust

Team Leader Human Resources:

- anti-harassment@helvetas.org, +41 44 368 67 31, +41 44 368 65 05

This email address is managed by the Team Leader Human Resources at Head Office and confidentiality is maintained. If you report an incident through this email, the Team Leader Human Resources will inform a Management member confidentially and will contact you per email for any further questions and next steps. It is possible to report an incident anonymously.

Swiss PEKO (for Head Office employees):

- PeKo@helvetas.org

International PEKO (for International employees):

- Int.peko@helvetas.org

External persons of trust

BeTrieB (advise in German and English):

- konfliktberatung@betrieb.ch, +41 44 214 67 85

Safecall (advise in over 170 languages)

- www.safecall.co.uk/report, +44 800 915 15 71

Experience shows that harassment and other forms of misconduct is more likely to stop if the persons concerned have the courage to react strongly. When an incident occurs, we recommend to seek advice from a person of trust as a first step. After consulting a person of trust the employee concerned has to decide whether a formal complaint is going to be filed. A formal complaint can be lodged independent of having consulted a person of trust or not.

Supervisors and the Human Resource Team have a duty of care to investigate and take action where required.

3. What to report?

In case a formal complaint will be filed it is important to have the case clearly documented.

What happened?

Describe in detail based on facts what you know about the incident(s).

Who?

Who committed the alleged misconduct? Do you know if anyone else was directly involved and witnessed the incident? Provide full names, functions and organisation, if known.

When and where?

When and where did the incident(s) occur? How often did it happen? Indicate dates and times, if available.

4. What happens when HELKETAS receives a complaint

Formal complaints are to be submitted to the Management (a Management Board member at Head office or Country Director). If the Management Board member or the Country Director is the suspected person, the complaint should be submitted to the Team Leader Human Resources at Head Office. The Management will decide, depending on the severity of the incident, about establishing a grievance committee with internal and/or external specialists or dealing with the incident within the line management in collaboration with the HR Team Leader.

The Team Leader Human Resources and the responsible Department Head will always be informed and provide advice on how to proceed.

The grievance committee, if needed, leads the investigation and adheres to the following principles (if the incident is dealt within the line management the same principles apply):

- To work independently and impartially
- To apply the presumption of innocence to suspected persons
- To be bound to confidentiality and only exchange information which, in case of an investigation, necessarily has to be disclosed to the persons involved

The Grievance Committee informs the accused person, taking, if required, measures to protect the plaintiff and possibly other people involved. The member of the Management Board resp. Country Director informs the direct supervisors of the accused and the plaintiff. The Grievance Committee and all informed persons as well as those affected are obliged to maintain confidentiality vis-à-vis third parties.

The investigation of the Grievance Committee can include, but is not restricted to the following measures and is depending from national regulations and laws:

- Reviewing and analysing evidence
- Reviewing certain information of personnel files in consultation with HR
- Interviewing the plaintiff
- Interviewing the alleged perpetrator
- Interviewing partners or other, in case plaintiff or alleged perpetrator are non-HELVETAS employees
- Interviewing witnesses
- Seeking legal counsel
- Recommend interim supportive measures to the plaintiff
- Recommend interim suspension or relocation of the plaintiff and/or alleged perpetrator during the time of investigation

Depending on the severity and/or complexity of the reported incident, the duration of the investigation can vary and is depending on national regulations and laws. The investigation is conducted carefully and as fast as possible.

All associated costs need to be approved by the Management Board member, resp. Country Director.

To the extent possible, safety, impartiality, and confidentiality during the course of the investigation is ensured.

After completion of the investigation the Grievance Committee then informs the Management Board member or the Country Director of its findings and recommendations. The Management Board member or the Country Director reserves the right to implement further measures and sanctions in collaboration with the Team Leader Human Resources, and make the final decision.

5. What are the rights of those involved?

Both the accused and the plaintiff have the right to be supported and accompanied by a person of their choice if a formal complaint has been lodged. Any costs incurred by the accompanying person are to be borne by the plaintiff and/or accused, unless otherwise pre-agreed in writing with the Management Board member or resp. Country Director.

Neither party may be terminated while the investigation is being carried out unless the severity of the incident allows no other option. Nor may any professional disadvantages occur because of the proceedings. The right is reserved to implement sanctions arising from the proceedings as well as justified suspension for the purposes of ensuring safety, impartiality, and confidentiality during the course of the investigation.

6. What are possible sanctions

In case the Grievance Committee concludes that the accused is guilty of mobbing, sexual harassment, abuse of authority or child abuse, pending its severity of behaviour and irrespective of whether or not a formal complaint has been lodged, different types of sanctions are applicable, depending on national regulations and laws:

- apologies to the concerned person(s)
- written rebuke
- warning
- warning with threat of dismissal
- one-sided disposed reassignment
- contractual notice of dismissal
- dismissal without notice

The right to civil or criminal prosecution is reserved. The same sanctions apply to anyone knowingly accusing someone falsely of mobbing or sexual harassment.

In case the misconduct was committed by a partner, consultant, or service provider, HELKETAS aims to negotiate a similar degree of sanction to its own employees as per above or may terminate the consultancy or service contract in case of repeated offence.

The affected victims will receive adequate emotional support from an internal or external specialist if required.

7. Final remarks

These guidelines are complementary to the "Regulations on Mobbing, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority" as well as the "Child Protection Regulations". For questions or uncertainties related to the application of the regulations or guidelines, please contact your supervisor or the Team Leader Human Resources at Head Office.

Annex 4

REGULATIONS ON RESPONSE TO SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, ABUSE AND HARASSMENT (SEAH), MOBBING & ABUSE OF AUTHORITY

1. Purpose and Principles

These regulations reflect the principles and responsibility of HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation¹ to prevent and address sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (PSEAH), mobbing, and abuse of authority.

All forms of SEAH, mobbing and abuse of authority are explicitly forbidden. Such behaviour or conduct manifest a considerable encroachment on the basic principles of equality and fundamental rights of those affected and is contrary to the principles and values of HELVETAS as stated in the Human Resource Policy, Code of Conduct, Gender and Social Equity Diamonds and Policy and our mission statement.

HELVETAS promotes the respect and protection of all its employees, partners and primary stakeholders against all forms of emotional, physical and sexual misconduct and/or aggression. Everyone has a right to their physical and mental integrity, while those in breach will be held accountable. Employees of HELVETAS or any other person involved in our activities responsible for such behaviour or conduct shall be subject to sanctions and/or disciplinary measures.

HELVETAS is committed to the following principles:

Zero tolerance

HELVETAS prohibits all forms of SEAH, mobbing and abuse of authority.

Protection

All employees of HELVETAS or any other person involved in our activities have a right to work in a harassment-free and respectful environment.

Prevention

HELVETAS consciously promotes a positive work environment to prevent inappropriate behavior in the workplace.

Reporting

HELVETAS establishes appropriate reporting mechanisms to respond to suspicions and formal allegations of SEAH, mobbing and/or abuse of authority and to protect whistleblowers, preventing retaliation related to the reporting of allegations.

¹ In the following HELVETAS

Rigorous sanction

HELNETAS is committed to address inappropriate behavior by or towards its employees, by or towards partners and/or towards primary stakeholders. If a case of SEAH, mobbing and/or abuse of authority is proven, involved employees or any other person contracted by HELNETAS are to be sanctioned.

Neutrality

Measures to deal with inappropriate behavior will be based on principles of fairness and impartiality.

Confidentiality

Whistleblowers who express a suspicion of inappropriate behavior are protected. Information concerning a suspicion is confidential. The presumption of innocence applies to suspicious persons.

Adequate information

All persons directly involved are informed openly about cases of SEAH, mobbing, and/or abuse of authority while protecting the whistleblowers.

2. Definitions

2.1. Mobbing

Mobbing means to pick on, pester and exclude a person or a group systematically and to harass a person repeatedly and over a longer period of time at work. Mobbing can be expressed in verbal or non-verbal attacks which affect the physical or mental health as well as the self-esteem of the person(s) concerned.

2.2. Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is an action with sexual references unwelcome to the person addressed. It can happen between peers, between a supervisor and subordinate level, between members of the opposite or same sex, between an older and younger person among others.

Sexual harassment can be expressed in the following ways (non-exhaustive list):

- remarks about physical advantages or weaknesses or about sexual orientation
- suggestive remarks
- sexist talk and jokes, in any form of verbal, written or non-verbal communication
- sharing suggestive material over email or social media
- ambiguous invitations
- making bodily advances
- making advances together with promises or threats of advantages or disadvantages

2.3. Sexual exploitation and abuse

Helvetas and its partners must fully adhere to the IASC² six core principles as defined as follows:

- Sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian workers constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment.
- Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defense.

² The Inter-Agency Standing Committee

- Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior is prohibited. This includes exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries.
- Any sexual relationship between those providing humanitarian assistance and protection and a person benefiting from such humanitarian assistance and protection that involves improper use of rank or position is prohibited. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of humanitarian aid work.
- Where a humanitarian worker develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation by a fellow worker, whether in the same agency or not, he or she must report such concerns via established agency reporting mechanisms
- Humanitarian workers are obliged to create and maintain an environment which prevents sexual exploitation and abuse and promotes the implementation of their code of conduct. Managers at all levels have particular responsibilities to support and develop systems which maintain this environment.

HELVETAS applies these principles across all areas of its work, including both humanitarian and development contexts. Reporting and enforcement follow HELVETAS' established reporting mechanisms and align with the HELVETAS' Code of Conduct.

2.4. Abuse of authority

Abuse of authority means the improper use of a position of influence, power or authority by an individual against another colleague or group of colleagues, stakeholders or beneficiaries. This is particularly serious when an individual misuses his/her influence, power or authority to negatively influence the career or employment conditions (including - but not limited to - assignment, contract renewal, performance evaluation or promotion) of another. It can include a one-off incident or a series of incidents. Abuse of authority may also include misuse of power that creates a hostile or offensive and/or submissive work environment, which includes - but is not limited to - the use of intimidation, threats, blackmail or coercion.

2.5. Conclusion

SEAH, in addition to any and all other forms of abuse and harassment including mobbing, and abuse of authority violate universally recognized international legal norms and standards and as such are unacceptable and prohibited behavior for all HELVETAS employees. SEAH and mobbing constitute acts of serious misconduct and are therefore reasons for disciplinary measures, including dismissal and legal prosecution.

3. Prevention & Responsibility

HELVETAS as employer

HELVETAS at Head Office and in partner countries consciously promote a safe, respectful and equitable working atmosphere at all levels and across all offices, teams and programmes and all its activities.

HELVETAS carefully screens possible partners and employees in key functions as defined by the vetting concept before starting collaboration. The "Regulations on response to sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH), mobbing and abuse of authority" as well as any other policies and regulations are actively discussed with all partners.

In implementing the present regulations, HELVETAS shall act consistently and undertake the appropriate investigative and disciplinary actions required. HELVETAS ensures that persons who report alleged incidents in good faith (whistleblowers) are not put at a disadvantage. Their identity is kept anonymous as far as possible and if necessary, also after the ending of an investigation. HELVETAS ensures that in cases of alleged SEAH, mobbing and/or abuse of authority the reputation of suspects is not damaged unnecessarily. Persons who maliciously raise suspicions or damage the reputation of others are liable to face sanctions. HELVETAS ensures full adherence to its whistleblower policy at all times.

HELVETAS provides training to their employees regarding prevention of SEAH, mobbing and abuse of authority. All employees are required to participate in the training.

Supervisors

All supervisors should act as role models by upholding only the highest standards of conduct in order to achieve a harassment-free environment. All supervisors are responsible for ensuring that new collaborators are made aware of the SEAH, mobbing and abuse of authority regulations and guidelines during their introduction and/or on-boarding. They provide guidance on prevention and respond to such form of misconduct.

Supervisors commit themselves to both prevent and address SEAH, mobbing and abuse of authority within their sphere of responsibility. They follow up any signs of SEAH, mobbing and/or abuse of authority according to HELVETAS organizational principles, policies and regulations, and governing legal framework as relevant. Should an incident occur during or after work, the supervisors ensure that the incident is promptly and adequately addressed. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

Employees

HELVETAS demands that all employees value and safeguard basic principles of equality and fundamental rights. Reporting of incidents is essential to prevent the continuation of SEAH, mobbing and abuse of authority. Cases are normally detected quickest in the immediate environment where they occur. Any concerns or suspicions regarding SEAH, regardless whether or not within HELVETAS, must be reported through the established mechanisms in the guidelines.

4. Confidential advice and initial support

Collaborators subjected to or witnessing SEAH, mobbing and/or abuse of authority are encouraged to seek emotional, professional and legal support, first and foremost from a person of trust. This person can be internal to the organization (Supervisor, People & Culture Director at Head Office, HR responsible in the country or Personnel Committee (PEKO) where existing and/or external (e.g. Be-Trieb in Switzerland offers confidential advice in English and German). Supervisors and the Human Resource Team have a duty of care to take action if required.

The person of trust can provide direct or indirect assistance by means of emotional support, accompanying support, information support, redirecting to relevant services or authorities and more. The internal as well as the external confidants are bound by confidentiality. In all cases across the organization, the People & Culture Director at Head Office is to be informed.

5. Investigation and Sanctions

Employees have the right to seek informal advice or lodge a formal complaint. For feedback and complaints HELVETAS has established reporting and investigation mechanisms (see “Guidelines on reporting of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH), mobbing, child abuse and abuse of authority”). In case of a formal complaint and depending on the severity of the incident the Management (Management Board member at Head office or Country Director) can decide about building a grievance committee with internal and/or external specialists. The grievance committee leads the investigation. To the extent possible, safety, impartiality, and confidentiality during the course of the investigation is ensured.

In case of a proven incident, pending its severity, different types of sanctions are applicable; from apologies to warnings to summary dismissals.

The right to civil or criminal prosecution is reserved. The same sanctions apply to anyone knowingly accusing someone falsely of SEAH, mobbing, and/or abuse of authority.

6. Area of applicability and date of enforcement

These regulations apply to all employees worldwide in any contractual relationship with HELVETAS (including interns & volunteers, Board of Directors and its Advisory Council as well as consultants) at all times during their assignment with HELVETAS – both during and after working hours. The regulations are an integral part of the employment contract.

These regulations will be supplied to all employees and become effective from July 01, 2025.

Owner (Function & Name):	People and Culture
Version (First/Latest):	17.10.2018/16.06.2025



Annex 5

REGULATIONS ON CHILD PROTECTION

1. Purpose and Principles

HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation recognizes that especially in situations of poverty, humanitarian crisis and/or conflict, children can be extremely vulnerable and acknowledges its fundamental duty to protect them.

These regulations have been developed to ensure maximum protection of children within our activities from all forms of abuse and exploitation. It ensures that HELVETAS has procedures in place to prevent and deal with child abuse, child exploitation and breach of regulations. Additionally, HELVETAS aims at protecting HELVETAS staff from false or malicious allegations of misconduct. Furthermore, HELVETAS seeks safeguarding of HELVETAS' organisational integrity and reputation, as well as that of its partners, by introducing sound Child Protection Regulations.

In all aspects of our work, HELVETAS is committed to the key principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, specifically:

- guaranteeing, without any form of discrimination, the rights of children.
- considering the best interests of children in all actions relating to them.
- recognising the right to life, survival and development of each child.
- reflecting children's views in matters affecting them.

2. Definitions

HELVETAS defines a child as any person under the age of 18 years as laid down by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Child protection is an activity or initiative designed to protect children from any form of harm, particularly arising from child abuse or neglect.

Child abuse is the physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, child labour, military use of children, neglect of a child resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development, dignity or integrity.

- Physical abuse occurs when a person purposefully injures or threatens to injure a child or young person. This may take, among others, the form of slapping, punching, shaking, kicking, burning, shoving or grabbing. The injury may take the form of bruises, cuts, burns or fractures. It can also include tasks and errands which clearly exceed the capacity of the child to manage safely.
- Emotional abuse is a chronic attack on a child or young person's self-esteem. It can take, among others, the form of name calling, threatening, ridiculing, stalking, intimidating or isolating the child or young person.

- Sexual abuse is when a child is used by another child, adolescent or adult for his or her own sexual stimulation or gratification.
- Child labour refers to the employment of children in any work that deprives children of their childhood, interferes with their ability to attend regular school, and that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful. Legislation across the world prohibit child labour.
- Military use of children means engagement of children in or exposed to military activity, including as soldiers or human shields.

3. Prevention & Responsibility

HELVETAS upholds the rights and obligations of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and is dedicated to protect children engaged in its programmes from harm, exploitation and abuse. Accordingly, HELVETAS is committed to implement and maintain child protection measures. These include introduction of regulations to all new HELVETAS staff, interns & volunteers, partners, consultants and service providers as well as organisation of regular refreshers for staff directly working with children. Furthermore, appropriate recruiting processes are established for functions directly working with children.

Prior to commencement of activities involving children directly or indirectly, HELVETAS will analyse potential risks to children that can arise as part of the implementation of HELVETAS programmes. These activities can include training attended by children, data collections including discussions with children etc.

Where potential risks to children are identified, the project team must address them in the project risk analysis and mitigation strategy. If risks cannot be reduced to the required level and the project activities could cause harm to children, the project team must bring this issue to the country programme management who decides on further measures to be taken in order to address the risk(s). Activities with any risk to harm children must not be implemented.

4. Standards of conduct and forms of unacceptable behaviour

The following behaviour should be observed and/or avoided by all HELVETAS staff and contracted partners, consultants and/or service providers when in direct contact with children.

Standards of conduct

- Make public and raise awareness of primary stakeholder groups e.g. implementing partners, consultants, service providers and local authorities in regard to HELVETAS regulations and accountability mechanisms.
- Treat children with dignity and respect regardless of ethnicity, gender, age, language, religion, sexual orientation, education, differently abled or other characteristics.

- When working in the proximity of children be visible and, wherever possible, ensure presence of another adult.
- Comply with all relevant legislation, including labour laws in relation to child labour.
- Raise and report concerns about child protection and safety.

When collecting data from children (during assessments, monitoring and evaluation, etc.) reduce the risk of potential harm by using culturally appropriate ways of communicating, obtaining informed consent e.g. from parent(s) or guardian in case of minor, ensuring confidentiality and being gender, conflict and trauma sensitive. If distressing data has to be obtained, endeavour to facilitate sensitive methods and consider options for professional psychosocial intervention and care.

When getting and/or using children's images for visibility purposes (i.e. photographing or filming a child/children):

- Comply with the standard approach as explained in the HELNETAS communication and photos taking guidelines.
- Ensure that the products (e.g. photographs, videos) present children in a dignified and respectful manner, with children being adequately clothed and not in poses that could be misleading or seen as sexually suggestive.
- When taking an image of a particular child for a specific purpose (media, advocacy, fundraising, etc.), explain in advance how the product will be used.
- Ensure that images of children is only used for the public with explicit consent of the child and from a parent or guardian.

Forms of unacceptable behaviour (non-exhaustive list)

- Touch a child in an unwanted, inappropriate or culturally insensitive manner.
- Use language or demonstrate behaviour that is harassing, abusive, demeaning, sexually provocative or culturally insensitive towards children.
- Engage children in any form of activity that is demeaning, offensive, sexually provocative, abusive or culturally inappropriate or insensitive.
- Physically assault or punish children.
- Engage children in any form of sexual activity or acts, including paying for sexual services or acts.
- Access, produce or spread child pornography through any medium.
- Invite unaccompanied children without their and parent's or guardian's approval into solitary places, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger.
- Sleep in close proximity to unsupervised unrelated children.
- Hire children for domestic or other labour which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage and which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or which puts them at risk of injury.
- Act or facilitate interactions in gender biased or discriminatory manner.
- Exclude or favour a particular child in context of our activities without objective reason.

5. Reporting on child abuse

HELVETAS strives to create an environment in which children and persons concerned about the child's safety within HELVETAS programmes feel free to report on it. HELVETAS therefore requests all HELVETAS staff, interns & volunteers, contracted partners, consultants and service providers to report to HELVETAS any suspicion or disclosure of child abuse within HELVETAS programmes/projects.

For feedback and complaints HELVETAS has established reporting and investigating mechanisms, as described in the guidelines on mobbing, sexual harassment, child abuse and abuse of authority.

6. Area of applicability and date of enforcement

These regulations apply to all employees worldwide in any contractual relationship with HELVETAS (including interns & volunteers, Board of Directors and its Advisory Council as well as consultants) at all times during their assignment with HELVETAS – both during and after working hours. The regulations are an integral part of the employment contract.

All partners we collaborate with are made aware of our policies and regulations during partnership negotiations.

These regulations will be supplied to all employees and become effective from March 02, 2018.