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Human Rights Policy

Document History

Version	Date	Changed by	Description
0.10	01/11/2020	Shruti S	Updated as per ACFID requirements
			Next review before annual board meeting

If you require further information regarding this document please contact:

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1. Purpose

Plus Education is committed to providing an environment free of discrimination and harassment, where all individuals are treated with respect and dignity, can contribute fully, and have equal opportunities. We believe that human rights are for everyone, regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, indigeneity, disability, age, displacement, caste, gender, gender identity, sexuality, sexual orientation, poverty, class or socio-economic status.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all associates and representatives of Plus Education, including:

- Implementing partners, staff members, contractors, and consultants
- Volunteers
- Board of Directors
- Partner organisations; and
- Observers/visitors accompanying a Plus Education activity

3. Commitment to Human Rights

Plus Education conducts its operations in a manner that respects the rights and dignity of all people, complying with all applicable laws and regulations. Our policies reflect our commitment to respecting the protection of internationally recognised Human Rights.

- We do not use child or forced labour in any of our operations or facilities. We do not tolerate any form of unacceptable treatment of workers, including but not limited to the exploitation of children, physical punishment or abuse, or involuntary servitude. We fully respect all applicable laws establishing a minimum age for employment, in order to support the effective abolition of child labour worldwide.
- Diversity is embraced at Plus Education. We recognise that a diverse mix of backgrounds, skills and experiences drives new ideas, products, and services and provides us with a sustained competitive advantage.
- We believe everyone should be treated with respect regardless of their background. We are committed to the elimination of discrimination based on gender, race, class, economic status, ethnic background, sexual orientation, age, political beliefs, veteran status, marital status or any other protected class.
- We recognise that marginalization and exclusion are typically a result of intersecting drivers. We strive to accurately identify the intersecting drivers that may prevent our communities from benefiting from Plus Education programs so we can be mindful, both in our communications and in our design, of these driver (Refer Annexure 1)
- In our education work, we ensure inclusion of comprehensive, affirmative and accurate material on sexual, biological, physical and psychological diversity, and the human rights of people of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, gender expressions and sexual characteristics, in curricula, taking into consideration the evolving capacity of the child;
- We respect all human rights. Plus Education commits to conducting ongoing human rights due diligence to assess and mitigate potential human rights infringements.
- We expect those with whom we partner or do business to respect all human rights

4. Prohibited Conduct

Plus Education upholds and supports the right to equal treatment without discrimination or harassment. This Policy prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following grounds, and any combination of these grounds:

- Age
- Creed (includes religion and caste)
- Sex
- Gender Identity and Gender Expression
- Sexual Orientation
- Family status (such as a parent-child relationship)
- Marital status (including the status of being married, single, widowed, divorced, separated, or living in a conjugal relationship outside of marriage, whether in a same sex or opposite sex relationship)
- Disability (including mental, physical, developmental or learning disabilities)
- Race
- Ancestry
- Place of origin
- Ethnic origin
- Citizenship
- Colour

5. Definitions

Discrimination and harassment are defined as:

Discrimination

Refers to any form of unequal treatment, whether imposing extra burdens or denying benefits. It may be intentional or unintentional. It may involve direct actions that are discriminatory, or it may involve rules, practices or procedures that appear neutral, but have the effect of disadvantaging certain groups of people. Discrimination may take obvious forms, or it may occur in very subtle ways. In any case, even if there are many factors affecting a decision or action, if discrimination is one factor, that is a violation of this policy.

Harassment

Engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known, or ought reasonably to be known, to be unwelcome. It can involve words or actions that are known or should be known to be offensive, embarrassing, humiliating, demeaning, or unwelcome.

Reporting Harassment

Plus Education encourages the reporting of all incidents of harassment and discrimination, regardless of who the alleged offender(s) might be. Our complaints handling policy has details on how reports can be made and handled.

Reporting Workplace Harassment

All employees have a right to freedom from reprisals or threat of reprisals for refusing to accept harassment in any form, for making a formal complaint or cooperating in an investigation. Our HR policy has detailed information on the process of reporting and handling complaints.

Marginalisation & Social Exclusion

- Social exclusion is the process in which individuals are blocked from (or denied full access to) various rights, opportunities and resources that are normally available to members of a different group, and which are fundamental to social integration and observance of human rights within that particular group.
- Marginalisation is multidimensional (Refer to Annexure 1) and the causal relations among dimensions of disadvantage may run in many directions, reinforcing or cushioning the impact of one another.
- Mechanisms of social exclusion carry a cumulative disadvantage, or the accumulation of multiple dimensions of disadvantage.
- The risk of exclusion may be based upon personal characteristics that include health, disability, gender, age, place of birth, language, religion, sect, and spatial distances. Ineligibility for services due to citizenship status, gender prohibitions, and social isolation also carry risks of exclusion.

Annexure 1: Marginalisation & Social exclusion in the context of Plus Education's work

Where possible, complaints will be resolved at first contact with Plus Education.

Plus Education's work in developing countries such as India and Cambodia is primarily in Education, involving multiple stakeholders across the community. In doing this work, Plus Education recognises that in these countries, marginalisation and social exclusion are evils that exist and must be accurately identified in order for Plus Education's mission of providing equitable access to education a reality. Plus Education believes that education is a right that is universal and does not permit any form of exclusion or discrimination.

Plus Education also recognises that marginalization and exclusion are typically a result of intersecting drivers across, but not restricted to:

- Age
- Creed (includes religion and caste)
- Sex
- Gender Identity and Gender Expression
- Sexual Orientation
- Family status (such as a parent-child relationship)
- Marital status (including the status of being married, single, widowed, divorced, separated, or living in a conjugal relationship outside of marriage, whether in a same sex or opposite sex relationship)
- Disability (including mental, physical, developmental or learning disabilities)
- Race
- Ancestry
- Place of origin
- Ethnic origin
- Citizenship
- Colour
- Income level

For example, while gender is often a powerful marginalizing factor in the lives of children who are excluded from education, there are often other 'intersecting' factors that further compound their marginalisation. For instance, a child's gender, along with their disability or ethnicity, can mean that they are at least 'doubly' marginalised. The following infographic from [Thematic Review: Understanding and Addressing Educational Marginalization](#) is a helpful visualisation of these intersecting drivers of marginalisation.

