

**SOCIETY FOR AGRICULTURE HEALTH ENVIRONMENT LITERACY  
INNOVATIONS**



**SAHELI**

# **VOLUNTEERS POLICY**



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## **VOLUNTEERS POLICY**

### **Introduction**

Society for Agriculture Health Environment Literacy Innovations (SAHELI) is a women-led not-for-profit organization currently operating in Myurbhanj and Balasore districts of Odisha. Ever since its foundation in 2004, it has been working to protect the rights of women and children with special thrust on those of adolescent girls. SAHELI holds a vision of society where dignity of women belonging to all sections of population, especially those belonging to vulnerable sections, respected and women gain equal opportunities in all frontiers of life and follows the mission of empower all sections of society through appropriate institutions and processes and place such institutions in operational collaborative relations with governments and other stakeholders for integrated development with equal dignity for women as the focal point. Currently SAHELI reaches out to nearly 2500000 persons in 300 villages of 75 Gram Panchayats in 11 CD Blocks with the message of empowerment of women and adolescent girls. It has been successful in mobilizing nearly 300 community-based mechanisms and securing collaboration with local governments in materializing its mission. Activating volunteers is an essential requirement in this context.

### **Definition of Volunteer**

SAHELI defines volunteer as anyone who, without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of SAHELI. A volunteer shall be officially accepted and enrolled by SAHELI prior to performance of the task. Volunteers shall not be considered as employees of SAHELI.

### **Purpose of Volunteer Policy**

This policy has been framed to provide overall guidance and direction to staff and volunteers engaged in volunteer involvement and management efforts. This policy does not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personnel agreement. SAHELI reserves the exclusive right to change any of these policies at any time and to expect adherence to the changed policy. Changes to or exceptions from these policies may only be granted by the Governing Body of SAHELI, and those changes shall be obtained in advance and in writing. Areas not specifically covered by this policy shall be determined by the Director (Chief Executive Officer) of SAHELI and the same shall be ratified by the subsequent meeting of the Governing Body.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Volunteers represent a valuable resource for SAHELI, its staff, and its clients. They function as a section or group of persons to be active in all functions of SAHELI. Volunteers should be given in writing meaningful assignments and effective direction, and be recognized for work done. In return, volunteers should actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities, volunteer at their assigned times, and remain loyal to the mission and procedures of SAHELI.

### **Volunteer Assignments**

Volunteers should have clear, complete, and current descriptions of the duties and



responsibilities of the assignment.

### **Engaging Minors**

Persons who have not reached 18 years of age cannot be engaged as volunteers in SAHELI. They must present a written consent of a parent or guardian to SAHELI prior to volunteering. The volunteer assignment for a minor should be in a non-hazardous environment and should comply with all appropriate requirements of child labor laws.

### **Process of Engagement**

There is a well-defined process for engaging volunteers. The process starts with receiving letters of interest from the candidates. After adequate scanning of the expression of interest, their suitability will be ascertained by physical interviews by the senior management team of SAHELI. The interviews should determine the qualifications of the volunteer and their commitment to fulfill the requirements of the assignment; and it should answer any questions that the volunteer has about the assignment. Volunteers are given an opportunity to attend a general orientation on the nature, purpose, admission of the organization; review of the volunteer program; and, a tour of the warehouse. Volunteers should receive guidance/training by their volunteer supervisor to provide them with the information on 1) knowledge and skills necessary to perform their volunteer assignment, 2) the operation of the program encompassing their volunteer activity, and 3) the purpose and requirements of the assignment. The timing and methods for delivery of such training should be appropriate to the complexity and demands of the assignment and the capabilities of the volunteer.

### **Volunteer – Staff Relations**

Each volunteer shall be placed under a member of staff of SAHELI designated as volunteer supervisor. Volunteers and staff are considered to be partners in implementing the programs of SAHELI with each having a complementary role to play. Each partner should understand and respect the needs and abilities of the other.

### **Hours of Work**

The hours of work for volunteers are normally the same as those for the staff members of SAHELI. However, if there are changes, if any will be communicated in writing to volunteers by their supervisors. Volunteers must sign in and sign out regularly on the volunteer sign in sheet. If expecting to be absent from a scheduled duty, volunteers should inform their staff supervisor as far in advance as possible that alternative arrangements can be made. Continual absenteeism may result in a review of the work of volunteers, assignment or term of service, and could result in ending the engagement of volunteers.

### **Conflict of Interest**

A “Conflict of Interest” arises when a person in a position of authority in SAHELI may be unfit personally from a decision he or she could make. Volunteers must disclose any conflict of interest to the Director in order to make sure a Disclosure form is completed and to make sure the conflict will not interfere with the assigned duties of volunteers.



## **Confidentiality**

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves a single staff, volunteer, client, or other person or involves overall agency business. Failure to maintain confidentiality will result in termination of the volunteer's relationship with the agency or other corrective action.

## **Holidays**

The list of holidays published by SAHELI for each year shall be applicable to volunteers. However, if working on any of the holiday in this list is required, volunteers are expected to work on such holidays.

## **Volunteer Records**

Volunteer records are kept for each volunteer. This volunteer record contains application, results of interview, a copy of the letter of engagement, a copy of ID, work report, and any information regarding the work of volunteers.

## **Applicability of other Policies**

The provisions of other policies such as POSH, CPP, IT, etc., manuals, and code of conduct of SAHELI will be applicable to volunteers.

## **Dismissal of a Volunteer**

Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules and procedures of SAHELI or who fail to satisfactorily perform their volunteer assignment are subject to dismissal. Possible grounds for dismissal may include, but are not limited to, the following: gross misconduct or insubordination, theft of property or misuse of the materials of SAHELI, abuse or mistreatment of clients, staff or other volunteers, failure to abide by the policies and procedures of SAHELI, and failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties.