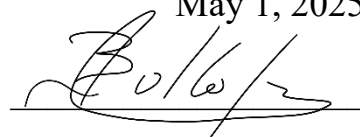


APPROVED
Executive Director
NGO «Technology of Progress»
Zadvornyy V.V.

May 1, 2025



Approved

By Order No. 3-D dated May 1, 2025

Approved

By the Decision of the Extraordinary General
Meeting No. 2-P dated May 1, 2025

POLICY ON PREVENTING AND MITIGATING SOCIAL RISKS: CONFLICT, RIGHTS, AND INCLUSION

Kyiv, 2025

1. Summary

1.1 This policy has been adopted by the NGO “Technology of Progress” and is effective until further notice.

1.2 The policy sets out the organization’s commitment to safeguarding key principles of conflict sensitivity, human rights, and gender equality in all its activities. We recognize that our work takes place in complex social and political contexts that may include tensions and risks. Our approach is designed to:

- proactively identify and manage any unintended negative impacts related to conflict dynamics, human rights, or gender inequalities;
- promote respect, inclusion, and equal opportunities for all individuals and communities we work with;
- support peaceful and constructive engagement within the communities and contexts where we operate.

1.3 To achieve this, the NGO “Technology of Progress” integrates regular analysis, monitoring, and adaptive management throughout the project cycle, ensuring that risks are minimized and positive outcomes maximized.

1.4 This policy guides our ongoing efforts to uphold the highest standards of ethical conduct and responsibility in line with international best practices.

2. Key Terms

Conflict and Violence

Conflict is present when two or more individuals or groups pursue mutually incompatible goals. Conflict exists on a continuum. When channeled constructively for resolution processes, conflict can yield benefits. However, conflict can also manifest violently, as seen in warfare. Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, whether threatened or actual, against another individual, group or community, resulting in (or having a high likelihood of resulting in) injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation.

Conflict Sensitivity

The ability to understand the context in which you operate; to understand the interaction between your intervention and the context (how the context affects the intervention and how the intervention affects the context); and to act upon the understanding of this interaction to avoid negative effects and maximize positive effects.

Do No Harm (DNH)

DNH is a principle to guide the design and implementation of humanitarian and development activities. It relates to looking for the potential harm that can be caused by interventions and avoiding or mitigating the potential negative impacts avoiding triggering/sustaining tensions or conflict.

Gender Equality

Seeking gender equality, to bring about a more inclusive and equal society, involves working with men and boys, women and girls to bring about changes in attitudes, behaviors, roles and responsibilities at home, in the workplace and in the community. Genuine gender equality means

more than parity in numbers or laws on the books; it means expanding freedoms and improving overall quality of life so that equality is achieved without sacrificing gains for males or females.

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

Integrating GESI into activities means integrating the perspectives and needs of all members of a community, regardless of their gender, social status or background with the aim of overcoming systemic inequalities and promoting equal participation and benefits for everyone. GESI approaches recognize that certain groups, such as women, ethnic minorities and persons with disabilities as well as sexual and gender minority (SGM) populations, are often marginalized and disproportionately impacted by conflicts and development initiatives.

Intersectionality

An approach that deepens and nuances the understanding of gender by examining how gender interacts with other societal markers, such as ethno-religious background, age, social class, sexual orientation, marital status, race, ethnicity and disability, placing people in different positions of power and privilege, discrimination and exclusion.

Safeguarding

Refers to a development organization's responsibility to put in place effective systems to prevent, mitigate and respond to any type of harm — discrimination, harassment, violence, exploitation, or other abuse — towards personnel or program participants that happens in its work environments or programs. Safeguarding aims to prevent harm from happening in the first place, while ensuring that if misconduct or other harm does occur as a result of a person's engagement with an organization or its programs, there are robust systems in place to respond effectively, including conducting investigations and prioritizing the safety of victims and survivors.

Social Inclusion

Refers to the ability, opportunity and access of marginalized people to take part in society. This includes rights, freedom, participation in decision-making and access to services and opportunities at all levels of society, from family, community, work and in civil space. In a project, this includes ensuring that the benefits of project activities are fairly distributed.

3. Overview of Conflict Sensitivity, Human Rights & Gender Equality

3.1 This policy outlines the processes that help NGO “Technology of Progress” understand and manage how its humanitarian and development activities might unintentionally influence conflict dynamics. It includes analyzing the local context, integrating conflict sensitivity into project design, and continuously adjusting activities based on monitoring and evaluation findings.

3.2 This approach ensures that interventions minimize negative effects and maximize positive contributions to peace and social cohesion, aligned with the organization's goals.

3.3 Conflict sensitivity requires seeing the interaction between activities and context as two-way, and adapting all operational aspects accordingly — from intervention methods to organizational policies and values.

3.4 Alongside conflict sensitivity, respect for human rights and promotion of gender equality are core commitments of NGO “Technology of Progress.” All activities are designed to uphold fundamental human rights, ensuring dignity, equality, and non-discrimination for all beneficiaries and stakeholders, with particular attention to vulnerable and marginalized groups.

3.5 Human rights principles include respect for civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights, and the organization actively works to prevent violations and address any risks arising from its interventions.

3.6 Gender equality is a critical component of this policy and requires recognizing and addressing the specific needs, experiences, and challenges faced by people of all genders. The organization promotes equal participation, empowerment, and protection from gender-based discrimination and violence throughout all project phases.

3.7 For humanitarian actions, the organization aligns with the following principles which are closely linked to conflict sensitivity, human rights, and gender equality:

- **Humanity:** Acting to protect life, health, and human dignity wherever suffering occurs.
- **Neutrality:** Remaining impartial and not taking sides in political, racial, religious, or ideological disputes.
- **Impartiality:** Providing assistance based on need alone, without discrimination by nationality, race, gender, religion, political opinions, or other factors.
- **Operational Independence:** Ensuring activities are free from external political, economic, or military influences.

3.8 ToP understands that social tensions often stem from power imbalances, inequalities, and exclusion linked to religion, ethnicity, gender, disability, age, or political affiliation. These dynamics can threaten social cohesion and fuel conflict.

3.9 NGO “Technology of Progress” applies a conflict-sensitive and rights-based approach to promote social cohesion, inclusion, and community resilience. This includes supporting initiatives that foster mutual understanding, respect for diversity, and peaceful cooperation at the local level.

3.10 By embedding principles of conflict sensitivity, human rights, and gender equality across all phases of its projects, the organization aims to ensure that its activities are responsible, inclusive, and contribute to long-term, positive social impact.

4. Conflict Analysis

4.1 Conflict analysis is a fundamental process for understanding the root causes, dynamics, actors, and impacts of conflict in the areas where NGO “Technology of Progress” operates. It provides the evidence base for designing interventions that are sensitive to local realities and do not unintentionally exacerbate tensions or harm affected populations.

4.2 A comprehensive conflict analysis includes:

- Identification of protection risks, threats, violations, and vulnerabilities affecting populations.
- Understanding who is at risk, why, and how.
- Examination of the drivers and triggers of conflict, including social, political, economic, and cultural factors.
- Analysis of the capacities and coping mechanisms of affected communities.
- Mapping stakeholders, their interests, power relations, and potential influence on conflict dynamics.

4.3 Protection analysis complements conflict analysis by focusing specifically on identifying risks and needs related to violations of human rights, and by guiding strategies to reduce these risks through protection-sensitive programming.

4.4 The analysis must be context-specific, evidence-based, and regularly updated to capture changing circumstances. It should also integrate gender perspectives and consider how human rights issues relate to conflict and vulnerability.

4.5 Effective conflict and protection analysis:

- Supports informed decision-making, programming, and advocacy.
- Helps identify entry points for engagement with local, national, and international actors.
- Enables the organization to anticipate and mitigate unintended negative impacts.
- Ensures alignment with humanitarian principles and a “do no harm” approach.

4.6 NGO “Technology of Progress” uses conflict analysis as a continuous process throughout the project cycle, ensuring that programs remain relevant, conflict-sensitive, and supportive of peacebuilding, human rights, and gender equality objectives.

5. Methodology: Guiding Principles for Conflict Analysis in TOPs Projects

5.1 To ensure that conflict analysis effectively supports our projects and contributes to conflict-sensitive, rights-respecting, and inclusive programming, the following principles guide our approach:

- Clear Purpose and Scope
Each conflict analysis begins with a clearly defined purpose that aligns with project goals and information needs. This clarity ensures focused data collection, protects sensitive information, and guides appropriate mitigation actions.
- Challenging Stereotypes and Adding Nuance
We actively question oversimplified or stereotypical narratives about conflict contexts. Our analysis strives to present a nuanced, evidence-based understanding that reflects the complex realities on the ground.
- Do No Harm
Conducting conflict analysis is itself an intervention. We prioritize minimizing harm by being sensitive to the local context, protecting vulnerable populations, and ensuring that our research and analysis do not escalate tensions.
- Participatory and Inclusive Process
Local stakeholders are engaged at all stages of analysis—from design through implementation to application. Their perspectives and knowledge are essential for accuracy, ownership, and sustainability of conflict-sensitive interventions.
- Capacity Building and Staff Empowerment
Our field teams and local staff are central to gathering data and applying findings. We provide continuous coaching and mentoring to strengthen their skills in conflict analysis and adaptive project management.
- Multiple Perspectives
We gather and analyze data from a diverse range of actors, recognizing that different stakeholders may have contrasting experiences and perceptions of the conflict. This reduces bias and enriches understanding.
- Gender and Diversity Integration
Gender and diversity considerations are fully integrated throughout the conflict analysis process. We examine how conflict impacts different groups (e.g., by gender, age, ethnicity, disability) differently and tailor our approaches accordingly.
- Programmatic Relevance
Conflict analysis directly informs project design, implementation, and monitoring. Findings are translated into actionable recommendations that enhance the relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability of interventions.
- Continuous Updating
Conflict dynamics evolve, so analysis is regularly revisited and updated to reflect new developments, ensuring that programming remains responsive and context-appropriate throughout the project lifecycle.
- Collaborative and Coordinated Analysis

We promote joint conflict analysis and knowledge sharing with other organizations and actors to build a comprehensive understanding of the context and enhance coordination of conflict-sensitive responses.

6. Safeguards Monitoring and Compliance

6.1 To ensure that all project activities adhere to principles of conflict sensitivity, human rights, inclusion, and protection, NGO “Technology of Progress” has established clear roles, monitoring tools, and accountability mechanisms.

6.2 Responsible Focal Points

- Daria Kutsenko, Co-founder, Head of Operations daria@uaprogress.tech
- Hnat Zabrotsky, Co-founder, Head of Legal hnat@uaprogress.tech

6.3 These focal points coordinate risk assessments, manage grievance and feedback processes, and ensure that all projects comply with internal safeguards and international standards.

6.4 Monitoring System

Compliance is ensured through the integration of safeguards and protection-related criteria into all levels of project planning and implementation. Key features include:

- Embedding indicators on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), EU integration, gender equality, inclusion, and conflict sensitivity into project KPIs.
- Conducting regular review meetings, internal assessments, and, where applicable, external audits to assess adherence to safeguards.
- Monitoring safeguard indicators through established internal mechanisms, with periodic reviews coordinated with relevant partners to ensure consistency, effectiveness, and alignment with project objectives.

6.5 Responsibilities of Focal Points

- Lead by example, promoting an ethical, inclusive, and harassment-free working culture.
- Ensure a workplace environment free from intimidation, hostility, harassment, sexual harassment, and abuse of authority.
- Proactively communicate relevant protection and ethical standards to staff and partners.
- Take immediate and impartial action in addressing any reported violations, while maintaining strict confidentiality and fairness. Prevent and address any instances of retaliation or favouritism.
- Report and act on any known or witnessed misconduct in accordance with internal policies and legal obligations.

7. Risk Management: Procedures and Organizational Capacities

7.1 NGO “Technology of Progress” applies a structured, rights-based approach to identifying and mitigating potential negative impacts related to conflict sensitivity, human rights, and social inclusion. This approach is grounded in both established procedures and institutional capacities.

7.2 Procedures:

- Contextual Risk Assessment: Conducted prior to project launch to understand potential risks linked to local conflict dynamics, discrimination, or exclusion.
- Stakeholder Engagement: Inclusive consultations with affected communities and local actors to ensure contextual relevance and acceptance.

- **Grievance and Feedback Mechanisms:** Open channels allow for timely community input and response to concerns.
- **Mitigation and Adaptation:** Risk-informed adjustments are made based on stakeholder dialogue and ongoing analysis.

7.3 Organizational Capacities:

- **Skilled Personnel:** Staff are trained in conflict-sensitive programming, human rights-based approaches, and gender-responsive planning.
- **Standardized Tools:** Conflict analysis and risk assessment are part of project design protocols.
- **Adaptive Systems:** Feedback loops support real-time adaptation and ensure interventions remain inclusive and context-appropriate.
- **Accountability Framework:** A commitment to equity, participation, and protection underpins all organizational activities.

7.4 This combined capacity ensures that ToP can proactively respond to the high-risk dimensions of its work and meet international safeguard standards.

8. Human Rights-Based Approach

8.1 NGO “Technology of Progress” applies a human rights-based approach (HRBA) as a cross-cutting principle across all project stages — from design and implementation to evaluation. This ensures that the dignity, participation, and protection of all individuals remain at the center of its programming. Key components include:

- **Participation and Inclusion:** Actively engaging communities — including marginalized, at-risk, and displaced groups — in project decision-making, implementation, and oversight.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** Ensuring access to information, consultation, and grievance mechanisms throughout the project cycle.
- **Do-No-Harm Principle:** All activities are screened for potential human rights risks, with mitigation plans embedded into project operations.
- **Legal Alignment:** Programs are aligned with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Ukrainian legislation, and EU human rights standards.
- **Institutional Capacity:** ToP staff receive regular training on human rights principles and apply internal procedures for rights-based risk analysis and prevention of harm.

8.2 This approach allows ToP to anticipate and mitigate unintended negative impacts on human rights while promoting fair access to public resources and services.

9. Gender Equality and Inclusion

9.1 ToP recognizes that sustainable development is only possible when gender equality and inclusion are fully embedded into project goals, processes, and outcomes. The organization systematically applies gender-responsive and inclusive programming practices, including:

- **Gender-Sensitive Design and Budgeting:** All projects are developed with consideration of gendered needs and barriers, supported by gender-responsive resource allocation.
- **Disaggregated Data and Impact Analysis:** Collection and analysis of data by gender, age, disability, and other factors help identify inequalities and adjust interventions accordingly.
- **Inclusive Participation:** Women, youth, persons with disabilities, and underrepresented groups are engaged in needs assessments, project planning, monitoring, and evaluation.

- Zero Tolerance for Discrimination or Abuse: Internal policies ensure that no gender-based violence, harassment, or exclusion occurs within the organization or its projects.
- Monitoring and Adaptation: Gender and inclusion indicators are tracked within the M&E framework, with regular review and corrective actions where necessary.

9.2 These measures ensure that ToP's activities not only avoid reinforcing gender inequality but actively promote empowerment, equity, and meaningful inclusion.

10. Commitment and Policy Review

10.1 NGO "Technology of Progress" reaffirms its strong commitment to safeguarding human rights, promoting gender equality, and ensuring conflict and context-sensitive programming in all activities it undertakes.

10.2 This Safeguards and Risk Mitigation Policy forms part of the organization's internal compliance framework and is binding for all staff, partners, and contractors.

10.3. ToP reviews and updates this policy regularly to ensure its relevance, especially in response to contextual changes, donor feedback, or lessons learned during project implementation. The policy is revised at least once every two years, or earlier if required by external audit recommendations, changes in legal frameworks, or newly identified risks.

10.4. All staff are informed of any revisions, and appropriate training or guidance is provided to ensure full implementation and compliance.