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## Safeguarding Policy – Protection Against and Prevention of Sexual Misconduct, Exploitation and Abuse, and Human Trafficking

## 1. General objective:

- 1.1. We conduct our research, programs and operations in ways that are safe for everyone with whom we have contact. In the conduct of our work, we come into contact with a wide range of people, including children and vulnerable adults, whether in field work, as part of youth education programs, living and working on campuses, as part of research involving human subjects, and more.
- 1.2. The purpose of this Policy is to set the standards to ensure good safeguarding practices towards children, vulnerable adults, and all other persons, including those who may be impacted by our work and those in the larger communities where CGIAR operates. All Staff are explicitly prohibited from engaging in any activity that may result in any kind of abuse, maltreatment, sexual exploitation, human trafficking or failure to follow good safeguarding practices towards children, vulnerable adults, and all other persons. This Policy was adopted to create an environment where concerns for the safety and wellbeing of children and adults can be raised and managed in a fair and just manner, prioritizing the best interests of those who are vulnerable.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1. This Policy applies to all CGIAR staff, temporary staff, consultants and third-party contractors in staff-like roles, trainees, interns, and students (“Staff” or “Staff members”). Third parties, including consultants, contractors, vendors, representatives and partners are expected to adhere to the standards set out herein.
- 2.2. CGIAR recognizes that it may not be able to mandate this Policy for certain partners such as governments and independent external agencies. CGIAR can, based on a careful risk analysis, elect not to work with such partners, put specific conditions into partnership agreements, or end partnerships based on a partner’s failure to follow the standards described in this Policy.
- 2.3. This Policy applies to all Staff, both during and outside of working hours, and regardless of where the questionable behavior occurred. Staff shall follow this policy when performing their official duties and responsibilities and in their personal conduct inside and outside of the workplace. Everyone who is covered by this Policy must be aware that their conduct and activities outside the workplace, even if unrelated to their official duties, can compromise the good reputation and best interests of CGIAR.
- 2.4. We respect the laws, culture, traditions, and practices of the communities in which we work. We comply with legislation in all operating jurisdictions wherever it is safe to do so. This includes local, national, and international child welfare and protective legislation. If our policies and procedures differ from local laws and this Policy has more rigorous expectations, this Policy must be followed.

## 3. Definitions

- 3.1. A **child** is a person under the age of 18.
- 3.2. An **adult** is a person who is 18 years of age or older.

- 3.3. A **vulnerable person**, regardless of age, is someone who has a limited capacity to protect their own interests. Examples include illiterate farmers, unemployed or impoverished individuals, migrants, refugees, the frail elderly, ethnic minorities, and women in a traditional patriarchal society. Vulnerable people are unable to protect themselves against sexual harm, abuse, or exploitation.
- 3.4. **Sexual exploitation** is any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. The term “sexual abuse” refers to the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. This definition includes sexual relations with a child, defined as a “human being below the age of eighteen years” in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Any person of any gender identity may be the victim of sexual exploitation. Examples of sexual exploitation and abuse include transactional sex, soliciting transactional sex, sexual assault, rape, and any type of sexual activity with a child, real or simulated, on the internet or any other medium.
- 3.5. **Safeguarding** refers to preventative, responsive and referral measures undertaken to protect children and vulnerable adults, ensuring that no such individual is subject to any form of harm as a result of their engagement with the Organization or as a result of the actions of one of its representatives. This includes ensuring that where there are concerns over the welfare of a child or vulnerable person or where a child or vulnerable person has been subject to harm, that appropriate and timely actions are taken to address it.
- 3.6. **Human trafficking** is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of people through force, fraud, or deception, with the aim of exploiting them. Adults and children of all ages and from all backgrounds can become victims of human trafficking, which occurs in every region of the world. Traffickers often use violence or fraudulent employment agencies and fake promises of education and job opportunities to trick and coerce their victims.

#### 4. Policy Statements

- 4.1. **Organizational Culture.** Safeguarding is a key aspect of our organizational culture. All Staff who engage directly or indirectly with children or vulnerable adults must act in accordance with the principles outlined in this document. Staff are committed to a shared responsibility for the safeguarding of all persons who participate in and/or benefit from CGIAR programs and/or activities. Specific safeguarding roles and responsibilities will be delegated to staff to effectively embed safe organizational practices across all programs, operations and activities. CGIAR is transparent about safeguarding concerns occurring within CGIAR, in line with privacy regulations and legal frameworks.

#### Safeguarding from Sexual Exploitation

- 4.2. We have zero tolerance towards any form of sexual exploitation or abuse of any person, whether child or adult. Staff shall not engage in any sexual activity with persons under the age of 18 years, regardless of the age of majority or consent locally. A mistaken belief as to the age of a child is not a defense.

- 4.2.1. Sexual activity includes all forms of activity and abuse of a sexual nature, with or without physical contact. Staff are strictly prohibited from exchanging money, employment, goods or services for sexual favors or sexual acts with children. Staff shall not abuse their position to withhold services and assistance to children, nor give preferential treatment in order to solicit sexual acts, favors, gifts, payments of any kind, or advantage.
- 4.2.2. Staff are prohibited from engaging in the production, distribution, importation, receipt or possession of any image of child pornography (e.g., any visual depiction of sexually explicit conduct involving persons under 18 years of age).
- 4.2.3. This Policy is central to CGIAR's ability to protect people from abuse, to safeguard the reputation of CGIAR, and to provide clear guidance. This Policy ensures the highest standards of behavior from Staff and minimizes the risk of abusers entering our organization. Any Staff member who engages in sexual abuse, sexual grooming, maltreatment, exploitation, or failure to follow good safeguarding practices has committed gross misconduct and will face dismissal or contract termination.
- 4.3. Child abuse and exploitation violate fundamental child and human rights. They may also be criminal acts. We are transparent in our approach to preventing and responding to any child safeguarding violations throughout our supply chains, partnerships, and relationships with third parties. We comply with all applicable laws, statutes, regulations, and codes in force, including:
- International Labour Standards on Child Labour and Forced Labour (1973 and 1999)
  - United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990)
  - The African Union Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1999)
  - UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000)
  - UN Secretary General's Bulletin: Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (2017 and following)
  - UK Modern Slavery Act 2015
  - US Trafficking Victims Protection Act (2000)
  - USAID ADS 303 Mandatory Standard Provision, Trafficking in Persons (July 2015)

### Safeguarding from Human Trafficking

- 4.4. Staff may not engage with, provide resources to, or support individuals or organizations associated with human trafficking. Human trafficking, also known as trafficking in persons or modern-day slavery, is a crime that involves compelling or coercing a person to provide labor or services, or to engage in transactional sex acts. The coercion can be subtle or overt, physical or psychological. Exploitation of a child for transactional sex is human trafficking, regardless of whether any form of force, fraud or coercion was used.

### Safeguarding in Research

- 4.5. **Risk Assessments.** CGIAR will conduct annual risk assessments to identify safeguarding and sexual misconduct risks, classify high-risk activities, and document steps being taken to reduce

or remove risks. For each scientific research project, CGIAR expects its staff to be continuously aware of the potential for safeguarding risks. Risk assessments will be reviewed and updated throughout the lifecycle of research projects.

- 4.6. **Images and Personal Information.** CGIAR's overriding principle is to maintain the respect and dignity in the portrayal of children, families and communities. Permitted use of pictures, images, or other likenesses of children or vulnerable adults and their personal information must never compromise our duties of care and protection.

We will implement best practices when using children's or vulnerable adults' images and personal information:

- a) Before photographing or filming, assess and endeavor to comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images
  - b) Before photographing or filming, obtain informed consent from a parent or guardian of the child, and provide an explanation of how the photograph or film will be used;
  - c) Ensure photographs, films and videos present everyone in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner, and do not stigmatize community, family, or the individual;
  - d) Ensure that any person whose or likeness is used by CGIAR is adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive;
  - e) Ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts;
  - f) Treat with the utmost importance the confidentiality of the children in CGIAR's work and never provide a child's personal details to unauthorized person(s). This also applies when material is made available to third parties. Full names should never be provided alongside other identifiers such as date of birth or community;
  - g) Pictures, materials, and personal information regarding individuals will be stored in a restricted access and secure database that is password protected;
  - h) The misuse of any person's images or personal information will be treated in the same way as other breaches of this Policy.
- 4.7. CGIAR is committed to confidentiality in sharing sensitive information about anyone who participates in or benefits from CGIAR programs. In the event of a safeguarding incident or allegation, information that identifies individuals will only be shared on a need-to-know basis with due consideration for the safety of children, vulnerable adults, witnesses, reporters, and subjects of complaints.
- 4.8. Research shall be conducted in accordance with CGIAR's Research Ethics Code and any applicable standards. Research may require the involvement of marginalized or vulnerable people. Researchers shall not exclude vulnerable groups from studies based on possible complications, but rather take informed measures to protect vulnerable individuals and groups. Researchers must ensure that research plans minimize the possibility of coercion, undue influence or manipulation, and maximize the likelihood of valid informed consent. Informed consent from a parent or legal guardian is required before commencing any scientific research that involves a child.

## Prevention

- 4.9. We will not knowingly permit any person to be employed, contracted, or engaged as a Staff member, if the individual is known to be convicted for or has engaged in sexual abuse or exploitation or related offenses against any person, including children and vulnerable adults.
- 4.10. CGIAR People and Culture/Human Resources will conduct background checks, criminal record checks where appropriate, and gather employment references before extending offers of employment. This is a screening measure to ensure that any individual with a history of sexual exploitation or abuse will not be employed by CGIAR.

## Accountability

- 4.11. CGIAR will fairly, completely, professionally and promptly investigate all suspicions of sexual misconduct and abuse (see the Procedure on Handling Reports of Alleged Misconduct.) CGIAR will take all appropriate corrective actions should there be a violation of this Policy.
- 4.12. If Staff working on behalf of CGIAR Entities or CGIAR Partners are found to have violated this Policy, they will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal or termination of their contract or, depending on the violation, referral to local authorities for possible criminal prosecution. Consultation must take place with legal counsel and Ethics and Business Conduct before engaging with local authorities about a specific matter.
- 4.13. Where CGIAR has caused harm to a child or vulnerable adult, it will take prompt action to remediate that harm. It is the responsibility of CGIAR, CGIAR Entities, and/or CGIAR Partners to make victims of sexual abuse, misconduct, or exploitation, whole to the degree possible. Affected persons can request help from Ethics and Business Conduct, Human Resources Officers, Supervisor, or Managers. They may be supported by someone of their own choice to serve as their representative or advocate.

## 5. Responsibilities

- 5.1. Staff must conduct themselves consistently with CGIAR's Core Ethical Values, follow the CGIAR Code of Ethics and Business Conduct, and comply with all applicable laws that protect children and vulnerable adults from sexual abuse, including but not limited to;
- a) Upholding the dignity of every person with whom they come into contact by ensuring that their conduct always displays respect and cultural sensitivity with regards to language, conversations, gestures and touch;
  - b) Providing and creating a safe work environment that protects children, vulnerable adults and all others from all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation;
  - c) Treating all persons and their families with respect, regardless of race, color, gender, language, religion, nationality, political, disability, ethnicity, caste, sexual orientation or other status;
  - d) Never engaging in sexual activity or having a sexual relationship with anyone under the age of 18 years irrespective of the local age of majority/consent or local custom;

- e) Immediately disclosing all charges, convictions, and other outcomes of offences relating to sexual abuse or exploitation, including those under traditional law or which occurred before or during association with CGIAR;
- f) Avoiding any circumstance where a Staff member is alone with a child or children in the context of our work. CGIAR Representatives should have at least one other adult present when in the presence of a child;
- g) Not inviting unaccompanied children into a private residence, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or physical danger;
- h) Never using language or behavior towards children or vulnerable persons that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative or intended to humiliate;
- i) Preserving the confidentiality of personal information about any individual, regardless of age or status;
- j) Reporting any suspicion, allegation or evidence of a possible violation of this Policy, whether they have experienced or witnessed the behavior;
- k) Cooperating in any investigation related to a safeguarding or sexual abuse concern; and
- l) Participating in safeguarding and misconduct trainings and supporting the Ethics Office in awareness-raising campaigns for third parties, project staff and local communities.

**5.2. CGIAR Center Boards** are required to :

- a) Champion an ethical organizational culture by actively embracing this Policy, set the tone, and lead by example;
- b) Ensure that all Staff have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities pursuant to this Policy;
- c) Require CGIAR Entities to implement the CGIAR Safeguarding Policy;
- d) Participate in training on CGIAR governance officials' obligations for Safeguarding; and
- e) Provide oversight for compliance with this Policy by regularly reviewing safeguarding risk assessments and mitigation plans, conducting regular audits of the implementation of this Policy, and conducting regular, objective and independent third-party monitoring and evaluation of CGIAR's Safeguarding Program.

**5.3. Executive leadership** is required to:

- a) Demonstrate personal compliance with this Policy;
- b) Build and promote an ethical organizational culture and lead by example;
- c) Ensure that all Staff have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities pursuant to this Policy;
- d) Ensure that all members of the relevant leadership team are fully trained and briefed on this Policy and receive support and guidance on its implementation in their operations;
- e) Ensure that all Staff receive regular updates and training about this Policy and its application;
- f) Take decisive action concerning any breach of this Policy as warranted by the circumstances; and
- g) Protect individuals who report suspicions of misconduct in good faith from retaliation.

**5.4. Ethics and Business Conduct** is required to:

- a) Champion this Policy, support adoption of this Policy, disseminate it throughout all CGIAR offices, and coordinate vulnerable person and child protection and safeguarding responses across CGIAR;
- b) Provide advice on the implementation of this Policy;
- c) Review this Policy on a regular basis, propose updates as relevant, and support CGIAR entities in implementing this Policy;
- d) Enable all Staff to receive regular updates and annual training about this Policy and its application;
- e) Provide technical advice on implementing and managing the reporting and investigations process for suspicions of misconduct;
- f) Document and report on a periodic basis any policy violations to the CGIAR System Board or its designated Committee; and
- g) In conjunction with CGIAR ethics focal points, ensure all allegations and concerns related to violations of this Policy are (a) taken seriously, (b) investigated fairly, completely, professionally and promptly; and (c) dealt with according to CGIAR's guidelines, irrespective of the identity of the reporter, alleged perpetrator, or victims.

**5.5 CGIAR leaders** are required to:

- a) Build and promote an ethical organizational culture and lead by example;
- b) Demonstrate personal compliance with this Policy;
- c) Ensure that all Entity-level Staff have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities pursuant to this Policy;
- d) Ensure that all CGIAR members of the Entity's research ethics review board are fully trained and briefed on this Policy and receive support and guidance on its implementation into their operations;
- e) When required, take decisive action in regard to any breach of this Policy as warranted by the circumstances;
- f) Ensure all contractual agreements with partners and vendors who are associated with and work on behalf of CGIAR include a provision in which they agree to comply with this Policy in all material respects;
- g) Identify and mitigate safeguarding-related risks in each CGIAR-funded project and adequately capture them in their risk registers;
- h) Ensure child and vulnerable person safeguarding measures are integrated into relevant core internal processes and practices. This includes implementing effective recruitment, background and reference checking, and due diligence procedures to ensure that CGIAR entities do not hire or retain any person with a proven record of safeguarding, sexual misconduct, abuse, or sexual exploitation violations; and
- i) Ensure that all Staff receive regular updates and training about this Policy and its application.

## **6. Implementation**

- 6.1. CGIAR will ensure that all those who are covered by this Policy understand and discharge their responsibilities to protect children and prevent exploitation or abuse. It is imperative that our science, research and policy work do not cause unintentional harm to children.



6.2. All newly engaged Staff will be oriented on this Safeguarding policy.

6.3. Annual training on this Policy will be offered to Staff. CGIAR will also create and implement awareness-raising campaigns on sexual abuse and exploitation, targeting Staff, stakeholders, and partners.

## 7. Reporting

7.1 Be risk aware. If you suspect a policy breach, it is important that you report it to notify management. Please use one of the following mechanisms to ensure that appropriate action can be taken:

- Reach out to Ethics and Business Conduct via [ethics@cgiar.org](mailto:ethics@cgiar.org)
- Use the CGIAR hotline through <https://www.lighthouse-services.com/cgiar>

7.2 CGIAR leadership believes that everyone is accountable and wants to ensure a safe environment for all Staff.

7.3 CGIAR does not tolerate any form of retaliation. Appropriate measures are in place to protect from reprisal anyone who reports wrongdoings and makes a good faith report.

## 8. Waiver from this Policy

8.1 The accountable party is the one that can approve a waiver. Before a policy waiver can be approved, the Office of Legal Affairs and the Office of Institutional Risk Management need to be consulted to identify possible legal risks.

## 9. Document management

### Management Table

Accountable Official	Responsible Official	Consulted Parties	
Elwyn Grainger-Jones	Andrew Giddings	CoPs: People and Culture Internal Audit Legal (ongoing)	
<b>Related Documents</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Code of Ethics and Business Conduct</li> <li>• Policy on Protection Against and Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination</li> <li>• Policy on Whistleblowing and Protection from Retaliation</li> <li>• Procedure on Handling Reports of Alleged Misconduct</li> <li>• Policy on Whistleblowing and Protection from Retaliation</li> </ul>			
<b>Revision History</b>			
Version	Effective Date	Approval	Summary of Changes