

## 1. Purpose

- 1.1. IWMI is committed to ensuring a safe environment free of sexual exploitation and abuse in its activities and operations. In line with this commitment, the purpose of this Policy is to provide efficient, reasonable and accountable guidelines for preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse.
- 1.2. IWMI has zero tolerance towards sexual exploitation and abuse. IWMI is committed to preventing sexual exploitation and abuse from occurring in the first place, and ensures prompt, impartial and effective response to allegations of this nature.
- 1.3. This Policy provides an understanding of prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse concepts, a commitment to a set of guiding principles that IWMI adhere to, a series of reporting mechanisms, and an agreement as to roles and responsibilities with respect to prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse.

## 2. Applicability

This Policy provides a global framework, respecting all applicable laws and regulations of the countries where IWMI operates.

If IWMI policy and procedures differ from local laws and our policy has more rigorous expectations, the requirements of this Policy are in addition to any other applicable requirements.

When business transactions involve more than one country, IWMI must find the best way to comply with all applicable laws. Whenever a possible conflict of laws situations arises, IWMI will seek legal guidance from in the location of the corresponding IWMI office or CGIAR entity.

## 3. Scope

- 3.1. This policy applies to all IWMI 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.
- 3.2. IWMI recognizes that it may not be able to mandate this Policy for certain partners such as governments and independent external agencies. IWMI 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 partner’s failure to follow the standards described in this Policy.
- 3.3. This Policy applies both during and outside of working hours, and regardless of where the questionable behavior occurred. Staff shall follow this policy while 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 IWMI.

- 3.4. We respect the laws, culture, traditions and practices of 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 legislation related to sexual exploitation and abuse. If our policies and procedures differ from local laws and this Policy is more rigorous expectations, this Policy must be followed.

## 4. Guiding Principles

IWMI collaborates on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse through the following guiding principles. These principles summarize our commitment towards sexual exploitation and abuse and reflect IWMI's Core Ethical Values, CGIAR Ethics Framework and furthers the CGIAR Safeguarding Policy – Protection Against and Prevention of Sexual Misconduct, Exploitation and Abuse and Human Trafficking.

- 4.1. **We have zero-tolerance for acts of sexual exploitation and abuse.** We have no tolerance towards any form of sexual exploitation and abuse. This means that sexual exploitation and abuse is prohibited and that every transgression will be acted upon.
- 4.2. **We commit to raising prevention of sexual exploitation awareness.** We pledge to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse from occurring in the first place, through training, awareness raising activities, and background screening when the IWMI deem necessary.
- 4.3. **We commit to protecting reporting parties who act in good faith from retaliation.** We will not tolerate retaliation in any form against anyone for raising concerns or making good-faith report of sexual exploitation and abuse.
- 4.4. **We commit to accountability on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse.** We acknowledge that the responsibility for IWMI's progress with respect to prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse rest with its own management.

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

- 5.1. IWMI is committed to acting ethically, honestly and reliably. This means behaving in an appropriate and respectful manner.
- 5.2. **All IWMI Staff, wherever they are located, shall be responsible for the following:**
- a) Conducting themselves consistent with CGIAR/IWMI's Core Ethical Values, including following the IWMI Staff Code of Conduct;
  - b) Treating each other with understanding, dignity, and respect;
  - c) Providing a safe environment that promotes implementation of this Policy;

- d) Protecting that all discussion, communications and actions are handled with sensitivity and outmost confidentiality;
- e) Knowing and complying with the IWMI policies and regulatory requirements that affect their job responsibilities;
- f) Complying with applicable country legislation regarding sexual exploitation and abuse;
- g) Reporting any suspicion, allegation or evidence of sexual exploitation and abuse, whether they have experienced, perpetrated or witnessed the behavior;
- h) Cooperating in any related investigation;
- i) Participating in prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse trainings, and
- j) Upholding the obligations set forth in this Policy and being aware of their duty of care, which means behaving in a manner that respects and fosters each other's rights.

### 5.3. **IWMI Board is responsible for:**

- a) Championing an ethical organizational culture, setting the tone, and leading by example;
- c) Requiring IWMI to implement the Policy;
- e) Provide oversight for compliance by regularly reviewing safeguarding risk assessments and mitigation plans.

### 5.4. **Human Resources Office is responsible for:**

- a) Providing advice on the implementation of this Policy;
- b) Reviewing this Policy on a regular basis, and proposing updates as relevant;
- c) Ensuring that all IWMI Staff receive regular updates and annual training about this Policy and its application;
- d) Providing technical input/advice on the reporting and allegation management process;
- e) Documenting and reporting any policy violations to the IWMI Board on periodic basis; and
- f) Ensuring the timely investigation of ethical concerns, in accordance with IWMI's protocols.

### 5.5. **IWMI Management Team is responsible for:**

- a) Building and promoting an ethical organizational culture and leading by example;

- b) Demonstrating personal compliance with this Policy;
- c) Ensuring that all IWMI Staff have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities pursuant to this Policy;
- d) Assisting with the investigation and resolution of the complaints;
- e) When required, taking decisive action in regard to any breach of this Policy as warranted by the circumstances, ensuring that incidents are promptly addressed;
- f) Ensuring contractual agreements with partners and vendors who are associated with and work on behalf of IWMI, including a provision in which they agree to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse.
- g) Ensuring measures for the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse are integrated into relevant core internal processes and practices, including IWMI's Institutional Review Board (IRB) applications and risk registers.
- h) Ensuring that all IWMI Staff receive regular updates and training about this Policy and its application.

## 6. Prevention and Monitoring

### 6.1. Raising Awareness, communication and dissemination of information

IWMI ensures consistent communication and dissemination of information to support effective implementation of this Policy across its global network, and to raise awareness in the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse.

The outreach and communication efforts shall ensure that sexual exploitation and abuse materials are distributed to all IWMI Staff, and that appropriate tools and channels are used for awareness-raising campaigns regarding sexual exploitation and abuse.

IWMI works to build commitment among its partners at all levels, to protect vulnerable persons from sexual exploitation and abuse related risk in the research for development context.

### 6.2. Due diligence and background checks

IWMI 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.

IWMI will conduct background checks, criminal record checks where appropriate, and gather employment references before finalizing 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 IWMI.

## 6.3. Training

IWMI is responsible for incorporating the standards on sexual exploitation and abuse in recruitment documentation, on-boarding materials/sessions and in mandatory courses.

## 6.4. Sexual exploitation and abuse risk assessment in project design

IWMI is responsible for conducting sexual exploitation and abuse risk assessments for each IWMI-funded project at an early stage of design in order to detect potential sexual exploitation and abuse risks associated with the project, determine relevant measures to avert the risks.

## 7. Reporting and Responding to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

- 7.1. Report ethical concerns or misconduct to the Human Resources Office, a supervisor, to the designated safeguarding person, or using IWMI or CGIAR's ethics hotlines. Existing reporting channels are monitored on a regular basis and strengthened where appropriate. Failure to report a concern, reasonable suspicion or knowledge of misconduct in accordance with this Policy may result in disciplinary action.
- 7.2. IWMI will manage sensitive information in a respectful and professional manner and comply with applicable laws. Retaliation against a staff member or other individuals for reporting an incident or for participating in an investigation of an incident is a serious violation of this Policy and staff who are found to do so will be subject to disciplinary action.
- 7.3. Cases involving allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse are high-priority cases. Complaints received should be acknowledged within 48 hours.
- 7.4. Staff are expected to immediately report any actual or suspected situations of sexual exploitation and abuse.
  - a) Such reports of policy violations or inappropriate behaviour can be made to the direct supervisor, IWMI Human Resources Office, local safeguarding focal point, or the ethics hotline(s).
  - b) If an IWMI staff member knowingly chooses not to report an incident, then this act of theirs will be considered as breach of this policy and they will be subject to relevant disciplinary action including the contract termination and/or be removed from any association with IWMI.
  - c) All incidents must be reported and managed in accordance with IWMI Safeguarding Incident Reporting Process.
  - d) If a report of sexual exploitation and abuse made or concerns are raised in good faith, even if the situation is ultimately found to be untrue, no retaliatory action will be taken against the individual. If, however, the report is found to be malicious, the Human Resources in consultation with senior leadership, will decide on the course of action

relating to disciplinary action.

## 8. Accountability

### 8.1. Accountability of non-compliance with this Policy

If Staff or third-parties are found to have violated this Policy, they will be subjected to disciplinary action up to dismissal or termination of their contract, or, depending on the violation, referral to local authorities for possible criminal prosecution.

### 8.2. Protection against retaliation

IWMI prohibits retaliation against anyone who makes a good faith report or participates in an investigation of a complaint under this Policy, or who otherwise acts to enforce or uphold this policy.

Individuals who are found to have engaged in retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action under the IWMI's internal policies and procedures.

## 9. Support to Affected Persons

Affected persons can seek support from the IWMI Human Resources Office, and Supervisors/Managers.

With respect to beneficiaries who are victims of sexual exploitation and abuse, and in line with the General Assembly Resolution (A/RES/62/214) on the "United Nations Comprehensive Strategy on Assistance and Support to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by United Nations Staff and Related Personnel", assistance and support to the victims should be provided through existing services, programmes and their networks.

## Appendix 1: Relevant Defined Terms

Certain terms and concepts used in this Policy are defined below to ensure their shared understanding across IWMI.

**“Child”** is any person under the age of 18, regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally.

In line with international standards, in particular the 2003 United Nations Bulletin on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse<sup>2</sup>, IWMI defines sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) as follows:

**“Child Abuse”** All sexual activity with a child, defined as a person younger than 18 years of age, is considered sexual abuse and is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or consent locally. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defense.”

**“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 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.

**“Sexual Abuse”** refers to any or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.