

CGIAR Integrated Partnership: Protection Against Sexual Misconduct, Exploitation, Abuse, and Human Trafficking

1. Policy Overview

The CGIAR Integrated Partnership is committed to maintaining the highest standards of safeguarding to protect all individuals with whom we interact, including children, vulnerable adults, and members of the communities we serve. This policy prohibits any form of abuse, exploitation, sexual misconduct, or human trafficking and establishes a framework to ensure safe and ethical conduct across all operations. The definitions and terms in this document do not alter, change, or modify the terms and conditions or privileges and immunities of the individual Centers.

2. Objectives

- Promote a culture of safeguarding throughout the CGIAR Integrated Partnership.
- Prioritize the best interests of, and prevent harm to children, vulnerable adults, and other individuals affected by CGIAR activities.
- Provide clear guidelines for reporting safeguarding concerns.
- Ensure compliance with local, national, and international legal standards.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All Personnel¹ of the Centers and System Organization that comprise the CGIAR Integrated Partnership, including full-time and temporary staff, consultants, trainees, interns, and students.
- Third parties such as contractors, vendors, and partners engaged by CGIAR Integrated Partnership member organizations.
- Subsequently, all covered parties are generally referred to as ‘Personnel’.

This policy governs:

- All CGIAR Integrated Partnership operations, including fieldwork, research, and interactions with vulnerable populations.

¹ The broad use of the term ‘personnel’ under this policy shall not be construed to create an employer-employee relationship between any category of person indicated above with the CGIAR System Organization or any CGIAR Center.

- Conduct of Personnel during and outside of work hours, for both professional and private activities that may impact the CGIAR Integrated Partnerships reputation, interests, or mission, regardless of where the activities occurred.

When required by external partners, such as governments and independent agencies, CGIAR member organizations will include adherence to this policy in collaboration agreements. These policies are written to complement and coexist with the policies of sponsors and funding agencies and will be interpreted consistently where possible, with guidance sought internally from the ethics advisor, legal office, or other designated representative within their organization.

4. Policy Statements

- **No Tolerance:** The CGIAR Integrated Partnership strictly prohibits any form of sexual misconduct, exploitation, abuse, or human trafficking of any person whether child or adult.
 - Personnel 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.
 - Sexual activity includes all forms of activity and abuse of a sexual nature, with or without physical contact. Personnel are strictly prohibited from exchanging money, employment, goods or services for sexual favors or sexual acts with children. Personnel 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.
 - Personnel 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).
 - Any Personnel who engage in sexual abuse, sexual grooming, maltreatment, exploitation, or failure to follow good safeguarding practices has committed gross misconduct and will face dismissal.
- **Child abuse and exploitation:** The abuse and exploitation of children violates 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 but not limited to:
 - 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)
- **Human Trafficking:** Personnel may not engage with, provide resources to, or support individuals or organizations associated with human trafficking.
- **Accountability:** Personnel are responsible for upholding safeguarding standards.
- **Confidentiality:** All safeguarding concerns will be managed with the utmost discretion.
- **Protection from Retaliation:** Whistleblowers and reporters of safeguarding concerns will be protected from retaliation.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Personnel shall respect the laws, culture, traditions, and practices of the communities in which we work. We comply with applicable legislation in all jurisdictions where we operate. This includes applicable 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.

5. Safeguarding in Research

- **Informed Consent:** Personnel shall obtain consent from guardians for research involving children or vulnerable persons.
- **Protection of Images:** The CGIAR Integrated Partnerships 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:
 - Before photographing or filming, assess and endeavor to comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images;
 - 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;

- 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;
- Ensure that any person whose or likeness is used is adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive;
- Ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts;
- Treat with the utmost importance the confidentiality of the children 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;
- Pictures, materials, and personal information regarding individuals will be stored in a restricted access and secure database that is password protected;
- The misuse of any person's images or personal information will be treated in the same way as other breaches of this policy.
- **Protection of Personal Information:** The CGIAR Integrated Partnership is committed to confidentiality in sharing sensitive information about anyone who participates in or benefits from its 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.
- **Conducting Research:** Research shall be conducted in accordance with the CGIAR Integrated Partnerships Research Ethics Code and any other applicable standards. Research may require the involvement of marginalized or vulnerable people. Researchers should 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.
- **Risk Mitigation:** The assessment, mitigation, and minimization of risks of coercion and exploitation must be conducted for all research activities.

6. Reporting Mechanisms

Reports should be factual and submitted promptly after the incident and contain as much information as possible to allow for proper assessment of the nature, extent, and urgency of the matter to allow for timely resolution through the procedures of the CGIAR Center or System Organization employing or engaging the individuals concerned. Personnel can report concerns through the following mechanisms:

1. Internal Reporting Channels:

- **Direct Supervisors or Senior Managers:** Supervisors must escalate reports to the appropriate ethics, legal, or human resources teams.
- **Human Resources/People and Culture:** Reports can be directed to the respective member organization's HR department.
- **Legal Office / Counsel:** Reports can be submitted via email or in person.
- **Ethics and Business Conduct Representative / Focal Point:** Reports can be submitted via email or in person.

2. **Whistleblowing Hotline:** An independent channel (e.g., Lighthouse Services) is available for each CGIAR Integrated Partnership member organization for anonymous or identifiable complaints, ensuring confidentiality and protection. The hotline also has the ability for a complainant to ask for updates and to exchange messages with ethics and business conduct focal point handling compliance cases within each organization, all while maintaining anonymity.
3. **Third-Party Reporting:** Personnel are expected to report suspicions of misconduct through the above-established channels. Protection from retaliation will be extended to individuals who report their concerns externally (e.g., CGIAR Integrated Partnership) if:
 - a. The individual reported their suspicions to their employing CGIAR Integrated Partnership member organization using the established internal channels, and the member organization failed to inform the individual of the status of the matter within six months of the report.
 - b. External reporting is necessary to avoid imminent danger to public interest, substantial damage to CGIAR Integrated Partnership operations, or violations of law.
4. **Confidentiality:** All reports will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality, with information shared on a need-to-know basis, ensuring the protection of due process, adherence to applicable law, and the rights of all parties involved, subject to the immunities and privileges of the Center of System Organization.
5. **Good Faith Reporting:** Reports should be made in good faith in accordance with relevant procedures for reporting misconduct and contain sufficient detail to allow for proper assessment. Anyone who files a complaint that is known to be false or malicious, or with a reckless disregard for the truth of the statements made, may be subject to administrative or disciplinary action.

For more information refer to the CGIAR Integrated Partnership's Policy on Whistleblowing and Protection from Retaliation. The CGIAR Integrated Partnership does not tolerate any

form of retaliation. Appropriate measures are in place to protect from reprisal anyone who reports wrongdoings and makes a report in good faith.

7. Responsibilities

1. CGIAR Integrated Partnership Personnel are required to uphold the CGIAR Integrated Partnerships Core Ethical Values and comply with all applicable laws to ensure safeguarding in all interactions, including but not limited to:
 - 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;
 - Providing and creating a safe work environment that protects children, vulnerable adults and all others from all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation;
 - Treating all persons with respect, regardless of race, color, gender, language, religion, nationality, political, disability, ethnicity, caste, sexual orientation or other status;
 - 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;
 - Immediately disclosing all charges, convictions, and other outcomes of offences relating to sexual abuse or exploitation, including those under traditional law;
 - Avoiding any circumstance where a Staff member is alone with a child or children in the context of our work.
 - Not inviting unaccompanied children into a private residence, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or physical danger;
 - Never using language or behavior towards children or vulnerable persons that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative or intended to humiliate;
 - Preserving the confidentiality of personal information about any individual, regardless of age or status;
 - Reporting any suspicion, allegation or evidence of a possible violation of this Policy, whether they have experienced or witnessed the behavior;
 - Cooperating in any investigation related to a safeguarding or sexual abuse concern; and
 - Participating in safeguarding and misconduct trainings and supporting awareness-raising campaigns for third parties, project staff and local communities.
2. **CGIAR Integrated Partnership Leaders** are required to:
 - Build and promote an ethical organizational culture and lead by example;

- Ensure that all Personnel have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities pursuant to this policy;
- Ensure that all members of the relevant leadership teams are fully trained and briefed on this policy and receive support and guidance on its implementation in their operations;
- Ensure that all Staff receive regular updates and training about this policy and its application;
- Take decisive action concerning any breach of this policy as warranted by the circumstances; and
- Protect individuals who report suspicions of misconduct in good faith from retaliation.
- Ensure that incidents of serious misconduct are reported to the relevant Audit, Finance, and Risk Committee of the Board in accordance with the organization's relevant policy and procedures.

3. CGIAR Integrated Partnership and Center Boards are required to:

- Champion ethical organizational culture by actively embracing this policy and leading by example;
- Participate in training on governance officials' obligations for Safeguarding;
- 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 ensure objective monitoring and evaluation of the CGIAR Integrated Partnership's Safeguarding Program.

4. The Ethics and Business Conduct Function is required to:

- Provide advice and guidance on implementing this policy upon request;
- Review this Policy on a regular basis, propose updates as relevant
- Monitor and report on compliance with this policy across the CGIAR Integrated Partnership
- Enable all Personnel of the CGIAR Integrated Partnership to receive regular messaging and annual training about this policy and its application;
- Support safeguarding responses as required across CGIAR.

8. Implementation

- **Training and Awareness:** Annual training and awareness campaigns will be conducted to ensure all Personnel understand their safeguarding responsibilities.
- **Risk Assessments:** Regular assessments will identify and mitigate safeguarding risks, especially in high-risk research and operational activities.

9. Prevention Measures

- **Staffing Safeguards:** Members of the CGIAR Integrated Partnership 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. People and culture/human resources departments of all CGIAR members will conduct background checks, criminal record checks where appropriate, and/or gather employment references before extending offers of employment to ensure that any individual with a history of sexual exploitation or abuse will not be employed by a member of the CGIAR Integrated Partnership.

- **Operational Safeguards:** Ensure at least two adults are present when engaging with children in CGIAR Integrated Partnership programs.

10. Accountability

- Reports and allegations of violations of this policy will be investigated promptly, professionally, and impartially, in accordance with relevant Procedures for Handling Reports of Alleged Misconduct
- Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal or contract termination.
- Where the CGIAR Integrated Partnership or its members have caused harm to a child or vulnerable adult, it will take prompt action to remediate that harm. It is the responsibility of CGIAR Centers, the System Organizations, and/or CGIAR partners to make victims of sexual abuse, misconduct, or exploitation, whole to the degree possible.

11. Monitoring and Review

- Policy effectiveness will be reviewed periodically, incorporating feedback from CGIAR Integrated Partnership members and other stakeholders.
- Reports on safeguarding risks and compliance will be provided to CGIAR Integrated Partnership governing bodies.

Annex: Definitions

1. **Child:** An individual under the age of 18.
2. **Vulnerable Person:** An individual with limited capacity to protect their interests, such as marginalized or impoverished individuals. Vulnerable people may be unable to protect themselves against sexual harm, abuse, or exploitation.
3. **Sexual Exploitation and Abuse** 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.
4. **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 CGIAR Integrated Partnership 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.
5. **Human Trafficking:** The coercion or exploitation of individuals for labor, services, or sex. Human trafficking, also known as trafficking in persons or modern-day slavery, is a crime that involves the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage or slavery. Coercion can be subtle or overt, physical or psychological. The exploitation of a child for transactional sex is human trafficking, regardless of whether any form of force, fraud or coercion was used.