



1 Terms and definitions

Abuse – Abuse is behaviour or actions that cause harm, whether physical, emotional, sexual or financial, to a person.

Child – A person below the age of 18 – UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Safeguarding – Safeguarding is the responsibility that organisations have to make sure their staff, operations, and programmes do no harm to children and vulnerable adults, and that means that they do not expose them to the risk of harm and abuse.

Sexual exploitation – Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to: threatening or profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.

Sexual abuse – The actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

Sexual abuse includes, but is not limited to:

- rape
- deliberately causing pain during sex
- assaulting the genitals
- forced sex without protection against pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- forcing someone to perform sexual acts
- using sexually degrading insults
- unwanted touching
- unwanted exposure to pornography
- sexual jokes
- withholding sex as punishment
- using sex to coerce compliance

Vulnerable person – A person who is or may be in need of particular care through lack of agency due to: poverty, mental or other disability, age or illness, and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

2 Scope of the policy

This policy is a global policy. Therefore, all principles of this IRC PSEA Policy are applicable to all those working on behalf of IRC, regardless of their location of work, and therefore includes:

- IRC employees
- IRC Associates
- Members of the IRC Supervisory Board
- Consultants contracted by IRC.

3 Policy statement

IRC is an international think-and-do-tank headquartered in the Netherlands with established country and representative offices globally. IRC is committed to the safeguarding and wellbeing of all individuals. Sexual exploitation and abuse are a violation of basic human rights. IRC aims to provide a safe and trusted environment that safeguards everyone from sexual exploitation and abuse including beneficiary communities, workers, programme participants and partner organisations. Breach of this policy will result in disciplinary action being taken in accordance with the disciplinary measures as described in the IRC Collective Labour Agreement (CLA 2020 – 2022) and IRC Code of Conduct.

The PSEA document forms an integrated part of IRC's Health and Safety Policies and has a direct link to IRC's:

- Whistleblowing policy
- Grievance Procedure (which will be reviewed before 31st December 2020)
- Code of Conduct
- Disciplinary Process (as outlined in the IRC CLA 2020-2022)

4 Zero tolerance commitment

The involvement of all those working on behalf of IRC in acts of sexual exploitation and / or abuse is a grave violation of our responsibility to do no harm and to protect people in need of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services. IRC's ability to reach its organisational objectives hinges on its own legitimacy and credibility. IRC is therefore committed to the principle of zero

tolerance towards sexual exploitation and / or abuse. All IRC employees, IRC associates, members of the IRC Supervisory Board and consultants contracted by IRC must not engage in any of the following activities at any time, whether in- or outside normal working hours or locations:

- Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual favours. As an organisation, we believe that this is an abuse of power contrary to IRC's policies and values;
- Engage in any form of sexual relationship with beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics;
- Engage in sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18;
- Sexually abuse or exploit children or vulnerable adults;
- Knowingly engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children or vulnerable adults, including child labour or trafficking;
- Physically assault a child or vulnerable adult;
- Emotionally or psychologically abuse a child or vulnerable adult;
- Put a child or vulnerable adult at risk as a result of IRC's activities, either through individual action, inaction or poor programme design and implementation. This includes the way in which we gather and communicate information about individuals in our programmes.

Engaging in any of the above-mentioned actions will be deemed sexual exploitation and / or abuse and result in disciplinary action.

The following list of behaviours applies to all those working on behalf of IRC in both their private and professional lives:

- To always act in a manner which upholds the values and reputation of IRC.
- To create and maintain a safe and trusted environment that promotes the implementation of this Policy and safeguards everyone from sexual exploitation and / or abuse.
- To comply with all relevant national laws of the country in which he or she is placed, or to which he or she is travelling.
- To be aware that sexual behaviour is an area of particular sensitivity, where conduct may more easily be seen as offensive or be misinterpreted.
- To ensure personal conduct towards a co-worker is not exploitative or such that it reasonably leads to a perception of exploitation.
- To read and agree to abide by the expected behaviours outlined in the IRC **Code of Conduct**.

5 Reporting

Whenever anyone has any concern, suspicion or allegation of sexual exploitation and / or abuse or breach of the IRC Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Policy, this should be reported, using the reporting procedures drawn up in the IRC **Grievance Procedure** and the **Whistleblowing Policy**.

External persons wishing to report a concern, suspicion or allegation can file a complaint via the external complaints form on the IRC website. This complaint will be investigated in accordance with the reporting procedure set out in the external complaints policy.

On an annual basis IRC will report on the number of internal and external incidents and/or complaints brought forward to IRC, in the HR section of the IRC Annual Report.

6 Enforcement and training

By signing their contract of employment and/or any other contractual agreement confirming a working relationship with IRC, all IRC employees, associates, members of the IRC Supervisory Board and consultants have agreed and are committed to this policy.

A training on the Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse is a mandatory part of IRC's induction programme for everybody who enters into a working relationship with IRC. On a periodic basis, IRC will organise mandatory (refresher) trainings on the contents and implications of this policy for all employees, associates, and members of the IRC Supervisory Board.

Version: V1.0 20200616

Validity date: 20th June 2020

Signed in The Hague on 20th June 2020.

IRC CEO,
Patrick Moriarty

IRC Works Council Chair,

Stef Smits