



POLICY ON PROTECTION FROM SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND SEXUAL ABUSE

1. Policy Statement

1.1 Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse violate universally recognized international legal norms and standards and have always been unacceptable behaviour and prohibited conduct.

1.2 Vulnerable adults and children are particularly at risk of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. This policy defines IOG's commitment to the protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSESA) of vulnerable persons, involving IOG Personnel, as participant or witness.

1.3 IOG does not tolerate any form of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse against any individual, regardless of age, gender, sexuality, disability, religion or ethnic origin and commits to take necessary measures to prevent sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. All complaints and concerns about sexual exploitation and sexual abuse will be dealt with and investigated with rigour and seriousness, as appropriate, and measures will be taken against breaches to this policy.

2. Scope of Application

This policy applies to all IOG Personnel, be they employees, associates, consultants or volunteers.

3. Definitions

3.1 Children and vulnerable adults

(a) Child: any individual under the age of 18, irrespective of local country definitions of when a child reaches adulthood.

(b) Vulnerable adults: those aged over 18 years and who identify themselves as unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or exploitation; or who, due to their gender, mental or physical health, disability, ethnicity, religious identity, sexual orientation, economic or social status, or as a result of disasters and conflicts, are deemed to be at risk.



3.2 Sexual Exploitation

Sexual exploitation means 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.

3.3 Sexual Abuse

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

3.4 Sexual Harassment versus Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse

SESA occurs against a beneficiary or member of the community. Sexual harassment occurs between personnel, and involves any unwelcome sexual advance or unwanted verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment is not covered by SESA.

4. Prohibition of Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse

4.1 In order to protect vulnerable populations, especially women and children, the following standards are promulgated.

(a) Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse constitute acts of serious misconduct and are grounds for disciplinary measures, including summary dismissal.

(b) Sexual activity with children, *i.e.*, persons under the age of 18, is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defence.

(c) Exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour, is prohibited. This includes any exchange of development assistance due to beneficiaries of assistance.

(d) Sexual relationships between IOG Personnel and beneficiaries of development assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics, undermine the credibility and integrity of the work of the IOG and are forbidden.



(e) Where a member of IOG Personnel develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual exploitation or sexual abuse by a fellow worker, whether within the IOG or not, the member must report such concerns to the Senior Vice-President, International and Iraq.

4.2 The standards set out above in 4.1 are exhaustive. Other types of sexually exploitive or sexually abusive behaviour may be grounds for administrative action or disciplinary measures, including summary dismissal.

5. Referral to national authorities

If, after proper investigation, there is evidence to support allegations of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, after consultation with the IOG Legal Advisor, the case may be referred to national authorities, for criminal prosecution.

6. Agreements

When engaging in partnerships or similar agreements, these agreements:

6.1 Incorporate this Policy as an attachment;

6.2 Include appropriate language requiring such contracting entities and individuals, and their personnel, to abide by the standards of this Policy; and

6.3 Expressly state that the failure of those entities or individuals to take preventive measures against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, to investigate and report allegations thereof, or to take corrective actions when sexual exploitation or abuse has occurred, shall constitute grounds for IOG to terminate such agreements.

7. IOG Obligations

7.1 IOG Management Obligations

(a) Create and maintain an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. Managers at all levels have a particular responsibility to support and maintain this environment.

(b) Take swift and appropriate action, including legal action when required, against IOG Personnel who commit sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. This may include administrative or disciplinary action, and referral to the relevant authorities for appropriate



action, including criminal prosecution, in the abuser's country of origin as well as the host country.

(c) Take appropriate action to the best of IOG's abilities to protect persons from retaliation where allegations of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse involving IOG Personnel are reported.

(d) Ensure high-level oversight on sexual exploitation and sexual abuse reports received and actions taken, in order to monitor effectiveness, report progress and improve efforts to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

(e) Hold confidential, sensitive information related to incidents of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, whether involving colleagues, program participants or others in the communities in which IOG works. Such sensitive information shall be shared only with enforcement authorities and IOG Personnel of the appropriate seniority or function who have a need to know such information. Breach of the present clause may put others at risk and will therefore result in disciplinary procedures.

7.2 IOG Personnel Obligations

(a) IOG Personnel must report immediately to the Senior Vice-President, International and Iraq, any concerns or suspicions regarding possible violations of this Policy. IOG Personnel must report any such concerns even when the person who may be in violation of this policy is not a member of the IOG Personnel.

(b) IOG Personnel must immediately disclose charges, convictions and other outcomes of an offence that relates to sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, including those under traditional law.

(c) IOG Personnel must undertake to create and maintain an environment that promotes the implementation of this policy. This policy will be publicised on the IOG Website and concerned Personnel, *i.e.*, International and Iraq, will be informed of this policy upon its approval or as they join the concerned Personnel group

7.3 Process

(a) Complaints under this policy shall be directed to the Senior Vice-President, International and Iraq, for appropriate action. Complaints may be in any form whatsoever and the complainant may be requested to formulate the complaint in written form.



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(b) Upon receipt of a complaint under this policy, the Senior Vice-President shall:

- i. in consultation with HR and IOG's Legal Advisor as required, investigate the complaint or cause the complaint to be investigated without delay;
- ii. take appropriate disciplinary measure as required, including a recommendation to the President of the IOG for summary dismissal, against any IOG Personnel who breached this policy;
- iii. as appropriate, in consultation with IOG's Legal Advisor, refer the case to national authorities in the host or home country, or both.

7.4 Rights of victim

Victims under this policy have the right to receive timely feedback on the development and outcome of their case.

7.5 Administration of Policy

This policy is administered by the Senior Vice-President, International and Iraq, in consultation with Human Resources and the Legal Advisor.

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