



Foundation for Rural Development (FRD)
Policy on
Prevention of Sexual Harassment and Abuse
(PSEA)

Foundation for Rural Development

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LET'S AMPLIFY THE VOICE OF VULNERABLE

Dear colleagues,

I would like to emphasize the importance of our Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) policy as the CEO of FRD. Our organization is committed to aiding vulnerable communities, and it is essential that we uphold the highest standards of professionalism and ethical conduct.

It is crucial for all of us to acknowledge the risks of sexual exploitation and abuse and take every necessary step to prevent such incidents within our organization. This involves maintaining vigilance in our interactions with beneficiaries, ensuring our programs are designed to minimize the risk of abuse, and promptly addressing any potential incidents of sexual exploitation or abuse.

We strongly encourage all members of our organization to familiarize themselves with our PSEA policy and to promptly report any concerns or suspicions of potential abuse or exploitation to our designated focal point. Safeguarding the rights and dignity of those we serve is a collective responsibility, and together, we must create a secure and supportive environment for everyone associated with our organization.

Sincerely,

Azmat Khan

Chief Executive Officer FRD

Foundation for Rural Development



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PREVENTION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND ABUSE (PSEA)

SEA constitutes a violation of universally recognized international legal norms and standards, and it stands as unacceptable conduct, strictly prohibited for all humanitarian workers, including those associated with FRD.

FRD maintains an unequivocal zero-tolerance policy toward SEA. It is the organization's expectation that all FRD employees and related personnel consistently adhere to the highest standards of personal and professional behavior. They are to provide assistance and services in a manner that upholds and nurtures the rights of beneficiaries and other vulnerable members of the local communities.

FRD is wholly dedicated to adopting an approach that emphasizes prevention and response to SEA. This approach is rooted in principles of human rights, sensitivity to age, disability, and gender, non-discrimination, and cultural appropriateness. It remains victim-centric in cases where SEA allegations arise, ensuring a comprehensive response that prioritizes the well-being and rights of the survivor.

Prevention of Sexual Harassment and Abuse (PSEA) is a separate policy as well as crucial component of our policy on **Protection against workplace harassment** and its additional component extends the scope of our policy to be applied for all concerned including staff, volunteers, partners, vendors and sub-contractors. Our PSEA policy provides with clear guidelines on what constitutes sexual harassment and abuse, and how to report incidents if they occur.

FRD follows its code of conduct to ensure that staff and affiliates conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner. With reference to PSEA (Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse), FRD follows the code of conducts mentioned below;

- **Zero Tolerance:** FRD has zero tolerance for any form of sexual exploitation and abuse.
- **Conducive Working Environment:** FRD ensures a safe and secure environment that is free from sexual exploitation and abuse.
- **Professional Behavior:** We clearly communicate to our staff, volunteers, partners, vendors and sub-contractors (if any) to conduct themselves in a professional and respectful manner at all times and avoid any behavior that could be perceived as sexual harassment or abuse.
- **Inclusion of PSEA clauses in contracts and agreements:** Our contracts and agreements with partners and suppliers Include PSEA clauses to avoid such incidents.

Definition: Sexual exploitation and abuse refers to any form of sexual activity that is forced, coerced, or otherwise non-consensual. This can include sexual harassment, sexual assault, and sexual exploitation. In the context of above definition; **Sexual Exploitation** refers to any proven or attempted exploitation of a position of vulnerability, the misuse of differential power, or the breach of trust



for sexual gratification. This may include, but is not limited to, deriving financial, social, or political gains from the sexual exploitation of another.

Sexual Abuse denotes the actual or threatened physical violation of a sexual nature, whether it occurs through force or under coercive and unequal conditions.

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) encompasses the misuse or attempted misuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes. It also encompasses the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature. This policy pertains to SEA incidents involving FRD personnel, their implementing partners, or other humanitarian workers, in relation to the individuals they serve.

Commitment to PSEA:

FRD will diligently strive to establish and preserve a secure environment that is entirely free from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA). To attain this objective, FRD will employ appropriate measures within the communities where it conducts its operations. This endeavor will be fortified by a comprehensive PSEA framework, which encompasses both preventive and responsive actions.

The PSEA framework unequivocally reaffirms FRD's allegiance to the UN Secretary-General's Bulletin on Special Measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13). Furthermore, it underscores FRD's unwavering commitment to the complete and sustained implementation of the IASC Six Core Principles that pertain to SEA.

Six core principles:

SEA committed by FRD employees and related personnel is deemed severe misconduct and constitutes just cause for termination of employment. Engaging in sexual activity with individuals under the age of 18 is expressly prohibited, irrespective of local age of majority or age of consent laws. A mistaken belief regarding the age of a minor is not a valid defense.

The exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sexual acts, including sexual favors and any demeaning or exploitative conduct, is strictly prohibited. This prohibition extends to any exchange involving assistance rightfully designated for beneficiaries.

All forms of sexual relationships between FRD employees or related personnel and recipients of aid or other vulnerable members of the local community that involve an improper use of one's rank or position are expressly prohibited. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of humanitarian assistance efforts.



Should any FRD employee or related personnel harbor concerns or suspicions of sexual abuse or exploitation by a colleague, whether within the organization or externally, they are mandated to report such concerns through established reporting channels.

Each and every FRD employee and related personnel are obligated to foster an environment that thwarts SEA and actively facilitates the execution of this policy. Managers at all hierarchical levels shoulder particular responsibilities in supporting and developing systems to sustain this environment.

PSEA Framework for the Foundation for Rural Development (FRD)

The following PSEA framework shall be operationalized in a manner adapted to the context, dynamics, and organizational structure of the Foundation for Rural Development (FRD). The relevant measures will be reflected, as necessary, in the relevant organizational policies and procedures.

As appropriate, FRD will consult with beneficiaries and local communities, including at-risk groups as identified by FRD, to ensure that the systems put in place and measures taken for the prevention and response to SEA are sensitive to the vulnerabilities and needs of beneficiaries and culturally appropriate.

Integration of PSEA into Planning, Programming, and Operational Processes

FRD ensures that risks of sexual exploitation and abuse are properly assessed, addressed, and monitored by integrating PSEA into its planning, programming, and operational processes, such as strategic planning, budgeting, and program cycle management. Sufficient human and financial resources are allocated for this purpose.

FRD conducts thorough and inclusive risk analysis and assessments on SEA while designing projects and program activities with mitigation measures. The organization identifies groups that are the most marginalized and at heightened risk of SEA through site safety mapping, focus group discussions with intended beneficiaries, and other relevant research methods.

Recruitment

FRD has safe and PSEA-sensitive human resources practices and processes in place during recruitment, contracting, and performance management.

Job announcements:

FRD explicitly states in a standard paragraph in its job announcements its zero-tolerance policy regarding SEA.

Interviews:

As part of the recruitment interviews, FRD asks questions related to ethics and PSEA.



Vetting:

FRD systematically vets all prospective job candidates in accordance with established screening procedures to ensure that FRD does not hire potential employees who would pose a risk to staff and beneficiaries.

Self-declaration:

FRD asks selected applicants to sign self-declarations committing not to have committed SEA in the past and not to commit SEA in their new role within the organization.

Employment contracts:

FRD includes a PSEA clause in its employment contracts, clearly establishing the definitions and roles and responsibilities of staff regarding PSEA. These include, but are not limited to, the duty not to commit SEA, to report SEA, and to cooperate in good faith with any investigation or audit related to a SEA case conducted by the organization.

PSEA Focal Points:

FRD provides designated PSEA focal points with specific terms of reference related to their PSEA roles and responsibilities.

HR processes:

FRD aligns its HR processes with its SEA policy to describe the reporting and response mechanism for SEA allegations (disciplinary measures for proven allegations).

Organizational Management - Cooperation Agreements

FRD includes a standard clause in all its contracts and partnership agreements with its suppliers, contractors, subcontractors, and sub-partners requiring them to commit to a zero-tolerance policy on SEA and to take measures to prevent and address SEA. Where suppliers, partners, and contractors do not have appropriate policies and measures in place, FRD will support them in developing such policies and take relevant measures. The failure of these entities or individuals to take preventive measures against SEA, to investigate allegations thereof, or to take corrective action when SEA has occurred shall constitute grounds for termination of any cooperative arrangement.

Awareness of Personnel, Including Mandatory Trainings

FRD is committed to ensuring that its personnel understand PSEA, are aware of the PSEA systems of the organization, and are informed of their obligations as well as what actions to take in case of an allegation. Personnel shall be informed of the following:

Definitions of SEA and a clear understanding of behaviors that constitute SEA.

The obligation of all personnel to report any suspicions or concerns and consequences for failing to report (e.g., disciplinary measures).



The option of reporting information anonymously. The organization's protections for those who make an allegation in good faith (e.g. whistleblower policy, protection plans for complainants).

Details regarding who to report to and what information to share to allow for proper response and follow-up.

A clear prohibition of SEA.

Actions that personnel are required to take, including the prompt reporting of allegations and referral of survivors.

FRD holds mandatory induction and refresher trainings for all employees and related personnel on the organization's SEA policy and procedures. Training materials on PSEA are adapted to the type of training provided and the audience, and opportunities for exchange and discussion among personnel are provided.

In addition to trainings, FRD takes measures to ensure that its employees and associated personnel are informed of their PSEA-related obligations, including posters, memos, reminder emails, and integration into agenda meetings.

REPORTING:

FRD has clear reporting procedures for staff, volunteers, and partners who witness or experience any incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse. We encourage all individuals to report any incidents promptly, and ensure that all reports are taken seriously and investigated promptly.

The reporting mechanism mainly includes the following steps:

- **Incident Report:** Anyone who witnesses or experiences sexual exploitation or abuse is encouraged to report the incident. Reports can share with designated PSEA focal points within FRD or through confidential numbers or email addresses.
- **Assessment:** The PSEA focal points or designated personnel will assess the report to determine the nature and severity of the incident, and take appropriate action based on the PSEA policy.
- **Investigation:** If the report warrants an investigation, the PSEA focal points or designated personnel will initiate an investigation into the incident. The investigation may involve interviewing witnesses and gathering evidence.
- **Response:** Based on the findings of the investigation, FRD will take appropriate action to address the incident and prevent future incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse. This may include providing support to the survivor, taking disciplinary action against the perpetrator, or revising organizational policies and practices to prevent future incidents.
- **Follow-up:** FRD will follow up with the survivor to ensure that their needs are being met and that they are receiving the necessary support.

It is important to note that the reporting mechanism is designed to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the survivor while ensuring that appropriate action is taken to address incidents of sexual exploitation



and abuse. FRD has clear guidelines and protocols in place to ensure that all reports are handled in a sensitive and appropriate manner.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Confidentiality is crucial in protecting against sexual exploitation and abuse. When individuals come forward to report incidents of sexual exploitation or abuse, they are often sharing sensitive and personal information that they may not want to be made public.

We respect the confidentiality and privacy of individuals who report incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse. All reports will be treated with the utmost confidentiality, and information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis.

In order to encourage individuals to report incidents of sexual exploitation or abuse, it is important that they feel their confidentiality will be respected. FRD ensures that the designated person will only disclose the information *on a need-to-know basis*, and only to individuals who have a legitimate reason to know the information.

FRD has designated person(s) using secure reporting mechanisms, limiting access to information, and ensuring that all individuals involved in the reporting process are properly trained on the importance of maintaining confidentiality.

However, it is important to note that confidentiality is not absolute, and there may be situations where it is necessary to disclose information in order to protect individuals from harm. In these situations, the disclosure of information is done in a way that minimizes any harm to the individual and is done in accordance with relevant laws and policies.

TRAINING AND ORIENTATION ON THE PSEA POLICY:

All staff, volunteers, and partners will receive training on PSEA policies and procedures, as well as on appropriate behavior and ethical standards. Training will be provided regularly, and all new staff, volunteers, and partners will receive training as part of their orientation. Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, is a critical topic for us because we are working with vulnerable populations. Training staff, volunteers, and partners on PSEA is essential to ensure that everyone is aware of the risks, understands how to prevent exploitation and abuse, and knows how to respond appropriately if an incident occurs.

Main topics of our training on PSEA include;

- **Tailor training to different groups:** Different groups may require different types of training. For example, staff working directly with vulnerable populations may need more in-depth training than volunteers who have less direct contact with beneficiaries. Therefore, we provide trainings tailored to the specific needs of each group.
- **Use interactive training methods:** People learn best through active engagement; Therefore, we use interactive training methods such as role-playing, case studies, and group discussions to help participants understand how to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse.



- **Ongoing training:** PSEA training is not a one-time event. Therefore, we provide ongoing training to ensure that everyone is aware of any changes to policies and guidelines and to reinforce the importance of preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse.
- **Encourage reporting:** We encourage staff, volunteers, and partners to report any concerns or incidents of exploitation and abuse and emphasize that reporting is not only a duty but also a way to protect beneficiaries and the integrity of the organization.

ACCOUNTABILITY:

FRD holds all staff, volunteers, and partners accountable for their behavior, and will take appropriate disciplinary action for any behavior that violates the PSEA policy or code of conduct. This can include termination of employment or partnership, and reporting to authorities if necessary. We take the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse seriously, and are committed to preventing it within our organization. We encourage all individuals to speak up and report any incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse, and we will do everything in our power to support and protect those who come forward.

Following are the key steps FRD takes to promote accountability for PSEA at the organizational level;

- **Clear PSEA policies and procedures:** We have clear policy and procedures in place that outline what constitutes sexual exploitation and abuse, how to report incidents, and how to respond to allegations. The policy will be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure to remain relevant and effective.
- **Provide training and awareness-raising:** We ensure that all staff, volunteers, and partners receive regular trainings on PSEA. The training covers what constitutes sexual exploitation and abuse, how to report incidents, and how to prevent such behavior.
- **Reporting mechanisms:** We have established confidential reporting mechanisms for individuals to report incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse. These mechanisms are widely publicized and accessible to all staff, volunteers, and partners.
- **Ensure accountability for staff and partners:** We have clear procedures in place for investigating and taking disciplinary action against staff and partners who engage in sexual exploitation and abuse. This includes ensuring that perpetrators are held accountable for their actions and that survivors are provided with support and assistance.

PSEA COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE:

- **Purpose:** The PSEA Committee is established to ensure that FRD has effective policies, procedures, and mechanisms in place to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse.
- **Membership:** The PSEA Committee is consist of representatives from the following departments:
 - Human Resources
 - Program Management, and Protection.
 - Operations



The committee members have relevant experience and expertise in issues related to sexual exploitation and abuse.

Responsibilities:

The PSEA Committee will be responsible for the following:

- Reviewing and updating FRD's PSEA policies and procedures.
- Ensuring that staff, partners, and beneficiaries are aware of the PSEA policies and procedures.
- Monitoring and reporting on incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse.
- Providing support to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse.
- Conducting investigations into allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse.
- Recommending appropriate actions to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse.

Reporting:

The PSEA Committee will report on its activities and findings to the Senior Management Team headed by CEO FRD on a quarterly basis. Ad hoc reports will be submitted as required in the event of significant incidents or investigations.

Confidentiality:

All PSEA-related matters will be handled with strict confidentiality. Only members of the PSEA Committee and other authorized staff will have access to sensitive information.

Accountability:

The PSEA Committee will be accountable to the Senior Management Team headed by Executive Director of FRD. The committee's performance will be evaluated on an annual basis, and it will be held accountable for its actions.

Case Management Register of PSEA;

Case Number	Date Reported	Date of Incident	Victim Name	Age	Gender	Type of Abuse	Alleged Perpetrator Name	Relationship with Victim	Actions Taken	Status

In this register, each case is assigned a unique case number and includes information such as the date of the report, date of the incident, victim name, age, gender, type of abuse, alleged perpetrator name,



relationship with the victim, actions taken, and status of the case. This information will be used for tracking and managing cases of sexual exploitation and abuse within an organization or community.

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