

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

1.0 Objective

Change Foundation is committed to preventing all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation (SEA). This policy seeks to ensure that all participants in Change Foundation programmes are safe and not exposed to any threat or conduct involving sexual exploitation or abuse. Change Foundation will respond promptly and appropriately to any SEA allegations and follows a zero-tolerance approach to any instance of SEA.

We are committed to create and maintain an enabling and safe environment, free from SEA, by taking appropriate measures for this purpose, internally and in the communities where we operate through robust prevention and response work.

2.0 Scope of the Policy:

This policy is applicable to:

- All Change Foundation staff, which for the purposes of this policy only includes board members, employees (whether working full-time, part-time, remotely).
- Interns and volunteers involved in the work of Change Foundation Any type of consultants and contractors (either individual or entity) with whom Change Foundation entered into an agreement.
- All implementing partners of CHANGE FOUNDATION

(All the above members together are termed as "related personnel" in the rest of this policy)

Change Foundation requires that such policies should be in accordance with applicable law, local regulations and adopted best practice

3.0 Policy statement:

Change Foundation has a policy of zero tolerance towards SEA. All Change Foundation employees and related personnel are expected to always uphold the highest standards of personal and professional conduct, and to provide services in a manner that respects and fosters the rights of beneficiaries and other vulnerable members from the communities we serve.

4.0 Definitions¹

Sexual exploitation is defined as an actual or attempted abuse of a position of power or trust, for sexual purpose. Exploitation can include profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.

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

4.1 Examples of Prohibited Behaviors

Change Foundation staff are prohibited from engaging in any form of sexual exploitation or abuse of a person participating in an Change Foundation or Change Foundation supported programme. Engaging in sexual relationships with beneficiaries of programmes are not allowed, as these relationships are based on inherently unequal power dynamics.

The following are the examples of sexual exploitation and abuse that includes but are not limited to:

- Abuse of vulnerability, differential power or trust
- Offering money, gifts or a job in exchange for sex

¹ Both definitions are adopted from the UN Secretary General's Bulletin ST/SGB/2003/13, 2003. Available at: <https://undocs.org/en/ST/SGB/2003/13>

- Withholding due services or blackmailing for sex
- Soliciting sex work
- Threats of sexual exploitation
- Sexual assault or abuse
- Unwanted (without consent) touching of a sexual nature
- Threats of an unwanted sexual act
- Raping or attempted rape
- Any sexual activity with a child

5.0 Six core principles:

The following are the six core principles that constitutes SEA

- i. SEA by Change Foundation employees and related personnel constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment.
- ii. Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defense.
- iii. Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior is prohibited. This includes exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries.
- iv. Any sexual relationship between Change Foundation employees or related personnel and beneficiaries of assistance or other vulnerable members of the local community that involves improper use of rank or position is prohibited. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of our work for the welfare of the community.
- v. Where Change Foundation employee or related personnel develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation by a fellow worker, whether in the same organization or not, he or she must report such concerns via established reporting mechanisms.
- vi. All Change Foundation employees and related personnel are obliged to create and maintain an environment which prevents SEA and promotes the implementation of this policy. Managers at all levels have responsibilities to support and develop systems which maintain this environment.

6.0 Complaint Redressal Mechanism

Change Foundation has safe, confidential, and accessible mechanisms and procedures for personnel, beneficiaries and communities, including children, to report SEA allegations that and ensures that beneficiaries are aware of these.

The Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) constitutes for the purpose of providing redressal to any form of sexual harassment at our workplace is entrusted to manage the enquiry proceedings of any complaints received with regards to SEA. The findings and recommendation of the committee will be submitted to Chief Executive for appropriate further actions.

Change Foundation has a process for investigation of SEA allegations in place and shall properly and without delay, investigate complaints on SEA by its employees or related personnel.

Where SEA occurs as a result of an act or omission by any third party or outsider, Change Foundation shall take all steps necessary and reasonable to assist the affected person in terms of support and preventive action.

In case the Committee find the degree of offence coverable under the Indian Penal Code, then this fact shall be mentioned in its report and appropriate action shall be initiated by the Management, for filing a legal action.

7.0 Assistance to the Victim

Change Foundation has a system to promptly refer SEA survivors to available services, based on their needs and consent. Change Foundation is committed to extend support to the victim/survivor in the form of :

- providing counselling support through referrals to mental health experts,
- allowing them to proceed on leave
- transferring or suspending the accused person (depending on the gravity of the complaint) during the course of the enquiry
- providing support in filing police complaints to the aggrieved employee.
- all required assistance for filing legal complaints.

8.0 Preventive Measures

Change Foundation systematically vets all prospective job candidates in accordance with established screening procedures.

Change Foundation holds trainings for all employees and related personnel on the Organization's SEA policy and procedures. All new employees joining Change Foundation will be provided training on SEA. Refresher trainings also will be organized for existing team members in frequent intervals. The HR team in close coordination with programmes team is responsible to ensure timely induction and refresher trainings for the staff and related personnel.

This policy is to be read and comprehend in conjunction with Prevention of Sexual Harassment at Work Place Policy (Section 8.11.3) Safeguarding Policy (Section 8.11.4), Whistle Blowing Policy (Section 8.11.5 and Child Protection Policy (Annexure I) of Chapter 8 Human Resources Policies and Procedures

Effective Date:

01.04.2024

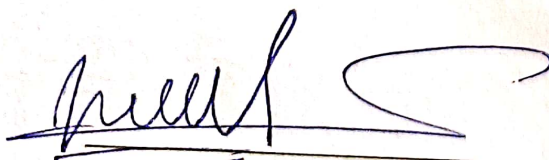
Approved by:

Maya SR Nayak

Position:

President

Date: 01.04.2024



Authorized Signatory
Change Foundation



Place: Yadagir

Date: 01.04.2024

