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Safeguarding & Code of Conduct Policy

Policy Statement

East-West Seed Knowledge Transfer Foundation (EWS-KT) is committed to providing a safe environment for every person connected with the work we do.

EWS-KT has a zero-tolerance policy for any form of violence, abuse, exploitation or harassment. EWS-KT will not tolerate its board members, employees, volunteers, consultants, partners, third party staff, and interns (herein collectively called “EWS-KT representatives”) carrying out any form of sexual harassment, sexual exploitation or sexual abuse.


EWS-KT commits to supporting survivors, improving safeguarding capacity, reporting, investigating, responding to, and preventing sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse. EWS-KT has a diverse workforce and takes diversity and inclusion seriously. EWS-KT is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate against employees based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability.

Purpose

This policy applies globally to all EWS-KT representatives and partners, except in countries where the following policy contravenes local legislation. In these cases, local legislation must be followed with guidance from the EWS-KT Global HR Manager.

Principles:

- Violation of the policy by EWS-KT representatives may constitute acts of gross misconduct and are, therefore, grounds for termination of employment or contract/agreement.
- Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of consent locally. Mistaken belief in the age of the child is not a defense.
- Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior by EWS-KT representatives is prohibited at all times.
- Providing training/ orientation and information to all EWS-KT representatives so they understand and abide by the policy and code of conduct.
- Maintaining confidentiality is a key, breach of which will be taken seriously.
- It is a personal responsibility of an EWS-KT representative to create and maintain an environment that promotes the implementation of this policy.
- Sexual relationships between EWS-KT representatives and beneficiaries are forbidden.
- EWS-KT will take action against anyone, whether they are the subject of a complaint or not, who seek or carry out retaliatory action against complainants, survivors or other witnesses. Employees may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

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Reporting Mechanism

Actual, potential or suspected incidents of abuse must be reported immediately. Where appropriate, the employee should make a report to his/her Line Manager or the EWS-KT Global HR Manager. Complaints can be verbal or written. Employees and external stakeholders may report concerns directly to the EWS-KT Global HR Manager at ews.kthr@eastwestseed.com. Reports will be handled with strict confidentiality, in accordance with this policy. The EWS-KT Global HR Manager will ensure that the matter is appropriately investigated. A safeguarding team will be formed to follow the process of investigation and hearing.

The need to report arises in the following instances:

- Abuse is observed or suspected
- An allegation of abuse is made
- Someone discloses abuse


It is important to note that where representative/s report concerns, it is not their responsibility to decide if abuse is taking place but it is their responsibility to pass these concerns on. Care must be taken regarding confidentiality and the sharing of information with appropriate people.

Responding to complaints

- The EWS-KT Global HR Manager is responsible for ensuring that all complaints are reviewed confidentially, assessed objectively, and processed in accordance with the timelines and procedures outlined in this policy. All information will be shared strictly on a need-to-know basis to protect the privacy and dignity of those involved.
- All allegations and subsequent follow-up will be documented in a secure and confidential database to ensure accountability. The report will be officially acknowledged within 24 hours, and a safeguarding team will convene a case conference to assess immediate risks and next steps within 72 hours.
- Where cases are being investigated under the Safeguarding Policy, suspension of the alleged perpetrator would automatically take place whilst the allegation is being investigated.
- EWS-KT will carry out independent, safe, and discreet investigations, recognizing the rights of and duty of care to everyone involved, including the complainant and/or survivor, witnesses and the subject of complaint.
- EWS-KT will take swift and appropriate action against EWS-KT representative/s who are found to have violated the policy. This may include disciplinary action, and/or referral to the relevant local authorities if appropriate and safe to do so.
- Survivors are entitled to support services as appropriate and available and according to the wants and the needs of the survivor. Support may include specialist psychosocial support such as counselling, medical assistance etc.

Raising complaints outside of EWS-KT

A survivor can also make a complaint outside of the company. They can do so through the legal framework of the country where the harassment, exploitation or abuse took place. In

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which case EWS-KT will extend full cooperation to the law as appropriate.

Receiving complaints from outside

- **Complaints about EWS-KT Partners**

External stakeholders may report concerns about EWS-KT partners to the EWS-KT Global HR Manager at ews.kthr@eastwestseed.com. Reports will be handled with strict confidentiality, in accordance with this policy.

Where EWS-KT receives a complaint about a partner organization, EWS-KT will expect the partner to respond safely, quickly and appropriately. EWS-KT will assist the partner to ascertain its reporting obligations.

Implementation of this policy

Recruitments- HR staff should ensure that references of staff, consultants, interns, third party staff are documented.

Partnership- EWS-KT further commits that companies/organizations partnering in its projects, also comply with this policy as confirmed by their signing of the policy.

Training- EWS-KT representatives will be trained on the content of this policy as part of their induction into the organization.

Awareness- Managers are responsible for promoting awareness of this policy with people they manage and for supporting/developing systems that create and maintain a safe working environment. Providing new joiners in their team with the policy on their joining.


Beneficiary accountability- EWS-KT is committed to promoting accountability towards our beneficiaries/ farmers, by:

- raising awareness about EWS-KT Safeguarding & Code of Conduct policy
- actively seeking feedback from farmers on EWS-KT's work, individual behaviors

Definitions

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature which makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated. It includes situations where a person is asked to engage in sexual activity as a condition of that person's employment, as well as situations which create an environment which is hostile, intimidating or humiliating for the recipient.

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Sexual harassment can involve one or more incidents and actions constituting harassment may be physical, verbal and non-verbal. Examples of conduct or behaviour which constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

Physical conduct

- Unwelcome physical contact including patting, pinching, stroking, kissing, hugging, fondling, or inappropriate touching
- Physical violence, including sexual assault
- Physical contact, e.g. touching, pinching
- The use of job-related threats or rewards to solicit sexual favours

Verbal conduct


- Comments on a worker's appearance, age, private life, sexual orientation, marital status etc.
- Sexual comments, stories and jokes
- Sexual advances
- Repeated and unwanted social invitations for dates or physical intimacy
- Insults based on the sex of the worker
- Condescending or paternalistic remarks
- Sending sexually explicit messages (by phone or by email)

Non-verbal conduct

- Display of sexually explicit or suggestive material
- Sexually-suggestive gestures
- Whistling
- Leering

Sexual Exploitation

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.

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Sexual Abuse

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

Child


A child is defined as anyone under 18 years old, irrespective of local definition.

Survivor

The person who it is alleged has been the subject of sexual harassment, abuse or exploitation.

Complainant

The person who raises a complaint (this may or may not be the survivor).

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Code of Conduct

The aim of the Code of Conduct is to formalize a standard which governs the EWS-KT representative. By following this Code of Conduct, it is intended that EWS-KT representatives will contribute to strengthening the work of EWS-KT and have a shared understanding of who we are and how we behave.

Standards:

As a representative of EWS-KT, I will

1. Be responsible for the use of information and resources to which I have access by virtue of my employment or association with EWS-KT
 - a. I will ensure that I use EWS-KT information, funds and resources entrusted to me in a responsible and cost-effective manner. These would include:
 - Money
 - Office vehicles
 - Telephones, photocopiers, training/ field day/ demo materials and stationery
 - Other office equipment/resources belonging to EWS-KT
 - Computers/ laptop/ tablets including the use of email, internet
 - Information that is confidential or restricted concerning EWS-KT
 - Any personal information collected from farmers
 - Appropriate use of the EWS-KT name
2. Ensure the safety, health, welfare and wellbeing of all EWS-KT representatives. I will comply with all security and safety guidelines in order to avoid any unnecessary risk to the safety, health, welfare and wellbeing of myself and others, including partner organizations and farmers.
3. Ensure that my personal and professional conduct is, and is seen to be, of the highest standards and I uphold EWS-KT's vision and mission:
 - a. I will work with others in an open and participative way, co-operating both within and across teams to support the delivery of organisational results.
 - b. I will take responsibility and accountability for the quality and timeliness of my own work to contribute to the achievement of the organisation's mission.
 - c. I will not be under the influence of alcohol whilst working. If representing EWS-KT at external functions where alcohol is permitted, I will drink alcohol responsibly. I will not allow alcohol to impair my judgement or have an adverse impact on my behaviour.
 - d. I will not use, or be in possession of, illegal substances at any time.
 - e. I will seek to ensure that my personal conduct does not compromise EWS-KT's reputation and does not impact my ability to discharge my duties.

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- f. I will not accept gifts or any remuneration from beneficiaries, farmers, partners, donors, suppliers, distributors and other persons, which have been offered to me as a result of my association with EWS-KT.
 - g. I will not abuse my position as an EWS-KT representative by requesting any personal service or favour from others in return of my work as a representative of EWS-KT.
 - h. I will uphold the safeguarding policy at all times and refrain from any form of harassment, discrimination, physical or verbal abuse, intimidation or exploitation, both in and out of work.
 - i. I will ensure that my relationships and behaviour are not exploitative, abusive or corrupt in any way.
 - j. I will behave in an appropriate manner towards all guests and representatives whilst travelling and field visits.
4. As an employee, I will not accept any additional employment or consultancy work outside EWS-KT without advising management to ensure there is no conflict of interest and that I remain within legal limits in respect of working hours.

SELF-DECLARATION

I have an obligation to report if I have been subjected to disciplinary action by any of my previous employers with respect to breach of code of conduct or organization’s policies and ethics.

SIGNATURE

I have read carefully and understand EWS-KT Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct and hereby agree to abide by its requirements and commit to upholding the standards of conduct to realize the vision and mission of EWS-KT.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Job Title: _____