



PEOPLE POLICIES & PROCEDURES

# Safeguarding Policy

August 2025

KNOWLEDGE FOR LIFE



**CABI's Mission**

To improve people's lives worldwide by providing information and applying scientific expertise to solve problems in agriculture and the environment.

# 1. Introduction

Safeguarding is the responsibility of organisations to make sure their staff, operations, and programmes do no harm to children and adults at-risk nor expose them to abuse or exploitation.

The purpose of this policy is to protect people, particularly children, at risk adults and beneficiaries of assistance, from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with CABI. This includes harm arising from:

- the conduct of staff or personnel associated with CABI;
- the design and implementation of CABI's programmes and activities.

The policy lays out the commitments made by CABI and informs staff and associated personnel of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

This policy does not cover:

- Sexual harassment in the workplace – this is dealt with under CABI's Dignity at Work Policy.

## Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Debbie Croft, **Chief People Officer (d.croft@cabi.org)**. If you are uncertain if something is covered under this policy you should seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

# 2. Scope

This policy applies to all CABI employees, officers, consultants, contractors, casual workers and agency workers worldwide when acting on behalf of CABI. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

# 3. Policy ownership

The Executive Management Team (EMT) has overall responsibility for this policy and for reviewing the effectiveness of actions taken in response to any concerns raised, and is accountable to the Board through the Audit & Risk Committee.

# 4. Definitions

Safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. In our sector, we understand it to mean protecting people, including children and at-risk adults, from harm that arises from coming into contact with our staff or programmes.

Further definitions relating to safeguarding are provided in the glossary below.

# 5. Policy Statement

CABI believes that everyone we come into contact with, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. CABI will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by staff or associated personnel.

This policy will address the following areas of safeguarding: child safeguarding, adult safeguarding, and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.

CABI commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the three pillars of prevention, reporting and response.

## Prevention

### CABI responsibilities

CABI will:

- ensure all staff have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy;
- design and undertake all its programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with CABI - this includes the way in which information about individuals in our programmes is gathered and communicated;
- implement appropriate safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and associated personnel;
- ensure staff receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organization;
- follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process.

## Staff responsibilities

### Child safeguarding

CABI staff and associated personnel must not:

- engage in sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18;
- sexually abuse or exploit children;
- subject a child to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect;
- engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children including child labour or trafficking.

### Adult safeguarding

CABI staff and associated personnel must not:

- sexually abuse or exploit at risk adults;
- subject an at-risk adult to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect.

## Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse

CABI staff and associated personnel must not:

- exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual activity - this includes any exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries of assistance;
- engage in any sexual relationships with beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics.

Additionally, CABI staff and associated personnel are expected to:

- contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy;
- report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by a CABI staff member or associated personnel.

## Reporting

CABI will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to staff and the communities we work with.

Any staff reporting concerns or complaints made through formal whistleblowing channels will be protected by CABI's Whistleblowing Policy.

CABI will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies.

We hope that everyone working for or with CABI will feel able to raise safeguarding concerns openly under this policy. However, if you want to raise your concern confidentially, we will make every effort to keep your identity secret. If it is necessary for anyone investigating your concern to know your identity, we will discuss this with you.

We will consider anonymous disclosures, however an anonymous disclosure may make a proper investigation more difficult or impossible if we cannot obtain further information from you. It is also more difficult to establish whether any allegations are credible.

### How to report a safeguarding concern

We are more concerned that you have every opportunity to raise a safeguarding concern than about how you raise a concern and so you should decide which of these is best.

1. with CABI management;

OR

2. if you prefer, by using an independent reporting service.

## CABI management

A safeguarding concern may be reported to your line manager. You may tell them in person or put the matter in writing if you prefer.

If, however you reasonably believe that your line manager may be implicated in the concern or if for any other reason you do not wish to approach your line manager, any concerns may be reported to Debbie Croft, Chief People Officer ([d.croft@cabi.org](mailto:d.croft@cabi.org)).

In some circumstances you may prefer to raise the matter directly with another member of the Executive Management Team or with a member of the Board.

### Executive Management Team contacts

Linda Copsey, Executive Director, IT ([l.copsey@cabi.org](mailto:l.copsey@cabi.org))

Carol McNamara, Chief Commercial Officer ([c.mcnamara@cabi.org](mailto:c.mcnamara@cabi.org))

### Board contact

Chair of the Board ([board@cabi.org](mailto:board@cabi.org))

<https://www.cabi.org/about-cabi/how-we-are-managed/board-members/>

### Independent Reporting Service

We have enlisted the services of Navex Global to enable you to report any safeguarding concerns directly to an impartial third-party using telephone, mobile app, or web reporting tools. Navex Global will report concerns independently to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Full contact details for Navex Global are given below.

## Response

Once a safeguarding concern has been raised, the appropriate management will carry out an initial assessment to determine the scope of any investigation. The investigation process will vary according to the circumstances of each case but will always seek to ensure that any concern raised is investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially. Depending on the circumstances, the investigation may involve staff from the People Team and if appropriate external support.

CABI will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff found in breach of this policy.

CABI will offer support to survivors of harm caused by staff or associated personnel, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out (such as an internal investigation). Decisions regarding support will be led by the survivor.

## 6. Confidentiality

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need to know basis only, and should be kept secure at all times.

## 7. Safeguarding incident log and risk register

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will maintain a safeguarding incident log that is updated to reflect all safeguarding cases. This will be used to reflect on vulnerabilities and their mitigation, to learn from safeguarding incidents, and also to notify authorities where necessary and to report to donors and other key stakeholders.

The safeguarding incident log feeds into the CABI risk register which is regularly reviewed by the Executive Management Team and the Audit & Risk Committee of the Board.

## 8. Policy schedule

This Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed annually or where legislation changes.

## 9. Associated policies

- CABI Code of Business Conduct
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Performance & Conduct Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy



## 10. Glossary of Terms

### **Beneficiary of Assistance**

Someone who directly receives goods or services from CABI's programme. Note that misuse of power can also apply to the wider community that the CABI serves, and also can include exploitation by giving the perception of being in a position of power.

### **Child**

A person below the age of 18.

### **Harm**

Psychological, physical and any other infringement of an individual's rights.

### **Psychological harm**

Emotional or psychological abuse, including (but not limited to) humiliating and degrading treatment such as bad name calling, constant criticism, belittling, persistent shaming, solitary confinement and isolation.

### **Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)**

The term used by the humanitarian and development community to refer to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse of affected populations by staff or associated personnel.

### **Safeguarding**

Safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

In the development sector, we understand it to mean protecting people, including children and at-risk adults, from harm that arises from coming into contact with our staff or programmes.

### **Sexual abuse**

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

### **Sexual exploitation**

The term '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. This definition includes human trafficking and modern slavery.

### **Survivor**

The person who has been abused or exploited. The term 'survivor' is often used in preference to 'victim' as it implies strength, resilience and the capacity to survive, however it is the individual's choice how they wish to identify themselves.

### **At-risk adult**

Sometimes also referred to as vulnerable adult. A person who is or may be in need of care by reason of 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.

## Navex Global (Independent Reporting Service)

Navex Global is an independent company, serving millions of employees working in organisations all over the world. Your call to Navex will not be recorded or traced. If you report your concern via the web, Navex will not trace your IP address.

### How does the Navex Global service work?

- Report your whistleblowing concerns via Navex Global: Ethics Point Incident Management.
- They will issue you with a unique reference that allows you to get back in touch with them, to update your report, or respond to information requests from CABI.
- Navex will pass the details of your report to CABI for investigation.

### Web

[www.cabi.ethicspoint.com](http://www.cabi.ethicspoint.com)

### App

<https://cabi.navexone.eu> (this is a mobile intake URL which can be saved to a phone homepage and used like an app).

### Countries with Telephone and Web Reporting

Telephone reporting requires two-stage dialling to be completed to reach a communication specialist, with the following steps:

1. Dial the access number first – this is obtained from the website using the drop-down for the specific country
2. When prompted use the corresponding telephone number for the country
3. The call will then be transferred to a communication specialist to handle the report

### Countries with telephone and web reporting:

China  
Ghana  
India  
Kenya  
Malaysia  
Netherlands  
Pakistan  
Peru  
Switzerland  
Trinidad & Tobago  
Uganda  
United Kingdom  
United States  
Zambia

### Countries with Web Reporting only:

Brazil  
Burundi  
Cameroon  
Nigeria  
South Africa