

## **Farm Radio International Policy E.4.3: Protection from Sexual Misconduct, Harassment, Exploitation and Abuse**

### DEFINITIONS

<b>Exploitation</b>	is using one's position of authority, influence or control over resources, to pressure, force or manipulate someone to do something against their will or unknowingly, by threatening them with negative repercussions.
<b>Sexual abuse</b>	is an actual, or threatened, physical intrusion of a sexual nature, including inappropriate touching, by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.
<b>Sexual exploitation</b>	is any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes; this includes profiting monetarily, socially or politically from sexual exploitation of another.
<b>Sexual Harassment</b>	unwanted conduct of a sexual nature which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.
<b>Sexual Misconduct</b>	is a broad term encompassing any unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature that is committed without consent or by force, intimidation, coercion, or manipulation. Sexual misconduct can be committed by a person of any gender, and it can occur between people of the same or different gender.
<b>Sexual violence</b>	is any sexual act or attempt to obtain a sexual act by violence or coercion, acts to traffic a person or acts directed against a person's sexuality, regardless of the relationship to the victim
<b>Zero-tolerance</b>	signifies that allegations are investigated whenever possible, and that perpetrators are held to account, including through prosecution and-or dismissal where appropriate



## BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

FRI works with target groups (including small-scale farmers, rural citizens, vulnerable adolescents, the elderly, people with disabilities, linguistic or cultural minorities, refugees and internally displaced persons) and partner organizations such as radio stations, farmers' organizations, and associations that reflect the interests of target groups. FRI provides valuable goods and services to these groups and organizations such as broadcasting equipment, wind-up radios, cash to cover costs of participating in meetings, opportunities to be heard on the radio, funding to pay for broadcasting radio programs, training opportunities, and others. FRI also provides employment, internships and volunteer opportunities in environments with high rates of unemployment, absence of unemployment insurance, and poor recourse to the justice system.

As a result, FRI staff, volunteers, including members of the Board of Directors, and contractors, are or may be in a position of power with respect to the individuals in these groups. Thus, there is the potential for sexual misconduct, harassment, abuse and exploitation. The individuals or groups of individuals that distribute, or control the distribution of the goods, services, work opportunities, and particular working conditions that FRI offers can demand sexual "favors" from or feel license to sexually harass individuals in exchange for them.

Whether or not there is a power imbalance between two employees or stakeholders, there is potential for one to be the subject of unwanted behavior from the other. There is potential for anyone working with or at FRI to be either a victim or a perpetrator: volunteers, staff members, contractors or subcontractors, clients, representatives of partner organizations including funders all have the potential to experience or commit acts of sexual misconduct.

FRI employees have the right to work in a workplace that is free of unwanted behavior of a sexual nature. To remain true to its core values, uphold human rights, and make FRI a safe and trusted organization to work with and for, it is essential that it maintain "zero tolerance" for sexual misconduct, violence, harassment, abuse and exploitation.

## POLICY

FRI is committed to creating safe and respectful workplaces and programs that promote gender equality and are free from violence, harassment or abuse. FRI promotes responsibility, respect, honesty, and professional excellence and we will not tolerate harassment, coercion, sexual misconduct, violence, exploitation and abuse of any form. It will proactively respond to all allegations of sexual misconduct and abuses of power, hold people to account, and protect and

support those who have experienced or are vulnerable to abuse. Specifically, FRI Board Directors, management, staff, and volunteers will:

- Treat all beneficiaries, affected communities, local partner organizations, target groups, employees, volunteers, and other persons, fairly and with respect, courtesy, dignity, and according to the respective national laws, international (humanitarian, human rights and refugee) laws and conventions, and local customs.
- Create and maintain an environment that fosters mutual respect and prevents sexual misconduct, harassment, exploitation, violence, abuse of power and corruption, and promotes the implementation of FRI's Code of Conduct.
- Never commit any form of harassment that could result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to individuals/beneficiaries, especially women and children.
- Never exploit the vulnerability of any target group, especially women and children, or allow any person to be placed in a compromising situation.
- Never engage in any sexual activity with persons under the age of 18, regardless of local law about the age of majority or of consent. Mistaken belief in the age of the child is not a defense.
- Never engage in sexual exploitation, violence or abuse of any target group (men, women, girls and boys). This constitutes acts of gross misconduct and is grounds for termination and prosecution.
- Never trade money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours. All forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour are prohibited. This includes trading of assistance that is due to beneficiaries.
- Never withhold assistance, give preferential treatment, or solicit sexual favours, gifts, payments of any kind.
- Consciously avoid accepting gifts (except small tokens of appreciation), sexual services, or bribes from anyone when they are or may be offered with the expectation of assistance or preferential treatment.
- Never engage in sexual relationships with beneficiaries, volunteers or subordinate staff. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of humanitarian aid work. This applies both during and after working hours.
- Never accept, solicit, or profit from, sexual services. This rule applies both within and outside of working hours.

Violation of any provision of this policy by a member of personnel will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of contract for cause, without notice or pay in lieu of

notice, in addition to possible civil, criminal or regulatory action. Such conduct may also affect individual performance assessment and compensation. Additionally, perpetrators may be reported to the authorities for prosecution.

As part of being accountable to each other and to FRI, each of us has an obligation to report any and all violations of this policy by speaking to his or her supervisor or, if the alleged violation has been committed by the supervisor, directly to the appropriate contact listed below:

- In Canada: to the Executive Director or, if the complaint is against the Executive Director, to the Chair of the Board of Directors
- In Africa: to the Country Representative or, if the complaint is against the Country Representative, to the Director of Operations or, if the complaint is against the Director of Operations, to the Executive Director, or, if the complaint is against the Executive Director, to the Chair of the Board of Directors.

Any report or allegation of conduct that may contravene the provisions of this policy will be investigated -even if the person making the allegation asks that it not be reported. The information will be treated confidentially to the extent possible and in a manner consistent with FRI's responsibility to address the issue raised.

FRI will provide effective support to survivors or victims of sexual misconduct by, for example, enabling them to access and benefit from counselling services. FRI will identify a trained counsellor in each country of operation that can be approached in confidence by anyone that has experienced sexual misconduct. The counsellor will not have an obligation to report the allegation to FRI if the victim requests that it be kept in confidence.

No one may retaliate or take adverse action against a member of personnel or a beneficiary or member of a local partner organization or targeted group who, in good faith, reports a real or potential contravention of this policy, or who provides information or assistance for an investigation

## PROCEDURES

- This policy on the Prevention of Sexual Misconduct, Harassment and Abuse shall be an integral component of FRI's Code of Conduct for all employees and volunteers. All staff shall review the Code of Conduct and signal their commitment to abiding by its terms throughout their employment.
- The policy will be translated into languages spoken by staff, printed and displayed in the office in publicly accessible location.

- An annual training session will be held in each country office to review the Code of Conduct including this policy.
- Beneficiaries, community groups and partners will be advised of FRI's policy of zero tolerance, the mechanism for making a complaint and how FRI will handle a complaint, including protection of confidentiality.
- To reduce the risk of sexual misconduct, FRI will endeavor to avoid hiring or engaging individuals who have a history of sexual misconduct, and will cooperate with others in the sector to prevent re-engagement of perpetrators.
  - This may include requiring police or judicial record checks of new employees, and filing reports to the appropriate authorities when FRI employees have perpetrated sexual abuse.
- FRI will proactively offer and arrange for support for survivors or victims of sexual misconduct, including, mental and physical health care services, counselling, etc.
- To affirm its commitment to preventing sexual misconduct, harassment and abuse, the Executive Director will sign the CCIC Leaders' Pledge on Preventing and Addressing Sexual Misconduct.