



Center for Finance

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

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Approved by	Ivana Katnic, CEO

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## **1 PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Safeguarding and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Policy is to ensure that all activities of the Center for Finance are conducted in a safe, respectful, and responsible manner, and that all individuals are protected from harm, exploitation, abuse, and misconduct.

This Policy establishes a zero-tolerance approach to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), harassment, and any form of harmful or inappropriate behavior.

The Policy aims to:

- Protect all individuals, including staff, partners, beneficiaries, and participants, from harm and misconduct;
- Ensure that safeguarding principles are integrated into all organizational activities, including projects and partnerships;
- Establish clear standards of behavior and responsibilities;
- Provide mechanisms for reporting, responding to, and preventing safeguarding concerns;
- Ensure compliance with applicable laws, donor requirements, and international safeguarding standards.

This Policy reflects the organization's commitment to ethical conduct, human rights, and responsible engagement with all stakeholders.

## **2 SCOPE**

This Safeguarding and PSEA Policy applies to all individuals and entities associated with the Center for Finance, as well as to all activities carried out by or on behalf of the organization.

The Policy applies to:

- All employees, including full-time, part-time, and temporary staff;
- Management and leadership of the organization;
- Consultants, experts, and project staff;
- Interns and volunteers;
- Partners, collaborators, and stakeholders;
- Suppliers, contractors, and service providers.

This Policy applies to all organizational activities, including:

- Research, analysis, and policy work;
- Project implementation, including donor-funded activities;
- Trainings, workshops, conferences, and public events;
- Fieldwork, stakeholder engagement, and community interactions;
- Online and digital engagement.

All individuals covered by this Policy are required to comply with its provisions and are expected to uphold the highest standards of behavior.

The Center for Finance also promotes the application of safeguarding principles across its partnerships and expects all partners and service providers to adhere to similar standards, particularly in the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse.

This Policy applies regardless of location and is relevant to both in-person and virtual environments.

### 3 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

- **Safeguarding** refers to the responsibility of the organization to ensure that its staff, operations, and activities do not cause harm to individuals, and that any risks of harm are identified, prevented, and addressed.
- **Sexual Exploitation** is defined as 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 person.
- **Sexual Abuse** refers to the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.
- **Sexual Harassment** refers to any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment.

**Child** refers to any person under the age of 18 years.

**Abuse** refers to any action that harms or exploits another person physically, emotionally, psychologically, or sexually.

**Exploitation** refers to the abuse of a position of vulnerability, power, or trust for personal or organizational gain.

**Beneficiaries** refers to individuals, groups, or communities who are directly or indirectly impacted by the organization's activities, including participants in projects, trainings, or events.

**Staff** refers to all individuals working for or representing the organization, including employees, consultants, interns, and volunteers.

These definitions are aligned with international standards and serve as the basis for understanding and applying this Policy.

#### **4 SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES & COMMITMENTS**

The Center for Finance is committed to ensuring that all its activities are conducted in a manner that respects the dignity, rights, and safety of all individuals.

The organization adopts a zero-tolerance approach to sexual exploitation and abuse, harassment, and any form of harmful or inappropriate behavior. All individuals associated with the organization are expected to act with integrity, professionalism, and respect in all interactions.

The Center for Finance is committed to a “Do No Harm” approach, ensuring that its activities do not expose individuals or communities to risks of harm. Safeguarding considerations are integrated into the design, implementation, and evaluation of projects and activities.

The organization promotes a culture of accountability and openness, where safeguarding concerns can be raised without fear of retaliation. All individuals are encouraged to report concerns in good faith, and all reports are treated with seriousness and confidentiality.

Special attention is given to individuals and groups who may be in situations of vulnerability. The organization recognizes power imbalances that may exist in professional or project-related relationships and takes steps to prevent their misuse.

The Center for Finance ensures that safeguarding responsibilities are shared across the organization. Staff, management, and partners are all expected to uphold safeguarding standards and contribute to a safe and respectful environment.

The organization also promotes safeguarding principles across its partnerships and expects partners, contractors, and service providers to adhere to similar standards, particularly in preventing sexual exploitation and abuse.

Through these commitments, the Center for Finance aims to create and maintain an environment that is safe, inclusive, and respectful for all individuals involved in its work.

#### **5 STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR**

All individuals associated with the Center for Finance are expected to maintain the highest standards of personal and professional conduct and to contribute to a safe and respectful environment at all times.

Individuals must treat all persons with dignity and respect and must not engage in any form of exploitation, abuse, harassment, or inappropriate behavior. Any conduct that could harm others or create an unsafe or uncomfortable environment is strictly prohibited.

The following behaviors are not permitted under any circumstances:

- Any form of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse;
- Engaging in sexual activity with individuals under the age of 18, regardless of local laws or consent;

- Exchange of money, employment, goods, services, or any other benefit for sexual favors or relationships;
- Any form of harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying, intimidation, or verbal abuse;
- Abuse of power, authority, or position for personal or professional gain;
- Any behavior that exploits vulnerability or creates unequal or coercive conditions.

Individuals must avoid any actions or relationships that could be perceived as exploitative or inappropriate, particularly in situations where there is a power imbalance, such as in interactions with beneficiaries, participants, or junior staff.

All individuals are expected to:

- Act responsibly and with integrity in all interactions;
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries;
- Be aware of and sensitive to cultural and social contexts;
- Immediately report any safeguarding concerns or suspected violations.

The Center for Finance requires all staff and associated individuals to adhere to these standards at all times, both within and outside the workplace when representing the organization.

Failure to comply with these standards constitutes a serious violation of this Policy and may result in disciplinary action or other appropriate measures.

## **6 ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Center for Finance ensures that safeguarding responsibilities are clearly defined and embedded across all levels of the organization.

Senior management holds overall responsibility for ensuring that safeguarding principles are integrated into the organization's governance, operations, and projects. This includes setting the tone for a safe and respectful organizational culture, ensuring that appropriate policies and procedures are in place, and allocating resources to support safeguarding implementation.

The organization designates a Safeguarding / PSEA Focal Point responsible for coordinating the implementation of this Policy. This role includes providing guidance to staff, supporting awareness-raising efforts, receiving and managing safeguarding concerns, and ensuring appropriate follow-up actions.

Project managers are responsible for integrating safeguarding considerations into project design and implementation. They must ensure that risks are identified and mitigated, that activities are conducted safely, and that all partners and participants are informed of expected standards of behavior.

All employees, consultants, interns, and collaborators are responsible for adhering to this Policy, maintaining professional conduct, and actively contributing to a safe environment. They are expected to remain vigilant, to recognize potential safeguarding risks, and to report any concerns promptly.

Partners, contractors, and service providers are expected to comply with safeguarding principles and standards when engaged in activities with or on behalf of the organization. The Center for Finance promotes alignment with this Policy across its partnerships and expects cooperation in preventing and addressing safeguarding risks.

Through shared responsibility and clear accountability, the organization ensures that safeguarding is effectively implemented and upheld in all aspects of its work.

## **7 REPORTING & RESPONSE MECHANISMS**

The Center for Finance is committed to ensuring that all safeguarding concerns are reported, addressed, and managed in a timely, confidential, and effective manner.

All individuals associated with the organization have a responsibility to report any suspected or actual cases of sexual exploitation, abuse, harassment, or other safeguarding concerns. Reports may be made through appropriate internal channels, including management or the designated Safeguarding / PSEA Focal Point.

The organization encourages reporting in good faith and recognizes that concerns may arise from observations, suspicions, or disclosures. Individuals are not required to have proof in order to report a concern.

All reports are treated with strict confidentiality and handled with sensitivity and respect for all parties involved. The Center for Finance ensures that individuals who report concerns in good faith are protected from retaliation, intimidation, or any form of adverse consequences.

Upon receiving a report, the organization conducts an initial assessment to determine the appropriate course of action. Where necessary, further investigation is carried out in a fair, impartial, and timely manner, ensuring that the rights and dignity of all individuals are respected.

The organization takes appropriate measures in response to confirmed cases of misconduct, which may include disciplinary action, termination of contracts, or referral to relevant authorities where required.

The safety and well-being of affected individuals is a priority in all response actions. Where appropriate, support measures may be considered, taking into account the needs and circumstances of those affected.

Through these reporting and response mechanisms, the Center for Finance ensures accountability, protection, and effective handling of safeguarding concerns.

## **8 PREVENTION & AWARENESS**

The Center for Finance is committed to proactively preventing safeguarding risks and promoting awareness of safeguarding principles across all its activities.

The organization integrates safeguarding considerations into its operational and project-related processes, including planning, implementation, and evaluation. Potential risks are identified in advance, and appropriate measures are taken to minimize the likelihood of harm.

Awareness-raising is an essential component of safeguarding. The organization ensures that staff, collaborators, and relevant stakeholders are informed about this Policy, expected standards of behavior, and available reporting mechanisms. Where appropriate, training and guidance may be provided to support understanding and implementation.

Safeguarding principles are also communicated to partners, contractors, and service providers. The Center for Finance encourages alignment with this Policy and promotes responsible conduct across its partnerships.

The organization promotes a culture of openness, respect, and accountability, where safeguarding is understood as a shared responsibility. Individuals are encouraged to remain vigilant, to recognize potential risks, and to contribute to a safe environment.

Through preventive measures and continuous awareness, the Center for Finance strengthens its ability to reduce risks and ensure that all activities are conducted in a safe and responsible manner.

## **9 REVIEW, IMPLEMENTATION & FINAL PROVISIONS**

This Safeguarding and PSEA Policy is an integral part of the governance and risk management framework of the Center for Finance and is binding for all individuals and entities within its scope.

The organization ensures that this Policy is effectively communicated and implemented across all levels. All individuals associated with the organization are expected to be aware of its provisions and to apply them in their daily activities. Where appropriate, training and awareness activities are conducted to support implementation.

The Center for Finance is committed to regularly reviewing and updating this Policy to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness. Reviews take into account changes in organizational activities, regulatory requirements, donor expectations, and lessons learned from implementation.

Management is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this Policy and ensuring that appropriate systems and resources are in place. The organization also ensures alignment with applicable laws, regulations, and international safeguarding standards.

This Policy enters into force on the date of its approval by the management of the Center for Finance. The most recent version of the Policy is applicable and accessible to all relevant stakeholders.

Through continuous improvement and strong safeguarding practices, the Center for Finance ensures the protection, dignity, and well-being of all individuals involved in its work.