



Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Sexual Abuse, and Sexual Harassment (PSEAH) Policy

Purpose and Introduction

The Species Saviour Initiative (SSI) is committed to ensuring a **safe, trusted, and respectful environment** within our organization, partner networks, and across all conservation programs and community engagements.

This policy defines SSI's guiding principles and commitments regarding the **prevention of sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, and sexual harassment (SEAH)** and establishes clear procedures for addressing allegations when they arise.

SSI recognizes that our work often brings staff and delivery partners into direct contact with communities, including **women, youth, Indigenous groups, and other marginalized or vulnerable populations**. In all instances, we prioritize the **rights, dignity, and well-being of individuals** by embedding prevention, accountability, and survivor-centered responses.

This policy builds upon SSI's **Code of Conduct** and complements our:

- **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**
- **Anti-Trafficking and Illegal Trade in Wildlife and Plant Species Policy**
- **Anti-Harassment Policy**

It should be read and applied alongside SSI's **Safeguards and Ethical Standards Framework**, which aims to minimize social and environmental risks and maximize positive impacts in all SSI projects.

Scope

This Policy applies to:

- All **SSI staff** (employees, interns, fellows, and volunteers).
- All **representatives** working under SSI, including board members and advisors.
- All **Delivery Partners** (grantees, awardees, contractors, suppliers, consultants, and their staff, sub-grantees, and representatives) engaged by SSI in any capacity.

It is binding across all SSI offices, field programs, and partner projects.

Principles and Actions

1. Awareness

- SSI ensures that all staff, volunteers, and partners are aware of their responsibilities under this policy.
- All SSI personnel must sign an **acknowledgment of compliance** with the PSEAH Policy and Code of Conduct.
- Delivery Partners are required to demonstrate awareness and adherence through their contracts and agreements with SSI.

2. Prevention

- Prevention of SEAH is a **shared responsibility**. All SSI personnel and partners must actively prevent and respond to SEAH risks in their work.
- SSI uses a **risk-based approach** to identify, assess, and mitigate SEAH risks across projects. This includes:
 - Screening all SSI projects for SEAH risks.
 - Requiring higher-risk projects to adopt **SEAH Prevention Plans**, which may include targeted training, staff vetting, due diligence checks, and enhanced monitoring.
 - Supporting Delivery Partners through **capacity building** where needed.

3. Reporting

- SSI holds itself accountable to the people we serve, including **community members, beneficiaries, partners, donors, and staff**.
- SSI maintains **confidential, accessible, and safe reporting mechanisms** that allow reports to be made confidentially and, where possible, anonymously.
- All reports and investigations are handled on a **need-to-know basis** to protect confidentiality.

4. Prioritizing Victims/Survivors

- SSI applies a **“do no harm” and survivor-centered approach**, ensuring that the safety, dignity, and wishes of victims/survivors are prioritized.
- Support may include referrals to psychosocial, legal, or medical services as appropriate.
- Every effort is made to ensure privacy and reduce risks of retaliation.

5. Zero Tolerance of Inaction

- SSI adopts a **zero tolerance of inaction** principle.
- Every allegation is acted upon fairly, reasonably, and with due process.
- Zero tolerance does not mean “zero incidents,” but it ensures a strong organizational response, accountability, and follow-up in every case.

Implementation

All SSI Staff and Delivery Partners are required to comply with this policy and ensure that their teams, sub-contractors, and representatives:

- Understand what constitutes **Sexual Exploitation, Sexual Abuse, and Sexual Harassment (SEAH)**.
- Receive appropriate training and guidance to recognize, prevent, and report SEAH.
- Have internal procedures in place to prevent SEAH risks and cooperate with SSI’s monitoring and oversight requirements.

SSI will provide capacity building where necessary to strengthen partners' ability to meet these requirements.

Reporting Requirements and Procedure

- All SSI Staff and Delivery Partners are required to **immediately report** any SEAH-related concerns, incidents, or violations of this policy.
- Reports can be made confidentially via SSI's **Ethics and Safeguards Hotline** (online platform and dedicated phone line) or through project-level grievance mechanisms.
- Project-level grievance mechanisms will be designed to be **community-friendly, culturally appropriate, and safe for marginalized groups**, with trained staff to handle sensitive complaints.
- All SSI Staff who receive a report or become aware of SEAH concerns must promptly share all information with SSI's **Safeguards & Compliance Office**.

SSI will:

- Promptly and thoroughly investigate all SEAH complaints in accordance with its procedures.
- Treat all victims/survivors with **dignity, respect, and compassion**, listening to and being guided by their wishes wherever possible.
- Make every effort to protect the privacy of complainants, reporters, and alleged subjects of a complaint. While full confidentiality cannot always be guaranteed, information will be restricted to those on a **strict need-to-know basis**.

Delivery Partners are required to fully cooperate with SSI investigations and ensure that their staff and affiliates do the same.

Retaliation against any individual who makes a SEAH report in good faith is strictly prohibited under SSI's **Conflict Resolution and Grievance Policy**.

In line with applicable donor policies, SSI will also report allegations or suspicions of SEAH to donors and cooperate with donor investigations. With the **explicit consent of the victim/survivor**, SSI will also make reports to relevant authorities with jurisdiction over criminal prosecution of SEAH offenses.

Consequences of Policy Violations

- If an investigation confirms that an SSI Staff member has violated this policy, SSI will take disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, in accordance with organizational policy and applicable law.
- For Delivery Partners, violations of this policy or failure to comply with contractual obligations will result in **remedial action**, including termination of the sub-contract or sub-award for cause and possible disqualification from future contracts, grants, or partnerships with SSI.

Definitions

- **PSEAH:** Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Sexual Abuse, and Sexual Harassment.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Any actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. All sexual activity with a child is considered sexual abuse.
- **Sexual Exploitation:** Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, power imbalance, or trust, for sexual purposes. This includes profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.
- **Sexual Harassment:** Any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors, or other verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature that interferes with work, is made a condition of employment, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. This can occur across or within genders and may include both same-sex and opposite-sex interactions.
- **Retaliation:** Any direct or indirect negative action taken against a person because they reported misconduct in good faith, participated in an investigation, or were identified as a victim/survivor of SEAH. Retaliation may include denial of benefits, workplace discrimination, hostile work environment, intimidation, or harassment.