ICRISAT Policy Series

Ethics Policy

Version 1.0
Nov 2020

ICRISAT

INTERNATIONAL CROPS RESEARCH
INSTITUTE FOR THE SEMI-ARID TROPICS

Table of Contents

1. Version Control

Policy Formulation:

Policy Category:	Governance
Policy Formulation date:	September 2020
Policy Approved by:	Governing Board
Policy Approval date:	1 Oct 2020
Policy Roll-out date:	1 Nov 2020
Policy Version:	1.0
Policy Owner:	Director Human Resources

Policy Amendments:

Date	Version	Changes made by	Changes approved by	Description of change

The Institute reserves the right to amend, suspend or rescind this policy at any time. While, the Institute has made best efforts to define detailed procedures for implementation of this policy, there may be occasions when certain matters are not addressed or there may be lack of clarity in the procedures. Such difficulties or lack of clarity will be resolved in line with the broad intent of the policy, by the Director General or Governing Board Chair (on case to case basis). The Institute may also establish further rules and procedures, from time to time, to give effect to the intent of this policy and further the objective of good corporate governance.

2. Introduction

ICRISAT ("Institute") is committed to promote the highest ethical standards and facilitate transparent, fair and objective behavior amongst its workforce. Through the Ethics Policy ("Policy"), the Institute establishes an Ethics Framework which orchestrates the various components that should function cohesively towards fulfilling the Institute's commitment to uncompromising integrity.

2.1. Objective

The objectives of this policy are as follows:

a) To establish principles that guide ethical conduct by the Institute's workforce

b) To promote and encourage the adoption of the guiding principles which reflect the Institute's values as regards relationships with internal (workforce and Governing Board) and external stakeholders (suppliers, project partners and donors engaging directly or indirectly with ICRISAT)

c) To outline a framework where the Institute can effectively manage risks which can potentially compromise it's ethical and moral virtues

d) To define broad roles and responsibilities with regard to the effective implementation of the Ethics Framework of the Institute

e) To outline the related policies, procedures and guidelines which complement this Policy and are expected to aid in effective implementation of the framework defined in this Policy

2.2. Scope & Applicability

a) This policy is applicable to members of ICRISAT's workforce and the Governing Board.

b) This policy also extends to all other stakeholders of ICRISAT including suppliers, project partners and donors engaging directly or indirectly with ICRISAT.

a) This policy is applicable to the Institute's workplace. The 'workplace' extends to all premises/locations where the Institute's workforce conducts activities in their professional capacity at ICRISAT, including on the phone, by email or virtually through other communications channels, in addition to Institute's premises and at Institute-sponsored events.

2.3. Roles & Responsibilities

a) **Governing Board:** The Governing Board shall be responsible for fostering a culture of upholding the highest ethical standards by providing oversight over effective implementation of this Ethics Framework.

b) **Ethics Committee:** This committee, headed by Director Human Resources, shall be responsible for the implementation of the Ethics Framework and monitoring compliance with this Policy as well as underlying policies, procedures and/or guidelines which constitute the framework

c) **Workforce:** All members of ICRISAT's workforce shall be responsible for imbibing the principles laid down in this Policy and complying with standards of ethical behavior outlined herein as well as other underlying policies, procedures and/or guidelines which constitute the Ethics Framework of the Institute

d) External Stakeholders: All external stakeholders shall engage with the Institute in an ethical manner and shall ensure compliance with applicable policies, procedures and/or guidelines which form part of the Institute's Ethics Framework.

2.4. Exception to the policy

Any exception to this Policy shall require an approval from Director General (DG) of the Institute and a post facto ratification shall also be obtained from the Governing Board at the next Board meeting. Any exceptions involving the DG shall be approved by the Governing Board. The Policy Owner shall be informed of these exceptions and he/she shall maintain a record of these for monitoring purpose.

2.5. Frequency of Review

This Policy shall be reviewed by the Policy Owner at least once in every 36 month period from the implementation date or from the date of last review or as directed by the Policy Council.
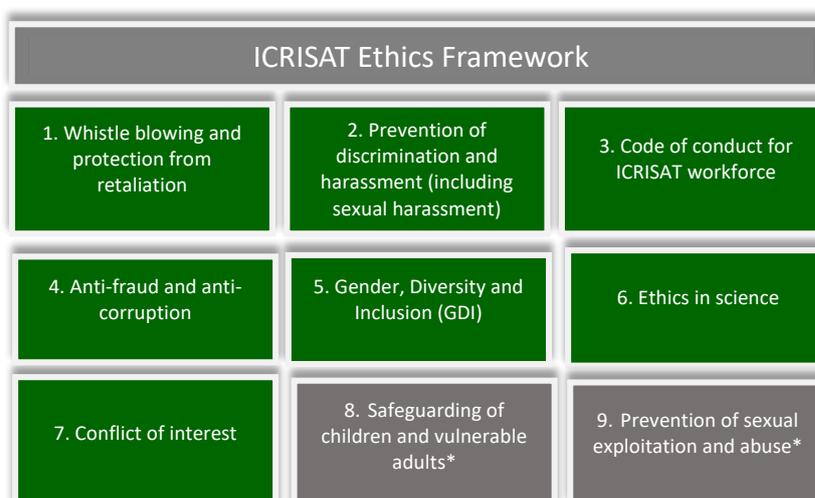
3. Policy Statement

3.1. ICRISAT's Ethical Principles

Ethical conduct in judgement, actions and behaviors is critical to the achievement of the Institute's vision and mission. The guiding principles which promote ethical conduct at the Institute are as follows:

a) ICRISAT respects the personal life of its workforce, but expects them to avoid situations that could result in a conflict between their personal interests and those of the Institute;

b) The Institute has 'zero tolerance' towards any form of discrimination or harassment, (including sexual harassment) at the workplace or in any situation associated with work performed on behalf of the Institute;

c) The Institute believes fraudulent activities (including corruption) can adversely impact its reputation and diminish donors' trust in its ability to deliver results in an accountable and transparent manner. Hence, efforts to eliminate fraud in all forms must be made;

d) The Institute believes that diversity and inclusion at the workplace are instrumental for its success and are key enablers to help it achieve its strategic objectives;

e) The Institute takes full responsibility for ensuring ethical standards in research that respect dignity, safety and rights of research participants; and

f) The Institute understands the importance of a reporting mechanism which is the backbone of the Ethics Framework and allows the relevant stakeholders to raise any concerns/violations without the fear of retaliation.

3.2. Ethics Framework

The Institute has developed an overarching Ethics and Safeguarding Framework to embed these principles into the behaviors, actions and judgements of ICRISAT's workforce. This Framework should serve as a guide, when an individual at ICRISAT is in doubt about the possible implications of an action or decision. This framework is to be read in conjunction with the policies, procedures and/or guidelines which complement it.

ICRISAT Ethics Framework		
1. Whistle blowing and protection from retaliation	2. Prevention of discrimination and harassment (including sexual harassment)	3. Code of conduct for ICRISAT workforce
4. Anti-fraud and anti-corruption	5. Gender, Diversity and Inclusion (GDI)	6. Ethics in science
7. Conflict of interest	8. Safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults*	9. Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse*

These frameworks/ policies are being developed by CGIAR and will be adopted by ICRISAT

3.2.1. Whistleblowing and Protection from Retaliation

To promote a "Speak up" culture at the Institute and encourage the members of workforce and external stakeholders at ICRISAT to report any actual or suspected wrongdoings, the Institute has developed the "Whistle Blowing and Protection from Retaliation Policy". This Policy in conjunction with the Institute's "Concern Resolution Procedure" provides a mechanism for raising concerns and violations related to malpractices, impropriety, abuse, unethical behavior or suspected fraud, and ensures adequate investigation of such matters. It also provides protection from retaliatory actions to the whistle blower.

3.2.2. Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment (including sexual harassment)

To provide an environment where every workforce member is treated with dignity and encourage the workforce to report any actual or suspected forms of discrimination and/ or harassment, the Institute has developed the "Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment including Sexual Harassment Policy". This Policy in conjunction with the Institute's "Concern Resolution Procedure" provides a mechanism for raising complaints related discrimination and/or harassment (including sexual harassment) and establishes grounds for thorough enquiry of such matters. It also provides protection from retaliatory actions to the complainant.

3.2.3. Code of Conduct for ICRISAT workforce

The Institute strives to provide a work environment characterized by professional, dignified and respectful conduct. The Institute's workforce members are accountable for their own actions and to take appropriate steps to recognize standards of conduct defined by the Institute and communicated to them from time to time. The Institute's "Code of Conduct" is intended to establish and clarify these standards of ethical conduct at the workplace.

3.2.4. Anti-fraud and Anti-Corruption

The Institute strives to eliminate all forms of fraud including, but not limited to, corruption, asset misappropriation and financial statement frauds in the conduct of its operations. To achieve this, the Institute has developed the "Anti-fraud and Anti-corruption Policy" which establishes the Fraud Management Framework for ICRISAT. This policy read in conjunction with "Whistle Blowing and Protection from Retaliation Policy" and "Concern Resolution Procedure" provides a mechanism for raising concerns/ violations related to any actual or suspected fraudulent activities at the Institute and provides adequate protection from retaliation to the whistle blower/ complainant.

3.2.5. Gender, Diversity and Inclusion (GDI)

The Institute recognizes its obligation to provide a diverse and inclusive workplace to its workforce. It is committed to the cause of promoting diversity and inclusion both within the institute and in the larger communities impacted by its work. The Institute has thus developed the "Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Policy". This Policy in conjunction with the Institute's "Concern Resolution Procedure" provides a mechanism for raising concerns/ grievances relating to any actual or suspected act/s of discrimination or victimization on the grounds of age, gender, disability, race, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, language, marital or civil partnership status, political beliefs or sexual orientation. It also provides protection from retaliation to the complainant.

3.2.6. Ethics in Science

The Institute is committed to research integrity and promotes high quality research that is ethical, accessible, transparent and rigorously evaluated. It also aims at ensuring that research activities are conducted in a manner that respects the dignity, safety and rights of research participants. All ICRISAT research projects are expected to adhere to the ethical principles and guidance as outlined in the Institute's "Policy for Safeguarding Good Research Practice" and "Guidelines for Research on Human Participants".

3.2.7. Conflict of Interest

The Institute through its "Conflict of Interest Policy" intends to provide guidance on how to avoid conflicts of interest, so that a workforce member's professional judgement and/ or actions regarding a primary interest, will not be unduly or inappropriately influenced by a secondary interest, potentially resulting in an unethical act, breach of code of conduct or violation of institutional policies, procedures and guidelines.

3.3. Training & Awareness

a) All members of the Institute's workforce should be made aware of this Policy and the Ethics and Safeguarding Framework at the time of onboarding. Ensuring this shall be the responsibility of the Institute's Human Resource Services Unit.

b) The Human Resource Services Unit should ensure the conduct of periodic refresher trainings on this Policy as well as the individual components of the Ethics Framework. It should also monitor closely the participation of members of the workforce in these sessions.

c) The Human Resource Services Unit along with Ethics Committee should also identify and implement other initiatives to raise awareness around the principles outlined in this Policy.

3.4. Annual Confirmation on Policy Compliance

ICRISAT shall, on an annual basis, obtain an undertaking from each member of the Governing Board and staff regarding their obligation to comply with the requirements under this Policy and to act within the boundaries set forth by the Ethics and Safeguarding Framework outlined in this document.

3.5. Breach of this Policy

Breach of this Policy and/or the underlying policies, procedures and/or guidelines will lead to disciplinary and other actions, up to and including the termination of employment of workforce members, as per applicable HR policies and procedures.

4. Appendix

4.1. Key Terms

Term	Definition
Complainant	An individual who raises a Concern / Complaint / Protected Disclosure / Disclosure under this Ethics Framework and its supplementary policies and procedures
Disciplinary Action	Any action that can be taken on the completion of/during the enquiry proceedings, including but not limited to a warning, imposition of fine, suspension from official duties or any such action as is deemed to be fit considering the gravity of the matter, in accordance with the Institute's policies, procedures and/or guidelines.
External Stakeholders	Suppliers, project partners and donors engaging directly or indirectly with ICRISAT
Institute	International Crops Research Institute for Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT)
Policy Council	A council consisting of nominated members from the ICRISAT Executive Team, constituted for ensuring compliance with the policy management framework of ICRISAT
Retaliation	A direct or indirect administrative decision and/or action that adversely affects the employment or working conditions of a Complainant. Such action is taken for the purpose of punishing, intimidating or injuring the Complainant because the individual has: • Reported suspected wrongdoing that implies a significant risk to the Institute; and/or • Cooperated with a duly authorized audit or an enquiry of a report of wrongdoing. Retaliation can include, without being limited to: • Harassment; • Discrimination; • Unsubstantiated negative performance appraisals; • Unjustified contractual changes: termination, demotion, reassignment or transfer; • Unjustified modification of duties; • Unjustified non-authorization of holidays and other leave types; • Unjustified termination or compensation decreases, or poor work assignments or threats of physical harm • Malicious delays in authorizing travel, or the provision of entitlements; • Threat to the Complainant, their family and/or property including threats that may come from outside ICRISAT. Retaliation will be treated as gross misconduct and is subject to appropriate disciplinary action.
Whistle Blower	An individual who makes a Protected Disclosure under the Whistle Blowing and Protection from Retaliation Policy of the Institute

Workforce	Refers to particular individuals who have a contractual relationship with ICRISAT such as members of Regular Staff Cadres, members of the Non-Regular Special Assignments category, members of Short-term contracts, members of Job-contracts, Learner-Participants and Third-party contractors; regardless of their position, type of employment, or location.

4.2. Reference Documents/ links

A. Ethics Committee ToR
B. Whistle Blowing and Protection from Retaliation Policy
C. Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment (including Sexual Harassment) Policy
D. Concern Resolution Procedure
E. Code of Conduct
F. Conflict of Interest Policy
G. Anti-fraud and Anti-corruption policy
H. Gender, Diversity and Inclusion policy
I. Policy for Safeguarding Good Research Practices
J. Guidelines for Research on Human Participants