WOMEN RIGHTS ADVOCACY INITIATIVE (WRAI) GENDER AND PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS POLICY 2017

Framework

Over the time, WRAI developed its Gender and protection of vulnerable group's policy gives direction for the organization in practice and holds the organization accountable. It also comes from the understanding that, inequality between men and women is deep rooted and it is manifested in discrimination against women in different forms. To whatever extent, one might be sensitive; it needs conscious and continuous efforts to achieve a balanced environment both at organizational level and work at field level. Framing this Gender and protection of vulnerable group's policy is a strong commitment of our overall efforts to promoting gender equality and Protection Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in all our work and providing an enabling environment for women within the organization, various partners and the communities with whom we work and strengthen gender sensitivity among all.

ORGANIZATIONAL VISION:
To ensure just, equitable and progressive humanity in which venerable of members especially women of the communities fully enjoy social, economic, and political rights.

Thematic sectors of focus - To equip grassroots women in wajir county and rural women in the cross border corridor with skills and knowledge to resolve conflicts through dialogue and mediation in their localities and hold their leaders accountable.; Resilience; Governance, advocacy and capacity building

Objectives of Policy:

To explicitly state the organizational commitment towards gender and protection of vulnerable group

To provide a direction towards building gender and protection of vulnerable groups related agenda

To provide a framework for effectively integrating gender concerns and protection of vulnerable groups into the organizational agenda and policy domain

To create equal opportunities and a conducive environment for women and men at work place and in the field level and our target beneficiaries.

To promote equal representation and participation of women in decision making at the professional/programmatic and administrative levels.

ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

Integrity and Credibility: We perform in compliance with our mission, being honest and transparent in our activities.

Respect: We adhere to respect the values and cultures of all our stakeholders whose participation in our decision making process is of high importance

Voluntary service: We participate in our activities with a commitment not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

Transparency & Accountability: We always remain accountable to our stakeholders by giving appropriate and timely feedback and transparent in our activities.

Provision of quality services: Provide services that meet the standard, provide services that can be appreciated by the community and donor, durability, services that have impact to the beneficiaries, provision of the correct information provided to the clients.

Commitment: We collectively serve the community by being effective and efficient in our activities.

Gender Equality: We value equally the different behavior, aspirations, needs and rights of women and men. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different but which is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities. Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities do not depend on whether they are born male or female

Elements of Gender and PSEA:

What we mean by Gender.

WRAI understands that gender refers to the attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the socio-cultural relationships between women and men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context specific and changeable. In most societies there are differences and

Inequalities between women and men in activities undertaken, access to and control over resources as well as decision-making opportunities. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context, which also takes into consideration factors such as class, race, economic status, ethnic group and age. WRAI adopts gender perspective, which means focusing on both women and men and their relationships with each other and resources. In addition, it means working with a global perspective that allows for and appreciates diversity. The organization aims at mainstreaming gender by creating an enabling working environment that in turn attracts and helps to retain gender sensitive staff. Since WRAI is working to empower pastoralist communities to living dignified lives, it means achieving a better analysis of vulnerabilities and capacities; patterns of use, knowledge and skills

regarding conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. Only with a gender perspective can a complete picture of pastoralists in dynamic changing environments be better understand and built up. The gender policy is an integral part of all its organizational policies, programmes and projects and involves building a culture that understands the issues and policies, which respect diversity and gender, related concerns. A mere statement of policy and objectives does not ensure the concerns relating to addressing the gender. Towards achieving the above objectives, a bear minim set of indicators are contained herewith as an annex to evaluate and assess the organizations commitment towards gender equity on a periodic basis.

For this following systems would be put in place and necessary strategies would be tried out internally and externally: *at organizational and partner's level.*

What is does protection of vulnerable groups mean:

Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) are forms of gender-based violence that have been reported in humanitarian and development contexts, specifically relating to UN and NGO workers. It is aligned to the IASC adopted six core principles relating to sexual exploitation and abuse in 2002. These principles together constitute Sexual Exploitation and Abuse programming (PSEA). They are binding on all WRAI staff. This means ensuring that WRAI and its partners work does not harm come to staff and beneficiaries at work and private life while on employment. Staff working with vulnerable groups should not have a known history of harmful or abusive behaviour and there must be in place disclosure arrangements conducted as staff join the organization and due diligence is done on them.

The IASC's Six Core Principles Relating to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse:

1. "Sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian workers constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment.

2. Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defense.

3. Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative

4. Sexual relationships between humanitarian workers and beneficiaries are strongly discouraged since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of humanitarian aid work.

5. Where a humanitarian worker develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation by a fellow worker, whether in the same agency or not, he or she must report such concerns via established agency reporting mechanisms.

6. Humanitarian workers are obliged to create and maintain an environment which prevents sexual exploitation and abuse and promotes the implementation of their code of conduct. Managers at all levels have particular responsibilities to support and develop systems which maintain this environment."

Commitment

Managers and supervisors must ensure that all WRAI staff understand and comply with this policy. To aid in implementing this instruction and in educating staff, WRAI's managers and supervisors commit to bear minimum in annex 2:

a. Management and coordination: Effective policy development and implementation; Cooperative arrangements; Dedicated department /focal point committed to PSEA.

b. Engagement with and support of local community population: Effective and comprehensive communication from HQ to the field on (a) what to do regarding raising beneficiary awareness on PSEA and (b) how to establish effective community based complaints mechanisms.

c. Prevention: Effective and comprehensive mechanisms to ensure awareness-raising on SEA amongst personnel; effective recruitment and performance management.

d. Response: Internal complaints and investigation procedures are in place

At Organizational level:

A) Staff composition/representation

➢ Recruiting adequate women staff and ensuring that even at senior levels; with an objective of striving to achieve a numerical gender balance in all posts at all levels

➢ Ensuring equal opportunities among male and female staff for personal growth, in promotion benefits, training and working conditions

➢ Ensuring equitable representation and participation of men and women in the core group, Board of trustees and in various levels of the organization

➢ Ensure that those who have regular contact with children and protected adults through paid and unpaid work do not have a known history of harmful behaviour

➢ Develop a quick and easy to use, reducing the need for Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme members to complete a detailed application form every time a disclosure check is required,

➢ Ensure that it is clear on who communities and such groups will report and seek protection from

B) Workplace

☐ providing a safe and secure workplace for women staff, free from sexual harassment with a Gender Complaints mechanism to look into specific concerns.

☐ providing an enabling and friendly work environment where both men and women enjoy and actively participate in work.

☐ Extending work related concessions and relaxations for women staff depending upon the situations and requirements; e.g. providing secure transport facilities when they work late hours; giving relaxation time off after field missions and within travel time for the next day for those in need; ensuring security measures along with minimum basic facilities for women staff travelling to field.

☐ Reviewing the organizational structure, functioning, problems in relation to gender imbalances among staff and the work environment time to time and taking definite steps to address the same

☐ Strategic orientation to staff in the field based programs and advocacy initiatives towards increasing women's access, control and ownership over the resources.

- Placing Gender in existing committees: A woman employee who has put in 6 months of service after confirmation shall be entitled for 3 months of Maternity Leave on full pay.

- Men employees when their spouses have children shall be entitled for 14 calendar days of paternity leave either immediately after child birth, Making efforts to avail flexible working hours to enable breastfeeding.

In the field

☐ furthering deliberate and intense efforts to promote participation of women within all spheres of the program/project cycle.

☐ Facilitating participation and even representation of women in various institutional structures created for the management of projects like committees, user groups etc.

☐ Analysis of gender disaggregated roles and work patterns, and make special efforts to reduce the work load of women.

☐ Extending constant orientation of field-level partners on gender perspectives in all our work as part of long-term gender goals like formal recognition of women's rights over resources like land, assets etc.

☐ Ensuring equal wages to equal work for both men and women in the works as part of the programs, where WRAI is directly or indirectly involved or facilitator/ convener.

☐ making special efforts to constantly identify vulnerable groups including women and provide them the necessary support and guidance.

☐ sensitizing the men and mobilizing their support towards gender balance/equality and PSEA with a special emphasis on the protection of vulnerable groups including the women and girl child

☐ Building awareness and sensitivity by processing information and publishing communication material in diverse media to appeal different strata of people.

C) Staff capacity building

☐ facilitating staff capacity building processes and trainings to enhance perspectives and conceptual clarity on Gender issu**es *(for all the staff members)***. It will be an important component of the inductions

• Ensuring that all trainings (internal and external) facilitated by the organization are gender-sensitive.- a) training conten*t/methodology/mode of faci*litation b) logistics part -time/location of venue, facilities/other logistics/first-aid kit

☐ Conducting Gender trainings for both men and women; and ensuring participation of women in all t*he field level meetings an*d trainings

D) Organizational policies and systems

- Making all HR systems and policies gender-sensitive and responsive, and integrating gender indicators into staff performance appraisal systems.

- Incorporating and explicitly mentioning gender sensitivity as an essential element in the tasks/job profiles in all terms of reference, including TORs for external consultants.

- Ensuring that the conceptual clarity and sensitivity on gender issues will be one of the important selection criteria in recruitment processes and capacity building efforts of staff.

- Initiating and building the advocacy around gender balance and making efforts to integrate gender concerns into the scaling up and mainstream developmental programs.

E) Staff benefits

↗ Following all statutory requirements related to maternity and paternity leaves.

↗ Ensuring that staff access to and use of information technology is gender equitable.

Arrangements should be made for recording all information and open access for reviewing the performance of tasks mentioned at organizational level regularly in different forums from staff to Annual meetings.

Advocacy:

❖ WRAI would proactively make several efforts in promoting gender concerns in its work and with partners. It involves extending support to partners in organizing training programs, conducting gender studies, preparing resource material, providing documentation support etc.

❖ WRAI would extend support to partner organizations in developing their own gender policies, strategies and programs

- ❖ WRAI would further strengthen linkages with the Gender desk of at county level and Centre for World Solidarity (CWS) affiliate and join women consortiums, movements and alliances to work on various women issues. Participation and contribution to the common platforms like Synergy group of women employees of all Solidarity Institutions will further help the organization.

- ❖ Sharing Gender reports within our network, alliances, consortiums and associate with others to promote gender sensitivity

- ❖ Supporting and expressing solidarity with partners at field level in taking up issues of discrimination or harassment against women.

Actions – who is responsible for what in WRAI HQ and field offices?

Personnel:

• Personnel are to review WRAI -managed contract conditions and ensure the distribution of PSEA flow-charts.

• Personnel are responsible for conveying the PSEA standards of conduct to current staff and senior management (at HQ and field level).

• Codes will be shared in the agreements with partners and individuals contracted.

All sector and program leads, HQ and Field:

• The CD and PM are fully engaged and leading WRAI's work on PSEA.

• PSEA Focal Points at senior level are identified and functioning with the overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the PSEA policy and activities and in regular contact with PSEA networks on the ground.

• WRAI has communicated in detail the expectations regarding beneficiary awareness raising efforts on PSEA (including information on the organization's standards of conduct and reporting mechanism). Community Based

Complaints Mechanism:

• The HQ urges its field offices to participate in community based complaint mechanisms that are jointly developed and implemented by the aid community, adapted to the specific c locations.

• There is guidance provided to the field on how to design the Community Based Complaint Mechanism (CBCM) to ensure it is adapted to the cultural context with focus on community participation.

• There is a mechanism for monitoring and review of the complaint mechanism.

Monitoring and compliance
Compliance will be monitored through WRAI's review cycles. Elements of this policy will also be monitored through the staff performance appraisal system in line with gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment.

ANNEX 1: INDICATORS FOR PROMOTING GENDER AND PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS

Internal	Ensure allocation of appropriate financial and human resources for gender equality
Practices	Ensure workplace policies & procedures are in place and socialized amongst staff & partners. To include anti sexual harassment HR policies
	Emphasize accountability of senior management for promoting gender equality
	Develop staff, partners and senior management capacity through induction, training and reflections
Gender **Analysis** **through** **Project Cycle**	Gender and protection of vulnerable analysis included in baselines, monitoring, all thematic sectors of focus and evaluations
	Collect , analyse and report on gender differences using sex & age disaggregated data (& other factors where possible/relevant) throughout the project cycle taking into account issues of safety & accessibility
	In consultation with women, men, boys and girls, design culturally appropriate gender sensitive programs that address the needs and safety requirements of the most vulnerable & readdress gender-specific injustices. The program design should incorporate a gender strategy, policy and advocacy elements.
	Programming is intertwined with gender related sustainable development objectives for the country including DRR
	Gender analysis informs the development and implementation of accountability and learning systems

Participation, Dignity & Empowerment	Ensure access and participation that is equal and safe, & meaningful participation by specific gender groups in program activities throughout the project cycle, including distribution, training, & livelihood opportunities.
	In consultation with women, men, girls and boys, activity promote women's and girl's dignity & empowerment in program design and implementation.
	Develop programs that ensure women's & girl's rights are being addressed in emergencies & and ensure men's and boy's support (not just consultation) making them allies.
GBV	Implement & monitor interventions to ensure safe programming in all situations in consultation with women and girls and men & boys.
	Advocate where possible for gender responsive policies & practices with communities and local authorities.
PSEA	Protect beneficiaries from sexual exploitation & abuse (PSEA) by staff, partners and those in authority.

ANNEX 2: MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR PSEA AT THE FIELD LEVEL

1. MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION

1.1. Focal point.

<u>Minimum Standard</u>: PSEA focal point designated has appropriate qualifications and is adequately managed and supervised

<u>Key indicators:</u> WWFP nominates a focal point coordinator level or an alternate focal point (one of the two must be female) focal points provide quarterly reports to management and are provided with feedback and guidance. Performance as a PSEA Focal Point is included in TOR and Personnel Appraisal.

1.2. Senior Management/leadership

Note: senior leadership and management is a critical issue for the institutionalization and embedding of PSEA culture and mechanisms.

1.3. PSEA networks.

<u>Minimum standard:</u> WWFP Focal point regularly contribute to in county networks for PSEA
<u>Key indicator</u>: focal participates regularly in the PSEA network meetings and contributes to implementation of PSEA network annual action plan

2. ENGAGEMENT WITH AND SUPPORT TO LOCAL POPULATION

2.1. Complaints mechanism

<u>Minimum Standard</u>: all sections of affected population have been engaged in development of an effective complaints mechanism, understand how to access the mechanism and know how to report any problems through the mechanism.

<u>Key Indicator:</u> community is fully involved in designing and carrying out PSEA complaints mechanism and trained regularly. Number and record of complaints are lodged by community and follow up recorded. Feedback mechanisms to community established and number of reports monitored.

2.2. Community awareness of SEA.

Minimum Standard: all sections of affected population have received adequate awareness raising to ensure they are fly aware of SEA issues, and know what they are entitled to.

Key Indicator: affected community involved in designing community awareness messages (e.g. local, media, teachers, community leaders, midwives, clergy etc.). Number and type of communication mechanism used meetings, flyers, notice boards) and materials translated in local languages.

3. PREVENTION

3.1. Staff awareness
Minimum Standard: personnel understand what PSEA means, know how to contact PSEA focal point and are made aware of obligations required of them in the SGB.

Key Indicator: Staff are informed of PSEA focal point annually (memos, verbally through staff meeting and or posted on notice boards). Minimum Operating Standard PSEA report shared internally with staff. Staff receive awareness training on PSEA annually or resign code of conduct. All newly recruited staff sign code of conduct and participate in orientation session of SEA. Whistle blower protection measures are in place, and all staff are aware of the importance in reporting.

3.2. Cooperative arrangements

Minimum standard: procedures are in place to receive written agreement from partners or individuals entering into cooperative arrangements with WRAI are aware of and will abide by the standards of the SGB.

Key Indicator: WRAI record system collects written agreements that the individuals or organizations. Respective codes of conduct are disseminated to those in contract to NGO. Staff of contractual organizations undergoes SEA training.

4. RESPONSE

4.1. Investigations.

<u>Minimum standard</u>: For procedures investigations into cases of SEA are in place by the agency including prompt reporting of cases to appropriate authority.

<u>Key Indicator:</u> Standard operating procedure or equivalent issued and used to guide practice. Investigations undertaken by experienced and qualified professionals in field of SEA

4.2. Victim assistance.

<u>Minimum standard</u>: have written guidance on the provision of victim assistance

<u>Key Indicator</u>: implement fully the victim assistance program. All staff trained on victim assistance.