

Safeguarding

Audience:	Global
Policy Topic(s):	Ethics Compliance
Policy Owner:	Chief Human Capital Officer
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Summary

TechnoServe employees, consultants, fellows, interns and volunteers, collectively known for purposes of this policy as TechnoServe Staff, are expected to treat all people with whom they have contact with respect, to actively prevent harassment, abuse and exploitation, and to ensure our programs do no harm to the communities in which we work.

Likewise, TechnoServe is committed to work only with partners—including vendors and suppliers—who are equally committed to the dignity of individuals and equally vigilant to preventing and addressing abuse and exploitation.

Whereas many TechnoServe policies vary across regions—contextualized to particular locations and cultures—the TechnoServe Safeguarding policy is universal to—and binding upon—all of our staff around the world. In addition, because we expect anyone employed by TechnoServe to live our values at all times, this policy applies to TechnoServe Staff activities and behaviors at work, outside work, and while on leave.

All TechnoServe Staff (as defined above) are required to sign and comply with our Safeguarding Policy.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to remind all TechnoServe staff of their moral and legal obligations to treat all people with respect, to actively prevent harassment, abuse, exploitation, and human trafficking—as defined below—and to report any such case whether observed or experienced.

Policy

TechnoServe believes that all persons we encounter have the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation. TechnoServe is committed to creating and maintaining an environment—both in our workplace and in our projects—that promotes our core values and we have a zero tolerance approach to abuse and exploitation of all with whom we interact. Abuse and exploitation constitute acts of serious misconduct both in the workplace and against beneficiaries and are therefore

grounds for disciplinary action including termination and, as relevant, notification to appropriate law enforcement authorities.

TechnoServe cannot address Safeguarding violations of which it is unaware. Therefore, all TechnoServe Staff are obligated to report any concerns or suspicions of harassment, abuse and exploitation involving TechnoServe Staff, partners, beneficiaries, vendors or aid workers associated with another organization. The concern may be a result of witnessing the incident, being told of it, or being the object of it.

TechnoServe Staff should report all concerns through any of the following channels: their supervisor, the global TechnoServe whistleblower site, Human Resources (HR), or the respective Country Director / Manager. Employees may also submit complaints to relevant donor hotlines. For example, concerns related to DFID-funded projects can be reported at reportingconcerns@FCDO.gov.uk and concerns related to USAID-funded projects can be reported to ig.hotline@usaid.gov.

The global TechnoServe whistleblower website is also available on our external website that can be used by any third party wishing to report an incident.

All claims and circumstances surrounding the alleged incident will be promptly and thoroughly investigated on an impartial basis. More information on how reports are managed by TechnoServe and our zero tolerance approach to retaliation—can be found in our **Ethics Reporting Policy**.

In no case, should any of TechnoServe Staff investigate an allegation or a reported allegation on their own, outside of standard reporting protocols.

Definitions

Harassment

TechnoServe strives to create and maintain a safe, professional work environment that is free of Harassment, defined as unwanted, unwelcomed and uninvited behavior that demeans, threatens or offends and results in a hostile environment for the victim. This includes, but is not limited to, harassment based on ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, national origin or ancestry, disability, medical condition, marital status, or veteran status.

General harassment is not sexual in nature and can take many forms including verbal, physical, and visual. It includes actions directed at an individual or actions observed by an individual.

- Verbal: Includes the use of offensive words, jokes, threats, or derogatory statements.
- Physical: Includes inappropriate physical contact or assault, as well as demeaning / unwelcome pranks.
- Visual: Includes cartoons, pictures, and posters, as well as inappropriate electronic communications (emails, etc.)

General harassment can also include bullying, defined as repeated health-harming mistreatment of one or more persons by one or more perpetrators and includes (but is not limited to) threats, intimidation, public humiliation, name-calling, persistent and unwelcome teasing, or intentional work interference/sabotage.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a specific type of harassment which can cross age and gender boundaries and may include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature including:

- The sharing or posting of images that create an offensive, hostile or intimidating environment or interferes with an individual's job performance. Examples include—but are not limited to—offensive pictures, cartoons, symbols, or items in the workplace
- Downloading sexually explicit pictures or materials from computer systems, even if not shared with others
- Unwanted or inappropriate leering or touching
- Explicit or implicit requests of a sexual nature made by one person to another that demand or imply a condition of employment, career advancement or compensation.

Exploitation

Exploitation—defined as actual or attempted abuse of power or mistreatment based on a power differential and/or position of vulnerability—is unacceptable under any circumstances but is particularly abhorrent when it involves TechnoServe beneficiaries, children, or vulnerable adults.

For purposes of this policy, a child is defined as anyone under the age of 18, and a vulnerable adult is defined as anyone in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, and who is unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

Prohibited exploitation includes:

- Physical abuse (violence towards or deliberate injury)
- Emotional abuse (humiliating, degrading, or aggressive behavior)
- Sexual abuse
- Economic abuse (requiring payments or goods in exchange for services)

Prohibited exploitation also includes child labor: All hired workers, whether working for TechnoServe, TechnoServe staff, or in the communities we support must be age 15 or over, or older where national laws mandate a higher working age. Family labor during a child's free time will not be considered child labor unless it interferes with the child's access to education. If minors (between the ages of 15 and 18) are employed, dangerous or physically excessive work is prohibited. All applicable national laws relating to the employment of minors must be observed.

Prohibited exploitation also includes sexual exploitation. TechnoServe Staff are prohibited from any sexual relations with beneficiaries, children, and vulnerable adults since they are based on an inherently unequal power dynamics. This includes the exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior or general preferential treatment.

- For children, this policy applies regardless of the age of majority or consent in the local setting and the mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a viable defense.

In addition, knowingly facilitating or aiding another individual to perform acts of exploitation or abuse is strictly prohibited and will be treated with the same level of consequence as if the activity was being done directly by TechnoServe Staff.

Prostitution—even if consensual and/or legal—in any form and at any location is prohibited for the duration of the staff member’s employment with TechnoServe or TechnoServe’s partner organization.

Trafficking

Trafficking in persons is defined as the recruitment, transportation, or receipt of persons by means of deception, coercion, threat, or force for the purpose of exploitation, sexual or otherwise. TechnoServe strongly condemns trafficking in human beings—children, women, and men—as a criminal act that violates fundamental human rights and the inviolable dignity and integrity of the human person.

TechnoServe believes that everyone we encounter has the right to be protected from human trafficking. TechnoServe has zero tolerance for this type of exploitation by staff or associated personnel and commits to combating trafficking. All TechnoServe Staff are prohibited from engaging in trafficking in children, women and men. TechnoServe places a special focus on anti-trafficking of women and children, given their specific vulnerability and given the cruelty and perversity to which trafficked women and children are particularly subjected.

All TechnoServe Staff are prohibited from engaging in:

- Trafficking in children, women, and men for sexual exploitation or procurement of any commercial sex acts (even if this practice is legal in a particular jurisdiction) including forced prostitution, child prostitution and pedophilic pornography
- Trafficking in women and girls for purposes of forced or arranged marriages, or for any bride price schemes
- Trafficking in children, women, and men for removal of organs for the illicit organ trade or for the illicit dealing, running or trafficking of narcotics and drugs;
- The use of force, fraud, or coercion to subject a child, woman, or man to forced labor, begging, or involuntary servitude; and shall not obtain labor from a child, woman, or man by threats of serious harm to that person or another person.

All TechnoServe Staff are also prohibited from employment practices related to trafficking, including:

- Destroying, concealing, confiscating, or otherwise denying access to an employee's identity or immigration documents
- Using misleading or fraudulent practices to recruit employees such as failing to disclose key terms and conditions of employment in a format and language accessible to the employee or charging employees recruitment fees
- Using recruiters that do not comply with local labor laws
- Failing to provide return transportation, unless exempted, to certain employees who are brought to a country for the purpose of working on a project
- Providing or arranging housing that fails to meet host country housing and safety standards
- Failing to provide a valid employment contract or work document where required by law or contract in writing and in a language the employee understands.

TechnoServe also prohibits Staff from obtaining work-related goods or services that have been provided or produced by trafficked or forced labor

Training and Awareness

TechnoServe will provide training and awareness on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse and combating human trafficking. It is mandatory for staff to complete these training sessions when they are announced.

Interpretation and Questions

Questions on the interpretation of this policy—and any other questions—can be directed to your designated Human Resources Business Partner.