



SEA REPORTING MECHANISM

Introduction:

SAVE THE CHILDREN INDIA (STCI; Brand Name: Vipla Foundation) has established an incident reporting policy to facilitate the prompt and confidential internal reporting of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) to senior management and relevant stakeholders. This document outlines the core principles and key factors of the reporting mechanism to ensure its effective implementation.

Core Principles of the Reporting Mechanism:

1. Safety:
 - Ensuring the safety of individuals reporting SEA allegations, respondents (alleged perpetrators), and survivors is paramount. STCI prioritizes safety through its Whistle Blowing Policy and limits access to incident reports and proceedings, ensuring confidentiality and protection.
2. Confidentiality:
 - Persons reporting incidents of SEA have the option to remain anonymous. Only designated focal points within the organization shall have access to reported information. Confidentiality of all individuals involved, including respondents/perpetrators and survivors, shall be strictly maintained, with personal details omitted from records to protect identities.
3. Transparency:
 - Prior consent of the complainant shall be obtained before any further action is taken on the incident. *However, STCI understands and acknowledges that all cases that constitute a crime under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act 2012 must be mandatorily reported to relevant systemic authorities as outlines in the said legislation.* Information sharing protocols, including purposes such as investigations and assistance to survivors, shall be communicated to the complainant to ensure transparency throughout the process.
4. Accessibility:
 - The reporting mechanism is designed to be user-friendly for all stakeholders, considering factors such as language, costs, and time needed for utilization. STCI ensures accessibility for diverse audiences, including people of different ages, genders, educational backgrounds, and abilities.



5. Support for Victims/Survivors:

- Ensuring adequate collaborations and partnerships with internal and external resources, including private and government agencies, that may be accessed for provision of referral and support services to the victims/survivors.
- Ensuring access of information regarding the availability of referral and support services to all persons/entities engaged with STCI through its programs and operations.
- Ensuring the safety and well-being of the victim/survivor, including provision of timely support services to the victim/survivor and family, as required, including access to referral services.
- Ensuring victims/survivors have the autonomy to decide when and if they wish to avail the available support and referral services.

These services shall be extended in accordance with the guidelines laid down in STCI's *'Referral SOP for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse'* and *'Referral Form for Victims'*

Key Factors of the Incident Reporting Policy:

- Reporting Channels:
 - STCI provides multiple communication channels for reporting SEA incidents, including in-person reporting to designated personnel, designated phone numbers (including that of Members on the Complaints Committee and Child Protection Officers) , text messaging, email, and secure complaint/suggestion boxes.
- Participation by Local Communities and Beneficiaries:
 - Consultation with vulnerable groups from local communities, such as women, children, the elderly, and disabled persons, is conducted to understand challenges in raising complaints and to design safe, confidential, transparent, and accessible reporting mechanisms.
- Wide Publicity of Reporting Mechanism:
 - STCI informs personnel, local communities, and beneficiaries about available reporting channels. Mandatory reporting obligations, behaviours constituting SEA, Whistle Blowing Policy details, designated focal points, and reporting processes are communicated.
- Actual Incident Reporting:
 - Reports of alleged incidents adhere to core reporting principles, with personnel receiving complaints extensively trained on relevant procedures. They accurately convey complainants' wording, fill information gaps, and provide essential contextual details without conducting investigations.



- Reporting Allegations to Partner Organizations:
 - As an implementing partner of various entities including corporates, institutions, and agencies; including UN agencies, STCI reports SEA allegations to its partner entities and its own management as per the agreed upon terms and conditions of engagement with the said entity.
 - Reports will be submitted as per the guidelines laid down by STCI's partner entities and in accordance with the written agreements with such entities. Regular updates on findings, investigation processes, outcomes, and referrals are shared with the partner entities as agreed upon.
 - This reporting mechanism ensures the efficient and transparent handling of SEA incidents, promoting accountability and safeguarding the well-being of all individuals associated with STCI.