

ICRISAT Memo



To: Staff at all locations
From: William D Dar *W.D. Dar*
Director General
CC: Management Group Members / Global Theme Leaders
Date: 5 June 2008
Re: ICRISAT Whistle-blower Policy

ICRISAT is committed to good corporate governance principles that are fair, transparent and objective. The Institute has the responsibility to protect appropriate use of its resources (knowledge, infrastructure, financial & human resources) and enable it to pursue its mission of conducting research to reduce poverty, enhance food security and protect the environment.

ICRISAT has put in place necessary systems and mechanisms to regulate and monitor the research and management practices to adhere to good governance principles, approved policies and delegation of authority. Staff members are responsible for helping the Institute to ensure that its responsibilities and commitments are met. In order to enable its staff to do this role effectively the Governing Board has approved the attached policy on "whistle-blowing".

I request that this policy be widely circulated to staff at all levels and at all locations.

ICRISAT
Whistle-blower Policy

Scope

If a staff member has knowledge of or a reasonable concern about illegal, grossly negligent, dishonest or fraudulent activity, he/she should report this to a designated authority as mentioned in the procedure below. Such information submitted to the concerned authority will be kept confidential and the staff member reporting such activity will be protected against retaliation.

Operating procedure

1. **Reporting an activity:** Staff who have strong reasons to suspect that illegal, grossly negligent dishonest or fraudulent activity has taken place, shall first bring this to the notice of their immediate supervisor(s). In the event that their supervisor(s) are unable or unwilling to address these concerns or it is not appropriate to bring the matter to their attention, the staff should report these directly to the Head of Internal Audit. All such reports should be in writing either as a letter or E mail from the person who wants to report under this policy. The staff member must exercise sound judgment and due care to avoid baseless allegations. Any staff intentionally filing a false report of wrongdoing will be subject to disciplinary action.
2. **Investigating the complaint:** The Head of Internal Audit will keep the Chair of the Board's Audit Committee informed of all such complaints. The Head of Internal Audit will investigate the complaints in a fair, confidential and timely manner and submit a report to the Chair of the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee will recommend actions for implementation either to the Governing Board or to the Management depending on the degree and nature of the recommendations. The staff member (whistle-blower) shall not be responsible for investigating the activity or for determining fault or corrective measures.
3. **Feedback:** The staff member (whistle-blower) will be informed by the Head of Internal Audit regarding the disposition of the complaint. This will be done after completion of investigations and suitable actions are recommended to the appropriate authority.
4. **Protection for the staff (whistle-blower)**
 - (a) **Confidentiality:** All information provided to the Supervisor(s) or Head of Internal Audit will be kept confidential. Insofar as possible the confidentiality of the staff member (whistle-blower) will be maintained. However, in some instances identity may have to be disclosed to conduct a thorough investigation, to comply with the law, investigating procedures and to provide the accused the legal rights of defense. The staff member (whistle-blower) will be kept informed on a regular basis during the process.
 - (b) **Retaliation:** The Institute will protect the staff member (whistle-blower) against any form of retaliation. This includes, but not limited to, protection from retaliation in the form of an adverse employment action such as termination, compensation decreases, or poor work assignments and threats of physical harm. Any staff member (whistle-blower) who believes he/she is being retaliated against must contact the Director of Human Resources. The right of a staff member (whistle-blower) for protection against retaliation does not include immunity for any unrelated personal wrongdoing that is alleged and investigated.

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