



Support for Sustainable Development (SSD)

CODE OF CONDUCT For SSD STAFF

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Addis Ababa

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1. Introduction

A code of conduct is a set of rules outlining the social norms, religious rules and responsibilities of an individual. Code of conduct includes principles, values, standards, or rules of behavior that guide the decisions, procedures and systems of an organization in a way that contributes to the welfare of its key stakeholders and respects the rights of all components affected by its operations. A common code of conduct is written for employees of SSD, which protects the organization and informs the employees of the SSD's expectations. It is ideal to form a document containing important information on expectations from employees at the work place. The document does not need to be complex or have elaborate policies, but the file needs a simple basis of what SSD expects from each employee at managerial and project level staffs.

Any employee in the organization will have direct or indirect contacts with the local community at his work place in good conduct or behavior by respecting others. Thus, good conduct will create or ensured good reputations of the organization in front of others and help to successfully complete its mission without any negative impacts left on social and cultural norms.

2. Background

Basic ethical commitments and standards are to be lived out in the work of the SSD. These include:- respect for the dignity and integrity of all human beings, fair and just treatment of all, without discrimination, exploitation or harassment , responsible stewardship in the exercise of power and use of financial and other resources, respect for diversity, inclusiveness and participation, and transparency and accountability All employed by the organization are expected to comply with these commitments.

These commitments call for special attention in international and multicultural work contexts where differences based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender, age or disability can lead to attitudes or practices that violate individuals' personal integrity or sense of what is appropriate.

In addition, in some locations poverty, conflict or displacement inevitably erode and weaken social and political structures aimed at protecting local communities. The temptations to misuse power, harass and exploit others, especially in relation to sexuality are considerable, and therefore must be constrained

Creating an overall atmosphere or organizational "culture," with ongoing awareness raising and educational efforts, is crucial to prevent the abusive use of power, sexual exploitation, harassment, fraud and corruption and unethical business practices. It is fundamental to preserve the responsible exercise of power and respect for the dignity and justice of all persons.

3. Legal and ethical dimensions

Ethical Dimensions is a competency embedded throughout the guiding principles of the code of conduct so that staffs will identify ethical principles that guide individual and collective actions and apply those principles to the analysis of contemporary social and political problems.

SSD management has the responsibility to ensure that all staffs are aware of this Code of Conduct, that they understand its meaning in concrete terms, and that they apply its elements to their program context. SSD staffs have a particular responsibility to uphold these standards, to set a good example and to create a working environment that supports and empowers staff.

4. Zero tolerance

A zero tolerance policy is SSD imposes strict punishment for infractions of a stated rule, with the intention of eliminating undesirable conduct. Zero-tolerance policies forbid persons in positions of authority from exercising discretion or changing punishments to fit the circumstances subjectively; they are required to impose a pre-determined punishment regardless of individual responsibility, justifying circumstances, or history. This pre-determined punishment, whether mild or severe, is always meted out.

SSD Code of Conduct embodies zero tolerance with regards to sexual exploitation and abuse, harassment, abuse of power, fraud and corruption in all of our activities and responsibilities, at the organizational or program level in our humanitarian and development work, and applying rules and penalties for any breaches or violations. When the Code of Conduct is violated, necessary procedures and disciplinary measures shall be applied according to the appropriate SSD personnel policies.

5. SSD staff code of conduct

SSD Code of Conduct outlines the responsibilities of all staff to safeguard the dignity and rights of people with whom they work. It is designed to assist staff to understand and comply with obligations placed on their conduct, and to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse, all forms of harassment, fraud and corruption and unethical practices.

5.1. General components

The SSD staff must:

1. Uphold the highest standards of accountability, efficiency, competence, integrity and transparency in the provision of goods and services in the execution of their jobs.
2. Respect the dignity and worth of every individual, and adhere to SSD values.
3. Respect and promote fundamental human rights without discrimination of any kind and

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- including discrimination based on race, ethnicity, language, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, marital status, socio-economic status, national origin, or political affiliation.
4. Respect and promote all aspects of the rights of children. Staff must ensure that children's rights, welfare and physical security are recognized, safeguarded and protected in accordance with international standards.
 5. Treat all work colleagues, persons with whom we work and other persons fairly and with respect, courtesy, dignity and according to the respective country law, international law, and local customs.
 6. Never commit any act or form of sexual exploitation or harassment.
 7. Never commit any act of fraud, corruption or unethical business practice, including conflict of interest in the work place.
 8. Create and maintain an environment that prevents abuse of power and sexual exploitation, and promotes the implementation of the Code of Conduct. Managers and project coordinators at all levels have a responsibility to support and develop procedures that maintain this environment, particularly related to gender inequities.

5.2. Specific components

5.2.1. Sexual exploitation and abuse

Sexual exploitation or harassment is activity that could result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to individuals, especially women and minors. Sexual exploitation and abuse can occur in many different environments – in a daily work context of an office, in travel and meetings away from the office creates a particular ethical responsibility and duty of care on the part of SSD staff. Females are often particularly vulnerable. Managers or project coordinators must ensure that effective mechanisms are in place to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse.

SSD staff shall:

1. Never engage in sexual exploitation or abuse of any target group (women, men, girls and boys), person, and colleague. This constitutes an act of gross misconduct and is therefore grounds for termination of employment.
2. Never exploit the vulnerability of any colleague or target group, especially women and minors, or allow any person/s to be put into compromising situations.
3. Never engage in any sexual activity with minors, regardless of whether the legal age in a given country may be less than 18, or act in ways that may place a child at risk of abuse, regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defense.
4. Never exchange money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favors. All forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior are prohibited.

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5. Particularly in the humanitarian context, never abuse one's position to withhold assistance, nor give preferential treatment in order to solicit sexual favors, gifts, payments or personal gains of any kind. The employee should be conscious of not taking advantage of his/her position.
6. Never engage in sexual relationships with staff and/or target populations, when power dynamics are unequal and the risk of exploitation is present. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of humanitarian development work. An exception may apply in [extreme] cases in the field, when one partner/spouse of a couple from a target population becomes a staff member.

5.2.2. Child protection

All children have the right to protection from all forms of violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation.

SSD staff shall:

1. support child safe and child friendly programs and environments;
2. ensure that protection and support to children are not discriminatory;
3. maintain a professional role with children; and
4. Ensure that children are appropriately and respectfully portrayed in all communications.

5.2.3. Harassment

SSD staff shall never commit any act or form of harassment resulting in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to individuals, especially women and children. SSD does not tolerate any form of workplace violation such as harassment (including sexual, gender and racial harassment), intimidation and discrimination, that is, any unwelcome comment or behavior that is offensive, demeaning, humiliating, derogatory, or any other inappropriate behavior that fails to respect the dignity of an individual.

SSD staff shall:

1. Treat everyone with dignity and respect in the workplace, speak with civility and fairness, listen carefully, and consider other's wellbeing. This includes communities with which SSD works.
2. Never commit any act or form of harassment as it causes physical, sexual, psychological or emotional harm or suffering to individuals, especially women, children and people with disabilities.
3. Never engage in any behavior, deliberate or otherwise, that makes the recipient feel persecuted, vulnerable and powerless.
4. Understand what constitutes harassment, recognize early signs of it (especially sexual, gender and racial harassment) and take swift action to prevent and resolve.

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5. Understand what constitutes intimidation, empower staff that are affected by it, develop strategies for reducing and stopping it, and take necessary disciplinary action against those found to have committed an act or form of harassment.
6. Never tolerate violent, harassing or discriminatory behavior of any kind directed toward another person in the workplace or in the communities with whom SSD works.

5.2.4. Fraud and corruption

SSD in all its programs recognizes the importance of having in place effective systems of prevention and deterrence of fraud in field locations. This will include strong systems of internal control, effective lines of communication and supervision, establishment of a professional working environment, and fraud risk appraisal systems at country and regional levels.

SSD staff shall:

1. Promote a culture of honesty and openness among SSD staff and management.
2. Be transparent in all work-related financial transactions.
3. Never accept, solicit or promise any kind of undue payment or favor and actively say “no” to any such practices
4. Never steal, misuse or misappropriate funds or property, ensuring that financial and other resources are used solely for the intended purposes. This applies also to any other income generated such as any interest received/earned on the funds.
5. Never engage in document or check forgery, money laundering, taking of commissions and influencing tender processes for improper benefit and theft.
6. Create a work environment where communities and staff can safely and confidentially raise and report all serious concerns about suspected fraud and corruption, and where “whistle blowers” will be protected.
7. Never knowingly support individuals or entities involved in illegal activities.
8. Never deliberately destroy, falsify, alter or conceal evidence related to an investigation or make false statements to investigators in order to materially influence or impede investigations into corrupt, fraudulent, coercive or collusive allegations.
9. Conduct all business in accordance with internationally accepted practices and procedures and uphold the highest standards of accountability and transparency in relations to finances, management and governance, where relevant.

6. Unethical business practices

SSD promotes moral and ethical organizational practices, including transparent, accountable, and honest practices in financial transactions, donations, gifts, and human resources management. SSD staff shall avoid conflicts of interest and activities which may affect SSD's credibility and integrity.

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SSD staff shall:

1. Always follow transparent, accountable and honest practices when receiving cash donations from public and private sources earmarked for humanitarian or development purposes.
2. Never use or accept a bribe in the form of money, goods and or services to secure a contract for services when dealing with suppliers in any development or humanitarian work.
3. Never take part in activities that generate personal, organizational or collective profit such as buying or selling when such activities may affect or appear to affect SSD's credibility or integrity.
4. Never share in the profits or budget leftovers as kickbacks, cuts or discounts for personal or organizational benefits.
5. Declare any known or potential conflicts of interest to SSD (e.g. direct relationship with service providers or suppliers of goods for SSD programs or family members).
6. Not accept any gifts or other favors that may influence the performance of staff functions or duties. Gifts are defined as, but not limited to: services, travel, entertainment, and material goods, among others. In order to respect national and local traditions and conventional hospitality, minor token gifts such as pens, calendars, desk diaries, etc. can be accepted on behalf of SSD and should be declared to the appropriate SSD office.
7. Never use illegal labor, child labor and forced labor in any work area.
8. Always pay compulsory State taxes and comply with national business law and international standards.
9. Always strive for the highest health, safety and environmental standards in all program work.
10. Ensure, where possible, that goods purchased are produced and delivered under conditions that do not involve the abuse or exploitation of any persons and have the least negative impact on the environment.
11. Never use/ distribute known unsafe products or supplies in a development/ humanitarian setting.

7. In cases of violations of the Code of Conduct

- i. Any violation of the Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the respective SSD terms, conditions and regulations.
- ii. Any staff member purposely making false accusations on any action by another staff member, which is in breach of the Code of Conduct, shall be subject to disciplinary action at the discretion of the employer, and in accordance with national labor laws.
- iii. Any SSD staff member observing or suspecting child abuse or serious misconduct of any kind is obliged to report it to his/her superior.
- iv. Failure to disclose or knowingly withhold information about any reports, concerns or

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suspicions of breaches of this Code of Conduct constitutes grounds for disciplinary measures.

- v. All confidential information, including reports of breaches of these standards by colleagues, obtained from affected populations and communities or colleagues shall be channeled correctly and handled with utmost confidentiality.
- vi. Violations of the Code of Conduct shall be reported in due time to senior management, any trusted colleague or the focal person for complaints, a specially designated group, the local human resources manager, or the Head of Human Resources of the SSD Office, who are expected to take prompt action.

SSD Code of Conduct – Signature by every staff member

The signatory below has read, understood and is in agreement with the contents of this document, the SSD Code of Conduct, which shall be subject to periodic revision and review. The signatory also accepts the consequences of any violation of any of the above provisions under this Code of Conduct.

SSD staff list :-

No	Name	Place	position	Date	Signature
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2					
3					
4					
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