

IMPACT

Shaping practices
Influencing policies
Impacting lives



IMPACT
Code of
Conduct

CODE OF CONDUCT
FOR IMPACT STAFF

Version 2 | 2021

Independent, private and non-profit, IMPACT respects a strict political and religious impartiality, and operates following principles of neutrality, non-discrimination and transparency, according to its core values: responsibility, impact, enterprising-spirit and inspiration.

IMPACT is committed to shape practices and influence policies in humanitarian and development settings in order to positively impact lives of people and their communities. IMPACT aims to enable better and more effective decision making by generating and promoting knowledge, tools and practices for humanitarian and development stakeholders.

The commitment of IMPACT is guided by 4 core values:

- **Responsibility:** we ensure the efficient and responsible delivery of humanitarian aid with the means and the resources that have been entrusted to us.
- **Impact:** we are committed to having the most sustainable impact for the communities and the people with whom we engage.
- **Enterprising-spirit:** we are enterprising and engage in our work with a spirit that creates value and overcomes challenges.
- **Inspiration:** we strive to inspire all those around us through our vision, values, approaches, choices, practice, actions and advocacy.

The aim of this Code of Conduct is to provide clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all staff are required to abide by.

This Code is governed by:

- IMPACT's Child Protection Policy;
- IMPACT's Conflict of Interest Prevention Policy;
- IMPACT's Data Protection Policy;
- IMPACT's Anti-Fraud, Bribery & Corruption Policy;
- IMPACT's Grievance Policy;
- IMPACT's Policy Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse;
- IMPACT's Anti-Terrorism and Anti-Money Laundering Policy;
- IMPACT's Environmental Safeguarding Policy;
- IMPACT's procedures, manuals and handbooks;
- Code of Conduct for The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief, of which IMPACT is a signatory;
- U.N. Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises.

Under the terms of this Code of Conduct, IMPACT staff covers all employees, volunteers, interns and freelance consultants, both international and national, whether they are based in headquarters or in the field with IMPACT or hosted by ACTED or another partner.

It is **binding on all IMPACT staff**:

- You must read and fully understand the content of this Code. If you have any questions it is your responsibility to ask your supervisor for clarification.

- If you fail to adhere to any of the provisions set out in this document you can face disciplinary action, dismissal or even legal action.
- You have a duty to report any breach of this Code to your supervisor or through IMPACT's established reporting mechanisms through:
 - grievance.geneva@impact-initiatives.org for personal and professional conduct,
 - transparency.geneva@impact-initiatives.org for protection of assets and resources,
 - Security Incident Report (SIR) regarding safety and security¹,
 - Complaints and response mechanisms (CRM) for beneficiaries².
- You also have a duty to inform beneficiaries and others with whom IMPACT is working of this Code that IMPACT staff must adhere to, including the rules relating to the reporting of misconduct and failure by IMPACT staff. All reports and concerns will be properly considered and treated with discretion. IMPACT will address any breaches of this Code that are reported through the established mechanisms.
- If you are a manager, you will have particular responsibilities to set a good example and to create a working environment conducive to upholding the standards of the Code of Conduct, as well as to support and develop systems that maintain this environment.

In the framework of IMPACT's "zero tolerance approach" on breaches of the Code of Conduct, it is the duty of all of us to think about and manage our behaviour to fit with the values and principles of IMPACT and the following requirements at all times.

1 – I WILL RESPECT OTHERS

- **I will respect all persons equally** and without any distinction or discrimination based on nationality, race, ethnicity, tribe, gender, religious beliefs, political opinion or disability.
- **I will act fairly, honestly and tactfully** and treat people with dignity and respect. I will respect the national law and local culture, traditions, customs and practices that are in line with UN conventions.
- **I will contribute to building a harmonious workplace** based on team spirit, mutual respect and understanding.
- **I will dress in a manner appropriate** to the assignment and the cultural setting.

Consequently,

I will not take part in any form of discrimination, harassment, or abuse (physical, sexual or verbal), intimidation or exploitation, or in any other way infringe the rights of others.

¹ In the framework of the global partnership between IMPACT and ACTED, ACTED security and safety procedures and processes apply to IMPACT. This includes the use of SIRs, which will be addressed to relevant ACTED Security Focal Point, with IMPACT HQ in copy.

² In the framework of the global partnership between ACTED and IMPACT, all beneficiaries will be directed towards ACTED's CRM mechanisms in countries where ACTED hosts IMPACT's operations. In other contexts, the deployment of CRM mechanisms will be implemented by IMPACT or its partners, as relevant.

2 – I WILL MAINTAIN HIGH STANDARDS OF CONDUCT, BOTH PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL ...

...by serving the mandate and values of IMPACT, by applying IMPACT's and ACTED's manuals, policies, guidelines, handbooks, internal rules and procedures, by striving for high standards in my work, taking responsibility for my actions and not abusing my position of power as an IMPACT representative. **I will refrain** from behaving in a way that undermines my ability to do my job or is likely to harm IMPACT's, ACTED's or any other partner's reputation. **I will ensure** that my personal and professional performance is always based on a non-racist, non-discriminatory, gender sensitive and environmental-friendly conduct.

Consequently,

- **I will neither support nor take part** in any form of criminal, illegal, exploitative or abusive activities, including, for example child labour, paedophilia, forced prostitution, trafficking of human beings, commodities and intoxicants.
- **I will never** knowingly **support**, tolerate or encourage terrorism or the activities of those who embrace terrorism.
- **I will not ask for** or invite any kind of personal payment, service or favour from others, especially beneficiaries or members of the populations of concern of our action, in return for our help, support, goods or services of any kind.
- **I will not be** in possession of, nor profit from the sale of, illicit/illegal goods or substances.
- **I will not** drink alcohol or use any other substances in a way that affects my ability to do my job or affects the reputation of IMPACT. Likewise, I will under no circumstances drive an IMPACT or ACTED vehicle³ under the influence of alcohol or any other illegal intoxicants. I understand that any knowledge of staff handling any kind of IMPACT or ACTED motorised transportation means under such influence should be reported and will be dealt with as a breach on the Code of Conduct and security regulations, and lead to disciplinary measures.
- **I will not accept** bribes or significant gifts (except small tokens of appreciation valued less than 30 USD that I will immediately notify to my line manager) from governments, beneficiaries or members of the population of concern, donors, or others.
- **I will not enter** into any sort of business relationship on behalf of IMPACT with family, friends or other personal/professional contacts for the supply of any goods or service to IMPACT or any employment related matters without authorisation.
- **I will not use** the organisation's computer or other equipment to view, download, create or distribute inappropriate material, such as pornography and paedophilia.
- **I am aware** that sexual exploitation and abuse constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of my employment.
- **I will not engage** in any sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) and am aware that this is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defence.
- **I will not exchange** money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour and am aware that it is prohibited. This includes exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries.

³ Authorised drivers only as per the ACTED Global Security & Safety manual.

- **I am obliged** to create and maintain an environment which prevents sexual exploitation and abuse and promotes the implementation of this code of conduct. Managers at all levels have particular responsibilities to support and develop systems which maintain this environment.
- **I will not carry** weapons or wear military uniforms within IMPACT or ACTED premises and vehicles and when on duty.
- **I will commit** to protect the environment and reduce risks of negative impacts on the environment.

3 – I WILL COMMIT TO PROTECT IMPACT’S BENEFICIARIES

...by taking into consideration the difficult experiences that victims of disasters have faced and the disadvantaged position in which they may find themselves in relation to those who hold power or influence over certain aspects of their lives, **I will** always seek to care for and protect the rights of the most vulnerable, e.g. children, in particular orphans and separated children, women, single parents, elderly, disabled, chronically sick and vulnerable minority groups. **I will** do my utmost to support IMPACT’s assistance and protection work and act in a manner that ensures that beneficiaries’ or population of concern’s interests are my paramount consideration.

Consequently,

- **I will not act** in a way that breaches IMPACT’s or any applicable ACTED’s operational guidelines, manuals, handbooks and procedures, in particular IMPACT’s child protection policy, or in any way place our beneficiaries or members of the population of concern at risk of harm.
- **I will not abuse** the power and influence that I have by virtue of my position over the lives and well-being of beneficiaries. I will never request or receive any service or favour from beneficiaries or the population of concern, staff members or other persons in return for assistance or protection. **I will never engage** in any exploitative relationships – sexual⁴, emotional, financial or employment-related – with beneficiaries.
- **I will not engage** in any sexual relationship with a person benefitting from humanitarian assistance and protection that involves improper use of rank or position and **I am aware** that this is prohibited. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of humanitarian aid work.
- **I will not withhold** information about any current criminal convictions, charges or civil proceedings, in particular relating to child abuse, either prior to my hiring with IMPACT as well as when I join IMPACT or arising during the time of my employment.

4 – I WILL ENSURE TO BE ATTENTIVE TO THE SAFETY & SECURITY OF MYSELF & OTHERS...

... by being aware of and complying with IMPACT’s and ACTED’s security & safety policies and practices and highlighting to my line manager any areas of concern.

Consequently,

⁴ The term ‘sexual exploitation’ is here defined as any abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes; including profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. Similarly, the term ‘sexual abuse’ means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

- **I will make** myself familiar and comply with all global and local IMPACT's and ACTED's security & safety and health rules and procedures.
- **I will not behave** in a way, which creates unnecessary risk to my security or the security of others.

5 – I WILL PROTECT IMPACT'S RESOURCES AND ASSETS...

... by handling IMPACT financial resources and assets carefully and by performing my official duties and conducting my private affairs in a manner that avoids conflict of interest. In particular:

- **I will ensure** IMPACT's resources are not misused and protect them from theft, fraud or other damage.
- **I will disclose** potential conflict of interest with a supplier, service provider or business partner (such as family relations or shareholding).
- **I will not use** offices, IMPACT property or knowledge gained from functions with IMPACT for private gain, financial or otherwise, or for the private gain of any third party, including family, friends or those they favour.
- **I will protect, manage and utilise** IMPACT human, financial and material resources efficiently and effectively, bearing in mind that these resources have been placed at IMPACT's disposal for the benefit of beneficiaries or other persons of concern to IMPACT.
- **I will maintain** electronic files and archives in a responsible manner keeping in mind the necessary protection of privacy. Information that may be considered illegal, offensive or inappropriate must under no circumstances be processed, downloaded, stored or disseminated.
- **I will use** the computer equipment and information systems made available to me in strict compliance with IMPACT's principles and rules.

Consequently,

- **I will not seek** personal gain from my employment with IMPACT and will resist any undue political pressure in decision-making. In particular, **I will not receive or provide** bribes, including kick-backs of any kind.
- **I will neither seek nor accept** instructions regarding the performance of my duties from any government or from any authority external to IMPACT. **I will not accept** any honour, decoration, favour, gift or remuneration from any authority; nor will I accept these from any other source external to IMPACT without prior authorisation, except for minor token items of appreciation valued less than 30 USD.
- **I will not engage** in any outside occupation or employment without prior authorisation. **I will not accept** supplementary payments or subsidies from a government or any other source.
- **I will not assist** private persons or companies in their undertakings with IMPACT where this might lead to actual or perceived preferential treatment. **I will never participate** in activities related to procurement of goods or services, or in human resource activities, where a conflict of interest may arise and will always act in strict conformity with related IMPACT's policies, guidelines and instructions.

6 – I WILL PROTECT THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF IMPACT'S INFORMATION AND DATA...

... by handling IMPACT's information and data carefully and with discretion. In particular:

- **I will safeguard** and make responsible use of the information to which I have access as a result of my employment with IMPACT.
- **I will exercise** due care in all matters of official business, and not divulge any confidential information about beneficiaries and persons of concern and other work-related matters to IMPACT colleagues and other partners.
- **I will exercise** necessary caution and discretion with regard to political, military or security matters in official or private communications, including telephone calls, radio messages, e-mails, social media and letters.
- **I will ensure**, when engaged in communication activities, that portrayal of individuals and their circumstances are fairly represented in terms of their capacities and vulnerabilities. I will make all necessary efforts to explain how photos and stories will be used and to obtain permission from the individuals for the use of their photos and stories.

Consequently,

- **I will not reveal**, both while working for and after leaving IMPACT, any confidential information I have obtained while working for IMPACT to any third party unless legally required to do so. **I am aware** that the breach of professional confidentiality, both while employed and after leaving the organisation, might lead to a claim for compensation and/or prosecution.
- **I will not make comments** to the media or to journalists on behalf of IMPACT without prior agreement with the Country Coordinator / Representative or Head of Department and the Communication Unit in Geneva.
- **I will not issue** statements to the press or other agencies of public information or submit articles, books or other material for publication, including on internet blogs, websites, online media, social media and any public electronic forums, if such act relates to the activities or interest of IMPACT, without prior necessary approval from the HQ Communication unit. **I am committed** to a responsible management of any personal social media platform, including Facebook and Twitter, in accordance with the law and the standards listed in the present Code of conduct, on which **I will not disclose** any confidential professional matters, nor divulge any confidential information about beneficiaries and persons of concern to IMPACT, colleagues and other work-related matters, nor represent IMPACT in any way.

7 – I WILL REPORT ANY INCIDENT OR CONCERN RELATING TO THIS CODE

In order to create the conditions for this Code of Conduct to enter into force, we must not only apply it individually but all IMPACT staff have a duty to report within IMPACT any potential incident, abuse or concern that we witness or are made aware of.

Consequently,

- **If I develop** concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation by a fellow worker, whether in the same organisation or not, **I must report** such concerns via established organisational reporting mechanisms (grievance.geneva@impact-initiatives.org).
- **I will report** through appropriate channels any matter which appears to break the standards contained in the Code of Conduct.

I am aware of the fact that any breach of this Code of Conduct may lead to disciplinary action, dismissal or even legal action and that intentionally false accusations and reports are seen as a breach of the Code of Conduct and will be subject to disciplinary action.

Date:

Location:

Staff member's first and last name:

Signature.....



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