

Code of Conduct

Introduction

UnitingWorld promotes the highest standards of behaviour and accountability in our relations with our partners, supporters, other members of the Action by Churches Together (ACT) Alliance and the people with whom we work in all our programs. These standards are consistent with our values. UnitingWorld shares this commitment with other members of the ACT Alliance and with the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) as a signatory to their Codes of Conduct.

This Code also reflects the principles and requirements of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Child Protection Policy.

1 Values and Behaviour

UnitingWorld representatives shall at all times:

- a Act in ways consistent with the Christian principles underpinning the work and service of UnitingWorld;
- b Respect and promote fundamental human rights without discrimination irrespective of social status, race, ethnicity, colour, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, national origin, political affiliation or disability;
- c Contribute to a work environment that is fair, equitable and free of harassment and act with honesty and good faith, treating all other UnitingWorld representatives with respect and dignity;
- d Help to build a harmonious workplace based on team spirit, mutual respect and understanding;
- e Treat all communities with whom we work (including crisis-affected populations, Internally Displaced Persons [IDPs] and refugees), fairly and with respect, courtesy, dignity and according to International Laws and Standards;
- f Uphold the highest standards of accountability, efficiency, competence, integrity and transparency in decision-making, especially as such decisions involve and impact UnitingWorld's partners and other stakeholders;
- g Be familiar with their rights and responsibilities as articulated in this Code of Conduct and other relevant UnitingWorld Policies and Procedures;
- h Abide by the high standards of behaviour expected when representing UnitingWorld;
- j Contribute to, and take ownership of, decisions that support achievement of the mission and vision of UnitingWorld;
- k Respect the role and decisions of UnitingWorld's Board and management;
- l Promote a team environment by acknowledging the work of others and, as appropriate, providing constructive feedback on their contribution to the work of UnitingWorld;

- m Respect other staff, partners and stakeholders by maintaining an appropriate level of confidentiality while working for UnitingWorld; and,
- n Refrain from misusing alcohol or other drugs which may adversely affect their work or service, the safety of colleagues or the reputation of UnitingWorld.

2 Child Protection

Representatives engaged by UnitingWorld, agree that while implementing any activities funded by UnitingWorld, they must:

- a) Treat children with respect regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status;
- b) Not use language or behaviour towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate;
- c) Not engage children in any form of sexual intercourse or sexual activity, including paying for sexual services or acts;
- d) Wherever possible, ensure that another adult is present when working in the proximity of children and allow the child to select their chaperone (parent, teacher, agency staff etc);
- e) Not invite unaccompanied children into their place of residence, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger;
- f) Not sleep close to unsupervised children unless absolutely necessary, in which case they must obtain the supervisor's permission, and ensure that another adult is present;
- g) Not use any computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras or social media inappropriately, and never exploit or harass children or access child exploitation material through any medium;
- h) Not use physical punishment on children;
- i) Not hire children for domestic or other labour which is inappropriate to their age or developmental stage, which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury;
- j) Comply with all relevant Australian and local legislation, including labour laws in relation to child labour;
- k) Immediately report concerns or allegations of child exploitation and abuse and policy non-compliance in accordance with appropriate procedures. These are outlined in the Child Protection Policy. Matters of a criminal nature will be immediately reported to local authorities);
- l) Immediately disclose all charges, convictions and other outcomes of an offence, which occurred before or occurs during their association with UnitingWorld that relate to child exploitation and abuse; and,
- m) Be familiar with and apply the letter and spirit of the Child Protection Policy in all circumstances.

When photographing or filming a child for work related purposes, UnitingWorld representatives must:

- n) Assess and comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images before photographing or filming anyone, but especially a child;

- o) Obtain informed consent before photographing or filming anyone, but especially a child, where the consent of the child and a parent are required. As part of this, UnitingWorld representatives must explain how the photograph or film will be used;
- p) Ensure photographs, films, videos and DVDs present people, especially children, in a manner that is dignified and respectful and not one that is vulnerable or submissive. Children should be adequately clothed and not presented in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive;
- q) Ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts;
- r) Not underestimate the reach of the internet. A picture of a child published on an Australian website can be viewed by someone in that child's community overseas, posing potential risks for the children our agency works for; and,
- s) Ensure file labels do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically, including by turning off the geo-tagging functions on still and video cameras and mobile phones.

3 Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

UnitingWorld unequivocally condemns sexual exploitation and abuse as a form of Gender-Based Violence (GBV). UnitingWorld recognises that Sexual Exploitation and Abuse can occur in any workplace or operational context, including in a development setting. In contexts of endemic poverty, dependency can create an additional ethical responsibility and duty of care on the part of UnitingWorld representatives and its implementing partners.

To protect UnitingWorld's partners and those we seek to assist in all situations, UnitingWorld representatives and of implementing partner staff shall at all times, both during and outside official working hours:

- a) Understand that sexual exploitation and abuse by staff constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment;
- b) Not accept, solicit or engage in the "buying" of or profiting from sexual services;
- c) Never exploit the vulnerability of any group being assisted or with whom we are working; whether this is in the workplace or in the context of development work. This is especially the case with women and children. No person/s should be put into compromising situations;
- d) Understand that the exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour is totally unacceptable and is prohibited;
- e) Never abuse a position to withhold development assistance, or give preferential treatment, in order to solicit sexual favours, gifts, payments of any kind, or advantage;
- f) Never engage in sexual relationships with members of crisis-affected populations as such relationships are based on inherently unequal power dynamics and undermine the credibility and integrity of humanitarian aid work;
- g) In countries where UnitingWorld may directly implement development work, a staff member who engages in a sexual relationship with a member of the recipient community and/or with another employee, must inform his or her manager about the relationship to prevent the perception of a conflict of interest;
- h) Not identify survivors of sexual exploitation, gender-based violence or abuse as such.

- i) Never reveal an individual's status as a person living with HIV, TB or any other serious health conditions without written consent.
- j) Not identify an individual's engagement in culturally unacceptable activities (such as promotion of child rights or challenging gender norms), or socially marginalised or criminal activities (such as engagement in sex work, or other activities that are illegal in their context)and,
- k) Be aware of, and abide by, the specific child-related provisions outlined in Section 2 of this Code.

UnitingWorld, in consultation with its implementing partners, promotes the integration of a gender-sensitive perspective into efforts to effectively prevent and respond to sexual abuse and exploitation.

4 Harassment

UnitingWorld does not tolerate any form of violation, in the workplace or in any other operational context. This includes sexual, gender and racial harassment, bullying and discrimination (including any unwelcome comment or behaviour that is offensive, demeaning, humiliating or derogatory), or any other inappropriate behaviour that fails to respect the dignity of an individual. UnitingWorld representatives should not commit any act or form of harassment as it results in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to individuals, especially women and children.

All UnitingWorld representatives are expected to:

- a) Treat everyone with dignity and respect in the workplace and speak with civility and kindness, listen carefully, and consider the wellbeing of others;
- b) Never commit any form of harassment;
- c) Never engage in any behaviour likely to make the recipient feel persecuted, vulnerable or powerless;
- d) Understand what constitutes harassment, recognise early signs of sexual, gender, racial or other targeted forms of harassment and take swift action to prevent and resolve this; and,
- e) Understand what constitutes bullying, empower staff affected by it, develop strategies to reduce and eliminate it, and take all necessary disciplinary action against those found to have committed harassment.

5 Fraud and corruption

UnitingWorld has a zero-tolerance approach to fraud and corruption. UnitingWorld representatives must never take advantage of their position when working with communities, partners or other stakeholders. Therefore, UnitingWorld representatives shall at all times be expected to:

- a) Promote a culture of honesty and openness among UnitingWorld staff and management;
- b) Be transparent in all work-related financial transactions;
- c) Never steal, misuse or misappropriate funds or property, and ensure that financial and other resources are used solely for the intended purposes. This applies also to any other income generated by UnitingWorld activities, such as any interest received or earned on the funds;

- d) Never engage in “non-arm’s length transactions”, document or cheque forgery, money laundering, taking of commissions or influencing tender processes for improper benefit and theft;
- e) Foster a work environment where communities and staff can safely and confidentially raise and report all serious concerns about suspected fraud and corruption;
- f) Never knowingly support individuals or entities involved in illegal activities;
- g) Never deliberately destroy, falsify, alter or conceal evidence material to an investigation or make false statements to investigators in order to materially influence or impede investigations into corrupt, fraudulent, coercive or collusive allegations; and,
- h) 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

UnitingWorld promotes moral and ethical business practices. All UnitingWorld representatives are expected to:

- a) Always follow transparent, accountable and honest practices when receiving cash donations from the public earmarked for humanitarian or development purposes;
- b) Never accept a bribe in the form of money, goods or services to secure a contract for services when dealing with suppliers in any development or humanitarian work;
- c) Never take part in activities that generate personal, organisational or collective profit such as buying or selling when such activities may affect, or appear to affect, UnitingWorld’s credibility or integrity, or that of its partners;
- d) Never share in the profits or budget leftovers as kickbacks, cuts or discounts for personal or organisational benefits;
- e) Not make improper use of:
 - i. UnitingWorld resources;
 - ii. inside information; or
 - iii. the status, power or authority as a UnitingWorld representative in order to gain a benefit;
- f) Declare any known or potential conflicts of interest to their employer (as outlined in UnitingWorld’s Governance and Personnel Policies);
- g) Never accept any gifts or other favours that may influence the performance of staff functions or duties. Gifts are defined as, but not limited to: services, travel, entertainment, material goods. In order to respect national and local traditions and conventional hospitality, minor token gifts such as pens, calendars, desk diaries, etc. can be accepted. These are articulated in UnitingWorld’s Governance and Procedures Manuals;
- h) Never use illegal labour, child labour or forced labour in any work area;
- i) Always pay compulsory State taxes and comply with national business law and international standards;
- j) Always comply with relevant national workplace health, safety and environmental standards in all program work;

- k) 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;
- l) Never use or distribute products or supplies that are known to be unsafe in any development or humanitarian setting.

7 Disclosure

UnitingWorld representatives must disclose any convictions for criminal offences which occur during their employment with UnitingWorld.

a Confidentiality

Written and spoken information will be protected from being shared with unauthorised persons or used for a purpose other than that for which it was collected. UnitingWorld is guided in this by the Assembly's Privacy Policy.

b Security & Safety

UnitingWorld places the security and safety of all its representatives, and those with whom we work, as a top priority and will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that UnitingWorld representatives are secure as they go about their work. Security is an individual as well as an organisational responsibility and all UnitingWorld representatives are expected to:

- i Understand and adhere to the Travel Policy and relevant Workplace Health and Safety policies as well as being familiar with the corresponding policies of its partners;
- ii Never use or possess weapons or ammunition of any kind while on duty; and,
- iii Never drive a vehicle while on duty whilst under the influence of alcohol or any illegal substance and comply with relevant laws of the country in which they are working.

I acknowledge that I have read and understand UnitingWorld's Code of Conduct 2018 and agree that in the course of my association with UnitingWorld I will abide by the conditions outlined in it.

I acknowledge that I have been given and kept UnitingWorld's Code of Conduct 2018 for my reference.

Name:

Position:

Signature:

Date:

Place: