

## WAY's

### Code of Professional Conduct

#### 1 Preliminaries

##### 1.1 Purpose of the Code

All staff members for WAY are responsible for abiding by the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct and regulations as laid out in the Statute. In addition, the Code is designed to provide a set of values or decision-making approaches that enable members to make judgments about the most appropriate behavior and course of action. More specifically, the Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct are designed to ensure:

- The alignment of standards of ethical and professional conduct throughout activities implemented by WAY
- Increased legitimacy and trust among external stakeholders
- The improvement of the quality of performance throughout WAY activities by helping all its members and bodies to undertake transparent and efficient decision-making processes
- The improvement of communication between the staff, target groups and stakeholders

##### 1.2 Scope of the Code

This Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct applies to all actors engaging in activities carried out by WAY:

- Directors, staff, board, interns and volunteers
- Subcontractors and external trainers
- Project partners
- Participants of activities such as trainings, workshops, seminars, and other formats

## 2 WAY Fundamental Values and Principles

### 2.1 Cooperation with Partners

- The foundation of successful project implementation is trustworthy and close cooperation with partners, in which all strategic decisions are made together.
- The project objectives must be aligned with the local needs. This requires:
  - The development of a long-lasting vision in cooperation with local partners.
  - The joint development of project activities, including the corresponding impact criteria. (e.g. through the joint creation of log frames)
  - Creation of a joint risk and conflict analysis with local partners.
  - The joint decision on the criteria for the selection of participants.
- The extent to which the values of WAY and its employees align with the achievable project goals and the working methods of the project partners must be reviewed consistently.

### 2.2 Basic Values

- The foundation of every project is the “Do-No-Harm” approach. The assumptions made in this context should be confirmed by the local partner.
- An open, close and equal cooperation with local partners is necessary.
- WAY’s employees must be impartial. This includes a categorical openness towards different ways of thinking.
- During, as well as at the end of the project, the effect will be observed, measured, recorded and compared with the project goals.

### 2.3 Sustainability

- The effect beyond the duration of the project and how it can be achieved must be taken into consideration for every project. Examples include multiplier approaches and the construction of (permanent) structures.
- People (Partner, Participants etc.) with heightened interest and motivation should be integrated long term, also beyond the duration of the project.
- If possible, the results of the projects should be multipliable.

## 2.4 Outreach / Accessibility

- Beyond the circle of direct participants, as many people as possible should be reached.
- During all projects, provided it is conducive to the project objectives, the involvement of as many different stakeholder groups as well as various social sectors and levels as possible will be strived for.
- People from disadvantaged, marginalized groups should be especially included in the project implementation. We are therefore committed to a greater inclusion of women to pro-mote a better understanding of gender, violence and peace as well as increasing the participation of women and other marginalized groups in peace building processes.
- The participation requirements for the projects should be critically reflected and minimized if possible.

## 2.5 Profitability

- The project contributes to the financial health of the organization.
- The (time and material) effort, the financial revenues and the achieved impact of a project must be in proportional relation to each other.

# 3 **Ethical and Professional Conduct**

## 3.1 Respect, Tact, and Courtesy

Directors, staff, subcontractors and those taking part in our joint activities shall conduct themselves with courtesy and respect at all times. They shall refrain from verbal or physical abuse and any form of harassment. In particular, they shall avoid making disparaging remarks on the grounds of race, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, disability, age, language, social origin or other similar shared characteristics or trait. Members shall be aware that statements or actions that are not intended to be offensive may be perceived as such by that person. At all times the person affected possesses the power of definition concerning the question of a statement or action being offensive/harassing/discriminating or not.

The given actors need to be aware of any risk of such perceptions and to refrain from making potentially offensive or intimidating statements. Members shall respect diversity of thinking and differences among all individuals involved in a given event or activity.

They shall be ready to listen and consider new and diverse ideas for achieving our joint mission and objectives.

### 3.2 List of Prohibited Conduct

Directors, staff, interns, volunteers, subcontractors, project partners and participants of joint activities and events commit themselves to avoid the following conduct in all conscience.

- Discrimination (any unfair treatment or arbitrary distinction based on a person's race, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, disability, age, language, social origin or other similar shared characteristics or trait. Discrimination may be an isolated event affecting one person or a group of persons similarly situated or may manifest itself through harassment or abuse of authority.)
- Harassment (any unwelcome conduct that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another person, when such conduct interferes with work or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Harassment may take the form of words, gestures or actions which tend to annoy, alarm, abuse, demean, intimidate, belittle, humiliate or embarrass another. Harassment may be directed at one or more persons based on a shared characteristic or trait. Harassment normally implies a series of incidents.)
- Abuse of authority (improper use of a position of influence, power or authority against another person. This is particularly serious when a person uses their influence, power or authority to improperly influence the career or employment conditions of another, including, but not limited to, appointment, assignment, contract renewal, performance evaluation, working conditions or promotion. Abuse of authority may also include conduct that creates a hostile or offensive work environment which includes, but is not limited to, the use of intimidation, threats, blackmail or coercion. Discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, are particularly serious when accompanied by abuse of authority.)
- Sexual Harassment (any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation, when such conduct interferes with work, is made a condition of employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Sexual harassment may occur in the workplace or in connection with work.)
- Inappropriate Romantic or Sexual Relationships
- Emotional Misconduct (pattern of deliberate, non-contact behavior that has the potential to cause emotional or psychological harm to a colleagues or

participants of any training measures and/or other individual(s)/group(s). Non-contact behaviors include verbal acts and acts that deny attention or support.

### 3.3 Threat of Sanctions for Misconduct

- WAYs response to misconduct allegations or matters will vary, according to the nature and seriousness of the alleged conduct. A full investigative response will be undertaken where the conduct, if proved, could result in dismissal.
- WAY directors will manage the initial receipt of a complaint; determine if the matter requires notification to the external bodies, WAY directors will undertake the appropriate action based on the substance of the report.
- Persons who are judged guilty of misconduct have committed gross misconduct shall face disciplinary action. Proven allegations of gross misconduct may result in dismissal.
- Directors, staff and subcontractors assure the awareness of employees/participants/project partners/consultants/associates about this code of conduct including threat of sanctions through signed receipts of acknowledgement.

## 4 **Reporting Misconduct**

In the following the reporting channels and obligations in the event of violations and regulations for the protection of whistle-blowers will be explained:

- All instances of suspected misconduct should be reported as stated in the respective Staff Codes of Conduct for appropriate action, while also providing for the protection of those individuals making the reporting, and natural justice to those individuals being subject of such report.
- Several channels exist by which an individual may raise their concern either verbally or in writing: a) Speaking to the awareness agent (see 5. Implementation of this Code of Conduct) b) speaking to the person directly c) speaking to the project manager or project assistant d) speaking to directors e) speaking to colleagues/peers
- Various legislation sets out the requirements for WAY to report matters of respective misconduct to the police station and the Attorney General if appropriate and proportionate.
- WAY shall be committed to report credible evidences of misconduct detection and the investigation's results to its partners, associated, clients, stakeholders

- and submit any further requirements related to the fraud investigations process in a timely and transparent manner as per requested and the conditions included in the signed agreements with those parties.
- Any whistle-blower who reports serious misconduct will be protected from adverse consequences. This covers the identity of the whistle-blower, as well as the mobility and staff report of the person concerned. Naturally, in order for WAY to be able to apply such protective measures, the person concerned will need to identify him/herself to one of the directors, and to observe the whistle blowing procedure of the Agency once it is adopted.

## **5 Implementation of this Code Conduct**

This Code of Conduct is presented to each new employee and has to be signed before any action in the name of the organization can be carried out. In order to assure the ongoing awareness about the code WAY staff regularly (in intervals of 3 months approx.) takes part in monitoring, team-development, awareness raising activities and regular (every 6 months) performance evaluations. An integral element of these activities is the examination of the implementation of the code as well as a conflict sensitive reflection of and adequate reaction to (i.e. through awareness raising) pervasive gender stereotypes in internal and external activities. In case of identification of insufficient awareness and compliance, measures will be implemented in order to reinforce ethical behavior. Furthermore, the code of conduct is perceived as a living document that can be amended at any time by proposal during one of the weekly team-meetings.

Thus, WAY encourages each staff member's ownership of the code of conduct and facilitates an ongoing discourse. The Way board regularly designates awareness agents (as well as a deputy awareness agent) who is in charge of moderating this discourse and maintaining the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. The awareness agents are especially qualified for the support and guidance of those affected by any kind of discrimination, harassment or sexual misconduct and manages the procedures following reports of misconduct in this regard. In case the awareness agents themselves are accused of misconduct of any kind, alternative mechanisms take effect. The issue is then to be discussed with at least one of whether WAY directors who will decide if the involvement of neutral third party mediators or external bodies is appropriate or vital.

As all of WAYs project partners, subcontractors and participants of any training or workshop are obligated to sign a respective receipt of acknowledgement this code is an



elementary part of each partnership agreement, contract as well as long term training measures that involve participants.

WAY have standard procedures for investigating and managing cases of misconduct that must be followed. These standard procedures include our commitment to taking active steps to safeguard, support, (and recognize as appropriate) employees/participants/partners who have reported a concern.

Reports will at all times be taken seriously and with most respect for the person affected. This notably counts for those affected by sexual misconduct. WAYs SOPs regarding sexual misconduct stipulate the following mechanisms:

- Actively expressed consent is at all times conditionally for any response to the alleged misconduct including reporting the incident to third parties.
- If consent was expressed the case should be discussed with the designated awareness agent.
- The affected person will be spatially separated from the accused person if possible.
- The designated awareness agent will discuss accurate measures in interest of the affected person if desired in order to assure their mental wellbeing.
- If adequate the matter will be reported to the police to assure further investigations.
- Results of internal and external investigations will be shared with the affected persons and complainants (provided the affected persons consent) by the awareness agents