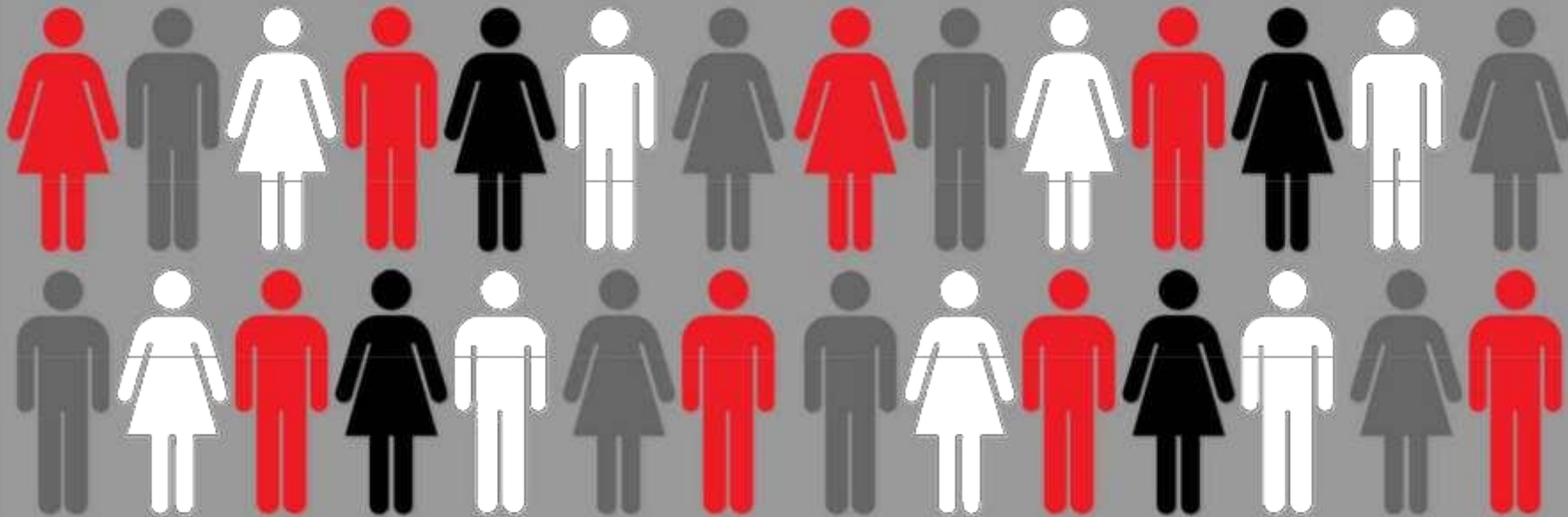


Paper 9 – Annex 2 ActionAid International Code of Conduct

**ACTIONAID INTERNATIONAL  
CODE OF CONDUCT**

# ACTIONAID INTERNATIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT



## 1. INTRODUCTION

ActionAid is committed to ensuring that all staff members behave in a reasonable manner that respects and protects both the vulnerable people we work with and each other and in line with the feminist principles and values that ActionAid adheres to. In addition, all staff are ambassadors of ActionAid and their actions and behaviours can enhance or hinder the reputation of the organisation. For these reasons, Action Aid's Code of Conduct is binding to all staff across the Federation. The Code of Conduct will also be used as the basis of induction, training and refresher discussions in order to have a continuing impact on cultural change.

ActionAid's Code of Conduct provides clear guidance, and outlines examples of conduct that are considered unacceptable. This is not an exhausted list and covers anyone representing ActionAid; staff, volunteers (including board and assembly members), consultants, interns, visitors, dependents accompanying staff while working for ActionAid, and other individuals representing ActionAid, such as partners working in communities.

Throughout the Code of Conduct where the word "staff" is used, this should be taken to include all the above-mentioned people.

The code of conduct is to be made public so that the communities we work with can report concerns or anyone not adhering to the code of conduct including how and to whom they can report any misconduct or non-compliance committed by ActionAid staff or representatives.

The Code of Conduct is a binding document:

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 are obliged to read and fully understand the content of the document. If you have any questions please ask your line manager or your local HR representative staff for guidance.

All reports and concerns will be fully considered and treated with discretion. ActionAid will take all necessary steps to protect staff or others reporting possible breaches of this Code.

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 in the Code of Conduct

## 2. ACTIONAIDS CODE OF CONDUCT

Staff members are responsible for managing their behaviour both in and out of work in accordance with ActionAid's values, policies and procedures and this Code of Conduct.

### Recognising my power and privilege

I will be mindful of the power and privilege that I hold in relation to other staff, community members and partners I work with.

I will not raise the expectations of communities, partners or other third parties I engage with and will be honest in

terms of how much ActionAid can support through its services and resources.

**Protecting the safety and wellbeing of oneself and others** – this means that I will adhere to ActionAid’s Global Security Management Policy and, my country specific Staff Health and Security policies.

- I will adhere to all legal and organisational health and safety requirements at the location of my work and when I travel within or outside my duty station/country.
- I will be supportive and where reasonable help ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of my colleagues and be pro-active in raising any concerns related to this to management in a sensitive and confidential manner.
- I will respect the privacy of colleagues, staff, partners and community members and will not share their confidential or personal information without their consent

**Demonstrating Mutual Respect**– means that I will recognise the innate worth and experiences of all people and the value of diversity by respecting the rights of all persons regardless of their race, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, culture, dress, language, political affiliation, health status, colour, class, caste, ethnicity, marital status, disability, location, pregnancy, and religion.

- I will act fairly, honestly and thoughtfully and treat all people with dignity and respect.
- I will respect the national law and local culture, traditions, customs and practices of the country I am working in where they are not in conflict with ActionAid’s values.
- I will not take part in any form of discrimination, bullying and harassment, or abuse (physical, sexual or verbal), intimidation, humiliation, shaming or exploitation, or in any other way infringe the rights of others. Please refer to *ActionAid’s Anti- Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures* for details and your country’s *Bullying and Harassment Policy*.

**Maintaining high standards of personal and professional conduct** – this means that I will always aim to achieve the best in my work, take full responsibility for my actions and not abuse my position of power as an ActionAid representative.

I will embrace and promote accountability and pro-actively make myself available to be held to account and strive to improve practicing transparency, participation, compliance, evaluation and learning.

- I will not behave in a way that undermines my ability to do my job or is likely to bring ActionAid into disrepute.
- I will be mindful about perception and appearance in my language, actions and relationships with all staff, Board members and members of the community I am working in, both in and outside of work.
- When working or travelling on behalf of ActionAid, I will observe all local laws and be sensitive to local customs.
- I will abide by the terms of *ActionAid’s Safeguarding policies*.
- I will not engage in sexual relations with a vulnerable adult or anyone under the age of 18. A minor is taken to be anyone under the age of 18 (or older if stipulated in local legislation) regardless of local custom.
- I will not knowingly abuse or exploit any person in any way.
- I will abide by the terms of *ActionAid’s Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures*.
- I will not exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual favours.
- I will not work whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or being in possession of it during work.
- I will not profit from the sale of any other illegal goods or substances whilst employed by ActionAid.

- I will not ask for or invite any personal payment, service from others, especially from the communities we work in, in return for ActionAid's help or not withhold, support, goods or services of any kind.
- I will not accept bribes or significant gifts (except small tokens of appreciation which I have declared) from governments, communities, donors, suppliers or others which have been offered as a result of my employment.
- I will not be part of or allow involvement in any activities that contravene human rights or those that compromise the work of ActionAid.
- I will adhere and align to AAI values<sup>1</sup> of Mutual Respect, Equity and Justice, Integrity, Solidarity with People Living in Poverty and Exclusion; Courage of Conviction, Independence from any religious or party-political affiliation and Humility.

**Personal conduct outside of work** – this means that I understand that I will be seen as a representative of ActionAid both during and outside of working hours and any social or work events.

- ActionAid does not intend to dictate how staff conduct their personal lives, however, unlawful or other behaviours, as outlined within this Code, by ActionAid staff which may bring

**Independence** from any religious or party-political affiliation and **Humility**, recognising that we are part of a wider alliance against poverty and injustice

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<sup>1</sup> AAI values as per Strategy 2028 : **Mutual Respect**, requiring us to recognise the innate worth of all people and the value of diversity; **Equity and Justice**, requiring us to ensure the realisation of our vision for everyone, irrespective of gender, sexual orientation and gender identity, race, ethnicity, caste, class, age, HIV status, disability, location and religion; **Integrity**, requiring us to be honest, transparent and accountable at all levels for the effectiveness of our actions and our use of resources and open in our judgements and communications with others; **Solidarity with People Living in Poverty and Exclusion** will be the only bias in our commitment to the fight against poverty, injustice, and gender inequality; **Courage of Conviction**, requiring us to be creative and radical, bold and innovative - without fear of failure - in pursuit of making the greatest possible impact on the causes of poverty, injustice, and gender inequality;

ActionAid's reputation into disrepute, or which may jeopardises its position, or the security of ActionAid and its staff whether during or after office hours will be considered as non-compliance of this Code and will be subject to performance management and or disciplinary procedure.

**Protection and use of ActionAid's assets, resources, and information** – this means that I will handle ActionAid's finances, assets, information and other resources with care and protect them from avoidable theft, fraud or other damage, or exposure to unauthorised people.

- I will ensure that I use ActionAid information, funds and resources entrusted to me in a responsible and confidential manner and I agree to account for all money and property in my care.
- I will be responsible for ensuring value for money in line with our commitment to promote simplicity by being cost effective in how we use ActionAid's money and resources.
- I will follow the appropriate ActionAid policy, procedures and technical guidelines in managing and using these funds and resources.
- I will not use the organisation's computers or other equipment to view, download, create or distribute inappropriate material, including but not limited to, pornographic, defamatory, abusive, sexist, prejudice or racist messages.
- I will ensure that my behaviour when I am allowed to use ActionAid equipment for personal use (including but not limited to vehicles, accommodation and computers) does nothing to misuse or damage the reputation of the organisation.
- I will not release any private or confidential information relating to ActionAid, its staff members or beneficiaries/communities to others unless it is a requirement of my job or I am legally

required to do so. Please refer to *ActionAid's Open Information Policy*.

**Avoiding conflicts of interest and duty** – this means that I will be transparent and honest in all my dealings with ActionAid, and not pursue personal, professional or family gain or advantage in such dealings.

- I will declare to ActionAid any connections including personal affiliation with family members, friends or business with other parties that may constitute a conflict of interest, and duty and ensure that my work does not benefit any such connections.
- I will not enter into any sort of business relationship on behalf of ActionAid with family, friends or other personal/professional contacts for the supply of any goods or service to ActionAid or any employment related matters without authorisation from senior management.
- I will not directly line manage a person whom I have a personal (intimate) relationship with, and to avoid any conflict of interest at work or within teams including power differentials will declare and raise any potential issues related to this with my line manager.
- I will not accept any additional employment or consultancy work outside of ActionAid that is a potential conflict of interest without prior permission from management.
- I recognize that there is an inherent conflict of interest and potential abuse of power in having sexual relations with ActionAid staff and volunteers. Should I find myself in such a relationship, I will advise my manager immediately and resolve any conflict of interest without delay.

### **FOR MANAGERS**

I have particular responsibilities to set a good example when it comes to my behaviour both on and off duty.

I will not engage in or tolerate any form of abuse, discrimination or harassment in the workplace.

I will encourage and be open to views of all team members. I will provide timely feedback on the performance of each team member through guidance, motivation and full recognition of their merits.

I will ensure there is budget and support available for the safeguarding and wellbeing of staff, and beneficiaries

I will ensure that the security of staff is planned, and budgeted for in accordance with the Global Security Policy.

**Reporting any incident or concern relating to this Code of Conduct** – this means that I will raise any potential incident, abuse or concern that I witness or I am made aware of to the appropriate management, using the relevant/country specific procedures.

- I understand that all individuals working for ActionAid have the right to approach a higher authority at ActionAid about abuses or any breaches of this Code.



- I will ensure that all information about breaches of this Code are handled confidentially and with discretion.
- I am aware that all suspected breaches of the code will be thoroughly investigated and treated with the utmost confidentiality in accordance with the appropriate ActionAid procedures.

**Compliance to this Code of Conduct** – this means that I will comply fully with this Code and am aware of the potential outcome if I do not.

- I understand that should the Code of Conduct demand a higher standard than the local laws then this Code will prevail.
- I understand that failure to comply with any aspect of ActionAid's Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action.
- I am aware that ActionAid may choose or (and in some cases be obliged) to report to the relevant professional or government authorities any instances wherein the law has been or suspected to have been broken.
- I am aware that ActionAid also adheres to the IFRC/ICRC Code of Conduct<sup>2</sup> that is applicable in all humanitarian/conflict contexts

Your employment and engagement with ActionAid is conditional on you signing and therefore agreeing to this Code of Conduct and its contents.

As an Action Aid stakeholder (staff, volunteer intern, partner, board member, consultant et al); I am obligated to report any observed violation of the code in a timely manner to my line manager or the lead safeguarding focal person in my country, or to the following address: [safeguarding@actionaid.org](mailto:safeguarding@actionaid.org).

I confirm that I have read, understood ActionAid's values, attitudes and behaviours and accept this Code of Conduct.

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this page to your Human Resources department once signed and dated.