

# CODE OF CONDUCT

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Created by: Legal & Compliance  
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Point of contact: Dr. Dominik Lentz  
Head of Legal & Compliance  
[compliance@welthungerhilfe.de](mailto:compliance@welthungerhilfe.de)

Binding for: 

- The Executive Boards and all employees of Welthungerhilfe (Association and Foundation)

To be agreed with: 

- All partner organisations
- All social businesses
- All freelancers working for Welthungerhilfe
- All persons and groups volunteering for Welthungerhilfe
- All suppliers and service providers of Welthungerhilfe

The current applicable version of this document is available in the intranet <https://bit.ly/2J5QvPH> and on the webpage [www.welthungerhilfe.org/code-of-conduct](http://www.welthungerhilfe.org/code-of-conduct).

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## Preface

Dear readers,

We work with and for people. Our employees come from 70 countries and over 100 languages are spoken in our projects. We are active in around 40 countries, in approximately a third of which the security risks are rated as high or very high. Our projects work across enormous ethnic and cultural differences. A particular challenge is posed by the working conditions encountered during humanitarian crises. To operate successfully in such a wide range of contexts, people need clear and binding rules for their day-to-day work.

The Code of Conduct, one of our organisation's most important documents, lays the foundation for our shared goal of a global fight against hunger and its causes. We will only be able to achieve our goal if all participants in the process can trust each other entirely. The basis for this is the lawful and responsible action of all parties involved. All over the world, the people with and for whom we work measure us against our words and actions. Each one of us is therefore responsible for maintaining the credibility of our organisation.


This document consolidates the applicable laws, internal policies and voluntary commitments which have direct relevance not only for the Welthungerhilfe's Boards, but for Welthungerhilfe as a whole. It lays out the principles and rules for our ethical, social and legal conduct. It applies to all employees worldwide, including freelance workers and volunteers, and shall serve as binding basis for our cooperation with all our partner organisations, as well as with Welthungerhilfe's suppliers and service providers.

Such an important document must be put into practice each and every day. It is up to our executives to set an example by conducting themselves with integrity and in full compliance with the law. In addition, they are responsible for ensuring that the standards of our Code of Conduct are known and understood by all. This responsibility cannot be delegated. All breaches of the Code must be reported, documented and investigated.

Welthungerhilfe will provide the resources required to ensure that the Code of Conduct is familiar to all employees and that its contents are clearly understood. Every individual employee and contributor must support our principles and policies wholeheartedly and with complete conviction. It is not enough just to read the text – we need to take the rules to heart and, above all, live by them. All members of the Executive Board personally support the Code of Conduct, and everyone else is requested to do so as well.



Mathias Mogge  
Secretary General



Christian Monning  
Chief Financial Officer

## 1. Our common understanding

Welthungerhilfe<sup>1</sup> is committed to a world without hunger and poverty and to promoting the human right to food. Its vision is a world in which all people have the opportunity to lead a self-determined life in dignity and justice, free from hunger and poverty. Everything Welthungerhilfe does is guided by the principles of the equality of all persons, the inviolability of their rights and the human right to self-determination. Its commitments to helping people in need and to international development are in keeping with its statutory mandate. In line with the organisation's purpose, Welthungerhilfe is an advocate for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, for social tolerance, and for a pluralistic, inclusive and cohesive society. It is in this spirit of solidarity and humanity that Welthungerhilfe works to improve people's lives in the countries in which it is active.

In all its activities, Welthungerhilfe sets the highest standards for itself and for the implementation of its projects and programmes. To this end, Welthungerhilfe will always support the following international standards and codes (as amended to date):

- CHS Alliance: Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability
- Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Committee of the German Federal Foreign Office: Twelve Principles of Humanitarian Assistance
- Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC): Six Core Principles Relating to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
- International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC): The Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief
- Sphere Standards:
  - Humanitarian Charter
  - Protection Principles
  - Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response
- Transparency International: Initiative for a Transparent Civil Society
- United Nations:
  - Universal Declaration of Human Rights
  - Convention on the Rights of the Child
  - Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
  - Global Compact Initiative
  - The Secretary-General's Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13)
- VENRO Codes:
  - Code of Conduct Transparency, Organisational Management and Monitoring
  - Code of Conduct for Children's Rights
  - Code of Conduct for Development-Related Public Relations

Therefore, the following regulations and policies are based on these international standards and codes in conjunction with fundamental human rights and Welthungerhilfe's common understanding. The international standards and codes mentioned above are available at: [www.welthungerhilfe.org/code-of-conduct](http://www.welthungerhilfe.org/code-of-conduct).

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<sup>1</sup> **Welthungerhilfe:** This term refers to both the association Deutsche Welthungerhilfe e.V. ("**Association**") and the foundation Deutsche Welthungerhilfe ("**Foundation**").

## 2. Scope and Policies

The Code of Conduct and the accompanying policies apply to:

- a) The Executive Board of Welthungerhilfe Association, General Management of Welthungerhilfe Foundation, and all employees of Welthungerhilfe (Association and Foundation), regardless of their type of contract (including full-time employees, temporary personnel, interns and personnel on loan), the scope of their responsibilities and the location of employment.

The Code of Conduct standards must be acknowledged as binding on themselves, their board members and employees by all:

- b) Partner Organisations<sup>2</sup> receiving material or non-material support from Welthungerhilfe.
- c) Social businesses that Welthungerhilfe holds shares in.
- d) Freelancers working for Welthungerhilfe on a contractual basis.
- e) People and groups volunteering for Welthungerhilfe (e.g. members of the Programme Advisory Committee or action groups).
- f) Suppliers and service providers for Welthungerhilfe.

Members of the Association's General Assembly and Supervisory Board as well as of the Foundation's Executive Board commit themselves to respecting the Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct applies worldwide. Hereinafter, the persons specified in point a) above are referred to as "Employees" and persons specified in points b) through f) above are referred to as "Contributors".

The following Welthungerhilfe policies supplement this Code of Conduct:

- Anti-Terrorism Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Complaint Response Mechanism Policy
- Information Security Policy
- Organisational Directive Employment Conditions for Domestic Employees/ Staff working abroad, §11/ §13, Rewards and Gifts
- Organisational Directive Whistleblowing
- Policy against Conflicts of Interest
- Policy against Corruption
- Policy against Sexual violence
- Security Policy
- Social Media Policy

The Code of Conduct sets minimum standards for each and every Employee and Contributor. The current version of the Code of Conduct and the accompanying policies can be found at [www.welthungerhilfe.org/code-of-conduct](http://www.welthungerhilfe.org/code-of-conduct) or in the Welthungerhilfe intranet under <https://bit.ly/2J5QvPH>.

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<sup>2</sup> **Partner organisations:** all local, national, and international partners who have signed a memorandum of understanding or a partnership agreement with Welthungerhilfe, including Alliance2015 organisations, community-based organisations, civil society groups, non-governmental organisations and advocacy partners.

Welthungerhilfe is committed to helping its Employees and Contributors conduct themselves in accordance with the policies, e.g. by offering training sessions or training support.

### 3. Objectives of the Code of Conduct

Explicitly acknowledging that violations of the Code of Conduct Rules would create and perpetuate structures which promote Hunger and Poverty, Welthungerhilfe's Code of Conduct Rules shall give clear guidance of how to act even in most difficult situations in order to effectively and sustainably fight hunger and poverty. As an organisation active in development cooperation and humanitarian aid, Welthungerhilfe has a significant obligation to its Project Participants<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore, it receives donations from private individuals, businesses and foundations as well as grants from public institutions from within Germany and abroad, so it is accountable to these donors as well. The public and the media keep a close eye on how Welthungerhilfe fulfils both of these obligations, playing a decisive role in determining its reputation. For these reasons, Welthungerhilfe emphasises the importance of proper conduct by each and every Employee and Contributor.

The objectives of the Code of Conduct are therefore to:

- Express Welthungerhilfe's common understanding.
- Create a common understanding of Welthungerhilfe's fundamental rules of conduct among all Employees and Contributors, thereby promoting consistent standards of behaviour.
- Clearly define how Employees and Contributors are expected to conduct themselves.
- Inform third parties, including Project Participants, about the conduct they can expect from Employees and Contributors of Welthungerhilfe.
- Express existing contractual obligations in clear terms.

### 4. Rules of Conduct

Welthungerhilfe expects its Employees and Contributors to observe the national and international laws to which they are subject and to adhere to this Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct must also be complied with outside of the workplace and outside working hours if an unambiguous connection can be made to Welthungerhilfe. When in doubt, the priority is always to obey the law, even in case of conflicting instructions from management.

By signing the Code of Conduct, Employees and Contributors commit to acting in accordance with Welthungerhilfe's common understanding and to observing the rules of conduct below.

#### 4.1 The Highest Standards of Personal and Professional Conduct

Employees and Contributors of Welthungerhilfe must act in accordance with the common understanding and objectives set out in Welthungerhilfe's Guiding Principles and Strategy. Welthungerhilfe expects them to actively strengthen the organisation through their work and their conduct. Employees and Contributors must ensure that their professional conduct contributes to Welthungerhilfe's good name, and that outside working hours, their conduct does not damage the reputation of Welthungerhilfe. They must treat all people as equals, with respect and dignity.

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<sup>3</sup> **Project Participants:** target groups (beneficiaries) of programmes and projects implemented by Welthungerhilfe or its partner organisations; members of communities in which Welthungerhilfe and its partner organisations are active; anyone who is actively participating in programmes or projects of Welthungerhilfe or its partner organisations and who is not categorised as either an Employee or a Participant.

They must conduct themselves in an appropriate, and culturally-sensitive manner, as well as ensure that Welthungerhilfe publications portray people respectfully. While at work, they must dress in accordance with their position and situation, giving a professional and positive impression of Welthungerhilfe. The above rules of conduct apply in equal measure to online activities, e.g. on social media. Additional information is provided in the following documents:

- [Guiding Principles](#)
- [Principles for Members of Welthungerhilfe Bodies](#)
- [Social Media Policy](#)
- [Strategy](#)

#### 4.2 No Religious or Political Activities when Representing Welthungerhilfe

Welthungerhilfe is politically independent and non-denominational. Employees and Contributors must conduct themselves accordingly while at work. This means that they are not permitted to participate in political or religious activities in their capacity as Employees or Contributors of Welthungerhilfe unless approved in writing by Welthungerhilfe's Executive Board.

This does not affect private participation in such activities. If participating privately, Employees and Contributors are responsible for ensuring that third parties cannot perceive their participation as representing Welthungerhilfe but perceive their participation to be in a private capacity.

#### 4.3 No Discrimination

Welthungerhilfe does not tolerate any discrimination<sup>4</sup> by its Employees and Contributors, be it on the basis of age, physical disability, nationality, ethnicity, gender, political views, union activity, religion, culture, language, sexual orientation or other distinguishing characteristics.

Employees and Contributors must therefore abstain from any and all kinds of discrimination as well as mobbing<sup>5</sup> and bullying<sup>6</sup>. Directing inappropriate, violent or insulting language at others, whether spoken or written, is prohibited. This also applies on social media. More information can be found in the following document:

- [Social Media Policy](#)

#### 4.4 Responsibility for Health and Safety

Employees and Contributors of Welthungerhilfe are obligated to observe Welthungerhilfe's local security policy at their place of work and to conduct themselves in accordance with it. They must not take any unnecessary risks with either their own health, safety and security or that of Employees, Contributors, Welthungerhilfe Project Participants or third parties. More information can be found in the following document:

- [Security Policy](#)

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<sup>4</sup> **Discrimination:** any kind of unjustified, unequal treatment of individuals or groups that results in social disadvantage or degradation.

<sup>5</sup> **Mobbing:** systematic persecution, badgering, and exclusion of individuals or groups by way of verbal or non-verbal attacks with a negative impact on the victim's self-confidence, physical health or mental health.

<sup>6</sup> **Bullying:** repeated use of threats or violence for purpose of harming or intimidating others.

#### 4.5 No Sexual Violence

Employees and Contributors commit themselves to an environment where the abuse of power is effectively prevented. Employees and Contributors are therefore prohibited from engaging in any form of sexual violence. This includes sexual exploitation<sup>7</sup>, abuse<sup>8</sup> and harassment<sup>9</sup>. Employees and Contributors are forbidden from abusing their power or working relationships for the purpose of soliciting sexual favours. In addition, Welthungerhilfe condemns any exchange of money, goods, services or favours for sexual services.

Actions or statements with sexual undertones or connotations that make someone feel attacked or ashamed are also forbidden. This includes suggestive remarks, unwelcome physical contact or proximity, the display or sharing of suggestive material (e.g. via email or social media) and sexist conversations or jokes, whether in verbal, written or non-verbal form.

Additional information is provided in the following documents:

- *Policy against Sexual Violence*
- *Social Media Policy*

#### 4.6 Child Protection

Children<sup>10</sup> need special care and protection. Their well-being is Welthungerhilfe's utmost priority in all projects and programmes. It forbids any conduct that could harm children. Employees and Contributors must condemn any and all forms of child abuse<sup>11</sup> and act accordingly and advocate for child protection. More information can be found in the following document:

- *Child Protection Policy*

#### 4.7 Responsible Handling of Personal Data and Information

Welthungerhilfe's proprietary information is a valuable asset of Welthungerhilfe. Personal data of individuals, including photographs must be collected, used and processed only as permitted by law and as required for Welthungerhilfe's work (in line with the principle of data minimisation). Processing of proprietary information and personal data must be conducted with the great care and with adequate technical and organisational measures of protection from unauthorised access. When collecting personal data, Employees and Contributors must inform the individuals in question about their data protection rights. This also applies when collecting personal data from Project Participants.

Personal data must be handled in accordance with applicable data protection laws. Confidential information of Welthungerhilfe must not be disseminated outside of the organisation, neither

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<sup>7</sup> **Sexual exploitation:** any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, unequal power relationships, or trust for sexual purposes with the aim of financial, social or political gain.

<sup>8</sup> **Sexual abuse:** any actual or threatened physical act of a sexual nature whether achieved through violence, under unequal circumstances or through compulsion.

<sup>9</sup> **Sexual harassment:** any behaviour of a sexual nature that is unwelcome and that makes someone feel uncomfortable and offends their dignity, including suggestive remarks, unwelcome physical contact or proximity, the display or sharing of suggestive material (e.g. via email or social media), and sexist conversation and jokes whether in verbal, written or non-verbal form.

<sup>10</sup> **Child:** a person under 18 years of age (according to the UN convention).

<sup>11</sup> **Child abuse:** physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect of a child that results in, or contributes to, actual or potential damage to the health, survival, development, or dignity of that child; this includes child labour and the employment of child soldiers.



verbally nor in writing, unless Welthungerhilfe has given its prior written consent. Legal regulations mandating the disclosure of information may provide grounds for exceptions to this rule.

Every individual is entitled to information about the processing of his personal data by Welthungerhilfe. This information must be provided upon request at any time. Personal data that are no longer needed must be deleted in accordance with the right to be forgotten.

More information is available in the following documents:

- [Information Security Policy](#)
- [Social Media Policy](#)

#### 4.8 Responsible Use of Resources

Welthungerhilfe expects its Employees and Contributors to deploy the organisation's resources in a responsible manner, taking into consideration such criteria as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

The private use of resources that Welthungerhilfe provides to its Employees and Contributors (e.g. laptops and work phones) is only permitted if the express consent of Welthungerhilfe has been obtained. Work equipment provided by Welthungerhilfe must not be used for activities that contravene the law or the Code of Conduct. This includes any and all types of harassment, intimidation, and degradation as well as viewing, storing, processing, transmitting, and duplicating illegal, obscene, pornographic or discriminatory files.

Employees and Contributors are obligated to take special care of the resources provided to them by Welthungerhilfe. Misuse or misappropriation of or grossly negligent damage to the property of Welthungerhilfe or to any property directly connected to Welthungerhilfe's activities will not be tolerated.

#### 4.9 No Supporting of Terrorism or Money Laundering

All Employees and Contributors must ensure that no resources are used for money laundering or to support terrorist activities directly or indirectly at any time. All Employees and Contributors are obligated to comply with the [Anti-Terrorism Policy](#). More information can be found in the following document:

- [Anti-Terrorism Policy](#)

#### 4.10 No Corruption

Corruption<sup>12</sup> pursues personal interests, breaks the rules of fair competition, entrenches structures of poverty and hunger, prevents sustainable project success and abets decisions that are inconsistent with the common good and that do not effectively address the issues at hand. Corruption is contrary to Welthungerhilfe's common understanding. Employees and Contributors of Welthungerhilfe are therefore prohibited from engaging in corruption of any kind.

Welthungerhilfe does not allow gifts, hospitality or the remuneration of expenses to be offered or accepted if doing so actually does or may appear to inappropriately influence the recipient's freedom

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<sup>12</sup> **Corruption:** the abuse of power for private gain or for the benefit of an individual. Corruption can be both material and immaterial. This includes offering, awarding, requesting or receiving financial or material gifts, loans, rewards, supplies or other material or immaterial advantages to or from a third party as an incentive to do something that would be considered dishonest, illegal or a breach of confidence in the context of normal business practices.

of choice in matters directly or indirectly concerning Welthungerhilfe. The appearance of such an influence is particularly stark if expenditures exceed the boundaries of what is appropriate and justifiable. For Employees of Welthungerhilfe, the boundary of what is appropriate and justifiable is set at a total value of up to EUR 40 per year. Stricter local value boundaries must also be observed.

Additional information is provided in the following documents:

- *Policy against Corruption*
- *Organisational Directive Employment Conditions for Domestic Employees/ Staff working abroad, §11/ §13, Rewards and Gifts*

#### 4.11 Avoiding Conflicts of Interest

Employees and Contributors of Welthungerhilfe must not exploit their professional position and any concomitant privileges for personal gain or to benefit related parties. They must avoid any situation in which personal interests could be contrary to Welthungerhilfe's legitimate interests and ensure the unsolicited disclosing of potential personal conflicts of interest<sup>13</sup>. More information can be found in the following document:

- *Policy against Conflicts of Interest*

#### 4.12 Prohibition of Alcohol and Drugs

Employees and Contributors of Welthungerhilfe are not permitted to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs, including the operating of vehicles or machines. This also applies to other narcotics that impair the ability of Employees or Contributors to perform their responsibilities for or on behalf of Welthungerhilfe. The possession, distribution and consumption of illegal substances at the workplace or on the job is prohibited. The workplace includes any vehicles owned or rented by Welthungerhilfe as well as properties, buildings and facilities used by Welthungerhilfe.

#### 4.13 No Carrying of Weapons

Welthungerhilfe pursues its objectives without violence. For this reason, it categorically prohibits the carrying of weapons<sup>14</sup> by Employees and Contributors on all properties and in all vehicles, buildings and other facilities used by Welthungerhilfe. Armed civilians or military personnel are categorically not allowed in Welthungerhilfe's vehicles, buildings or facilities nor on its properties. Consent for the employment of armed guards must be given by the Executive Board in accordance with Welthungerhilfe's *Security Policy*. More information can be found in the following document:

- *Security Policy*

### 5. Reporting Requirements and Consequences for Violations

Anyone with concerns, suspicions or knowledge of incidents regarding violations of Welthungerhilfe's Code of Conduct and the accompanying policies is obligated to immediately report them to the Legal & Compliance Unit at Welthungerhilfe's Head Office

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<sup>13</sup> **Conflict of interest:** a conflict between someone's own interests and the legitimate interests of Welthungerhilfe.

<sup>14</sup> **Weapons:** military weapons, firearms, or equivalent items as well as portable items designed to injure or kill people.

([complaints@welthungerhilfe.de](mailto:complaints@welthungerhilfe.de)). Any report submitted to management or via national complaint lines to Welthungerhilfe must be passed on by them to Welthungerhilfe's Legal & Compliance Unit. Welthungerhilfe also offers anonymous reporting online or via a telephone hotline for whistleblowers. All information regarding breaches of the Code of Conduct and the accompanying policies is treated confidentially. Nobody who reports violations or submits information regarding violations with honest intent needs to fear any disadvantage or other consequences, even if the report later turns out to be unfounded. Deliberately false accusations will not be tolerated.

Violations of the Code of Conduct or the accompanying policies may result in disciplinary measures up to and including immediate termination and/or the annulment of cooperation agreements. Welthungerhilfe explicitly reserves its right to claim damages and report criminal offences in compliance with applicable laws.

Additional information is provided in the following documents:

- *Complaint Response Mechanism Policy*
- *Organisational Directive Whistleblowing*

Internet: [www.welthungerhilfe.org/complaints](http://www.welthungerhilfe.org/complaints)

Confidential Email-address: [complaints@welthungerhilfe.de](mailto:complaints@welthungerhilfe.de)

Whistleblowing-hotline: +49 (0)228 2288 577

## **6. Obligation to Comply with the Code of Conduct**

All Employees of Welthungerhilfe must confirm in writing that they have read and understood the Code of Conduct and the accompanying policies, that they will comply with all the rules of conduct, and that they acknowledge that compliance with this Code of Conduct and the aforementioned policies (as amended to date) is a condition for their employment.

All Contributors must confirm by signature that they have read and understood the Code of Conduct, that they will comply with all the rules of conduct, that they will familiarise their employees with the Code of Conduct, and that they acknowledge that compliance with this Code of Conduct by them and their employees is a material condition for their commission/employment.