



HILFSWERK INTERNATIONAL

CODE OF CONDUCT

Based on

- A) The Principles of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Response Programs and*
- B) The Code of Ethics for United Nations Personnel*

The HILFSWERK INTERNATIONAL Board of Directors agrees, at the September 29th 2003 Board meeting held in Vienna, to adopt this Code of Conduct.

*Extended by bullet point 12
on 19th of February 2018 in order to state explicitly zero tolerance.*

Scope of Application

The requirements of this Code of Conduct apply to all employees, management and board members of Hilfswerk International [HWI] in Vienna and worldwide.

This Code of Conduct formalizes the principles by which HWI conducts its activities with employees, partner organisations, donors and other stakeholder involved in HWI projects and programs. HWI encourages partner organisations, suppliers and consultants to adopt these principles.

The Code of Conduct

1. The humanitarian imperative and universal human rights come first

The right to receive humanitarian assistance and aid, and to offer it, is a fundamental humanitarian principle and human right which should be enjoyed by all citizens of all countries. As members of the international community, we recognise our obligations to provide humanitarian assistance and aid wherever it is needed. Hence the need for unimpeded access to affected populations, is of fundamental importance in exercising that responsibility. Furthermore, as stated in the 1993 Vienna Declaration, we recognize the right to development as "a universal and inalienable right and an integral part of fundamental human rights".

The prime motivation of our response is to alleviate human suffering amongst those least able to withstand the stress caused by disaster and to contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable development.

When we give aid it is not a partisan or political act and should not be viewed as such.

2. Aid is given regardless of the ethnic group, creed or nationality of the recipients and without adverse distinction of any kind. Aid priorities are calculated on the basis of need alone

Wherever possible, we will base the provision of aid upon a thorough assessment of the needs of the intended beneficiaries and the local capacities already in place to meet those needs.

Within the entirety of our programs, we will reflect considerations of proportionality. Human suffering must be alleviated whenever it is found; life is as precious in one part of a country as another. Thus, our provision of aid will reflect the degree of needs it seeks to respond. In implementing this approach, we recognise the crucial role played by women, children and people with special needs and will ensure that their role is supported, not diminished, by our aid project and programs.

The implementation of such a universal, impartial and independent policy can only be effective if we and our partners have access to the necessary resources to provide for such equitable aid, and have equal access to all beneficiaries and victims of disaster.

3. Aid will not be used to further a particular political or religious standpoint

Aid will be given according to the need of individuals, families and communities.

Notwithstanding the right of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to espouse particular political or religious opinions, we affirm that assistance will not be dependent on the adherence of the recipients to those opinions.

We will not tie the promise, delivery or distribution of assistance to the embracing or

acceptance of a particular political or religious creed.

4. We shall endeavor not to act as instruments of government foreign policy

NGOs are agencies which act independently from governments. We therefore formulate our own policies and implementation strategies and do not seek to implement the policy of any government, except in so far as it coincides with our own independent policy.

We will never knowingly - or through negligence - allow ourselves, or our employees, to be used to gather information of a political, military or economically sensitive nature for governments or other bodies that may serve purposes other than those which are strictly humanitarian or development nature, nor will we act as instruments of foreign policy of donor governments.

We will use the assistance we receive to respond to needs and this assistance should not be driven by the need to dispose of donor commodity surpluses, nor by the political interest of any particular donor.

We value and promote the voluntary giving of labor and finances by concerned individuals to support our work and recognise the independence of action promoted by such voluntary motivation. In order to protect our independence we will seek to avoid dependence upon a single funding source.

5. We shall respect culture and custom

We will endeavor to respect the culture, structures and customs of the communities and countries we are working in.

6. We shall attempt to build disaster and development response on local capacities

All people and communities - even in disaster - possess capacities as well as vulnerabilities. Where possible, we will strengthen these capacities by employing local staff, purchasing local materials and trading with local companies. Where possible, we will work through local NGOs as partners in planning and implementation and cooperate with local government structures where appropriate.

We will place a high priority on the proper coordination of our responses, projects and programs. This is best done within the countries concerned by those most directly involved in our activities operations, and should include representatives of the relevant UN bodies.

7. Ways shall be found to involve program beneficiaries in all stages of aid

Aid should never be imposed upon the beneficiaries. Effective relief, lasting rehabilitation and sustainable development can best be achieved where the intended beneficiaries are involved in the design, management and implementation of projects and programs. We will strive to achieve full community participation in our relief and rehabilitation programs.

8. Aid must strive to reduce future vulnerabilities and to aim at sustainable development

All activities affect the prospects for long-term development, either in a positive or a negative fashion. Recognizing this, we will strive to implement projects and programs which actively reduce the beneficiaries' vulnerability to future disasters and help create sustainable development. We will pay particular attention to environmental concerns and the inclusion of people with special needs in the design and management of our projects and programs. We will also endeavor to minimize the negative impact of humanitarian assistance, seeing to avoid long-term beneficiary dependence upon external aid.

9. We hold ourselves accountable to both those we seek to assist and those from whom we accept resources

We often act as an institutional link in the partnership between those who wish to assist and those who need assistance. We therefore hold ourselves accountable to both constituencies.

All our dealings with donors and beneficiaries shall reflect an attitude of openness and transparency.

We recognize the need to report on our activities, from both a financial perspective and the perspective of effectiveness.

We recognize the obligation to ensure appropriate monitoring of aid distributions and to carry out regular assessments of the impact of assistance.

We will also seek to report, in an open fashion, upon the impact of our work, and the factors limiting or enhancing that impact.

Our programs will be based upon high standards of professionalism and expertise in order to minimize the wasting of valuable resources.

10. In our information, publicity and advertising activities, we shall recognise disaster victims as dignified human beings, not objects of pity

Respect for disaster victims and beneficiaries as an equal partner in actions should never be lost. In our public information we shall portray an objective image of the disaster and need situation where the capacities and aspirations of beneficiaries are highlighted, and not just their vulnerabilities and fears.

While we will cooperate with the media in order to enhance public response, we will not allow external or internal demands for publicity to take precedence over the principle of maximizing overall assistance.

We will avoid competing with other agencies for media coverage in situations where such coverage may be to the detriment of the service provided to the beneficiaries or to the security of our staff or the beneficiaries.

11. The work and behavior of our personnel is based on values and principles which reflect the respect of human rights and dignity of all persons

HWI personnel should not use the authority entrusted to them, in particular by taking advantage of colleagues, beneficiaries or other individuals or groups, for financial, political, sexual or other gain.

Our staff should maintain the highest standards of integrity, including honesty, fairness and incorruptibility in all their activities and should act with understanding, tolerance and respect for diversity and without discrimination of any kind.

12. Zero tolerance

HWI explicitly underlines a zero tolerance policy with regard to its code of conduct. Any violation will be subject to contractual and legal consequences.

In case of a good faith suspicion of a violation of this code of conduct – equal to HWI whistle blowing policy reporting procedure – it is highly encouraged to report the concern promptly to the local HWI Management (either HWI Project Manager, Project Coordinator or Country Representative) or to overall HWI Management or to external ombudsman.

Contact for any reporting:

- President HWI
Name: Mr. Christian Domany
Phone: +43 1 40 57 500 -0;
Email: christian@domany.at

and/or

- Managing Director HWI
Name: Mr. Stefan Fritz
Phone: +43 1 40 57 500 -140 or +43 676 8787 60400
Email: stefan.fritz@hwa.or.at

and/or

- External independent ombudsman:
Global Responsibility Platform for Development and Humanitarian Aid
Name: Ms. Annelies Vilim
Phone: +43 1 522 4422
Email: annelies.vilim@globaleverantwortung.at

Declaration

We, the undersigned, will oversee the implementation and promotion of Hilfswerk International Code of Conduct and take all necessary steps to ensure it is adhered to.