

Code of Ethics and Conduct for Non Governmental Organizations

(First Draft)

The Code of Ethics and Conduct is a set of fundamental principles, operational principles and standards to which all personnel active in the field of civil society organizations are committed in quest of enhancement of sublime values and purging civil work of any improprieties or suspicious acts.

- The Code of Ethics and Conduct applies to community development associations, foundations and federations organizations
- Commitment to the Code of Ethics and Conduct is voluntary. NGOs which have decided to sign the Code shall notify all stakeholders that they are committed to the Code and responsible for the implementation of its articles and rules.

General Items:

1. All NGOs to which this Code is applicable shall comply with all and every provisions of the laws and bylaws organizing NGOs in Egypt and all other organizing laws and by laws, as Labor Law , Social Insurance Law, Tax Law as well as all other organizing laws in Egypt, viewing that law represents the minimal degree of ethics,
2. NGOs commitment to this Code and to the organizing Laws provisions in Egypt shall not prejudice the organizations declared efforts, regarding its reservations and advocacy activities to change/update some laws in pursuit of the benefit of the Egyptian society.
3. NGOs shall be committed to provide real services; they have an obligation to monitor the impact of their projects and services on target groups and adjust their strategy to achieve the best development results which requires dedication to the mission and willingness to volunteer substantial energies towards the achievement of their mission.
4. The organization shall encourage the culture of volunteerism among its staff without prejudicing their job responsibilities

Mission and Guiding Principles

NGOs exist to serve society according to a clearly identified and articulated mission. They shall provide their services to target groups in accordance with the principles of equity (no discrimination regarding target groups)

Organizing Membership- General Assembly

- Membership conditions are linked to the mission and purpose of the NGO. Signatory organizations of this Code of Ethics and Conduct shall be committed to articulate the required conditions and discard any member who does not meet the specified conditions.
- General Assembly membership reflects the NGO's commitment to all forms of diversity (in relation to target groups which the organization serves)
- General Assembly members are entitled to hold fully paid posts on the assembly (any of their relatives who are also staff shall have the same right). To avoid any suspicion of their bringing any pressure to bear on the board, their right to vote in board meetings shall be suspended until they or their relatives accomplish the tasks with which they were entrusted, taking into consideration that all bylaws relevant to appointment shall apply. This clause applies to all the organization's purchases and services.
- The NGO shall be committed to provide its members with training/ raising awareness or enhancing their qualifications to create cadres qualified for board membership; this shall be accomplished within set timelines.
- The General Assembly pays particular attention to appoint an efficient, professionally adept and ethically committed financial auditor to audit the organization accounts and report to the General Assembly.
- The General Assembly shall publish its annual financial statement.

The Board of Directors

- The Board of Directors shall be elected according to organizing bylaws.
- It is inadmissible for staff/ consultant/paid service provider to serve as a board member.
- The NGO shall be committed that no family relation, whatsoever exists between the board chairman and the treasurer.
- The board shall have broad representation, reflecting the diversity of the NGOs constituencies and their commitment to all forms of diversity (the NGOs target groups).
- The organization is committed to train and raise awareness of board members as well as encourage their participation in qualifying activities which would earn them credit and provide the organization with qualified cadres eligible for board membership. This shall be undertaken in accordance to an organizing timeline.
- All board members share a joint responsibility, in the sense that each has a set role to play. The general assembly is responsible to determine whether a board member is effective or not, its decision shall be based on the

annual report which sums up the role of the board and its activities during the past year.

- Board members shall effectively manage the organization resources and refrain from using the organization financial resources whether material or otherwise for purposes irrelevant to the organization.
- All board members shall be renowned for their integrity, fairness and deep respect of human rights. They shall aim at serving the community in all board decisions and acts; they shall also be dedicated to the mission of the organization and willing to volunteer their time and energies toward the achievement of set goals, in addition to being able to offer substantial contributions to the organization.
- Fair distribution of opportunities for training and skills development among board members.
- The board of directors shall apply the principles of sound management in dealing with the executive director and other organization staff members, its intervention in the organization management shall be through the executive director.
- The board shall periodically evaluate the performance of the executive director in accordance with specific indicators, to be stated in advance in the contract between the executive director and the organization.

Human Resources (Staff - Volunteers)

- The organization shall seek the employment of capable and responsible employees according to clear and declared procedures.
- The organization has written criteria for the quality services which it provides implements and follows up. Employees and service providers are evaluated according to these criteria.
- The organization seeks to attract capable and efficient administrative and technical staff to undertake the organization management and achieve its mission.
- The organization shall also seek to create trained and vibrant cadres which would be on the helm in the future.
- The organization has a clear and competitive wage and incentive system with no wage ceiling; however there is a balance between the small and big wages in the organization. There is also a balance between wages and remunerations and the size of activities and outcomes.
- No reductions are made from wages to go as donations for the organization; the employee only puts his/her signature on the actually received wage or remuneration check.
- The organization has a declared and clear evaluation system for every position; accomplishment of the organization mission and achievement of the projected results shall serve as the basis of evaluation.

- The organization has a clear and declared system for employment contracts; the organization is also committed to payment of social insurance and taxes. As far as its employees are concerned, the organization complies with all the articles of the Labor Law.
- The organization has a clear system for addressing employees' grievances in accordance with the management hierarchy. The system gives the employee the right to submit his or her grievance and so avoid conflict at various management levels.
- The organization full time employees shall not serve in other bodies as consultancy or training during regular business hours except after receiving a written permission from the executive director.
- All training opportunities and conference and workshops participation shall be declared and all employees shall have access to participation in accordance with an open and fair system.

The Organization Resources

- The organization resources shall not be used except for set purposes in accordance with the organization bylaws and signed agreements.
- The organization shall criminalize the use of its resources for personal benefit or profit and shall take stringent measures to punish offenders.
- The organization has a declared mechanism to monitor the use of its resources; such mechanism is effectively and meticulously applied, particularly at higher levels of authority; as the board of directors, the executive director and the financial manager.
- Members of the board, the executive director, the financial manager and every officer with oversight authority are expected to maintain the highest standards of integrity when dealing with the organization resources.

Addressing Conflicts within the Organization

- The organization management is conducted in a way to avoid internal conflicts; this concept is taken into account when selecting staff and members.
- The organization addresses internal conflicts which may arise between its staff (board members or personnel) with wisdom as an internal affair which may not affect the organization reputation or prestige in society.
- The organization resorts to arbitration and conciliation committees which comprise representatives from the general assembly, stakeholders and experts to settle the differences, if necessary.
- The organization individuals do not resort to funding bodies to solve the problem of internal conflicts out of keenness on the organization reputation and prestige; they usually seek the help of supervisory bodies, but only after exhausting conventional administrative methods.

Funding and Donations

- The organization pursues such methods which provide it with self dependence in the long term. The organization accepts local and international funding and donations according to the following criteria:
- Funding / donation shall be consistent with the organization goals, core principles and mission as well as its potential.
- Legitimacy of funding by competent local bodies.
- The organization shall not accept funding / donations of unknown source.
- Funding shall not compromise the organization independence due to its keenness to stay away from partisan issues.
- Funding shall not impose conditions in conflict with religious teachings or norms or moral values or traditions or the culture of the society.
- The funding body shall not interfere in the organization internal affairs except within the limits of the extended funding.
- The organization shall literally comply with contracts signed with funding/ donation entities.
- The organization shall acknowledge the role of funding in accomplishing its mission and shall seek to highlight it as a form of gratitude.

Organization Services – Relations with Society

- The organization shall be committed to community participation in projects identification, design and evaluation
- The organization shall be committed to the mission and the target categories for which it has been established.
- The organization shall apply equity and fairness in providing its services and in its relations with society. It shall treat target categories with respect and understanding; it shall also deal with them humanely.
- The organization shall apply the principles of human rights and shall not violate fundamental human rights with which every person is endowed. In all its activities and services it shall uphold the rights of woman and child as well as observe environmental parameters.
- Staff and members who communicate with society shall show in dealing with target categories high integrity, humanitarianism and professionalism.
- Target categories are the organization partners in decision making and selection.

Financial Management

- The organization has a written financial system based on efficient management of financial resources, strict internal supervision and an external and independent control.

- The financial department staff and board members maintain a high degree of financial integrity and professionalism.
- The organization observes a balance in operational expenditure and compares expenditure to outcome for beneficiaries.
- The organization conducts any purchases with transparency and provides equitable opportunities to goods suppliers and service providers.

Relations with Government and Oversight Bodies

- The organization operates in accordance with bylaws and rules.
- The organization deals with oversight and government bodies in a spirit of cooperation and transparency.
- The organization does not tolerate interference in its internal affairs or its decisions except within the limits of law