

Tearfund Nederland Code of Conduct

Responsible person	HR Manager
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INTRODUCTION

A code of conduct is an explicit description of the norms and values for the conduct of certain professions or specific states of affairs in the conduct employees of an organisation. A code of conduct deals with far more specific issues than a professional code, it contains rules for behaviour ranging from positive behaviour, unacceptable behaviour, and gross misconduct.

Wherever this policy mentions employees, all employees, people seconded to Tearfund, consultants², self-employed professionals, volunteers³, and members of the Supervisory Board are meant.

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to ensure that all employees conduct themselves in the course of their work for Tearfund in such a way that:

- Mutual trust and respect is promoted between employees and the people we work with at home and abroad.
- Employees are able to carry out their tasks effectively.
- All employees and beneficiaries with whom Tearfund works are protected.
- Tearfund's reputation as a Christian organisation is protected.

Tearfund considers it unacceptable for employees to behave in a way that could lead to a breach of trust, makes them unsuitable for the type of work they are doing, affects their performance or the performance of others, and that harms themselves, others or the reputation of Tearfund. An employee's behaviour outside working hours may be unacceptable to the same extent if it leads to any of the outcomes mentioned in this paragraph.

By signing the (employment) agreement with Tearfund, the employee accepts the rules of conduct as described in this policy. Employees also sign the rules of conduct separately. In addition, employees accept the rules of conduct over and over again by signing a travel plan. This policy will be updated from time to time. An English version of this document is available for those for whom Dutch is not their native language.

In case employees have any questions about compliance with these rules of conduct or the working conditions required from them in the performance of their duties, they can turn to the HR advisor who can provide the necessary clarification. Employees may be expected to follow any additional training recommended by the HR advisor, Team Leader or Project Leader for this purpose.

1.1 POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR THAT IS ENCOURAGED

1.1.1 Tearfund encourages employees to demonstrate an attitude of humility and compassion in all activities and to be respectful, calm, patient, forgiving, tolerant, and helpful to others.

1.1.2 Employees should avoid destructive criticism, they should resolve personal conflicts as far as possible, and they should aim to work with integrity and transparency.

1.1.3 Employees strive for a personal walk with God as part of their lives, they have healthy relationships in their network, they see each other as God looks at people. Employees must adhere to the norms and values, vision, mission and beliefs of Tearfund, as outlined in the General Provisions on Employment Conditions (i.e. Articles 7 and 10, and Appendix A: Articles of Association, Article 2) and in Tearfund's identity document. Employees are expected to put God at the centre of their work through prayer, to participate in the weekly openings, and we encourage them to participate in the congregational life of a church.

1.1.4 Tearfund aims to transform communities through restored relationships. Employees are expected to promote good relationships with everyone they work with and to recognise the value of each person as a creature of God, regardless of gender, age, disability, nationality, religion, sexual orientation or ethnicity.

1.2 RULES OF CONDUCT REQUIRING SENSITIVITY

1.2.1 Respecting local culture – Employees working away from their home situation should be aware of local customs and standards and should give up certain ways of doing things in favour of the prevailing culture, even if their own culture does allow for that freedom.

1.2.2 Examples of what it means to respect culture are given below. This list provides the minimum requirements for all employees.

- **Clothing:** Standards for clothing vary from country to country and are therefore subject to local guidelines. Employees must dress in a manner that is appropriate to the country's culture and the type of work we do.
- **Alcohol:** Employees are expected to exercise restraint when consuming alcohol. Employees must refrain from possessing or consuming alcohol where local practice or regulations so require. The use of alcohol is unacceptable in some churches (including parts of Africa), and employees must respect this to avoid damage to the relationship between Tearfund and local churches, organisations, and colleagues. The country leads are responsible for deciding whether the use of alcohol is acceptable in the context and they communicate this to the employees.
- **Smoking:** Employees should be respectful towards colleagues, other employees, local partner organisations, and the Christian community and communities with other religions. They need to be sensitive about when and where to smoke, especially when this is dictated by local practice and regulations. Employees are not allowed to smoke in Tearfund buildings or vehicles, at home or abroad.
- **Communication:** All employees should be aware of their body language and use of language. They should refrain from shouting, using hurtful language or being disrespectful to authorities.
- **Relationships:** In all forms of conduct, especially relationships, employees must behave appropriately, in line with Tearfund's Christian values. Employees must take great care where the cultural norms and

values for dealing with members of the opposite sex, the elderly and dignitaries are concerned. In some contexts, this may mean that it is inappropriate to organise mixed accommodation. Examples include behaviour that respects local culture, in churches and in partner organisations, including refraining from inappropriate forms of affection in public.

- Religion and cultural considerations: All employees must take great care to respect the cultural norms and values of the place where they reside and work. For example: being sensitive to appropriate or inappropriate foods for cooks to prepare food with, being respectful of individual prayer routines, being aware of different cultural eating habits, being discreet in reading and sharing Western magazines, videos, DVDs, and messages on social media.

1.2.3. Conflict of interest

If an employee identifies a potential conflict of interest involving himself or a colleague that could have a negative impact on the effectiveness of the organisation, on colleagues or on work in general, the employee is expected to discuss it within the organisation so that any consequences can be properly managed. For more information see the Conflict of Interest Policy.

1.2.4 Humanitarian Principles

Tearfund is a signatory of the Red Cross Code of Conduct. A Tearfund employee is therefore also a representative of the values expressed in this Code of Conduct, including the four principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence.

- Humanity: that we want to alleviate the suffering of people, with particular attention to vulnerable groups while respecting the value of all victims.
- Neutrality: that we do not take sides in armed conflicts.
- Impartiality: that we provide assistance exclusively on the basis of need, without any form of discrimination.
- Independence: that we work independent of the political, economic, military or whatever agenda of other actors.

Employee awareness of these principles is important in general, but especially so when travelling on behalf of Tearfund to other countries.

1.2.5. Use of socialmedia

Employees are encouraged to use social media to share their opinions and views. The characteristic of social media is that it is public and available everywhere, therefore the same guidelines for behaviour apply both online and in other areas.

When employees use social media (during working hours or in their own time), they do so with common sense, by adhering to Tearfund's values at all times, and by acting in accordance with Tearfund's policies and procedures.

Comments made in social media and on other forums may lead to legal liability for the employee and for Tearfund. Each employee is personally responsible for the content he/she publishes, both during working hours and in his/her own time.

Employees are expected to behave in a positive and respectful manner when using social media. They must not breach confidentiality by sharing information that is for internal or limited use only, or breach the criteria mentioned at the beginning of this Code of Conduct Policy. Unacceptable behaviour can be any online activity that:

- Damages the mutual trust and respect between employees and the people we work with at home and abroad.
- Prevents employees from performing their tasks effectively.
- Endangers employees and the people we work with.
- Harms the reputation of Tearfund as a Christian organisation.

1.3 SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

The sexual behaviour of employees is inadmissible for Tearfund if it harms the reputation of Tearfund or interferes with the effective performance of their duties. Sexual exploitation is unacceptable in all circumstances, as elaborated in chapter 1.5.

1.4 UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Behaviour that is considered unacceptable, as described in the non-exhaustive list below, may lead to a sanction as mentioned in Article 23 of the General Provisions on Employment Conditions, with termination of employment as the ultimate consequence.

- a. Aggressive behaviour: Employees must refrain from aggressive or violent behaviour, they must not harass, bully or verbally or physically abuse other individuals and/or employees.
- b. Favoritism (e.g., showing improper preference or allowing improper factors to influence decisions involving transactions with third parties, including suppliers, vendors, contractors, and employees).
- c. Hiring relatives, friends, or members of one's own ethnic group, leading to the exclusion of other qualified persons and/or without following established Tearfund policies and procedures.
- d. Falsification of documents.
- e. Disrespectful behaviour.
- f. Possession at work of dangerous or unauthorised materials, such as explosives or firearms.
- g. Discrimination: Employees must not treat others unfairly or biased on the basis of specific characteristics, including gender, age, disability, nationality, religion, sexual orientation or ethnicity.

1.5 GROSS MISCONDUCT

The behaviours listed below are considered gross misconduct which, if supported by evidence, will normally result in dismissal. This list is not exhaustive.

- Theft and fraud: Employees must not be found in possession of property belonging to Tearfund or another employee without the prior consent and approval of Tearfund and/or the other employee. Employees must not commit fraud or participate in fraudulent activities, and they must adhere to Tearfund's guidelines on financial matters and use of materials.
- Bribery and corruption: Employees may not give, take, receive or solicit any gifts, favours or goods that could be perceived as a bribe and/or participate in corrupt activities.
- Drunkenness: Employees are expected to exercise restraint in the consumption of alcohol and not to get into a situation of alcohol abuse.
- Drugs: Under no circumstances shall any employee be in possession of, or using, any form of hallucinogenic or other narcotic substance that is illegal.

- Safety: Employees must not breach, ignore or seek a compromise on safety guidelines and procedures as set out in Tearfund's safety policy. Employees must always act in the best interests of the safety of all Tearfund employees, partners and partner staff, and beneficiaries.
- Deliberate disobedience or negligence: Employees are expected to follow all Tearfund policies and not to ignore lawful and reasonable instructions from their Team Leader or Project Leader. The principle of confidentiality must under no circumstances be compromised in the event that an employee is in possession of confidential information. Employees must not deliberately misuse Tearfund's property, materials and/or vehicles under any circumstances.
- Forced conversions: Employees must not use any form of coercion when speaking about their faith, and they must not speak or act in a way that is inappropriate in the context. Tearfund rejects any form of coercion in speaking about the faith or in ensuring that people remain followers of a particular faith. We support the principle of freedom of religion and tolerance between different faiths.
- Sexual exploitation and abuse:
 - Under no circumstances may an employee enter into a sexual relationship with a beneficiary.
 - Employees must not use their position within Tearfund to solicit sexual favours and/or sexually harass or intimidate other employees.
 - Employees must not sexually exploit or abuse a beneficiary (adult or child).
 - Employees must not engage in sexual activity with a child (person under 18), regardless of the locally accepted age of consent. In such a case, the wrong assumption of the child's age can never be invoked as a defence in the case of a sanction or termination of employment.
 - Employees must not exchange money, employment, goods or services for sex (including sexual favours or other forms of degrading, abusive or exploitative behaviour). This also applies to the exchange of aid that is already given to the beneficiaries.
- Human trafficking:
 - Human trafficking is a global problem that affects, as estimated, millions of people worldwide. Tearfund endorses the dignity and respect of every individual. Therefore, under no circumstances should a Tearfund employee be involved in or facilitate human trafficking.
 - Human trafficking occurs when a person arranges or facilitates the recruitment, transport, transfer, harbouring or receipt of another person for the purpose of exploitation. This may involve the use of force, threats of violence or other forms of coercion.
 - Coercion also includes abduction, deception, abuse of a position of power or a vulnerable position.
 - Human trafficking can mean taking someone to another country, but it can also take place within the country where the person comes from.
 - The victim's consent does not apply in the case where coercion has been used.
 - Exploitation includes, but is not limited to:
 - Forced labour

- Debt bondage
 - Domestic slavery
 - Enforcing services of children or vulnerable adults
 - Forced child labour
 - Forced sex work by adults or children
 - Other forms of sexual exploitation and the recruitment or use of child soldiers.
- If you know, or should know, that as a result of your actions another person is most likely to be exploited in some way as described above, then you may well be involved in human trafficking.
 - You must take steps, if necessary, to ensure that other parties with whom Tearfund works (including consultants, contractors, suppliers, partner organisations and volunteers) are not involved in any form of human trafficking. If you suspect anything at all, you should report it as described in the whistleblowers' scheme.
 - Check these [Guidelines](#) for more understanding on what to look out for or which might give an indication that human trafficking is taking place.

2. HOW WILL TEARFUND RESPOND TO PERSONAL MISCONDUCT?

Each employee receives the General Provisions on Employment Conditions and all guidelines and procedures at the start of their employment. Employees should read these guidelines and procedures and be aware that if their personal conduct does not meet the minimum standards and expectations laid down in this policy, they may be subject to the procedure set out in the General Provisions on Employment Conditions. In the event of a breach of this Code of Conduct, Article 23 of the General Provisions on Employment Conditions will be leading in determining and applying any sanction.

For all those who are not covered by the General Provisions on Employment Conditions, Tearfund will make an assessment on a case-by-case basis, using the principle of hearing both sides of the argument between the person concerned and the person primarily responsible at Tearfund. The Board will ultimately decide on the continuation of the cooperation. In case the Board itself is part of the case, the Supervisory Board will take over this role and make the decision.

Tearfund will act with compassion and mercy and with a pastoral attitude, but where necessary will make difficult and firm decisions in the light of this Code to protect the beneficiaries, all those who work for Tearfund, and the good name of the organisation.

Signed for approval:

Employee name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____
