

# **STAFF**

# **CODE OF**

# **CONDUCT**

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# SOLIDARIDAD STRIVES TO BE AN ORGANIZATION WHERE PEOPLE CAN WORK SAFELY, ARE PROTECTED, AND FEEL SAFE TO SPEAK UP.

## INTRODUCTION

Solidaridad is committed to operate with integrity and respect towards people both Internally and externally. We are also aware that we live in a complex world, where people have different interests, different values, and different understandings of the world. We might disagree on what is right and wrong. This Code of Conduct is to make explicit what values and principles are important in executing our work, as well as what specific rules we adhere to. Solidaridad strives to be an organization where people can work safely, are protected, and feel safe to speak up.

## SCOPE: TO WHOM IT CONCERNS

This code is applicable to all people working with a contract of employment, and includes:

- Employees, volunteers, and interns working for Solidaridad;
- Board Members, like the Continental Supervisory Board and International Supervisory Board;
- Self-employed/individual consultants working within Solidaridad.

All categories together are referred to as staff members in this document.

Excluded are other consultants (e.g. corporate, firm etcetera) and partners working with/for Solidaridad, but not representing Solidaridad.

## WHEN AND WHERE APPLICABLE

- The Code of Conduct applies while working for Solidaridad and while representing Solidaridad, including business travel;
- In general, it is applicable always—on and off duty—as behaviour of a Solidaridad representative could reflect on the reputation of Solidaridad;
- Where the Code of Conduct conflicts with local laws and customs, one will discuss this with the Managing Director, Executive Director, Integrity Advisor, and/or HR representative;
- If an individual is subject to this Code of Conduct and another Code(s), one is to adhere to all. One should discuss (potential) conflicts with the Managing Director, Executive Director, and/or HR representative.

## VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

**Our vision** is an economy that works for all: a world in which all we produce, and all we consume, can sustain us while respecting the planet, each other, and the next generations.

**Our mission** is to enable farmers and workers to earn a living income, shape their own future, and produce in balance with nature by working throughout the whole supply chain to make sustainability the norm.

We are a network of organizations working together internationally to create a sustainable economy.

We share a common vision, common philosophies, and, to a large extent, common working practices. We have deliberately chosen a network organization structure as we believe the global can add value to the local and vice versa. Fairness is key to us — at all levels, and within our own organization.

We work with the following guiding values:

### OUR CORE VALUES

- **Solidarity:** We are faithful to the name of our organization in a deeply rooted solidarity with the poor
- **Solutions:** We are pragmatic problem solvers
- **Impact:** We are impact-driven and fully committed to achieve change that matters
- **Interdependence:** We are dependent on each other and on the planet, so we need to collaborate
- **Innovation:** We believe continuous learning and development adds value and leads to positive change
- **Inclusivity:** We believe everyone has the potential to contribute and the right to be heard
- **Integrity:** We adhere to the highest ethical principles and professional standards

In line with these values this Code of Conduct was drafted to provide guidance in the face of any ethical dilemmas you may experience. It highlights our

standards and values and shapes how to best protect against situations that may damage you or Solidaridad. It also seeks to ensure that employees avoid using possible unequal power relationships for their own benefit.

The code describes what Solidaridad expects from its employees and what the employees can expect from Solidaridad. The Code is subject to international human rights law, wherever the employee is employed and shall be read in a manner that is compliant with that law.

We recognize that local laws, cultures, and customs differ considerably. We shall comply with the laws of the countries in which we operate and any other laws which apply to us. When topics of conduct are both regulated in the Code of Conduct and in the local law, in principle the local law will be followed. However, when the Code of Conduct sets higher standards or is stricter, the Code of Conduct will take precedence.



Written values and rules will not be conclusive in every situation. We encourage an open door policy within and across regional offices to promote dialogue throughout the decision making process.

Lastly, we aim to have a safe and open culture and clear channels so one can speak up if one witnesses or takes part in a situation where a breach of integrity took place. These reporting channels are listed in the Whistleblower Protocol.

# DECLARATION

*As a staff member of Solidaridad I will:*

**1. Uphold the integrity and reputation of Solidaridad by ensuring that my professional and personal conduct is demonstrably consistent with Solidaridad's values and standards.**

I will seek to maintain and enhance public trust in Solidaridad by being honest, transparent, and accountable for the professional and personal actions I take. I will ensure that I manage the power that comes with my Solidaridad position with appropriate restraint.

I shall respect and contribute to the legitimate and ethical objectives of Solidaridad. I will take immediate action to correct and end behavior that is not compliant with this Code.

Whilst observing the requirements of the Code of Conduct, I will also be sensitive to, and respectful of, local customs and culture, even if the norms and values in that cultural context differ from the Code of Conduct. I will, if necessary, seek (and will receive) support and advice from my line manager. I will seek to contribute to the development of the communities of the countries and regions where we operate, while respecting the culture, norms, and heritage. I will avoid any activity that is harmful to the wider interests of the communities in which we operate.

I will not work under the influence of alcohol or use, or be in possession of, illegal substances (including drugs) on Solidaridad premises, vehicles, or accommodation.

I will not smoke tobacco (cigarettes, cigars, and the like) on the premises of Solidaridad. In case one prefers to smoke, this is only allowed if smoking zones are assigned on the premises. Even then one must ensure that co-workers are not disturbed.

**2. Treat all people with respect and dignity no matter what gender, religion, belief, ethnicity, marital status or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, nationality, social position, economic position, disability, age, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity or reassignment. Challenge any form of harassment, discrimination, intimidation, exploitation, or abuse.**

Solidaridad staff members hold a privileged position of power and trust in relation to our partners and the communities that we come from and serve. When carrying out Solidaridad's mission I understand that it is important not to abuse my own position of power/unequal power relationships in any way.

Recognizing my role in Solidaridad's mission I will respect all peoples' rights, and protect children and uphold their rights, following UN conventions.

I will contribute to a working environment characterised by mutual respect, integrity, dignity, and non-discrimination.

I will ensure that my relationships and behaviour are not exploitative, abusive, or corrupt in any way, and I will not engage in any form of sexual abuse, assault, or exploitation of any persons of any age.

I will not engage in a romantic/sexual relationship with a beneficiary of the activities of Solidaridad.

In line with international (safeguarding) standards I will not have sexual relations with children (defined as under 18 years old), regardless of the local age of consent or majority. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defence.

I will not exchange money, employment, goods, assistance or service for sex, nor for other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour towards the beneficiary population.

If I have a romantic and/or sexual relation with a colleague, I will disclose this immediately to the employment contract signing authority (employment). I am aware that Solidaridad may decide on some measures, taking circumstances and context into consideration, to ensure unequal power balances are avoided, for the staff involved and for colleagues, and that prescribed division of roles is not compromised.

I will report any such behaviours or malpractice in the workplace by others to my line management or through recognized confidential reporting systems.

**3. Perform my duties and conduct my private life in a manner that avoids possible conflicts of interest with the work of Solidaridad.**

I shall ensure that all the business decisions will be made in a sound and fair manner and without conflict of interest. In case I doubt, I will seek consultation with my line manager.

I will declare any financial, personal, family or close intimate relationship interest in matters of official business which may impact on the work of Solidaridad (e.g. contract for goods/services, employment or promotion within Solidaridad, partner organizations, beneficiary groups).

I will inform Solidaridad of other functions I fulfil, voluntarily, paid, or otherwise. I will also inform Solidaridad about my politically active roles like representative or candidate of any political party or public office. Solidaridad will assess whether any conflict, or perceived conflicts, with my duties with Solidaridad may arise.

Even when the giving and acceptance of gifts is normal cultural practice I will reject monetary gifts or inappropriate gifts from governments, beneficiaries, donors, suppliers and other persons, which have been offered to me as a result of my employment with Solidaridad. However, if the gifts are a normal cultural practice, I will ensure that such gifts are within the limits with a maximum of a 40 Euro value. I will report any gift to the line management and hand them onto Solidaridad, to be shared with colleagues.

I will assure that assistance by Solidaridad is not provided in return of any service or favour from others. I will act against any form of corruption and not offer, promise, give, or accept any bribes.

**4. Be responsible for the use of information, equipment, money, and resources to which I have access by reason of my employment with Solidaridad.**

I will use my discretion when handling sensitive or confidential information. Disclosure of confidential information is considered a breach unless requested by a court order, required by law or governmental supervisory body, all under supervision of the Managing Director or Executive Director.

I will seek authorization, based on general policy or based on explicit request and approval, before communicating externally in Solidaridad's name and will avoid any unintended detrimental repercussions for me or Solidaridad.

I will appropriately account for all Solidaridad money and property, (e.g. vehicles, office equipment, Solidaridad-provided accommodation, computers including the use of internet, email and intranet). I will use Solidaridad's assets only for the purpose of execution of my job according to the policies and guidelines.

I will ensure that all Solidaridad's resources will not be misappropriated, embezzled, misdirected, misused, lost, or unaccounted for in any manner.

I will exercise the utmost care and integrity in the management, use, and appropriation of Solidaridad's funds and of any assets procured with these funds and adhere to the more specific guidelines on these matters, if there are as such.

I will refrain from fraud and theft and will report immediately if I witness one of these cases or have strong suspicions that they are taking place.

I will not accept or support corruption or bribery of any kind.

I will refrain from seeking tax avoidance in the execution of my job and will point out to my manager if I see (risk of) tax avoidance taking place

I will protect Solidaridad's intellectual property and not disclose this without a supervisor's permission, during or after my deployment; this refers to intangible assets such as (innovative) concepts, tools, symbols and logos and designs with or without property rights or trademark.

**5. Protect the health, safety, security, and welfare of all Solidaridad employees, volunteers, and contractors.**

I will undertake and act on appropriate risk assessments. I will avoid any unnecessary risk to the safety, health and welfare of myself and others, including partner organizations and beneficiaries.

**6. Promote human rights, protect the environment and oppose criminal or unethical activities. I will ensure that my conduct is consistent with the human rights framework of the UN1 to which Solidaridad subscribes.**

I will endeavour to protect the natural environment and work in a sustainable way.

I will contribute to preventing all forms of criminal or unethical activities in the execution of my job.

I shall strive to create an environment free from fear of retribution to deal with concerns that are raised or cases reported in good faith, knowing that no one shall be punished or made to suffer for raising concerns or making disclosures in good faith or in the public interest.

I will inform Solidaridad of any relevant criminal convictions or charges I have had prior to my employment in which Solidaridad may have a legitimate interest.

I will also notify Solidaridad if I face any criminal charges during my employment that may impede my ability to perform the duties of my position subject to national legislation. I will adhere to policies and procedures of Solidaridad that support the above standards.

In accepting my appointment I will execute my duties and regulate my conduct in accordance with the requirements of this Code thereby contributing to Solidaridad's quality of performance and reputation.

**7. Develop my moral compass, I will seek consultation with my colleagues, participate in training and moral deliberations.**

Life is ethically more complex than rules or a code can regulate. What is right and wrong in a situation is often context-specific. By participating in moral deliberations, I will contribute to the ethical learning of Solidaridad. This way, we develop a collective moral compass.

**Name:**

**Date:**

DD MM YYYY

**Signature:**

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

## DEFINITIONS

### Beneficiary

Marginalized producers, workers (especially women and youth) and other value chain players that are impacted by Solidaridad interventions across select commodities.

### Conflict of interest

When an employee has an undisclosed personal or economic interest in a matter that could influence his professional role (source: Association of Certified Fraud Examiners).

### Corruption

The abuse of public or private office for personal gain (source OECD: Definition for Policy purposes),

### Fraud

Includes any intentional or deliberate act to deprive another of property or money by guile, deception, or other unfair means (source: Association of Certified Fraud Examiners),

### Money laundering

Money laundering is a term used to describe the process of turning the proceeds of crime into property or money that can be accessed legitimately without causing suspicion. (Source: GUIDELINES FOR INVESTIGATIONS, A guide for humanitarian organisations on receiving and investigating allegations of abuse, exploitation, fraud or corruption by their own staff, CHSAlliance)

Further explanation money laundering:

The goal of a large number of criminal acts is to generate a profit for the individual or group that carries out the act. Money laundering is the processing of these criminal proceeds to disguise their illegal origin. This process is of critical importance, as it enables the criminal to enjoy these profits without jeopardizing their source. Illegal arms sales, smuggling, and the activities of organized crime, including for example drug trafficking and prostitution rings, can generate huge amounts of proceeds. Embezzlement, insider trading, bribery, and computer fraud schemes can also produce large profits and create the incentive to "legitimize" the ill-gotten gains through money laundering. When a criminal activity generates substantial profits, the individual or group involved must find a way to control the funds without attracting attention to the underlying activity or the persons involved. Criminals do this by disguising the sources, changing the form, or moving the funds to a place where they are less likely to attract attention. (Source: Financial Action Task Force (FATF), established in July 1989 by a Group of Seven (G-7) Summit in Paris)

### Tax Avoidance

The arrangement of a taxpayer's affairs that is intended to reduce his tax liability and that although the arrangement could be strictly legal it is usually in contradiction with the intent of the law it purports to follow. (Source: OECD - Glossary of tax terms)

### Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse

The term "sexual exploitation" means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. Similar, the term "sexual abuse" means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. (source UN Secretariat, Secretary-General's Bulletin, ST/SGB/2003/13)

## RESOURCES

- [Whistleblower protocol](#)
- [Responding to a report on an integrity breach](#)
- [How to conduct an investigation](#)

