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GHANA RED CROSS SOCIETY

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF

Approved and Adopted at Central Council Meeting of November 2018, NASCO Hotel, Koforidus

Signed by

Nana Dr. Michael Agyekum Addo
President

Signed by

Samuel Kofi Addo
Secretary General

Preamble

The Ghana Red Cross Society and Red Crescent Societies is a humanitarian organization achieving its general object and carrying out its functions at all times respecting the seven Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Ghana Red Cross Society Staff are expected to be advocates and champions of vulnerable people everywhere and to act in accordance with the Fundamental Principles and this Code of Conduct.

Before acting, Staff must ask themselves the following questions:

- Is this action in accordance with the Fundamental Principles?
- Is this action in compliance with this Code of Conduct, the National Society Staff Rules, and the Staff Regulations?
- Is this action in compliance with all mandatory policies, processes, procedures, and guidelines?
- Is this action legal under the laws of Ghana?
- Will this action reflect positively, and in fact not reflect negatively, on me and the Society?
- Is there an alternative action for which I could answer yes to each of these questions?

When in doubt about an action's conformity with this Code of Conduct or its ethical implications, Staff shall seek advice from their line manager, Finance & Administrative Manager or Secretary General before acting.

1. Scope and application

This Code of Conduct applies to all Staff at all times during their service with the Ghana Red Cross Society both during and after working hours. "Staff" in this Code refers to all Ghana Red Cross Society employees, consultants, volunteers, and interns, as well as staff on secondment and all individuals working under the Ghana Red Cross Society

This Code, whether signed or not, shall automatically form an integral part of all Ghana Red Cross Society contract of employment and conditions of service for all Staff.

The Secretary General is responsible for ensuring this Code is read, understood and abided all Ghana Red Cross society staff. In case of any violation by Staff, he/she may be held accountable and the Society may take all appropriate measures to protect the organisation.

Violations of this Code are subject to disciplinary measures in accordance with the *Disciplinary Measures* of the NS. In addition, the Society reserves the right to recover from Staff all expenses incurred by the staff as a result of any violation of this Code by them or their accompanying family member (including remedying harms, repatriation costs, etc.).

The Society is committed to ensuring that all organizations and individuals with whom it works reflect values consistent with those of the National Society – this applies in particular to individuals with whom the Society has a close but indirect association, such as staff of Partner National Society (PNS) acting in close cooperation with the Society, guards working for a security company or Employees of a construction firm contracted by the Society, etc. The Society will take such actions as necessary and appropriate to discontinue its association with any organization or individual whose actions, if carried out by the Society’s own Staff would be considered serious breaches of this Code.

2. Implementation of the Code of Conduct

Staff Responsibility:

Staff are responsible for ensuring that they have read and understood the Code of Conduct.

They also have a duty to inform beneficiaries of their service and those under their care of the code of conduct that Staff must adhere to, as well as how and to whom to report any misconduct or failure in the standard of their treatment.

Staff have a duty to report any breach of this Code to the appropriate person. All reports and concerns raised will be properly considered and treated with discretion. The NS will take all necessary steps against any form of retaliation suffered by Staff reporting possible breaches of this Code

Management responsibility:

Managers shall lead by example and are responsible for creating a culture of compliance within their areas of authority. They shall inform the Finance & Administration Department of all reports or concerns of breaches of this Code that are raised to them.

Management/Staff relations shall be guided by mutual respect and understanding, for which continuous dialogue is indispensable. Managers shall make themselves available to Staff who wish to raise concerns in confidence and shall deal with such requests in an impartial and sensitive manner.

Managers are responsible for drawing the attention of the organizations and individuals with whom the NS contracts to the NS's values and the specific conduct that it considers unacceptable and inconsistent with these values. If the acts of any organization or individual with whom the Society is associated could be considered serious breaches of this Code, managers are responsible for taking appropriate action. Where possible, contracts should include provisions for replacement of individuals or termination in such cases – managers are invited to consult the Legal Advisor for Options.

Institutional responsibility:

The Secretary General and Managers are responsible for putting in place effective mechanisms to ensure the highest standards of conduct are observed both in the Society's service to the most vulnerable and in its internal and external professional relations.

3. Rules of conduct

All Staff shall:

1. Comply with the Staff Rules, Staff Regulations, and all mandatory rules, policies, and procedures, and with the terms of their employment contracts and conditions of service.
2. Comply with the applicable laws of Ghana, including the Society's applicable status or headquarters agreements. In case of violation of any applicable law, the Society may not

provide any legal assistance to the individual and may waive any immunities enjoyed by him/her.

Respect for persons

3. Respect all persons equally and without any distinction or discrimination based on nationality, race, gender, religious beliefs, class or political opinions; and act at all times in accordance with the Fundamental Principles and the humanitarian and organizational values as defined by the NS. These are: respect for diversity, cultures, structures and customs of the communities, solidarity with the community, integrity and accountability, as well as mutual understanding and non-discrimination are essential elements to preserve human dignity.
4. Take into account the sensitivities of peoples' customs, habits, and religious beliefs and avoid any behavior that is not appropriate in a particular cultural context.
5. Ensure that the portrayal of individuals and their circumstances is fairly represented in terms of their capacities and vulnerabilities. All efforts must be made to explain how photos and stories will be used and to obtain permission from the individuals for the use of their photos and stories.
6. Abstain from all acts, which could be considered harassment, abuse, discrimination or exploitation. This applies to all people of all ages, especially to children and to people exposed to stigma, including those living with HIV.

Independence

7. Discharge functions and act only with the interests of the Society in view.
8. Neither seek nor accept instructions from any government, National Society, or any authority other than the Secretary General (or his/her designate) in connection with their official functions. Staff are considered neutral and independent officials of a global membership organization and are fully and solely accountable to the Society's Secretary General.

9. Respect the emblems of the Red Cross, the Red Crescent and the Red Crystal, using them only as consistent with the applicable rules (as set out in the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, the Regulations on the use of the Emblem of the Red Cross or the Red Crescent by the National Societies and any other mandatory policies, processes, procedures, and guidelines), and report any misuse.

Integrity

10. Conduct all official duties with integrity, free from any taint of dishonesty or corruption, including not engaging in any act of favouritism, nepotism, cronyism, or bribery. This includes not accepting from any external source (including National Societies, governments, corporations or others) without authorization, any honor, decoration, gift, remuneration, favor or economic benefit which is more than a “token gift”. Examples of token gifts include cheap pens, desk diaries, trinkets, etc.
11. Not benefit improperly or allow a third party to benefit improperly (whether directly or indirectly) from association with an enterprise that engages in any business or transaction with the NS (including association with the management or the holding of a financial interest). Any potential conflict of interest with a supplier, service provider, or business partner (such as family relations or shareholding) must be disclosed.
12. Not intentionally misrepresent their official functions or title to any entities or persons.
13. Not act in any way likely to bring the NS into disrepute.

Neutrality

14. Not publicly express any opinions on events connected with political affairs or engage in political activities that could reflect adversely on the impartiality, neutrality or independence of the Federation, e.g., public support of a political party.

15. Not accept or exercise any public appointment, outside employment, or activity that could be regarded as inconsistent with, or reflecting adversely upon, their impartiality, neutrality, or independence, or that would result in a conflict of interest without previous agreement of the Secretary General.
16. Dress in a manner appropriate to the assignment, careful to avoid giving the impression of having any military affiliation or status.

Sexual abuse and exploitation

17. Not commit any act of sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual violence. This prohibition extends to all forms of sexual abuse or exploitation and includes not reporting concerns or suspicions regarding any violation by a co-worker (whether fellow Staff or an individual working for a partner organization).
18. Not engage in any sexual activity with persons (adult or child) that look to or benefit from the NS's protection or assistance, or with any persons under the age of 18 years, regardless of the age of majority or consent locally (mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defence). Sexual activity includes all forms of activity and abuse of a sexual nature, with or without physical contact and whether or not either party is aware of such abuse.
19. Not exchange money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior. This prohibition extends to any use of sex trade workers.
20. Not produce, procure, distribute or use pornographic material in NS's offices or on NS equipment, including reading/surfing pornographic websites or message boards or sending pornographic emails.

Protection of information

21. Exercise the utmost discretion in regard to all matters of official business and handle all confidential and sensitive information with the greatest care.
22. Not disclose sensitive information of individuals we serve where there is a risk of adverse consequences to the individuals if their identities are revealed. All efforts must be made to protect the identities of beneficiaries, including their names, faces and geographical locations. Disclosure may be made only where silence puts the individual, those we serve or Staff in danger, and then informing the source in advance and protecting his/her identity to the extent possible.
23. Protect the confidentiality of the NS' internal information, and not communicate to any person any internal correspondence or information known to them by reason of their official position which has not been made public, except in the course of their official duties or by authorization of the Secretary General. Staff shall not at any time use the NS's internal information to private advantage.
24. Immediately inform the Secretary General and follow his/her instructions in the event that they are called upon by authority of law to give evidence or information known to them by reason of their official position.
25. Not publish any work (including writings, photographs, video footage, etc.) that has been produced in connection with, or that is related to, their assignment and functions with the NS's without prior approval of the Secretary General. Staff hereby transfer to the NS all intellectual property rights in any work published in violation of this obligation, as well as any income derived from such publication.

Security

26. Comply with the Minimum Security Requirements and the Security Regulations for the country in which they are present, as well as any other security procedures or instructions that may be issued.

27. Abide by the Fleet Manual and the Driver Rules and Regulations for the country when operating a NS vehicle. In particular, Staff are prohibited from driving NS vehicles under the influence of any alcohol or mind altering substance (proportionate disciplinary action will be taken for any violation).
28. Comply with national traffic laws and regulations at all times, including drinking and driving laws, whether driving NS vehicles or their private vehicles. Staff facing penalties or criminal charges for drunk driving should not expect any legal assistance from the Federation or to be covered by any immunities.
29. At no time use or have in their possession any drugs prohibited under laws of Ghana.
30. Ensure that no firearms or ammunition of any kind are brought to or kept in NS vehicles or NS offices or premises (including residences provided by the NS).

Ghana Red Cross Society Property

31. Administer the funds and supplies entrusted to them with the utmost care and be accountable for their use. Staff are prohibited from stealing, misappropriating, or misusing funds or property of the Ghana Red Cross Society.
32. Not commit the Ghana Red Cross Society financially unless officially authorized to do so.
33. Return upon the end of their employment or service with the NS all property issued to them by the Ghana Red Cross Society, including NS or other identity cards and insignia.

Endnotes

- i. “Harassment” includes any improper and unwelcome conduct that has or that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another. Harassment may be present in the form of words, gestures, or actions which tend to annoy, alarm, abuse, demean, intimidate, belittle, or cause personal humiliation or embarrassment to another or that causes an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.
- ii. The terms “favouritism”, “nepotism”, “cronyism”, and “bribery” include such conduct as unfair treatment of a person or group on the basis of prejudice, support or favor

shown to friends and family (especially in making of appointments), and acceptance, offer, or consideration of any improper personal benefit.

- iii. The following common definitions of “sexual abuse”, “sexual exploitation” and “sexual violence” have been agreed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Force on Gender and Humanitarian Assistance:

“Sexual abuse” is the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

“Sexual exploitation” is any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.

“Sexual violence” is any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic a person’s sexuality, using coercion, threats of harm or physical force, by any person regardless of relationship to the victim, in any setting, including, but not limited to, home and work. Sexual violence takes many forms, including rape, sexual slavery and/or trafficking, forced pregnancy, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and/or abuse, and forced abortion.

(Refer to the *Guidelines for Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Emergencies*:

Focusing on Prevention and Response to Sexual Violence (2005)).

- iv. “Pornographic material” includes all sexually explicit material intended to cause sexual arousal, including photographs, videos, and writings. However, if local law provides a stricter definition of pornography than provided here, Staff must comply with local law.

The NS encourages anyone with concerns that the Staff Code of Conduct has been breached to report them immediately. All reports will be respected with confidentiality and the safety of personnel reporting will be a priority.

Staff Code of Conduct

Acknowledgment

I _____, confirm that I have read and understood this Staff Code of Conduct, and I agree to abide by its terms, which form part of the conditions of my employment/service with the Federation.

Signature _____

Place _____

Date _____