



HEART فريق الإغاثة والتعزيز الإنساني

Humanitarian Empowerment and Relief Team

HEART's Code of Conduct

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This Code of Conduct establishes HEART's ethical commitments and minimum standards of behavior for all representatives. It should be customized with operational reporting and contact details and implemented in alignment with applicable national laws and relevant humanitarian standards in all countries of operation.

Document Overview

Document Title	HEART's Code of Conduct
Designated Reporting Focal Point	PSEA Officer/Designated Safeguarding Focal Point
Approved by	Board of Directors (BoDs)
Effective Date	30 December, 2024

This policy is a core governance and accountability document. It shall be read together with HEART's Code of Conduct, PSEA Policy, Whistleblowing/Complaints Procedures, and relevant HR and program manuals.

Article 1: Purpose and General Principles

1. This Code of Conduct sets the minimum standards of ethical and professional behavior for all HEART representatives and forms the cornerstone of an institutional culture of integrity, transparency, respect, and safeguarding.
2. HEART is guided in all its humanitarian actions by the principles of humanity, neutrality, independence, and impartiality, and by its organizational values of **Partnership, Equality, Solidarity, and Accountability (PESA)**.
3. HEART maintains **zero tolerance** for sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), sexual harassment (SH), bullying, intimidation, discrimination, violence, neglect, and any form of exploitation or abuse of power.
4. This Code applies to: Board members, staff (under any contractual mechanism), volunteers, consultants, interns, partners/service providers where agreements include conduct requirements, and any person acting on behalf of HEART.
5. This Code shall be interpreted consistently with HEART's Constitution, applicable national laws, and relevant international humanitarian standards and commitments.

Article 2: Core Behavioral Values

All HEART representatives shall uphold:

1. **Integrity:** Honesty and fairness in actions and decisions.

2. **Respect:** Treating all people with dignity, without discrimination, humiliation, harassment, or intimidation.
3. **Neutrality:** Refraining from political, ethnic, religious, or tribal bias in HEART's work and conduct.
4. **Transparency:** Clear, accurate, and timely communication; avoidance of deception or concealment.
5. **Accountability:** Taking responsibility for conduct and its consequences; cooperating with reviews and investigations.
6. **Confidentiality:** Protecting sensitive information and sharing it only on a need-to-know basis in line with applicable law and data protection principles.

Article 3: Professional Conduct

1. Comply with HEART's internal policies, procedures, and lawful instructions, including the Safeguarding Policy, PSEA commitments, and related reporting procedures.
2. Do not use one's position, power, or access to resources for personal gain, favoritism, or improper advantage.
3. Protect HEART assets (funds, property, information, and reputation) and use them only for authorized purposes.
4. Maintain professional relationships, respectful communication, and a teamwork culture; avoid behavior that undermines colleagues or beneficiaries.
5. Avoid any conduct inside or outside the workplace that could bring HEART into disrepute or compromise humanitarian principles, community trust, or safety.

Article 4: Safeguarding and Protection of Beneficiaries and Vulnerable Groups

1. HEART upholds "**Do No Harm**" and prioritizes the safety, dignity, and rights of affected populations, particularly children, women, persons with disabilities, and older persons.
2. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All representatives must act to prevent harm and respond appropriately when concerns arise.
3. **Minimum Standards of Behaviour (Prohibited Conduct):** HEART strictly prohibits:
 1. Sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18, regardless of local age of consent or mistaken belief about age.
 2. Any form of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse of community members or affected populations.

3. Any sexual relationship with a community member/beneficiary involving the exchange of money, employment, goods, services, or other benefits.
 4. Sexual harassment, including unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal/physical conduct of a sexual nature.
 5. Physical assault, hitting, or any form of violence against children or adults.
 6. Any act that puts a child or vulnerable adult at risk of harm, including negligence and unsafe practices.
 7. Bullying, humiliation, intimidation, or discrimination based on gender, religion, ethnicity, disability, age, race, or other status.
 8. Abuse of power or position to take unfair advantage of staff, volunteers, partners, or community members.
 9. Retaliation against anyone who raises a safeguarding concern in good faith.
4. Any breach of safeguarding standards may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination, referral to authorities where lawful and safe, and other remedial actions.

Article 5: Humanitarian Neutrality and Independence

1. Assistance shall be provided solely based on need, without political, ethnic, religious, or tribal discrimination.
2. HEART resources, staff, and activities must not be used for political, military, or personal purposes.

Article 6: Conflict of Interest

1. All representatives must disclose any personal, family, financial, or other interests that could compromise impartiality or influence decision-making.
2. Participation in decisions or procurement processes involving parties with whom there is a personal or financial relationship is prohibited.
3. Failure to disclose or manage a conflict of interest may result in disciplinary action.

Article 7: Gifts, Hospitality, and Favors

1. Accepting gifts, hospitality, or favors that could compromise independence, create an obligation, or influence decisions is prohibited.
2. Symbolic or low-value gifts may be accepted only where culturally appropriate and only if promptly disclosed to management.

3. Any gift received on behalf of HEART must be documented in a dedicated register and handled in accordance with HEART procedures.

Article 8: Reporting Misconduct and Safeguarding Concerns

1. **Duty to Report:** All representatives must promptly report suspected or actual misconduct – especially safeguarding concerns – through safe and confidential channels.
2. Reports may be made anonymously where feasible. False or malicious allegations are prohibited; however, good-faith reporting is protected even if concerns are not substantiated.
3. **Reporting Channels (as applicable):**
 - Directly to the **PSEA Officer / Designated Safeguarding Focal Point** (in person or by phone); or
 - To a line manager, Country Director, or the **CEO/Secretary General** (who must forward immediately to the safeguarding focal point); or
 - Through a confidential complaints mechanism (hotline and/or email); or
 - Through community feedback mechanisms (complaints boxes, helpdesks, trusted community focal points), where established.
4. **Survivor-Centered Response:** HEART adopts a survivor-centered approach. Safety, confidentiality, respect, and informed choice guide all actions. Where feasible, HEART supports access to medical care, psychosocial support, and protection services through appropriate referrals. Decisions regarding support will be led by the survivor.
5. **Confidentiality:** Safeguarding matters are confidential. Information shall be shared only on a need-to-know basis and stored securely. Representatives must not promise secrecy if it could compromise a person’s safety or well-being.
6. **Protection from Retaliation:** Retaliation against complainants, reporters, or witnesses who report in good faith is strictly prohibited and will be treated as serious misconduct.
7. HEART will assess, triage, and respond to reports promptly and fairly, applying due process and disciplinary measures where breaches are substantiated.

Article 9: Final Provisions

1. This Code shall be communicated to all representatives and must be signed as a condition of employment/engagement with HEART.
2. Compliance is reinforced through induction and periodic training on HEART values, Code of Conduct, PSEA, and Safeguarding.

3. This Code shall be reviewed at least annually or whenever necessary.
Amendments shall be approved by the Board of Directors.
4. The provisions of this Code shall be incorporated into relevant contracts, partner agreements, and service-provider arrangements.