



# **COMMUNITY INITIATIVE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (COMINSUD)**

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**



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#### **Introduction**

COMINSUD's **Code of Conduct** outlines expectations regarding employees' behavior towards their colleagues, supervisors and overall organization.

We promote freedom of expression and open communication. But we expect all employees to follow our code of conduct.

The Code shall form an integral part of COMINSUD's contracts of employment and conditions of service for all staff.

The principles set out in this Code of Conduct form the framework of our common action. Compliance with these rules is of utmost importance for the success and core values of our organization.

#### **COMINSUD's Mission, Vision and Values**

##### **Our Mission**

COMINSUD is a development organization that works to empower communities towards achieving their development goals.

##### **Our Vision**

A responsive society where the principles and standards of good governance are respected and upheld for sustainable human and environmental development.

##### **Our Values**

**Service:** Prioritizing and dedicating oneself to helping others and contributing positively to society.

**Integrity:** Upholding Honesty, ethical and strong moral principles in the services we offer.

**Accountability:** Open processes that ensure transparency.

**Gender Responsive:** Recognizing and addressing the different needs and ensuring that policies, programs, and practices are inclusive and fair.

**Teamwork:** working collaboratively with others to achieve common goals.

##### **Our Domains of intervention**

- Grassroots political empowerment, democracy, human rights and good governance
- Gender, social inclusion, protection and SGBV +HIV
- Sustainable agriculture, WASH and environmental management
- Humanitarian action and Peace Work



### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to support the Board of Directors, administrators and employees of the COMINSUD in making ethically and legally sound decisions. This Code of Conduct is supplemented by the Personnel Policy specific policies, strategies, guidelines and other internal documents on specific areas topics. The Code of Conduct is an expression of our willingness to handle the risks involved in our work with the utmost care.

### **2. Scope of application**

This Code of Conduct is binding for Member of the Management Board, members of the organization, volunteers and all employees. Aspects of this Code of Conduct shall also apply other persons engaged by COMINSUD including but not limited to, consultants, professionals, resource persons and service providers.

## **PROTECTION ACTS**

### **3. Principles guiding our actions**

We are committed to the following principles:

- Inviolability of the dignity of all human beings
- Protection of human rights
- Respect for diversity of religions, beliefs and cultures
- Participation and inclusion
- Accountability and transparency
- Social, environmental and economic sustainability
- Responsibility in exercising power and managing resources
- Observance of the “do no harm” principle
- Trust and appreciation

### **4. Protection against discrimination**

We promote equal rights for all and work towards the elimination of existing disadvantages. We therefore are committed to treating all people with respect and recognition. In particular, we prohibit any form of discrimination based on:

- racial or ethnic origin
- sex;
- religion or belief;
- disability;
- age and
- sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Social Status

### **5. Protection against physical, psychological and sexual exploitation/abuse**

Physical, psychological or sexual exploitation and abuse constitute an attack on human dignity. We therefore are committed to the following rules:

- Never violate other people’s privacy through (threatening) inappropriate physical contact or touching, through inappropriate sexual remarks or the showing/display of pornographic depictions.
- Under no circumstances exploit a position of power to obtain sexual services.
- Not trade employment offers or goods for sexual services. Particularly those involved in humanitarian aid undertake not to engage in sexual relations with people from the (potential) target group.
- To treat people with disabilities with particular care so as not to cross physical and psychological boundaries.
- Never to (nor threaten to) humiliate, bully, exploit other people.

## **6. Child protection**

Children are persons under 18 years of age. They deserve special protection.

We are committed to complying with the following rules when dealing with children:

- Never to abuse the power conferred upon us by our position or function or our influence regarding the lives and welfare of children.
- Never to beat children or cause them other physical harm.
- Never to support illegal, dangerous, negligent or abusive behaviour towards children; not to use inappropriate, indecent or abusive language.
- Not to build relationships with children that may be considered exploitative or abusive; not to embrace, caress, kiss or touch children in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive manner.
- Never to engage in sexual activity with a child or in front of children; never demand from children that they engage in sexual activity or let them be abused by a third person.
- Not to expose children to pornographic material.
- Not to buy, possess, consume or distribute child pornography.
- Not to assign hazardous or exploitative tasks to children; Not to assign any tasks to children that will harm their physical and mental development or prevent them from going to school.
- To respect the dignity and personal rights of children; Private photographs and films cannot be distributed on social media without consent. Before taking pictures, the written consent of the parent or guardian must be obtained.

## **7. Preventing and combating fraud and corruption**

The trust that our donors place in us results in the responsibility and legal obligation to use the funds entrusted to us carefully and economically. Accordingly, we are committed to planning and managing our donations with care. COMINSUD has a Zero-tolerance policy against fraud and corruption.

COMINSUD is therefore committed to:

- Complying with the law and internal regulations.
- Rejecting any form of corruption, both in dealings with public officials and with private sector individuals.
- Refraining from demanding, accepting, offering, giving or arranging bribes.

These obligations include the prohibition of unlawful payments or non-monetary benefits and the granting of unlawful advantages to public officials, partners or member organizations as well as family members.

## **8. Violence and Terrorism**

We stand against all acts that promote or incite violence and terrorism in any form. Thus, Staff should not be involved directly or indirectly in acts that result or contribute to violence and terrorism.

## **CONFLICT AND CONTRADICTION ACTS**

### **9. Conflict of interest**

We avoid situations in which our personal relationships or financial interests may conflict with the interests of COMINSUD. A conflict-of-interest situation arises when the “private interests” of the staff compete or conflict with the interests of the organization. “Private interests” means both the financial and personal interests of the staff or those of their connections including: family and other relations; personal friends and any person to whom they owe a favour or are obligated in any way.

### **10. Gifts and other benefits**

We undertake not to accept any benefits – in any form whatsoever – which might reasonably be expected to affect the decisions or transactions of COMINSUD or its partners, service providers and other collaborators. Caution should be exercised when receiving or giving gifts and entertainment. Exceptions to this require the prior written consent of the Ethics Committee.

### **11. Protection of Property**

Staff given access to any property of the organization should ensure that it is properly used for the purpose of conducting the organization's business. Misappropriation of the organization's property for personal use or resale is strictly prohibited.

### **12. Confidentiality**

All employees are expected to maintain the confidentiality of our records and business practices to ensure the safety of all parties involved. Confidential records should be accessed and shared solely for work purposes with the appropriate stakeholders. Sensitive information of any kind is neither used for the pursuit of our own interests nor made accessible to third parties. We therefore only collect, store or process personal data if this is necessary for specified, unambiguous and legally permitted purposes.

## **ACTS OF CONDUCT WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION**

### **13. Attendance**

We require employees to follow their assigned work schedules based on their work status as determined by a contract of employment or based on decisions made by supervising staff members.

### **14. Dress Code**

While our organization maintains a professional but casual atmosphere, we expect employees to take care in presenting a neat and clean appearance while at work.

### **15. Respect at workplace**

All employees should respect their colleagues. We won't allow any kind of discriminatory behavior, harassment or victimization. Employees should conform with our equal opportunity policy in all aspects of their work, from recruitment and performance evaluation to interpersonal relations.

### **16. Job duties and authority**

All employees should fulfill their job duties with integrity and respect toward customers, stakeholders and the community. Supervisors and managers mustn't abuse their authority. We expect them to delegate duties to their team members taking into account their competences and workload. Likewise, we expect team members to follow team leaders' instructions and complete their duties with skill and in a timely manner. We encourage mentoring throughout our company.

### **17. Collaboration and Communication**

Employees should be friendly and collaborative. They should try not to disrupt the workplace or present obstacles to their colleagues' work. All employees must be open for communication with their colleagues, supervisors or team members.

## **ATTENDANCE AND SANCTIONS**

### **18. Policies**

All employees should read and follow our company policies. If they have any questions, they should consult the administration.



## 19. Disciplinary actions

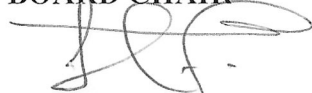
The organization may have to take disciplinary action against those governed by this Code who repeatedly or intentionally fail to follow the principles therein. Disciplinary actions will vary depending on the violation from demotion, warning, suspension or termination as stipulated in COMINSUD's Personnel Policy and/or termination of contractual relationship as the case may be.

The organization reserves the right to take legal action in cases of corruption, theft, embezzlement or other unlawful behavior.

COMINSUD Coordinator and Board shall have the authority and responsibility to administer appropriate disciplinary action for violation of COMINSUD policies within the limits of the powers conferred to their positions.

**Bamenda 19<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

**BOARD CHAIR**



**CHAMBI JULIE**



## DECLARATION OF HONOUR

As a member of COMINSUD's workforce, I engage to abide by the present Code of Conduct, and I promise to report severe breaches directly to the competent hierarchy.

- I will uphold the mission, vision and the values of COMINSUD and treat all persons with whom I deal with in an official capacity fairly, with respect, courtesy and dignity, including in communication on public channels and social media.
- I will treat the people COMINSUD serves with dignity and respect and will not engage in any act of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse (SEA) and I will promptly report any concern and/or suspicion of SEA
- I will always seek to care for and protect the rights of Children, women and any other vulnerable persons, and act in a manner that ensures that their best interests shall be the paramount consideration.
- I abide by all regulations, rules and policies applicable to me and the terms of my contract.
- I will show respect to all colleagues, regardless of their status and position and I will respect their privacy.
- I will ensure that my professional and personal conduct does not reflect unfavourably on the integrity of COMINSUD and its ability to render services.
- I will be mindful of and carefully consider the potential impact of my words and actions on others' dignity and integrity, regardless of my intent.
- I will not work under the influence of alcohol or of any unlawful drug.
- I will not engage in, condone or facilitate, or appear to condone or facilitate, any fraud, corruption, collusive, coercive, obstructive practices, money laundering and financing of terrorism in the course of the activities and operations of COMINSUD and I will promptly report any reasonably suspected practice or attempt thereof.
- I will perform my duties and conduct my private affairs in a manner to avoid and/or mitigate conflicts of interest and I will promptly disclose them.

By signing the present COMINSUD's Code of Conduct,

- i) I acknowledge that I have read the Code of Conduct and understood it.
- ii) I agree to abide by the Code of Conduct and understand that my failure to do so may result in disciplinary actions or contractual measures, including the immediate termination of my contract with COMINSUD.
- iii) I acknowledge that I have an obligation to report breaches of COMINSUD's Code of Conduct in good faith as soon as I become aware of it.

**Employee name:**

**Signature:**

**Place & Date:**