



*Growing
Together
in Solidarity*

Code of Conduct (2020)

Caritas Nepal

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PUTTING OUR VALUES FIRST

Code of Conduct Version 1.0

1. PURPOSE

We are guided by the principles of Catholic Social Teachings and it is important that the professional and personal conduct of everyone associated with us uphold those values and principles. This Code of Conduct describes the standards of conduct and behavior expected of all associated with us. It shall provide a basis for a shared understanding of the expected behavior in all aspect of our work.

These standards of professional and personal conduct is also essential to ensure that everyone is entitled to work in an environment that is safe, free and respectful and promotes cooperation and support to each other.

Everyone associated with us shall be guided by and work in accordance with our Vision, Mission and the following values, which are non-negotiable.

- i. **Human Rights, Respect and Dignity:** Human life is sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. That is Right to dignified life. This includes rights of men and women, children, persons with disabilities and ethnic communities.
- ii. **Equality:** Non discrimination
- iii. **Social Justice:** Equal opportunities, distribution of wealth and privilege
- iv. **Common good and Solidarity:** Common good before self-interest, collaboration for a common cause. One human family. We take care of our brothers and sisters wherever they may be.
- v. **Subsidiarity:** Social and political issues should be dealt with at the most immediate (or local) level for its effective resolution. Working with the people, enabling them to have the power and control over their own destiny.
- vi. **Stewardship (Ecological sustainability):** Sustainable development for creation of a sustainable ecological order “*Laudato Si* - caring for our common home” as proclaimed by Pope Francis.

- vii. **Patriotism:** Preserving the independence, integrity, unity in diversity, and democratic status of Nepal.
- viii. **Programmatic and operational excellence:** Technical competence, accountability, transparency, open communication, mutual trust, equality and reciprocity in partnerships.

2. SCOPE OF POLICY APPLICATION

- i. This Code of Conduct applies to the entire organization including the Head Office in Kathmandu and all its Regional Offices, District Offices And Project/Program or Field Office and any other entity under the management and operation of Caritas Nepal (presently existing or to be established in future) which implies applicable to all the staff (including temporary or part time), volunteers, General Members and Executive Committee Members.
- ii. This code of conduct also extends to relationships Caritas Nepal have or shall have with third parties such as implementing partners, vendors and any other associations such as consortium, alliance and network members including anyone acting on behalf of Caritas Nepal.
- iii. The standards defined in this documents shall also be applicable beyond the designated duty period (unless otherwise stated) including all external social relations and activities as well as interactions on social media that take place outside work premises. The provisions as described in the '*Code of Conduct for Using Social Media (2018)- Internal Memo*' shall be applicable for matters related to interaction on social media.
- iv. Everyone associated with Caritas Nepal as indicated above are expected to familiarize themselves with the expected conduct and are responsible for applying and complying with this Code of Conduct.
- v. This policy broadly outlines the expected ethical standard and conduct. There are other policy and guidance documents which also defines the performance standard and code of conduct related to specific areas. This Code of Conduct shall compliment the other polices (and vice versa). Therefore, This code of conduct shall be applicable in conjugation with other policies of Caritas Nepal namely Anti-corruption policy (2019) 'Employee Service Terms Facility Regulation 2020', 'Constitution 2047', 'Finance Policy and Procedure(2020)', 'Risk management policy (2020)', 'Complain Handling Policy and Processing (2020)', 'Environment and DRR Policy (2020)'; 'Monitoring and Evaluation Policy (2020)'; 'Social Protection and Safe Guarding Policy(2020)', which includes provisions in child protection, gender and social inclusion.

3. CODE DETAILS

Everyone associated with Caritas Nepal shall adhere to the standards set out below.

3.1 Responsibility, Accountability and Transparency

- i. Conduct themselves at all times in a manner befitting their position. They shall not engage in any activity that is inconsistent and incompatible with the demand of their role and responsibilities.

- ii. Be transparent and maintain high standards of ethical behavior and integrity in all spheres – at work, in public and in private.
- iii. Performance of their related duties and functions, in an accountable, transparent and responsible manner

3.2 Professionalism and Commitment

- i. Demonstrate the utmost professionalism, competence, honesty and diligence in their performance
- ii. Maintain loyalty and commitment to Caritas Nepal and its interests; promote a sense of responsibility and belonging to the organization.
- iii. Fully accept, commit and adhere to the rules, regulations, policy, strategies, plans and program.
- iv. Honor the role, status and authority of Caritas Nepal.
- v. Uphold Caritas Nepal reputation at all times and ensure that Caritas Nepal's reputation is not be brought into disrepute in any way.
- vi. Build solidarity and cooperation with all stakeholders and organizations working in collaboration with Caritas Nepal.
- vii. Respect all reasonable directives from Supervisors or concerned authority and not refuse to undertake any assignment entrusted by the institution and be engaged in similar act of insubordination.
- viii. Refrain from any actions which are detrimental to the interest of Caritas Nepal and stakeholders and which may harm our work and interests or breach any law, rules or instructions applicable to Caritas Nepal.
- ix. Refrain from having an interest, directly or indirectly in any contact, sale, lease or purchase that is under his/her supervision or which would benefit him/her personally.

3.3 Confidentiality, Use of Official Information and Information Submission

- i. Demonstrate discretion while handling official documents/ information and take utmost caution to maintain confidentiality.
- ii. Refrain from making or attempt to make unauthorized access to confidential document, file, and record of any unit of CARITAS NEPAL.
- iii. Refrain from any directly or indirectly, use or allow the use of official information obtained through or in connection with the organization for the sake of private gain or interest.
- iv. Refrain from disseminating any unauthorized information to anyone.
- v. Refrain from publishing any statement, article, letter etc. in newspapers, magazine, journals or bulletins or any other media or make a public statement without prior approval
- vi. Refrain from distorting or withholding any information or data. He/she shall not provide substantially incorrect or falsify information such as personal information (age, qualification, nationality or anything relating to previous services and other information as required in the employee fact sheet) or statement for allowance and expenses or suppress material of fact or any other information furnished to the institution.

3.4 Use of Organization's Resources

- i. Ensure that all resources and official assets authorized or allocated for use are utilized with utmost care and diligence.
- ii. Refrain from sabotaging or attempt to sabotage or engage in wasteful or improper use of organization's property , assets, resources entrusted
- iii. Ensure no wasteful expenditure is incurred and maximum result is secured at minimum cost.
- iv. Refrain from directly or indirectly use or allow others to use organization's resources, assets, property, facilities or services (including working time) of any kind for other than officially approved purpose/activities.
- v. Refrain from theft, fraud or dishonesty in connection with institution's business or property.
- vi. Refrain from any activity causing damages to any assets, properties, facilities or resources of the organization.
- vii. Refrain from taking or removing unauthorized assets, property and resources (including funds) from the organization
- viii. Refrain from using organization's property, assets, resources, facilities or services including fund for one's own or other's direct or indirect personal gain or interest.
- ix. Immediately report any accident, injury or damage to organization's assets, property, resources, goods or material to the supervisor.
- x. Refrain from using official internet and email resources for anything that is not officially authorized including accessing, transmitting, storing or downloading pornographic, sexually explicit or otherwise inappropriate material.

3.5 Neutrality and political participation

- i. Carrying out official duties and responsibilities without any relation or support to any particular interest group or political parties.
- ii. Anyone associated with Caritas Nepal can be members of social or political organizations and their affiliate organizations provided that the incumbent are managed to maintain complete neutrality and such association does not adversely affect the interest of Caritas Nepal and its associates. However, taking part in activities of any political party or their affiliate organizations or actively promote any partisan politics, or religious causes while in service of the organization is strictly prohibited.
- iii. Refrain from taking part in demonstrations or strikes either singly or with others in favor or in contravention of any national statute, law, rule, directives or program or for/against any international policy, rule, law, directive or priorities unless such act organized by or authorized by Caritas Nepal in accordance with its program priorities.

3.6 External Occupation/Employment

- i. Refrain from involvement in any business or professional activity, including outside employment, or supplementary employment or accept fees, commission or honorarium, gifts whatsoever from any other institution/organization/agency or individuals or possess any personal interest in other organizations without prior approval of Caritas Nepal.

- ii. Any associated is encouraged to take up volunteer engagement with social organizations including providing services as resource persons, provided that official time, resources, assets or facilities are not used without prior approval of Caritas Nepal

3.7 Personal Conduct

- i. Demonstrate high moral standards and voluntary spirit in providing their services.
- ii. Be fair, just and open-minded in their opinions and actions.
- iii. Refrain from any act of Harassment, bullying, abuse and discrimination (including biasness, favoritism, prejudices, nepotism/cronyism)

Example of Harassment, bullying, biasness, abuse and discrimination (Not exhaustive list, intended to provide examples as a guidance)

- iv. Refrain from
 - a) Embezzlement and fraud, corruption, stealing and cheating in any form of dishonest act, in accordance to the organization's Anti-corruption policy (2019).
 - b) Bullying, biasness, abuse or discrimination
 - c) Exploitative behavior such as abuse of women, men, children and others through modern day slavery such as child labor or sexual harassment; capitalizing on the weaknesses of others, hiring or availing services of labors paying below minimum wage requirement including exploitative behavior towards beneficiaries or junior staff.
 - d) Violence, assault and the use of force or conspiring to assault others including riotous, disorderly or indecent behavior
 - e) Possession, consumption, or being under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance at work or in office premises (e.g. alcohol, drug)
 - f) Gambling within the boundaries of Caritas Nepal's premises or while on duty.

- Insulting, ridiculing, threatening, intimidating, shouting or demeaning (verbal, gesture or written); in appropriate gestures in public or private
- Starting/Spreading malicious rumors
- Copying critical memos about someone to others who do not need to know
- Exclusion or victimization
- Physical bullying (hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching, pushing or damaging property)
- Physical attack
- In appropriate touching
- Using abusive, disrespected words/language; Conversation/jokes/comments targeting someone – their identify, personality or preferences
- Exclusion or victimization- excluding from conversation; opportunities, task/projects; shaming
- Offensive graffiti
- Disclosing the identity of victims
- Cyber bullying – trolling, identity theft, Flaming (online exchange/ fight)
- Sending/sharing inappropriate emails/t texts/documents/images
- Making inappropriate advances

- g) Any other activity that can be convicted by any court of law for any criminal offense.
- h) Bringing a weapon into the Caritas Nepal's premises; unless authorized

3.8 Civic Conduct

- i. Respect the independence and sovereignty of Nepal and undertake to help protect its national interest and contribute fully towards its national development.
- ii. Adopt, respect and practice democratic values.
- iii. Promote friendship, understanding, tolerance, cooperation and mutual respect among all staff members, clients, beneficiaries, partners and other stakeholders, irrespective of their position and responsibilities.
- iv. Respect all people irrespective of caste, creed, gender, economic standing, culture, ethnic affiliations or religion.
- v. Act in good faith; operate with integrity honesty and treat other people with dignity and respect
- vi. Treat other members of the public with courtesy and sensitivity
- vii. Respect all human rights and challenge discrimination, harassment, abuse, neglect, and exploitation that infringe the rights of others
- viii. Refrain from imposing one's beliefs including one's faith upon others. Be open to others opinions and ideas
- ix. Refrain from making racist, sexist or otherwise offensive statements publicly or privately
- x. Take reasonable action to protect others from harm; operate with the principle of 'do no harm'
- xi. As possible contribute to preserve the environment from harm
- xii. Respect and be sensitive to local customs and culture
- xiii. Operate in a safe and responsible manner in accordance with health, safety and security guidelines, and endeavor to safeguard others

4. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

- i) The Executive Director (with support of administration of Caritas Nepal) shall be responsible for ensuring that all staff are informed of the Code of Conduct and are committed to upholding it, and that the document is reviewed and updated regularly. The Executive Director and Head of Department Committee will manage the implementation of code of conduct and hold necessary meetings on the same. At least 2 meetings will be held on the issue each year. Human Resource Department will report to Head of Department Committee and Executive Director on the issue.
- ii) The Human Resource Department shall be responsible for regular monitoring and facilitation effective implementation of the code of conduct through regular training, orientation and integrating in organizational system and procedure such as Job Description, Employee Induction Package and Performance Management System
- iii) In case of internal staff, immediate supervisors, as part of job portfolio and supervisory responsibility shall be responsible to ensure that everyone reporting to them are well informed about the Code of Conduct and shall monitor their performance.
- iv) In case of external parties such as implementing parties, vendors, contractors and associates appropriate official as relevant shall be responsible for communication and monitoring of performance such as Head of Administration and Finance for vendors/contractors; Head of Program and/or partnership manager in case of

implementing partners and Executive Directors where other partners, donors, alliance/network members are concerned.

5. DISCIPLINARY ACTION AND APPEAL

- i. Any breach in this Code of conduct shall be considered to an offence and disciplinary action shall be initiated
- ii. In case of internal Staff
 - a) The immediate supervisor, upon notice shall initiate the process of assessment/investigation and initiate disciplinary action as appropriate
 - b) The **inquiry/investigation procedure, disciplinary actions** and the **appeal** procedure shall be in accordance with the provision in Caritas Nepal's '*Employee Service Terms Facility Regulation 2019*'
- iii. **In case of General Members, Executive Committee Members and Executive Director**
 - a) The President upon notice shall initiate the process of assessment/investigation and initiate disciplinary action as appropriate. In doing so he/she will take into confidence to undertake the same either the Vice President or Secretary of the Organization.
 - a) The President shall define the **inquiry/investigation procedure, disciplinary actions** and **provision for appeal**.
 - b) Where the President is concerned, the Executive Committee (in consultation with the Executive Director) will jointly define the **inquiry/investigation procedure, disciplinary actions** and **provision for appeal**.
- iv. **In case of External Entity (vendors; contractors; partners; donors; other network/alliance members)**
 - a) The Executive Director in consultation with the Head of Department Committee members will forward the matter to their respective organizations and shall follow up and communicate on the actions.
 - b) Caritas Nepal believes in progressive discipline, which calls for appropriate discipline in appropriate circumstances, and hence reserves the right to review each situation independently and to make a decision on what deems to be appropriate discipline and code of conduct in all cases. The range of consequences for breaches of this Code may vary, depending on the nature and seriousness of the matter, which may include (but not limited to):
 - Verbal warning
 - Mediation between parties involved with an aim towards mutual understanding and resolution
 - Submission of a written apology
 - Official written warning
 - Counseling
 - Performance improvement plans
 - Suspension

- withholding perks, benefit
- Withholding increment and promotions
- Demotion
- Formal disciplinary action up to and including financial recovery, fine and termination of employment
- Referral to an external Agency or authority such as police, child protection board, women protection cell etc.

6. DUTY TO REPORT (WHISTLEBLOWING)

- i. It is the moral, professional and civic responsibility and code of conduct of every staff member of Caritas Nepal to report improper action and violation of code of conduct by fellow staff members or anyone associated with Caritas Nepal.
- ii. Anyone associated with Caritas Nepal can report improper action and violation of code of conduct in accordance with the mechanism defined in the Compliant Handling Policy (2020).
- iii. Caritas Nepal's staff members can choose to report the case to their immediate supervisor or through the mechanism defined in the Compliant Handling Policy and Procedures (2020). The immediate supervisor receiving such reports shall initiate appropriate actions (or forward the case to the immediate supervisor of the person concerned with the matter, for appropriate action).
- iv. The identity of the reporting staff member shall be kept confidential and protection shall be provided in accordance with the provision defined in the Compliant Handling Policy and Procedures (2020).
- v. Any attempt to victimize a person who raises a legitimate breach of the code will be considered a serious offence and will result to disciplinary actions
- vi. False or frivolous or vexatious allegations shall be considered a serious disciplinary offence and will result to disciplinary actions.
- vii. Caritas Nepal's Department, Teams, Caritas Nepal Offices, and Caritas Organization as whole should address any internal differences through open and frank discussion as far as possible given its mandate as a humanitarian and social development organization, and false whistleblowing with ill intentions will result in disciplinary actions.

D.S.

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 Sr. Durga (Cecilia) Shrestha
 President of Caritas Nepal
 July 12, 2020



Statement of Acknowledgment and Acceptance

I have read the code of conduct and I agree to perform my duties keeping in mind the vision, mission of Caritas Nepal. I also agree to abide by the policies that are in place currently or any changes/additions made in them by the organization and to the new policies that Caritas Nepal introduces in future.

I understand my responsibility to report any suspected breaches in accordance with this code.

Signed by:

Name:.....

Position:.....

Date:.....