



# Code of Conduct

**Document title:**

Code of Conduct

**Document type:**

Foundation  
 Framework  
Policy  
Manuals and tools

**Approved by:**

National Board

**Connection to other documents:**

Anti-Corruption Manual  
Manual on Sexual Harassment

**Prepared by** (function, name):

Martin Nihlgård, Secretary General

Jacqueline Duerre, Process and  
Operations Developer

**Issue date original:**

**Latest revision date:**

2024-11-28

**Validity:**

until further notice

**Classification:**

Internal  
 External

**Published**, place(s):

IMPACT

**Title of original doc** (if in other language):

Individuell Människohjälp  
Swedish Development Partner

Trollebergsvägen 5  
SE-222 29 Lund  
Sweden

Tel +46 46 32 99 30  
info@imsweden.org

Pg 90 07 06-3  
Bg 900-7063

Org.nr 845 000-0768

# Table of Content

- Code of Conduct ..... 1
  - Introduction..... 3
  - Scope and application of the Code of Conduct ..... 3
  - Alcohol and drugs ..... 3
  - Anti-corruption ..... 4
  - Conflict and non-violence ..... 4
  - Dignity ..... 5
  - Discretion..... 5
  - Discrimination ..... 6
  - Environmental protection and sustainability ..... 6
  - Ethical trading..... 6
  - Neutrality ..... 7
  - Pornography ..... 7
  - Power Dynamics ..... 8
  - Safety and security violations ..... 8
  - Sexual abuse and harassment ..... 9
  - Employer Responsibilities and Breach of Code of Conduct..... 10

## Introduction

IM embraces the fundamental principle that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, as stated in the [universal declaration of human rights](#). IM stands up against all forms of discrimination, and other violations of human rights.

IM is committed to creating an environment rooted in feminist and anti-racist perspectives and wants to see human rights in practice. This Code of Conduct establishes the standards and behaviours for employees, elected representatives, interns and partners. We have zero tolerance for any actions that undermine these values and a breach of the code of conduct will result in consequences.

## Scope and application of the Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct is binding for employees, elected representative, interns, consultants and partners. By being part of our organization or entering a formal partnership with us, you commit to upholding these values and standards in words and actions.

IM is responsible for briefing all employees, interns and elected representatives on the code of conduct in a timely manner. People & Compliance officer and People & Engagement Strategist is available for any questions that you might have during your engagement with IM. Consultants and partners should receive the code of conduct upon signing relevant contracts and commit themselves to abiding to this code of conduct throughout the whole contractual period.

Adhering to the code of conduct is mandatory during your engagement with IM. If you travel as a representative for IM or in connection to a partnership agreement with us, remember that the Code of Conduct applies to your leisure time too.

Whenever national legislation is stricter than this code of conduct, the legislation of the country you are residing or working in, applies.

Any breach of the code of conduct might lead to a termination of employment/assignment/partnership or other sanctions.

## The Code of Conduct

### Alcohol and drugs

**IM** prohibits using alcohol or any illicit substances during working hours, work premises or IM activities. Alcohol consumption during work functions is only permitted in exceptional cases, such as official dinners. During IM events, a limited amount of alcohol may be served at people's own expense, but non-alcoholic options will always be dominant. If an incident happens or IM receives a report of suspected substance abuse, IM is responsible for investigating it timely and taking appropriate action.

**I** commit myself to not being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during work hours or when volunteering. I accept that I will be escorted off the premises safely, in case I would be under the influence. I will respect my colleagues' and peers' choices regarding alcohol and promise to not make anyone feel uncomfortable for not drinking.

If I suspect that an IM representative has a substance abuse issue or is under the influence at work, I will inform People & Engagement Strategist for IM employees. If there is an immediate safety risk, I will take reasonable actions to minimize it.

## Anti-corruption

Corruption undermines sustainable development and rule of law. IM defines corruption as misuse of resources, trust, power or position, to attain undue advantages for oneself, for a related person or for a group. The advantage may be financial or related to increased influence, improved reputation, political recognition, votes and sexual or other services. IM has zero tolerance for any form of corruption. A manual on the prevention, detection, reporting of suspected corruption can be found [here](#).

**IM** is responsible for setting up systems and practices that prevent corruption. It is also responsible for timely and impartially investigating any suspected or reported incidents. IM is also responsible for ensuring that people who reported incidents don't face retaliation and remain anonymous if they want to. Punishment against or victimisation of a person who in good faith reports a violation will not be tolerated. Good faith shall be presumed unless there is evidence of malicious intent or recklessness.

**I** will reject and not engage in any form of bribery, extortion, or corruption. I will also avoid any activities that could be perceived as corrupt. I will not accept gifts, favours, or any form of hospitality that could influence or appear to influence my decisions. I am committed to transparency and will declare any potential conflicts of interest. I will act with honesty and transparency in all my dealings. I understand that any form of corruption undermines our mission and will not hesitate to report any corrupt behaviour I encounter. To prevent corruption, I will actively support and participate in initiatives and practices designed to strengthen ethical standards and accountability within our organization.

## Conflict and non-violence

Conflict and violence are huge obstacles to fighting poverty and exclusion. Conflict sensitivity is the practice of understanding the potential impact of your actions, decisions, and behaviors on a conflict situation. It involves being aware of how your actions can either exacerbate or mitigate tensions, and making deliberate choices to avoid contributing to violence, misunderstandings, or further conflict.

**IM** strives to diminish conflicts, misunderstandings and suspicions between individuals, groups and societies by creating arenas and forums for meetings, mutual learning, dialogue and reconciliation. In practical terms, this means that we strive to understand the specific dynamics of the conflict, including the history, the key actors involved, and the underlying causes and triggers. That we regularly assess our actions on the personal, organizational or community level and how they might affect conflict. If necessary, taking steps to minimize any negative impact our actions might have on the conflict and ensuring that all stakeholders, especially those who are marginalized or vulnerable, are included in discussions and decisions that affect them.

I will not express support for any individuals, organizations or entities that incite systematic human rights violations, promote violence or war, or are associated with terrorist activities. My actions and words will always align with IM's commitment to peace, human dignity, and the protection of human rights.

In case of personal conflict, I will first attempt to resolve conflicts directly with the person involved. If needed, I will seek the assistance of People & Engagement strategist or another appropriate person or body within IM to mediate and find a fair solution.

### Dignity

IM is responsible for creating an environment, in which every individual is treated with respect and dignity. IM lays out details around this in its work environment policy.

I will not engage in any unwelcome or offensive behaviour that creates a hostile or intimidating environment, including verbal abuse, threats, or inappropriate comments. I will refrain from bullying, meaning persistent and intentional actions that undermine an individual's confidence and well-being, including but not limited to, spreading malicious rumours or sabotaging work.

### Discretion

IM is responsible for ensuring that all sensitive information is handled with discretion. We commit to providing clear guidelines on the sharing of organizational information, including on social media. IM will support in understanding when to escalate concerns or report inappropriate behaviour, including using the whistleblower function. We also commit to addressing any breaches of discretion and protecting the organization's reputation.

I commit to responsibility in all my professional activities. This includes:

- Handling sensitive information carefully and avoiding public discussions that could negatively impact our goals and collaborations.
- Ensuring that any information I share is accurate and only shared with the appropriate parties.
- Avoiding making public statements, including on social media, that could be interpreted as official statements of IM.
- Ensuring that my personal opinions in public forums do not conflict with IM's values and policies.
- Seeking approval before sharing any organizational information publicly, particularly if it involves confidential or strategic matters.
- Reporting any inappropriate behaviour or breaches of discretion through the whistleblower function or other internal channels.

## Discrimination

Equal treatment and protection against discrimination are fundamental human rights. It is essential that we actively dismantle any patterns or practices that may be discriminatory or reinforce biases. Everyone we interact with should feel valued and respected, regardless of their actual or perceived ethnicity or skin colour, gender or (non-conforming) gender identity or expression, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, age, or any intersection of these characteristics.

*IM* is committed to maintaining an environment free from discrimination and harassment. We will foster a culture of inclusivity and respect by providing training and resources, and by taking effective action to address reports of discrimination or harassment. This includes ensuring the protection and support of anyone who reports such incidents.

*I* will not engage in or tolerate harassment based on any of the protected characteristics listed above. This encompasses any unwelcome conduct, verbal or physical, that creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive work environment. Should I experience or witness harassment, I will report it immediately to People & Compliance officer or People & Engagement strategist or another trusted person at IM or to the chairperson of the board, via the whistleblowing channel. I understand that retaliation against anyone who reports discrimination, participates in an investigation, or otherwise asserts their rights under this policy is prohibited. I will not tolerate retaliation and will take decisive action if I encounter it.

## Environmental protection and sustainability

*IM* promotes climate justice as an important pillar of poverty prevention and reduction. An ecologically sustainable society is a resilient society that has a strong ability to prevent and manage climate and environmental challenges. IM will protect the climate for current and future generations by working to achieve a positive environmental and climate impact within our own operations to the greatest extent possible.

*I* am committed to supporting the organization's sustainability goals and practices. I will strive to minimize my environmental impact and contribute to a culture of environmental responsibility in all my practices. This includes following all environmental guidelines and engaging in practices that promote the efficient use of resources, climate-friendly traveling and consumption.

## Ethical trading

Ethical trading plays a vital role in poverty alleviation and supports our commitment to social responsibility.

*IM* is dedicated to ensuring that all procurement decisions are made in alignment with ethical standards, taking into account human rights, working conditions, and environmental impact. We will prioritize Fair Trade and other ethically labelled products whenever possible.

*I* will ensure that my choices reflect these ethical standards, when making purchases for IM. If I suspect that child exploitation or other unethical practices are involved in the production chain, I will refrain from making such purchases. By upholding these principles, we contribute to a more just and equitable global economy.

## Neutrality

*IM* strives for the respect of human rights for all, including freedom of belief and freedom of political opinion. IM does not support any specific political party, neither is IM a faith-based organization nor promoting a particular religious belief. While human rights are often politicized, they are not tied to party-politics and IM will always speak up on behalf of human rights. All communications and activities using IM's resources should be professional and relevant to the organization's mission.

*I* will keep my personal religious or political expressions separate from my professional or engagement responsibilities and interactions. Not use company resources, including email, meeting spaces, or social media platforms, to advance or promote religious or party-political causes. I will ensure that my decisions and actions are free from religious or political bias. My conduct, including hiring, promotions, and performance evaluations, will be based on objective performance criteria and merit. I will avoid letting personal beliefs influence my decisions, I will reflect upon my unconscious biases and strive to create equitable and impartial spaces for all.

## Organized crime

Organized crime undermines sustainable development and puts personal security and livelihoods of people at risk.

*IM* is committed to maintaining the highest standards of integrity and legality in all our operations and will put preventative systems in place to avoid any relationship to organized crime. IM will timely investigate all suspicions in a serious and protective manner.

*I* am committed to maintaining the highest standards of integrity and legality. I understand that involvement in organized crime, including participating in, supporting, or benefiting from criminal activities orchestrated by criminal organizations, is strictly prohibited. This includes any actions related to extortion, money laundering, drug trafficking, or any other illegal activities linked to organized crime. I will report any suspicions or evidence of organized crime activities to the appropriate authorities or the designated compliance officer immediately.

## Pornography

*IM* commits itself to an environment where everyone can feel safe and where societal patterns of gender injustice and exploitation do not have any room.

*I* will ensure that IM's spaces remains free from all forms of pornographic material. I understand that using the technical equipment provided by IM to view or distribute pornographic content is

prohibited. I also recognize that any involvement with child pornography, whether inside or outside the workplace, is strictly forbidden.

### Power Dynamics

Power dynamics refer to the ways in which power and authority are distributed and perceived within relationships and interactions. These dynamics can significantly influence behaviour and decision-making processes.

*IM* recognizes that power imbalances can exist between various levels of hierarchy, roles, and relationships, not exclusively because of formally held power. The power dynamics we witness in broader society can also be mirrored within our organization, meaning that people who historically have been excluded and restrained in their exercise of power, such as women, the LGBTQ\* community, People of Colour and people with disabilities, are particularly susceptible to experiencing the abuse of power. IM will ensure that power is held responsibly and will not tolerate any abuse thereof.

*I* will hold myself and others accountable, creating spaces where respect, fairness, and accountability are central. Recognizing that my position might come with inherent power and privilege, I commit to never misusing any power for personal gain, manipulation, or coercion. I will be mindful of how my actions and decisions impact others, ensuring they are fair, transparent, and in everyone's best interest.

I will reflect on my privileges and my formal and informal positions within the organization, ensuring that my decisions are made in the best interests of the organization as a whole. Transparency in exercising power is essential; therefore, I will communicate decisions, especially those affecting others, clearly and with reasonable justifications. I will not tolerate or engage in favouritism, harassment, or retaliation. I am responsible for identifying and addressing power imbalances and will report suspected abuse of power.

### Safety and security violations

*IM* works in challenging contexts and is committed to keeping co-workers and volunteers safe. IM is responsible to ensure a safe and secure environment for all.

*I* am committed to contribute to safety and security for all. I will follow all safety protocols, procedures, and communicated guidelines. This includes following established safety practices, using safety equipment as required, and promptly reporting any safety hazards, incidents, or concerns.

I am also committed to protecting the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of organizational data. I will follow all data protection policies and procedures, including those related to the handling, storage, and disposal of sensitive information and report any data breaches, security incidents, or suspicious activities immediately.

I am responsible for my personal safety and the safety of those around me.

I will strive to make thoughtful choices that prioritize safety for myself and others, follow safe practices when using equipment or performing tasks that may involve risks, and report any unsafe conditions or practices I observe. I will actively support investigations or corrective actions aimed at improving safety.

### Sexual abuse and harassment

**IM** has zero tolerance for any type of sexual harassment or abuse. Sexual harassment and abuse do not happen in a vacuum and is often about exercising and misusing power. Reflecting existing power dynamics within society, IM recognizes that women and the LGBTQ\* community are especially vulnerable to abuse.

Sexual harassment or abuse, whether verbal, non-verbal, or physical, is prohibited. Sexual harassment is any unwelcome or inappropriate behaviour of a sexual nature that creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive environment, and which often involves an imbalance of power between the individuals involved. It encompasses a range of behaviours including, but not limited to, unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

IM ensures a safe environment free from harassment by conducting background checks for hiring decisions, acting timely and protectively when an incident is reported and supporting the victim throughout the process.

**I** will not engage in any form of sexual harassment or abuse. I am aware that the impact of my actions are considered, not the intention in itself. Even if my behaviour was not intended to harm, if it creates an uncomfortable or threatening environment, it is considered harassment

I understand that sexual harassment can involve one or more incidents and may be physical, verbal and non-verbal such as

- A demand for sexual favours in exchange for work related benefits such as wage increase, promotion, training opportunity, a transfer or the job itself
- Unwelcome physical contact including patting, pinching, stroking, kissing, hugging, fondling, or inappropriate touching
- Physical violence, including sexual assault, which may be defined as criminal offense
- The use of job-related threats to solicit sexual favours
- Inappropriate comments on appearance, age and private life
- Sexual comments, stories and jokes
- Repeated unwanted social invitations for dates or physical intimacy
- Insults based on the sex of the person
- Condescending or paternalistic remarks
- Sending sexually explicit messages
- Display of sexually explicit or suggestive material
- Sexually suggestive gestures
- Whistling
- Leering

I will not engage in any forms of sexual abuse and sexual contact with children at any time. I will not purchase sexual services, whether through direct payment or indirect means such as paying

bills, rent, or providing other forms of support in exchange for sexual services. I will not visit pornography, strip clubs or similar establishments.

I also need to be careful of power imbalances and how these affect my environment. I will never enter a sexual or romantic relationship with someone benefitting from IM's services. I must avoid situations where personal relationships could create a conflict of interest, such as participating in hiring, promotion, or disciplinary decisions that affect my partner. If you are employed at IM and in a romantic relationship with a co-worker and either one has a direct or indirect reporting relationship to the other, the relationship must be reported to People & Engagement Strategist. The organization may take steps to manage the reporting structure, such as reassignment or supervisory changes, to avoid conflicts of interest.

I am aware of the [manual on preventing, reporting and managing sexual harassment](#).

## Employer Responsibilities and Breach of Code of Conduct

**IM** is responsible for proactively creating a safe, inclusive environment, offering regular training on the Code of Conduct, providing support for those reporting violations and ensuring confidentiality in investigations, taking immediate action to address any breaches of the Code, protecting from retaliation when reporting misconduct.

A breach of the Code of Conduct occurs when a person fails to follow the principles, guidelines, and policies outlined in this document. This includes, but is not limited to, engaging in unethical behaviour, discrimination, harassment, abuse of power, favouritism, retaliation, or any other actions that violate IMs standards of integrity, respect, and fairness. IM will provide relevant and appropriate support to you who are affected, reporting or accused.

### For IM Staff:

Depending on the severity and nature of the breach, IM will take disciplinary actions which include:

- Corrective conversation.
- Warning or disciplinary action as provided by the Swedish labour law LAS
- Mandatory training or counseling.
- Suspension
- Termination of employment or contract.
- Legal action, if the breach involves unlawful activities.

In addition to disciplinary measures, the organization may take restorative actions to repair the damage caused by the breach. This could include mediation, apologies, or other steps to rebuild trust and relationships.

Once a breach is reported, IM will promptly initiate a fair and impartial investigation. This process will include gathering relevant information, interviewing those involved, and reviewing

evidence. IM is responsible for treating all individuals involved with respect and fairness throughout the investigation. Every effort will be made to ensure that the process is free from prejudice and bias, allowing all sides to be heard. IM will ensure that possible victims receives appropriate support.

Information will only be shared with those involved in the investigation and resolution process, and the organization will make every effort to protect identities of those involved. Reprisal against or victimisation of a person who in good faith reports a violation is not allowed and will not be tolerated. Good faith shall be presumed unless there is very strong evidence of malicious intent or recklessness.

I understand that I have an obligation to report suspected breaches of the Code of Conduct. I can do this through several channels, such as speaking to union representatives, work environment representatives, People and Culture staff, using the whistleblower function, or reporting directly to management. I may remain anonymous if I wish.

For IM staff:

If I am subject to disciplinary action as a result of a breach, I have the right to appeal the decision. Appeals must be submitted in writing within a specified period according to Swedish Labour Law and will be reviewed by an impartial panel or higher authority within the organization. The appeals process will involve a thorough review of the investigation, consideration of any new evidence, and a reassessment of the consequences. I will receive the final decision in writing.

The Code of Conduct and the procedures for handling breaches are reviewed regularly to ensure they remain relevant and effective. I understand that feedback from employees and lessons learned from previous cases will help improve these processes.

Name

Signature

Date