

CODE OF ETHICS

Introduction

CARE International is a membership of non-partisan and non-sectarian independent organisations with a shared Vision of a world of hope, inclusion, and social justice, where poverty has been overcome and all people live in dignity. To achieve our Vision, we take our responsibility with participants, communities, partners, our employees and representatives, and donors, seriously and know that our journey must be with the highest standards of ethical practice. This Code of Ethics is a high-level summary of our aspirations to responsible and ethical decision-making and actions and supports our risk management.¹

Statutes

CARE International's membership must comply with the requirements of the CARE International Code and Statutes which outline the overall purpose of the CARE International confederation and the shared obligations of our membership. This Code of Ethics expands on the obligations defined in our Statutes.

Ethical responsibility must be taken for all our conduct and within all our activities with accepted professional standards of accuracy, truth, integrity, and good faith, and in accordance with donor requirements.

Participants

At all times and in all circumstances, CARE International's membership is expected to perform their roles in the best interests of, and guided by, the people we work with. Participation in CARE's programmes is for free and must be safe from harm or abuse in any form.

We uphold the dignity of participants, and respect cultures and values, embrace differences and diversity, and commit to advance gender equality and inclusion, and antiracism. We join in solidarity with multiple stakeholders and communities to realise the rights and aspirations of participants through the highest quality and accountable locally led programmes.

Partnerships

CARE recognizes that we cannot achieve our vision of a world of hope, inclusion, and social justice alone. CARE partners with diverse actors, in one-to-one relationships as well as multi-stakeholder alliances, with whom we have a shared vision to have an impact on poverty and injustice, and to provide humanitarian assistance.

¹The CARE International Code and Statutes, and CARE International global policies, standards, and commitments, provide detailed requirements, guidance, and approaches to our ethical aspirations and practices and support our risk management. CARE International's membership may follow our shared Code of Ethics in varying ways according to their different national contexts and legal frameworks, and may choose to introduce, where deemed necessary, independent policies, procedures and approaches that will ensure conformance with this Code of Ethics.

Our partnerships must be purposeful relationships based on mutual trust, equality, and learning, with an agreed vision, clear accountability for all parties, and which engage the complementary strengths of the actors involved to collaborate on specific objectives, challenges or opportunities in ways that achieve greater impact than they could not achieve alone.

Climate and Environment

We recognise that to achieve our global vision, CARE must prevent, reduce, and mitigate its own impact on our climate and environment. We are committed to reducing greenhouse gases, minimizing our impact on the environment, and integrating climate and environmental considerations into all levels of our work.

Employees and representatives

CARE International's membership must treat all employees and representatives with respect, dignity, fairness and without discrimination. Their health, well-being, safety and security, and ability to thrive, are vital to enabling CARE to realise its Vision.

Employees and representatives of the CARE International membership must also uphold shared high standards of ethics, behaviours, and professional conduct outlined in our CARE International Code of Conduct.

Financial Management

CARE International's membership must ensure accuracy of accounts and must take corrective action for inaccuracies. Accounts and finance statements, where appropriate, must be transparently disclosed to relevant internal and external stakeholders.

Effective internal controls and timely, accurate, assurance, and relevant reporting required under agreement with donors must be fulfilled.

Procurement

All procurement processes and respective internal and external representatives handling procurement, must strictly adhere to policies, procedures, and standards to assure ethical conduct in our business practices. Procurement activities must be conducted with full transparency and proper documentation to prevent personal or organizational conflicts of interest and maintain confidentiality. Management of all relationships and contacts must be performed in a professional manner to prevent fraud and corruption.

Administration

CARE International's membership must have robust administrative capacity and oversight which is essential for the financial security and overall reputation of the confederation and the safety of the people it works with. We must be able to explain clearly and transparently how we have spent money allocated to this area and why it is essential to our work.

Fundraising

Fundraising activity and expenditure will be consistent with the CARE International Code and the regulatory and legislative environment where activity is taking place.

CARE International's membership must have considered and transparent expectations of financial returns of fundraising activities.

Designated funds, raised by specific appeals for particular objectives, will be allocated and spent in accordance with the stated purpose of the appeal. Donors will be informed of any unavoidable adjustments, resulting from changing circumstances. Prudence and due care must be exercised in spending donor provided resources.

Joint responsibility will be taken with partners to mutually carry out transparent selection processes, due diligence and risk assessments, capacity strengthening, monitoring and any necessary risk management measures that are guided by the partner who holds contextual knowledge.

We will be conscious of where our income comes from and recognise there are cases where we may want to decline the offer of a donation.

Brand, Communications and Advocacy

Responsible and ethical decision-making and actions are essential to defining and protecting CARE's brand and reputation.

Responsible media, marketing and public fundraising techniques will be used, and will be authentic, ethical, and accurate, and meet global brand and marketing standards within the respective countries where we work.

We will give voice to and uphold the dignity and human rights of those affected, apply Do No Harm approaches, hold duty-bearers to account, and put women and girls at the centre of all that we do.

Accountability and Transparency²

CARE is committed to transparent, accountable, and ethical governance and management of all its operations and resources. All aspects of governance within the distinctive national organizations that make up the CARE International confederation, and the global governance organs of CARE International, will be open and accessible to scrutiny, including the nature of cooperation, and the relationships and responsibilities within the CARE International confederation.

CARE operates with agreed upon policies that are critical to ethical standards and our accountability. CARE is also committed to meeting international standards for quality and accountability. We will transparently report on how we work to meet these standards and will be responsible for our actions, hearing the perspectives of others, actively making changes based on what we have heard, learned, and experienced, and explaining our actions.

² See CARE International's [website](#) for internationally recognized standards and codes that CARE is signatory to and the platforms that CARE engages in to improve humanitarian policy and actions. Also on this site are CARE's global policies and transparency reports.