

Code of Ethical Conduct

Fundacja Polskie Centrum Pomocy Międzynarodowej (PCPM)

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
1. Purpose.....	2
2. Definitions.....	3
3. Principles and Values	3
3.1. Human Dignity and Human Rights.....	3
3.2. Equality and Non-Discrimination	4
3.3. Diversity, Pluralism and Tolerance	4
3.5. Humanitarianism, Impartiality, Neutrality and Independence	4
3.6. Rule of Law and Accountability	5
3.7. Integrity and Transparency.....	5
3.8. Respect, Professionalism and Responsibility	5
3.9. Solidarity and Responsibility Towards People in Need	5
3.10. Agency of Project Participants	6
3.11. Prohibition of Abuse of Power and Exploitation of Advantage	6
3.12. Responsible Resource Management	6
3.13. Protection Against Violations	6
4. Environmental Protection	7
4.1. Compliance with Regulations	7
4.2. Respect for the Environment of Local Communities	7
4.3. Sustainable Resource Management.....	7
4.4. Environmental Awareness of Employees	7
4.5. Monitoring and Responding to Environmental Threats	7
4.6. Example and Education	8
4.7. Role Modeling	8
5. Implementation of the Code.....	8
6. Consequences of Violation of the Code	8
7. Monitoring and Evaluation of the Code	9

Introduction

The Polish Centre for International Aid Foundation (PCPM) is an apolitical non-governmental organization whose mission is to provide humanitarian, development, and emergency assistance to people in need worldwide, in particular those affected by armed conflicts, natural disasters, and other crisis situations.

In fulfilling its mission, PCPM is guided by the highest ethical and professional standards and the principle of respect for the dignity, rights, and fundamental freedoms of every person. PCPM is committed to creating a working environment and implementing activities free from abuse, violence, discrimination, exploitation, harassment, intimidation, and other behaviors violating human dignity or rights.

PCPM recognizes that humanitarian and development assistance should be provided with respect for the agency, dignity, and rights of the persons to whom it is delivered. Persons participating in PCPM projects are not merely recipients of assistance, but subjects possessing rights that must be respected and protected.

PCPM is guided by the principles derived from the International Bill of Human Rights and the values set out in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union, in particular the principle of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values also include pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity, and equality between women and men.

PCPM operates under a "zero tolerance" policy for exploitation, discrimination, and other serious violations of this Code.

1. Purpose

This Code of Ethical Conduct defines the fundamental ethical and professional standards and rules of conduct applicable to all persons acting on behalf of or for PCPM, including members of the Management Board, executive staff, employees, associates, experts, volunteers, and PCPM partners.

The Code aims to:

- a) Establish common standards of ethical, responsible, and professional conduct;
- b) Protect the dignity, rights, and fundamental freedoms of persons with whom PCPM cooperates or on whose behalf it conducts activities;
- c) Prevent abuse, violence, discrimination, exploitation, and other behaviors violating human rights;
- d) Promote equal treatment, diversity, tolerance, and mutual respect;
- e) Ensure transparency, integrity, and accountability in decision-making and implementation of activities;
- f) Ensure that PCPM's activities are conducted in accordance with applicable law, principles of the rule of law, and internal regulations of the Foundation.

The Code forms the basis for decision-making and conducting activities by PCPM, both in the short-term and long-term perspectives.

This Code translates the mentioned values into specific standards of conduct applicable to all persons acting on behalf of or for PCPM. To this end, PCPM provides appropriate internal regulations, mechanisms for reporting irregularities, and procedures for investigating reported cases and taking appropriate measures.

2. Definitions

Discrimination: Unequal, unjustified, or unfavorable treatment of a person based on a characteristic protected by applicable law or other circumstances that lead or may lead to a violation of their rights or dignity.

Foundation or PCPM: The "Polish Centre for International Aid" Foundation, an apolitical non-governmental organization whose mission is to provide humanitarian, development, and emergency assistance to persons in need.

Code of Ethical Conduct: Document defining ethical and professional standards of conduct binding all persons acting on behalf of or for PCPM.

Abuse of Power or Position: Exploitation of position, organizational, professional, economic, or other dependency in a manner violating the rights, dignity, or interests of another person.

PCPM Partners: Entities with which PCPM establishes cooperation and from which it expects compliance with ethical standards consistent with the principles defined in this Code.

PCPM Personnel: All persons covered by this Code, regardless of the legal basis of cooperation, position, or location of duties, including employees, associates, Management Board, executive staff, experts, volunteers, and other persons acting on behalf of PCPM.

Project Participants: Persons to whom PCPM provides humanitarian, development, or emergency assistance. PCPM treats them with agency, respecting their dignity, rights, needs, autonomy, and interests.

3. Principles and Values

PCPM carries out its mission based on the principles of humanitarianism, impartiality, neutrality, and independence, as well as values arising from respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

3.1. Human Dignity and Human Rights

Every person has inherent dignity that must be respected and protected. PCPM personnel treat every individual with respect, regardless of their origin, nationality, citizenship, gender, age, disability, social or economic status, beliefs, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, political views, or other characteristics.

PCPM respects human rights and fundamental freedoms and takes actions aimed at preventing their violation within its activities.

No person acting on behalf of PCPM may be treated in a degrading, humiliating, inhumane manner, or in a way that violates their dignity.

3.2. Equality and Non-Discrimination

PCPM adheres to the principle of equal treatment and does not tolerate discrimination. Decisions regarding employment, cooperation, access to professional opportunities, participation in projects, provision of aid, and cooperation with partners must be made on the basis of objective, justified, and transparent criteria.

PCPM pays special attention to ensuring equality between women and men and counteracting barriers that lead to exclusion or unequal treatment.

3.3. Diversity, Pluralism and Tolerance

PCPM respects cultural, social, linguistic, religious, and worldview diversity and recognizes pluralism as an essential value of international cooperation.

PCPM personnel should be open to diversity and respect different experiences, perspectives, and ways of life, as long as they remain consistent with the law and fundamental human rights. Differences of opinion and views should be resolved through dialogue, mutual respect, and argument, rather than through intimidation, violence, discrimination, or abuse of position.

3.4. Freedom and Respect for Autonomy

PCPM respects the fundamental freedoms of every person, including freedom of conscience, belief, and expression, within the limits defined by law and the rights of others.

PCPM personnel may not use their position to exert undue pressure on other persons regarding their beliefs, views, or personal decisions.

Project participants should, to the extent appropriate to the nature of the aid provided, receive information enabling them to make informed decisions regarding their participation in PCPM activities.

3.5. Humanitarianism, Impartiality, Neutrality and Independence

PCPM provides assistance to persons in need regardless of their origin, nationality, gender, age, religion, political views, social or economic status, and other characteristics.

Assistance is provided in accordance with the principles of humanitarianism, impartiality, neutrality, and independence.

PCPM personnel may not use provided assistance to achieve political, ideological, religious, or personal goals, and should be guided primarily by the needs of persons affected by crisis.

3.6. Rule of Law and Accountability

PCPM operates in accordance with applicable legal provisions, internal regulations of the Foundation, and principles of transparent and responsible management.

Respect for the rule of law means, in particular, the obligation to act within assigned competencies, and the obligation to be guided by objective and justified grounds.

Persons performing managerial functions or holding special powers are required to use their position in a responsible and appropriate manner. Decision-making should be as transparent, justified, and free from arbitrariness, discrimination, and conflict of interest as possible.

3.7. Integrity and Transparency

PCPM conducts its activities honestly, reliably, and transparently.

PCPM personnel are obliged to present factual information, avoid intentionally misleading others, and immediately report significant irregularities.

It is unacceptable to use PCPM information, position, or resources to obtain unauthorized personal benefit or benefit for third parties.

PCPM expects its partners and contractors to adhere to similar ethical and compliance standards.

3.8. Respect, Professionalism and Responsibility

PCPM personnel perform their duties with due care, professionalism, and responsibility.

Relationships between employees, associates, partners, project participants, and other stakeholders should be based on mutual respect, professionalism, and respect for dignity.

PCPM does not tolerate behaviors involving intimidation, humiliation, persistent harassment, mobbing, verbal or physical violence, or other behaviors violating human dignity.

3.9. Solidarity and Responsibility Towards People in Need

Solidarity constitutes one of the foundations of PCPM's activities.

PCPM personnel should be guided by concern for the well-being of persons affected by crises and pay special attention to the needs of persons in situations of increased vulnerability.

Assistance should be provided in a way that strengthens the agency and empowerment of the persons to whom it is delivered, rather than leading to their dependence, stigmatization, or deprivation of influence over decisions concerning them.

3.10. Agency of Project Participants

PCPM treats project participants as rights-bearing subjects, not merely as aid recipients.

PCPM personnel ensure that project participants, to the extent appropriate to the nature of activities:

1. Are aware of their rights;
2. Receive clear and understandable information regarding the provided assistance;
3. Can express opinions and submit feedback regarding the received support;
4. Are treated with respect for their dignity, privacy, and autonomy;
5. Have the opportunity to report irregularities without fear of retaliation.

3.11. Prohibition of Abuse of Power and Exploitation of Advantage

No person acting on behalf of PCPM may use their position, power, knowledge, access to resources, or dependency of other persons to obtain personal gain or exert unauthorized influence. In particular, behaviors of an exploitative nature towards employees, associates, partners, subcontractors, and project participants are prohibited.

PCPM does not tolerate the exploitation of special vulnerability, economic, professional, social, or other dependency of a person in order to achieve benefit or exercise unjustified control.

3.12. Responsible Resource Management

PCPM personnel manage entrusted material and non-material resources with the utmost care.

Foundation resources may be used exclusively in accordance with their purpose, applicable procedures, and law.

PCPM personnel make every effort to counteract waste, abuse, corruption, and other actions that could lead to unjustified loss of Foundation resources.

3.13. Protection Against Violations

PCPM applies a "zero tolerance" policy toward abuse, violence, exploitation, discrimination, harassment, corruption, and other serious violations of the principles specified in this Code.

Every person covered by the Code has a duty to respond to serious violations or reasonable suspicions thereof in accordance with the procedures in force at PCPM.

A person making a report in good faith shall not suffer negative consequences due to making the report.

4. Environmental Protection

PCPM considers environmental protection to be an element of responsible and sustainable operation.

4.1. Compliance with Regulations

PCPM complies with applicable legal provisions and national and international regulations regarding environmental protection, ensuring their effective implementation in its activities.

4.2. Respect for the Environment of Local Communities

PCPM ensures that all conducted activities respect the natural environment of the communities with which it cooperates, both in Poland and abroad. At the project design stage, it adjusts actions, tools, and technologies to have the smallest possible impact on the local ecosystem.

4.3. Sustainable Resource Management

PCPM commits to adhering to high environmental standards throughout the supply chain, including procurement processes and waste management. This includes, among others:

- a. Priority purchase of products and services in local markets to reduce the carbon footprint, support the local community, and ensure after-sales service availability, reducing the risk of discarding faulty equipment;
- b. Reducing the consumption of single-use materials and plastic;
- c. Implementing effective waste segregation and recycling systems.

4.4. Environmental Awareness of Employees

PCPM employees respect the natural environment and are fully aware that their individual choices affect global ecosystems. PCPM personnel strive to take actions that limit the negative consequences of their activities.

4.5. Monitoring and Responding to Environmental Threats

PCPM commits to continuously monitoring the environmental impact of its activities.

At the proposal writing stage, this impact is monitored and included in planned activities. Every Foundation employee is responsible for monitoring activity within a project. Ultimate responsibility lies with the project coordinator, who continuously monitors the situation, reports results to supervisors, and immediately informs of any emerging threats or risks. In

case of detecting direct risk of environmental damage—both to the local community and the organization—immediate corrective actions are taken. This may include:

- a. Informing relevant authorities and institutions;
- b. Taking all possible and available measures to minimize environmental threats or eliminate them and remove consequences;
- c. Cooperating with local partners to protect ecosystems.

4.6. Example and Education

PCPM provides its employees with educational materials regarding environmental protection and responsibility for it, encouraging them to review them.

4.7. Role Modeling

PCPM expects organization employees, both in Poland and abroad, including the Management Board and executive leadership, to serve as role models for responsible ecological attitudes. Personnel are required to promote good practices in environmental protection both in the workplace and in contacts with local communities.

5. Implementation of the Code

Knowledge of the Code constitutes an element of professional responsibility of every person acting on behalf of or for PCPM. Therefore, every person starting cooperation with PCPM is required to read this Code within 7 days of beginning cooperation.

PCPM provides appropriate informational and educational activities enabling personnel to understand the principles of the Code and how to apply them in practice.

Executive management and persons performing managerial functions bear special responsibility for promoting the principles of the Code and creating an environment in which compliance with its provisions is an organizational standard.

PCPM expects partners and cooperating entities to comply with principles consistent with this Code and, where possible, includes appropriate obligations in concluded contracts.

6. Consequences of Violation of the Code

Violation of the provisions of this Code may constitute a breach of duties under employment, contract, or other basis of cooperation with PCPM and may result in the application of appropriate measures provided for by law, internal Foundation regulations, or concluded contract.

Depending on the nature, severity, and circumstances of the violation, corrective, disciplinary, organizational, civil, or other legal measures may be taken.

The Foundation's liability does not exclude individual liability of persons who committed the violation, in particular persons holding managerial, executive, or supervisory positions, employees, associates, contractors, and other persons acting on behalf of or for PCPM.

When deciding on the consequences of a violation, its nature, severity, consequences, intentionality or unintentionality of the action, the position of the person committing the violation, and other relevant circumstances are taken into account.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation of the Code

This Code is subject to review at least once a year and whenever significant changes occur in applicable legal regulations, international standards, PCPM operating principles, or identified organizational risks.

The review of the Code should take into account in particular:

- a. Experiences resulting from its application;
- b. Reported cases of violations and conclusions from their analysis;
- c. Changes in applicable legal regulations;
- d. Development of international human rights and humanitarian action standards;
- e. Changes in standards and requirements of partner and donor institutions;
- f. Changes in risks related to discrimination, abuse, exploitation of advantage, protection of project participants, and personnel safety.