GLOBAL NGO COUNCIL

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Moving the world forward

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT OF THE GLOBAL COUNCIL OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

The Global Council of Non-Governmental Organistions (GLONGO) is a global coalition of international, regional and national civil society and non-governmental organisations working to realise peace, universal human rights, equality and social justice, good governance and sustainable human development worldwide. GLONGO was formed in 2016 to bring together advocacy organisations and international development and emergency relief agencies active in local communities around the world, to build a cohesive global civil society voice of like-minded organisations for advocacy, learning and sharing, policy impact, best practices, networking and solidarity with the people and communities we serve.

1.1. Object of the Code of Conduct

The Council's Code of Professional Conduct is a set of rules aimed at preventing corrupt practices vis-a-vis Council or among its collaborators, and effectively applying principles of transparency, fairness, accountability, and corporate responsibility to the Council's own activities.

1.2. Preparation process

The Board of Directors assigned preparation of this Code to a Work Group, who met several times during the course of almost two months to discuss suggestions and prepare texts. Individual opinions converged to a draft which was submitted to the Board and subsequently to a Board hearing for all members. Contributions were then assessed and added to the original draft, which originated the present document configuration.

1.3. Scope of the rules

The provisions in the current Code of Professional Conduct apply to:

A. all Council programme beneficiaries;
B. board members;
C. regional chapters or representatives;
D. specialised structures and initiatives of the Council;
E. the Executive Committee members, the President's Office, and employees, and also to
F. third parties who are not part of the mentioned groups, but have other forms of relationship with the Council.

1.4. Code of Conduct Management

The announcement, updating, interpretation, and application of this Code are responsibilities of the Conduct Committee, whose structure and actions are regulated by the Bylaws which make up Chapter 4 of this Code.

2. CODE OF CONDUCT PRINCIPLES

This Code is inspired by two sets of ethical principles:

(1) The Council's own basic principles, which are part of the Code of Best Anti-Corruption Practices, and

(2) Specific principles applicable to the activities and situations covered by the Code of Conduct.

2.1. Ethical principles of GLONGO

Integrity, transparency, fairness, equity, accountability, and corporate responsibility, as defined in the examples included in the Code of Best Anti-Corruption Practices. Those principles shall directly or indirectly inspire all Council programme beneficiaries and network members to act in society as disseminators of good examples and concepts of anti-corruption to all interested audiences.

2.2. Specific principles of the Code of Professional Conduct

1. Endorsement of the Council in all its actions and initiatives

2. Consistent opinions given by GLONGO representatives to third parties

3. The volunteering nature of professional contributions from partners (pro bono services) to the Council.

4. Effective strengthening of the Council's alignment and adherence to its own recommended rules of conduct.

5. Precedence of the Council's collective objectives over any personal or professional interests of its grantees in all Council activities.

3. INTEGRITY

3.1. The affairs of the Council, its operations and functions, programs and activities shall be conducted with integrity and transparency.

3.2. All grantees, directors, officers, employees, and volunteers of GLONGO shall act with honesty, integrity, and openness in all their dealings as representatives of the Council.

3.3. The Council shall maintain a working environment that values integrity, fairness, and respect.

3.4. The activities of the Council upon request are open and accessible to scrutiny by its respective governing bodies, except for personal matters, legal and proprietary, information, as specified by its constitution or statues.

3.5. The Council shall ensure that allegations by its employee, volunteer or any affiliate of misconduct or other irregularities on the part of anyone associated with it operations, programmes and/or activities are dealt with impartially, respecting the rights of the involved parties for confidentiality and disclosure.

3.6. The Council and its affiliates/associates, staff and volunteers, Board members and Advisors shall oppose and shall not be a participant to any wrongdoing or financial impropriety in any of its activities. They shall take prompt and firm corrective action whenever and

wherever wrongdoing of any kind has been committed by any one of the Board members, or its Advisors and by anyone of its employees or volunteers.

3.7. In all of its respective activities or programmes, the Council shall respect the dignity, values, history, religion, and culture of all people, irrespective of race, national ethnic, origin, colour, religion, sex, sexual orientation, political affiliations, age and mental or physical disability.

3.8. The Council in all of its operations shall recognise that all of its activities impact on the public perception of the international cooperation community, and that it shares significant responsibility to enhance the public trust, and act accordingly.

4. GOVERNANCE

The Board of Directors is responsible for setting the mission and the strategic direction of the Council and its specialised structures and for exercising oversight of its finances and policies. The Board of Directors shall:

4.1. Ensure that Board members possess the requisite skills and experience to carry out their duties and that all directors understand and fulfil their governance duties, acting for the benefit of the Council and its public purpose;

4.2. Adopt and implement a Conflict of Interest Policy so that conflicts of interest, as well as the appearance of conflicts of interest, are avoided or properly managed through disclosure, refusal, or other means;

4.3. Be responsible for the hiring and regular performance review of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and ensure that the compensation of the CEO is reasonable and appropriate;

4.4. Ensure that the CEO and appropriate staff provide the Board of Directors with timely and comprehensive information so that the Board of Directors can effectively carry out its duties;

4.5. Ensure that the Council conducts all transactions and dealings with integrity and honesty;

4.6. Ensure that the Council promotes working relationships with Board members, management team, staff, and volunteers based on mutual respect, fairness, and openness;

4.7. Ensure that the Council is fair and inclusive in its hiring and promotion policies and practices for all Board, management team, staff, and volunteer positions;

4.8. Ensure that key policies of the Council are in writing, clearly articulated, and adopted;

4.9. Ensure that the resources of the Council are responsibly and prudently managed;

4.10. Ensure that the Council has the capacity to carry out its programmes effectively.

5. FINANCES

5.1 Without limiting any obligations that may exist at law, the Council shall conduct its finances in such a way as to assure appropriate use of funds and accountability to grantees, donors, and partners.

5.2 The Council shall have an audited financial statement, conducted by qualified, independent accountants and auditors. The audited financial statements comply with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and Requirements according to the Principles or any such Institute guiding Chartered Accountants of Sierra Leone.

5.3 The audited financial statement, full or summary, shall be provided to any inquirer upon written request within a reasonable date.

5.4 The Council shall submit an audited financial statement to the Council's stakeholders; within 90 days after the audited financial statement is approved.

5.5 Upon written or verbal request from the stakeholders, the Council shall, within ten (10) days of the request, submit to the Council's stakeholders at the Global Secretariat an Annual Report including a statement of the awarded grants, full or summary financial statement, description of goals, summary of overall program activities, results of the work of the Council, and a list of current Council grantees and staff members beginning from the President/CEO and Executive Director at the Executive Secretariat to volunteers and Representational Offices and solicitors in Sierra Leone and abroad.

5.6 The Council and its affiliates' combined fundraising and administrative costs shall be kept to the minimum necessary to meet their needs. Allocations of expenditures to administration, fundraising, and program services shall reflect the Council's purposes and actual activities, and shall conform to generally-accepted accounting principles.

5.7 The Council and its affiliates shall operate a budget approved by the Executive Board of Directors.

5.8 The Council shall not have any funds that are not accounted for and it shall prohibit any unaudited transactions or loans to Board Members, Advisors and staff members and volunteers.

5.9 The Council shall exercise adequate internal controls over the disbursements of grants/funds to avoid unauthorised payments.

5.10 The Council shall account for funds from the moment they are received or committed until they are disbursed or used in projects or services.

5.11 Contributions shall be used as promised or implied in the fundraising appeal or as requested by the donor.

6. LAW AND ETHICS

GLODECA shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations and shall seek the advice of counsel when necessary or appropriate.

Compliance with the law, however, is the minimum standard of expected behaviour. The Council and its affiliates shall also adhere to the highest ethical standards. All resolutions and other legal actions by the Board of Directors shall satisfy two requirements:

1. they shall be legally permissible, and

2. they shall also reflect the highest ethical standards as determined by the Board of Directors in the exercise of its sole discretion.

7. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE PUBLIC

7.1 Fundraising solicitations shall be truthful, shall accurately describe the Council, its affiliates, programmes or activities, and its beneficiaries, it purposes, and need.

7.2 The Council and its affiliates shall only make claims, which can fulfil, and shall avoid using high-pressure tactics in soliciting donations or mobilising partners.

7.3 There shall give no misleading information (including material omissions or exaggerations of fact), or use of misleading photographs, nor any other communication, which would tend to create a false impression or misleading.

7.4 Information in the Council's appeal should give accurate balance to the actual programmes for which the funds solicited will be used.

7.5 Any and all communications to the public by the Council's secretariat staff, associates/affiliates, and solicitors shall respect the dignity, values, history, religion, and culture of the people supported or beneficiaries of its programmes or resources raised.

7.6 In particular, the Council and its affiliates shall avoid the following:

7.6.1. Messages which generalise and mask the diversity of situations;

7.6.2. Messages which fuel prejudice;

7.6.3. Messages which foster a sense of Southern Inferiority or Northern Superiority;

7.6.4. Messages which show people as hopeless objects for our pity, rather than as equal partners in action and collaborators in promoting socioeconomic growth;

7.6.5. Messages trying to preach religious beliefs or with the intention to convert people into religious beliefs.

7.7. The Council shall control all fundraising activities conducted on its behalf. All fundraising contracts and agreements shall be put into writing.

7.8. The Council will encourage the participation of its partners in formulation of communications to the general public.

7.9. The Council shall in no way discredit another association, foundation, fund, initiative, or fundraising and/or grant making or advocacy initiative or research or training centre or any

sister organisations in its public communications; nor shall it give out misinformation about its affairs or those of its affiliates/associates, solicitors.

8. STEWARDSHIP

In managing its funds responsibly and prudently, the Council shall:

8.1. Devote a reasonable percentage of its annual budget to programmes in pursuance of its mission;

8.2. Incur administrative costs adequate to ensure effective accounting and legal compliance systems, internal controls, competent staff, and other expenditures critical to professional management;

8.3. Pay compensation, in return for services, that is reasonable but not excessive;

8.4. Avoid accumulating the Council funds excessively;

8.5. Draw prudently from restricted funds in a manner consistent with the restrictions;

8.6. Follow spending practices and policies that are fair, reasonable, and appropriate to fulfil the mission of the Council and its affiliates.

9. DIVERSITY

The Council shall promote diversity and inclusiveness in its membership, Board of Directors, management team, staff, and volunteers.

10. MANAGEMENT PRACTICE AND HUMAN RESOURCES

10.1. The Council shall endeavour to follow sound management and business practices appropriate to its Mission and Purpose, Programmes, Fundraising and Governance Structure.

10.2. The Council shall have clear, well-defined, written policies and procedures relating to its grant making, employees and volunteers, including host country and nationals and expatriates.

10.3. Such policies shall clearly define and protect the rights of grantees, employees, assuring fair treatment in all matters.

10.4. Employee benefits shall be clearly described and communicated and the Council shall make financial arrangements to protect its ability to honour its obligations to employees and volunteers.

10.5. The Council's expectations of its grantees, network members, employees and of it volunteers shall be clearly defined and communicated.

10.6. The Council shall promote gender and minority equity, membership mobilization, in recruitment, hiring, training, promoting, and professional development and advancement.

10.7. The Council shall endeavour to recruit and retain staff and volunteers that combine professional competence with a commitment to the Mission and/or Purpose of the Council.

11. EVALUATION

The Council is committed to improve, continually, its public programmes and its organisational quality. The Council shall periodically review its programmes and incorporate lessons learned into future programmes. The Council shall be responsive to new developments in its field of activity and shall be responsive to the interests of its audiences and other constituencies.

The Council shall develop and implement a three-tier evaluation procedure whereby the performance of the Board of Directors as a whole, each Board committee, and each director is evaluated periodically.

12. FUNDRAISING

The Council shall comply with the fundraising requirements of Non-profit Laws of countries in which it has offices. The Council shall respect the privacy concerns of individual donors and shall follow donor intent in making expenditures. The Council shall disclose important and relevant information to potential donors. In raising funds from the public, the Council shall:

1.1. Inform donors of the mission of the Council and its affiliates, how resources will be used, and the integrity of the Council causing donations to be used effectively for their intended purposes;

1.2. In all its fundraising activities, the Council shall ensure that:

12.2.1. its donors are informed of the Council's mission and/or purpose, of the way the Council intends to use donated resources, and the Council capacity to disburse grants/funds and use donations effectively for its intended purpose;

12.2.2. the Board and the Advisory Council and the secretariat staff exercises prudent judgment in their stewardship responsibilities;

12.2.3. its donors have access to GLONGO's most recent audited financial statements and to a list of the Council's current Board Members, Regional Advisory Council members, and secretariat staff, and regional representatives;

12.2.4 donations will be used for the purposes for which they were given;

12.2.5 its donors receive appropriate acknowledgment and recognition;

12.2.6 information about a donation is handled with respect and with confidentiality to the extent provided by law;

12.2.7 its donors are informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, affiliates/associates, beneficiaries or hired solicitors of the Council;

12.2.8 its donors have the opportunity for their names to be deleted from the mailing lists that the Council may have intend to share; and,

12.2.9 its donors are encouraged to ask questions when making donation and receive prompt, truthful and forthright answers.

12.3. Inform donors and sponsors of the identity of those serving on the Council's Board;

12.4. Disclose the Council's most recent financial reports;

12.5. Represent that contributions will be used for the purposes for which they were given;

12.6. Provide appropriate acknowledgement and recognition of contributions;

12.7. Treat information about donations with respect and with confidentiality to the extent provided by the law;

12.8. Provide an opportunity for donors to delete their names from mailing lists that may be used by others;

12.9. Encourage donors to ask questions when making a donation, and provide prompt, truthful, and forthright answers.

13. TRANSPARENCY

The Council shall provide comprehensive and timely information to the public, the media, and all stakeholders and shall be responsive in a timely manner to reasonable requests for information. All information about the Council shall fully and honestly reflect the policies and practices of the Council. All solicitation materials shall accurately represent the Council's policies and practices. All financial and programme reports shall be complete and accurate in all material aspects.

The following governance documents shall be posted on the Council's website:

1. Articles of Incorporation
2. Constitution and Bylaws
3. Conflict of Interest Policy
4. Code of Professional Conduct
5. Gift Acceptance Policy
6. Whistleblower Policy
7. Document Management Policy
8. Audited financial statements for the most recent three years.

The website shall invite comments by readers with regard to any governance document, and the readers shall be expressly encouraged to download any documents that may be useful to their non-profit organisation.

14. CONFIDENTIALITY

All directors, officers, employees and volunteers have a duty to safeguard information that is proprietary to the Council. Information about the Council that is confidential or proprietary and

obtained by a director, officer, employee or volunteer as a consequence of such person's association with the Council may not be disclosed to third parties unless expressly authorised by the Council.

15. COMPLAINTS

Any person, whether or not connected with the Council, may lodge a complaint of unethical conduct against a director, officer, employee, or volunteer of the Council and its affiliates by filing such complaint, written or oral, with any director or officer.

16. REMEDIES

Any director who fails to comply with this Code of Professional Conduct may, in the discretion of the Board of Directors, be removed from the Board. If any employee or volunteer fails to comply with this Code of Professional Conduct, that person may be put on notice or terminated, in the discretion of the President/CEO or the Board of Directors.

17. ANNUAL AFFIRMATION STATEMENT

The Council shall provide a copy of this Code of Professional Conduct to every Council member, grantee, director, officer, employee, and volunteer. Each year the Annual Affirmation Statement, attached, shall be signed by each director, officer, and employee, affirming that such person has received a copy of this Code of Ethics, has read and understands it, and agrees to comply with it. Volunteers are not required to sign and submit such a Statement. All Annual Affirmation Statements shall be submitted to the President/Chief Executive Officer or the Executive Director of the Council and then filed with the minutes of the first meeting of the Board of Directors held each year after January 31.

18. ANNUAL AFFIRMATION STATEMENT OF GLONGO

The Code of Professional Conduct of the Council requires an annual affirmation that you have received, read, understand, and agree to comply with the Code of Conduct.

Please sign this Annual Affirmation Statement indicating your affirmation as described above, and kindly return this Statement to the President/Chief Executive Officer of the Council each year by January 31.

For more information on the implementation of this Code, please feel free to contact us by email at info@globalngocouncil.org or call us at +232-7649-7906/7.