

MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS 26.5.2020

ETHICAL CODE OF CONDUCT OF THE MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION CARRIED OUT WITH GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

This document sets out the most important ethical standards to be observed in development cooperation carried out using discretionary transfers granted by the Finnish Government.

Although government transfer recipients (recipient) serve a variety of purposes and may be influenced by religion, political affiliation or some other ideology, they are to practise their development cooperation in a manner that strengthens democratic structures and is in line with Finnish legislation, Finland's human rights policy, the Development Policy Programme's human rights based approach and concept of non-discrimination as well as sector-specific guidelines complementing the programme. The importance of commitment to the code of conduct is accentuated when dealing with persons representing different cultures, religions and ideologies.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs or Embassy has set compliance with the ethical code of conduct as a condition for the use of its support. Upon receiving support from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs or Embassy, recipients pledge to apply and adhere to this ethical code of conduct in their development cooperation activities in developing countries. In case a recipient fails to meet these conditions, the Ministry or Embassy can set a date by which the conditions must be fulfilled, suspend the payment of support, or demand a refund of paid instalments.

1. All those who are involved in development cooperation are guaranteed respect for their human dignity, human rights, culture, religion and ideology, and freedom from discrimination of any kind. Development cooperation supported by the Government must be free from all kinds of discrimination.
2. Development cooperation focuses on people subject to discrimination in society and communities. It addresses the root causes of poverty, injustice and discrimination. It seeks to change prevailing discriminatory attitudes and structures.
3. Provision of support must not be conditional upon the recipients' ideological or religious belief or political opinion or require conversion or prevent participation in development cooperation activities. Particular attention must be paid to this when working with minor children and youth. Funds granted for development cooperation must not be used to propagate an ideology, a religion or a political opinion.
4. Development cooperation promotes peaceful dialogue and fosters peace and partnerships in communities. It creates and employs approaches that enhance equal participation.
5. Good governance promotes sustainable development. Corruption and associated poor governance contribute to unequal access to development and weaken the realisation of human rights. Anti-corruption work and tackling any suspicions head-on are conscious acts in an effort to improve the results and impacts of development cooperation.
6. Development cooperation must be based on zero-tolerance towards sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, as well as discrimination and abuse of power. Appropriate action must be taken in case of any such allegations.

In any alleged case of incompliance with the above-mentioned ethical standards the Ministry has to be informed without delay.

1 The most common forms of discrimination are related to religion, political or ideological view/opinion, belief, sex, ethnic origin, caste, language, status of health, disability, sexual orientation, sexual identity, age or other aspect relating to the person