MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS 26.5.2020
ETHICAL CODE OF CONDUCT OF THE MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS FOR DEVELOPMENT
COORDINATION CARRIED OUT WITH GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

This document sets out the most important ethical standards to be observed in development
coordination 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.