



## **Association for the Development of Rural Capacities (ADR)**

### **STAFF CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT**

**Location: Lebanon**

**Most recent update: April 28, 2021**

In keeping with our vision and values, ADR is committed to maintaining the highest degree of ethical conduct among all its employees and expects all staff to act in a manner consistent with the core values of respect, integrity, commitment and excellence while carrying out their organizational responsibilities. All employees are expected to understand and abide by ADR's Code of Ethics & Conduct.

ADR reserves the right to modify its Code of Ethics and Conduct either wholly or in part.

**The Code of Ethics and Conduct is a contractual document**

- \* Any and all breaches of the Code may result in disciplinary action, immediate dismissal or even legal action.
- \* By signing this document, staff recognize having understood its content and commit to respecting and adhering to the Code.
- \* If you require any further details or clarification, please refer to your immediate superior, Operations Coordinator or to the General Manager.
- \* ADR staff is duty-bound to inform local populations of the principles governing our work, including the possibility of reporting any breaches or inappropriate behavior.

### **1. ADR Name, Logo, and Trademark**

The ADR name, logo, and trademark may only be used in activities and circumstances sanctioned by ADR and in the appropriate form.

### **2. Confidential Information**

All ADR employees should protect and keep the confidentiality of all verbal and written ADR information such as financial data, computer files, contracts, procurement materials, program material, personnel or staff information (including all HR data) and general organizational and strategic documents.

Revealing confidential information knowingly or unknowingly will lead to a disciplinary action or even dismissal. If you are unsure about the confidential nature of specific information, ask your supervisor for clarification. One example of breaching confidentiality, is recording of phone conversations by ADR staff without the express permission or knowledge of the person who is being recorded. There is under no circumstances the need to record a conversation using personal and ADR phones with another staff person or outsider whether the nature of the conversation is confidential or not. In case there is a specific security need or for any other valid reason, prior consent from General Manager and those being recorded should be obtained.

### **3. Communication Regarding:**

- Communication with media/press: All press and media inquiries must be forwarded to ADR Operations Coordinator and the General Manager - whether the media interest is local, national, or international. Under no circumstances should any other staff field any questions or supply any information to the media, either verbal or written, unless explicitly designated to do so by the General Manager.
- Communication with lawyers: Staff are not to communicate directly with any lawyer not representing ADR when the communication involves ADR business.

### **4. Conflict of Interest – Actual or Perceived**

All ADR staff shall avoid any conflict between their personal or other professional interests and

the interests of ADR or it may lead to allegations of partiality and undermine confidence in both the employee and ADR. It can exist even if no unethical or unacceptable act results from it.

A clear conflict of interest arises when a staff member or a member of their family directly or indirectly:

- Participates in any ADR or related entity evaluations, selection, award, or administration of a contract, loan, purchase, sale, investment order, donation, or other transaction that will directly or indirectly benefit them or their family.
- Stands to gain personally or individually from any transaction in which ADR, a ADR program or a ADR -related entity is a party.
- Accepts gifts, favors, or anything of monetary value from ADR donors or vendors, including contractors and sub-contractors (except for unsolicited gifts of a nominal value, training, materials, or other items provided for the benefit of ADR with manager approval).
- Pays or offers to pay (fees, commissions, kickbacks or any form of bribes), or gives anything of value to a donor, governmental entity, regulatory authority, political party, vendors, including contractors and sub-contractors. This provision is not intended to prohibit routine, modest business gifts of minor value, customary in local business relationships, provided that no applicable law, regulation, or ADR Policy is violated, and full disclosure is made to the employee's immediate manager.

#### **Definitions**

**Conflict of Interest:** *A conflict of interest can arise in a variety of situations whenever ADR interests, such as relying on staff duties of loyalty and confidentiality, compete with the professional activities or organizational needs or ADR.*

**Perceived Conflict of Interest:** *A perceived conflict of interest exists when there is a reasonable apprehension that a conflict of interest exists.*

**Family:** *For the purposes of this policy, "your family" includes a spouse, brother or sister, parent, in-laws or child.*

#### **Disclosure in Conflict-of-Interest Situations**

ADR employees must disengage themselves from any activity or decision-making that could lead to a conflict of interest. In order to do so here are some points of advice:

- Be clear and honest about the conflict-of-interest situation and advise promptly your supervisor and then if necessary, a Third Party or committee will be appointed.
- Absent yourself from the room while the decision is made.
- Don't attempt to exert any influence on ADR to affect a decision unless you are asked by your manager and your personal knowledge may help ADR reach its decision.

Actual conflicts of interest or serious or repeated perceived conflicts of interests may result in disciplinary action, up to and including contract termination.

### **5. Code of Conduct and Accountability to Program Participant Communities Regarding Harassment and Exploitation**

Consistent with ADR's vision, mission and core values of respect, integrity, commitment and excellence, as well as our commitment to diversity, we seek to create and maintain an organizational environment that is free of harassment and exploitation, and to ensure the same in all of our work with communities and partners. This is critical to our effectiveness as an organization. Each member of the communities with which ADR works or provides assistance must have ADR's utmost assurance that they will not be subject to any form of harassment or exploitation. Equally, each ADR employee must have the opportunity to contribute fully to ADR's mission in a work environment that is free from all forms of social harassment and exploitation.

To fulfill these aims, ADR expressly prohibits and will not tolerate any form of harassment or exploitation, be it physical, sexual or psychological. ADR employees are obliged to create and maintain an environment that prevents exploitation and abuse and promotes the implementation of our code of ethics and conduct.

## **6. Relationships with Other Staff**

ADR Code of Conduct encourages staff to perform their duties from a position of neutrality and impartiality. This includes interactions with other staff inside and outside the work place.

ADR staff members are required to maintain open, professional and respectful relationships with one another.

Personal relationships between staff should not interfere with or in any way compromise or prejudice ADR standards and objectives.

If staff relations result in plans for long term relationship or marriage, the staff involved must inform their line manager in order to avoid any risk of potential conflict of interest or compromise of management arrangements. Alongside this requirement, ADR is committed to respect the privacy and integrity of colleagues.

## **7. Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Child Abuse**

ADR expressly prohibits and will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, or sexual harassment based upon race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, marital status, citizenship status, disability, or military status. ADR employee should not expose a child under 18 years of age to the risk of child abuse, sexual exploitation, injury and any other harm.

## **8. Outside Activities**

While conducting ADR business and other relationships outside ADR, staff are expected to: a. comply with all laws, b. be fair with respect to the rights, interests, and responsibilities of others. c. protects ADR's reputation at all times through responsible conduct; and appropriately address actual or potential conflicts of interest.

## **9. Outside Employment**

If you are a regular employee, you should not assume another position or take on any other form of work outside the organization unless approved by the General Manager in writing.

## **10. Procurement**

ADR staff should not select a supplier of goods or services for any reason other than its ability to fulfill the organization's needs. They should not personally accept any goods or services or other forms of compensation or favors from a supplier for less than market value, other than as a usual contribution to ADR.

Fees, commissions, kickbacks, or any form of bribes intended to induce or reward favorable decisions and governmental actions, are unacceptable and prohibited. No staff member should, in violation of any law, pay or offer to pay, or give anything of value to a donor, governmental entity, or political party.

The provision is not intended to prohibit routine, modest business gifts of minor value, customary in local business relationships, provided that no applicable law, regulation, or ADR policy is violated, and full disclosure is made to the employee's immediate manager.

## **11. Gifts**

It is inappropriate to give a gift to or receive a gift from a person within ADR with whom there is either a superior or subordinate relationship - unless the gift is of nominal value of no more than

\$25. No manager will influence or be influenced by the giving of gifts. Group gift giving to a fellow staff person that spontaneously and voluntarily arises from employees is permitted.

Gifts from vendors and suppliers are acceptable when they are of modest minor value (25 USD), customary in local business relationships and full disclosure is made to your immediate manager. However, gifts up to 25 USD cannot be received during the procurement solicitation process and no applicable law, regulation, or ADR policy can be violated.

## **12. Losses and Fraudulent Acts**

ADR's reputation is an enormously valuable asset. We must all work to maintain the highest degree of accountability to our donors and to avoid or prevent situations that may compromise our integrity. This policy applies to any irregularity, or suspected irregularity, involving not only employees, but also vendors and other outside parties. Investigations of any suspected fraud will be conducted without regard to length of service, position, title or relationship.

Actions that may be deemed as fabrication, misappropriation or fiscal irregularities include, but are not limited to:

- Any dishonest or fraudulent act.
- Forgery or alteration of any document or account belonging to ADR (including timesheets, payroll and associated leave records and accounts, travel and expense reports, advance records and accounts, procurement documents, agricultural commodity records, spare parts or project materials and equipment inventory records, food commodity management and monitoring reports, etc.).
- Forgery or alteration of a check, bank draft or any other financial document.
- Misappropriation or misuse of funds, commodities, securities, supplies, spare parts, project materials and equipment, or other assets.
- Impropriety in the handling or reporting of money, financial transactions or bidding procedures.
- Acceptance or seeking anything of material value from vendors or persons providing services/materials to ADR
- Destruction or misappropriation of records, furniture, fixtures or equipment.
- Diversion, alteration or mismanagement of documents or information and/or any similar or related irregularity.

## **13. Use of ADR's Equipment and Communication Systems**

ADR vehicles, equipment and systems, computers, computer networks, electronic mail (email), internet access and systems, telephone systems and equipment, fax equipment, hardware, software, postage meters and equipment, and all data, files and other applications are the property of ADR.

ADR has the right to access any of these systems and equipment without notice for inspection or to review any and all data, consistent with the requirements of applicable law.

ADR equipment and systems are to be used primarily for ADR business.

Personal telephone and email usage should occur during breaks and meal periods away from other employees' work stations and should always be limited to urgent or essential use.

ADR equipment and systems should be used by authorized employees only; others are prohibited from such use. Consultants are able to use such facilities if necessary, to carry out their contracted duties.

Unauthorized access or use of ADR computers, electronic or communication systems is strictly prohibited. Also, the unauthorized use, installation, copying or distribution of copyrighted, trademarked or patented material on the internet is expressly prohibited.

Employees should notify their manager or Operations Coordinator of any known or reasonably suspected violation of this policy.

All ADR equipment and systems must be returned in good working condition to ADR at the termination of employment prior to final payments.

ADR vehicles and driving - please see SOPs

#### **14. Visitors in the Workplace**

From time to time, colleagues may receive personal visitors at the office. If so, they are responsible for the conduct of their visitor while he or she is on ADR premises. Please ensure that the visitor does not disturb the work of others. Under some circumstances, ADR may decide that certain persons are not permitted on ADR premises.

ADR also recognizes that sometimes staff may bring their children to the office. Out of respect for colleagues, please keep this to a minimum. Children should be in the presence of their guardian at all times.

#### **15. Violence in the workplace**

ADR believes in creating a safe working environment for all employees; therefore, any acts of violence committed by or against employees are prohibited. ADR also strictly prohibits the possession or use of any form of weapon on ADR property. Any instances of violence must be reported to the employee's supervisor, Operations Coordinator and/or the GENERAL MANAGER and all complaints will be fully investigated. Violation of this policy will result in immediate discharge.

#### **16. Requests for Employee Information or References**

Official requests are defined as information produced on behalf of ADR. In response to such requests, information produced will be limited and will only include dates of employment, last salary or wage rate and last position held. All other employment data will not be released without the appropriate written authorization from the individual who is the subject of the inquiry. Under no circumstance should anyone other than the designated staff members provide official ADR reference information. All official requests for information about a current or former ADR employee must be referred to the HR focal point and responses provide or authorized by the Operations Coordinator or GENERAL MANAGER.

#### **17. Dress Code**

All ADR staff is representative of the organization, especially when at meetings and other formal / work events. As such, our appearance and choice of clothing should reflect ADR's professionalism and standards.

All ADR staff will be required to dress for work accordingly, in addition reflecting sensitivity to and respect for the variety of local norms and cultures, in general opting for modest / conservative choices. It is not acceptable to wear shorts, caps or flip-flops, nor clothing someone would normally wear for informal social occasions at evenings and weekends.

#### **18. Corrective Action**

ADR International in Lebanon is committed to maintaining a productive and safe work environment that assures compliance with all public laws, and organizational policies, as well as protects the rights and wellb eing of all employees. All employees are expected to observe the

rules governing ADR work environment. Violations of these rules can be the basis for corrective action.

ADR's corrective action process is intended to help an employee correct behavior and performance issues wherever reasonably possible, prevent a recurrence of problems, and prepare an employee for continued service with the organization. Serious violations may result in immediate termination of the employment contract.

Corrective action is often taken in a progressive manner in an effort to provide an opportunity to correct the behavior in question and may be introduced in either or the following situations:

- Misconduct

Misconduct refers to behavior that is not in line with the organization's policies and/or the national law and that might adversely affect ADR, ADR employees, or ADR's mission. Examples include but are not limited to discrimination and sexual harassment, unauthorized absences from work, criminal behavior, fraud or falsification of documents; alcohol or drug abuse, possession of firearms or other deadly weapons on ADR premises, breach of confidentiality clause and other serious inappropriate behaviors. Examples of corrective action that may be introduced are:

- a. Verbal Warning
- b. Written Warning
- c. Suspension
- d. Contract Termination

- Performance

Poor performance may be grounds for corrective action. If a manager deems that an individual's performance is below reasonable expectations and standards, s/he may create a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) to assist in achieving expectations. If the performance is not improved upon sufficiently within the plan's time-frame, the manager may take additional steps to address the poor performance. A PIP is not required prior to termination nor is it intended as a promise to continue employment. Examples of corrective action that may be introduced are:

- a. Verbal Counseling
- b. Performance Improvement Plan
- c. Suspension
- d. Termination

When corrective action is needed, managers may omit one or any number of the steps mentioned as is deemed appropriate by circumstances.

- Grievance procedure

If any employee believes that they have been treated unfairly, they are encouraged to discuss the situation with their manager or the HR Manager who will follow up where appropriate, and mediate if necessary

I have read, understood and agree to abide by ADR's Code of Ethics and Conduct policy, signified by my signature below:

**Name**

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**Signature**

**Date**