



Code of Conduct

Revised: December 2022

1. Introduction

Inclusion Ghana (IG) is a national, umbrella Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) of Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in Ghana, their parents/caregivers, and local NGOs. IG is fully committed to the principles of honesty, integrity, and fair play in the delivery of services to its constituents and the public. All staff, member organisations (MOs), volunteers (board) and interns should ensure that the businesses of IG, such as provision of services to members, procurement, or personnel recruitment, are dealt with in an open, fair, and impartial manner. In the conduct of their duties or any activities, staff, volunteers, or interns must bear in mind that IG is accountable to its sponsors/donors, including governmental and any private sponsors, and all members of IG.

This Code of Conduct sets out the basic standard of conduct expected of all staff, member organisations (MOs), volunteers (board), and interns, as well as the organisation's policy on key matters as catalogued in the following sections of this document, in relation to their official duties.

2. Identity and Organization Principles

Vision: Equal opportunities and inclusion for all Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDDs) in Ghana.

Mission: To reduce stigmatization and ensure full inclusion of Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDDs) and their families in Ghana by advocating for their rights and needs.

Values: We, the National Council (Board), staff and Member Organisations (MOs) of Inclusion Ghana hold the following values to be the foundation of our identity as a community. We pledge ourselves to act, in the totality of our life together, in accord with these values:

- We value the development of the potential of each person with an intellectual disability in an atmosphere characterized by love, respect and creativity
- We advocate and promote the rights of persons with intellectual disability and their families
- We foster partnership and collaboration in community inclusion of persons with intellectual disability and their families
- We demonstrate integrity through honesty, civility, and fairness
- We embrace the diversity of individuals, ideas, and expressions
- We exercise stewardship of our global community

3. Moral and Ethical Integrity

A personal commitment to integrity in all circumstances benefits everyone as well as the organization. Therefore, we:

- Respect and seek out the truth in all activities and refrain from practices that undermine the moral and ethical integrity of Inclusion Ghana.
- Ensure fairness and objectivity in all activities.
- Honour the right of privacy of all people, including co-workers, contributors, and beneficiaries
- Promote public confidence in non-profit organizations.
- Utilize all the resources and privileges available to our organization to meet our mission and strategic objectives.
- Shall accept funds and donations only from sources whose aims are consistent with our mission, objectives and capacity and which do not undermine our independence and identity.

4. Professional Excellence

As an employer, IG promotes professional excellence and encourages open and honest communication among all employees to create an atmosphere conducive to personal growth and career development.

IG Management:

- Encourage employee development, and communities with personnel to help them achieve their goals and increase their self-esteem through job enrichment.
- Evaluates employees on a fair and consistent basis, so that all employees know what is expected of them and how they are progressing toward fulfilling expectations.
- Shows respect and empathy for employees, and is considerate while being mindful of managerial responsibilities.
- Regularly solicits and respects the opinions of subordinates.

Employees of IG:

- Strive to meet performance standards at the highest level.
- Refuse to engage in or tolerate any fraud, misuse, abuse or waste of IG's resources.
- Encourage growth and self-improvement in themselves and their co-workers.
- Exhibit respect for co-workers and all those they encounter.
- Have the courage to face situations and offer a minority opinion when necessary.
- Examine all alternatives with the understanding that the easiest action is not always in the best interest of the organization.
- Comply with all laws and regulations affecting the organization and their personal obligations.
- Encourage the reporting of breaches of the Code and protect those who report.

Responsibilities to Volunteers

Volunteers who serve IG through its National Council (Board), Regional and District Council or otherwise are crucial to the success of the organization. To assist volunteers to serve effectively and to obtain satisfaction from their service, IG management and staff will:

- Support volunteers so they can perform to the highest level of their contribution and personal satisfaction.
- Treat all volunteers with fairness, equity and respect, providing appropriate mechanisms for their views and interests to be expressed.
- Involve volunteers at appropriate levels and phases of the decision-making process.
- Assist in the development and the understanding of the roles of volunteers and employees respectively; set clear standards of performance for volunteers, and appropriately recognize their contributions.
- Provide benefits to volunteers which are consistent with the spirit of volunteerism.

5. Vendor Relations

Vendors are treated fairly to avoid favouritism or appearances of impropriety. IG:

- Affords all vendors the opportunity to offer or qualify their products or services on a competitive basis.
- Conducts all competitive bidding in a fair and professional manner, giving no special preferences or advantages to any vendor.

6. Partnerships, Collaborations and Networking

When appropriate, IG may find that co-operation with other civil society organizations, governmental and intergovernmental agencies and for-profit corporations may be beneficial in advancing its mission-related objectives. Such collaborations for the common good may reduce

duplication of services and eliminate using resources for competitive purposes rather than serving constituencies. Collaboration may allow the pairing of diverse strengths and resources and promote effectiveness in tackling priorities. However, recognising the need to build and strengthen sustainable partnerships based on equality, trust and honesty, IG will:

- Respect individual institutional values, policies, visions, and objectives and will work together to find solutions and achieve agreed goals using their complementary but different skills and experiences.
- Support and promote partnerships that facilitate the pooling of resources, sharing power in decision-making, planning, promoting effective co-ordination and being accountable to each other.
- Promote sustainable partnerships and this should result in shared vision, responsibility and accountability.

7. Diversity and Equal Opportunity

IG is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to the principle of diversity. We therefore:

- Value, champion, and embrace diversity in all aspects of IG work.
- Respect co-workers and all other individuals without regard to race, colour, religion, creed, age, sex, national origin, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation.
- Support affirmative action and equal employment opportunity programs throughout IG.
- Refuse to engage in or tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment.

8. Transparency, Accountability and Efficiency

Trust is the lifeblood of IG— trust by its members, the public, government, corporates, donors, NGOs, beneficiaries, employees, and those who volunteer their time. To maintain the trust of IG staff:

- Shall be truthful and honest in all matters related to the raising, using and accounting for funds.
- Make full and fair disclosure of all relevant information to customers, who have a right to know how their cedis are spent.
- Shall maintain and make available to all concerned bodies, periodic audit, financial and activity reports.
- Shall maintain a sound financial and accounting system that ensures the use of resources in accordance with intended purposes.
- Shall maintain an annual financial audit performed by an independent auditing firm and make the same public. All financial statements shall be available upon request by relevant and interested parties.

9. Voluntary Giving

The most responsive contributors are those who could become informed and involved. Fundraising is always conducted in a voluntary manner; coercion creates animosity, hinders communications and understanding, and eventually leads to decreased support.

The coercion of donors – whether real or implied – is contrary to the operating principles of Inclusion Ghana. Giving is a personal matter and decision; no form of coercion is acceptable.

10. Acts of Bribery and Corruption

Any staff, volunteer or intern of IG who engages in any acts of bribery or corruption, in the course of his/her duties, shall be liable to commit a criminal offence under the Criminal Offences Act, 1960 (Act 29) and Criminal Offences (Amendment) Act, 2012 (Act 849). Such acts shall be reported to the appropriate authorities for proper investigation, and sanctions. Taking anything of value,

such as money, gift, commission, fee, reward, service or favour, in return for services provided to an IG member or associate, may constitute an act of bribery or corruption.

11. Acceptance of Gifts

It is the policy of Inclusion Ghana to prohibit all staff, volunteers or interns from soliciting any gifts from any persons having dealings with the Organization (such as suppliers, contractors, members, and activity participants).

Any gifts offered voluntarily to staff, volunteers or interns in their official capacity are regarded as gifts to Inclusion Ghana, and they should not be accepted without permission. Officials should decline the offer of gifts if the acceptance could affect their objectivity in conducting their duties or induce them to act against the interest of the Organization or lead to perception/complaints of bias or impropriety.

For gifts which are presented to officials in their official capacity and of nominal value (below GH¢50), the refusal of which could be seen as unsociable or impolite, the National Council (Board) has given a blanket permission for the officials to accept these gifts.

12. Conflict of Interest

A conflict-of-interest situation arises when the “private interests” of an official of IG (staff, volunteer, intern or other) compete or conflict with the interests of Inclusion Ghana. “Private interests” means the financial, material, or personal interests of the official or those of their connections including:

- + family and other relations,
- + personal friends,
- + the clubs and societies to which they belong, and
- + any person to whom they owe a favour or are obligated in any way.

A fundamental integrity requirement is that all officials of IG should avoid situations which may compromise (or be seen to compromise) their personal judgement or integrity at work or lead to conflict of interest. An official’s duty to avoid or declare a conflict of interest goes beyond the disclosure of interests that are definable in pecuniary terms.

When a situation involving a conflict of interest cannot be avoided, officials should as soon as possible make full disclosure of all relevant interests which conflict, may conflict or may be seen to conflict with their official duties. Any declarations made and the related decisions should be recorded in a declaration form. Officials who have made declarations should wait for their supervisors/ the approval authority to decide on the appropriate course of action to be taken before dealing with the matter involved. If officials have doubts concerning the handling of a conflict-of-interest situation, they should immediately consult the National Coordinator (Head of IG Secretariat)/their supervisors.

13. Misuse of IG Property

Officials (staff, volunteers, interns or others) given access to any property of Inclusion Ghana should ensure that it is properly used for the purpose of conducting the organisation’s business. Misappropriation of the organisation’s property for personal use or resale is strictly prohibited.

14. Misuse of Official Position

Officials who misuse their position for personal gains or to favour their relatives or friends are liable to disciplinary action or even prosecution. An example of misuse of an official position is

when a staff responsible for the hiring of a consultant for project activity, gives undue favour or leaks relevant information to his friend's organization with a view to helping this organization submit a proposal most likely to win the consultancy.

15. Paid Work Outside Inclusion Ghana

Staff who wish to take up paid outside work, including those on a part-time basis, must seek the written approval of the organisation before accepting the job. Applications for paid outside work should be made to the National Coordinator (IG Secretariat, Accra Rehabilitation Centre, Adabraka, Accra) for consideration.

Approval will not be given if the outside work conflicts with the interest of the organisation.

16. Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Sexual exploitation and Abuse (SEA) involves any actual or attempted abuse of a person in a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust for sexual purposes. Inclusion Ghana has a zero-tolerance stand on SEA, implying:

- a) no sexual contact with children who are 18 years of age or below, and
- b) no transactional sexual contact with IG members, beneficiaries, clients or staff of IG partners.

Inclusion Ghana has a Policy on SEA. Staff, volunteers, interns or anyone associated with the delivery of services or activities are bound to uphold this policy and to report anyone or incidents that they believe constitute SEA. Allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse will be referred to the relevant authority for investigation and appropriate disciplinary measures to be taken.

17. Confidentiality and Privacy

Staff, volunteers, or interns are not allowed to disclose any classified or proprietary information to anybody without authorisation. Officials who have access to or are in control of such information should always provide adequate safeguards to prevent its abuse or misuse. It should also be noted that unauthorised disclosure of any personal data may result in a breach of the Data Protection Act, 2012 (Act 843).

Officials (staff, volunteers, interns, and others) should continue to observe their duty of confidentiality after they have left Inclusion Ghana. They should not use or take advantage of any classified or proprietary information obtained in the course of their official duties.

18. Disclosure

IG staff and representatives are encouraged to disclose any perceived breaches of the Code of Ethics & Conduct of which they are aware. Disclosure should be made to a supervisor, executive director, or a member of the National Council. Any reported breaches will be investigated and appropriate action, if needed, will be taken. Confidentiality will be maintained for the employee disclosing the breach unless the matter raises serious legal implications. In such instances, the employee disclosing the breach will be notified. IG National Council will not take any adverse action against employees solely for disclosing perceived breaches of the Code. IG encourages all employees to be prompt, open, and forthright in reporting perceived breaches of the Code of Ethics.

19. Compliance with this Code of Conduct

It is the responsibility of every staff, volunteer, intern, or other person working for Inclusion Ghana to fully understand and comply with the Code of Conduct contained in this document.

All officers should, in their daily supervision, ensure that their subordinates understand and comply with the requirements stated in this Code of Conduct. Any problems encountered as well as any suggestions should be channelled to the National Coordinator (IG Secretariat, Accra Rehabilitation Centre, Adabraka) for consideration and advice.

Any official of IG who violates any provision of the Code will be subject to disciplinary action, including termination of appointment. In cases of suspected corruption or other criminal offences, a report will be made to the Police or the appropriate authorities.

Certificate

I acknowledge that I have received and read my personal copy of the Code of Conduct for Inclusion Ghana. I understand that each Inclusion Ghana staff, volunteer, Intern and representative is responsible for adhering to the principles and standards of the Code, and I confirm that I have conducted myself in accordance with the principles and standards of the Code. The certification process is mandatory for all members of the National, Regional and District Councils, IG staff, and other volunteers.

Print name

Signature

Date