

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CONTRACTORS

ETHICAL PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS

By this Code of Conduct, the Buyer applies ethics to procurement. We expect our Candidates to act socially and environmentally responsible and actively work for the implementation of the standards and principles in this Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct is applicable for all our Candidates who supply goods, services and works to our operations and projects.

This Code of Conduct and its related principles and standards are based on recommendations from the UN Global Compact principles¹ and ECHO's Humanitarian Aid Guidelines for Procurement 2011².

General Conditions

The Code of Conduct defines the ethical requirements and standards for our Candidates, whom we expect to sign and respect the Code of Conduct, and work actively towards the implementation hereof. By signing the Code of Conduct Candidates agree to place ethics central to their business activities.

The provision of the ethical standards constitutes minimum rather than maximum standards. International and national laws shall be complied with, and where the provisions of law and the Buyer's standards address the same subject, the highest standard shall apply.

It is the responsibility of the Candidate to assure that their Candidates and sub-contractors comply with the ethical requirements and standards set forth in this Code of Conduct.

The Buyer acknowledges that implementing ethical standards and ensuring ethical behaviour in our supply chain is a continuous process and a long term commitment for which we also have a responsibility. In order to achieve high ethical standards for procurement we are willing to engage in dialogue and collaboration with our Candidates. In addition we expect our Candidates to be open and willing to engage in dialogue with us to implement ethical standards for their businesses.

Unwillingness to co-operate or serious violations of the Code of Conduct will lead to termination of contracts.

Human Rights and Labour Rights

Candidates must at all times protect and promote human- and labour rights and work actively to address issues of concern. As a minimum they are obliged to comply with the following ethical standards:

- *Respect for Human Rights* (UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights)
The basic principles of the Universal Human Rights are that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and in rights, and everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of the person. Candidates must not flaunt their responsibility to uphold and promote the Human Rights toward employees and the community in which they operate.
- *Non exploitation of Child Labour* (UN Child Convention on the Rights of the Child, and ILO Convention C138 & C182)
Candidates must not engage in the exploitation of child labour³ and Candidates must take the necessary steps to prevent the employment of child labour. A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 and children shall not be engaged in labour that compromise their health, safety, mental and social development, and schooling. Children under the age of 15 (in developing countries 14) may not be engaged in regular work, but children above the age of 13 (in developing countries 12) can be engaged in light work if it does not interfere with compulsory schooling and is not harmful to their health and development.

¹ <http://www.unglobalcompact.org/AboutTheGC/TheTenPrinciples/index.html>

² http://dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/actions_implementation/procurement_in_humanitarian_aid/procurement_mandatory_principles/start

- *Employment is freely chosen* (ILO Convention C29 & C105)
Candidates must not make use of forced or bonded labour and must respect workers freedom to leave their employer.
- *Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining* (ILO Convention C87 & C98)
Candidates must recognise workers right to join or form trade unions and bargain collectively, and should adopt an open attitude towards the activities of trade unions (even if this is restricted under national law).
- *Living wages are paid* (ILO convention C131)
As a minimum, national minimum wage standards or ILO wage standards must be met by Candidates. Additionally a living wage must be provided. A living wage is contextual, but must always meet basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing, health care and schooling and provide a discretionary income⁴ - which is not always the case with a formal minimum wage.
- *No discrimination in employment* (ILO Convention C100 & C111 and the UN Convention on Discrimination against Women)
Candidates must not practice discrimination in hiring, salaries, job termination, retiring, and access to training or promotion - based on race, national origin, caste, gender, sexual orientation, political affiliation, disability, marital status, or HIV/AIDS status.
- *No harsh or inhumane treatment of employees* (ILO Convention C105)
The use of physical abuse, disciplinary punishment, sexual abuse, the threat of sexual and physical abuse, and other forms of intimidation may never be practiced by Candidates.
- *Working conditions are safe and hygienic* (ILO Convention C155)
Candidates must take adequate steps to provide safe and hygienic working environments. Additionally workers safety must be a priority and adequate steps must be taken to prevent accidents and injury to health associated with or occurring in the course of work.
- *Working hours are not excessive* (ILO Convention C1 & C14)
Candidates must ensure that working hours comply with national law and international standards. A working week of 7 days should not exceed 48 hours and employees must have one day off per week. Overtime shall be compensated, limited and voluntary.
- *Regular employment is provided* (ILO Convention C143)
All Work performed must be on the basis of a recognised employment relationship established through international conventions and national law. Candidates must protect vulnerable group's regular employment under these laws and conventions and must provide workers with a written contract.

International Humanitarian Law

Candidates linked to armed conflicts or operating in armed conflict settings shall respect civilian's rights under International Humanitarian Law and not be engaged in activities which directly or indirectly initiate, sustain, and/or exacerbate armed conflicts and violations of International Humanitarian Law⁵. Candidates are expected to take a 'do no harm' approach to people affected by armed conflict.

Additionally, Candidates shall not be engaged in any other illegal activity.

Involvement in Weapon Activities

The Buyer advocates for the Ottawa Convention against landmines and the Convention on Cluster Munitions against cluster bombs. Candidates shall not engage in any development, distribution, sale, or manufacturing of anti-personnel mines, cluster bombs, components, or any other weapon which feed into violations of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights.

Protection of the Environment

The Buyer wishes to minimise the environmental damages applied to nature via our procurement activities and we expect our suppliers and Candidates to act in an environmentally responsible manner. This involves respecting applicable national and international environmental legislation and acting in accordance with the Rio Declaration.

⁴ Discretionary income is the amount of an individual's income that is left for spending, investing, or saving after taxes and personal necessities (such as food, shelter, and clothing) have been paid.

⁵ This includes pillage/looting which is the unlawful taking of private property for personal or private gain based on force, threats, intimidation, pressure and through a position of power accomplished due to the surrounding conflict.

As a minimum Candidates should address issues related to proper waste management, ensuring recycling, conservation of scarce resources, and efficient energy use.

Anti-Corruption

Corruption is by the Buyer defined as the misuse of entrusted power for private gain and it includes bribery, fraud, embezzlement and extortion. The Buyer holds a great responsibility to avoid corruption and ensure high standards of integrity, accountability, fairness and professional conduct in our business relations. Candidates are expected to have the same approach by undertaking good and fair business ethics and practices, take action to prevent and fight corruption, and abide by international conventions as well as international and national laws. To fight corruption and promote transparency, Candidates who are confronted with corrupt practices are advised to file a complaint in a Complaint Mechanism¹.

A Candidate's involvement in any form of corrupt practice during any stage of a selection process, in relation to the performance of a contract or in any other business context is unacceptable and will lead to the rejection of bids or termination of contracts.

List of International Conventions and Treaties covered by this Code of Conduct for Contractors

- UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948; [>>link](#)
- UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, 2011; [>>link](#)
- Geneva Conventions I-IV, 1949 and additional Protocols; [>>link](#)
- ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, 1998; [>>link](#)
- UN Child Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1990; [>>link](#)
- C182, Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999; [>>link](#)
- C138, Minimum Age Convention, 1973; [>>link](#)
- C87, Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948; [>>link](#)
- C98, Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949; [>>link](#)
- C29, Forced Labour Convention, 1930; [>>link](#)
- C105, Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957; [>>link](#)
- C131, Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970; [>>link](#)
- C100, Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951; [>>link](#)
- C111, Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958; [>>link](#)
- The UN Convention on the Elimination on All Forms of Discrimination against Women 1979; [>>link](#)
- C1, Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, 1919; [>>link](#)
- C14, Weekly Rest (Industry) Convention, 1921; [>>link](#)
- C143, Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) convention, 1975; [>>link](#)
- C155, Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981; [>>link](#)
- The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, 1992; [>>link](#)
- The Ottawa Convention, 1997; [>>link](#)
- The Convention on Cluster Munitions, 2007; [>>link](#)
- Arms Trade Treaty, 2013; [>>link](#)

¹ Contact ombudsperson@begeca.de