



Self Help Africa Code of Conduct

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1. Introduction

As Self Help Africa (hereinafter “**SHA**”)¹ works towards its mission with the most vulnerable communities to help them respond to and recover from crises, and to assist them build transcendent solutions to mitigate poverty and vulnerability, we, as SHA board members/ trustees and company members, SHA employees, consultants /contractors/suppliers, SHA partners, SHA visitors and dependants of SHA international staff; must always maintain and be seen to practice the highest standards of behaviour, accountability and integrity with everyone we encounter. This will ensure that we protect our staff, we deliver the best service to the communities with whom we work and protect and uphold SHA’s image and reputation.

This Code of Conduct (hereinafter, the “**Code**”) sets out behaviour deemed to be acceptable, and that which is unacceptable. It defines your responsibilities while connected with Self Help Africa (SHA). The examples given are, by definition, non-exhaustive.

Where the Code does not address any specific issues or ethical dilemmas that arise, common sense should be applied. If in doubt, discuss the matter with your Line Manager or a HR representative or a SHA focal point if you are a SHA partner, contractor and/or visitor.

The Code is informed by International Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, UN standards and Conventions including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and best practice guidelines from the humanitarian and development sectors (including SHA’s own policies and experience). SHA is also committed to maintaining the Core Humanitarian Standards, which should be read and understood alongside the Code.

The Code applies regardless of location. As SHA operates across multiple countries across the globe, the Code cannot cover all laws and regulations in every country. You will need to be familiar with the relevant laws and regulations as they apply to you and where you work or operate. If there is a difference between a local legal requirement and the Code, apply the highest and most stringent standard. If in any doubt, please contact your Line Manager or a HR representative or a SHA focal point if you are a SHA partner, consultant, contractor, visitor and/or volunteer.

¹ Self Help Africa (SHA) is the trading name of Gorta CLG, and Self Help Africa (SHA) is a collective term and includes Self Help Africa, Self Help Africa Inc., Self Help Africa UK, Self Help Africa NI, United Purpose, Concern Universal, Cumo Microfinance, Partner Africa, TruTrade, Village Aid or other entities, affiliated organisation, branches, and country/liaison offices that may form part of the group now and in the future.

2. Who must comply with the Code?

The Self Help Africa (SHA) Code of Conduct is applicable to every SHA Member.

“SHA” includes all SHA entities, affiliated organisation, branches, and/or country/liason offices that may form part of the group now and in the future as set out at footnote 1 of this Code.

“Members” are defined as:

- All board members/trustees, board committee/advisory board members and company members of each of Self Help Africa¹, United Purpose (UP) and their subsidiary companies, together with their country and liaison offices where they operate¹;
- All employees, secondees, interns and volunteers at headquarters and in the country and liaison offices where they operate of SHA/UP and any of their subsidiary companies¹;
- All consultants (including internal consultants with a SHA/UP and any of their subsidiary companies¹ email address) of SHA/UP and any of their subsidiary companies¹;
- All contractors/suppliers/third parties under contract of SHA/UP and any of their subsidiary companies¹;
- All partners (those entering into a partnership agreement or a sub-contract with SHA/UP and their subsidiary companies¹) of SHA/UP and any of their subsidiary companies¹;
- All visitors (defined as all visitors to any SHA/UP¹ and their subsidiaries programming operations, namely those acting as representatives of donors and funding partner organisations (e.g Universities, INGO’s, corporates), guest visitors, and/or all people associated with SHA/UP and their subsidiaries¹ operations) ; and
- All dependents of international staff placed in-country by SHA/UP and their subsidiary companies¹.

All Members are obliged to create and maintain an environment that promotes the implementation of the Code. Those in positions of authority in SHA¹ have a particular duty to act as positive role models in upholding the organisation’s standards, and to support and develop appropriate systems to maintain such an environment.

We expect you to:

- Respect SHA’s values² which are central to how we operate.
- Behave in an ethical manner, which means being accountable for your actions and decisions.
- Comply with the principles and rules in the Code and fulfil your legal and regulatory obligations; and
- Speak up if you feel a working practice or behaviour is not ethical or safe or if it breaches the Code.

The Code is integral to every meeting, relationship, engagement, contract, terms of reference or agreement that our organisation is party to or enters into.

Failure to adhere to the Code may result in necessary disciplinary action or equivalent being taken, up to and including dismissal, removal or termination of a contractual relationship (as relevant) and may lead to civil and/or criminal prosecution.

² <https://selfhelpafrica.org/ie/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2023/03/Strategic-Objectives-Values-Behaviours-1.pdf>

3. When does this Code apply?

SHA¹ Members	When will I receive the Code and be required to sign?	When does the Code apply to me?
SHA Board member/ trustee, committee/advisory board member and company member	i. On or prior to appointment to the board or committee/advisory board; and ii. Annually.	The Code of Conduct applies on appointment and for the duration in office.
SHA Employee, secondee, intern and volunteer	i. On induction; ii. Annually	The Code of Conduct applies for the duration of employment or engagement.
SHA Consultant	During contract/engagement negotiations	The Code of Conduct applies for the duration of the contractual relationship with SHA.
SHA Contractor/supplier/third party under contract	During contract/engagement negotiations	The Code of Conduct applies for the duration of the contractual relationship with SHA.
SHA Partner	During contract/engagement negotiations	They agree to abide by the Code and associated policies.
SHA Visitor	i. At briefing prior to travel to; or ii. Upon visiting programming operations	They agree to the Code and associated policies.
SHA Dependent of international staff	i. Prior to travel to; or ii. Upon arriving in-country	They agree to the Code and associated policies.

4. The Code

I **will** maintain the highest standards of personal and professional conduct during my engagement with SHA. I **will** always act in a manner which is consistent with all the values of the organisation available at this [link](#)³.

I **will not** discriminate, directly or indirectly, on the grounds of gender; marital status; family status; sexual orientation; religion; age; disability; race; political affiliation; social status; or membership of an ethnic community.

I **will** obey international law and the laws of the country where I am based, and respect local culture. I **will** always apply the highest and most stringent standard.

I **will not** commit any act, or consent to any act being committed, that could cause physical or psychological harm or suffering to any person. I **will** be particularly conscious of the vulnerabilities of women and children in this regard. I understand that sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) which also includes child marriage is strictly prohibited. This applies regardless of local laws and customs regarding age of majority and/or consent. Mistaking the age of a child will not form any part of a defence.

I **will not** abuse any real or perceived power that accrues from my position in SHA and/or my relationship with SHA. I **will** maintain professional relationships with the communities we support, respecting their privacy and dignity and **will not** use my position to form an inappropriate, exploitative or sexual relationship with a Programme Participant⁴ or that exploits a position of power.

I **will not** seek to influence development and humanitarian assistance, give preferential treatment, offer employment or promotion, or give or receive money in order to obtain gain a benefit for myself or others, receive gifts or advantages or sexual favours.

I **will not** enter into any sexual activity which may be perceived as an exploitation of an unequal power dynamic. Sexual relationships between any SHA Member and Programme Participants³, or any other behaviour that is humiliating, degrading or exploitative, or behaviour that undermines the credibility and integrity of development and humanitarian aid work is prohibited.

I **will not** excuse or ignore or participate in corrupt, fraudulent, exploitative, or unethical activities. This includes, but is not limited to the trafficking of people, participating in any armed, political or religious conflict, dealing in illegal drugs, gems or arms or using the services of a sex worker.

I **will** uphold the highest standards of integrity, honesty and transparency. I will strive for the most ethical, effective and efficient use of SHA resources. I **will** safeguard and treat responsibly in line with legal requirements all information, assets and resources to which I have access by reason of my work/engagement with SHA.

³ A Program Participant is any individual who stands to benefit *directly* from our development programming or humanitarian assistance. Is often also referred to as Beneficiary.

I **will** disclose any and all interests, whether (a) personal, financial, business, political or family interest(s), and any outside employment/engagement that may impact my responsibilities and obligations to SHA either in fact or appearance in accordance with SHA's Conflict of Interest Policy.

I **will** behave in such a manner as to avoid any unnecessary personal risks that may impact on the health, safety and welfare of myself and others. This includes SHA partner and Programme Participants³. I **will** consider safeguarding and safety during planning and delivery of all programmes and activities. I **will** work actively to safeguard the rights of all communities, particularly the rights of children and vulnerable adults.

I **will not** be alone with a child I have met whilst working/volunteering/engaging for or with SHA or a SHA partner, consultant and/or contractor/supplier/third party under contract, including online. I **will not** make sexually inappropriate remarks or comments to anyone, especially children.

I **will not** be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, which include illegal drugs and misused prescription medication, while engaged in SHA duties. I **will not** work while impaired by a lawful prescription medication or over-the-counter drugs. I **will** be fit to carry out my role in SHA and fulfil my responsibilities.

I **will** exercise due care in all matters of official business and not divulge any confidential information about Programme Participants³, staff members, or other work-related matters.

I **will not** speak to the media on behalf of SHA, or in respect of SHA programmes or the situation in a country where SHA is based, except where I am given explicit written authorisation to do so by my Line Manager or Country Director.

I **will not** post social media that bring SHA into disrepute, cause potential reputational damage or cause offence to a host country and/or any section of its community, except in accordance with SHA's Email and Internet Use Policy.

I **will** report any suspicions of breaches of this Code by any SHA Member under SHA's Whistleblowing Policy, to a designated SHA Safeguarding Lead or Focal Point **or** by emailing: **confidential.reporting@selfhelpafrica.org**, or contacting SHA headquarters dedicated phone **+353 89 207 35 58** (WhatsApp and SMS), **or** via the externally managed hotline, **Ethicspoint: <http://selfhelpafrica.ethicspoint.com>**.

The Code should be read in conjunction with the following associated SHA policies:

- Whistleblowing Policy
- Child and Adult Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Email and Internet Use of Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy

5. SHA Code of Conduct Certification

- a) I hereby certify that I am aware of my obligation to comply with SHA Code of Conduct and the SHA associated policies:
- Whistleblowing Policy
 - Child and Adult Safeguarding Policy
 - Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy
 - Conflict of Interest Policy
 - Email and Internet Use of Policy
 - Equality and Diversity Policy
- b) I further certify that I commit to disclosing any suspicions of breach related to this Code and the associated SHA policies, through the mechanisms outlined above or in SHA's Whistleblowing Policy. I understand that SHA is committed to treating any such disclosure in a confidential and anonymous way with no risk of retaliation.
- c) I also certify that I am aware of the consequences of non-compliance with the Code and the associated policies which will include immediate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, removal or termination of a contractual relationship (as relevant), and/or civil and/or criminal prosecution where relevant.

By signing below, I confirm that I have read, agree with, and will adhere to the Code and above certifications.

Name (block letters): _____

Signature: _____

Position/relationship to SHA: _____

Date: _____

NOTE:

Report any suspicions of breaches by staff/representative of a SHA Member under SHA's Whistleblowing Policy either:

- emailing **confidential.reporting@selfhelpafrica.org**, or contacting SHA headquarters dedicated phone **+353 89 207 35 58** (WhatsApp and SMS), **or**
- through the externally managed hotline, **Ethicspoint: <http://selfhelpafrica.ethicspoint.com>**