

Practical Action

CODE OF CONDUCT

Version	v:0004.00
Date	November 2022
Scope	All Employees, Trustees, Consultants, Volunteers, partners and others acting on behalf of Practical Action or its subsidiaries

Approval required from	Name	Date approved
Policy Owner:	Global Head of People & Culture	November 2022
Responsible Director:	Chief Operating Officer	November 2022
Board approval	Board Approved	December 2022

Queries:	Contact the Policy Owner
Exceptions:	Contact the Responsible Director

Big change starts small

Introduction

With staff and volunteers working in countries across Asia, Africa, Latin America and the UK, we work with communities vulnerable to poverty and climate change to support them to change their world. We have strong track record of developing innovative, community powered and locally owned solutions that achieve transformative change in lives and livelihoods. Throughout our 50 years we have built strong partnerships with many communities, governments, development agencies and the private sector, which enable us to achieve our ambitions, and inspire wider change in the world for people living in or vulnerable to poverty.

To build and maintain these relationships we must continually conduct ourselves in a spirit of professionalism, honesty and integrity. Whilst acknowledging that cultures and labour laws differ between places where we work, we always expect employees, consultants, partners, volunteers, trustees or anyone else acting on our behalf to demonstrate high standards of professional conduct that are in line with internationally accepted standards of behaviour relevant to all International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGO).

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour by which we are all bound. It has been created to help you understand the behaviours expected of you. The standards are not exhaustive - relevant policies such as the Safeguarding, Diversity and Dignity at Work or Global Complaints Framework and your contract of employment also set out expected standards of behaviour and, if a situation still arises where there is no pre-determined way forward, we encourage you to use this code, relevant professional standards, policies and support from others as a compass to guide you.

You must make time to read and understand this document and, if you have questions or need advice, please speak to your line manager or local People and Culture team. Everyone who acts on behalf of Practical Action is required to read and sign up to this code **before** carrying out any activities on our behalf.

If you ever have concerns about your conduct or that of others, you are required to speak about it with your manager, People and Culture contact or, make a complaint via the Global Complaints Framework which includes a confidential reporting line.

Each of us have a responsibility to uphold these standards in order to achieve our mission. Practical Action will not tolerate any behaviour that conflicts with this Code of Conduct and any breach will be taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal and, in some cases, could lead to criminal prosecution.

Our Code of Conduct

These standards apply when acting in a formal Practical Action capacity, where you could reasonably be seen to be a representative of Practical Action or in any circumstances where your behaviour could negatively impact organisational standing and reputation (e.g. whilst travelling or on assignment with Practical Action etc.). Employees, and anyone acting on our behalf, frequently work in situations where they are in positions of power and where they are granted high levels of trust from the communities with whom we work. This power and trust must never be abused and everyone has an obligation and responsibility to maintain the highest professional and ethical standards in our day-to-day conduct.

Acting on behalf of Practical Action, I will always:

- ✓ demonstrate **honesty and ethics** in my behaviour
- ✓ **promote an environment** where people, such as colleagues, partners or communities with whom we work, feel able to raise any concerns that they have
- ✓ **report** any matter that does not meet the standards expected by Practical Action

To build and maintain trust with others, I will:

- ✓ **treat others with dignity and respect** and challenge any form of harassment, discrimination, intimidation, exploitation or abuse
- ✓ understand that it is important **not to abuse my own position of power**/unequal power relationships in any way
- ✓ contribute to a working environment characterised by respect, integrity and dignity
- ✓ maintain and promote a **safe and secure** working environment
- ✓ **disclose** any **relevant criminal convictions or charges** on joining Practical Action, or that become relevant during the course of my employment/engagement
- ✓ participate in **induction and training** on joining and periodically as a refresher
- ✓ comply with the rules and procedures of any association or professional body to which Practical Action and/or I may belong
- ✓ declare any financial, personal, family or other **relationships which may impact**, or be perceived to impact, on the work of Practical Action
- ✓ not act in situations in which personal **interests may conflict**, or appear to conflict, with the position or interests of Practical Action or its partners/operations
- ✓ not use Practical Action contacts, networks or other resources to advance personal or business activities or interests
- ✓ notify Practical Action if nominated as a prospective candidate or official role for a **political party**
- ✓ not use **substances that adversely affect the ability to perform** duties or could affect the reputation of Practical Action e.g. alcohol

To build trust in our operations, I will:

- ✓ mindfully **reduce the impact of my work on the environment**
- ✓ **act against any form of corruption** and not offer, promise, give or accept any bribes
- ✓ reject monetary or inappropriate gifts from organisations or people which have been offered to me as a result of my engagement with Practical Action and ensure that such gifts are within the limits of reasonable judgements and in accordance with relevant policies
- ✓ protect Practical Actions' **assets and resources**, making sure that hardware or information is stored/destroyed appropriately
- ✓ ensure any expenditure on behalf of Practical Action is properly accounted for
- ✓ **not release private or confidential information**, including intellectual property, relating to our work to anyone outside the organisation without appropriate approval/authority or unless legally required to do so
- ✓ **not use computer equipment or other technology, equipment or services in contravention with our computer and network policy** such as to view, download, create or distribute inappropriate material, such as pornography
- ✓ comply with all relevant policies and procedures including but not limited to those relating to Safeguarding, Diversity and Dignity at Work, Discipline, Grievance, Complaints, Conflict of Interests, Financial Crime, Data Protection, Social Media, Security, Computer and Network, Expenses etc. These policies can be found on NETconsent through SharePoint

To safeguard others, I accept that:

- ✓ Practical Action has zero tolerance for harm, sexual exploitation and abuse; these acts constitute gross misconduct and represent grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment
- ✓ Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the local age of consent or local/national laws of the relevant country; ignorance or mistaken belief in the age of the child is not a defence. All sexual activity with someone under the age of 18 constitutes sexual abuse.
- ✓ Exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour is prohibited. This includes the exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries.

- ✓ Sexual relationships between beneficiaries and anyone acting on behalf of Practical Action that involve improper use of influence, power, rank or position are prohibited.
- ✓ Anyone acting on behalf of Practical Action will not engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children including child labour or trafficking
- ✓ I have an obligation to report any concerns via established reporting procedures.

Practical Action will **not** tolerate the following general behaviours:

- Retaliation against someone speaking up if they have concerns about anything connected to Practical Action's activities
- Sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or harm
- Unsafe, illegal or unethical activity
- Bribery, fraud or corruption
- Discrimination, bullying or harassment or infringement of the rights of others
- Violence or aggression

Failure to meet the standards set out in this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action and/or criminal prosecution.

Employees will agree to this code of conduct through the policy software, NETconsent. All other individuals please sign below:

I agree to accept and apply the above Code of Conduct in its entirety.

Signed:

Name in capitals:

Role/Job title:

Date: