

YAGAZIE FOUNDATION

Code of Ethics

Policy Forum, January 7th, 2019.

The purpose of this voluntary Code of Ethics is to promote high standards, quality, effectiveness, transparency and accountability among Yagazie Foundation and other organizations. We and other organizations agree to work to ensure that our policies and practices are progressively consistent with this Code of Ethics.[1]

1. Core Values

1.1. We are independent, autonomous and non-partisan organizations. We will design and conduct our work independent of any political party, for-profit business or donor.

1.2. We are non-governmental organizations. We are answerable to our own mission, values and governing bodies rather than the instructions of any local, national or foreign government.

1.3. We believe all people are equal. We will not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, HIV/AIDS status or any other characteristic. Instead, we will actively promote human rights, dignity, equity and inclusion of all.

1.4. We believe in participatory democracy and will work to promote democratic space for citizen voice and action.

1.5. We value diversity of opinion, freedom of expression and open debate, and will promote these values at all levels.

1.6. We will strive for quality and excellence, and a culture of learning and reflection, in all that we do

1.7. We will promote transparency and accountability in our organizations, partnerships and in society.

1.8. We will avoid subversive activities that undermine the state through violent or unconstitutional means.

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2. Governance

2.1. We have a constitution, clear vision/mission statement and objectives; and we will work towards ensuring our work is consistent with these.

2.2. We have a governing body which understands and accepts ultimate responsibility for governance and all aspects of the organization. It will set policies; approve major strategies, plans, budgets and reports; and supervise the chief executive consistent with the constitution and mandate of the organization.

2.3. We will hold Annual General Meetings with full, open and accurate disclosure of relevant information concerning goals, achievements/challenges, finances and governance.

2.4. We will have written procedures regarding the appointments, responsibilities and terms of members of the governing body and specify the frequency of meetings, quorum, reporting and the roles and powers of the governance structure.

2.5. We developed and adhered to a policy that prohibits direct or indirect conflict of interest by members of the governance structure, as well as members, employees and volunteers of the organization. Members of the governing body and staff will not participate in decisions where they have, or are perceived to have, a personal interest.

2.6. Assets and resources of the organization will not be used or disposed for private or personal gain other than as stipulated in the constitution or written policies of the organization.

2.7. We developed, promoted and enforced a policy of Zero Tolerance on Corruption and any other serious misconduct in all that we do.

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3. Accountability

We recognize and appreciate multiple levels of accountability as follows:

- **Downward accountability:** to the people 'we serve' ('beneficiaries').
- **Internal accountability:** to the Board or equivalent governing structure of the organization, and to the staff of our organization, consistent with our policies
- **External accountability:** to the provisions of Constitution of Nigeria and reasonable statutory laws and regulations, and to the donors consistent with our contracts and good donor practice.
- **Horizontal accountability:** to the partner organizations with whom we work with

We will work to promote appropriate accountability in all four dimensions, with a particular emphasis on downward accountability. We will avoid making commitments to any one dimension that may compromise our accountability to another dimension. To this end:

- 3.1.** We will regularly communicate, in a clear and accessible manner, about our values, governance structure, mission, objectives, approaches and progress made.
- 3.2.** We will develop programs and plans whose intended change (results?) is clearly stipulated.
- 3.3.** We will develop reasonable budgets that clearly correspond with our programs and plans.
- 3.4.** We will systematically monitor, document and report on the progress of our work against agreed plans and budgets.
- 3.5.** We will promote practical ways in which people involved in or affected by our work can provide inputs and feedback, and we will consider these seriously.
- 3.6.** We will promote policies and practices that foster sustainability of natural resources and the environment, and that seek to avoid or minimize damage to the earth.

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3.7. We will conduct periodic independent evaluations that will examine, among other aspects, the quality of results and effectiveness of our work.

3.8. We will compile and make available to the public an annual report that will state the members of the Board; the main achievements, challenges and lessons learned in the course of implementation; as well as the annual incomes, expenditures and balances.

3.9. We will actively promote and practice a culture of ongoing critical assessment, reflection and learning, and to demonstrate how we are using lessons learned to make our work more effective.

4. Human Resources

Our staffs and volunteers are the heart of Yagazie Foundation. To this end:

4.1. We will develop and adhere to clear, well defined, written human resource and administrative policies and procedures, consistent with the laws of Nigeria.

4.2. We will promote and practice fairness and non-discrimination in recruitment and to the maximum extent possible promote diversity and gender balance in staff composition.

4.3. We will strive to create a healthy work environment, where mutual respect is fostered and where there is zero tolerance for sexual harassment and other actions that violate the basic safety or dignity of staff.

4.4. We will establish clear disciplinary and grievance procedures

4.5. We will actively promote organizational and staff learning and development, and foster a culture of learning from mistakes, openness, creativity and innovation.

4.6. We will promote and enforce clear policies to avoid conflict of interest, nepotism, favoritism and corruption, as well as protection for whistle-blowers.

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5. Financial Transparency and Accountability

5.1. We will develop and adhere to clear, well defined and written financial regulations that reflect high ethical standards and are consistent with sound financial management principles and practice.

5.2. We will seek to limit resources used towards fundraising and administration /overheads to a reasonable level, so that maximum amount can be spent towards our programs.

5.3. We will manage resources in a manner that is prudent and provides value for money, including wherever possible by employing or involving competent personnel to manage these resources.

5.4. We will ensure all financial transactions are transparently and fully documented, and that these documents are preserved for a defined number of years, consistent with sound accounting practice.

5.5. We will ensure all substantive expenditures are authorized in a process that involves scrutiny by more than one officer, and where the chief executive or any other officer does not have unlimited authority.

5.6. We will ensure procurement is undertaken in a manner that provides quality at least cost, avoids favoritism and corruption, is transparent, documented and otherwise conforms to sound procurement principles.

5.7. We will maintain a regularly updated assets register in accordance with sound accounting practice.

5.8. We will maintain and manage bank account(s) with a licensed financial institution, into which all incomes will be deposited.

5.9. We will develop and adhere to clear policies regarding allowances, honorarium, gifts and other such payments to avoid conflict of interest and incentives to distort organizational priorities, and in the interest of transparency and fairness.

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5.10. We will prepare comprehensive financial statements that accurately disclose all incomes (from all sources), expenditures and balances, as well a comparison of actual performance against budgets, in accordance with sound accounting practice.

5.11. Where our expected total annual revenue will exceed 300 million Naira, we will ensure that our financial statements are independently audited by a registered/competent auditor, and that we will act on the recommendations of the auditor.

5.12. We will exercise zero tolerance for corruption and other form of substantive misuse of funds, and take effective actions to hold persons responsible accountable.

6. Progressive Implementation of the Code of Conduct

We will continually work to strengthen and improve our adherence to the high standards set out in this code of conduct. In this regard, we will:

6.1. Explicitly and consciously put measures in place to progressively attain the standards articulated herein.

6.2. We will promote and sustain an enabling environment that fosters a culture of individual, group and organizational learning at all times both within our organizations and through our interaction with other organizations.

6.3. We will seek to engage in continuous self, peer and or external assessment and evaluation to monitor the progress of our respective organizations.

6.4. We will periodically report on the progress made towards and compliance with the standards in this code of conduct.

Signed:

**Mr. Ezirim C. Kennedy
CEO Yagazie Foundation**