



UNDP

# CODE OF ETHICS

## OPERATING WITH UNWAVERING INTEGRITY



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Dear Colleague,

*Operating with Unwavering Integrity* is the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP's) first formal code of ethics. It is a guide to help us each resolve ethical issues in an increasingly complex global environment, and also serves as a proclamation of our commitment to the highest standards of integrity. While development efforts and business practices may change over time, our dedication to honesty, integrity, transparency, accountability and mutual respect remain constant. We believe that conducting our operations ethically is critical to our success, and this Code is a public statement confirming that integrity underlies everything we do at UNDP. We can all be proud of our pledge.

Of course, no Code of Ethics can anticipate and address every situation. In many cases, common sense and good judgment will be your best guide. If you are unsure about any aspect of this Code or how it may apply to a situation with which you are faced, you are encouraged to consult with your supervisor. You may also send questions or concerns by email to [ethicsoffice@undp.org](mailto:ethicsoffice@undp.org) or call UNDP's ethics helpline +1-212-909-7840 or by logging in to the [Ethics Intranet](#) site. Whatever you do, keep in mind that when you act on the UNDP's behalf, our reputation for honesty and integrity is in your hands.

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Achim Steiner, UNDP Administrator

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Peter Liria, Director, UNDP Ethics Office



## PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1. PURPOSE OF THIS CODE OF ETHICS

#### Why a Code of Ethics?

While all staff remain responsible for abiding by the [UN Staff Rules and Regulations](#), this Code was developed to consolidate the ethical expectations of all of UNDP's staff and other personnel, worldwide. We have synthesized and summarized most of the rules, regulations and policies that influence how we must behave with each other, and with our partners, member states, donors and the public, in order to uphold ethical principles and protect UNDP's reputation as a trustworthy organization.



This Code also aims to promote, strengthen and support an ethical culture throughout UNDP, underscore UNDP's commitment to the highest standards of integrity, and help you to make ethical decisions both in the context of your work for UNDP and also in your personal interactions outside of work. UNDP expects you to operate with integrity – *unwavering integrity*.

### 2. TO WHOM DOES THIS CODE OF ETHICS APPLY?

Every UNDP staff member (regardless of rank or level), consultant, service contractor, volunteer, and intern is expected to comply with this Code while working for UNDP. We will note where specific policies and regulations apply only to staff members, contractors or other limited groups; otherwise, this Code of Ethics identifies the ethical standards expected of all who work for UNDP.

Staff members together with all others working for UNDP are collectively referred to in this Code as “personnel” or “you”. “We” or “the Organization” are used along with “UNDP” to mean the United Nations Development Programme.




While this Code describes the ethical behaviour, we anticipate from you, it does not replace or supersede the various policies, rules, regulations (e.g., [UN Staff Regulations and Rules](#)), documents, web pages, bulletins and procedures that provide greater detail on specific subjects, most of which have been linked throughout the Code for clarity and ease of reference. It is our intention that all personnel abide by the spirit and intent of this Code as well as the specific policies and rules that may apply in each situation.

### 3. WHY ETHICS MATTER


As a part of the United Nations system, UNDP embodies the highest global ideals. Governments and private sector companies often look to the UN, along with its Funds and Programmes, to be the leader in ethical, humanitarian behaviour. It is fundamental that our personnel discharge their duties with independence, honesty, impartiality, and incorruptibility. The long-term success of the Organization and its missions depends on maintaining the respect and confidence of Governments, Member States, the public we serve, NGOs and donors around the world. As UNDP is judged by the conduct of its personnel, each and every one of us is bound to act ethically in every way, every day.



The obligation to do what's right must be an essential part of the character of UNDP and must underscore everything we do. When taking decisions, we must, regardless of who is present at the time, be guided by a culture that reinforces making the appropriate, ethical choice.



**HINT:**  
*When you see either of these icons, click for more information. We have made these icons interactive; they are hyperlinked to useful webpages, training or documents.*



### 4. UNDP FUNDAMENTAL VALUES

UNDP has adopted six values that define the overall expectations for organizational behaviour:

- *Integrity*
- *Transparency*
- *Mutual respect*
- *Professionalism*
- *Accountability*
- *Results orientation* (at times modified by the words *through Principled Performance*)



*Click compass for more on UNDP's six values*

The purpose of these values is to create a unified culture that supports [UNDP's vision](#) to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals through ethical practices.

## 5. UNDERLYING DOCUMENTS

This Code of Ethics is substantially based on UNDP's values, together with the following key documents, which you are expected to read and embrace:

1. The [Charter of the United Nations](#), which states that the paramount consideration in the employment of UN staff "shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity."
2. The [Declaration](#), signed by all staff, declaring that they will act with independence and impartiality and regulate their conduct with the interests of the United Nations only in view, and not seek or accept instructions in regard to the performance of their duties from any Government or other external body.
3. The Staff Regulations, promulgated by the General Assembly, and supplemented by the Staff Rules issued by the Secretary General. Together, the [UN Staff Regulations and Staff Rules](#) describe the fundamental conditions of service and the basic rights, duties and obligations of all UNDP staff.
4. The [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service](#), adopted by the General Assembly, for application to all staff of all United Nations system organizations. The Standards of Conduct provide that international civil servants have a special calling to serve our universal ideals of peace, respect for fundamental rights, and international cooperation.
5. The [UNDP Legal Framework for Addressing Non-Compliance with UN Standards of Conduct](#), which serves to remind staff of their duty to abide by the highest standards of conduct. It also defines the mechanisms that currently exist within UNDP for reporting allegations of wrongdoing, as well as what constitutes misconduct; it clarifies the responsibilities of each individual involved in the investigation of allegations of wrongdoing; it explains the procedure following investigation; and it outlines the disciplinary procedure
6. The [UNDP Corporate Accountability Framework](#), which establishes the organization-wide accountability to programme countries, including project beneficiaries, and donors and is considered an "organizational accountability system to support increased transparency, clarity and alignment of all organizational activities." The Corporate Accountability Framework has been developed to support the implementation of clear roles, accountabilities and decision making throughout the organization.
7. The [Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials and Experts on Mission](#), which apply to non-staff service and individual contractors, and require a declaration similar to that of staff, to exercise in all "loyalty, discretion and conscience the functions entrusted to me by the United Nations, to discharge these functions and regulate my conduct with the interests of the United Nations only in view."

8. The *UNV Conditions of Service*<sup>1</sup> (Section 2) contain a similar obligation on the part of UN Volunteers to “undertake their duties in the interests of the United Nations. International UN Volunteers will uphold and promote the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct.”
9. The [UNDP POPP](#) (Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures) which contains all of UNDP’s policy documents, relevant regulations and rules, as well as many templates, forms and business processes.
10. [UNDP Financial Regulations and Rules](#) which describes the financial regulations and rules applicable to all UNDP operations, at Headquarters, at the Country Offices and at other UNDP offices worldwide. Rule 102.2 states “All personnel of UNDP are responsible to the Administrator for the regularity of actions taken by them in the course of their official duties. Any personnel who take any action contrary to these Financial Rules or to the instructions which may be issued in connection therewith may be held personally responsible and financially liable for the consequences of such action.”

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<sup>1</sup> [Conditions of Service for International UN Volunteers](#) (volunteers)

[Conditions of Service for National UN Volunteers](#) (volunteers)



## PART TWO: ETHICAL CONDUCT

### 1. INDEPENDENCE AND IMPARTIALITY



In working for UNDP, you represent the ideals of the United Nations and must seek to protect the best interests of UNDP, rather than those of individual governments or other personal or political interests. You must act with complete loyalty to UNDP, and not seek or take instructions from any Government or other entity or person. You must also be independent, fair and objective in the conduct of your duties.

- ❖ [\*UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations\*, Reg.1.1-1.2 \(staff\)](#)
- ❖ [\*Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service\*, ss. 1-13 \(staff\)](#)
- ❖ [\*Declaration \(Oath of Office\)\* \(staff\)](#)
- ❖ [\*Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials and Experts on Mission\*, s.2 \(b\) and \(c\) \(contractors\)](#)
- ❖ [\*Code of Conduct for International UN Volunteers\* Section 2 \(volunteers\)](#)
- ❖ [\*Code of Conduct for National UN Volunteers\* Section III \(volunteers\)](#)

### 2. HONESTY AND PROFESSIONALISM

UNDP personnel must uphold and promote the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct, and carry out their duties with honesty, integrity and professionalism. Be a model of the behaviour you want to see in others in the workplace.

- ❖ [\*UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations\*, Reg.1.2\(b\) \(staff\)](#)
- ❖ [\*Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service\*, ss. 1-13 \(staff\)](#)
- ❖ [\*Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials and Experts on Mission\*, s.2 \(a\) \(contractors\)](#)
- ❖ [\*Code of Conduct for International UN Volunteers\* Section 2 \(volunteers\)](#)
- ❖ [\*Code of Conduct for National UN Volunteers\* Section III \(volunteers\)](#)

### 3. OBEYING THE LAW

UNDP operates in approximately 170 countries and territories across the globe. Regardless of where you carry out UNDP activities, you are expected to comply with local laws and honour your private legal obligations. For example, you must obey local traffic laws, pay your debts and family support obligations, and avoid activities that are illegal in your host country. UNDP privileges and immunities protect only the interests of the Organization and the actions you take in the name of UNDP, and can be waived in certain situations.



As such, they extend only to activities undertaken as part of your official functions, and do not exempt you from your obligation to observe local laws. If the UN is made aware that you have violated local laws, the Organization must refer the matter to national authorities.

See also:

- ❖ [UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations, Reg.1.1\(f\) and Rule 1.2\(b\) \(staff\)](#)
- ❖ [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service, s.43 \(staff\)](#)
- ❖ [Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials and Experts on Mission, s.2 \(j\) \(contractors\)](#)
- ❖ [Code of Conduct for International UN Volunteers Section 2 \(volunteers\)](#)
- ❖ [Code of Conduct for National UN Volunteers Section III \(volunteers\)](#)

#### 4. AVOIDING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

**Click to access  
a brief course  
on Avoiding  
Conflicts of  
Interest**



A conflict of interest is a situation in which your personal interests clash, or appear to clash, with the interests of UNDP. You have an obligation to try and avoid placing yourself in such a situation, however, it may not necessarily mean that you have done anything wrong - only that it may appear that your objectivity can be questioned. When you have a potential or actual conflict of interest, it may be perceived that you have some personal bias that will make it difficult for you to maintain your impartiality, which in turn undermines public

confidence. For example, a staff member should not be affiliated with a UNDP vendor. Even if the staff member has the best intention to ensure that quality service is provided to UNDP, the staff member cannot protect and be loyal only to UNDP when their personal interests in the vendor may cloud their judgment, and allow others to suspect that the staff member may not be objective and impartial.

While working for UNDP, you must base your actions and decisions on the Organization's priorities, rather than your personal interests, the interests of family or friends, or those of a Government or a Member State. It is critical to avoid conflicts of interest, or even the appearance of a conflict, between your personal interests and your professional responsibilities.

**Common  
Conflict of  
Interest  
Situations**



What follows are several areas where conflicts commonly arise. If you are in a situation that appears to create a conflict of interest, or raises questions of possible partiality or bias, review the situation with your manager or the Ethics Office.

- ❖ [Informational Brochure on Avoiding Conflicts of Interest](#)
- ❖ [UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations, Regulation 1.2 \(f\), \(m\) and Rule 1.2 \(q\) \(staff\)](#)
- ❖ [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service, s.23 \(staff\)](#)

- ❖ [Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials and Experts on Mission](#), s.2 (e) and (h) (contractors)
- ❖ [Code of Conduct for International UN Volunteers](#) Section 2 (volunteers)
- ❖ [Code of Conduct for National UN Volunteers](#) Section III (volunteers)

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## A. FAMILY AND PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

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Family ties or personal relationships may affect (or appear to affect) your impartiality and job performance. You must avoid situations where working or doing business with a friend or family member could appear to cloud your professional judgment. View your outside interests, and those of your friends and family members, with a critical eye. For example, if your brother owns a business that UNDP is considering hiring, you must declare that interest to your manager. You cannot be involved in any decision to select that business as a UNDP vendor, nor can you serve in a role that either oversees any services or products provided to UNDP by the business, or processes payments to it.



UNDP prohibits the recruitment of immediate family members (mother, father, daughter, son, sister or brother) of current UNDP staff members and contractors. All applicants for a UNDP position must disclose whether they are related to any UNDP staff member or contractor. While the spouses of UNDP personnel may be hired, the serving UNDP spouse cannot participate in the recruitment process. Spouses cannot work in the same unit or line of authority, and there can be no supervisory relationship between them.

Finally, care must be taken with regard to intimate relationships in the workplace. While it is inadvisable to enter into romantic relations with a co-worker in your unit, you must not engage in such a relationship with a subordinate or someone in your reporting line, or where it makes it difficult to maintain your professionalism and objectivity. Such relationships may lead to accusations of favouritism or sexual harassment. It may be prudent to discuss any concerns with your manager, your local OHR focal point, Staff Association or the Ethics Office in order to avoid a situation where a conflict of interest could arise or be inferred.

- ❖ [The Policy on Family Relationships](#) includes more detail on prohibited and permitted family connections for staff members and contractors.
- ❖ [UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations](#), Reg.1.2(g) (staff)
- ❖ [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service](#), s.23 (staff)
- ❖ [Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials and Experts on Mission](#), s.2 (e) (contractors)

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## B. GIFTS, AWARDS AND PAYMENTS

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Gifts, awards, entertainment, hospitality and so on, are sensitive ethical issues at the UN. Receiving gifts or benefits in connection with your work can appear to create an obligation to the giver that can damage UNDP's reputation by calling into question your independence,

impartiality, and integrity. Giving gifts, entertainment etc. can also lead to negative inferences of seeking some undue benefit.

UNDP has specific guidelines and procedures regarding gifts that apply to all personnel. As a general rule, *you may not accept gifts, honours, awards, hospitality, travel, favours, or supplementary payments (with the exception of pension payments), from a Government source*. Exceptionally, if refusal of an unanticipated gift or award from a Government would cause embarrassment to UNDP, you may accept it on behalf of UNDP, but it must be promptly disclosed to your supervisor and surrendered to the Administrator, through the Chief of Administrative Services Division (ASD)<sup>2</sup> or the head of your office. A decision will be made by ASD as to the disposition of the gift or award. *You similarly may not accept any gift, award, or hospitality etc. from a vendor or anyone having or seeking to have a contractual relationship with UNDP*. There is no exception to this rule when it comes to vendors. Any such gifts should be returned with a polite note explaining the Organisation's gift policy.



While you are generally expected to refuse all gifts, hospitality, awards and honours from all sources while working for UNDP, an occasional gift of nominal value from a non-governmental, non-vendor source<sup>3</sup> (below US\$30) may be accepted, but must be disclosed to your supervisor. Gifts valued at or above US\$30 from any non-governmental (and non-vendor) sources should not be accepted unless you receive prior approval from your supervisor or the head of office. Please note, however, that the receipt of monetary gifts such as cash or gift cards is never acceptable. Finally, there is even a stricter standard for staff and other personnel involved in procurement - no gifts, hospitality etc. whatsoever are permitted from outside sources.

It is permissible to exchange modest gifts with other UN colleagues so long as they are freely given, without coercion, of nominal value (below US\$30) and not offered to influence a colleague in his/her official decision-making.

As noted in Section 5 below, in the exercise of their official duties, each UNDP employee is responsible for the proper care and use of the Organization's property and assets. In organizing UN events or functions attended by external stakeholders, UNDP personnel are to exercise restraint in the allocation of UN resources for such purposes, and must ensure that decisions are made on the basis of the best interests of the Organisation. Avoid giving gifts if doing so can reasonably be expected to give rise to questions of intent or lead to negative perceptions about self-benefit. And, of course, lavish gifts must be avoided in all circumstances.

Lastly, let us state clearly that gifts, entertainment, awards and hospitality must never be used to curry favour. Don't offer them as such and certainly don't accept them as such.

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<sup>2</sup> You can download [a form for disclosing gifts](#) and return it to ASD.

<sup>3</sup> A "non-governmental, non-vendor source" can be a co-worker, a member of the public, a member of another organization working on a project that has no contractual connection to UNDP and so on.

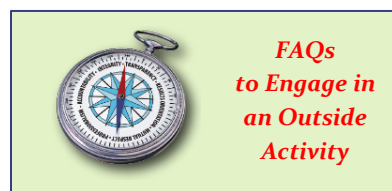
- ❖ [UNDP Gifts Guidance](#)
- ❖ [Administrative Instruction on Reporting, retaining and disposing of honours, decorations, favours, gifts or remuneration from governmental and non-governmental sources](#)
- ❖ [UNDP Hospitality Expense Policy](#)
- ❖ [UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations](#), Regulation 1.2(j)-(l) and Rule 1.2 (k) re bribes and (l)-(p) re gifts (staff)
- ❖ [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service](#), ss. 50-51 (staff)
- ❖ [Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials and Experts on Mission](#), s.2 (g) and (m) (contractors)
- ❖ [Acceptance of pro bono goods and services](#), ST/SGB/2006/5

## C. OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT, EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES AND BOARD POSITIONS

While working for UNDP, you are expected to devote your full time and attention to your UNDP duties and responsibilities.

You cannot undertake any outside work or activities that may interfere with your ability to carry out your role at UNDP, either in terms of time and energy or by being incompatible

(or perceived as incompatible) with your status as a UNDP staff member, service contractor or UN Volunteer. UNDP does, however, generally support and approve activities that contribute to professional development and further the Organization's mission.



While all personnel should guard against outside activities that may give the appearance of or create a conflict of interest, all are required to obtain prior approval from UNDP before engaging in any outside activities, whether paid or not. Generally, prior approval is not required for studies, or private unpaid social or charitable work unrelated to UNDP work, where those activities are conducted outside of working hours; still it may be advisable to discuss these with your supervisor in the event you have any concerns. You will always need to

obtain approval to own a business, participate on a board, panel, committee or such group, to take on outside employment, and for other outside work or activities. Public speaking and publication also require approval (see also the Code sections on *Social Media, Publication and Public Speaking*). See the references below for the approval procedure.

- ❖ [UNDP Outside Activities Bulletin 2015](#)
- ❖ [Outside Activities](#), ST/AI/2000/13. In order to obtain approval, staff must complete the [Outside Activity Approval Form](#) (also available in [French](#) and [Spanish](#)) and submit it to the Ethics Office, which will vet the activity for potential conflicts of interest, will make a recommendation for approval or denial, and, if approval is recommended, will provide guidance on controls that must be adhered to in order to avoid conflicts of interest from arising in the future. The staff member must then seek a final decision on approval from the Director, OHR, through the staff member's manager. Service contractors must seek approval directly from the senior-most person in their country office or Bureau.
- ❖ [Outside Activities FAQs](#) ([EN](#), [SP](#), [FR](#))
- ❖ [Outside Activities](#), ST/IC/2006/30
- ❖ [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service](#), ss. 45-47 (staff)



- ❖ [UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations](#), Regulation 1.2 (o)-(p) and Rule 1.2 (s) and (t) (staff)
- ❖ [Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials and Experts on Mission](#) s.2(d) (contractors)
- ❖ [Code of Conduct for International UN Volunteers](#) Section 2 (volunteers)
- ❖ [Code of Conduct for National UN Volunteers](#) Section III (volunteers)

## D. POLITICAL ACTIVITY

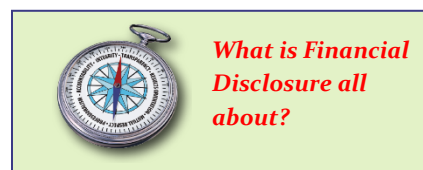
UNDP supports your right to vote and encourages you to do so. We would never expect you compromise your political or religious convictions. You are also permitted to belong to a political party provided that such membership does not entail action, or an obligation to take action, inconsistent with, (or that would reflect adversely upon), i. the independence and impartiality required by your UN status (e.g., racist parties, or groups that advocate violence) or ii. any conditions of your visa, if applicable. The international, impartial nature of your role limits your freedom to publicly express views on controversial matters. For example, you cannot take part in political demonstrations, or wear politically-themed clothing or buttons. You may not publicly criticize governments, or run for or hold political office at any level while working for UNDP. If your spouse is involved in politics, you may be restricted from taking part in certain activities in order to preserve your independence and impartiality. Remember, your first loyalty is to UNDP.



- ❖ [UNDP Political Activities Bulletin 2016](#)
- ❖ [UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations](#), Reg.1.2(f), (h) (staff)
- ❖ [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service](#), ss.9 and 48-49 (staff)
- ❖ [Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials and Experts on Mission](#), s.2 (d) (contractors)
- ❖ [Code of Conduct for International UN Volunteers](#) Section 2 (volunteers)
- ❖ [Code of Conduct for National UN Volunteers](#) Section III (volunteers)

## E. FINANCIAL INTERESTS AND DISCLOSURE

Because your first priority and your first loyalty are to UNDP, you should not have any financial interests that may profit, or appear to benefit, from your UNDP work. The annual [UNDP Financial Disclosure Programme](#) (FDP) helps to maintain and enhance public trust in the integrity of the Organization by identifying, managing, and mitigating the risk of personal conflicts of interest. Designated personnel, including all individuals at the D-1 level and above and those whose



principal duties involve procurement and investment are required to disclose annually their assets and liabilities (as well as those held by their immediate family members), and any outside activities and affiliations. Where UNDP detects a potential conflict, the Ethics Office will issue guidance which may include having you cease certain outside activities or

requiring that you divest certain financial holdings. If you are designated to participate in the FDP, you will be contacted by the Ethics Office and required to fully comply with your filing obligations within the programme's specified timeframe.

UNDP also requires *all* job candidates, regardless of level, to complete a separate pre-hire conflict of interest disclosure form. The form provides for the disclosure of relationship and limited financial interest information so that controls can be put in place before new staff commence employment, in order to prevent potential conflicts of interest from developing into actual conflicts.

- ❖ [Policy for the Financial Disclosure Programme and Declaration of Interest Statements](#) (also available [in French](#) and [in Spanish](#))
- ❖ [Informational Brochure on the Financial Disclosure Programme](#)
- ❖ [UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations](#), Regulation 1.2 (n) and Rule 1.2 (u) (staff)
- ❖ [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service](#), s.24 (staff)
- ❖ [Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials and Experts on Mission](#), s.2 (h) and (i) (contractors)
- ❖ Brief course for FDP Focal Points: [UNDP Ethics Financial Disclosure Programme](#)

## 5. PROTECTING UNDP RESOURCES

While working for UNDP you have access to numerous UNDP assets and resources (e.g., monetary funds, computer systems, telephones, supplies, vehicles etc.). You are responsible for their appropriate use and protection, which means you are expected to use UNDP property and resources wisely and for the benefit of UNDP and the public we serve, and to prevent waste or misuse. Our assets include not only money and physical items, but also intangibles such as time, information and technology.

- ❖ [UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations](#), Regulation 1.2 (q)-(r) and Rule 1.7 (staff)
- ❖ [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service](#), s.25 (staff)

### A. MONEY



UNDP funds are received from donors for specific objectives and purposes. You must not misuse UNDP funds (nor permit misuse) by spending monies on matters unrelated to the work of UNDP, or by engaging in wasteful or inefficient expenditure. For example, securing products or services from a vendor generally must be conducted competitively so as to obtain the best value for UNDP.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, when you submit a claim for any personal benefits, entitlements, or work-related expenses

<sup>4</sup> UNDP Financial Regulation 21.02 states: "The following general principles shall be given due consideration when exercising the procurement functions of UNDP:

(a) Best value for money; (b) Fairness, integrity and transparency; (c) Effective international competition; (d) The interest of UNDP."

including health insurance claims or non-cash benefits such as sick leave, the claim or expense must be truthful, reasonable, and supported by appropriate documentation.

- ❖ [UNDP Financial Regulations and Rules](#)
- ❖ [UNDP Hospitality Expense Policy](#)
- ❖ [UNDP Policy on Fraud and other Corrupt Practices](#)

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## B. PHYSICAL ASSETS

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The property and assets of the Organization are intended only for official UNDP purposes. You are responsible for the professional use and reasonable care of the items assigned to you for your work such as computers, mobile phones, and vehicles. You should not use office supplies or other UNDP materials for personal purposes – even if the item seems small. When you consider the number of individuals employed by UNDP worldwide, the cost of such abuses can quickly add up.

- ❖ [UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations](#), Regulation 1.2(q)

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## C. VEHICLES

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UNDP vehicles are only to be used for UNDP official business purposes and cannot be used for trips unrelated to UNDP work unless specifically permitted by your head of office and full costs are recovered including fuel, insurance and vehicle wear and tear. Similarly, you cannot request that a colleague or subordinate use a UNDP vehicle for your personal benefit. Remember to always use seatbelts, and obey local traffic rules, including speed limits and parking restrictions.

- ❖ [UNDP Vehicle Management](#)
- ❖ [UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations](#), Regulation 1.2(q)

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## D. TIME – YOURS AND OF OTHERS

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UNDP's people are its greatest asset. You are expected to manage your time efficiently, and apply yourself to your duties with maximum productivity and competence, in order to best contribute to the effectiveness of the Organization. If you are a manager, do not ask, require or permit subordinates or co-workers to spend working hours on non-Organization tasks; also as a manager, do not abuse your authority, or your colleagues' good will, by asking that they perform personal tasks for you.



As you are expected to dedicate your full time and attention to your tasks and responsibilities at UNDP, you must not let any outside activities (even where the activity has been approved) affect your ability to perform your UNDP function.

- ❖ [UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations](#), Regulation 1.3 (a)

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## E. OFFICE TECHNOLOGY

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UNDP telephones (including mobile phones), computers, e-mail, Internet, and other technologies are intended for official business purposes. UNDP has the right to monitor and review all information contained in these systems, including emails (See [UNDP Information Security Policy](#) and [System Logon Banner Standards](#)). As such, please be aware that there is no right of privacy when using UNDP systems and equipment. You are permitted to use Organization technology, such as e-mail, phones and printers, for limited personal purposes, although reimbursement for personal telephone calls may be required in certain circumstances. While that privilege may be withdrawn by the Organization if abused, generally, if your use does not infringe upon your work hours to any significant degree, does not violate policy and does not interfere with the operations or the values of the Organization, it is acceptable.



Any improper use (e.g., sending harassing, insulting, or illegal email, streaming or downloading movies using the UNDP internet connection) is prohibited. Abuse or over-use will not be permitted (for example, you cannot make long-distance personal telephone calls at the Organization's expense, or run off dozens of copies of flyers for your local charity).

You must help maintain the security of UNDP's technology and systems, as well as its records and other information. Do not access systems to which you are not authorized, or help anyone else to do so. Use *your* password to access your computer (never sign on as someone else), and do not share your password or leave it visible to others. To protect UNDP information from inadvertent disclosure, lock your computer even if you leave it for only a few minutes (just press *Control + Alt + Delete* at the same time). Do not "borrow" a colleague's password, credentials, grounds pass etc., and do not loan anyone yours.

You are also prohibited from using the UNDP's IT resources to access, send, copy or forward any material that is harassing, offensive, sexually oriented, illegal or defamatory, e.g., no viewing pornography, no e-mailing inappropriate jokes.

*NOTE RE: USING YOUR OWN DEVICE (BYOD – "Bring Your Own Device")* – While UNDP permits personnel to connect to UNDP systems using their own personal devices, there are limitations, and your equipment must meet certain technological and security standards before it will be allowed to connect. Similarly, while in UNDP's ICT environment the use, transmission,

distribution, or storage of any material in violation of UN Staff Regulations or Rules or UNDP policies and procedures is prohibited. See the UNDP POPP on BYOD.<sup>5</sup>

- ❖ [Use of information and communication technology resources and data](#), ST/SGB/2004/15
- ❖ [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service](#), s.25 (staff)
- ❖ [UNDP Information Security Policy](#) and [System Logon Banner Standards](#)
- ❖ [UNDP POPP Bring Your Own Devices and Acceptable Usage of UNDP ICT Resources](#)

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## F. DATA AND RECORDS

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UNDP maintains many business and financial records in a variety of formats, including paper, digital, and other. You must cooperate in accurate record-keeping of the Organization. Be certain to code or label information confidential or proprietary as warranted in order to protect it from intentional or inadvertent disclosure. Do not damage, delete, alter, conceal or create false or misleading data, documents, or other records of the Organization. You must prepare and deal with all records truthfully, and sign or enter records only to the extent you know they are correct and have authorization or instruction to do so.



- ❖ [UNDP Information Security Policy](#)
- ❖ [UNDP Records Management Policy](#) and [UNDP Records Management Guidelines](#)
- ❖ [Use of information and communication technology resources and data](#), ST/SGB/2004/15
- ❖ [UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations](#), Rule 1.2(i) (staff) and Regulation 1.2(i) (staff)

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## G. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

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Despite transparency initiatives, there is much information at UNDP that must remain confidential, including investigation files, personal details of colleagues, medical records, vendor bids, and proprietary information such as intellectual property, and more. Do not disclose UNDP confidential or proprietary information (that has not been made public) to anyone outside of UNDP, or inside UNDP except those within UNDP with a legitimate need to know as part of their official duties, as appropriate in the normal course of your work, or as authorized by your manager. Please be sure to exercise the utmost discretion in regard to all UNDP work. If information has not been made public, it may be confidential – if in doubt, consult your manager.

- ❖ [UNDP Information Security Policy](#)
- ❖ [Making Information Available to the Public](#)

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<sup>5</sup> Information sent, received or retrieved through the ICT Environment, including electronic mail, data, documents, programs, voicemail, images or other forms of communication, may not contain content that may reasonably be considered threatening, harassing, or offensive to any individual, or which is in violation of the UNDP Policy on Workplace Harassment and Abuse of Authority. Such content includes, but is not limited to, sexually explicit or pornographic comments or images, threat of use of force, or any comments that might reasonably be considered offensive in terms, inter alia, of race, colour, religious belief, gender, sexual orientation, age, national origin, disability, or political beliefs.



- ❖ [UNDP Records Management Policy](#) and [UNDP Records Management Guidelines](#)
- ❖ [UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations](#), Regulation 1.2(i) (staff)
- ❖ [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service](#), s.39 (staff)
- ❖ [Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials and Experts on Mission](#), s.2 (f) (contractors)
- ❖ [Information sensitivity, classification and handling](#), ST/SGB/2007/6

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## H. FRAUD

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UNDP plays a significant role in the UN's global effort to combat fraud and corruption, by supporting many countries in strengthening their capacity and framework to prevent fraud and corruption. The Organization also takes a very strong stance to prevent fraud and corruption within UNDP.

Fraud and corruption in any form is unacceptable in UNDP. This is broadly applied and includes bribery, bid-rigging, kickbacks, reciprocity, theft, embezzlement, forgery, making false statements (including submission of false medical claims), smuggling and corrupt practices.



- ✓ **Fraud** is any act of omission whereby an individual or entity knowingly misrepresents or conceals a material fact a) in order to obtain an undue benefit or advantage or avoid an obligation for himself, herself, itself or a third party and/or b) in such a way as to cause an individual or entity to act, or fail to act, to his, her or its detriment.
- ✓ **Corruption** is the act of doing something with an intent to give an advantage inappropriate with official duties to obtain a benefit, to harm or to influence improperly the actions of another party.
- ✓ **Actions taken to instigate, aid, abet, attempt, conspire or cooperate in a fraudulent or corrupt act, also constitute fraud or corruption.**

Any act of fraud or corruption in UNDP's activities depletes funds, assets and other resources necessary to fulfill UNDP's mandate. Fraudulent and corrupt practices can also seriously damage UNDP's reputation and diminish donors' trust in its ability to deliver results in an accountable and transparent manner. Furthermore, it may affect staff and personnel effectiveness, motivation and morale, and impact on the Organization's ability to attract and retain a talented work force.

UNDP has zero tolerance for fraud and corruption, meaning that there are no acceptable excuses for UNDP staff members, other personnel, vendors, implementing partners and responsible parties to engage in bribery, fraud or corruption. We also encourage you to report any suspected fraud that you encounter on the internet or social media (e.g., persons appearing to impersonate UNDP or its staff to solicit funds via Facebook, GoFundMe or other such site)

All incidents of suspected fraud and corruption are to be reported, and will be assessed and, as appropriate, investigated in accordance with OAI's Investigation Guidelines and the UNDP Legal Framework for Addressing Non-compliance with UN Standards of Conduct ("UNDP Legal Framework") (see Investigations Hotline section at the end of this Code for reporting options). UNDP will rigorously pursue disciplinary and other actions against perpetrators of fraud, including recovery of financial loss suffered by UNDP, or referring a matter to local or national authorities.



- ❖ [\*UNDP Policy against Fraud and other Corrupt Practices\*](#)
- ❖ [\*Procurement Ethics, Fraud and Corrupt Practices\*](#)
- ❖ [\*UNDP Internal Control Framework\*](#)
- ❖ [\*Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service\*, s.5 \(staff\)](#)
- ❖ [\*UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations\*, Regulation 1.2\(b\) \(staff\)](#)
- ❖ [\*UNDP Legal Framework for Addressing Non-Compliance with UN Standards of Conduct\*](#)
- ❖ [\*Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials and Experts on Mission\*, s.2 \(a\) \(contractors\)](#)
- ❖ [\*Code of Conduct for International UN Volunteers\* Section 2 \(volunteers\)](#)
- ❖ [\*Code of Conduct for National UN Volunteers\* Section III \(volunteers\)](#)

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## I. ENTERPRISE RISKS

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UNDP is exposed to a variety of external and internal influencing factors that create uncertainty regarding the realization of organizational goals. The effect of this uncertainty on the objectives is also referred to as "risk". Some of these risks may be ethical in nature, such as the risk of bribery, corruption, fraud, embezzlement, kickbacks, misuse of confidential or proprietary information etc. UNDP's Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) System allows UNDP to

- identify, manage and treat all risk throughout the organization,
- identify opportunities and threats,
- encourage proactive management and better informed strategic decision taking,
- effectively allocate and use resources for risk treatment.

This will enable us to

- secure life and property,
- support the effective achievement of results,
- safeguard the accountable use of resources and
- protect corporate reputation.

We each have an obligation to mitigate risks facing UNDP *by reporting concerns we have* (by following procedures in the UNDP Legal Framework), and by following controls and other mandated steps to lessen UNDP's exposure to these risks. See UNDP's POPP on ERM for more detail.

- ❖ [UNDP POPP Policy on Enterprise Risk Management](#)
- ❖ [UNDP Legal Framework for Addressing Non-Compliance with UN Standards of Conduct](#)

## 6. PROTECTING UNDP'S INTERESTS AND REPUTATION

### A. YOUR UNDP POSITION

We should all feel proud of our work at UNDP. However, do not exaggerate your position or abuse it for personal benefit. Do not intentionally misrepresent your function, official title, or overstate the nature of your duties to anyone, including Member States, external entities, or the public we serve. Do not use your position as a means of convincing or coercing someone to provide you favorable treatment.

Further, remember that according to the Declaration of Office, we must remain independent, impartial and loyal only to the UN. It is improper for you to try to influence Member States, the UN or any of its parts, or experts, to change a position taken by the Secretary-General, even if it negatively affects you, a colleague, or a project on which you are working.

- ❖ [Declaration of Office](#)
- ❖ [Charter of the United Nations](#), s.100
- ❖ [UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations](#), Regulation 1.2 (g) and Rule 1.2 (f), (h) and (j) (staff)
- ❖ [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service](#), s.29 (staff)
- ❖ [Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials and Experts on Mission](#), s.2 (l) (contractors)

### B. DIGITAL MEDIA, PUBLICATIONS AND PUBLIC SPEAKING

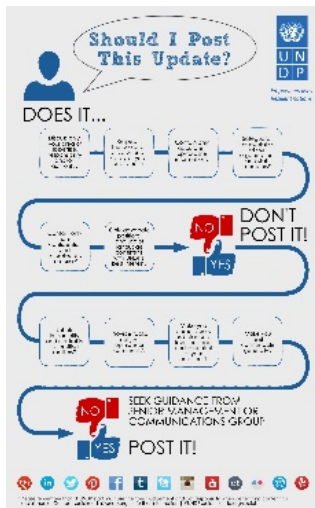
UNDP uses both traditional and digital media, such as Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, Instagram, Wikis, blogs and web pages as critical tools to inform the public about, and engage interest in, our work.

If speaking to the media, posting on social media or publishing (digitally or otherwise) is part of your official UNDP duties, you must not advance your personal point of view or support a position on a matter that is not supported by the Organization.

If speaking to the media, posting on social media or publishing (digitally or otherwise) is *not* part of your official UNDP duties, you do not speak for the Organization. Retweeting a UNDP tweet is acceptable, but embellishing it is not.

If you are not speaking on behalf of the Organization, before considering speaking to the press, issuing statements, taking part in media productions, or submitting books, articles or other material for publication or electronic dissemination related to the work of UNDP, you must seek and obtain prior approval by the Organization via the vetting and approval process detailed in the *Outside Activities* section 4 (c) above. Remember that you must remain impartial, and any positions you advance must not be inconsistent with UNDP's view on the topic or

incompatible with your status as a UNDP staff member, contractor or UN Volunteer. Even then, you must make it clear that what you are expressing are your personal views and not necessarily those of UNDP.



When using social media for *personal* purposes, it is advisable to add a disclaimer in your social media profile that your views are personal and do not necessarily reflect the endorsement of your employer. Remember, too, that whatever you say can be found online either at that moment or when searched later. It can also be

*We speak on behalf of UNDP only if we have the authority to do so.*

forwarded, re-tweeted or re-posted; though you may attempt to delete a post, internet caches retain permanent copies of posts, including any photos and videos. In any case, even when sharing in private groups, your words can circulate well beyond your original intended audience. Use care, discretion and good judgment when posting and leaving comments on social media sites. Do not use the

UNDP logo or indicate an official connection with UNDP so as to avoid confusion. Avoid political or other controversial or offensive statements, or criticisms of any government, and remember that your statements should reflect your independence, impartiality and loyalty to the UN; our obligation to remain impartial transcends contract status. Be careful not to publish UNDP confidential or proprietary information. Remember as well that, by virtue of our visibility as UNDP personnel, it may sometimes be difficult to separate your personal views from your UNDP role, such as with a Resident Coordinator; if your affiliation with UNDP is well known, the public may assume your personal views as those of UNDP. If the news media contacts you through your personal social media accounts, please bear in mind that any reply could be regarded as on the record and on behalf of UNDP.

Do not publish anything that you would not want to see reported in the news, and certainly nothing that can serve to harm the Organization's reputation. Use good judgment and professional discretion; do not engage in any social media activities that can serve to embarrass you, your co-workers or UNDP.

- ❖ [UNDP Guidelines for Social Media](#). Also see the [UNDP Guidelines for Personal Use of Social Media](#), [UNDP social media guidelines: Good practices on getting the most out of social media tools](#) or the [UNDP Social Media page](#) for further guidance on social media.
- ❖ [UNDP Publications Policy](#) and [Annex](#)
- ❖ [UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations](#), Reg.1.2(f) (staff)
- ❖ [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service](#), ss.9, 35-38 (staff)
- ❖ [Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials and Experts on Mission](#), s.2 (d) and (f)(contractors)
- ❖ [Code of Conduct for International UN Volunteers](#) Section 2 (volunteers)
- ❖ [Code of Conduct for National UN Volunteers](#) Section III (volunteers)

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## C. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

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During the course of your UNDP work, you may generate programs, documents, communications, presentations or other work products. The intellectual property of work you develop in the course of your official functions including title, copyright, trade mark and patent rights, belongs to UNDP. Similarly, you may develop or purchase software solutions for UNDP. Remember to protect all such intellectual property as any other highly valuable asset of the Organization. You may not copy software licensed to, or developed for, UNDP for your personal use, or even for official use if you do not have the appropriate software license to do so. We must always ensure the quality and integrity of all our work, but also take care not to infringe on the intellectual property rights of others. You may use other organization's information or creations only if you have received consent, or if it is publicly available without restriction. Do not install, copy or download information or programs if you do not have a license to do so, and do not install, copy or download illegally or pirated copies, or otherwise violate licensing agreements or copyright law.

- ❖ [UNDP Publications Policy](#) and [Annex](#)
- ❖ [UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations](#), Rule 1.9 (staff)

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## D. DEALING WITH THIRD PARTIES – EXTERNAL PARTNERS, DONORS, CONTRACTORS, NGOS AND VENDORS

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UNDP often engages third parties, including vendors or suppliers, NGOs, partners or private sector organizations. We must be certain to conduct due diligence before contracting with any such entity or individual in order to ensure we avoid engaging in business transactions with

***We must choose suppliers based on merit and commitment to ethics and compliance.***

parties who do not meet UNDP's expectations with regard to ethical behaviour and business practices; a simple "Google search" is not sufficient. Remember to vet principals and owners of the entities as well.

Take care to consider whether the proposed relationship would create the appearance that UNDP is not objective or that we are playing favorites: Are you affiliated somehow with the external party? Do you have a conflict of interest? If so, UNDP can suffer reputational damage. The same goes for entities that offer *pro bono* contributions or donations.

In order to enter into a potential partnership with an external entity or accept *pro bono* goods or services, you must use the established template documents that establish the terms of the agreement; deviations from standard templates must be reviewed by the [Legal Office](#). The [Bureau for External Relationships and Advocacy](#), and particularly its [Partnership group](#), also provides guidance on external partnerships including templates. You must also be familiar with the restrictions contained in the Bulletin on [Acceptance of pro bono goods and services](#).



***Click for  
UNDP's  
Supplier Code  
of Ethics***



If you are considering accepting an offer of *pro bono*, or *gratis*, personnel, or personnel under an internship or non-reimbursable loan arrangement (secondment), please take note that there are specific restrictions and guidance that must be followed and template agreements to be used. Please be certain to contact your OHR Focal Point and/or the [Procurement Services Unit](#) for further information.

If you require goods or services from outside vendors, contractors or consultants, you must follow the formal UNDP procurement process, which generally includes a competitive bidding and approval process. All vendors are expected to meet or exceed UNDP's expectations with regard to ethical behaviour and business practices, and must agree to abide by the UNDP [Supplier Code of Ethics](#). Contact the [Procurement Services Unit](#) or the [Central Procurement Unit](#) for further information.

And remember - you may not sign any contracts on behalf of UNDP unless you have appropriate authority to do so, and any deviations to standard contracts have been approved by the Legal Office. See the latest Policy on [Procurement Authority and Increased Delegated Procurement Authority](#).

- ❖ [Acceptance of pro bono goods and services](#), ST/SGB/2006/5
- ❖ [Administrative instruction - Gratis personnel](#), ST/AI/1999/6
- ❖ [Non-Reimbursable Loan Template Agreement](#)
- ❖ [Administrative Instruction on Non-Reimbursable Loan Agreement](#), ST/AI/231/Rev.1
- ❖ [Administrative Instruction – Internships](#), ST/AI/2014/1
- ❖ [UNDP Financial Regulations and Rules](#) (re procurement process)
- ❖ [UNDP Supplier Code of Ethics](#) (same as UN Supplier Code)
- ❖ [UNDP Procurement Ethics, Fraud and Corrupt Practices](#)
- ❖ [Procurement Authority and Increased Delegated Procurement Authority](#)
- ❖ [Delegation of Authorities](#)
- ❖ [Vendor Sanctions](#)

## 7. BEHAVIOR TOWARDS OTHERS – RESPECT AND TOLERANCE

As one of the most highly respected international humanitarian organizations, we are expected to help set the ethical tone for the world to follow. Our behaviour must be exemplary and a model for others to emulate. As such, we expect you to demonstrate at all times respect, tolerance and professional behaviour towards your colleagues and others, both within and outside of the Organization. Your behaviour reflects directly on UNDP and impacts our international credibility and reputation. That, in turn, has an effect on the willingness of donors to continue supporting our efforts and how well the Organization will be able to carry out its objectives in the future.

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## A. ENCOURAGE DIVERSITY

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We all come from different backgrounds and cultures – this is what makes UNDP such an exciting and dynamic place to work. Demonstrate respect for your colleagues and management, and the public we serve, including those whose languages, religions, cultures and customs differ from your own. That said, as part of UNDP, we also have an obligation to protect human rights. While we must respect local culture and abide by local law, where local culture and traditions are in conflict with the human rights recognized by UNDP or our policies and practices, (e.g., if local culture promotes gender inequality) UNDP policy must prevail in the workplace.

- ❖ [\*UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations, Reg.1.2\(a\) \(staff\)\*](#)
- ❖ [\*Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service, s. 1-13 and 40 \(staff\)\*](#)
- ❖ [\*Code of Conduct for International UN Volunteers Section 2 \(volunteers\)\*](#)
- ❖ [\*Code of Conduct for National UN Volunteers Section III \(volunteers\)\*](#)

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## B. NO SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OR ABUSE

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There is often a great disparity in economic and social power between UNDP personnel and UNDP beneficiaries or other individuals among the public we serve. Sometimes we find the people we serve or with whom we work to be very susceptible, weak or helpless. You have a particular duty of care to protect the vulnerable, especially women and children, in accordance with UNDP's international humanitarian mandate. At all times we must treat the local population with respect and dignity.

UNDP has a zero tolerance Policy for the Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA). You are prohibited from taking advantage or exploiting others for sexual or other illicit purposes, both in the workplace and outside.

Sexual exploitation includes any actual or attempted use or abuse of a position of power or trust for sexual purposes, including but not limited to profiting financially, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. Sexual abuse includes an actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

Exchange of money, employment, food, goods or services or other preferential treatment for sex, sexual favours or other exploitative behaviour is expressly prohibited.

Sexual activity with persons under the age of 18 is also prohibited, regardless of the local age of majority or of consent. Mistaken belief of the age of a person is not a defense.

Sexual exploitation and abuse represents a catastrophic failure of protection. It brings harm to those whom we – the UN, NGOs or other international organizations – are mandated to protect and jeopardizes the reputation of our organizations. It also violates universally recognized

international legal norms and standards. You are expected to avoid any behaviour that is, or could be reasonably viewed as, exploitation or abuse.

- ❖ PSEA Website <http://www.pseataaskforce.org/>
- ❖ See the video [To Serve with Pride](#) for further information. Also find it on the [Ethics Office Intranet home page](#).
- ❖ [Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse](#) ST/SGB/2003/13 (staff and contractors)
- ❖ [UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations](#), Rule 1.2(e), (f) (staff)
- ❖ [Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials and Experts on Mission](#), s.2 (k) (contractors)
- ❖ [Code of Conduct for International UN Volunteers](#) Section 2 (volunteers)
- ❖ [Code of Conduct for National UN Volunteers](#) Section III (volunteers)

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## C. NO HARASSMENT OR ABUSE OF AUTHORITY

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UNDP does not tolerate harassment – sexual or otherwise - or abuse of authority. We all must work together to maintain a harmonious working environment by behaving in a manner that is free of intimidation, hostility, offence and any form of harassment or abuse. We expect you to be respectful to your colleagues and treat them fairly.

**Workplace harassment** including mobbing or bullying, is any improper and unwelcome conduct, including words or actions that can reasonably be expected to cause offense or humiliation to another person, marginalize or exclude a person, or unreasonably disrupt that person's work. This does not include, however, the legitimate application of policies or a fair and reasoned assessment of work or job performance.

**Click to access  
UNDP Course on  
Prevention of  
Harassment,  
Sexual  
Harassment and  
Abuse of  
Authority**



**Sexual harassment** is any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favour, or any other behaviour of a sexual nature that can reasonably be expected to cause offense or humiliation to another person. Even a single incident may rise to the level of sexual harassment. This includes *quid pro quo* offers of advancement, money or other preferential treatment in exchange for sexual favours. “No means no” – if a person declines your suggestion to engage in a personal relationship, let it go. If you are a manager, it is never appropriate to attempt to engage in a personal relationship with a subordinate as that person may feel pressured against his or her will to participate, and if the relationship ends poorly, it may even lead to claims of sexual harassment.

**Abuse of authority** is the improper use of one's position of influence or power. UNDP personnel must not abuse their authority or use their power or position in a manner that is offensive, humiliating, embarrassing or intimidating to another person. Nor may they use their power for personal gain; for example, you may not require a UNDP worker to perform personal tasks for you.

Harassment and abuse include the concepts of mobbing, exclusion, marginalization, humiliation, screaming/yelling, use of profanity, and physical threats. These behaviours are all strictly prohibited.

- ❖ [\*HR User Guide, Chapter I Duties and Responsibilities, Section: Workplace Harassment & Abuse of Authority, January 2010\*](#), which serves as the UNDP (POPP) Policy on Workplace Harassment & Abuse of Authority and applies to all UNDP staff members and non-staff personnel.
- ❖ [\*Prevention of workplace harassment, sexual harassment and abuse of authority ST/SGB/2005/20\*](#)
- ❖ [\*UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations, Rule 1.2 \(f\) \(staff\)\*](#)
- ❖ [\*Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service, ss.16-22 \(staff\)\*](#)
- ❖ [\*Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials and Experts on Mission, s.2 \(k\) \(contractors\)\*](#)
- ❖ [\*Code of Conduct for International UN Volunteers Section 2 \(volunteers\)\*](#)
- ❖ [\*Code of Conduct for National UN Volunteers Section III \(volunteers\)\*](#)

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## D. NO DISCRIMINATION

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UNDP recognizes the worth and equality of all persons, without discrimination; you must do so as well. You must not engage in any unfair differential treatment or arbitrary distinction based on a person's race, ethnicity, creed, social or political background or affiliation, colour, nationality, religion, age, gender, disability, physical attributes, marital status, family size, sexual preference or orientation, LGBT status, social origin, class, caste or other similar status, whether it affects one person or a group of persons similarly situated.

When evaluating job applicants, you must consider only objective, job-related criteria such as experience, skills and integrity to determine who will best fill the needs of the Organization, through competitive, unbiased hiring.

Remember that UNDP is an organization focused on human welfare – we need to reflect these beliefs in how we interact with one another and with the public. As part of this mission, we promote gender equality, advancement of LGBT issues, religious tolerance, HIV awareness and fairness in every aspect. We are also dedicated to ensuring a balanced workforce.

- ❖ [\*HR User Guide, Chapter I Duties and Responsibilities, Section: Workplace Harassment & Abuse of Authority, January 2010\*](#), which serves as the UNDP (POPP) Policy on Workplace Harassment & Abuse of Authority and applies to all UNDP staff members and non-staff personnel.
- ❖ [\*UNDP POPP section on Appointment and Promotion\*](#)
- ❖ [\*Charter of the United Nations \(staff\)\*](#)
- ❖ [\*UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations, Rule 1.2 \(a\) \(staff\)\*](#)
- ❖ [\*Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service, ss.15-22 \(staff\)\*](#)
- ❖ [\*Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials and Experts on Mission, s.2 \(k\) \(contractors\)\*](#)
- ❖ [\*Code of Conduct for International UN Volunteers Section 2 \(volunteers\)\*](#)
- ❖ [\*Code of Conduct for National UN Volunteers Section III \(volunteers\)\*](#)

## 8. DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

The misuse and abuse of drugs and alcohol, both legal and illegal, interferes with a safe, healthy and productive work environment and is prohibited.

UNDP prohibits the use, possession, distribution or sale of illegal drugs by its personnel. Generally, personnel are not to conduct UNDP business while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol. Of course, prescribed use of prescription drugs is permitted, provided that its use does not impair the employee's ability to safely perform the essential elements of his or her work, and does not place the individual or others at risk. All personnel and management are encouraged to engage UN Medical to discuss accommodation, assistance for addiction problems, and other options that may be available.

## 9. CONDUCT OUTSIDE OF WORK AND POST-EMPLOYMENT RESTRICTIONS

### A. OUTSIDE OF WORKING HOURS

In earlier sections of this Code, we have discussed outside activities requiring prior approval, social media and public speaking. However, it is also critical that you understand your UNDP obligations do not end at the conclusion of the workday. How you comport yourself in your private life reflects upon how others view UNDP. We expect that all personnel will embody UNDP's values in all that they do and say both inside and outside of the workplace. Although your social activities and interactions outside of work are generally private, remember that, especially in field missions, you may be recognized and associated with UNDP. Your appropriate behavior and obligations as an impartial, independent representative of UNDP transcend your work hours. You must not act in ways that can bring disrepute to the Organization, compromise its interests, or undermine its position. As noted earlier, you are also expected to obey local laws and honor your private legal commitments. Remember, your "...privileges and immunities furnish no excuse to the staff members who are covered by them to fail to observe laws and police regulations of the State in which they are located, nor do they furnish an excuse for non-performance of their private obligations."<sup>6</sup>



- ❖ [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service](#), s.42 (staff)
- ❖ [UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations](#), Rule 1.2 (f) (staff)
- ❖ [Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials and Experts on Mission](#), s.2 (d) (contractors)
- ❖ [Code of Conduct for International UN Volunteers](#) Section 2 (volunteers)

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<sup>6</sup> UN Staff Regulation 1.1(f)



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## B. POST-EMPLOYMENT RESTRICTIONS

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Whether you resign, retire, or are involuntarily terminated, your obligations of confidentiality do not cease when your service ends. You have a perpetual obligation to maintain the confidentiality of proprietary and other non-public information that came to your knowledge through your work at UNDP.

Additionally, there are specific restrictions that may affect your ability to accept certain jobs after your employment with UNDP ends. Specifically, if you are involved in procurement activities at UNDP – which includes selecting or approving contractors, authorizing payments, managing the contractor database, participating in preparing specifications, overseeing or auditing contractor work, and more – you may be prohibited from working for certain UNDP vendors for a period of time following the end of your employment with UNDP; see the Bulletin on Post-Employment Restrictions below.

Finally, UNDP's Recruitment and Selection Policy contains other restrictions concerning movement of staff between government positions and back to UNDP. The concept of “revolving door” is frowned upon and reemployment after serving in a government role may be subject to additional scrutiny.

- ❖ [Post-employment restrictions](#) (Procurement staff) ST/SGB/2006/15. *If you are involved in procurement activities at UNDP, while employed at UNDP and for the specific periods noted thereafter, you may not solicit nor may you accept offers of future employment from any NGO, supplier, contractor or vendor.*
- ❖ [UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations](#), Regulation 1.2(i) (staff)
- ❖ [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service](#), ss.26 and 39 (staff), including that you should also not take advantage of your former position by attempting to influence or lobbying the Organization on behalf of someone with a view to obtaining employment from that person.
- ❖ [Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials and Experts on Mission](#), s.2 (f) (contractors)
- ❖ [Recruitment and Selection Framework](#)

## PART THREE: OBLIGATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

### 1. DUTY TO COMPLY

#### A. DUTY TO COMPLY

Because UNDP (and the UN as a whole) is not subject to any nation's laws, rules or regulations, we have established a body of policies, bulletins, administrative instructions, rules, regulations and standards to govern your/our behaviour. You are expected to know and obey the rules and standards that apply to you – ignorance is no excuse. If you are unsure of what to do, or whether a particular rule or policy applies to you, seek guidance from your manager, the Office of Human Resources, the Legal Office or the Ethics Office. You are still obligated to follow the rule, policy etc. even when another individual does not, including your management. Remember, too, that we are each responsible for our own behaviour; if you are asked to do something that you know, or believe, violates a rule, policy or the like, you are obligated to refuse to do so.



- ❖ Staff members are also obliged to take the mandatory UNDP Ethics on-line training course, [Ethics and Integrity at UNDP](#). Available in [English](#), [Español](#), [Français](#).

#### B. OBLIGATIONS AT EVERY LEVEL

Leaders are no different than lower level staff; we are all bound by the same ethical standards of the Organization. Leaders, however, do have a special obligation to embody and promote those standards to their staff and co-workers, embracing role model behaviors and setting the “tone at the top”. This includes mid-level managers whose day-to-day responsibilities put them in close contact with personnel, and close to the delivery of the products and services we provide. As such, they set the “mood in the middle” and are critical to the success of the effort to strengthen the ethical culture at UNDP and embed ethical behaviour in all that we do.



All managers and supervisors are expected to provide advice and guidance, support good conduct, and foster a culture where personnel feel free to raise concerns, ask questions and make

suggestions without fear of reprisal or retaliation. Moreover, managers need to be diligent so as not to delegate discretionary authority to individuals who exhibit questionable judgment or who may have a propensity to engage in unethical or illegal activities.



Finally, UNDP personnel at all levels play an indispensable role by embodying ethical behaviour at UNDP. Your influence on your co-workers, and the Organization as a whole, cannot be underestimated. We are all responsible for our own actions, or inactions, but we are also responsible for influencing the behaviour of our co-workers and peers. Set the appropriate ethical tone in your workplace, and expect no less of others.

## 2. CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE

Integrity is doing the right thing, even if no one is watching. Not only is our expectation that personnel should be honest and engage in good, appropriate, ethical behaviour, but the raw practicality is that if you do something wrong, you will likely be caught. If you are found to have violated rules, regulations, policies, standards, bulletins or administrative issuances or local laws, you may be subject to discipline up to and including demotion, loss of privileges summary dismissal or termination of your contract, or, depending on the violation, even referral to local authorities for possible criminal prosecution.

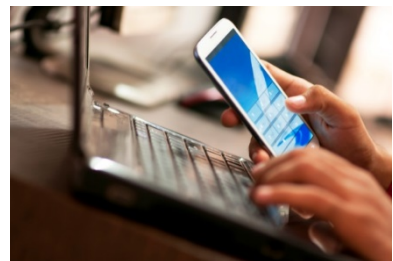
- ❖ [UNDP Legal Framework for Addressing Non-Compliance with UN Standards of Conduct](#) (staff)
- ❖ [UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations, Rule 1.2 \(d\)](#) (staff)
- ❖ [Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials and Experts on Mission Contractors](#)
- ❖ [Code of Conduct for International UN Volunteers](#) Section 2 (volunteers)
- ❖ [Code of Conduct for National UN Volunteers](#) Section III (volunteers)

## 3. REPORTING WRONGDOING AND PROTECTION FROM RETALIATION

### A. DUTY TO REPORT

**If you see something, say something. What does this mean?**

Management must maintain an open-door, speak up culture, where staff and other personnel can approach them with concerns of any sort, without fear that they will be punished for doing so. If you see, or suspect, that a UNDP staff member or other personnel, or a vendor, supplier, partner, government official, NGO or anyone else is acting or has acted improperly (or if you receive credible information from someone else that leads you to believe there may be improper activity taking place, such as harassment, fraud or corruption etc.), ***you have an obligation to report the suspected misconduct without fear of reprisal or retribution.***



Speak to your manager or, if you have concerns raising the matter with your manager, speak to another manager. Alternatively, the Office of Audit and Investigations maintains an [Investigations Hotline](#) for that purpose; personnel who report wrongdoing have the option of remaining anonymous (except in matters alleging workplace harassment or abuse of authority

because the victim must identify him/herself). Finally, you always have the option to approach the Ethics Office for confidential advice and guidance at +1-212-906-7840 or at [ethicsoffice@undp.org](mailto:ethicsoffice@undp.org). The Ethics Office cannot be compelled to disclose the matter you discuss, or the fact that you sought its guidance.

- ❖ [UNDP Policy on Protection against Retaliation](#)
- ❖ [UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations](#), Rule 1.2(c) (staff)
- ❖ [UNDP Legal Framework for Addressing Compliance with UN Standards of Conduct](#) (staff)
- ❖ [UNDP Policy against Fraud and other Corrupt Practices](#) (staff and contractors)

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## B. PROTECTION FROM RETALIATION

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*Click here to  
access a brief  
course on  
UNDP's  
Protection  
against  
Retaliation*



UNDP actively promotes “whistleblowing”, which means we encourage you to come forward, speak up, speak out and raise good faith concerns of possible misconduct, fraud, corruption, harassment, abuse of authority, discrimination or other wrongdoing. We support an open environment where such good faith reporting is viewed as a ***positive*** action – because you are *protecting* the best interests of the organization. In fact, under the UN Staff Rule 1.2(c):

***“Staff members have the duty to report any breach of the Organization’s regulations and rules to the officials whose responsibility it is to take appropriate action and to cooperate with duly authorized audits and investigations. Staff members shall not be retaliated against for complying with these duties.”***

# WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION

Thus, you are encouraged to make good faith reports of wrongdoing without fear of reprisal or retaliation; you cannot be punished for fulfilling your obligation. Leaders are counselled to support this speak-up, open-door culture where personnel feel comfortable bringing their concerns to light. Under UNDP’s Policy for Protection against Retaliation, the Ethics Office is empowered to protect staff, contractors, interns and UNVs from retaliation for good faith reporting of misconduct or for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations. And remember, retaliation is itself misconduct. If you believe that you have been subject to retaliation or a threat of retaliation because you reported misconduct or cooperated with an audit or investigation, contact the [Ethics Office](#) for confidential advice and guidance.

- ❖ [UNDP Policy on Protection against Retaliation](#)
- ❖ [Protection Against Retaliation form](#)
- ❖ [Informational Brochure on Protection against Retaliation](#)
- ❖ [PaR Informational Flyer](#)
- ❖ [UNDP Ethics Office Confidentiality Policy](#)
- ❖ [UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations](#), Rule 1.2(c) (staff)
- ❖ [ST/SGB/2017/2](#) Protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations

## PART FOUR: ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING

### 1. MAKING ETHICAL DECISIONS



Computers can only follow rules. Human beings, on the other hand, make real-life decisions that require discretion and judgment. While we are also expected to (generally) follow rules, sometimes we are unsure whether the rules apply, or we are faced with unique sets of facts. How do you make an “ethical” decision? When faced with an ethical dilemma, consider the following:



- What are the relevant facts? What are the issues? Who may be affected by this decision?
- Are there specific rules and guidelines for this situation? Does it comply?
- Do you have information that should cause you to question taking certain action?
- Will my decision reflect well on UNDP in the eyes of the public, Member States and donors?
- How would I feel if my decision were to appear on the front page of tomorrow's newspaper or circulated on social media?
- Do I need help deciding what to do?

If you are not certain what to do, get the advice you need. Seek guidance from your manager, the Ethics Office or one of the other resources listed under C) below.

### 2. A FINAL WORD ABOUT THE ROLE OF THE ETHICS OFFICE

The UNDP Ethics Office is an independent, confidential, impartial, and professional resource for all personnel, everywhere. We promote an organizational culture that places the highest value on honesty, integrity, accountability, transparency, and mutual respect.

The Ethics Office offers five lines of service:

- Providing confidential, pragmatic ethics advice and guidance.
- Promoting ethics awareness and education initiatives on ethics, values and standards.
- Providing protection against retaliation and promoting whistleblowing.
- Administering the Financial Disclosure Programme and addressing conflicts of interest.
- Consulting on, developing and clarifying standards, policies and principles.



What does this mean? The Ethics Office provides confidential advice to UNDP personnel around the globe and generally cannot be required to disclose information brought to our attention in confidence nor can we disclose the name of anyone who seeks our advice, unless that person gives us permission to do so. Except in very limited circumstances, the Ethics Office cannot be compelled by anyone (or any body) to reveal information that has been imparted to us in confidence. You can feel free to seek our counsel secure in the knowledge that our conversation will remain private.

❖ [\*Informational Brochure on the Ethics Office\*](#)

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*Click here to  
access a brief  
course on  
Helpful Offices  
at UNDP*



## OTHER UNDP RESOURCES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

For a summary of how these offices can help you, read [Where to go When](#) on the Ethics Office intranet site or [watch the linked video](#).

### ⇒ **Ethics Office**

One UN Plaza, DC-1 23<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10017  
USA

Helpline: +1-212-909-7840

Fax: +1-212-906-6153

Email: [ethicsoffice@undp.org](mailto:ethicsoffice@undp.org)

Skype account: ethics.office.undp

Intranet: <https://intranet.undp.org/unit/office/ethics/default.aspx>

### ⇒ **Office of Audit and Investigation (OAI) (For Hotline information, see below)**

One UN Plaza, DC-1 4th Floor  
New York, NY, 10017  
USA

Tel: +1-646-781-4302

Fax: +1-646-781-4333

Intranet: <https://intranet.undp.org/unit/office/oai/default.aspx>

## INVESTIGATIONS HOTLINE

The investigations hotline, managed by an independent service provider on behalf of UNDP to protect confidentiality, can be directly accessed worldwide and free of charge in different ways:

- **EMAIL**  
Email directly to OAI at: [reportmisconduct@undp.org](mailto:reportmisconduct@undp.org)
- **ONLINE REFERRAL FORM** (*You will be redirected to an independent third-party site.*)
- **PHONE - REVERSED CHARGES**  
Call +1-770-776-5678 worldwide (interpreters available 24 hours/day)  
Call +1-877-557-8685 in the USA  
Fax at +1-770-409-5008 worldwide

- **REGULAR MAIL**

Deputy Director (Investigations), Office of Audit and Investigations, UNDP  
One UN Plaza, DC-1 4th Floor  
New York, NY, 10017

⇒ **Office of Human Resources**

One UN Plaza, DC-1 18<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10017  
USA

Tel: +1-212-906-5200

Fax: +1-212 906-5282

Intranet: <https://intranet.undp.org/unit/ohr/SitePages/intranet.aspx>

⇒ **Office of the Ombudsman for UN Funds and Programmes**

304 East 45<sup>th</sup> St.  
Room FF-671  
New York, NY 10017  
USA

Tel: +1 646-781- 4083

Fax: +1 212-906 -6281

Email: [ombudsmediation@fpombudsman.org](mailto:ombudsmediation@fpombudsman.org)

Intranet: <https://intranet.undp.org/unit/office/ombud/default.aspx>

Internet: [www.fpombudsman.org](http://www.fpombudsman.org)

⇒ **Legal Office**

304 East 45th Street, 16th Floor  
New York, NY 10017  
USA

Tel: +1-212-906-5501

Fax: +1-212-906-6911

Intranet: <https://intranet.undp.org/unit/oalts/lso/SitePages/Intranet.aspx>