

## Social Media

We all take social media for granted. Every day, we spend time on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Flickr, blogs and many other web pages and apps. First, please remember to keep work and pleasure separate: If speaking to the media is not part of your official duties, you must refrain from doing so. Do not say or imply that you speak on behalf of UNDP, or use our logo, or say anything that will embarrass you or the Organization. Even though re-tweeting official messages is encouraged, do not take the opportunity to reinforce the message by embellishing to emphasize your support. Make it clear you speak for yourself and not UNDP. And most importantly, do not express views that are inconsistent with or contrary to the best interests of UNDP. This particularly comes into play when dealing with political activities. Though you are encouraged to exercise your right to vote, do not use social media to criticize governments, and do not become involved in political debate or protest in any forum. [Remember that we all must remain independent and impartial.](#)

## Financial Issues including Investments (Financial Disclosure Programme)

The Financial Disclosure Programme and the on-boarding Conflict of Interest Disclosure form both seek to identify actual, potential or apparent conflicts of interest. For example, it would be inappropriate for you to have a significant investment in a company that does (or seeks to do) business with UNDP. The personal financial interest you hold may appear to affect your objectivity and tempt you to show favoritism towards that company. To manage that sort of conflict of interest, certain UNDP personnel, such as D1/P6 staff (and above) and procurement or investment professionals, are required to annually disclose private interests through UNDP's Financial Disclosure Programme. Visit the Ethics Office [FDP page](#) on the intranet for more information.

## Reference Documents for Conflicts of Interest

- [UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations, Regulation 1.2 \(f\), \(m\) and Rule 1.2 \(q\)](#)
- [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service, s.23](#)
- [Policy on Family Relationships](#)
- UN Gifts AI [Reporting, retaining and disposing of honors, decorations, favors, gifts or remuneration from governmental and non-governmental sources](#) (ST/AI/2010/1)
- [UNDP Gifts Guidance Note](#)
- UNDP Gift Registration Form [EN](#) [FR](#) [ES](#)
- [Outside Activities](#), ST/AI/2000/13
- [Outside Activities](#), ST/IC/2006/30
- [Policy for the Financial Disclosure Programme and Declaration of Interest Statements](#)

***This brochure is intended as a general guide.  
For more information, please contact the Ethics Office.***



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Resilient nations.*

**UNDP Ethics Office**  
One United Nations Plaza  
(DC-1-23rd Floor) New York, NY  
10017 USA

**Email:** [ethicsoffice@undp.org](mailto:ethicsoffice@undp.org) **Phone:**  
+1-212-909-7840  
**Fax:** +1-212-906-6153  
**Intranet:** Go to the [Ethics Intranet site](#)

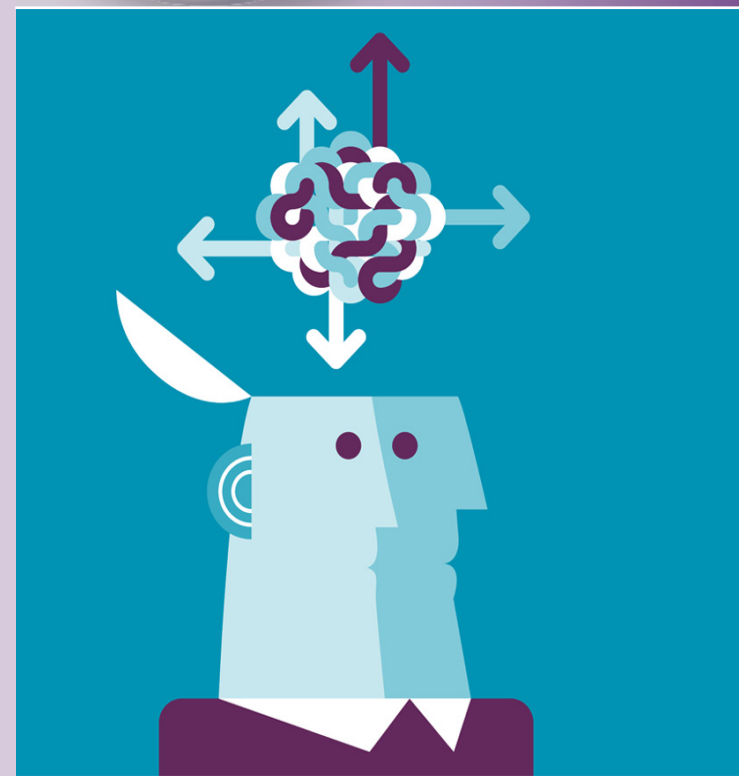
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## ETHICS OFFICE

### PREVENTING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST



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## CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

As staff members, contractors, volunteers and other personnel, we are all told to **avoid conflicts of interest**.

### What does that mean?

Simply put, it means to avoid situations where your objectivity or motives can be questioned. While you work for UNDP, the interests of UNDP come first. A conflict of interest is a situation where your personal interests are inconsistent, or appear to be at odds, with UNDP's interests. For example, is a company offering you gifts while looking to secure a contract with UNDP? Is your brother-in-law asking you to use your influence to get him hired at the UN? Are you thinking of Tweeting an opinion or writing a blog posting that is critical of or contrary to UNDP's position on an issue?

Potential conflict of interest situations do not necessarily imply corruption, wrongdoing or inappropriate activities. However, once a conflict is detected if it is not identified and managed appropriately, the situation can compromise (or be perceived as compromising) your professional integrity as well as the values, integrity and reputation of UNDP. It is important for us to maintain our integrity, impartiality and objectivity at all times. If we do not, the international community, including donors, Member States, and the public we serve will lose confidence in UNDP, which, in turn, will affect our ability to carry out our missions. Whenever we make decisions, big or small, we must not let our personal views or interests cloud our judgment. Our decisions must reflect the best interests of UNDP.

However, even when you believe that you are able to make a sound, fair and fully supported decision, you need to be aware of how your conduct may appear to others. For example, if you wear a t-shirt displaying the logo of a vendor – someone providing or seeking to provide services or goods to UNDP – other vendors

may believe that you have already decided on a vendor, and that the competitive bid process is biased and merely for show. Accepting even a small gift from a vendor may send a message that the vendor will be favored. This is unacceptable.

### Conflicts of interest arise in many situations. Here are the most common:

#### Family and Personal Relationships

Ties with friends or family could appear to undermine the standards of fairness and objectivity that we are expected to uphold at UNDP. Imagine how it would appear to your colleagues if the head of your department was your relative. UNDP has a specific policy that restricts hiring of family members. Similarly, if your family owns a business, you cannot be involved in the decision whether UNDP should contract with that entity. You have an obvious conflict – your family's best interests vs UNDP's best interests. In order to avoid any questions as to why a particular **candidate or vendor** is selected, you should disclose your relationship and never take part in the decision-making process if you have a personal interest at stake.

#### Gifts

Accepting gifts can give the impression that you will favor the giver in future decisions. In general, you are expected to refuse all gifts, honors, decorations, monetary or other awards, meals, entertainment or other favors, from all sources, while working for UNDP. There are few exceptions to this rule, such as if you are offered an unanticipated honor or gift by a government and to refuse could cause embarrassment to UNDP. But such exceptions are few and far between and gifts accepted must be reported. Contact the Ethics Office or see the [Gifts Guidance Note](#) on the [Ethics Intranet](#) for further clarification.

#### Outside Employment and Activities

We understand that you have personal activities and interests outside of the workplace. Many of us are involved in outside pursuits. However, you are expected to devote your full time and attention to your duties at UNDP. Therefore, UNDP requires that you obtain prior approval before taking part in any outside activities such as a second job, university teaching, a personal business, publishing, public speaking or a Board membership. [The Request for Approval of an Outside Activity form \(FR, SP\)](#) is available on the Ethics Office intranet, and enables the Ethics Office to vet your proposed activity for actual, potential and apparent conflicts of interest. We can then provide you with detailed guidance, as appropriate, to avoid even the appearance of impropriety. Importantly, any outside activity must be consistent with the ideals and values of UNDP and the UN at large (e.g., your outside activity cannot support positions contrary to those held by UNDP). Of course if it is not possible to mitigate the conflict, or the activity is contrary to the best interests of UNDP or inconsistent with your functions or status, the Ethics Office will not recommend approval.

You do not need approval for undertaking studies, or any unpaid social or charitable activity that is unrelated to your work, unremunerated and done on your own time.

You are encouraged to consult the Ethics Office if you need help identifying or handling an actual, potential or apparent conflict of interest situation, or for clarification of the relevant rules and procedures. This will safeguard your professional integrity and reputation, as well as that of UNDP. The Ethics Office welcomes your inquiries and maintains strict confidentiality.