

**Oceans Alive Foundation**

**Institutional Tools**

**of**

**Code of Conduct**

*Final*

**Background**

To uphold our image, our reputation and brand, the OA Board of Trustees, have issued these policies which establish their commitment to safeguard against Oceans Alive actions that may lead to adverse exploitation of the environment, or do harm to vulnerable communities, women and children. The intention is not to put at risk our rural, coastal communities who face challenges of food and energy insecurity, environmental degradation, economic and educational nature, and it observes the protection of children, described as youth under 18 years.

**Policy Objectives**

Oceans Alive is committed to delivering sustainable benefits through our programs and projects, and we place great importance on the rights of our partner communities, partner organizations, our beneficiaries and our people. To create a safe, considerate and positive working culture we have developed safeguard policies that guide our work and ensure we “do no harm”, neither to the environment nor to the people we work with and the communities we support and their children. This means protecting communities from the potential risk and harm that could arise from coming in contact with anyone working for or with us, or from our activities, or our in-action and our programs and projects.

**Policy Application**

These policies are summarized in this Code of Conduct that applies to all who work for and are associated with the Oceans Alive brand, notably;

1. Employees
2. Consultants
3. Visitors
4. Board Members
5. Volunteers and interns
6. Partners
7. Trainers of trainers
8. Partners and
9. Stakeholders

Everyone who works with, partners with, are associated with and stakeholders and those who visits with, Oceans Alive are expected to agree to, support, and abide by these policies. Specifically, this Code applies to our staff, partners, consultants and any visitors to our offices, sites, programs and partner communities, and we take a zero tolerance approach to anyone who contravenes our Code of Conduct or does potential harm to the image of Oceans Alive.

**Code of Conduct:**

Each individual listed and those that interacts with Oceans Alive is ultimately responsible to ensure compliance with this policy, and its reporting obligations.

We must therefore, as a team, through our actions, or inactions:

1. Respect our partner communities’ heritage, customs and culture, and not offend or alter.
2. Not knowingly commit a criminal offence.
3. In all we do, abide by the national and county government legislative framework that governs all that we promote.
4. Not endanger the health and safety of an individual or put their livelihoods at risk.
5. Be aware of, and do your best to limit your environmental impact.
6. With the exception of salaries from employment and travel allowances, all persons, and your immediate family and close friends, should not receive a personal gain or financial benefit from project expenditures or operations (e.g. receive additional income from accommodation and travel allowances, or profit from supplying goods or services).
7. Maintain receipted records of all expenditures and incomes segregated by projects and departments, ensuring proper accounting, and annual audits and financial reports are presented to the Board.
8. Produce factual progress reports of our achievements and avoid any fake news or raised expectations in our outward reporting.
9. All employment opportunities must be advertised widely, and recruiters must carry out unbiased recruitment for all positions, declaring and withdrawing if any conflict of interest.
10. Conduct yourself professionally and work hard and be dedicated to achieve your Brand, project goals, and uphold our good image;
11. Not to exploit, abuse or harass, in any way, community members, partners, colleagues or children.
12. Not to engage in sexual relationships with direct beneficiaries of our programs and with members of the communities where we work (unless you are originally from, or have become a long term resident of that community).
13. Not engage in any form of transactional sex or relationships where the giving and/or receiving of gifts, money, employment opportunities or other services is used to gain sexual favours.
14. Comply with internal administrative policies, the most important of which are gender, child and vulnerable adult protection, avoid personal or sexual harassment, do not participate in any form of bribery and fraud.
15. Not show discrimination of race, culture, age, qualifications, gender, disability, religion, sexuality, political persuasion or other status.
16. Not act in any way that embarrasses, shames, humiliates or degrades anyone, a vulnerable adult or child.
17. You must not conceal any information relating to any incidents or behavior that contravenes this Code of Conduct.
18. Bring attention to management when any incident or knowledge comes to light that our actions or inactions have caused confusion, mis-understanding or conflict, and do what is need to diminish and defuse the situation.
19. Ensure that our government, NGO, CBO and community partners are consulted each step of the way to ensure harmony, avoiding mis-representation.

**General Behaviour**

All staff are expected to uphold the image of Oceans Alive and conduct themselves as follows:

1. Be respectful and professional with all interactions.
2. Listen and communicate clearly, avoid any misunderstanding, misconception or misrepresentation.
3. Use common sense in dialogue with community, be caring, sympathetic, attentive, sensitive and aware of needs, avoid heated debates and show of tempers.
4. Act in an appropriate, respectful manner according to local custom and culture.
5. Be sympathetic to community needs, but be aware of your responsibility, to not raise undue expectations.
6. Be aware and do not contravene local customs, policies, procedures and traditional laws and regulations.
7. Promote state protocols as relates to the COVID pandemic, and observe these protocols in all interactions at meetings, with staff and communities (ie social distancing, wearing mask, vaccination, etc).
8. Draw attention to the prevention of HIV/AIDs and address and resolve any fish for sex type behaviour.
9. Promote actions that combat climate change and reduce threats to the environment, assist communities with options to tackle issues, like resource over-exploitation, pollution, plastics, poor sanitation, etc.

**Whistle-blowing**

We are an open, self-critical and transparent organization and we have created a reporting procedure to support our Code of Conduct. If you believe that someone working for or with us is not supporting or abiding by the Code of Conduct you should raise your concern confidentially with management (ie CEO or Program Manager-PgM). We encourage you to report any wrong-doing, notably:

1. We will take all reports seriously and commit to investigate all reports thoroughly.
2. We assure employees making reports of anonymity, protection from suffering a detriment or having their contract terminated for ‘whistleblowing’.
3. However, if the procedure has not been invoked in good faith (e.g. is used for malicious reasons or in pursuit of a personal grudge), and the investigation concludes that the report was malicious or vexatious, then offender may be subject to disciplinary action.

**Signed in Acceptance**

The undersigned acknowledge having read, understood and commit to abide by this Code of Conduct to uphold the good image of the Oceans Alive brand.

Signed and dated by staff: ……………………….

Name of Staff: ……………………….

Position in Oceans Alive: ………………………