



Safeguarding Guideline of KOLPING INTERNATIONAL

with validity for all its legal entities

Prevention and protection against abuse and sexualized violence in our organization

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The self-image of KOLPING INTERNATIONAL, adopted by the 2017 International Convention in Lima, formulates the commitment to "respect and defend human dignity". In addition to our daily commitment in the work of the Association, we must and want to express this claim in the way we go about our work and how we can protect people from danger as part of our work.

KOLPING INTERNATIONAL sees it as its task to strengthen people in the exercise of their rights and in their development opportunities. It is our mission to protect them from dangers, which include exploitation, sexual violence and abuse in particular. KOLPING INTERNATIONAL pursues a zero-tolerance policy towards abuse and exploitation in any form.

The aim of KOLPING INTERNATIONAL is to provide a safe learning and living space for all people who become involved in our Association or engage in activities on the basis of our self-image. In this space, human development should be promoted and dignity and integrity respected. Active protection against violence, especially sexualized violence, must be provided. Psychological and physical violations of boundaries must also be avoided at all costs.

Prevention as a basic principle of professional action helps to strengthen people in their development into responsible and socially competent personalities. This includes respecting sexuality as an important part of human life. It is important to us to create a working environment in which diversity, equal opportunities, gender equality and the protection of children and vulnerable groups are promoted and all those involved in implementing the organizational goals treat each other with mutual respect. This requires "a climate in which power structures - including between genders - can be openly reflected upon. The aim is to create an organizational culture of mindfulness, observation, intervention, respect, appreciation and respect for personal boundaries"¹.

Our aim is to

- support people in their healthy physical and mental development,
- be mindful of closeness and distance and to respect the privacy and personal boundaries of shame of children and adults in need of protection or help,
- take cultural circumstances into account when dealing with children and adults in need of protection or assistance,
- protect the dignity of children and adults in need of protection or assistance and their living environment when reporting,
- be mindful when dealing with positions of trust or authority.

What does Safeguarding mean?

For us, safeguarding includes protection from sexualized violence and exploitation as well as child protection. Safeguarding stands for our organization's responsibility to ensure that our employees and our programs and projects neither harm children and vulnerable adults themselves nor expose them to the risk of harm and abuse. This includes violence by employees towards other employees.

KOLPING INTERNATIONAL therefore understands safeguarding as *the entirety of processes and measures that contribute to protection against violence and to a safe working environment*. In particular, the protection and empowerment of vulnerable individuals is at the forefront of our efforts to support their health and well-being.

This Safeguarding Guideline presents KOLPING INTERNATIONAL's approach, the preventive measures, the incident management system, the implementation with partners and the future development of the guideline.

Sexualized violence in our context

In our work, we may encounter sexualized violence in different contexts. Precarious living conditions, violent conflicts, humanitarian disasters, large social disparities and dependencies increase the risk of sexualized violence. These conflict-prone situations are often associated with some form of abuse of women and men, children and adolescents. Deficient education and legal systems are also risk factors. Added to this are the unequal power relations in international cooperation. One of the reasons for this is financial dependency.

¹ VENRO: Code of Conduct Transparency, Organizational Governance (2018)

In church contexts, spiritual dependencies are added. Perpetrators use their positions of power and authority to satisfy their own needs at the expense of those affected. The hierarchical structure of the church can make it easier for perpetrators to abuse trust in the institution and its representatives. A lack of control and accountability fosters sexualized violence.

Our understanding of *violence* is based on the definition by Agiamondo (2022)². According to this definition, violence is any act that causes or is intended to cause physical, emotional, psychological, economic or other harm to people.

Violence can take different forms: as a **violation of boundaries**, as a **threat**, as an **assault** or as **criminal behavior**. KOLPING INTERNATIONAL wants to be an organization in which boundary violations are addressed and personal boundaries are respected.

Boundary violations describe inappropriate behavior and statements that occur only once or occasionally, even if unintentionally. The reasons are usually a lack of personal or professional reflection. Repeated boundary violations are to be regarded as invasive.

In the Safeguarding Guideline, we distinguish between various forms of violence that are increasingly being committed via the internet.

Physical violence is the actual or potential physical injury of people.

Sexualized violence and sexual exploitation occur when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive another person into a sexual act or with sexual intent. This also means when sexual acts are demanded in return for (a) something the victim needs or wants and/or (b) financial gain or increased status of the perpetrator or an intermediary.

Sexualized violence against children and persons under protection refers to sexual acts carried out on or in front of a child, person under protection or a vulnerable person as well as sexual acts that take advantage of a relationship of dependency. Any sexual act performed on or in front of a person either against their will or to which the person cannot knowingly consent due to physical, psychological, cognitive or linguistic inferiority is to be described as sexualized violence. In accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, we consider all those under the age of 18 to be children. Any kind of sexual act with a person under the age of 18 is abuse.

Psychological and emotional violence includes verbal abuse, humiliation, discrimination, stigmatization, bullying or devaluation of a person. In the case of children or persons under protection and other vulnerable people, this also includes rejection which has a negative impact on the psychological and behavioural development, as well as depriving a child of an age-appropriate environment that fosters their psychosocial development.

Gender-based violence describes violence that is inflicted on a person because of their gender. It is driven by gender inequality and an abuse of power.

Spiritual violence describes any form of violence and repeated violations of boundaries that are carried out with reference to a religious doctrine or to religiously based authority structures in order to exert influence

² https://www.agiamondo.de/fileadmin/user_upload/A_PDF-Dateien/D_Basisdokumente/Safeguarding_Policys/AM_Safeguarding-Policy_2022-07-08_DE.pdf

and pressure on a person's life in an encroaching manner, even to the point of controlling their entire way of life.

Our duty

KOLPING INTERNATIONAL, as both an employer and a partner in international cooperation, works to ensure that (sexualized) violence in any form is prevented, condemned, and, if necessary, prosecuted, and implements standards in its own organization.

This mission can only be accomplished in trusting cooperation with the partners of KOLPING INTERNATIONAL.

Our Code of Conduct

The following rules of conduct apply to honorary and employed staff, employees, volunteers and all persons working on behalf of KOLPING INTERNATIONAL. The partner organizations are obliged by contract to develop their own rules of conduct.

- I respect the dignity and rights of all people.
- I am committed to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents sexualized violence and ensures the implementation of the guideline, to the best of my abilities.
- I will ensure that the KOLPING INTERNATIONAL Safeguarding Code of Conduct is observed in the respective working environment and emphasize its importance in appropriate situations. I will inform myself about the respective codes of conduct of the partner organizations with which I work.
- I pay attention to culturally and power-sensitive communication as well as to the needs of the person concerned when I take a stand against discriminatory, violent and sexist behavior, whether in word, image or deed.
- If people behave in an abusive manner, I work to protect the person concerned, taking into account the particularities that arise from my role and the context, such as increased security risks.
- I do not engage in sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18, regardless of local laws. Misguided assumptions about a person's age are no excuse.
- I refrain from all actions that endanger the dignity and well-being of persons or even lead to (sexualized) violence.
- I will not offer money, employment, goods or services in exchange for sexual services, including sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior. This also includes offering support to which the beneficiaries are entitled.
- In the partner country, I will not visit localities or stay in hotels where (sexual) exploitation and prostitution are known to take place.
- When reporting on people and their living conditions as part of public relations work, I respect the dignity of these people.
- I am also aware of my responsibility in my private life and especially when using social media, and I do not share images, videos or messages with inhumane content.

Failure to comply may result in disciplinary, labor and possibly criminal consequences.

Measures to fulfill the guideline

The following measures are implemented by KOLPING INTERNATIONAL to ensure that employees, volunteers and persons commissioned by KOLPING INTERNATIONAL comply with the rules of conduct:

1. Personnel management and selection

- The guideline is handed out during personnel selection interviews, order clarification meetings, etc., and safeguarding is actively addressed, as it is during the familiarization phase.
- Reference is made to the guideline in all employment contracts. The Code of Conduct is signed by everyone as part of the employment contract/assignment.
- The Human Resources managers address the issue of prevention of sexualized violence in job interviews, during the induction period and in regular performance reviews.
- All employees shall submit an extended police clearance certificate. The costs for this are borne by the employer. The extended police clearance certificates are submitted to the relevant Human Resources department for inspection. The date of issue of the extended police clearance certificate (the issue must not date back more than three months) is noted there and it is checked whether there is "no entry in the area of Article 72a Para. 1 SGB VIII (German Social Insurance Code)" (passage on the exclusion of persons with relevant criminal records from working in child and youth welfare). The personnel department forwards this information to the KOLPING INTERNATIONAL Safeguarding Officer. The extended police clearance certificate shall be resubmitted every five years. This is monitored by the Safeguarding Officer.
- All employees shall submit a self-declaration. The self-disclosure declaration contains information as to whether the person to be employed has been convicted of a criminal offense pursuant to Section 72a (1) SGB VIII (German Social Insurance Code) and whether a public prosecutor's investigation has been initiated against them in this respect. In addition, the obligation is included to inform KOLPING INTERNATIONAL immediately if such a public prosecutor's investigation is initiated. (see Attachment 3)
- When new employees are hired, they shall present an extended police clearance certificate and sign the self-declaration before the contract is concluded.
- As part of its training programme, KOLPING INTERNATIONAL conducts ongoing training for all employees and the International Executive Board on the prevention of and dealing with sexualized violence.
- Employees pay attention to communication and interaction so that there is no room for sexualized language and boundary violations. Managers are responsible for ensuring that responsibilities, procedures and measures are known and that the Guideline is adhered to.

2. Project funding

The following rules apply to project funding and partner dialog:

- Employees are required to discuss the prevention and handling of sexualized violence and exploitation with project partners, to support the exchange of experiences and to develop a common understanding.
- KOLPING INTERNATIONAL's funding criteria outline the prevention of and dealing with sexualized violence as an essential component of project funding.
- Existing guidelines from the project partners are requested already during the application process and reference is made to our Safeguarding Guideline. The applications must be adapted accordingly and revised regularly.
- A risk analysis for safeguarding in projects supported by us is to be prepared by the project partner.
- The project contracts contain a separate clause on safeguarding and the cooperation of the project partner in the event of suspected cases.

3. Project trips & reporting

Further regulations apply to visitors, volunteers and press and public relations work in the project environment:

- Persons traveling on behalf of KOLPING INTERNATIONAL (e.g. journalists, photographers, filmmakers) or accompanying KOLPING INTERNATIONAL employees (e.g. donors) will receive this guideline as a basis for information before the trip and must sign a declaration of commitment referring to it.
- Any reporting commissioned by KOLPING INTERNATIONAL must respect the dignity of the persons depicted. Persons may not be depicted naked, in a sexually provocative or discriminatory manner in photos or films. An unobjective portrayal of hardship and misery is prohibited.
- When using social media, the potential risk to people must always be considered and avoided. This applies, for example, to the moderation of forums and blogs, the use of suitable security settings and the careful and legally compliant handling of sensitive data.

Actors in our safeguarding system

There are various players in the KOLPING INTERNATIONAL safeguarding system.

1. Safeguarding competence team of the General Secretariat

The Safeguarding Competence Team is made up as follows:

- The Safeguarding Officer,
- a member of the International Executive Committee,
- one additional employee, appointed by the International Executive Committee.

The Safeguarding Competence Team meets regularly to analyze risks, monitor and evaluate, update and make further arrangements for the implementation of the Safeguarding Guideline.

2. Person of Trust for Safeguarding

KOLPING INTERNATIONAL works together with an external Person of Trust for safeguarding. This person has proven expertise in the field of safeguarding and international cooperation. The person works on a voluntary basis, i.e. only costs arising from the activity (e.g. travel expenses) are borne. The person is appointed by the International Executive Committee.

The involvement of the Person of Trust is intended above all for cases in which persons at management and executive level and/or the Safeguarding Competence Team are involved in suspected cases or in which suspected cases are not or only insufficiently investigated. The function of the neutral Person of Trust is therefore intended to prevent existing hierarchies and relationships of dependency from making it difficult or impossible to investigate suspected cases. In addition, the Person of Trust should use their expertise in the area of safeguarding to support the internal stakeholders of the safeguarding system in carrying out their tasks in an advisory capacity if required. The Person of Trust is regularly informed by the Safeguarding Officer about the activities of the Safeguarding Competence Team.

The current Person of Trust can be contacted by email by partners and employees. Its contact details are easily accessible on the KOLPING INTERNATIONAL website. It acts as a contact person in the event of suspected bias on the part of the Safeguarding Officer, the management level or the Competence Team. In these cases, it acts as the coordinator of the incident management team.

3. Safeguarding Officer (internal)

In order to network and manage the prevention of sexualized violence, a person must be appointed as a Safeguarding Officer who reports regularly to the International Executive Board. The appointment is made for a period of five years from among the employees with a sufficient number of hours worked, which is assessed for this purpose. In this function, the person is a

- the point of contact for experiences of violence and suspected cases,
- the point of contact for questions regarding the Safeguarding Guideline,
- responsible for coordinating and managing the Safeguarding Competence Team of KOLPING INTERNATIONAL,
- responsible for coordinating incident management in the incident management team,
- responsible for ensuring that extended police clearance certificates are renewed every five years and that employees receive regular training,
- responsible for the further development of the Guideline,
- the point of contact for questions on the topic.

4. Incident management team

Immediately after a report is received, the Safeguarding Officer (or Person of Trust) coordinates with at least one other member of the Safeguarding Competence Team and agrees on how to handle the report. It is clarified whether an incident management team should be convened and a recommendation made to the International Executive Committee.

When an incident management is convened, it is composed as follows, depending on the case:

- Safeguarding Officer,
- at least one other member of the Safeguarding Competence Team,

- in the case of a report outside the office, the responsible desk officer/team leader,
- any other persons necessary for the investigation of the suspected case.

If further investigation of a situation is necessary, the incident management team should check whether independent specialist units in Germany or independent investigation teams (fact-finding teams) abroad can be considered for this purpose.

In order to ensure optimal capacity to act and the necessary confidentiality, the number of members of the incident management team should be kept as small as possible. If there is a risk that members of the competence team may be biased, for example because they have a close personal relationship with the person under suspicion, they will be replaced by a representative from the relevant team.

The incident management team works in the following mode:

- The incident management team draws up recommendations that are forwarded to the International Executive Committee for a decision.
- If time does not permit this, the incident management team can act independently.
- Decisions are made by simple majority, whereby the aim is to reach decisions by consensus. Each member of the incident management team has the same voting rights. If no majority can be found, the vote of the Safeguarding Officer counts double.
- Every approach is treated confidentially and only documented for the competence team in a report form. This can also be done anonymously in order to protect the reporter and the person concerned.

The points of contact are the Safeguarding Officer and the Person of Trust. They can be contacted in the following ways:

Email addresses:

safeguarding@kolping.net

leuchtzeichen@um-steuern.org

or via the reporting form on the homepage.

Incident management

KOLPING INTERNATIONAL reacts immediately and carefully to any contact regarding (suspected) cases of violence. Immediately after a report is received, the Safeguarding Officer or the Person of Trust for Safeguarding coordinates with at least one other member of the Safeguarding Competence Team and agrees on how to deal with the report. The first decision is whether an incident management team should be convened. If the answer is yes, a proposal for the composition of an incident management team is drawn up.

In this context, an investigation of suspected cases is only considered in cases in which employees, board members, volunteers or honorary staff are directly affected: as victims of violence or as suspected perpetrators. Other suspected cases will not be dealt with as part of KOLPING INTERNATIONAL's incident management, but the contact persons are also available for advice and support in these cases.

A distinction is made between (presumed)

- cases of violence against persons for whom KOLPING INTERNATIONAL bears direct responsibility: employees, board members, volunteers or honorary staff.

- cases of (observed/confided) violence in the working environment of KOLPING INTERNATIONAL.

For KOLPING INTERNATIONAL, the well-being of those affected is the top priority. It is of utmost importance to us that those affected receive help and support and that they are protected while their cases are being processed.

The institutionalized incident management system

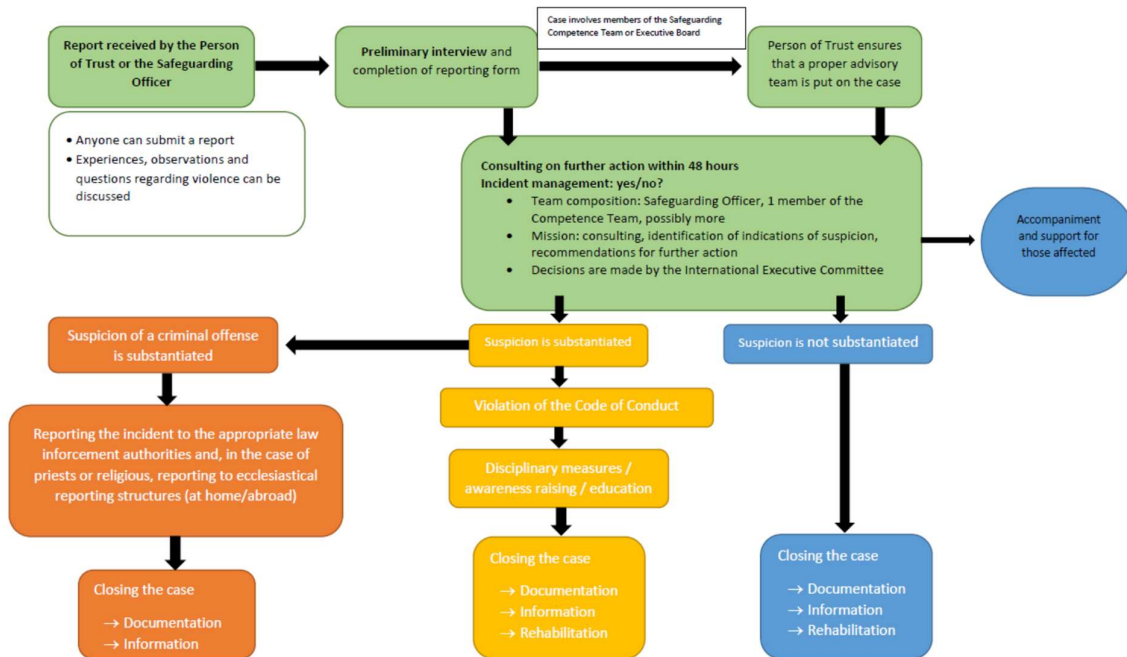
- ensures that the matter in question is investigated without delay,
- initiates measures to protect those affected,
- enables those affected to access offers of help, medical treatment, legal representation and psychosocial support,
- responds promptly and discreetly and ensures that all parties involved are informed of the next steps as the situation demands.

Great caution must always be exercised when dealing with suspected cases of violence. Hasty conclusions that could have far-reaching consequences should be avoided. False or unverifiable accusations could result in far-reaching consequences for KOLPING INTERNATIONAL, the persons concerned and the partner organizations.

The International Executive Board of KOLPING INTERNATIONAL will be informed by the International Executive Committee or the Person of Trust for Safeguarding when the incident management team is convened. Once the respective case has been concluded, the outcome of the investigation is presented to the International Executive Board by the International Executive Committee or the Person of Trust.

Below is a diagram summarising the incident management processes.

Reporting channels



As a VENRO member organization, we also refer to the VENRO handout "Protection against sexualized violence and exploitation in development cooperation and humanitarian aid" and the VENRO Code of Conduct on Children's Rights.

Attachments

Attachment 1: Interview guide for the preliminary interview

Important: Anyone can become a contact person!

Whether you are a volunteer or a full-time employee, you can become a confidant for victims of abuse at any time. Sometimes this happens unexpectedly when someone confides in you.

The following tips are intended to help you respond sensitively and competently if you find yourself in such a situation:

The discussion guide can help you to provide the best possible support to those affected, receive information from them and conduct a conversation.

Basic information:

- Stay calm and take your time.
- Find an undisturbed room.
- Take the person affected seriously and let them know that you believe them and will take the necessary steps.
- Ask questions gently and do not question what has been said.
- Ask as little as possible and as much as necessary so as not to burden or embarrass those affected unnecessarily.
- Ask: "What happened?" and "Who did something?"
- If those affected do not want to say anything more, accept this and stop asking questions.
- Clarify the expectations of those affected.
- Do not act against the wishes of those affected if possible. If you should decide to act against the wishes of the victim, inform those affected and explain your reasons for doing so.

Possible questions and reactions:

- Ask open questions – who? what? where? – but not closed questions that suggest an act or a perpetrator.
- Try to avoid asking "why" questions, as this could reinforce feelings of guilt and make the person affected feel that they have done something wrong. Do not disparage the perpetrator, as you do not know the nature of the relationship between the person affected and the perpetrator and could thus exacerbate conflicts of loyalty.
- Do not accept a vow of silence, but be sincere: "You know I can keep secrets. But if you tell me something that I need to help you with, I need to be able to get help."
- Afterwards, ask how the person affected is feeling after telling you about it.
- Mistrust, fear and ambivalence are natural reactions after sharing experiences of violence. Take these feelings seriously.
- Thank them for their trust and praise them for their courage in confiding in you.
- If possible, try to support the person affected throughout the rest of the support process.

Concluding the conversation: Violence can leave those affected feeling powerless and helpless. It is therefore important that, after they have spoken, they are not left feeling powerless and at the

mercy of the support process. At the end of a conversation, you should always discuss with the person affected what they can and will do now.

Personal aftercare: After talking to someone affected, find a place where you can process your own feelings and seek professional advice on the next steps, e.g. from the Safeguarding Officer or an external confidant.

Attachment 2: Form for reporting suspected cases

The information provided on this form is confidential. The form may be used to report concerns regarding a possible violation of KOLPING INTERNATIONAL's Safeguarding Guidelines.

You can leave blank any fields that you cannot report on. Please try to fill out the form as completely as possible.

If you prefer, you can also send the notification directly to the Safeguarding Officer by email. To do so, please use safeguarding@kolping.net

Do you want to provide your name?

If you wish to remain anonymous and do not provide a name, we will not be able to contact you. We will, of course, follow-up on the information provided and document it, but we will not be able to support you.

Contact details/email address

Please describe the incident as detailed as possible.

Please consider answering the following questions when submitting your notification, which would be helpful:

What happened?

Who committed the violation?

Where did it happen?

When did it happen?

How often did it happen?

How can the violation be evidenced?

Are there any other people who witnessed the violation?

In which country did the incident occur?

Where or as part of which project/institution did the incident occur?

Please provide as much detail as possible (for projects, if possible: project holder, location, etc.)

Have you already reported the incident to another office?

Are superiors or persons with whom the harmed person has a relationship of dependency aware of the incident?

Are superiors or persons with whom the harmed person has a relationship of dependency directly or indirectly involved in the incident?

Are employees from other organisations involved in the incident? If so, which organisations?

When did the incident occur?

Has the incident happened more than once? If so, how many times?

As far as you know, is the incident still ongoing?

Have measures been introduced to ensure the current safety of the person concerned? If so, what measures?

Attachment 3: Self-declaration

I hereby declare,

surname, name _____

place of birth, date of birth _____,

that I have not been legally convicted of a punishable sexual offense pursuant to Article 72a SGB VIII (German Social Insurance Code) and that no preliminary proceedings have been initiated against me in this respect.

In the event that a preliminary investigation is initiated against me in this regard, I undertake to inform KOLPING INTERNATIONAL immediately. I am aware that I am not required to provide any information about previous convictions that have been or are to be expunged or about any investigation proceedings that have already been discontinued.

Violations may result in disciplinary, labor and possibly criminal consequences.

_____ date, signature

Attachment 4: Code of Conduct

Code of Conduct of KOLPING INTERNATIONAL

- I respect the dignity and rights of all people.
- I undertake to create and maintain an environment that prevents sexualized violence and ensures the implementation of the guideline, to the best of my abilities.
- I will ensure that the KOLPING INTERNATIONAL Safeguarding Code of Conduct is observed in the respective working environment and emphasize its importance in appropriate situations. I will inform myself about the respective codes of conduct of the partner organizations with which I work.
- I pay attention to culturally and power-sensitive communication as well as to the needs of the person concerned when I take a stand against discriminatory, violent and sexist behavior, whether in word, image or deed.
- If people behave in an abusive manner, I work to protect the person concerned, taking into account any particularities that arise from my role and the context, such as increased security risks.
- I do not engage in sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18, regardless of the local law. Misguided assumptions about a person's age are no excuse.
- I refrain from all actions that endanger the dignity and well-being of persons or even lead to (sexualized) violence.
- I will not offer money, employment, goods or services in exchange for sexual services, including sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior. This also includes offering assistance to which the beneficiaries are entitled.
- In the partner country, I will not visit localities or stay in hotels where (sexual) exploitation and prostitution are known to take place.
- When reporting on people and their living conditions as part of my public relations work, I respect the dignity of these people.
- I am also aware of my responsibility in my private life and especially when using social media and do not share images, videos or messages with inhumane content.

Failure to comply may result in disciplinary, labor and possibly criminal consequences.

Date, signature