



# Code of Conduct of the Austrian Development Agency

*The Austrian Development Agency's (ADA) objective is to actively help people in partner countries and regions to achieve better living conditions and perspectives in a sustainable way. ADA's employees and partners and the work they do enables effective development cooperation to be carried out according to the legal mandate. This Code of Conduct sets out the principles on which our work is based and which guide us in our work.*

*This edition of the Code of Conduct was adopted by Management on 26 February 2020 and provided to the Supervisory Board. This Code of Conduct is binding in all its parts on all employees of ADA. In particular, superiors should be aware of their special responsibility and function as role models and conduct themselves accordingly.*

## Respect and Consideration

Having **respect** for one another is the foundation for our work, as well as for mutual trust and a pleasant working atmosphere. We support each other as far as possible and communicate with each other and our partners in a **respectful, appreciative and reasonable way**.

## Integrity

**We always act with integrity when carrying out our work.** This includes the obligation to perform our duties according to our best knowledge and conscience and in compliance with the applicable laws. We comply with Austrian law, the law of our partner countries, public international law, contracts and internal rules of ADA, including the principles set out in this Code of Conduct. We actively promote the protection of human rights and respect human rights as highest principles.

As part of Development Cooperation, corruption, the misuse of funds and other punishable and/or unlawful acts are particularly harmful. Pursuant to the Transparency International definition, we understand corruption to mean the abuse of entrusted power for private gain. **We actively take measures against corruption and avoid even the appearance** of the misuse of power or partiality. Loyalty to ADA as an organisation is important to us and we carry out our work exclusively in the objective interest.

**We make a distinction between professional and private matters.** We disclose conflicts of interest to our superiors at the first indication. We do not demand any gifts or "favours", do not have them promised to us, decline them in compliance with our internal rules and also do not offer, promise or grant them. The "*Directive on Personal Benefits and Conflicts of Interest*" sets out more detailed rules regarding conflicts of interest, accepting gifts and dealing with invitations.

## Equal Treatment and Non-Discrimination

We maintain an egalitarian dialogue between each of us. We respect the **human dignity** of each individual. We stand for **equal treatment and non-discrimination** of all employees regardless of their age, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation or disabilities. Equal opportunities for all, diversity and a balanced gender ratio on all levels are important to us. This begins with recruitment and continues in our day-to-day work.

We strongly reject any form of bullying, harassment, abuse, threats, exploitation and violence, whether verbal or physical. **We do not tolerate any form of sexual harassment, sexual abuse or sexual exploitation** and take measures to prevent, stop and combat this.

## Partnership

ADA is committed to a **spirit of partnership**, which is enshrined as a principle in the field of international development cooperation. In line with sustainability and as a contribution to the Agenda 2030, we live the same values which we expect from our partners.

We respect and are considerate of all people and their cultures, ways of working, systems and processes as well as their environment and resources. We are committed to the **Principle of Ownership** according to international standards and participation in structuring programmes and projects. The participation of interest groups and dialogue with them are important to us. We facilitate access and exchange, whether by means of physical, digital or linguistic accessibility. We are open to learning from our partners and accepting feedback.

We are aware of the huge economic and social inequalities which exist in our partner countries and refrain from any conduct in our professional and private lives, which could create the impression that we gain unfair advantages from such inequalities or abuse positions of power.

The abovementioned principles of equal treatment and non-discrimination also guide us as part of the cooperation with our partners.

## Sustainability

We make our contribution to achieve the global Sustainable Development Goals and also take these into account in our day-to-day work. We interpret sustainability broadly and aim to achieve a balance between social, ecological and economic concerns. **We are committed to sustainability - in development cooperation as well as within ADA.** Therefore, we develop our ways of working on an ongoing basis.

We handle the property, administrative budget and operative funds which are provided to us with care. We use natural resources **responsibly and carefully** and promote social responsibility. We pay attention to **economy, the conservation of resources and social fairness** in our everyday work, especially in the course of procurements, events and business trips. With regard to business trips, and as far as costs and time considerations allow, we select the most climate friendly means of transport. All employees are encouraged to take into account, which unintended negative effects on the environment are caused by measures taken and how such effects could be avoided.

## Professionalism and Quality

**Professionalism and quality are guiding principles of our work.** We see ourselves as a service-oriented organisation and have structured our work accordingly. We value a **constructive feedback culture and a culture which is tolerant of errors** in order to continually improve the quality of our work: we analyse and reflect on our processes and results and learn from them. We see employees as human beings with capabilities, interests, needs and potential and encourage them to develop their skills and competences further.

**Team spirit and teamwork** are important to us and are promoted. We strive to ensure that our actions contribute to the achievement of common tasks and objectives. We understand that teams can only work together successfully if each member's voice has equal weight and each opinion is taken seriously.

We are aware of **employees' responsibility** and take care to protect the health and safety of employees as part of all our measures.

## Transparency and Confidentiality

We take decisions based on **objective, fair and comprehensible criteria**, applying **transparent processes**. We ensure that our work is transparent by documenting it. We communicate our motivations in order to create realistic expectations on the part of colleagues, partners and stakeholders and to enable mutual understanding of shared goals and results.

We communicate all the necessary information early, completely and according to the principle of equal opportunities. We keep internal information confidential and do not use such information to gain benefits for either ourselves or a third party. **We communicate in a transparent manner as possible and as confidentially as necessary.** Statements to the public and the media are agreed on with our superiors and the Executive Unit Public Relations. You can find more detailed information in the “*Data Protection Directive*” and in the “*Handbuch Kommunikation*”.

### Compliance with the Code of Conduct

We see compliance with the Code of Conduct as a joint task and an ongoing process. **The priority is to protect the interests and needs of affected persons.** Breaches of the Code of Conduct are detrimental to our work and to the achievement of ADA’s objectives. They damage the reputation of ADA and that of its employees. Breaches of the Code of Conduct can result in consequences under labour and criminal law as well as in claims for damages.

### Further Information and Points of Contact

An open dialogue between superiors and employees is very important to us. If you have any questions about the application of the Code of Conduct in a specific case, or about preventing or reporting possible breaches, then - depending on the respective field - you can contact one of the departments or people below. ADA ensures that employees who make a report in good faith do not suffer any detrimental effects. All enquiries and reports are checked carefully and - if so requested - handled **confidentially**.

- **Superiors (in Headquarter, Coordination Offices, Project Offices):** superiors are generally the first people you can contact with regard to general questions about day-to-day work in the office and interpersonal behaviour.
- The **Head of Unit Human Resources and Organisational Management:** for questions relating to interpersonal conduct, questions on equal treatment, and in the event of possible discrimination or violations of sexual integrity.
- **Integrity Officers** (<https://www.entwicklung.at/en/ada/integrity>): if you have any questions about integrity or information on the issue of anti-corruption and other serious breaches of the law. You can also make a report anonymously via the electronic whistleblowing portal. Regarding the reporting obligation, see also the “*Company Agreement regarding the operation of a Whistleblowing System*”.
- For reports on the issue of anti-corruption and other serious breaches of the law, there is also an **External Ombudsperson, Dr. Pilar Mayer-Koukol.** ([www.paulitsch.law/ombudsperson-ada/en](http://www.paulitsch.law/ombudsperson-ada/en))

These departments/people may be contacted by email, by telephone and personally to discuss the relevant matters further.

Our business partners, project partners, target groups and interested members of the general public may also contact the departments/people specified here **confidentially**, if they have a reasonable suspicion that the Code of Conduct has been breached.

(Last amended: November 2023)