

IRRI

# THE IRRI CODE OF CONDUCT



This document replaces the IRRI Code of Discipline (last revised on 11 March 2002)

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# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

Dear colleagues,

Maintaining the highest standards of ethical conduct is critical to reaching our goal of reducing poverty and hunger. IRRI's strong reputation is upheld and enhanced or diminished by each person's decisions, actions, and ethics. Each one of us plays an important role in establishing and sustaining an environment that is respectful of others, committed to excellence and attentive to meeting the highest ethical standards.

To that end, IRRI has established this Code of Conduct. The Code provides guidance on IRRI values and how we are expected to interact with our stakeholders, donors, colleagues, and partners (both public and private entities), including the communities and the government entities of the countries in which we operate. The Code does not cover every issue that may arise, but sets out basic principles and a methodology to help guide all of us as we work towards achieving IRRI's mission.

Please read this document carefully, understand its contents, and then apply the principles in the course of your work.

Since its establishment in 1960, IRRI has experienced remarkable success and our work is widely recognized. IRRI's reputation is integral to our success. Our continued success depends on sustaining the collaboration, honesty, respect, and the trust of those with whom we work. Thank you for protecting and further strengthening our reputation, so that together we can continue to make a positive difference to the lives of others.

Robert S. Zeigler  
Director General, IRRI





### Foreword

The International Rice Research Institute's (IRRI) key asset is our people, representing a wide range of disciplines, talents, cultures and nationalities, all of whom are committed to working to meet the Institute's mission of reducing poverty and hunger through collaborative research, partnerships, and strengthening of national agricultural research and extension systems.

IRRI is an international organization and is a member of the CGIAR Consortium. IRRI's headquarters is located in Los Baños, Philippines. IRRI operates in many countries and has a number of Country Offices.

The IRRI Code of Conduct (from now on also referred to as the Code) establishes the basic level of conduct expected of all employees and persons under contract to IRRI such as Visiting Scientists, Consultants, Collaborators, Scholars and Trainees, and service contractors (from now referred to as the contractors). All employees and contractors are expected to read, adhere to, and remain familiar with IRRI Values, Principles and Code of Conduct.

Specifically the Code aims to:

- (i) Specify standards of integrity and conduct to meet IRRI workplace standards;
- (ii) Foster accountability, supervision and responsibility within the Institute;
- (iii) Reduce the risk of unlawful, unethical or inappropriate behavior; and
- (iv) Foster open communication and transparency;

The Code cannot address all possible situations. IRRI employees and contractors to IRRI are encouraged to approach their Supervisor or Human Resource Services with questions regarding this Code.



## IRRI Values

This Code is guided by IRRI's core values. IRRI Values describe the minimum standard of ethics and conduct for IRRI employees and persons under contract. Rather than specifying every potential act or behavior, IRRI Values establish the obligations generally expected of IRRI employees and contractors, in their relationship with stakeholders. They are binding to all those engaged by IRRI, who must ensure that these Values form the basis for their workplace relationships and behaviors, and drive the completion of their daily duties.

### Excellence and Quality Service

At IRRI we aim high. We are passionate about what we do, and we are fully committed to doing the very best we can, to international standards, in all circumstances. The needs of our stakeholders guide our actions and decision-making, and we strive to provide quality service to all of our stakeholders, both internal and external. We seek to anticipate client needs and look for optimal solutions that will help our stakeholders.

### Integrity and Accountability

Our integrity is central to the maintenance of stakeholder confidence in our Institute. We avoid any activities, whether connected with our official duties or otherwise, which might bring the Institute into disrepute, or jeopardize its relationships, especially while on missions, at training, conferences, or workshops. We take ownership and accountability for our individual actions, commitments and results, and we take responsibility for our individual and organizational performance. We use resources efficiently, collaboratively, and in consideration of our stakeholders. We are honest and ethical and make decisions in the interest of IRRI.



## Innovation and Creativity

We are constantly looking for ways to improve our individual and collective ability to meet our mission. We accept change that will aid our continuous improvement and foster innovation and creativity to drive that change.

## Respect and Diversity

We are proud to be part of a multi-cultural organization that employs women and men from all around the world. We embrace differences as natural and normal, and we take responsibility for interacting in respectful and productive ways. We believe our diversity strengthens our capacity to deliver our mission. We are committed to supporting and respecting each other's efforts to balance our personal and professional lives.

## Teamwork and Partnership

We acknowledge each other's expertise and are willing to collaborate. We are consultative and participative. We ask questions, raise concerns and challenge assumptions in a constructive manner. We communicate and cooperate with each other and share credit and recognition. We constantly reach out to new partners outside IRRI, in the public and private sectors, who share our mission and values and strive to work with them in fulfilling our mission.

## Indigenous Knowledge and Environmental Sustainability

We respect and value the important knowledge that indigenous communities hold. We are committed to environmental sustainability and our research approaches and operations are guided by the principles of respect for indigenous knowledge and environmental sustainability.



# Principles of IRRI Human Resource Management

This Code of Conduct operates with the following Principles of Human Resource Management:

- a. Employees and contractors are treated fairly and in accordance with the Institute's Board-approved policies;
- b. Employment and appointment decisions at IRRI are made on the basis of merit;
- c. Human Resource management activities are undertaken in such a manner as to ensure the exclusion of nepotism, cronyism, patronage, and favoritism;
- d. Human Resource management activities at all times ensures the maintenance of confidentiality of privileged information;
- e. Human Resource administration and management is consistent with the principles of equal opportunity. No employee or contractor will be discriminated against on the grounds of race, ethnicity, sex, sexuality, age, marital status, pregnancy, parenthood, breastfeeding, disability, religious belief, or association with a person who has, or is believed to have, one of the these attributes;
- f. Human Resource management promotes an environment that recognizes and rewards achievement and that values communication, consultation, co-operation and input from employees on workplace matters;
- g. Human Resource management aims to provide employees with:
  - Reasonable access to training and development; and
  - Remuneration at fair rates commensurate with their responsibilities

# The Rights and Obligations of IRRI Employees

## IRRI is committed to providing all employees with:

- Clear statements of duties and IRRI's expectations of them;
- Appropriate feedback and communication on work performance;
- Safe and healthy working conditions;
- Freedom from harassment and discrimination in the workplace;
- Appropriate disciplinary and dispute procedures, and protection against unfair or unreasonable treatment in the workplace;
- The right to appeal cases where s/he considers a disciplinary measure and/or administrative decision unjust and unacceptable, in compliance with the *Guidelines on IRRI's Disciplinary Procedures*; and
- An enabling environment that supports employees in attending to the personal and family aspects of their lives.

## In accepting an appointment in IRRI we acknowledge that we will:

- Commit time and energy to working to achieve the Institute's mission;
- Exercise best possible technical and professional judgment;
- Develop, maintain and share knowledge of our professional field within and across our field of specialization;
- Be familiar, and comply with, this Code and IRRI policies and procedures;
- Provide all necessary and appropriate work-related assistance to colleagues and stakeholders;
- Ensure the efficient utilization of funds;
- Encourage other employees and contractors by example to exercise similar qualities of personal and professional behavior to those outlined above.
- Perform our duties honestly, faithfully, efficiently, and conscientiously, respecting the rights of our colleagues and stakeholders;
- Respect the lines of reporting and recognize that we are accountable for our actions; and
- Discuss concerns openly with the objective of reaching a solution.

Bearing in mind the IRRI Values and the principles under which IRRI operates, we undertake to observe the following workplace behavior and standards of conduct:

### Public Comment

“Public comment” includes public speaking engagements, comments on radio, television and social media, expressing views in a letter to the press or in books or in notices or where it is reasonably foreseeable that publication or circulation of the comment will flow to the community at large.

We are encouraged to speak to the public to share our research widely to benefit rice farmers and consumers. However, we have responsibilities when making public comments. IRRI expects employees and contractors to be scientifically accurate, open, polite, respectful, unbiased, and honest, and to stick to their area of expertise when making public comment. All employees are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the Guide for IRRI staff making public comments.

There are some circumstances in which public comment is inappropriate. Depending on the circumstance, such actions could be considered misconduct. Comment may be regarded as unacceptable if it:

- (i) Uses or reveals confidential information gained in the course of official duties;
- (ii) Expresses or implies an official view, rather than clearly stating a personal perspective only;
- (iii) Constitutes a personal attack; or
- (iv) Constitutes inappropriate use of digital media and social networks.

## Confidentiality

We do not seek access to information that is inappropriate for us to have, or disclose official information or documents acquired in the course of our employment, other than where proper authority has been given. We do not misuse information gained in our official capacity.

Misuse includes:

- (i) Seeking to take advantage of information held in official records; and
- (ii) Gossiping on the basis of personal or other information held in official records.

We take care to maintain the integrity and security of official documents or information for which we are responsible.

We ensure that the privacy of individuals is maintained, and that we only release appropriate information in accordance with our daily duties.

## Disclosure of Wrongdoing

We report any unethical behavior, corrupt act, wrongdoing or other breach of the Code of Conduct by an employee or contractor, to a supervisor, relevant Organizational Unit Head or Deputy Director General, or Human Resource Services as appropriate.

Supervisors ensure that there is no retaliation against an employee who reports, in good faith, a breach of the Code of Conduct.

We are aware that we may report the matter in accordance with the Institute's Whistle blowing policy.

We are responsible for carrying out decisions and implementing programs in a timely manner, conscientiously and with full regard to IRRI policies. In implementing programs, should we be unable to carry out an instruction due to issues of conscience, we should discuss our circumstances and options with our immediate supervisor, a Dignity Advisor, or a member of the Human Resource Services.



## Discrimination and Harassment

We support and contribute to maintaining a pleasant working environment, which is free from all forms of harassment and discrimination, whether based on race, ethnicity, sex, sexuality, age, marital status, pregnancy, parenthood, breastfeeding, disability, religious belief or activity, or association with a person who has, or is believed to have, one of the above attributes. Any conduct that fails to respect the dignity of another staff member is unacceptable.

IRRI prohibits any comments or conduct by any employees or contractors, male or female, which reasonably could be viewed as either workplace or sexual harassment.

### *Workplace Harassment*

Workplace harassment is defined as the improper conduct of an employee or contractor directed at another colleague with the aim to cause harm, embarrass, degrade or offend another colleague in the workplace. This includes bullying, objectionable acts, comments or displays that demean, belittle, or cause personal humiliation or embarrassment, or any act of intimidation or threat that creates a hostile or offensive work environment.

### *Sexual Harassment*

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome comments, gestures or physical conduct of a sexual nature, whether intentional or unintentional, that is found personally offensive and that might create an intimidating working environment. It includes the transmittal or display of sexually offensive materials.

Conduct constitutes sexual harassment when among other things:

1. It is expressly or apparently unwelcome; or
2. Submission to such conduct is made a condition of an individual's employment; or
3. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting the individual; or
4. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual performance.

We report any behavior that can be considered inappropriate and which can be linked to discrimination, harassment, and retaliation in accordance with the reporting procedures stated in the Harassment and Discrimination Policy.

## **HIV/AIDS**

We acknowledge the seriousness of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and understand that the HIV virus cannot be transmitted through normal day-to-day interaction between colleagues.

We protect our colleagues against discrimination and ensure that they are respected and treated with the dignity due to all persons working at the Institute. HIV status is not accepted as a reason to exclude any person from employment. HIV testing is done at the voluntary request of the employee and is accompanied by counseling. Confidentiality of HIV status of any staff member or contractor is maintained at all times. A spirit of compassion and understanding for HIV-infected people is fostered throughout the Institute.

## **Proper Accounting and Internal Control**

We provide accurate, clear, and timely financial and operating information. We do not conceal or omit relevant information and we do not make any false or fictitious entries in our records.

We do not take fraudulent actions to influence, manipulate or mislead an internal, independent public or certified accountant engaged in the performance of an audit of the financial statements of our Institute.

## **Procurement Integrity**

We establish relationships and do business with our vendors and suppliers based on the fundamental principles of fairness and honesty. We respect the commitments we make and stand by our promises and agreements with service providers. We only do business with service providers that have high standards of conduct.

## Use of IRRI Property

We use IRRI property for official purposes. We do not misappropriate the Institute's property for personal use or resale. We do not use the skills or working time of colleagues for personal benefit or gain.

We have read and are familiar with the IRRI Network User's Code of Conduct

## Intellectual Property Management

We abide by IRRI's policy on *Intellectual property rights and the CGIAR Principles on the Management of Intellectual Assets* and have signed the *IRRI Intellectual Property Rights Agreement*. We understand that all research outputs including data, technologies and other intellectual properties arising from our work are property of the Institute and do hereby assign all such rights to IRRI. All intellectual property rights, including title, copyright, royalties, and patent rights that result from our work during our term of employment rightfully belong to IRRI. We respect agreements IRRI may have entered into covering a body of work and resulting in patent, copyright, royalties or title. We report aspects of our work that may be copyrighted or patented to the appropriate unit.

## Conflict of Interest

Conflict of interest arises from a situation in which an employee or a person under contract to IRRI has a personal interest, which may influence, or appear to influence, the impartial and objective performance of duties. Our personal interests and relationships will not interfere with our ability to make decisions in the best interest of the institute.

A personal interest includes any advantage of a person appointed by IRRI to himself or herself, to his or her family, relatives, friends, persons or organizations with whom he or she has had a vested interest.

A conflict of interest arises when a person appointed by IRRI or a member of his or her family directly or indirectly:



- a. Engages in activities or makes announcements incompatible with IRRI's interests;
- b. Distributes rice seeds or other biological material without appropriate Material Transfer Agreements duly registered with the Institute or not yet approved by the appropriate Seed Board or other counterpart national boards for commercial release;
- c. Conducts business on IRRI's behalf with businesses owned or operated by Institute employees or their immediate families (parents, legal spouse, children, and other relatives within the second civil degree by blood or by marriage) without disclosure and prior approval.
- d. Accepts loans, entertainment, cash, gifts, or personal favors that might influence decisions regarding the Institute's interest;
- e. Discloses confidential information about IRRI for personal gain;
- f. Conducts a private business using Institute services, data, facilities, vehicles and/or research and training methodologies for personal gain;
- g. Is a member of a selection panel or a committee that handles employment issues, including confirmation of appointments, performance reviews and staff developments, where a family member or relative is a candidate;
- h. Develops a consensual relationship with an employee in the same organizational unit, where one of the individuals supervises or evaluates the performance of the other.

## Outside Employment and Engagements<sup>1</sup>

As IRRI employees, we are sometimes offered honoraria, consultancies, or other outside employment related to the expertise and experience that we provide to the Institute. Such activities may involve attending meetings, serving on Boards, preparing manuscripts, editing journals, reviewing

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<sup>1</sup>The section on Outside Employment and Engagements only applies to IRRI employees and those contractors that work for IRRI full time during their period of contract.

research programs, and serving in a consultancy or advisory capacity. Attending meetings, serving on editorial boards, preparing manuscripts, and editing journals, for example, often fall within the normal expectations of senior research scientists. Nonetheless, it is advisable to inform immediate supervisors of the commitment as they will affect time management.

Before an employee accepts an offer for which substantial time commitments are required or financial remuneration may be involved, we seek written approval from our supervisor which must then be endorsed by the Human Resource Services - Operational Manager. Activities that do not require prior approval include membership and uncompensated services related to civilian or community involvement, including services to friends and family.

Outside work includes any unpaid and paid work undertaken in addition to the duties and responsibilities at IRRI. We will not accept outside work if any of the following exists:

- It affects the performance of our responsibilities and duties or creates a real or perceived conflict of interest;
- It requires the use of IRRI resources;
- It requires disclosure of confidential information or may risk the reputation of the Institute; or
- There are questions over legal compliance.

## Acceptance of External Benefits

The acceptance of gifts, honorariums or other third party benefits is an area requiring sound judgment. Benefits may include offers of cash, gifts, free travel, substantial hospitality, accommodation, entertainment, honors, decorations or favours. We will bear personal responsibility for any decision to accept a benefit.

We will seek the approval of the relevant Deputy Director General before accepting major benefits from any individual or organization. A major benefit is anything other than one of nominal value, i.e., anything with a value of more than US\$100 per year. We will not give, accept, or solicit any item that could be seen as a bribe or kickback.

Benefits valued at more than \$100 may be approved if protocol, courtesy, or other special circumstances exist. However, the relevant Deputy Director General must approve the acceptance of such benefits.

## IRRI's Political Neutrality

IRRI operates in all its locations as a guest of the host government. The Institute is classified as an international organization, which allows us to function effectively as a research organization. To preserve this status and scientific integrity, we will not engage in any political activity.

## Obligations to Stakeholders

We interact with all stakeholders<sup>2</sup> with integrity, and to the best of our ability. When required, we provide advice to stakeholders which is frank, independent, based on an accurate representation of the facts and which is as comprehensive as possible.

When required to give references or make reports to stakeholders we have a duty to provide accurate comments.

## Interactions with Communities

We respect the cultures, customs and practices of the communities we work with. We do this by treating all persons with respect and dignity and by partnering with private and civil society organizations through initiatives that encourage the involvement of individual staff through volunteerism and participation in outreach programs.

## Respect for National Laws

We will not attempt to achieve any objective of the Institute by violating the law of the country where the office is based.

We are required to advise Human Resource Services, if we have been charged or convicted of a criminal offence, or are engaged in a civil suit related in any way to IRRI functions, regardless of whether the offence relates directly to our duties.

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<sup>2</sup>Stakeholders include all partners and collaborators we work with (such as NARES, research institutions and universities, governments, donors, public and private entities, the communities IRRI works with and the communities that benefit from IRRI services).

## Health and Safety

We promote staff health, safety and well-being, recognizing that each employee and person under contract to IRRRI bears the responsibility for his or her own safety and the safety of fellow workers.

## Respect for Others

In line with IRRRI Values, we are expected to treat colleagues, stakeholders and the general public with courtesy and respect by:

- a. Avoiding behavior which might endanger or cause distress or in any way contribute to workplace disturbance;
- b. Refraining from allowing workplace relationships to adversely affect the performance of official duties;
- c. Respecting the privacy of individuals when dealing with personal information;
- d. Refraining from discrimination in any form as per the clause on Discrimination and Harassment of this Code of Conduct;
- e. Respecting the cultural background of colleagues, stakeholders and the general public in all official dealings;
- f. Considering the safety of others in the use of property, resources and requests; and
- g. Not bringing weapons to the workplace.

## Alcohol and Substance Abuse

We recognize that the abuse of alcohol and other drugs can harm the safety, health and well-being of our colleagues and that it can also threaten the reputation of the Institute. We will not report to work intoxicated or under the influence of illegal drugs. We are aware that the unlawful manufacturing, distribution, possession or use of a regulated substance is forbidden on IRRRI premises.

Appropriate disciplinary actions may be taken against a person who violates the provisions of this Code.

### Implementation of the Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct has been approved by the IRRI Board of Trustees.

The Code supersedes the IRRI Code of Discipline, and supplements existing IRRI policies and procedures consistent with this Code. If there is apparent inconsistency, this Code of Conduct prevails.

We are primarily accountable to our supervisor as identified in our job profile, unless otherwise agreed in writing. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that issues / incidents related to the Code of Conduct are administered promptly and fairly.

Should we be in a position to supervise or manage other employees or contractors, we must do so in accordance with IRRI policies and procedures. When in a position of authority:

- (i) supervisors are held accountable for acts or omissions by their employees and contractors which are not consistent with those policies and procedures if they have not taken reasonable steps to prevent such acts or omissions; and
- (ii) supervisors must take reasonable steps to prevent inappropriate workplace conduct, including:
  - a. emphasizing and enforcing rules and regulations and promoting a culture of ethics;
  - b. providing appropriate education and training;
  - c. being alert to staff conduct;
  - d. providing an example of propriety and integrity through their personal conduct;
  - e. creating an environment where employees and contractors feel comfortable raising concerns; and

- f. responding to questions and concerns by listening carefully to issues raised and by requesting clarification when needed

Human Resource Services support employees, contractors and supervisors through awareness raising, capacity building, monitoring, and ensuring compliance with IRRI policies. Human Resource Services also provide advice in interpreting IRRI's policies and procedures.

# PART IV

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

### Acknowledgement of the Code of Conduct

I have read and have understood the contents of this Code of Conduct and will adhere to the Code as a condition of my appointment in IRRI. I am aware of the *Guidelines on IRRI's Disciplinary Procedures*.

I understand that if I have questions or concerns at any time about the Code of Conduct I can consult my immediate supervisor, Unit Head, the relevant Deputy Director General, or Human Resource Services for clarification.

I understand that the contents of the Code of Conduct may change at any time and that Human Resource Services will announce such changes. It is my responsibility to maintain an up-to-date knowledge of the Code.

I AGREE,

Name

Signature

Date

Cut here





## Annex: List of Abbreviations and Glossary of Terms

This list of abbreviations and glossary of terms is compiled from terminology that is used in this Code of Conduct. The definitions in the glossary are not intended to be comprehensive and complete.

### Abbreviations

<b>HIV/AIDS</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus Infection / Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
<b>IRRI</b>	International Rice Research Institute
<b>NARES</b>	National Agricultural Research and Extension Systems

### Glossary of Terms

<b>Bullying</b>	The use of force or coercion to abuse or intimidate others. The behavior can be habitual and involve an imbalance of social or physical power.
<b>Collaborators</b>	Individuals from other institutes who work together with IRRI to move their research forward by investigating common research questions and sharing resources and information.
<b>Consensual Relationship</b>	One in which two people are engaged by mutual consent in an emotionally (romantic) or physically (sexually) intimate relationship.
<b>Consultant/s</b>	A person contracted as an associate appointment to provide expertise in highly specialized areas and to bring knowledge not available within the Institute.
<b>Contactors</b>	An individual or group of individuals who provide services to IRRI under terms specified in a contract or within a written agreement
<b>Digital Media</b>	A form of electronic media where data are stored in digital (as opposed to analog) form. It can refer to the technical aspect of storage and transmission (e.g. hard disk drives or computer networking) of information or to the “end product”, such as digital video, augmented reality, digital signage, digital audio, or digital art.

<b>Dignity Advisor</b>	An IRRI employee who acts as a confidential contact and source of information and support, serves as advocate for a workplace free of harassment and discrimination, and provides a backstop to the formal support provided by the Human Resource Services.
<b>Discrimination</b>	Prejudicial and/or distinguishing treatment of an individual based on their actual or perceived membership of a certain group or category.
<b>Harassment</b>	Covers a wide range of behaviors of an offensive nature. It is commonly understood as behavior intended to disturb or upset, and it is characteristically repetitive.
<b>Host Government/ Country</b>	A nation in which representatives or organizations of another state are present because of government invitation and/or international agreement
<b>Institute</b>	Refers to the International Rice Research Institute.
<b>Intellectual Property Rights</b>	Intellectual property right (IPR) is a legal concept which refers to creations of the mind for which exclusive rights are recognized.
<b>Job Profile</b>	An instrument for the Institute to define the responsibilities of a position. Is a combination of a job description and a person specification. All IRRI standard Job Profiles can be found in the IRRI Job Dictionary.
<b>Organizational Unit</b>	Represents a single organization or division with multiple units (departments) within the Institute.
<b>Protocol</b>	The form of etiquette or a set of rules and regulations that determines how a certain process or action is to be done.
<b>Service Provider</b>	Is a company that provides IRRI with relevant services, e.g. consulting, legal, communication, shipping, etc. At IRRI it is generally used to refer to third party or outsourced suppliers.
<b>Social Media</b>	Refers to the means of interactions among people in which they create, share, and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks.
<b>Stakeholders</b>	A person, group, organization, member or system that affects or can be affected by IRRI's actions.
<b>Substantial Hospitality</b>	Gifts or material benefits received which in any way relate to the appointment of the employee or persons under contract to IRRI
<b>Supervisor</b>	A person who manages or supervises the work done by others or one who is in charge of a unit or department.
<b>Supplier</b>	An organization or individual whose business is to supply a particular service or commodity.
<b>Third Party</b>	Person or entity who is not involved as one of the principals in a transaction or contract.

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