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# Facilitator's Manual: UNHCR Code of Conduct

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
The Ethics Office  
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# I. Introduction

In order to protect and assist refugees, asylum seekers, the internally displaced, stateless people and other persons of concern, UNHCR staff must be willing and able to uphold the highest ethical standards. To that end everyone who serves with the organization, from staff member through intern and volunteer, agrees to abide by the UNHCR Code of Conduct—five Values and nine Guiding Principles that shape our ethical decision-making and actions every day. The Introduction to the Code of Conduct clearly states its purpose:

The Code of Conduct is intended to serve as an illustrative guide for staff to make ethical decisions in their professional lives, and at times in their private lives. It is a moral code that does not have the force of law. It is designed to assist staff to better understand the obligations placed on their conduct by the Charter of the United Nations and the Staff Regulations and Rules, which remain the only legal instruments that determine acceptable conduct in UNHCR. Signing the Code does not take away any acquired rights of UNHCR Staff.

The complete [Code of Conduct](#), which contains explanatory notes and the bulletin from the Secretary-General on sexual abuse and exploitation, can be found in the Resources section of this Manual. While the Code can be read merely as a clear statement of what is, and is not, acceptable behaviour in the organization, it is hoped that staff will use it a much more comprehensively. When the underlying principles are internalised, the Code can become a lens through which staff view their actions and the actions of others on a daily basis.

A code of conduct states the values and standards of behaviour that an organisation's members are expected to exemplify in order to fulfil its mission. No written code, however, can substitute for thoughtful, wise decision-making. Ethical decisions are seldom so straightforward that one can simply consult a list of do's and don'ts. Instead, a commitment is needed to always conduct oneself with the agency's mandate as the highest priority. The question that a UNHCR staff member continually must ask is whether his or her behaviour is contributing to or detracting from the ability of the organisation to fulfil its mandate.

## **Purpose and contents of the Manual**

The purpose of this Manual is to provide guidance to those UNHCR staff members tasked with orienting staff members to the Code of Conduct both initially and in annual

Refresher sessions. The goal of these sessions is to encourage staff members to develop and maintain the ethical mindset that must underlie all UNHCR staff practice.

While staff members in many functions may find parts of this Manual useful, the primary users are expected to be those persons serving as focal points and/or facilitators of Code of Conduct training sessions. Managers and team leaders also will find here detailed instructions for conducting many activities that can be integrated into team training or staff meetings throughout the year. Senior managers will find justification for the agency's requiring annual Refresher sessions on the Code of Conduct.

This Manual contains:

- Background information on the Code of Conduct and ethical decision-making
- Specific guidance for orienting UNHCR newcomers to the Code (including a self-study guide)
- Advice on organising and carrying out annual Refresher sessions on specific themes
- Ideas for keeping the Code alive between Refresher sessions
- Recommendations for how best to structure and present Code of Conduct training sessions
- Detailed instructions for conducting many specific training session activities
- A wide variety of case studies drawn from actual UNHCR situations, illustrating ethical decision-making in action—each with a detailed facilitator guide for leading discussion of the case
- Information on where to go for advice on ethical choices when the written information is ambiguous or silent on an issue
- Clearly marked materials that can be photocopied as handouts for staff distribution
- Resources for background information and reference

## Organization and use of this Manual

The Manual is available in two formats: electronic and in hardcopy. If you have access to the Manual electronically, you will probably find that option preferable because of the ease of navigation through hyperlinks. While not every reference document can be included in the hard copy reference section, all can be immediately accessed electronically simply by clicking on the title whenever it is written in **blue type**. By using the electronic version of the Manual, you can print only those parts that you need to have in paper format.

All materials meant primarily to be photocopied for distribution as handouts during sessions are marked at the beginning and end with a heavy double bar: **=====**  
Documents meant to be reference material for the facilitator do not carry the double bar marker. Available published documents (such as the Code of Conduct), even when used for distribution during a session, do not carry the double bar. Examples in the text, meant for illustrative purposes, carry a single bar before and after: **\_\_\_\_\_**

The major sections of the Manual are:

### **I. Introduction**

Purpose and organization of the Manual; background of the Code of Conduct; administering the Code and related requirements

## **II. Orienting the newcomer**

Options for conducting the required Code of Conduct orientation for *all* newcomers to the organisation; agendas for facilitator-led sessions; self-study guide and workbook; guidance for the focal point in debriefing newcomers using the self-study option

## **III. Refresher sessions**

Instructions on how to design and implement an annual Refresher session; checklists for set-up and evaluation; administration guidance and forms

## **IV. Integrating the Code of Conduct into everyday practice**

Suggestions for ways to keep the Code alive throughout the year; poster examples; awareness-building games for team meetings

## **V. Facilitating Code of Conduct sessions**

Guidance for facilitators; steps in planning the session; a logistics checklist; ideas for managing small groups and other techniques; suggestions for handling common challenges; instructions for facilitating discussions and using case studies

## **VI. Activities for sessions on the Code of Conduct**

Suggestions on how to use the activities for different purposes; detailed advice for carrying out many activities, including objectives, materials, preparation required, and step-by-step procedures for each

## **Annexes**

### **A. Case studies on ethical issues**

A table classifying all cases by the part of the Code of Conduct they address and when they were written; reproducible cases with thought questions; a facilitator notes page for each case with answers to the questions, listing of applicable parts of the Code and other instruments, questions to focus discussion of the case and where to go for additional advice

### **B. Resources and References**

Table listing all references and resources with filenames and full titles, and date of publication; links to documents that can be accessed electronically; hard copy of selected essential resources; note on references that can be obtained from the Ethics Office

### **C. Annual theme for each year**

Objectives of the session; preparation and follow up; ideas for creating an agenda; detailed instructions for activities to achieve each of the objectives

## **The Code of Conduct in context**

As far back as in 1954, the United Nations International Civil Service Advisory Board first established standards of conduct intended to define the status and obligations of international civil servants. In 2001 the International Civil Service Commission submitted standards of conduct that were accepted by the General Assembly. In 2008-2009 the United Nations Ethics Committee developed a Code of Ethics—an aspirational



statement of values and principles derived from the U.N. Charter. Yet, all of this guidance had to be general in focus because of the vast breadth of the work conducted by such diverse agencies. For example, it was possible to define general values, such as *integrity*, but the situations in which a U.N. Peacekeeper is called upon to show integrity can vary greatly from those faced daily by a UNHCR staff member.

To meet the need for a UNHCR-specific ethics statement to address the issues most frequently faced by our own staff, the UNHCR Code of Conduct was finalized in 2002. In September of 2002 the High Commissioner, the Chair of the Staff Council, and members of the Senior Management Committee endorsed the Code of Conduct and rollout began to all staff. Within a year, nearly all UNHCR staff members had received formal training in the Code and had signed the commitment statement. That statement continues to be required of all newcomers to the organization.

While the Code of Conduct is meant to help UNHCR staff members deal with ethical dilemmas, it also provides other guidance such as how to build a harmonious workplace environment and how to care for staff welfare, health and safety. In fact, the larger purpose of the Code is to foster an organisational culture of which UNHCR staff can be proud and that will project the highest standards and reputation to the wider world.

There are times when controlling scarce humanitarian resources gives us enormous power over those people we are charged with protecting. While most UNHCR staff behaviour is commendable, occasionally someone misuses that power by being abusive or exploitative. The Code of Conduct makes it clear that such actions will not be tolerated, whether they stem from ignorance or intentional misconduct.

We must both “follow the rules” and go beyond the rules on occasion to make wise judgments when faced with ambiguous situations. Transparency is key. When you are not sure whether an action is ethical or not, seek advice. As a UNHCR staff member, you are responsible both to abide by the Code of Conduct yourself and to report the serious misconduct of others.

Documents that define acceptable UNHCR staff behaviour are listed below. You can access any of them electronically simply by clicking on the document title. An asterisk \* in the last column indicates that the document is also found in the Resources and References section of the hard copy version of this Manual.

Document	Purpose	* = hard copy in notebook
<a href="#">Code of Conduct</a> <i>Code of Conduct and Explanatory Notes 2004. Including the S-G's Bulletin-special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, 2003; 46 pages</i>	Illustrative guide to ethical conduct without explicit force of law	*

<a href="#">UN Charter</a> <i>Charter of the United Nations</i>	The Charter has over 100 articles, several of which regulate staff behaviour.	
<a href="#">UN Staff Rules and Regs</a> <i>STAFF RULES: Staff Regulations of the United Nations and Staff Rules 100.1 to 112.8, SECRETARY-GENERAL'S BULLETIN</i> January 2002, updated 2008; Includes applicable Charter clauses, Staff Regulations, and appendices and annexes;	Fundamental conditions of service and the basic rights, duties and obligations of U.N. staff. Legally binding.	
<a href="#">United Nations Code of Ethics</a>	A system-wide statement of values and principles	Contact the Ethics Office
<a href="#">S-G Bulletin-special measures protection</a> <i>SECRETARY-GENERAL'S BULLETIN: Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, SGB/2003/13</i> 9 October 2003	Definitions, duties, and guidance regarding sexual exploitation, sexual abuse of persons of concern, and responsibilities for reporting.	* Found in Code of Conduct and Explanatory Notes
<a href="#">SAMM Chapter 1</a> <a href="#">SAMM Chapter 10</a> <a href="#">SAMM Chapter 11</a> The UNHCR Staff Administration and Management Manual	UNHCR's refinement of the U.N. rules and regulations to fit our specific requirements and circumstances.	
<a href="#">Standards of conduct Int'l Civil Servants</a> <i>Standards of conduct for the international civil service,</i> January 2002	Fifty guiding principles that define specific conduct expected of all U.N. civil servants; it guides interpretation of the Rules and Regulations	

Acting ethically has implications for our interaction with persons of concern as well as with other staff members and the local community. We need to place persons of concern and their needs at the centre of our decision-making. Transparency implies that we need to be honest about what we can achieve and what we cannot. We should be open to share constraints with the persons of concern and solicit what then they can do from the resources and skills that they possess. Thus, a true partnership can be established as opposed to a patronizing relationship.

## Administering the Code and related tasks

Managers and administrative staff in all UNHCR offices are responsible for ensuring that everyone in the office has completed certain requirements, and that the corresponding documentation is in their personnel files. This includes:

- ☐ The Oath of Office
- ☐ The Code of Conduct Commitment
- ☐ Certificate of completion of the required e-learning *U.N. Programme on the Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority in the Workplace*

In addition, managers and administrative staff are responsible for ensuring that their own office has identified a focal point for the Code of Conduct and that Refresher sessions on the Code are conducted annually.

## Cultural issues

The UNHCR Code of Conduct clearly states, “We will respect the cultures, customs and traditions of all peoples, and will strive to avoid behaving in ways that are not acceptable in a particular cultural context. However, when the tradition or practice is considered by the relevant organ of the U.N. to be directly contrary to an international human rights instrument or standard, we will be guided by the applicable human rights instrument or standard”. This statement incorporates both the spirit underlying the Code and the explicit expectation that we will perform our duties with the utmost awareness of and regard for the cross-cultural dimension of our work.

We must show acceptance and respect to the persons of concern, host governments, implementing partners and other stakeholders who often represent a variety of cultures. In order to show respect, it is important that we learn about the cultures of the people we serve: their values, their perceptions, their assumptions and their beliefs. In addition, our workplace typically includes staff members from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. In this regard the Code says, “In light of the diverse backgrounds, cultures and experiences of UNHCR staff, we should take extra care to respect our colleagues”.

Given the cross-cultural issues that exist in the external environment in which UNHCR functions, combined with those we face internally as an organisation, we are called to a very high standard of cultural awareness, sensitivity and competence. This requirement not only demands that we have excellent intercultural knowledge and skills, but that we also possess positive welcoming attitudes toward those who are different. Many of the challenges that confront us and the rewards we receive flow from this multicultural reality we share.

## II. Orienting the Newcomer

Interns, temporary staff, secondments, surge staff, UNVs, consultants, short-term deployments from NGOs...often our offices are brimming with people who may be with us for a limited time but who still must uphold the ethical standards by which we operate. In addition, with a staff turnover rate of 5~8% annually, UNHCR has new regular staff members joining the organization every year. The ethical judgements and actions of these staff, and interactions of managers with these staff, have a significant impact on our ability to meet operational objectives and to ensure consistency and integrity throughout the organization.

### Responsibilities of the UNHCR manager

Everyone working at UNHCR, regardless of their prior experience inside or outside of UNHCR and their current assignment within the organisation, paid or un-paid, requires an introduction to the Code of Conduct.

All hiring managers have the obligation to be sure that Code of Conduct materials are included in any induction packet and that the signed commitment to the Code is placed in the newcomer's personnel file. If no focal point for this task has yet been identified, it should be done soon.

While induction procedures differ from one office to the next, the new staff member nearly always is loaded down with items to read and forms to sign. Too often the Code of Conduct becomes just one more set of papers in the pile. The annual Refresher sessions assume that everyone attending has gone through a full orientation to the Code of Conduct at some point in the past, which may not be true for temporary staff or those who have joined the organization in the last few years. In order to ensure that **all** newcomers to the organization, regardless of their status, are sufficiently well oriented to the Code of Conduct, we need to include specific learning activities as part of their initial induction procedures. That way the annual Refresher session to the Code can be just that—a reminder rather than an initial exposure for anyone.

Two main options exist for newcomers' initial orientations to the Code of Conduct. They can take part in a formal half or full day group session, or they may complete a self-study program. The choice will depend on how many newcomers arrive at a given time and whether or not someone is available to facilitate a formal program. In addition, you may want to consider the positions and functions of the newcomers in the organization, as well as whether they are staff or short-term, temporary help.

While it is the responsibility of the manager to ensure that all newcomers are provided an orientation to the Code of Conduct, only the individuals themselves can be responsible for internalising the material.

## Goals

The goals of the initial orientation to the Code, regardless of the format chosen for delivery, are:

Newly hired UNHCR staff members will grasp the context and accept the need for a Code of Conduct, will understand the Code's five values and nine Guiding Principles, and will be able to show informed personal judgement in applying the language, meaning, and spirit of the Code to their personal and professional behaviour.

They will understand that the Code, while not explicitly legally binding, is anchored in the United Nations staff rules, regulations, and other documents that **are** binding.

They will recognize the importance of placing the welfare of persons of concern at the centre of decision-making.

Additionally, staff members will recognise that truly ethical behaviour goes beyond merely following explicit rules to regularly asking oneself if a given action supports or hinders UNHCR's ability to fulfil its mandate.

## Formal half or full-day session

If there are three or more new staff members hired around the same time, it is preferable to provide a formal half or full-day training session on the Code for them as a group sometime within their first few weeks on the job. This will allow for discussion that is not possible with self-study. In addition, it will help develop a shared culture based on our ethical values. If possible, someone who has facilitated previous Code of Conduct sessions should lead this program. In addition, it may be useful to bring in a senior officer who can stress the importance of the Code and perhaps answer questions about the application of the Code in particular cases.

Agendas for possible group sessions follow, with hyperlinks to the full activity descriptions.

### Half-day group orientation to the Code of Conduct for new staff

- Introduction to the Code and distribution of materials
- Activity: [Definition of the Code of Conduct](#)
- Activity: Understanding the Code of Conduct
- Break
- Activity: [Quiz on the Code of Conduct](#)

- Activity: *Discussion of cases* selected for the particular participants, given their backgrounds and functions. The number of cases will be determined by the amount of time available.
- Closing: Have a senior officer meet with the group for an informal question and answer session. End with everyone signing the commitment.

### **Full-day group orientation to the Code of Conduct for new staff**

- Introduction to the Code and distribution of materials
- Activity: *Definition of the Code of Conduct*
- Activity/contest: *Put Together the Puzzle*
- Break
- Activity: *Understanding the Code of Conduct*
- Lunch
- Activity: *Quiz on the Code of Conduct*
- Activity: *Discussion of cases* selected for the particular participants, given their backgrounds and functions. Participants are assigned different cases, work on them alone, and then share with the group and discuss them.
- Break
- Application Activity: The facilitator leads a discussion drawing out specific ways the Code of Conduct might apply to the particular functions the new staff members will be performing.
- Closing: Have a senior officer meet with the group for an informal question and answer session. End with everyone signing the commitment.

### **Self-study orientation to the Code of Conduct for new staff**

In many offices new staff members are not hired as a group, but arrive individually. These are the staff members whose introduction to the Code is typically the most superficial. A self-study approach to orienting new hires to the Code is meant to accomplish the same objectives as the group orientation, but without requiring the presence a facilitator.

In using the self-study orientation materials, you should keep in mind:

- The Code should be introduced face-to-face. That is, rather than simply handing the packet to the new hire, someone should explain what the Code is and why it is important, what the materials consist of, and how their completion of the packet will be checked. This person will usually be the Code of Conduct focal point for the office.
- Time during work hours should be allowed for completion of the packet. This is not to be assigned as “homework.” A minimum of three to four hours should be allotted.
- Someone qualified should be made available to answer questions that may arise while the newcomer is working on the materials. Again, that person probably will be the Code of Conduct focal point.
- On completion of the newcomer’s work on the materials, the hiring manager, a Code of Conduct orientation facilitator, or the local Code of Conduct focal point should go

over the newcomer's written answers with him or her. Part of this final check should include the newcomer signing the commitment.

### **Materials in the self-study packet**

The self-study materials consist of:

- [Self-study Guide and Workbook](#) (found at the end of this section of the Manual)
- [Code of Conduct](#) This is the document *Code of Conduct and Explanatory Notes 2004, including the S-G's Bulletin-special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse*, 2003
- [Easy Reference: Where to go for help with a work-related problem](#)
- Set of photocopied cases selected by the focal point for the individual
- Any additional office-specific materials

### **Guidance for administering the self-study orientation**

A self-study packet needs to be put together for each individual because the particular case studies should be selected according to the individual's function and position. This will allow the newcomer to focus on situations that are the most personally relevant. In the case of generalists or short-term temporary staff, you might want to consider defaulting to three of the following most-preferred cases:

- Hansen's Disease
- Work hard/Play Hard
- Off-duty Political Job
- The Office Romance
- The Family Antique
- He/she Staff Member

Provide the packet of materials to the newcomer, introduce the Code of Conduct, and briefly explain its importance. Go over the procedure, including that you will be available to answer questions and that all answers are to be written in the Self-study Guide and Workbook. Explain that you will go over the written answers when everything has been completed.

On completion of the Guide/Workbook, you should sit down with the individual and briefly check the written answers to the seven questions in the Guide. Go over the answers to the Quiz, and be sure to explain any that were missed or incorrect. Briefly discuss each of the three cases with him or her.

Congratulate the newcomer on having completed the orientation, and present him or her with the Commitment to sign. (You may need to explain the meaning of the Commitment again—that the person has read and understands that UNHCR expects him or her to abide by the Code of Conduct.)

### **Answers to the Questions in the Guide and Workbook: Orientation to the UNHCR Code of Conduct**

[Self-study Guide](#) and [Workbook](#)

1. According to the first core value, what are the values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations?

**The values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations are respect for fundamental human rights, social justice and human dignity, and respect for the equal rights of men and women.**

2. According to the second core value, what is our primary commitment?  
**The second core value states that we will ensure the protection of, and assistance to, refugees and other persons of concern in accordance with the mandate of the Office. Support their participation in decisions that affect their lives.**
3. By virtue of our positions in the organization, many UNHCR staff have considerable power and influence over the lives and well-being of refugees and other persons of concern. Based on the seventh guiding principle how must we avoid misusing that power and influence?  
**We must never abuse that power, such as by requesting favours, accepting bribes, or having a sexual, emotional, financial or employment relationship with a beneficiary.**
4. Why do UNHCR *persons of concern* need to know about the Code of Conduct?  
**Refugees and other persons of concern need to know about UNHCR's Code of Conduct so that they are aware of what behaviours are and are not appropriate from a staff member. They can't complain about misconduct if they don't know what it is.**
5. What's the difference between "sexual exploitation" and "sexual abuse"?  
**The Secretary-General's Bulletin on Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (pages 38-43 of the Code of Conduct and Explanatory Notes of June 2004) defines these terms on page 38. *Sexual exploitation* means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.**  
  
***Sexual abuse* means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.**
6. To whom are you expected to report cases of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse of which you might have knowledge?  
**Page 40 says that you "must report such concerns via established reporting mechanisms." On page 41 it says the "the Head of Department, Office or Mission shall be responsible for taking appropriate action in cases where there is reason to believe that any of the standards listed in section 3.2 above have been violated or any behaviour referred to in section 3.3 above has occurred."**
7. To which office might you direct an inquiry regarding a conflict with a co-worker that you've not been able to resolve on your own?



It's usually best to consult first with your supervisor and/or other local officers. But you also should feel free to call or write to the Ombudsman's Office for informal, confidential advice.

<b>Ombudsman's Office</b>	
<b>Confidential fax:</b>	<b>+41 22 739 7340</b>
<b>Tel:</b>	<b>+41 22 739 7770</b>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:Ombuds@unhcr.org">Ombuds@unhcr.org</a>

Answers to the questions on the Case Studies are found in the Facilitator Notes following each case.

## Answers and Notes on Quiz 1

(Pages refer to the document *Code of Conduct and Explanatory Notes*, June 2004)

1. c      *The Code of Conduct is intended to serve as an illustrative guide for staff in making ethical decisions in our professional lives and at times in our personal lives.*      Page 1  
This is quoted from the Introduction to the Code of Conduct. Many ethical decisions in our private lives are not related to the UNHCR Code, but some are.
  
2. a      *What does it mean or imply when you sign the Code?*      Pages 14 and 15  
**It confirms that you have read the Code and understand that you are expected to live up to its standards of behaviour.**  
Signing the Code means more than merely accepting its content as a suggestion. It is a solemn commitment to always follow the Code. It provides ethical guidance that is not explicitly legally binding. However, your signature does mean that you recognise that UNHCR expects you to understand and follow the Code.
  
3. c      *The legal basis for determining unacceptable conduct at UNHCR is:* **The Charter of the UN and The Staff Rules and Regulations.**      Pages 1 and 2  
The Code of Conduct is an ethical code without the force of law. Nevertheless, staff members are legally bound by the UN documents referenced above on which the CoC is based, and through which the CoC values and principles are implemented.
  
4. c      *Exploitation of refugees means* **using our power as UNHCR employees to obtain goods or services from refugees for our personal gain or using our power in a relationship (sexual, social, political, emotional or financial) with a refugee.**      Page 38  
Just being employed by UNHCR gives us power that,

unfortunately, can be used in unethical ways. If we misuse that power in a relationship with someone who has less power, such as a refugee who we are supposed to be serving, it is exploitation.

5. b *Why does the Code of Conduct emphasise treating women and children refugees, in particular, with respect and dignity?* Page 16  
**Because they are typically disadvantaged in terms of power and influence.**  
 UNHCR has pledged to respect the equal rights of women and men and to care for and protect the rights of children. This is important because, in so many refugee situations, women and children suffer more than men.
6. b *It is vital to see the people we serve as human beings rather than “cases,” “populations” or “caseloads” because such terms reinforce an impersonal bureaucratic approach.* Page 18  
 Direct conversations with persons of concern can help us “put a human face” on complex problems.
7. c Holding an outside job in addition to your UNHCR work Page 23  
**must be authorized in advance.**  
 In fact, not only *jobs* need to be authorized but also some other outside activities. It is critical to ensure that no conflict of interest exists that could impugn the integrity of our operations and activities.
8. a *The definition of a “child” varies from one country to another. The Code of Conduct is based on international legal standards that define children as anyone under the age of 18.* Pages 2, 10, 34, 40, 42  
 This is an example of a standard that differs from one country to another, in which case UNHCR follows international standards. Another example would be a case in which an activity, such as female genital mutilation, is accepted or condoned by a government but is considered a violation of human rights by the United Nations.
9. b *One of the clauses in the Code says that we will avoid “conflicts of interest”. This means that we will avoid getting into a situation that puts our personal, business, ethnic group or national interests ahead of our official responsibilities.* Pages 6 and 7  
 Actually, part of clause five states that we will avoid even *perceived* preferential treatment of private persons or companies, such as suppliers. Other situations that could result in a conflict of interest include taking instructions from your national government, accepting gifts or anything else of

value from someone doing business with the U.N., or participating in political activities such as standing for office.

10. a *Any concerns or suspicions regarding sexual exploitation or sexual abuse by a fellow worker, whether in UNHCR or not, \_\_\_\_\_ be reported through the established mechanisms. Which word best fits in the blank?*

Page 33

**Must**

Staff do not have the option of ignoring sexual exploitation or abuse, but are required to report it. This is true whether the perpetrator is within the U.N. system or not.

## Guide and Workbook: Orientation to the UNHCR Code of Conduct

Welcome to UNHCR! The ability of our organisation to ensure the protection of refugees, asylum seekers, stateless people, and other persons of concern depends largely on our staff upholding the highest ethical standards of conduct. In order to assist us in doing so, the organisation developed a Code of Conduct, which has been in force since 2002. All staff members receive an orientation to the Code and attend follow-up refresher training annually.

The purpose of this self-study programme is to provide you an orientation to the Code similar to that received by other UNHCR staff through group training.

### Goals

On completion of this self-study, you should:

- Recognize the context and need for a Code of Conduct
- Understand the Code's five values and nine Guiding Principles
- Be able to show personal judgement in applying the language, meaning, and spirit of the Code to your personal and professional behaviour
- Be aware that while the Code is not explicitly legally binding, it is anchored in the United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules and other documents that **are** legally binding instruments
- Understand that truly ethical behaviour goes beyond complying with written rules. It requires you to continually ask yourself whether your behaviour supports or hinders the ability of UNHCR to fulfil its mandate

### Method

You will be given time at work to carefully read the packet of materials on the Code of Conduct and to respond in writing to seven questions in this Guide and Workbook. You will also read and respond to some short case studies and take a quiz. When you are done, a UNHCR staff member will go over your responses and answer any questions you may have. Then you will be asked to read and sign a "commitment to the UNHCR Code of Conduct" that will be placed in your personnel file. Note that the Code of Conduct is ethically, but not strictly legally, binding. However, your signature on the Commitment to the Code of Conduct confirms the fact that you have read and understood the text, and that you understand that UNHCR expects you to live up to the Code of Conduct.

In summary, you will:

- Read the documents as instructed in the Guide and Workbook
- Write out answers to the seven questions in the Guide and Workbook
- Study the three cases you are given
- Write out responses to each case in the Guide and Workbook as indicated
- Take the quiz
- Review your written work with the person administering your self-study assignment and answer any questions you may have
- Read and sign the Commitment to the UNHCR Code of Conduct, which will be placed in your personnel file

## **Materials**

The packet of materials for self-study of the Code of Conduct consists of:

- This Self-study Guide and Workbook: Orientation to UNHCR's Code of Conduct
- The document Code of Conduct and Explanatory Notes, including the Secretary-General's bulletin on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse
- The short document: Easy reference: Where to go for help with a work-related problem
- A set of case studies
- Other reference materials that may be added for your particular site and job

## **History of the UNHCR Code of Conduct**

As early as in the 1950s, the United Nations established certain standards of conduct for international civil service employees. While these provided good general guidance, UNHCR recognised that some unique aspects of its work needed to be addressed specifically.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, specific instances in which values and principles were violated surfaced, making clear the need for additional guidance. There were allegations of corruption, of financial mismanagement, bribery, and sexual exploitation of refugees in exchange for aid and protection.

In addition to pressure from outside UNHCR for higher ethical standards, there was internal pressure for development of clearly stated guidelines for behaviour. Two reports in 2001 urged development and adoption of a code of conduct: *Prevention and Response to Sexual and Gender-based Violence in Refugee Situations*, and *Sexual Violence and Exploitation: The Experience of Refugee Children in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone*. The Inspector General's office and others called for development of a Code of Conduct.

Work on a UNHCR Code of Conduct began in 2000 and accelerated in 2002 when a broad variety of staff members were involved in consultations and drafting of the Code and Notes on the Code. In September of 2002 the High Commissioner, the Chair of the Staff Council, and members of the Senior Management Committee all publicly endorsed the Code of Conduct and rollout began to all staff. Within a year, nearly all UNHCR staff members had received formal training in the Code and had signed the commitment statement.

## Difference between the Code and U.N. Staff Regulations and Rules

The Code of Conduct and Explanatory Notes says, “The Code of Conduct is intended to serve as an illustrative guide for staff to make ethical decisions in their professional lives, and at times in their private lives. It is an ethical code that does not have the force of law. It is designed to assist staff to better understand the obligations placed upon their conduct by the Charter of the United Nations and the Staff Regulations and Rules, which remain the only legal instruments that determine acceptable conduct in UNHCR.”

The Charter of the United Nations clearly states the standard to which all United Nations staff are held accountable: “Staff of the United Nations are required to perform their professional work to the ‘highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity’.”

In short, the Staff Regulations and Rules are legally binding, while the Code of Conduct helps clarify what types of behaviour are appropriate and expected, particularly in situations where difficult choices need to be made.

## The UNHCR Core Values and Guiding Principles

Stop now and read pages 1-10 of the document *Code of Conduct and Explanatory Notes*. Then answer the questions below, which will be checked when you have completed this self-study.

1. According to the first core value, what are the three values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations?
2. According to the second core value, what is our primary commitment?
3. Due to our positions in the organisation, many UNHCR staff have considerable power and influence over the lives and well-being of refugees and other persons of concern. Based on the seventh guiding principle how must you avoid misuse of that power and influence?

## Notes on the Code

Now read pages 11-37 of the document *Code of Conduct and Explanatory Notes*. As you are reading, ask yourself:

- What does this have to do with me and my work at UNHCR?

- Will my behaviour be any different than it might have been if I had not read this information? In what way(s)?
  - Is this the kind of organisation for which I can be proud to be working?
- When you are through reading the *Notes on the Code*, answer the following question:
4. Why do UNHCR persons of concern need to know about the Code of Conduct?

### **Secretary-General's Bulletin: Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse**

SGB/2003/13 was issued in October of 2003 in response to allegations of sexual exploitation of persons of concern by United Nations aid workers in West Africa. It is found on pages 38-43 of the document Code of Conduct and Explanatory Notes. Please read the Bulletin now and respond to the following questions.

5. What's the difference between "sexual exploitation" and "sexual abuse"?
6. To whom are you required to report cases of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse of which you might have knowledge?

### **Where do I turn for guidance?**

Rather than refer to the somewhat dated contact information provided at the end of the *Code of Conduct and Explanatory Notes*, please review and keep handy the current *Easy reference: Where to go for help with a work-related problem* that is included in your packet.

7. To which office might you direct an inquiry regarding a conflict with a co-worker that you've not been able to resolve on your own?

### **Applying the Code**

Now that you are thoroughly familiar with the Code of Conduct, why it exists and what it covers, it is time to think about the practical aspects of how to apply it. Please carefully read each of the cases that you were given, and write out your answers to the questions following each case.

Be sure to ask yourself not just whether the Code is being violated in the situation, but whether the behaviour described has contributed to or hindered the ability of UNHCR to fulfil its mandate. Written rules, explicit definitions of what's always right and what's always wrong, are seldom able to provide us sufficient guidance in the ambiguous, real world in which we live and work. In some situations specific behaviour may not be wrong in itself, and yet the actions would not be advisable simply because of how they might be perceived by the public.

Case 1. Title \_\_\_\_\_

Answers to the questions:

Case 2. Title \_\_\_\_\_

Answers to the questions:

Case 3: Title \_\_\_\_\_

Answers to the questions:

You're almost done! Just complete the following ten-item quiz by circling the one best response for each item.



## Quiz 1: UNHCR Code of Conduct

*Circle the letter of the phrase that correctly completes the sentence or answers the question.*

1. The Code of Conduct is intended to serve as a guide for staff in making ethical decisions
  - a in our personal lives
  - b in our professional lives
  - c in our professional lives and, at times, in our private lives
2. What does it mean or imply when you sign the Code?
  - a It confirms that you have read the Code and understand that you are expected to live up to its standards of behaviour.
  - b It is a solemn commitment on your part to follow the Code in your professional and personal life.
  - c It demonstrates your acceptance of the Code as providing valid suggestions for appropriate behaviour
3. The legal basis for determining unacceptable conduct at UNHCR is
  - a The Code of Conduct
  - b The Staff Rules and Regulations
  - c The Charter of the U.N. and The Staff Rules and Regulations
4. A key provision of the Code is to prevent, oppose, and combat all exploitation of refugees and other persons of concern. "Exploitation" means
  - a using our power as UNHCR employees to obtain goods or services from refugees for our personal gain
  - b using our power as UNHCR employees in a relationship (sexual, social, political, emotional or financial) with a refugee
  - c both a and b
5. Why does the Code of Conduct emphasise treating women and children refugees, in particular, with respect and dignity?
  - a Because there are fewer of them than there are men, and so they tend to be neglected
  - b Because they are typically disadvantaged in terms of power and influence
  - c Because it would be culturally inappropriate to not give them the respect to which they are accustomed
6. It is vital to see the people we serve as human beings rather than merely "cases," "populations" or "caseloads" because
  - a The persons of concern may not understand these terms
  - b Such terms reinforce a bureaucratic approach
  - c In some languages the translation of these terms is derogatory
7. Holding an outside job in addition to your UNHCR work
  - a Is allowed if it is unpaid, volunteer work for a worthy cause

- b Is never allowed
  - c Must be authorized in advance
8. The definition of a “child” varies from one country to another. The Code of Conduct is based on international legal standards that define children as anyone
- a under the age of 18
  - b under the age of 16
  - c under the age of 21
9. One of the clauses in the Code says that we will avoid “conflicts of interest”. This means that we will
- a avoid getting into conflicts with others, whether other staff, implementing or operating partners, or refugees or persons of concern
  - b avoid getting into a situation that puts our personal, business, or national interests ahead of our official responsibilities
  - c avoid getting into conflicts or disagreements about people of concern.
10. Any concerns or suspicions regarding sexual exploitation or sexual abuse by a fellow aid worker, whether in UNHCR or not, \_\_\_\_\_ be reported through the established mechanisms. Which word best fits in the blank?
- a Must
  - b Can
  - c Should

**Congratulations! You have completed the self-study orientation to the UNHCR Code of Conduct. You will now have an opportunity to go over your written responses with the person who gave you the packet of materials. On completion, you will sign the Commitment to the Code of Conduct.**

# III. Refresher Sessions

Although UNHCR staff should have attended an initial orientation to the Code of Conduct, it takes regular reminders of the Code's importance and implications for it to remain paramount in staff's thinking. As one part of keeping the Code alive, the organisation is committed to conducting annual Refresher sessions in all offices. The overall purpose of the annual session on the Code of Conduct is to enable staff members to use the Code of Conduct automatically as a lens through which they view their public service on a daily basis.

Specific objectives for the annual Refresher will be provided each year. They will usually consist of a variation on the following:

- To review and deepen staff's understanding of the Code of Conduct's Core Values and Guiding Principles
- To recognize and appreciate successes during the year in applying the Code of Conduct to everyday behaviour
- To examine the yearly Code of Conduct theme (each year see the Annex to this Manual which will be updated for the annual theme and approaches).

## Organising the annual Refresher

### Timing

The Ethics Office provides advice and support concerning interpretation and application of the Code of Conduct. The Ethics Office also sets the annual theme early each year and offers suggestions for Refresher session content. While offices have the remainder of the year to provide the Refresher to all staff members, they are urged to meet their obligation as soon as possible to avoid having the Refresher sessions compete with other end-of-the-year activities.

Some regions have successfully rolled-out the Refresher at the Branch Office level early in the year and then cascaded it down to the most remote Field Offices. An advantage of this approach is that facilitators can then move from one office to another to conduct the sessions.

### Focal points

While the Office is responsible for seeing that the Code of Conduct Refresher session takes place each year, the senior officer will usually appoint a focal point to organize the training. The focal point for Refresher sessions may be the same person who facilitates Code of Conduct orientations for newcomers—or not.

It is the responsibility of the Office, often delegated to the focal point, to:

- Organize the Code of Conduct Refresher sessions for the office
- Send the Senior Manager's Annual Report on Refresher Sessions to the Ethics Office, using the form provided, maintaining a copy for the local files

- Maintain the files on Refresher sessions, including participant evaluations, to ensure continual learning from year to year

Focal points needing further guidance regarding their responsibilities for the Code of Conduct Refresher sessions may contact the Ethics Office:

UNHCR Ethics Office	<a href="mailto:hqethics@unhcr.org">hqethics@unhcr.org</a>
Confidential Phone:	+41 22 739 8794
Confidential Phone:	+41 22 739 8838
Confidential Fax:	+41 22 739 7381
Code of Conduct:	<a href="mailto:hqcc01@unhcr.org">hqcc01@unhcr.org</a>

## Groupings

There are advantages to having mixed groups in all Code of Conduct sessions, whether general orientations or annual Refreshers. Integrating professional and general staff from all functions and all levels shows that the Code applies equally to everyone and encourages cross-level discussion that does not frequently happen in all offices. It is important to not risk inhibiting lower-level staff members by having a large number of high-ranking managers in the group. It is much better to spread them out among different groups.

Some large offices prefer to have the introductory part of the Refresher in mixed groups and then split into functional groups or teams for the application part of the session. For example, the large group would hear an opening review of the Code, but when small groups are formed to discuss cases, they would be divided by teams. Each team would consider cases specifically chosen for relevance to its particular duties or for enhanced understanding of ethical dilemmas and challenges faced by colleagues in the operation.

Because discussion is such an important part of Code of Conduct sessions, group size should be limited. Otherwise, everyone will not have an opportunity to express his or her thoughts. Most offices have found that the optimum group size is 12 to 15 people. Groups of more than 25 are highly discouraged.

## Creating the agenda

While the Ethics Office provides a theme and suggestions for the annual Refresher, it is up to each office to create an agenda that best relates to its particular needs and emphases. The person responsible for the sessions—usually the Code of Conduct focal point or a designated facilitator—should meet with the Office’s senior staff to discuss the yearly theme, session length, dates, and specific content and focus. It is important to not only have local management’s buy-in, but their credible support.

Once the length of the session has been agreed upon (usually either a half or full day), the time must be divided among the different activities. When planning the agenda, keep in mind:

- Start with the more general ideas (such as a review of the Code) and move to more specific ones (such as application to particular situations).

- Mix more passive activities (watching a power point presentation, a video, or listening to a presentation) with more active exercises (small group discussions, individual or group-based tasks).
- Provide a break of fifteen minutes or so about every two hours.
- Allow seven hours for a full day session and 3.5 hours for a half-day session.
- Set start, end, lunch, and break times according to local custom.
- Create a simplified agenda to share with the participants and a very detailed agenda for the facilitators.

## Addressing the annual theme

UNHCR staff members will not look forward to the annual Refresher sessions if they think of them as merely a repeat, year after year, of the same material. While a good review of the basic content of the Code of Conduct is necessary, it's important that each year's session be unique. One way to do that is by focusing on a different annual theme. In 2008 UNHCR offices around the world looked at the topic of *Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Harassment*. A film and suggested activities raised interest. In 2009 the theme *The 2008 Global Staff Survey: Ethics in Action* was used. You will find guidance for each year's theme as an Annex to this Manual.

The Annual Refresher session provides all staff with the opportunity to review and enhance their understanding of the Code of Conduct, and to identify potential ethical dilemmas so they can prevent and resolve specific problems. While the yearly theme provides an overall framework for the Refresher, it should not totally determine session content for every office worldwide. Many times there will be issues unique to the office, the country, or the region that need to be addressed. The Code of Conduct focal point and/or the Refresher session facilitators need to consult during the planning stage with senior management to determine appropriate session content.

Just as the initial orientation to the Code of Conduct was not sufficient to ensure its complete internalisation by all staff, neither can a single Refresher session. It is critical for the theme to be reinforced throughout the year. This may happen through:

- Repeated mention of the theme in general staff and team meetings
- Placement on bulletin boards of theme-based materials, posters, and reminders
- Regular inclusion of the theme as a topic in consultation with stakeholders, including Implementing Partners, persons of concern, interpreters, and government officials
- Continued application of the standards of conduct in all functions

## Preparing staff for the Refresher

The Representative, Chief of Mission, or Director should lay the groundwork before the scheduled Refresher session by stressing that it is a "theme for the year" rather than a "theme for a day". Discussion of the annual theme and how it will be approached can be discussed in monthly all-staff meetings. Staff should be advised who the focal point is and be encouraged to provide that person with input appropriate to the theme. Applicable materials might be distributed to staff in anticipation of the session. The key to avoiding the one-off syndrome is to build up to the Refresher, provide it, and then follow it up regularly over subsequent weeks and months.

## Facilitating the annual Refresher



Refer to section V. Facilitating Code of Conduct sessions for detailed guidance on running training sessions.

### Co-facilitation

Co-facilitation is generally preferable for Code of Conduct Refresher sessions if two facilitators are available. This is especially important when several different sessions must be given in order to reach a large audience. If possible, the facilitators should be diverse in gender, level, ethnicity, and other factors. Some offices have found it advisable to have one facilitator with a legal background in order to address any legal issues that might arise.

Co-facilitators can divide facilitation duties, take turns supervising or delivering different parts of the program, and can circulate during small group activities to answer questions and to be sure everyone is on task. Needless to say, co-facilitation takes careful planning and co-ordination.

If a second facilitator is not available, then it is essential to have someone serve as a training assistant. This person would be in the room with the facilitator to handle logistics, pass out materials, operate the projector, and help with any unforeseen problems.

Some countries with many staff have found it preferable to train a large number of facilitators who all offer the Refresher on the same day. Most countries, however, have a smaller team of facilitators who offer multiple sessions.

### Arranging attendance

Be sure that all participants know of the session at least several weeks in advance. It is best to announce upcoming sessions in more than one way, such as by written messages to each person plus e-mail, or in person plus a written reminder, or announced in a meeting that is followed up with e-mail.

Build interest and motivation when you announce the session by telling participants a little about what to expect, why it is important, and that the training will be highly interactive. Also ensure that they understand that the session is required.

Be sure to take attendance during the session. Some facilitators do this by preparing and circulating during the session a sheet with the name of each person expected and space for them to sign, affirming their presence. Afterwards, the facilitator can check the names of those who missed the session to verify the reason for the absence and whether it is to be considered excused. Each person's attendance must be noted in the individual's personnel record.

### Logistics

Any training programme will be more successful if the logistics run smoothly. The key is remembering to arrange for everything well ahead of time, so that you are not focusing

on logistics just prior to or during the session. Refer to the Logistics Checklist found in Section V Facilitating Code of Conduct Sessions.

### **Participant and facilitator materials**

Be sure that you have at hand all materials and resources that you will need. It is useful to take references into the room, such as *the UNHCR Staff Administrative and Management Manual*, and the U.N. Staff Rules and Regulations, which can be accessed via [UN Staff Rules and Regs](#) in case questions arise. Also have extra copies of the [Code of Conduct](#).

Ensure you have a sufficient number of handouts. (Have extras on hand in case unforeseen participants arrive.) It may be helpful to send an electronic copy of the Code of Conduct with the original invitation to the session. However, most facilitators find it preferable to save other handouts for the session itself, rather than distributing them in advance.

Of course, you should bring your detailed plan for the session, your notes, and all the materials you will be using.

### **Your tasks as facilitator**

As facilitator of the Refresher session on UNHCR's Code of Conduct, you are responsible for setting up the session, conducting it, and along with programme managers, following through afterwards to ensure that participants are reminded of what they have learned. Also, you are responsible for administering and collecting the participant evaluations. Once these have been shared with interested parties, they should be filed at the Office level. You may be given responsibility for completing the Senior Manager's Annual Report on Code of Conduct Refresher Sessions for filing with the Ethics Office.

#### **Prior to the session**

- ☐ Make sure you understand all of the materials that you will be covering. Be sure to review the Code of Conduct also.
- ☐ Photocopy sufficient handouts and evaluation forms.
- ☐ Arrange all logistics for the training using the checklist in Section V.
- ☐ Invite participants, making clear the session starting and ending times.

#### **During the session**

- ☐ Start on time.
- ☐ Clarify the objectives of the session and the agenda.
- ☐ Describe *how* the session will be conducted.
- ☐ Establish ground rules together with the group. (See the section called Facilitating Discussions in Section V. of this Manual.)

- ☐ Remain impartial throughout the session.
- ☐ Draw out any participants who seem withdrawn or reluctant to take part.
- ☐ Avoid talking too much and do not become personally involved in the discussions.
- ☐ Remain aware of the time without being “tied to the clock”. Adjust your estimated time for each activity if necessary.
- ☐ Stick to the plan and do not digress or allow the group to digress or waste time.
- ☐ Relate the discussion topics to actual incidents of which you are aware, being careful to avoid criticising any individual or group.
- ☐ Remain positive; avoid sarcasm or negativity.
- ☐ Stay alert and convey interest through your body language, facial expression and eye contact with all of the participants.
- ☐ Require on-time return from all breaks.
- ☐ Serve primarily as organiser, not director. Suggest rather than direct; ask questions instead of primarily providing information; and encourage participation.

#### **Following the session**

- ☐ Collect the evaluation forms and share them with session facilitators, organisers, and senior Office managers, followed by placing copies in the office Code of Conduct file.
- ☐ Prepare the Senior Manager’s Annual Report on Code of Conduct Refresher Sessions and submit it to the Ethics Office, if delegated this task by senior management of the Office. Also place it in the local Code of Conduct file.
- ☐ Ensure that attendance records are kept and attendance is noted in each person’s personnel record.

#### **Evaluating and reporting on the annual Refresher**

It is the responsibility of the Code of Conduct Focal Point and/or the session facilitators to see that every participant completes an evaluation of the Refresher, that these are shared with the appropriate people and are then filed at the Office level for reference when planning Refreshers in subsequent years. It is primarily through careful study of these evaluations that necessary changes can be identified that will result in constant improvement to the Code of Conduct training sessions we offer. The [Participant Refresher Evaluation Form](#) is found at the end of this section of the Manual.



It is the responsibility of the Office to file an end-of-year [Annual Report on Code of Conduct Refresher Sessions](#) , also found at the end of this section of the Manual, with the Ethics Office, and to place a copy in the local files.

### **Evaluation procedure**

- ☐ Photocopy sufficient copies of the evaluation form to provide one for each participant, plus a few extras in case more are needed.
- ☐ Distribute the evaluation forms at the end of the session and allow time for completion. As participants leave the room, they should deposit their evaluation form anonymously in a box or place it in a pile.



Don't send the evaluation forms with the participants to be completed and returned later. The return rate is always unacceptably low.

- ☐ After the session (never while participants are present in the room), gather the evaluation forms and share them. The session organisers, facilitators, and senior managers of the Office should review them to assess the sessions and identify issues and needs for follow-up.
- ☐ File the evaluations at the local Office level. These may be requested by an Inspection Mission.
- ☐ If delegated the task by the senior Office manager, complete the Senior Manager's Annual Report on Code of Conduct Refresher Sessions to be submitted to the Ethics Office and placed in the local files.

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## Individual Evaluation Form

### Code of Conduct Annual Refresher Session

We appreciate your completing this anonymous evaluation of the Refresher session. It will help this Office make next year's Refresher even better!

1. Do you feel that the session length was (check only one):

☐

Too long?

☐

Too short?

☐

The right length?

2. Were your questions about how to apply the Code of Conduct addressed?

☐

Yes

☐

No

If no, please explain:

3. Did you receive information on how and where to seek advice on applying the Code of Conduct?

☐

Yes

☐

No

4. Did you receive information on how and where to seek help in resolving grievances or addressing work-related problems?

☐

Yes

☐

No

5. Did you receive information on how and where to report misconduct?

☐

Yes

☐

No

6. Do you understand your responsibilities as a staff member with regard to personal conduct?

☐

Yes

☐

No

7. Have you completed the e-learning U.N. Programme on the Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority in the Workplace?

☐

Yes

☐

No

8. Any additional comments? (You may also write on the back of this form.)

# Senior Manager's Annual Report on Code of Conduct Refresher Sessions

To: Representatives/Chiefs of Mission and Directors of Bureaux  
 From: Director, Ethics Office  
 Re: Reporting Requirements  
 Deadline: **31 December Annually**

UNHCR's capacity to ensure the protection of and assistance to refugees and other persons of concern largely depends on the ability of our staff to uphold the highest standards of ethical conduct. One way we promote professional behaviour is by keeping the UNHCR Code of Conduct paramount in staff's minds, including by offering an annual Refresher on the Code and ensuring that all incoming staff receive an induction to the CoC.

As senior managers you have a particular role to play in this regard. Thank you for your commitment to UNHCR's Code of Conduct, both individually as a staff member as well as in your leadership role as a manager. The information you provide in this report will be collated with the results from offices globally and will be made available by the Ethics Office annually at its intranet site, under the subject Code of Conduct. All Representatives/Chiefs of Mission as well as Bureau Directors are required to complete and send this report to the Ethics Office at [ethicsoffice@unhcr.org](mailto:ethicsoffice@unhcr.org) no later than 31 December Annually.

## REPORT FROM:

Office: .....  
 Director / Representative: .....

1 Please list all Refresher sessions held this year:

Date	Location	Number of Participants	Names of facilitators
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	YES	NO	Comments
2 Have all staff in your operation/Bureau participated in the Code of Conduct Refresher Session for this year?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If no, please provide comments on why this was not possible, and steps you will take to follow up.

- 3 **Have all new staff in your operation/Bureau:**  
 A. received an induction in the CoC?  
 B. completed the mandatory online training courses?  
 C. had placed on file their signed CoC commitments?  
 and their certificates of completion for the e-learning? ☐ ☐ If not, please explain.
- 4 Have you provided all staff in your operation/Bureau information where to go to seek additional confidential advice on the CoC? ☐ ☐ If not, please explain.
- 5 Did your operation/Bureau face any particular challenge in implementation of the CoC this year? ☐ ☐ Please specify.
- 6 Have all staff in your operation/Bureau including interns, deployees and consultants, completed the UN Programme on the Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority in the Workplace? ☐ ☐ If not, please explain.
- 7 Have you reviewed, taken action as needed, and placed on file the completed evaluation forms of all participants from the Annual CoC Refresher Session? (NOTE: These forms may be requested for review during an inspection or compliance mission.) ☐ ☐ Please explain.
- 8 What is the most significant follow up issue for your office in relation to this year's annual theme? The issue is:
- 9 Any additional comments or feedback? Comments:

# IV. Integrating the Code of Conduct into Everyday Practice

The Code of Conduct is much more than merely one document among the many providing guidance to UNHCR staff regarding their decisions and actions as civil servants. The Code is a lens through which all staff should view their behaviour on a daily basis. For the Code of Conduct to become an integral part of UNHCR's basic operating philosophy and an effective guide to each individual's behaviour, it needs to be constantly brought to staff's attention. The Code cannot merely be something addressed only during an annual one-off training event.

For values to become internalised, they need constant reinforcement. This reinforcement can take many forms and need not always be direct. In fact, one of the most effective ways to reinforce a value is to have it mentioned informally and frequently in a positive way by persons who are particularly respected and admired. These "agents of influence" are often persons of official authority in the organization, but may also be others who influence simply through their personal charisma or professional experience.

Too often the Code is brought up only in a negative context, when a crisis is looming or a difficult challenge is being faced. It is essential that UNHCR managers have a more proactive attitude and ask, "What might the Code of Conduct have to say about this?" in everyday workplace situations. Staff who maintain a constant ethical stance will be able to prevent problems from developing that might otherwise become crises.

A positive approach can help prevent behavioural issues. Learning to congratulate others and ourselves when situations are well handled will reinforce that behaviour and increase the likelihood that it will happen again.

## Example

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Team leader Wossen at a weekly staff meeting:

*Tanja has suggested that if we reorganise the reception area we could make it a lot more comfortable for refugees waiting for RSD interviews. That's a great application of the first Core Value of the Code of Conduct. Tanja, do you want to explain your idea to the team?*

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## Visual reminders

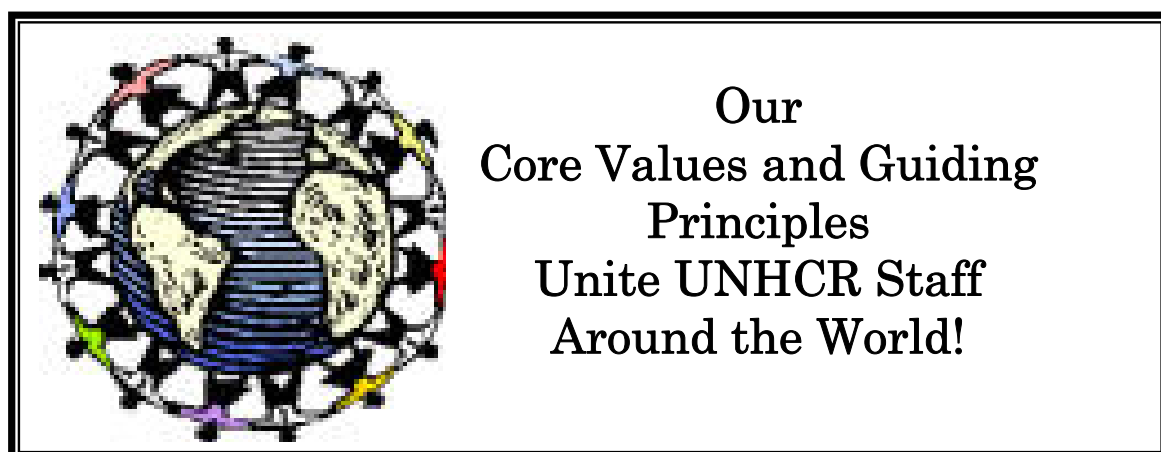
Much has been written in the last few years about the effectiveness of subliminal advertising—visual reminders that affect our thinking and behaviour even when we are not consciously aware of having seen anything. If these techniques successfully promote positive attitudes toward mundane items such as a particular brand of car, for example, then they should also work to build positive feelings about something as substantive and critical as a Code of Conduct which impacts staff and others daily.

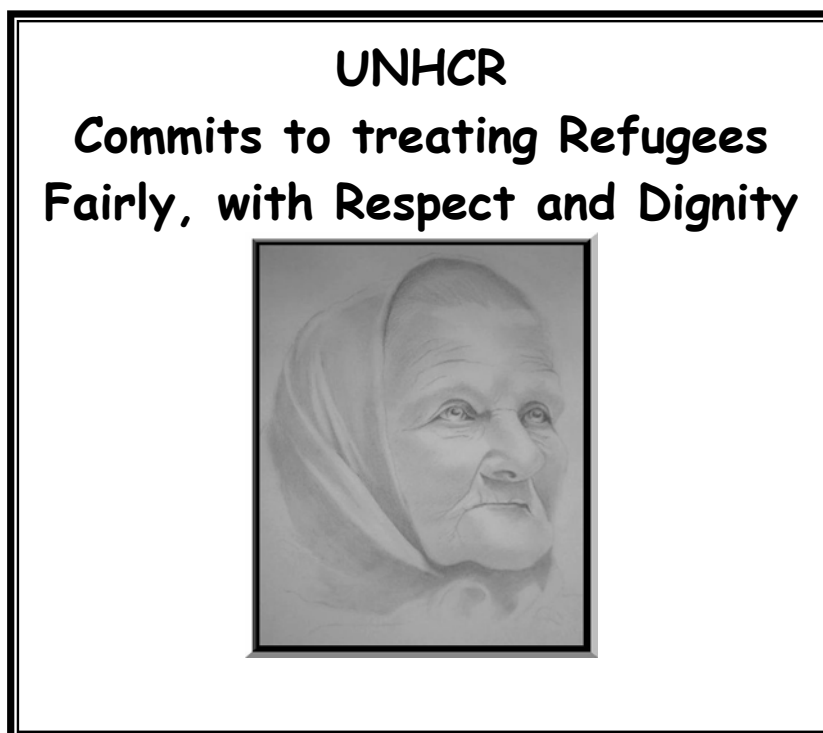
You might want to:

- Post the Code of Conduct itself prominently on bulletin boards
- Place posters about the Code of Conduct on staff bulletin boards
- Place Code-oriented posters in areas seen by refugees and other persons of concern
- Program a Code-oriented online popup to automatically appear when staff members turn on their computer

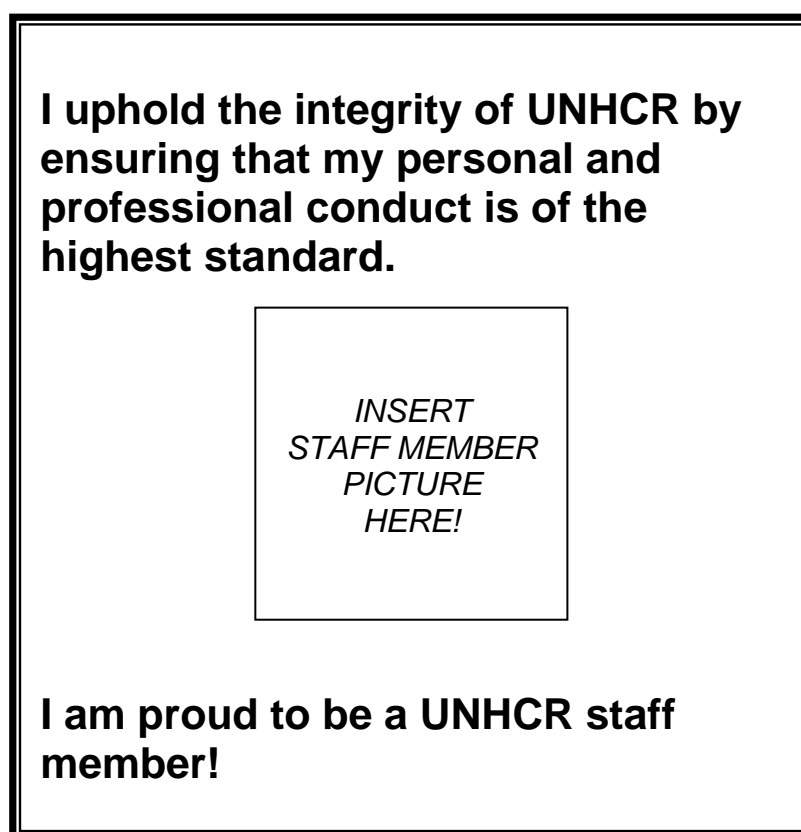
Examples

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Note: the pictures in these sample posters are Google Images so you are free to use them.



## Other awareness building activities

Interactive consultations in which the Code of Conduct is specifically mentioned with stakeholders including Implementing Partners, interpreters, refugees, and others will make them aware of the Code and its applicability. Be sure that they have copies of the Code and know its importance in UNHCR's work.

Consider using some of the activities suggested in the 2004 publication [CoC Guidelines for Managers](#):

Bulletin Boards Outside of UNHCR	Provide copies of the Code, posters, and information on the Code for placement on boards at Implementing Partner facilities and at key locations in refugee camps.
All Staff Meetings	Devote about ten minutes during regular staff meetings to discussion of a case study, either from this Manual or one created to reflect the realities in your own office.
Inter-agency Meetings	Be sure the contents of the Code are discussed at the sector level in inter-agency meetings.
Workshops	Regardless of the topic, it is usually possible to apply some aspect of the Code, for example, during POP training.
Translate the Code into Local Languages	If it has not yet been done, make the Code available in all local languages to better reach persons of concern, government interlocutors, and IP staff.
Performance Reviews	Be sure to address the Code during mid-term and annual performance reviews as well as during annual objective setting.
Form a Network of CoC Facilitators	Create a network of Code facilitators so that they can exchange ideas prior to delivering annual Refresher sessions.
Meet with Managers	Ensure that managers have an opportunity to share with one another how they are addressing CoC issues, either during regularly scheduled or special meetings.

## **Code of Conduct questions game**

Try an energising Code of Conduct game during a staff meeting. Photocopy the two quizzes found in [Section VI. Activities](#) of this Manual, cut them into slips with one item on each, and place the folded slips in a container. Divide into mixed teams of two or three staff members. Each team takes turns drawing a slip and collaborating to answer the question. (Photocopy the answers for yourself, as a reference.) If the answer is correct, they win a point for their team. You may want to have a prize for the winning team, such as a bag of sweets to share. It will be most effective if the game is kept active and short—perhaps 15 minutes.



### **Alphabet game**

The Alphabet Game is another quick, fun, way to raise the energy level in a meeting or training session—such as when you find the group fading after lunch. The idea is to form a statement related to the Code of Conduct—even peripherally—beginning with each letter of the alphabet. (Be sure to have copies of the Code available for reference.) You can have individuals compete, or teams, or simply give the whole group three minutes to see how many statements they can make. It's easiest, of course, if participants skip around the alphabet rather than trying to work from A to Z. It's amazing how creative some groups can become!

**A**void conflicts of interest.  
**B**e sure your professional conduct is of the highest standard.  
**C**onfidentiality is important.  
**D**on't get involved in anything that would harm UNHCR's image.  
**E**xploitation of refugees is always wrong.  
**F**ollowing security instructions is critical.  
**G**ifts are out of the question!  
**H**eads of departments, offices, or missions are responsible for reporting sexual abuse.  
**I**n case of doubt, ask the Ethics Office your CoC questions.  
**J**ust being aware is half your job.  
**... etc.**

The key to integrating the Code of Conduct into everyday practice at UNHCR is to have it become an automatic point of reference for us as we make decisions and do our work. Constant reminders to each other of our shared values and routine examples of the highest standards of personal and professional conduct will make the Code a norm that actually guides us rather than just an abstract set of expectations, rules and regulations to be reviewed periodically.

# V. Facilitating Code of Conduct Sessions

As a facilitator of Code of Conduct training, you are not expected to be an “expert” on the UNHCR Code of Conduct. You will not be delivering lectures on it or teaching about it. Instead, you will be facilitating the participants’ exploration of the Code, its meaning and application to everyday realities. Much of that exploration will be done in small groups of participants, who return to share with the entire group. You do, however, need to understand the Code and be fully committed to it. Also, you must be able to draw out the thoughts and feelings of all the participants.

If you are an experienced trainer or group facilitator, this part of the Manual may be too detailed for you; it has been written to provide very structured guidance for less-experienced facilitators. Feel free to use as much or as little of this section as you need.

## Your role as facilitator

Remember that your job is to *facilitate*, or “make easy”, the participants’ learning. Your role is not to be an authority, but rather a guide in helping the group achieve its objectives. One way to do that is by lessening the perceived power gap between you and the group.

It will be up to you to identify and focus much of the discussion on power relationship issues. Even more importantly, during the session you can set an example of appropriate use of the power that you inherently have, as leader of the group. The fourth Principle says, in part, “I will show respect to all colleagues regardless of status or position, and will allow all colleagues the opportunity to have their views heard, and to contribute from their knowledge and experience to team efforts.” This is an excellent job description for you as group facilitator.

Prior to the session, you should speak with any senior managers who will be attending mixed-level sessions. Their enthusiastic participation is critical, yet they must understand the importance of refraining from dominating discussions. In fact, managers are well advised to generally hold back their contributions during discussion until others have spoken.

## Planning the session

Guidance for creating an agenda is found both in [Section III Refresher Sessions](#) and in [Annex C](#) where suggestions for the yearly Refresher sessions are found. In summary, your planning should include the following steps:

1. Determine the length of the session, whether it will be a half-day (3.5 training hours plus a break) or a full day (six to seven training hours plus two breaks and lunch).

2. Decide how many sessions you will be offering. If you offer two or more sessions on different days, it may be possible to accommodate everyone's work schedule more easily. The optimum group size that balances including enough participants for a variety of opinions with enough time for everyone to make their views heard is 12 to 15 participants.
3. Decide on your participant mix. In a small office, you will probably have everyone together in one session. In a larger office you may decide to train by work group, with mixed levels. This would allow you to focus on cases relevant to a particular functional group. Or you may prefer to mix functions, levels, genders, and local/international staff, which would offer the advantage of a variety of viewpoints. It is highly advisable, however, that you not assign a large number of high-ranking managers to a single group. It is much better to spread them among different groups, so they will not risk overpowering other participants.
4. Check the availability of rooms, chairs, etc. and **set a date** or dates for the training through consultation with senior Office management.
5. Set the schedule for the training. Set start, end, and lunch times according to local custom. Plan 15 or 20-minute breaks, also depending on custom.
6. Carefully study the objectives for the session you are planning and each of its parts. Know exactly what you hope to accomplish. What do you want participants to "take away with them" from of the training?
7. Carefully select the activities that you will use for each section to accomplish the objectives. See which ones seem particularly appropriate for your participants and which you feel comfortable leading. Keep in mind that many of the essential topics inevitably may be somewhat uncomfortable to address. Consider your particular participants' interests and needs, the number who will attend, and the amount of time you have. Identify an extra activity in case the session proceeds more rapidly than expected.
8. Write the plan for the session with an estimated time for each activity. Sample agendas are included in the Annex description of the theme for the year.
9. Prepare yourself for the session:
  - Study all of the material very carefully.
  - Think about actual incidents with which you are personally familiar to illustrate particular points.
  - Prepare especially to deal with any sensitive cases that have occurred in the office and might be raised during the session. You may want to consult with senior managers about any potentially difficult issues ahead of the session. It is important to ensure that no confidential or personal matters are discussed in this context, which is intended to review general standards of conduct.
  - Go through the agenda mentally, picturing what you will be doing at each stage.

- Discuss the Code of Conduct, including each of the cases you will be using, with colleagues and senior staff. Be sure you are ready to answer questions that may arise.
- Meet with others who will be facilitating sessions to give each other suggestions and “walk through” your plans, if possible.

10. Notify the participants. (See the suggestions under Logistics.)

11. Arrange the programme logistics using the Logistics Checklist that follows.

### **Allotting time**

It can be quite difficult to estimate the time an activity will take because groups vary so much in size and enthusiasm. The times given in the instructions for each activity are often a range. If you will have a large group, or a group with language challenges, choose the longer estimate. For a very small group, take the shorter one. Also consider the personalities and communication styles of the participants.

It is critical that you start on time and end on time. Also, require on-time return from scheduled breaks. Do not plan more than you can do in the time you will have—or you will be tempted to rush the participants.

### **Logistics Checklist**

Any training session will be more successful if the logistics run smoothly. The key is remembering to arrange for everything well ahead of time, so that you are not focusing on logistics just prior to or during the session.

- ☐ A quiet meeting room that is large enough for small groups to work without bothering each other OR one room for the whole group and one or more nearby rooms for the small group activities
- ☐ Chairs or desks for all participants and the facilitator
- ☐ Either a large table for participants to sit around, tables placed in a U, or smaller tables and chairs placed “bistro style” around the room
- ☐ Blackboard and chalk or whiteboard and markers
- ☐ Flip charts or newsprint paper and markers
- ☐ All materials and handouts for the activities you have
- ☐ A table, counter, or other flat surface in the room where you can arrange all of the handouts and other materials in the order in which they will be used
- ☐ Tape for putting posters etc. on the walls
- ☐ Pens and notepads for the participants

☐ Water and drinking glasses on the table, or nearby

☐ Access to a nearby canteen or cafeteria where participants can buy coffee, etc. during breaks

OR

☐ Refreshments in the room, such as coffee and biscuits or whatever is typical in your region

### Training management

You can do many things to make the session more effective, even if you are relatively inexperienced as a facilitator. Think about what helps you learn, and try to apply similar techniques in the session you will be facilitating. Make sure that your activities suit the local culture. If you are not local staff, you may wish to consult a local staff member about the culture and/or ask one of the local staff to co-facilitate. Following are some ideas to keep in mind.

### Co-facilitation

Especially if you have a large group, or if you are not an experienced group facilitator, you might consider asking someone to serve either as your assistant or as co-facilitator. An assistant would be in the room with you to handle logistics, pass out materials, and so forth leaving you free to focus more on the learning process. A co-facilitator would be able to circulate with you during small group activities to answer questions and to be sure everyone is on task. You might also divide facilitation duties. Of course, co-facilitation takes careful planning together and teamwork.

### Preparation

Never try to facilitate a session without being sure that you completely understand the objective(s) of each activity and the procedure for carrying it out. Read the instructions through carefully. Talk over procedures for each activity with your co-facilitator or your training assistant. Get all your props, materials, and equipment arranged so that you know exactly where everything is. Be sure your handouts are ready, in sufficient number. Know how you will introduce the session and what transitions you will use to move smoothly from one activity to the next.

If possible, it is helpful to run-through an activity prior to carrying it out the first time with a group. If you are inexperienced as a facilitator, it will be helpful to practice out loud, either with or without an audience. Whenever possible, check out the site where you will be facilitating. Walk through the room, so that you know where the electrical outlets are, how to open and close windows or shades, and how you might best arrange the desks, tables, or chairs. Test the acoustics in the room. Will you be heard at the back of the room? Are there noises outside that might be distracting?

### Objectives and agenda

Participants generally need to know **what** they will be doing and **why**. It is helpful to post the session's goals and the agenda before participants come into the room. When you post the agenda, you can make it quite general. They **do** need an idea of the timing of breaks and lunchtime.



It's usually better **not** to put exact times on your posted agenda. Participants tend to get nervous if you stray from stated times!

As you move from one section of the session to the next, let participants know the objective of the upcoming section—what they'll be doing and why. There is no need to use sophisticated language to explain an objective; simply state the purpose in your own words. For example, you might say, "Now we're going to break into small groups to look at some case studies of UNHCR staff who have faced ethical dilemmas. This will give you a chance to decide how you would handle a similar situation".

### Seating and grouping participants

One of the preferred ways to arrange seating is to have the chairs in a U formation when participants enter the room. This is an appropriate arrangement for the opening, since you can stand at the front to present the initial information. Then you can easily close the end of the U to create a circle for whole-group discussion.

Another seating option that works well for training is to use several round tables "bistro style", which facilitates small group work.

If you will be doing more than one small group exercise (and almost all sessions will), it is important to mix the participants so that they are not always with the same people. While it is easiest to simply have participants work with those seated next to them, there are other more creative ways to group participants that will add interest.



One team of facilitators divides participants into groups by having them each draw a card from a deck of playing cards. This automatically divides the group into four: the clubs, hearts, diamonds, and spades. To make instructions even easier, they tell participants that the person drawing the lowest card in each group is to serve as chairperson and the person drawing the highest card is to be *rapporteur*.

Another way to divide participants is to have them line up in the front of the room using one of the suggested criteria below. Then split the line into the number you want per group. Ways to line up include:

- By birthday, with January birthdays at one end and December the other
- By height
- By distance from the office to their home of origin
- By date they joined UNHCR

### Managing small group work

Some things to remember when you are facilitating pair or small group work include:

- Give very clear instructions so that the groups waste no time in trying to decide what they are to do. Be specific. For example, rather than telling groups to "talk about X" tell them to "discuss X and identify three solutions that you will then share with the large group."

- In most small group work, it is helpful for the group to have a chairperson and someone else who serves as *rapporteur* if they will be presenting what they have discussed. You can usually task the groups with selecting their own chairpersons and reporters. But if the instructions for the group work are particularly complex, you might want to assign a chairperson for each group and prepare them ahead of time.
- If the instructions for small group work are even a little complicated, and especially if there are likely to be language challenges, write out the instructions ahead of time on a flip chart or newsprint and post it. Number the instructions so that everyone understands exactly what they are to do, and in what order. Alternatively, you can have the instructions written on a piece of paper for each chairperson.
- Tell the groups approximately how long they will have to work so that they can allocate their time appropriately.
- Explain what they will be doing with the conclusions they reach as a group. Are they to write them up on a sheet of paper to post on the wall? Are they to explain their conclusions to the whole group? Are they to get together with another small group to share or to reach consensus?
- If the room is small and you are sending groups to meet elsewhere, make it clear that this is work time, **not** break time.
- Immediately after sending the groups off to work, move quickly from one group to the next making sure that they understand the assignment and are focused on it.
- While the groups are working, circulate among them so that you can answer questions, offer help as needed, and keep them on task. Avoid leading the group.
- It is natural for some groups to be faster than others. Try to have an “extension activity” ready to assign to any group that is much faster, such as additional discussion questions. Be ready to provide extra help to any group that is much slower than the others. Call “time” and bring the groups back together when all or nearly all have finished the assignment. Do not keep everyone else waiting while a very slow group finishes.
- Since the groups may take more or less time than you estimate, you may need to adjust the timing when you bring them back together. For example, if they took longer than expected in the small groups and you were planning for each group to make a report to the plenary, then you may shorten that by having each group share only one conclusion that they identified. If the groups took less time than you had estimated, you might have everyone in the group (rather than a single *rapporteur*) share their work.

### **Handling introductions, transitions and summaries**

One of the easiest ways to tell the difference between an experienced and an inexperienced facilitator is by how well the person introduces material and transitions from one topic to the next. These are easy skills to learn, so practice!

There is an old training saying that you should “Tell them what you’re going to tell them; tell them; and then tell them what you told them”. This holds a great deal of truth. Most people learn best when they know from the beginning the subject and purpose of the training, and when the trainer summarises key points at the end of the session.

In addition, participants also follow better if there are clear transitions from one section of the program to the next. The easiest transition is a simple statement of “what we’ve just done and what we’re going to be doing next”. It is even better if you can tie the two parts together meaningfully.

The summary at the end of each section of the session can be a simple sentence describing what you have just completed. At the end of the whole programme, however, it is a good idea to provide a more detailed summary of the key points.

### Handling facilitation challenges

Since Code of Conduct sessions are required, you occasionally may have participants who are less than enthusiastic about attending. It will be up to you, and their manager, to help them see the value and importance of active participation in the session.

#### The overly outspoken participant

It is unusual to have a truly disruptive participant. However, you may have someone who dominates the discussion, rambles, and generally uses too much of the group’s time. Some ideas for handling this challenge include:

- Be sure your Ground Rules address the issue of fair sharing of the speaking time.
- Stand near the person.
- Call on someone else who looks like he or she may have something to say, even though Mr./Ms. Dominant is also indicating a desire to speak.
- Say, “*I see you have something to say, but let’s hear first from some of the group who’ve not yet spoken.*”
- When dividing into small groups, place the most talkative people all together, rather than in different groups.

#### The quiet participant

Participants can seem quiet and withdrawn for any number of reasons. One is simply personality, that is, the person is always quiet in a group, and it has nothing to do with you as the facilitator or the subject matter of the training. This type of person is frequently very much in tune with the session and is getting a lot out of it without verbally contributing much. Do not risk embarrassing such people by calling on them directly unless you are sure you will not make them uncomfortable. Or, you can ask a very general question, such as, “*Rachel, do you have any thoughts on that?*”

When someone you know to be usually outgoing becomes withdrawn during a training session, you need to find out why. It may be discomfort with the subject matter, confusion over the content, a personal problem, or disagreement with what is being discussed. A simple question to the person during a break may clarify what is going on.



Timid members of the group may be drawn into the discussion by asking them for specific information that you know they have. Inquire whether those who have not spoken would like to comment and, instead of calling on more vocal participants, recognise those who have kept silent but look ready to speak. When participants are quiet because a few others are dominating the discussion, you will need to “clear space” to allow them to speak.

## Participants conducting side-conversations

Stand quietly and look intently at those who are conducting their own conversation until they quit. If they persist, you might say, “Let’s have one conversation together as a group, please.”

## Facilitating discussions

Code of Conduct training often involves animated group discussion. There is much that you can do to structure and manage discussions to make them more effective. Try the following:

### Arrange the room

For a good whole-group discussion to take place, participants need to be able to see each other's faces. A circle or oval shape is usually the best arrangement, with you as facilitator seated in the circle with the participants. If you are using cases or other handouts, it is useful to have people seated around one or more tables where they can place the materials.

### Create a supportive atmosphere

The subject matter covered in the Code of Conduct can be very sensitive, and some participants may feel embarrassed or defensive about discussing it. One way to create comfort is to provide a supportive, accepting atmosphere.

At the beginning of the programme, ask the participants what ground rules they would like to have for the discussion. Encourage open sharing by being culturally and gender-sensitive. If a participant makes a comment that is likely to be offensive to someone else, gently call the speaker’s attention to the insensitivity.

### Open the discussion thoughtfully

Be sure that participants clearly understand **what** they are to discuss. You may distribute a case for everyone to read; you might have a controversial statement written on the board; or perhaps you will explain an incident verbally.

When everyone understands the situation or topic, open with a carefully thought-out question or two. (Later in the discussion you can ask questions that spontaneously occur to you, but in the beginning it is important to have well-prepared questions to get the discussion started.) Good opening questions:

- are open-ended, requiring more than just agreement or disagreement (why, what, how, ...)

- are addressed to the group as a whole, not to individuals
- encourage thoughtful, personal opinions as a reply, not simply a restatement

Examples: What do you think might have contributed to this situation? Who has an example to share of something similar? What would have happened if...? Why did he decide on that action?

### **Ask questions**

Your role as facilitator includes guiding the discussion of the Code through thoughtful questions. Make your questions specific and to the point.

- ask *what* to get opinions and facts
- ask *why* for reasons and causes
- ask *who* or *where* for sources of opinions and facts
- ask *how* or *when* to narrow the discussion and get down to specifics

The following are some suggestions for questions you can use to facilitate the discussion and accomplish specific goals:

- ➔ to call attention to a point that has not been considered: *Has anyone thought about this aspect of the issue?*
- ➔ to question the strength of an argument: *What reasons do we have for accepting this position?*
- ➔ to get to causes: *Why do you suppose John takes this position?*
- ➔ to bring a generalising speaker back to specifics: *Can you give us a specific example on that point? Can you make it more concrete?*
- ➔ "How would that work in practice?"
- ➔ to suggest that some participants are talking too much: *Does anyone who hasn't commented on the subject yet have something to say?*

- Keep on track** Discussions have a tendency to wander sometimes. Always keep in mind what your purpose is for the discussion, and gently steer the conversation in that direction through your questions.
- Get it in writing** It will often be helpful to write down the key points that come out of the discussion of the Code, either on the board or on a flip chart. If you find it difficult to facilitate the discussion and also capture and record key thoughts, then appoint a recorder from among the participants.
- Make occasional summaries** Use summaries during the discussions to:
- reduce needless repetition
  - bring random conversations back to the subject
  - note apparent areas of agreement or disagreement
- Ensure that the summary is brief and objective. Do not magnify any disagreement or assume agreement when none exists. Avoid bias by asking the participants if you have captured the essence of what has been said, and ask them to contribute anything you may have overlooked.
- Wrap it up** End the discussion by summarising key points, perhaps referring to what your recorder or you have written. (**Do not simply stop** when the time you have allotted for the discussion is up)

## Using case studies

### Why use cases?

There is a danger of being too abstract, too general, when presenting Code of Conduct sessions. It's essential that participants understand how to apply the principles to their everyday lives. One of the best ways to bring the theoretical down to the practical is by considering real-life examples. This Manual contains a large number of mini-case studies that illustrate various applications of the Core Values and Guiding Principles of the Code of Conduct. All are based on actual situations in UNHCR, disguised for anonymity, and all have been vetted by several UNHCR officers.

Since a case study provides insight into how UNHCR really works, it tends to be highly involving. Cases can provoke thought and discussion without providing prescriptive advice. They describe what others did in a particular situation and how it turned out, but they cannot ensure that you will always derive the same results in a similar situation. Meaningful personal insight can arise from reflection on and discussion of a good case.

UNHCR staff members sometimes discount learning methods such as lectures (too academic) and learning materials from the private sector (too corporate). But case studies derived from the actual experiences of their colleagues tend to have credibility and generally are received with enthusiasm.

## Selecting, adapting, and writing cases


Choose those cases in this Manual addressing situations that are most relevant for your own group. Feel free to make them even more applicable to your particular location and circumstances by adapting them. Just changing the characters' names can sometimes be enough to help participants better identify with the situation described.

Don't avoid those cases that cover issues that may be somewhat uncomfortable for participants to discuss. Often these are the most important ones to address. While multiple reviewers have vetted all of the cases in this Manual, it will still be important for you to consider any local sensitivity when you select which to use.

If none of the cases addresses exactly the situation you need, feel free to write your own, following the format of those in the Manual. Remember these guidelines if you write your own case:

- Make it real so that the case will be relevant. Don't exaggerate behaviour.
- Disguise it so that the real situation you described is kept anonymous.
- Provide context and contributing factors, so that the described behaviour makes sense.
- Describe the characters so they seem like real people.
- Provide outcomes, because a good case shows the results of the action described.

If you would like further guidance in writing good case studies, see the document [Write Good Cases](#) at the end of this section.

All cases are found in [Annex A](#) of this Manual. Each case is indicated as meant to be photocopied for participants by the heavy bar at the top and bottom of the case:  Each case is followed by a box containing a few questions. Either several questions are simply listed, or alternative options are presented for resolving the situation presented by the case. You can assign these questions when the cases are used either for self-study or for large or small group discussion.

A "Notes for the Facilitator" sheet follows each case. It opens with a section that identifies those parts of the Code of Conduct that might be applicable in the case described. It also identifies any relevant clauses in other instruments such as the UNHCR Staff Administrative and Management Manual or the UN Staff Regulations and Rules.

The second section, titled "Discussion", highlights the key issues in the case and provides perspective on how the situation might be resolved or might have been prevented. This section provides answers to the boxed questions-for-discussion that follow the case.

This section is followed by "Further questions" that are meant to deepen the conversation by making it more personal and, especially, to encourage the participants to share similar situations that they may have encountered.

The final section of the Facilitator Notes provides information on useful resources, such as offices that might be contacted for support or further guidance on issues such as those discussed in the particular case.

## Ways to use the cases

While the cases are useful for self-study, they are primarily meant to stimulate group discussion so that participants can benefit from the reactions, thoughts, and insights of others. In planning the session, carefully consider whether you should use pair, small group, or whole group discussion of the cases. The advantages and disadvantages of each include:

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Pair discussion	Each person has maximum amount of time to offer ideas	Individuals don't benefit from hearing the ideas from many others
Small group discussion	Good amount of shared 'air time'	More talkative individuals may dominate
Whole group discussion	Opportunity to hear ideas from maximum number of others	Individuals don't have as much speaking time; some people may not contribute

As facilitator, you can be instrumental in ensuring that participants gain as much benefit as possible from the case studies. To do this, consider the following:

- There are several ways to introduce a case. Much will depend on the sophistication of the particular group. You might simply hand it out, have people read it silently, and then call on someone to summarise it briefly. Or you could skip the summary and just ask if anyone has any questions regarding the content. With less prepared groups, or those with language challenges, you might want to summarise the case briefly yourself before passing it out to be read.
- Push participants beyond a narrow focus on "right and wrong" or what rule was broken to look at the broader picture of behaviour that contributes to or detracts from the ability of UNHCR to meet its mandate.
- Help participants see the ambiguous areas in each case and in each character. People and situations are seldom all good or all bad. The situations will seem more meaningful if participants are able to identify with the characters, which is difficult to do if they are seen as completely bad or their behaviour totally wrong. Draw out *why* a character might behave as he or she did. What lay behind their decision to act the way they did?
- Encourage participants to see how something similar might happen in their own locale—or to identify variations that might be likely to occur locally.

- Encourage a variety of viewpoints and don't be nervous about disagreement. You want constructive engagement and discussion. Just ensure a safe, respectful atmosphere in which personal attacks are never allowed.
- Ask participants to share any similar situations about which they are aware, being conscious of a need for confidentiality.
- Track responses or suggestions on the board or a flip chart and leave them posted for participants to think about. You might use different coloured markers for different types of response: red for suggestions/ideas and black for questions, for example.
- Discuss where more information or guidance might be obtained. If **you** faced a similar situation, whom might you turn to for help? For example, legal guidance might be necessary, and you could approach the Legal Affairs Section or the Inspector General's Office—depending on the type of incident. You should refer to and distribute the document [Easy Reference—where to go for further information, advice, or help with a work-related problem](#).

### Turning cases into role-plays

Both watching and participating in role-playing exercises can be excellent learning activities. Many of the cases in this Manual lend themselves well to being acted out. Nevertheless, it is important for the facilitator to handle role-plays with care since they can feel threatening to some participants.

- Use volunteers rather than assigning people to play roles.
- Allow enough preparation time.
- Be sure it is clear that observers critique the actions of the *characters* and not the people playing the roles.

First, select a case that has two principal characters. Choose which approach you will take: you can either have two participants act out the situation described in the case or you can have someone act out providing advice to one of the characters in the case. Select two participants who will be in the session and give them the case and the instructions for the role-play at least a day in advance of the session. It's important that they have time to think about their role-play.

The day of the role-play, you can seat the participants in a U so that they can easily see and hear the actors in front. Introduce the scene if the role-players will act it out, and then let the drama take place. Participants can then question the actors, who **stay in role** as they respond.

Alternatively, you can have all participants read the case before they come together in the U shape formation. One of the role-players then gives advice to the other. This can be followed by audience members volunteering to come forward to play the role of the advice-giver.

Or, have your two actors role-play what comes next—taking the next step after the case study ends.

Role-playing can provide variety during a full-day program, and if carefully facilitated, it can be a memorable and vivid way to get key points across. Some examples of cases that lend themselves particularly well to role-playing are:

**Work Hard/Play Hard** – act out the case

**Off-duty Political Job**—provide advice to the supervisor

**He/She Staff Member**—act out the next step that the supervisor decides to take

**The Housekeeper**—act out the case and what happens next

**Compassion or Something Else**—provide advice to the staff member

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## Writing Good Case Studies

A case study offers real-life solutions and insider tips on how UNHCR really works, so it tends to be highly engaging. By following a few simple guidelines, you can write very involving, realistic cases.

### Steps to developing the case

1. **First, set the scene.** Describe the context as vividly as possible, but always with a view to confidentiality. In UNHCR we often set our cases in the fictitious country of Ruritania. Add details that will make the case seem real to the types of situation that your audience knows.

Be sure that you are consistent in your details. If you've placed the scene in a Branch Office, then the players must occupy positions consistent with those that would be present in a BO. If the case takes place in a refugee camp, then the sights, sounds, and smells that you describe to make it seem real will be different from those of a scenario taking place at headquarters in Geneva.

Steps two through five need not be done sequentially, but all are important. Steps six through eight will need to be done last.

2. **Define the issue(s)** vividly and clearly, with the necessary detail. The opening "problem" section should have impact. In other words, it has to mean something important to the reader—it must be something that they can relate to.

Provide the necessary context for your audience to understand the complexity of the situation, including contributing factors. Be sure you describe it in terms of a problem or problems that must be solved. Generally, the more specific you can be, the better.

3. **Introduce and develop your characters.** Most situations are focused on people. Make sure that you understand the role of each player and how it relates to the issues and problems at hand. The characters need to sound like the people we all know—from the government official to the IP head—and yet you need to describe them without using stereotypes. Be sure to provide the information necessary for your audience to understand *why* each person acts as he or she does. This often includes personal and professional background, motives, intentions, and some history of past behaviour in the situation.

In UNHCR we are particular aware of gender and ethnic sensitivity. Choose names from a variety of regions for your characters. Place women in positions of authority. It's usually possible to refer to main characters just by their first names (always fictitious, of course) after you have introduced them and the other actors by their titles, such as "Assistant Minister of Refugee Affairs" or "the store clerk."

4. **Provide a sense of time.** If your case is taken from a scenario where events take place over a long period, a timeline is recommended, to help your audience gain a



realistic view of the time frames involved. If events occur simultaneously, this should be noted as well. Be sure your readers know what happened when, so they don't get confused.

5. **Define alternative actions.** Few real life situations can only be confronted in one specific way. If possible, identify several alternative ways to solve the problem at hand. The alternatives you propose do not need to be very specific, but simply represent different general approaches to the problem.
6. **Consider the purpose** of your case study as you craft the narrative and decide where to stop the description: at the decision point or after relating the consequences. Is your purpose to illustrate a particular ethical issue? To provide instruction on how to handle commonly occurring tasks?
7. **Describe the outcomes—or do not.** Depending on how the case will be used (Read and thought about only? Discussed with a group? Read and then analysed in writing? Submitted as part of an assignment?), you may want to include the outcome as *part* of the case study. That is, you describe the situation, the need for a decision, what decision was made, and the results of the decision.

Alternatively, you may want to end the case study at the decision point. This allows readers to put themselves more easily in the place of the decision-maker: what would I do? If you choose this alternative, then it's important to present the actual outcome in the analysis that you provide of the case: this was the decision made; this is the rationale; this is what happened as a result of the decision.

8. **Formulate thought questions** that will lead the readers to consider the key issues. Usually open-ended questions are best (as opposed to those that can be answered with *yes* or *no*) but sometimes you may want to offer multiple alternatives from which the reader can choose. These will provoke more thought, or discussion, if several of the alternatives are possible rather than only one "right" answer. Or you may ask the reader to list the alternatives in order of preference.
9. **Provide analysis**, answers to the questions you posed, and possible follow-up thoughts. If the case is to be used by a discussion leader, he or she will want guidance from you. If the case is to be read and thought about, you'll probably want to provide an analysis against which the reader can check his or her own perceptions.

It may also be useful to give further questions for thought. For example, you might ask how the situation could have been handled given different contingencies—such as with less budget, or if X had happened.

If you did not provide the outcomes as part of the case itself, then the actual outcome should be presented in the analysis section.

## Checklist for Evaluating Your Case Study



1. Is the situation realistic and believable?	
2. Is it complex enough, with enough detail, to be engaging?	
3. Is the situation and are the characters disguised well enough to avoid embarrassing anyone?	
4. Do the characters seem authentic and believable so that the readers feel empathy for them and their problems?	
5. Is the storyline or series of events easy to follow?	
6. Are the outcomes directly linked to the actions taken?	
7. Is there sufficient detail without extraneous content?	
8. Are you clear regarding what you want the readers to learn from the case?	
9. If a facilitator will present the case study, have you given that person guidance for leading the discussion?	
10. Are your discussion questions clear and challenging—without obvious right answers?	
11. Have you had someone review your draft for accuracy and relevance?	
12. Have you had someone review your draft for authentic language and expression?	

# VI. Activities for Sessions on the Code of Conduct

There are three situations when you can use structured activities to help staff internalise the content of the Code of Conduct and learn to apply it in their everyday lives. Initial induction sessions are held for newcomers to UNHCR; annual Refreshers are provided at the Office level; and teams are reminded of the Code throughout the year. This section of the Manual contains a variety of structured activities useful in all three types of situation. Any necessary handouts or materials necessary for a particular activity are found immediately following the activity description.

In considering whether a particular activity would be appropriate for your purposes, it's important to ask yourself several questions:

- What's my **objective** for the activity? Will this activity help the participants reach that objective? How?
- How much **time** is available? Is it sufficient for this activity?
- Is it appropriate for the particular **participants** who will be present? (Language, functions, backgrounds, and experience.)
- **How many** participants can take part in this activity effectively? Will it be suitable for my group?
- What **materials or equipment** are necessary for this activity? Do I have what is needed or can I get it?

## Variety and adaptation

Variety is critical to good session planning. To keep participants interested and involved, move from activities where they are primarily **taking in** information (listening to a presentation, watching a PowerPoint slideshow, seeing a film, etc.) to ones in which they are actively **doing something** with the information they have taken in (small group work, discussion, games, etc.). In addition, it's preferable to shift back and forth from large to small group activity and back again. For example, you might introduce a topic to the whole group, then break into small groups, then have the small groups report back to the whole group.

Engaging all learning styles is another factor to think about when you are planning a session. If you've had an activity that's primarily auditory (listening to a talk), you might want to follow it with something visual (making a poster, watching a demonstration) or something kinaesthetic (where the participants are up and moving around).

Many times you will not be able to use an activity exactly as it is described in the Manual. Feel free to adapt it to your particular needs. If your group is larger than you

would like, plan on using primarily small group activities or you might adapt a large group activity to become one involving several small groups.

If your group has language challenges, use an interpreter. Or seat those who need language help together at one table and provide a bilingual assistant. Or have critical written materials translated into the local language. Sometimes participants can handle the large group introduction to an activity in the common language followed by small groups that work in different languages. For example, they might hold their discussions in various local languages, but still make their presentations back to the large group in the common language. The key is to be flexible, and to adapt to the needs of the group.

### **Activities using case studies**

[Section V Facilitating Code of Conduct sessions](#) provides extensive guidance on how to use cases effectively. Please read that material before choosing one of the techniques below.

#### ***Discussion of cases: whole group method***

**Objectives:**

- To be able to apply the Values and Principles of the Code of Conduct to practical situations in UNHCR
- To know where to go for further guidance and advice when facing ethical dilemmas

**Time:** Will vary by the number of cases you discuss. Allow about 10-15 minutes per case. (Some will take more time, some less.)

**Number of participants:** Use this technique primarily when you have a very small group: eight or fewer participants. With a larger group, consider breaking them up into small groups in order to give each person more opportunity to express him or herself, as described in the next activity.

**Preparation:** Be sure you fully understand each case you will be using. You should read carefully the corresponding Notes for the Facilitator. You ought to be able to respond to participants' questions without reference to the Notes.

**Materials:** Provide a copy for each participant of each of the cases you will discuss. They are found in [Annex A Cases and Facilitator Notes](#). Note that you will need to photocopy the cases you plan to use but **not** the Notes for the Facilitator.

**Suggestion:** Choose more cases than you think you will need, and use them in order of priority, so you will be sure to

get to the most important ones for your particular group and also will have extras available for use if time permits.

## Procedure

Note that the text in *italics* is a suggestion of what you might say in your own words.

1. Introduction to the activity  
*We are going to discuss some actual situations in which UNHCR employees were faced with ethical decisions. Read the case silently when I give it to you*  
Hand out the first case. Wait until almost everyone is done reading.
  2. Check for understanding  
*Joel, can you summarise the case for us? OR  
Is there anything in the case that anyone doesn't understand?*
  3. Discussion  
Lead the discussion using the suggested questions in the Notes for the Facilitator for that case. (Be sure to follow the guidelines for leading discussions suggested in Section V Facilitating Code of Conduct sessions of this Manual.) It is important to point out, or have participants identify, which parts of the Code apply to each of the cases.
  4. Continuation  
Continue by distributing one case at a time, having the participants read it and then discuss the issues, until the time you have allotted for this activity is nearly up.
- Summary of the activity
- Remind participants of the most important points that they have identified. This will be easier if you have been keeping a running list on the board or flip chart. Then lead in to the next part of the session:
- We've had a good discussion of how you'd handle some of the ethical situations that other UNHCR employees have faced. Some of the main points that you've identified as important are.... Let's move on now to...*

## ***Discussion of cases: small group method***

### **Objectives:**

- To be able to apply the Values and Principles of the Code of Conduct to practical situations in UNHCR
- To know where to go for further guidance and advice when facing ethical dilemmas

**Time:** Will vary depending on the number of groups. Allow 10-12 minutes for the groups to discuss their case, and another 5-8 minutes for each group's presentation to the whole group, along with your follow-up questions. Multiply that time by the number of cases that you expect to be discussing.

**Number of participants:** Use groups of 3-4 for this activity.

**Preparation:** Be sure you fully understand each case you will be using and the corresponding Notes for the Facilitator. You should be able to respond to questions without reference to the Notes.

Before participants arrive, write the three discussion questions on the board or a flip chart. (The questions are in the activity introduction section below.)

**Materials:** Provide a copy of the case for each member of the group, with each group having copies of a different case. (Do not duplicate the Notes for the Facilitator.) Participants will also need the Code handy, in order to look up which clause is applicable.

**Suggestion:** Be creative in assigning groups! For example, you might mix participants from different backgrounds or job functions.

## Procedure

This activity is not merely a small-group version of the Whole Group Discussion. In this activity participants discuss the same three questions for each case instead of, or in addition to, the suggested discussion questions found with the case. Also, each group examines a different case and shares it, along with their responses, with the whole group.

Note that the text in *italics* is a suggestion of what you might say in your own words.

1. Introduction to the activity  
*We are going to look at some actual cases in which UNHCR staff were faced with ethical decisions. Each group will have a different case. Read and discuss the case with your partner(s). Be prepared to summarise your case for the large group and answer the three questions that I've placed on the board:*  
What is the ethical issue(s) here?  
What would you do? Why?  
Have you ever heard of or experienced anything similar?
2. Small-group work  
Give groups about 10-12 minutes to work on their cases. Circulate among the groups, clarifying the content or process

as needed.

3. Group presentations  
Call on each group to present their case. (It will be easier if one person speaks for each group.)  
Summarise the case briefly.  
Identify the ethical issue(s).  
Tell how they would handle the situation and why.  
Tell about any similar experience they have had or heard of.
  4. Clause identification, discussion  
After each presentation by a group, ask the whole group to identify which Principle or Core Value addresses the issue that was just discussed.  
  
Using the "Possible further questions" section of the Notes for the Facilitator, discuss with the whole group one or two pertinent related issues. (Pace your time so that you do not use too much on the first cases and have to skimp on the later ones.)
  5. Continuation  
If there is time after each group has made their presentation, you can hand out a second set of cases and repeat the process.
- Summary of the activity
- Close the activity by summarising the discussion and leading in to the next part of the session:  
*We've had a good discussion of some ethical dilemmas others have faced and how you would have handled them. The key points that you've identified are .... Let's move on now to ....*

### ***Discussion of cases: using native language***

#### **Objectives:**

- To be able to apply the Values and Principles of the Code of Conduct to practical situations in UNHCR
- To know where to go for further guidance and advice when facing ethical dilemmas

**Time:** Allow about 15 minutes to explain and discuss each case that you select.

**Number of participants:** Any number, but more discussion can take place with a smaller group.

**Type of participants:** This alternative is for those groups with limited facility or comfort speaking English or French, who would benefit more from discussion in a different common

language.

**Preparation:** Carefully select those cases most appropriate to the particular group. Consider cultural issues. Either translate them into the local language or study them thoroughly so that you can “tell the story” yourself in a language comfortable for the whole group.

**Materials:** Make copies of the cases for participants only if they are comfortable reading in English and discussing in a different common language, or if you have translated them.

**Suggestions:** If you have a large group, you may want to divide into those who would prefer to do the training in English and those who prefer to do it as suggested in this activity, in another common language on a different date. Note that most of the activities listed in this Guide can be adapted for use orally in another language.

## Procedure

Follow the procedure outlined for *Whole-group Discussion of the Cases*. Either distribute the cases for participants to read or simply explain each one yourself using the common language. Then lead the discussion as suggested in the Notes for the Facilitator for each case, also using the common language. Write key thoughts on the board, to make it easier to summarise them at the end of the activity. Close the activity by summarising the discussion and leading in to the next part of the session:

*We've had a good discussion of some ethical dilemmas others have faced and how you would have handled them. The key points that you've identified are .... Let's move on now to ....*

## Worksheet-based discussion of cases

### Objectives:

- To be able to apply the Values and Principles of the Code of Conduct to practical situations in UNHCR
- To know where to go for further guidance and advice when facing ethical dilemmas

**Time:** It will vary by the number of cases you choose. Allow about 15 minutes per case: four minutes for individual work, five minutes for pair sharing, six minutes for whole group sharing.

**Number of participants:** This technique works particularly



well with large groups but is also suitable for smaller groups.

**Type of participants:** This technique appeals both to people who like to work and think alone before speaking up as well as those who need a little extra time.

**Preparation:** Be sure you fully understand each case you will be using and the corresponding Notes for the Facilitator. You should be able to respond to participants' questions without reference to the Notes.

**Materials:** Provide copies of all of the cases you expect to discuss for each participant, and a worksheet for each participant. (Bring additional worksheets if you think you may discuss more than three cases.) Worksheets and cases are found immediately following these instructions. Do not duplicate the Notes for the Facilitator.

Participants will also need their Code handy, in order to look up which clause is applicable to each case.

**Suggestion:** Choose more cases than you think you will need, and pass out a new one only when participants have finished with the previous one. Use them in order of priority, so you will be sure to get to the most important ones for your particular group and will have extras available if time permits.

## Procedure

Note that the text in *italics* is a suggestion of what you might say in your own words.

1. Introduction of the activity  
*We are going to look at some actual cases in which UNHCR staff members were faced with ethical decisions. Each of you will read the case and complete that part of the worksheet. Just jot a few notes—no one will read it but you. Then you will pair up with a person sitting nearby who has also finished the worksheet, and you can compare and discuss your answers. When everyone's done—or nearly so—we'll discuss the case as a whole group. Any questions?*
2. Check for understanding  
Circulate and glance at the things people are writing to be sure that they are only making brief notes for self-reference.
3. Pair work  
As soon as two participants seem to have finished reading and making notes, encourage them to get together to discuss their answers. Then match up the next two participants who seem ready, etc.

4. Whole group presentation, discussion  
When the pair discussions seem to be slowing down, or after about five minutes, have everyone rejoin the large group. Call on different pairs to share their worksheet answers; if there is no consensus, then discuss. Use the additional discussion questions from the Notes to the Facilitator if there is time.
5. Continuation  
Hand out the next case (in order of priority) and continue in the same way until the time you have allotted for the activity is nearly over.

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## Worksheet for Cases

Case	What's the issue?	Applicable Clauses	My Resolution
1.			
2.			
3.			

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## Activities for introducing and reinforcing the Code of Conduct

### Defining the Code of Conduct

**Objectives:**

- To understand what a code of conduct is
- To identify the parts of the UNHCR Code of Conduct
- To understand to whom the UNHCR Code of Conduct applies

**Time:** 3-5 minutes

**Preparation:** Read over the suggested text so that you are ready to say it in your own words.

**Procedure**

Note that the text in *italics* is just a suggestion of what you might say in your own words.

1. What's CoC?

*What is a "code of conduct"? How would you define it?*  
[Take contributions from the group.]

*Good. The idea of a basic statement of what an organisation believes in and how they commit to act has been around for many decades. It is sometimes called a code of ethics or an ethics statement, and often contains two parts. The first is a statement of the values that the organisation holds, and the second is a statement of the behaviour that they expect will come naturally from embracing those values.*

2. The parts of UNHCR's CoC

*UNHCR's Code of Conduct follows this same model: the Core Values and Guiding Principles speak of what we believe in, as staff in the UN system, as staff of UNHCR, as humanitarian workers, and as members of a diverse workforce. It consists of five core values that we hold and share.*

*The second part of the Code is the Commitment to the UNHCR Code of Conduct. It consists of a commitment that we make as individuals to nine guiding principles defining types of behaviour that grow out of our UNHCR values.*

*There is also a one-page Introduction to the Code of Conduct. And, there are explanatory Notes that provide details and examples of the Code's application.*

- |                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| 3. To whom does it apply? | <i>The Code applies to all UNHCR staff members. Interns, consultants and others doing work for the Office are also asked to confirm that they uphold it as far as applicable to their status. Staff members sign the Commitment as a statement of our understanding that we are expected to live up to it.</i> |
| 4. Questions or comments? | Open the floor for discussion and clarification.   |

### ***Examining the Code***

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#### **Objectives:**

- To internalise the Code of Conduct
- To identify and clarify any confusing parts of the Code or questions remaining about the Code

**Time:** Allow an hour to an hour and 15 minutes for the complete activity. The longer amount of time would be for a larger group of participants.

**Number of participants:** Any size group, divided into triads.

**Type of participants:** All types of participants, except those for whom reading in English is difficult. For that type of participant, see the following activity.

**Preparation:** Be sure **you** fully understand the Core Values and Guiding Principles, the Commitment to the Code of Conduct, and the Notes on the Code of Conduct. You might highlight or underline sections that you believe to be particularly relevant or of concern to your group and that you want to bring up for discussion. If you are unsure of any part of the Code, check with the Ethics Office.

The instructions for this activity are a bit complex. It is important that you have them written out on the board or on paper prior to the activity, for reference by the participants. It might look like this:

1. Divide into groups.
2. Take turns reading a section aloud.
3. Discuss meaning; identify any confusion or doubt.
4. If so, write question on appropriate paper on wall.
5. If your question is already there, just put a ✓ beside it.
6. Go on to the next section.

**Materials:** 14 sheets of newsprint or flipchart paper taped

to the walls and/or placed on tables around the room. Each should be clearly titled with one of the 5 Core Values or the 9 Principles of the Code of Conduct. Place markers near each sheet of paper. Be sure to have extra copies of the Code of Conduct in case someone forgets to bring theirs. Have a copy of the Staff Regulations and Rules on hand for reference.

## Procedure

Note that the text in *italics* is just a suggestion of what you might say in your own words.

### 1. Introduction to the activity

*I'm sure that all of you have read the Code prior to this session. Now is your opportunity to go through it carefully, line by line, so that we can correct any confusion or address concerns and be sure that everyone understands it thoroughly. This is the procedure.*

[Point to your list of instructions on the board or paper.] *First, we will divide into groups of three. Then, in your small group, you will take turns reading a section of the Code, starting with the Five Core Values and then going on to the Nine Principles. After you read the section, discuss it. If you are left with any confusion or concerns, then one of you should write it on the corresponding paper. [Point out where the papers are.] If you find that someone has already expressed more or less what you were going to write, then simply put a check mark beside the comment to show that you also had that concern.*

[Then go on to the next section.] *Note that since there are Five Core Values and Nine Principles, this is a lot of material to get through. There is no need to discuss each one in detail. Simply be sure you understand it, and identify any concerns. Any questions about what we're doing?*

### 2. Group assignments

Divide into heterogeneous groups of three. For fun, try lining them up by distance from home of birth to the office, and then split the line into threes.[With a very large group you may want to put four in each small group.]

### 3. Small group discussions

While the groups are working, circulate to keep them on track. Do not respond to issues at this time; just keep them on task. You will need to speed up the slower groups so that everyone finishes more or less at the same time. If you overhear a group deep in discussion, urge them to write their issue or question on the appropriate sheet and move on. Tell the group when they have about 5 minutes left.

#### 4. Whole group discussion

When all or nearly all of the small groups have finished, call the whole group back together. Go through the large sheets of papers in order, discussing and clarifying only the issues that the groups have raised. Pay special attention to those items with check marks indicating that more than one group had the same issue. There will probably be no doubts expressed for many of the clauses; others may be of concern to many people. Reading the Notes carefully should prepare you for this discussion.

#### Summary

If there is room on the walls, leave posted those sheets on which issues were expressed. As you go through the rest of the session, you can refer back to the posted issues.

*All right, you've done a good job of carefully going through the Code. During the rest of the training, I'm sure many of the issues you've identified will become clearer. Let's move on now to...*

### ***Examining the Code in native language***

#### **Objectives:**

- To internalise the Code of Conduct
- To identify and clarify any confusing parts of the Code or answer questions remaining about the Code

**Time:** Allow an hour to an hour and 15 minutes for the complete activity. The longer amount of time would be for a larger group of participants.

**Number of participants:** Any size group.

**Type of participants:** Those participants for whom reading in English or in French is difficult or would be very slow.

**Preparation:** Be sure you fully understand the Core Values and Guiding Principles, the Commitment to the Code of Conduct, and the Notes on the Code of Conduct. You might highlight or underline parts that you feel are particularly relevant or of concern to your group. If you are not a native speaker of the common language that you will be using with the group, consult with a native speaker to be sure that you can adequately translate the terminology and concepts found in the Code.

**Materials:** Extra copies of the Code, in case someone has forgotten to bring theirs.

**Rationale:** Although participants should have read the Code prior to coming to the training, they may not have completely understood its contents due to the language factor. The purpose of this initial exercise is to give them an opportunity to clarify anything that is confusing and to deal with any doubts or concerns.

## Procedure

Note that the text in *italics* is just a suggestion of what you might say in your own words.

### 1. Introduction to the activity

*I'm sure that all of you have read the Code prior to this session. Now is your opportunity to go through it carefully, line by line, so that we can clarify any confusion or concerns and be sure that everyone understands it thoroughly.*

### 2. Review of each section

Start with the Core Values and then go on to the Principles. For each section or clause:

- You read the section in English.
- You ask a volunteer to restate it in the common language.
- You clarify, add to, or change the interpretation as needed.
- You ask the group to explain what it means **and** to give an example.
- If questions, issues, or concerns arise, make note of them on the board or a large piece of newsprint on the wall.

## Summary

Leave the concerns posted. As you go through the rest of the programme you can refer back to the posted issues, so that by the end of the session you will have been adequately addressed them.

*All right, you've done a good job of carefully going through the Code. During the rest of the training, I'm sure many of the issues you've identified will become clearer. Let's move on now to . . .*

## **Explaining the Code to a child**

**Objective:** To be very clear on the meaning of each value and guiding principle in the Code of Conduct

**Time:** About 20 minutes



**Number of participants:** Any number. Divide them into five groups (one group for each of the Core Values) by having them count off by fives.

**Type of participants:** This activity is appropriate for all job levels and degrees of language proficiency. The idea is to **simplify** the concepts, so do not have them explain the Code to a journalist or other professional.

**Materials:** None, beyond participants' copies of the Code.

**Rationale:** The Core Values and Guiding Principles are written in rather "official UN". English. One way to verify participants' understanding of the Code is to see if they are able to explain the concepts in simple, everyday speech.

## Procedure

Note that the text in *italics* is just a suggestion of what you might say in your own words.

### 1. Introduction to the activity

*Pretend that you have an eight-year-old daughter or sister at home. Tonight at the dinner table she asks you, "What did you do today at work?" and you tell her that you attended a training session on the UNHCR Code of Conduct. She asks, "What does that mean"?*

*Who can tell us how you might reply?*

*Call on a volunteer. They might say something like; "I'd tell her that it's a list of what we believe in at UNHCR, and ways that we promise to act because of what we believe in".*

*[Divide into groups.] Now I'm going to assign one of the Five Core Values and Nine Guiding Principles to each group. Think of how you would explain it to that eight-year-old. You have about five minutes, and then we'll share what we've come up with.*

### 2. Small-group work

As the participants work, circulate to answer any questions. Help any groups that are having difficulty.

### 3. Whole-group discussion

After they seem to have completed the task, call the groups together. Have one person from each present their statement to the whole group. After each, ask the whole group if they think that statement would communicate the basic idea to an eight-year-old. If they do not agree, help them develop a clearer, simpler statement.

## Summary

*Good job. It's been said that you can explain any concept to a child if you really understand it yourself and simplify the language sufficiently. You've shown that you understand our Core Values well enough to explain them simply and briefly. Do any of you have elementary-school-aged children at home? Try explaining our Core Values and Guiding Principles to them this evening.*

## Say it in a phrase

**Objective:** To be completely clear about the essential meaning of each value and guiding principle in the Code of Conduct

**Time:** About 20 minutes

**Number of participants:** Any number. For more than 8, assign some to work in pairs. If you have more than 16, have some work 3 to a group. (There are 9 Principles and one of them will be used as an example, leaving 8 for the groups to work on.)

**Type of participants:** All except those with a low level of relevant language proficiency.

**Rationale:** The Principles are written in rather "official UN" language. One way to verify participants' understanding is to see if they are able to explain the essence of each Principle in a simple phrase.

**Suggestion:** This is a good exercise to use as a lead-in to the next activity, **Put Together the Puzzle**. It will make that exercise, which is a bit more difficult, easier to do.

## Procedure

Note that the text in *italics* is merely a suggestion of what you might say in your own words. Use a language common to the group.

### 1. Introduction to the activity

*Let's all look at Principle Three, "Perform my official duties and conduct my private affairs in a manner that avoids conflicts of interest, thereby preserving and enhancing public confidence in UNHCR".*

*If you were to summarise it to its bare essence in one short phrase, what would it be?*

Call on a volunteer. He or she might say, “Avoid conflicts of interest”. Write it on the board.

*Good. She gave us a simple 4-word phrase that captures the essence of that Principle. Now I’m going to assign one of the remaining Principles to each of you [or each group]. Please summarise its essence in no more than a very few words. You have about five minutes, and then we’ll share what we’ve all come up with.*

Assign one of the remaining Eight Guiding Principles to each individual or group.

2. Small-group work    As the participants work, circulate to answer any questions. Help any groups that are having difficulty.

After they seem to have completed the task, call the groups together. Have each person, or one person from each group, present their statement(s) to the whole group **and write them on the board**. Leave them there if you will be doing the puzzle activity next.

Summary    *Good job. Remembering those simple phrases will help you remember the Nine Principles of the Commitment to UNHCR Code of Conduct.*

**Variation on the activity**    If some groups finish earlier than the others, have them also try to create a **proverb** to illustrate their assigned principle. Example for Principle Five: “He who has not a good work-life balance risks the wrath of spouse and kids”. Example for Principle Four: “Respect is like a mirror: Send it out and it reflects back to you”.

### ***Put together the puzzle***

**Objective:** To internalise the expanded meaning of each principle of the Code of Conduct

**Time:** About 20-30 minutes

**Number of participants:** Any number. Divide them into pairs or groups of three. (Larger groups do not work.)

**Type of participants:** All except those with a low level of language reading proficiency

**Preparation:** Duplicate, cut, and prepare the materials so that you have one package for each group. Instructions are

on top of each page. (Make an extra set or two in case you have more participants than expected.) The materials are found immediately following these instructions.

All members of each group will need to be able to see and manipulate the puzzle pieces on a flat surface. They can be around a table, a desk, or some can arrange the pieces on the floor or on top of a cabinet.

**Materials:** The puzzle cards (of which there are 25) cut apart, mixed, and clipped together or placed in an envelope, one set for each group. The Nine Principles sheet, cut on the dotted lines and clipped together or placed in an envelope along with the 25 puzzle cards, for each group.

If it seems appropriate for your group, you may want to bring in simple prizes for the winning team or for the winning team to share with the whole group. A bag of sweets serves this purpose well.

**Rationale:** Grouping or classifying material is one way to help ensure that it is understood. In this exercise participants have to understand each of the paragraphs in order to comprehend to which Principle each belongs.

**Suggestion:** If you did the previous exercise, in which the participants summarised each Principle in a phrase on the board, it provides a nice lead-in to this activity. Suggest that the groups look up at the list on the board for easy reference as they are grouping their cards.

## Procedure

Note that the text in *italics* is merely a suggestion of what you might say in your own words. Use a language common to the group.

### 1. Introduction to the activity

*You've all read the Commitment to the UNHCR Code of Conduct carefully, but can you tell which paragraph belongs to which Principle? Let's have a contest to see who can put together the Code puzzle the fastest. First, everyone put away your copy of the Code—no peeking!*

*I will give each team a set of the nine Principles on slips of paper. You'll also get a set of cards, each of which has one paragraph from the nine Principles. There are 25 total. Your job is to group the paragraphs so they go with the correct Principle by arranging them on the table. Note that the paragraphs do not have to be in order under each Principle; they just need to be associated with the correct one. The*

Nine Principles *slips tell you how many paragraphs go under each one. Any questions? Are you ready? Go!*

2. Small-group work As the small groups work, circulate to be sure that they are doing the activity correctly and are not cheating by looking at the actual Code. Help any groups that are having difficulty.
3. Completion of the activity As soon as one team is done, call time and check their answers in reference to the Code. If the team has all the paragraphs associated with the correct Principle, they win the contest. If they do not, then just say that it is not correct and continue the game until they or another team wins. If time is not an issue, you may want to allow the remaining teams a little longer to finish, even after a winner has been declared.  
*Good job. Here's a prize for the winners.*

**PAGE 1 OF 4 FOR THE ACTIVITY “PUT TOGETHER THE PUZZLE” PRINT 1 SET PER TEAM**

<p>I will always seek to understand the difficult experiences that refugees and other persons of concern to UNHCR have faced and survived, as well as the disadvantaged position in which they – particularly on the basis of gender, age or disability – may find themselves in relation to those who hold power or influence over aspects of their lives.</p>	<p>I will always seek to care for and protect the rights of children, and act in a manner that ensures that their best interests shall be the paramount consideration.</p>	<p>If my job involves direct work with refugees or other persons of concern, I will meet with them regularly, in order to fully understand their experiences and needs, and to explain the role of UNHCR and the scope of its work.</p>
<p>I will keep myself informed about UNHCR's policies, objectives and activities and about refugee concerns, and will do my utmost to support the Office's protection and assistance work.</p>	<p>I will demonstrate integrity, truthfulness, dedication and honesty in my actions. I will be patient, respectful and courteous to all persons with whom I deal in an official capacity, including refugees and other persons of concern, representatives of operational and implementing partners, governments and donors.</p>	<p>I will observe local laws, will meet all my private legal and financial obligations, and will not seek to take personal advantage of any privileges or immunities that have been conferred on me in the interest of the United Nations. I will do my utmost to ensure that the conduct of members of my household does not reflect unfavourably on the integrity of UNHCR.</p>

**PAGE 2 OF 4 FOR THE ACTIVITY “PUT TOGETHER THE PUZZLE” PRINT 1 SET PER TEAM**

<p>My actions will be free of any consideration of personal gain, and I will resist any undue political pressure in decision-making. I will neither seek nor accept instructions regarding the performance of my duties from any government, including my national authorities, or from any authority external to the United Nations.</p>	<p>In accordance with Staff Regulations and Rules, I will not accept any honour, decoration, favour, gift, or remuneration, from any government; nor will I accept these from any other source external to the United Nations without prior authorisation. I will not engage in any outside occupation or employment without prior authorisation. I will not accept supplementary payments or subsidies from a government or any other source, or participate in certain political activities such as standing for or holding public office.</p>	<p>I will avoid assisting private persons or companies in their undertakings with UNHCR where this might lead to actual or perceived preferential treatment. I will never participate in activities related to procurement of goods or services, or in human resource activities, where a conflict of interests may arise.</p>
<p>I will show respect to all colleagues, regardless of status or position, and will allow all colleagues the opportunity to have their views heard, and to contribute from their knowledge and experience to team efforts. I will communicate openly and share relevant information (subject to confidentiality requirements) with other colleagues, and will endeavour to respond in a timely manner to queries.</p>	<p>I will respect my colleagues' privacy, and avoid misinformation. I will seek to resolve differences and solve problems when they arise. I will contribute to building constructive dialogue, guided by mutual respect and an open, positive approach, between management and staff representatives.</p>	<p>As a manager/supervisor I will be open to the views of all team members. I will provide timely feedback on the performance of each team member through guidance, motivation and full recognition of their merits.</p>

<p>I will remain aware of and comply with all instructions designed to protect my health, welfare and safety. I will always consider the safety of staff in operational decisions. If I have doubts regarding an instruction that I consider threatening to my safety or the safety of other persons, I will bring this immediately to the attention of my supervisor.</p>	<p>As a manager/supervisor, I will endeavour to ensure that the health and well being of staff and their families are not subjected to undue risk. I will promote a healthy work-life balance for staff, and will respect staff entitlements.</p>	<p>I will exercise due care in all matters of official business, and not divulge any confidential information about refugees, colleagues and other work-related matters in accordance with the staff regulations and rules and current guidelines.</p>
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**PAGE 3 OF 4 FOR THE ACTIVITY “PUT TOGETHER THE  
PUZZLE” PRINT 1 SET PER TEAM**

<p>I will protect, manage and utilise UNHCR human, financial and material resources efficiently and effectively, bearing in mind that these resources have been placed at UNHCR's disposal for the benefit of refugees and other persons of concern.</p>	<p>I undertake not to abuse the power and influence that I have by virtue of my position over the lives and well being of refugees and other persons of concern.</p>	<p>I will never request any service or favour from refugees or other persons of concern in return for protection or assistance. I will never engage in any exploitative relationships – sexual, emotional, financial or employment-related – with refugees or other persons of concern.</p>
<p>Should I find myself in such a relationship with a beneficiary that I consider non-exploitative and consensual, I will report this to my supervisor for appropriate guidance in the knowledge that this matter will be treated with due discretion. I understand that both my supervisor and I have available to us normal consultative and recourse mechanisms on these issues.</p>	<p>I will act responsibly when hiring or otherwise engaging refugees or other persons of concern for private services. I will report in writing on the nature and conditions of this employment to my supervisor.</p>	<p>I will neither support nor take part in any form of illegal, exploitative or abusive activities, including, for example, child labour, and trafficking of human beings and commodities.</p>
<p>As UNHCR is committed to the highest standards of protection and care for children, I am aware that I am expected not to engage in sexual activities with any person under the age of 18. (Further guidance is given in the Notes to the Code of Conduct)</p>	<p>I will not engage in or tolerate any form of harassment in the workplace, including sexual harassment and abuse of power.</p>	<p>As a manager/supervisor, I will not solicit favours, loans or gifts from staff, nor will I accept unsolicited ones that are of more than token value.</p>

I recognise that there is an inherent conflict of interest and potential abuse of power in having sexual relations with staff under my supervision. Should I find myself in such a relationship, I will resolve this conflict of interest without delay.

**PAGE 4 OF 4 FOR THE ACTIVITY “PUT TOGETHER THE  
PUZZLE” PRINT 1 SET PER TEAM**



**The Nine Principles**

- 1. Treat all refugees and other persons of concern fairly, and with respect and dignity.  
4 PARAGRAPHS**
- 2. Uphold the integrity of UNHCR, by ensuring that my personal and professional conduct is, and is seen to be, of the highest standard.  
2 PARAGRAPHS**
- 3. Perform my official duties and conduct my private affairs in a manner that avoids conflicts of interest, thereby preserving and enhancing public confidence in UNHCR.  
3 PARAGRAPHS**
- 4. Contribute to building a harmonious workplace based on team spirit, mutual respect and understanding.  
3 PARAGRAPHS**
- 5. Promote the safety, health and welfare of all UNHCR staff as a necessary condition for effective and consistent performance.  
2 PARAGRAPHS**
- 6. Safeguard and make responsible use of the information and resources to which I have access by reason of my employment with UNHCR.  
2 PARAGRAPHS**
- 7. Prevent, oppose, and combat all exploitation and abuse of refugees and other persons of concern.  
4 PARAGRAPHS**
- 8. Refrain from any involvement in criminal or unethical activities, activities that contravene human rights, or activities that compromise the image and interests of UNHCR.  
2 PARAGRAPHS**
- 9. Refrain from any form of harassment, discrimination, physical or verbal abuse, intimidation or favouritism in the workplace.  
3 PARAGRAPHS**

## ***“A” is for Accepting Differences***

**Objective:** To review the essential content of the Code of Conduct in a fun, energizing way

**Time:** 20 minutes (two minutes to give instructions, exactly 12 minutes for the game, and six minutes to check and share some answers and declare the winners)

**Number of participants:** Any number, divided into pairs.

**Type of participants:** All

**Preparation:** Duplicate the alphabet sheet handout, one copy for each pair. (It is found immediately following these instructions.)

Write on the board: **T: Treat** all refugees and fellow staff fairly.

**Materials:** One copy of the alphabet sheet for each pair. A pen or pencil for each pair.

If appropriate for your participants, you may want to bring in prizes for the winning pair, such as sweets.

### **Suggestion**

This fast-paced exercise can be used at virtually any time during the training session. You might want to keep it in reserve for use when you find the group losing interest or fading after lunch.

Or, change the rules of the exercise and use it as an energiser. Have participants stand in a circle and toss a ball (a “ball” of crushed paper will do). The person who receives the ball must make a sentence beginning with **A** and then toss the ball to someone else who must make a sentence starting with **B**, and so on. All sentences must deal with the Code of Conduct, of course. Anyone who cannot think of a sentence is eliminated, until there is a winner standing alone.

### **Procedure**

Note that the text in *italics* is merely a suggestion of what you might say in your own words. Use a language common to the group.

#### **1. Introduction of the activity**

*OK, let's divide into pairs again. This is a contest, so we'll see who's the fastest. Here's a sheet of paper for each pair. Note that the alphabet is printed down the left side of the page.*

*Your job is to work together to write a short sentence starting with each of the letters—as many sentences as possible in 12 minutes. Each sentence must have to do with the Code of Conduct. They don't have to be in order—you can vary them, for example going from A to R. Just do as many as you can. There is an example on the board to get you started.*

*Any questions? Remember, when I call “time” you must put your pen down immediately.*

2. Pair work      Say “Go” and then watch your clock. After exactly 12 minutes, call time. Have the pairs count how many sentences they have, to see which pair has the most. Check their sentences to be sure they make sense and relate to the Code.
3. Sharing      Choose a few of the more difficult letters such as K, Q, Z, V, and X and ask pairs to share their sentences with the whole group.
4. Completion of the activity      *Good job. Here's a prize for the winners.*

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## Alphabet Sheet

A

P

B

Q

C

R

D

S

E

T

F

U

G

V

H

W

I

X

J

Y

K

Z

L

M

N

O

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## ***The Quiz: One***

### **Objectives:**

- To review essential parts of the Code of Conduct
- To test knowledge of the Code of Conduct

**Time:** 10-15 minutes

**Number of participants:** Any number

**Type of participants:** All, except those with very limited English reading skills.

**Preparation:** Duplicate the Quiz and the Answers and Notes sheet for each participant.

**Materials:** A copy of the Quiz and the Answers and Notes for each participant. They are found with the other handouts and teaching aids at the end of this Section of the Guide.

**Suggestions:** Although the Quiz itself is quite easy, some people are nervous about anything that brings back memories of school testing. In such cases, substitute another activity.

The Quiz is also included in the Self-study Guide for Newcomers, found in [Section II Orienting the Newcomer](#) of this Manual.

## **Procedure**

Note that the text in *italics* is merely a suggestion of what you might say in your own words. Use a language common to the group.

### **1. Introduce the Quiz**

*Here's a short quiz to see how much you now know about the Code of Conduct. Just circle the letter of the answer (a, b or c) that you believe best answers the question or completes the statement. Keep your papers, and we'll go over the answers together when everyone is done. No one but you will know your score!*

### **2. Debrief the Quiz**

Hand out the Quiz. Give the participants time to complete it. Then, using the Answers and Notes page, go over their answers. Do not waste time with items that everyone got right; focus on answers where there was disagreement. Give a copy of the Answers and Notes sheet to everyone for their future reference, since it includes an explanation for every answer.

## **Alternative:**

Quiz Two is considerably more difficult than Quiz One. You

## **Quiz Two**

might use Quiz Two with a more sophisticated group. Or, if your group has already used Quiz One in a different context, such as during the year in team meetings, then use Quiz Two.



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## Quiz One

### UNHCR Code of Conduct

***Circle the letter of the phrase that correctly completes the sentence or answers the question.***

1. The Code of Conduct is intended to serve as a guide for staff in making ethical decisions
  - a. in our personal lives
  - b. in our professional lives
  - c. in our professional lives and at times in our private lives
  
2. What does it mean or imply when you sign the Code?
  - a. It confirms that you have read the Code and understand that you are expected to live up to its standards of behaviour.
  - b. It is a solemn commitment on your part to follow the Code in your professional and personal life.
  - c. It demonstrates your acceptance of the Code as providing valid suggestions for appropriate behaviour
  
3. The legal basis for determining unacceptable conduct at UNHCR is
  - a. The Code of Conduct
  - b. The Staff Rules and Regulations
  - c. The Charter of the UN and The Staff Rules and Regulations
  
4. A key provision of the Code is to prevent, oppose, and combat all exploitation of refugees and other persons of concern. "Exploitation" means
  - a. using our power as UNHCR employees to obtain goods or services from refugees for our personal gain
  - b. using our power as UNHCR employees in a relationship (sexual, social, political, emotional or financial) with a refugee
  - c. both a and b
  
5. Why does the Code of Conduct emphasise treating women and children refugees, in particular, with respect and dignity?
  - a. Because there are fewer of them than there are men, and so they tend to be neglected
  - b. Because they are typically disadvantaged in terms of power and influence
  - c. Because it would be culturally inappropriate to not give them the respect to which they are accustomed
  
6. It is vital to see the people we serve as human beings rather than "cases," "populations" or "caseloads" because
  - a. The persons of concern may not understand these terms
  - b. Such terms reinforce a bureaucratic approach

- c. In some languages the translation of these terms is derogatory
7. Holding an outside job in addition to your UNHCR work
- a. Is allowed if it is unpaid, volunteer work for a worthy cause
  - b. Is never allowed
  - c. Must be authorized in advance
8. The definition of a “child” varies from one country to another. The Code of Conduct is based on international legal standards that define children as
- a under the age of 18
  - b under the age of 16
  - c under the age of 21
11. One of the clauses in the Code says that we will avoid “conflicts of interest”. This means that we will
- a avoid getting into conflicts with others, whether other staff, implementing or operating partners, or refugees or persons of concern
  - b avoid getting into a situation that puts our personal, business, or national interests ahead of our official responsibilities
  - c avoid getting into conflicts or disagreements about people of concern
12. Any concerns or suspicions regarding sexual exploitation or sexual abuse by a fellow aid worker, whether in UNHCR or not, \_\_\_\_\_ be reported through the established mechanisms. Which word best fits in the blank?
- a Must
  - b Can
  - c Should
-

# Answers and Notes on Quiz 1

(Pages refer to the document  
*Code of Conduct and Explanatory Notes*, June 2004)

1. c      *The Code of Conduct is intended to serve as an illustrative guide for staff in making ethical decisions in our professional lives and at times in our personal lives.*      Page 1

This is quoted from the Introduction to the Code of Conduct. Many ethical decisions in our private lives are not related to the UNHCR Code, but some are.
2. a      *What does it mean or imply when you sign the Code?*      Pages 14 and 15  
**It confirms that you have read the Code and understand that you are expected to live up to its standards of behaviour.**

Signing the Code means more than simply accepting its content as suggestion, and less than a solemn commitment to always follow it. The Code provides ethical guidance that is not legally binding. Your signature means that you recognise that UNHCR expects you to understand and follow the Code.
3. c      *The legal basis for determining unacceptable conduct at UNHCR is:* **The Charter of the UN and The Staff Rules and Regulations.**      Pages 1 and 2

The Code of Conduct is an ethical code without explicit force of law. Legally, staff are bound by the UN documents referenced above and their expression in the UNHCR Staff Administrative and Management Manual, and should understand that the Code is interpretive of how the legally binding instruments should be applied.
4. c      *Exploitation of refugees means* **using our power as UNHCR employees to obtain goods or services from refugees for our personal gain or using our power in a relationship (sexual, social, political, emotional or financial) with a refugee.**      Page 38

Just being employed by UNHCR gives us power that, unfortunately, can be used in unethical ways. If we use that power in a relationship with someone who has less power,

such as a refugee who we are supposed to be serving, it is exploitation.

5. b *Why does the Code of Conduct emphasise treating women and children refugees, in particular, with respect and dignity?* Page 16  
**Because they are typically disadvantaged in terms of power and influence.**

UNHCR has pledged to respect the equal rights of women and men and to care for and protect the rights of children. This important because, in so many refugee situations, women and children suffer more than men.

6. b *It is vital to see the people we serve as human beings rather than “cases,” “populations” or “caseloads” because such terms reinforce an impersonal bureaucratic approach.* Page 18

Direct conversations with persons of concern can help us “put a human face” on complex problems.

7. c Holding an outside job in addition to your UNHCR work **must be authorized in advance.** Page 23

In fact, not only *jobs* need to be authorized but also other outside activities. It is critical to ensure no conflict of interest exists that might impugn the credibility of our operations and activities.

8. a *The definition of a “child” varies from one country to another. The Code of Conduct is based on international legal standards that define children as under the age of 18.* Pages 2, 10, 34, 40, 42

This is an example of a standard that differs from one country to another, in which case UNHCR follows international standards. Another example would be a case in which an activity is accepted or condoned by a government but is considered a violation of human rights by the United Nations, such as female genital mutilation.

9. b *One of the clauses in the Code says that we will avoid “conflicts of interest”. This means that we will avoid getting into a situation that puts our personal, business, or national interests ahead of our official responsibilities.* Pages 6 and 7

Actually, part of clause five states that we will avoid even *perceived* preferential treatment of private persons or companies, such as suppliers. Other situations that could result in a conflict of interest include taking instructions from your national government, accepting gifts or anything else of value from someone doing business with the UN, or participating in political activities such as standing for office.

10. a     *Any concerns or suspicions regarding sexual exploitation or sexual abuse by a fellow worker, whether in UNHCR or not, \_\_\_\_\_ be reported through the established mechanisms. Which word best fits in the blank?*

Page 33

**Must**

Staff do not have the option of ignoring sexual exploitation or abuse, but are required to report it. This is true whether the perpetrator is within the UN system or not.

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## Quiz 2

### UNHCR Code of Conduct

*Circle the letter of the phrase that correctly completes the sentence or answers the question. There is only one correct answer **except in those cases when you are asked specifically to select more than one answer.***

1. UNHCR \_\_\_\_\_ our implementing partners to follow the Guiding Principles of the Code of Conduct.
  - a. expects
  - b. allows
  - c. encourages
  - d. requires
  
2. The first Guiding Principle states that as a staff member of UNHCR, I commit myself to treat all refugees and other persons of concern:
  - a. Impartially, and with compassion and caring
  - b. Fairly, and with respect and dignity
  - c. Professionally, and with honesty and openness
  - d. Compassionately, and with transparency and accountability
  
3. One of the clauses in the Code says that we will avoid “conflicts of interest”. This means that we will
  - a. avoid getting into conflicts with others, whether other staff, implementing partners, or persons of concern
  - b. avoid getting into conflicts or disagreements about people of interest to UNHCR
  - c. avoid getting into a situation that puts our personal, business, or national interests ahead of our official responsibilities
  - d. avoid situations that are likely to develop into conflicts of any kind
  
4. In the second principle we agree to “uphold the integrity of UNHCR by ensuring that my personal and professional conduct is, and is seen to be, of the highest standard.” Which set of words best defines *integrity*?
  - a. Honesty, truthfulness, and loyalty to the Office
  - b. Peacefulness, transparency, and dedication to hard work
  - c. Honourable, professional and consistent behaviour
  - d. Accountability, tact, and consensus building

5. UNHCR staff members may not run for or hold local or national political office but may
- vote and solicit funds for political purposes
  - vote and publish political opinion articles in the press
  - vote and publicly support candidates
  - vote and participate in local civic activities
6. Staff members have the right in exceptional circumstances to refuse to carry out instructions, including in which **two** cases? (**Select two.**)
- When the instruction breaks existing UNHCR and UN security policies and regulations
  - When the instruction is given orally rather than in writing
  - When the staff member has been singled out and given substantially different instructions than have been given to others
  - When the staff member has reasonable grounds to believe that the instructions would expose him/her or others to unnecessary risks
  - When the instruction would require the staff member to temporarily forego a statutory entitlement such as for rest and recuperation
7. Which of the following statements is true about the use of official UNHCR vehicles for private purposes?
- Such use is forbidden
  - Such use must be authorized
  - Such use is forbidden except in case of urgent need or emergency, which must be fully documented
  - Such use is acceptable
8. According to the Secretary-General's Bulletin from 2003, sexual relationships with persons of concern **over** the age of 18:
- Are strongly discouraged
  - Are forbidden in all cases and are reason for summary dismissal
  - Are only acceptable with the knowledge and prior approval of the UN worker's supervisor
  - Are acceptable if fully consensual
9. Our private lives are our own. UNHCR only has the right to regulate our private conduct in which two instances? **Choose two.**
- When the behaviour is detrimental to our physical well being
  - When the behaviour is illegal under local law
  - When the behaviour would be likely to embarrass UNHCR in the eyes of the Government or local population
  - When the behaviour has a negative impact on our work or the people whom we serve

- e. When the behaviour causes discomfort or controversy among colleagues
10. Harassment, discrimination, physical or verbal abuse, intimidation or favouritism have no place in the UNHCR workplace. Which one of the following statements is **not** true about harassment?
- a. Harassment can occur during work or non-work hours.
  - b. Harassment can take the form of offensive emails.
  - c. Single staff members or groups of staff members may be perpetrators of harassment.
  - d. Harassment is always perpetrated by someone in a position of power or authority over the victim.
11. When you first joined the United Nations and signed the Oath of Office, you promised to: (circle all that are correct)
- a. respect the obligations incumbent on you as set out in the Staff Regulations and Rules
  - b. not to seek or accept instructions from any Government or source external to the United Nations
  - c. exercise in all loyalty, discretion and conscience the functions entrusted to you as a civil servant of the United Nations
  - d. treat all persons of concern with respect and dignity
  - e. refrain from any involvement in criminal or unethical activities, activities that contravene human rights, or activities that compromise the image and interests of the United Nations
12. Principle 9 of the Code of Conduct describes activities from which we should refrain in order to create a good workplace environment. Those activities in Principle 9 include: (circle all that apply)
- a. any form of harassment
  - b. mistreatment of persons of concern
  - c. discrimination
  - d. financial improprieties
  - e. physical or verbal abuse
  - f. intimidation or favouritism
-



## Answers and Notes on Quiz Two

(Pages refer to the document  
Code of Conduct and Explanatory Notes, June 2004)

1. c      *UNHCR encourages our implementing partners to follow the Guiding Principles in Code of Conduct.*      Page 2  
  
The Notes state that “Staff are also urged to encourage partners to adhere to these standards...” Many of our partners have already developed similar codes of their own. (Sometimes they are called Ethical Standards.)
  
2. b      The first Guiding Principle states that as a staff member of UNHCR, I commit myself to treat all refugees and other persons of concern **fairly, and with respect and dignity.**      Page 5  
  
It goes on to say that “I will seek to understand the difficult experiences (they) have faced and survived...”
  
3. c      One of the clauses in the Code says that we will avoid “conflicts of interest”. This means that we will **avoid putting our personal, business, or national interests ahead of our official responsibilities.**      Pages 6 and 7  
  
Actually, part of clause five states that we will avoid even **perceived** preferential treatment of private persons or companies, such as suppliers. Other situations that could result in a conflict of interest include taking instructions from your national government, accepting gifts or anything else of value from someone doing business with the UN, or participating in political activities such as standing for office.
  
4. a      *In the second principle we agree to “uphold the integrity of UNHCR by ensuring that my personal and professional conduct is, and is seen to be, of the highest standard.” Which set of words best defines integrity?*      Page 20  
**Honesty, truthfulness, and loyalty to the Office**  
  
The other terms are all excellent traits of a good UNHCR staff member, but do not define the word *integrity*.
  
5. d      *UNHCR staff members may not run for or hold local or national political office but may **vote and participate in local***      Page 23

**civic activities.**

Staff can participate in local community or civic activities provided that this is consistent with the declaration made when entering the services of the UN.

6. a *Staff members have the right in exceptional circumstances to* Page 26  
and *refuse to carry out instructions, including in which **two** cases?*  
d *(Select two)*

**When the instruction breaks existing UNHCR and UN security policies and regulations (a) and**  
**When the staff member has reasonable grounds to believe that the instructions would expose him/her or others to unnecessary risks (d)**

Any staff member who feels he or she is being asked to carry out an unreasonable or dangerous instruction should first consult their own supervisor and if they wish, a higher-level supervisor.

7. b *Which of the following statements is true about the use of* Page 29  
*official UNHCR vehicles for private purposes?*  
**Such use must be authorized in advance**

Besides authorization, reimbursement must be made for expenses such as petrol.

8. a *According to the Secretary-General's Bulletin from 2003,* Page 30  
*sexual relationships with persons of concern **over** the age of*  
*18 undermine the credibility and integrity of the work of the*  
*UN and:*  
**Are strongly discouraged**

When there is any doubt, it is in the interest of the staff member to discuss the relationship with his or her supervisor—who is bound to respect confidentiality.

9. b *Our private lives are our own. UNHCR only has the right to* Page 34  
and *regulate our private conduct in which two instances? **Choose***  
d ***two.***

**When the behaviour is illegal under local law (b) and**  
**When the behaviour has a negative impact on our work or the people whom we serve (d)**

The other options are cases in which the UNHCR staff member should exercise good judgement and limit his or her own behaviour, even though the organization has no right to limit it.

10. d *Harassment, discrimination, physical or verbal abuse, intimidation or favouritism have no place in the UNHCR workplace. Which of the following statements is **not** true about harassment?* Page 35

**Harassment is always perpetrated by someone in a position of power or authority over the victim.**

It is true that harassment is typically carried out by someone in authority over the victim, but it also is possible for a subordinate or peer to harass.

- 11 a, b, c *When you first joined the United Nations and signed the Oath of Office, you promised to: (circle all that are correct)* Not applicable
- a. **respect the obligations incumbent on you as set out in the Staff Regulations and Rules**
  - b. **not to seek or accept instructions from any Government or source external to the United Nations**
  - c. **exercise in all loyalty, discretion and conscience the functions entrusted to you as a civil servant of the United Nations**

The other two items are taken from the UNHCR Code of Conduct rather than the Oath of Office, Principles 1 and 8.

- 12 a, c, e, f *Principle 9 of the Code of Conduct describes activities from which we should refrain in order to create a good workplace environment. Those activities in Principle 9 include: (circle all that apply)* Principle 9, page 35
- a. **any form of harassment**
  - b. mistreatment of persons of concern
  - c. **discrimination**
  - d. financial improprieties
  - e. **physical or verbal abuse**
  - f. **intimidation or favouritism**

While b (mistreatment of persons of concern) and d (financial improprieties) must also be avoided, the reason is not primarily that of maintaining a good workplace environment. Those two behaviours are addressed in other parts of the Code of Conduct.

## **Debate**

**Objective:** To think more deeply about ethical issues covered by the Code of Conduct

**Time:** From 45 minutes to an hour and 15 minutes, depending on the number of statements participants will debate. You will need two teams of three to four people for each statement. (With 20 participants you might debate three statements, using six teams, four with three members and two with four members each.)

**Rationale:** Debating an assigned side to an issue (not necessarily what participants actually believe), requires participants to think through the issue very carefully and empathise with people on the other side of the issue.

**Preparation:** Write the statements to be debated on the board or a sheet of paper, prior to the session. Under each statement list those participants who are to argue “pro” and those who are to argue “con”. Example:

“Most abuse of persons of concern could be eliminated by increasing the amount of humanitarian aid those groups receive”.

Pro: Bill, Keesha, Lala

Con: Pilar, Ben, Musa

Write the procedure on the board, for reference during the debate:

### **Possible statements for debate:**

“A Code of Conduct is the most effective way to prevent the exploitation of refugees by humanitarian aid workers”.

“Most abuse of vulnerable populations could be eliminated by increasing the amount of humanitarian aid those groups receive”.

“UNHCR’s Code of Conduct is largely ineffectual because it does not incorporate meaningful sanctions for violators”.

“UNHCR should define a ‘child’ by local cultural and legal norms and not as the age of 18”.

## **Suggestion**

Be sure to think through the team assignments ahead of time. Try to balance ability and skill. Also, place your strongest participants on the teams arguing the hardest-to-justify positions.

## **Procedure**

Note that the text in *italics* just suggests what you might say in your

own words.

### 1. Introduction of the activity

*How many times have you debated before, perhaps in school? Well, today we're going to have some debates on controversial topics related to the Code of Conduct. These won't follow all the rules of formal debating, but they will be structured. Look at the procedure that I've written on the board. [Go over each point.] Notice that you may be assigned to a team that is debating something that you do not actually believe. That means that you'll have to carefully think through what someone who did believe that would say. Everyone should participate in the planning. One or everyone on the team may do the actual debating.*

[Explain the procedure.]

*Work in teams to prepare your arguments.*

*Prepare counter-arguments based on what you think your opponents will say.*

*During the debate, the Pro side will have 3 minutes to speak.*

*Then the Con side will have 3 minutes.*

*The Pro side will have one minute for a summary.*

*The Con side will have one minute for a summary.*

*The rest of the group (listeners) will vote.*

### 2. Group preparation

Tell each team where they are to meet for planning. Be sure that teams debating the same issue are not within hearing distance of each other.

Circulate to be sure the teams understand their task and get to work right away. They should be able to come up with at least three arguments and a couple of counter arguments.

Notify the groups when they have just three or four minutes left to plan.

### 3. Debates

Bring the whole group back together.

Indicate which statement is to be debated first, and call the "Pro" group up to make their presentation to the large group.

Maintain strict control over the time! (Teams tend to become irritated if some are given even a little more time than others.)

Call on the "Con" group, and then have each team give their summary as indicated on the Procedure chart you have posted. Get the whole group to vote on whether they agree or disagree with the statement.

Go through the same procedure with the remaining teams.

#### 4. Summary of the activity

*We've had some lively arguments. Let's remember that people in this room may have argued a side of the issue that they didn't personally believe in; so don't hold it against them if you did not agree with their arguments! The important part of this activity has been your careful thinking through of some important issues related to the Code.*

### **Posters**

#### **Objectives:**

- To use the visual modality to express feelings about the Code of Conduct
- To produce a product that will be used to remind others of the Code of Conduct on a regular basis

**Time:** From 15 minutes to an hour, depending on which version of the activity you use. (See instructions below.)

**Rationale:** It is important that the Code of Conduct not be seen as a one-time training event. Staff need to be reminded of the Code and its applicability to everyday life. Posters with themes or mottos they have created can be a constant reminder. This makes a nice concluding activity; participants enjoy it; it allows them to express their creativity, and it results in a tangible product that can be used later.

**Preparation:** Either prepare a sample poster yourself, or show participants the examples in [Section IV Integrating the Code into everyday practice](#).

Also prepare a list with names assigned to groups. (See suggestion below for criteria.)

**Materials:** For the short version of this activity, all you need is a stack of A-4 paper and a variety of narrow-tip markers or crayons. For the recommended longer version (and more elaborate posters), bring in a sheet of poster board for each group and different art supplies such as scissors, markers, pens, tape, glue, coloured papers, foil, crayons, etc.

It will be necessary to have tables on which the groups can work.

### **Suggestion**

Divide participants into groups of four to six people. Fewer, and they will tend to be less creative; more, and not everyone participates. This is a good chance to mix participants so that they interact with staff members with whom they might not ordinarily work. The groups

will be more creative if they have variety in level, gender, ethnic background, jobs, etc.

## Procedure

Note that the text in *italics* suggests what you might say in your own words.

### 1. Introduction of the activity

*Let's wrap up this part of the session with something fun that will help us all remain aware of the Code in the coming weeks. We're going to divide into groups. Each group will create a poster (or more than one) with one simple idea that captures the meaning and purpose of the Code for you. (Show examples you have made or copied from [Section IV Integrating the Code into everyday practice](#) of this Manual).*

*First come up with your theme, motto or saying, and then think about how you will illustrate it. Any questions?*

### 2. Organisation of the activity

Read the group assignments from your prepared list and tell each group where they are to work. Distribute the art materials or place them all in the front of the room where participants can take what they need, when they need it.

### 3. Small-group work

Move from group to group to get them started. Some may be anxious to begin 'playing' with the materials. Be sure that each group comes up with a theme, saying, or motto before they start working on the poster. If they have difficulty getting started, you might have them think about a word or phrase that sums up the Code for them: Respect? Integrity? Compassion?

As you circulate, remind groups of how much time they have left and encourage the slower ones, so that you can have them finish more or less at the same time.

### 4. Whole group presentations

Once the groups have identified their theme and written it on the paper (short version) or created an artistic poster (longer version), bring the groups together. Have each group hold up their poster for all to see and describe why they chose that particular theme.

### 5. Summary of the activity

Summarise by commenting on how each of the posters reflects a key aspect of the Code. If appropriate, you can praise the artistic talent of the group! You might want to have the group vote for their favourite(s), to be displayed right away.

### 6. Follow-up

Collect the posters and use them over the next few weeks or months on the walls and bulletin boards in the office. Consider distributing them to other offices, or exchanging them with groups who have done the same activity.

## ***Application to Our Workgroup***

**Objective:** To apply learnings about the Code of Conduct to specific situations common to the work group or team

**Time:** 10-30 minutes

**Number of participants:** Any number

**Type of participants:** This activity assumes that all participants come from one workgroup or office.

**Preparation:** Think through the question of application of the Code to the particular workgroup or office ahead of time so that you can offer one or two ideas if they find it difficult to get started.

### **Suggestion**

If participants do well on their own, do not offer your ideas. Limit yourself to asking questions to focus them on areas you feel are important to the workgroup. This activity works well as a summing-up at the end of the session.

### **Procedure**

Note that the text in *italics* is merely a suggestion of what you might say in your own words.

#### **1. Introduction to the activity**

*We've talked mostly about how the Code of Conduct applies to UNHCR as a whole, and all staff members from drivers to country representatives. Now we're going to take a few minutes to focus on how it applies to our workgroup [office] in particular. The ethical decisions **we** have to make may not be the same as those of someone setting up contracts in Geneva or someone who is working directly with refugees in the field.*

#### **2. Discussion**

Lead a discussion using questions such as the following. Your goal is to have the workgroup or office staff identify specific situations of which they must be aware and actions they must take in order to comply with the Code. (If you have more than one workgroup present, you may want to have them work as individual groups first and then come together to share.)

In this discussion you **should** feel free to contribute your own examples. It will help the workgroup see you as a fellow staff member who also has to face some of the same issues.

#### **Possible questions:**

*In an office situation, when was the last time you had to really think about "What's the right thing to do"? Describe it to us.*



*What parts of the Code particularly resonated with you today as being applicable to us, right here? How?*

*What situations have come up in this workgroup [office] in the past where the Code would have provided guidance?*

As the group discusses, you or a reporter may make notes on a flip chart or the board. It will be useful for participants to see a summary of their ideas.

#### Summary of the activity

Remind participants that the Code applies to **all** UNHCR staff, and that it applies to their particular work group or office in tangible ways. (Refer to the notes generated on the board/paper.)



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# Annex A: Cases and Notes for the Facilitator

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### A note on the cases

A Facilitator Notes page follows each case study, to help you guide the discussion. The last part of those notes is a section on where to go for further guidance and advice if you should encounter a situation similar to that discussed in the case. We want to encourage all UNHCR staff to consult with others *before* engaging in behaviour that might be ethically questionable. Likewise, we encourage staff to report suspected misconduct of others. In general:

GO TO	FOR
The Ombudsman	An interpersonal dispute, work related conflict, etc.
Staff Welfare	Personal problems
The Ethics Office	Interpretation of the Code of Conduct, including conflicts of interest, standards of conduct etc.
Staff Council	Advice and referral for informal resolution of grievances
Inspector General's Office	Formal investigation of misconduct
Legal Affairs Section	Legal advice, such as on residency, taxes, privileges and immunities
Division of Human Resources	Advice on HR matters, performance appraisal issues, medical concerns, HR policies, etc.

**NOTE:** The proposed referrals for follow up listed after each case study are suggestions only. In addressing actual scenarios, consideration should be given to approaching any of the offices above as relevant.

## Information on the Cases

This information is provided so that you can select cases that show the application of different parts of the Code of Conduct, as well as choose cases that address issues relevant to your particular group. Select the highest priority cases, since there will be time only to examine a small number of them.

Note: The cases are found in the Manual in the order they are presented below.

Photocopy only the cases for the participants, **not** the Notes for the Facilitator.

Name of Case	Major Issues	Code of Conduct Principle	Code of Conduct Value	Year written
The Auto Parts Store	Lack of transparency in starting a home business	3		2009
A Peaceful Day at the Beach	Inadvertent harm to UNHCR's image	8		2009
The Modern Woman	Clash between traditional local and Western cultures		5	2009
The "Suitable" Applicant	Conflict of local values and practices with UN standards	9	4	2009
Workplace Communication	Workplace harassment; gender discrimination; financial misconduct	4, 5, 6, 8, 9	1, 4	2009
Pornographic Website	Sexual harassment; possible refugee abuse	1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9	1, 2, 5	2009
Rumour-Mongering	Discrimination based on sexual orientation, HIV status, gender, and disability	4, 9	1, 3, 4	2009
The Mobile Phones	Conflict of interest and financial malfeasance	2, 3, 6, 8	1	2009
Outside Business for Family's future	Conflict of interest; retaliation against whistleblower	2, 3, 5, 8, 9	1	2009
Work Hard and Play Hard	UNHCR intervention in staff's personal life, violation of cultural norms, involvement in prostitution and other criminal activities	8, 6	5	2002

Sex, Power and Refugees	Sexual exploitation of refugees, reporting on problem with an Implementing Partner	7		2002
Ruritanian Marriage	Sex with persons under the age of 18	8		2002 Revised '09
Office Romance	Sexual relationship between supervisor/supervisee, reporting misconduct	9		2002
Implementing Partner's Religious Activities	Inappropriate implementing partner non-contractual behaviour, violation of cultural norms		5	2002 Revised '09
The Puppy	Possible conflict of interest/ receipt of a gift	3		2002
Off-duty Political Job	Outside employment, appearance of support to political party	3		2002
He/She Staff Member	Office diversity, maintaining confidentiality, violation of cultural norms	9	4, 5	2002
Hansen's Disease	Maintaining staff confidentiality/ medical issue	4, 6	3	2002
The Housekeeper	Domestic employment of a refugee	7		2002
Contracts to the Family	Conflict of interest, management of resources	3, 6		2002
Compassion or Something Else?	Friendship with refugees, appearance of sexual relationship	1		2002
Mysterious Vehicle Parts	Reporting possible theft; gender issue in office	4, 6	4	2002
New Business	Possible conflict of interest/wife's business	2, 6		2002
Use of Assets	Use of car for unofficial business, reporting on abuse at higher level	6		2002

The Translator	Perceived favouritism toward a certain refugee	3, 7		2002
The Family Antique	Possible financial exploitation of refugee, abuse of power	7		2002
Night-time Emergency	Weighing the safety of one group of staff against that of another	5		2002
Returnees' Relocation Meeting	Refugee participation in decision-making, gender issues	1	2, 4	2002

### Case Studies for use in orientations or refreshers on the Code of Conduct

(Cases follow, in the order they are found in the list above.)



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## **Case Studies for use in Orientations or Refreshers on the Code of Conduct**

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## The New Auto Parts Store

Mr. Lin had served for several years as Supply Assistant responsible for local automotive parts procurement. During that time he managed to gain wide knowledge of what was available and where hard-to-locate parts could be obtained. Lately, discussions with members of his extended family had made Mr. Lin begin to think of using this knowledge to open his own small business.

Continuing to carry out his UNHCR duties faithfully during the day, Mr. Lin began spending more of his personal time organizing the new business. In March he opened a small used auto parts store in a building on the family compound. His cousin attends it during the week, and Mr. Lin serves customers on the weekend. Mr. Lin has not seen any reason to share information about his new enterprise with his supervisor.

For many years it's been customary for UNHCR drivers to be allowed to keep any discarded used parts. Realizing that he could resell many of these in his store, Mr. Lin approaches the head driver and mentions that he would be happy to buy parts from the drivers. He makes it clear that he is referring only to those parts discarded by UNHCR that they have legitimately acquired.

1. Is any part of the Code of Conduct applicable in this situation?
2. Mr. Lin seems to be trying to keep a clear line between his UNHCR work and his new home enterprise. Are his efforts sufficient? Is there any conflict of interest?
3. Do you see any potential problem with the informal policy of allowing drivers to take discarded used automotive parts? If the drivers are allowed to keep the discards, can they then legitimately sell them to Mr. Lin?
4. If you were Mr. Lin's supervisor and you discovered his new home business, would you be concerned at all? What about his purchasing of used parts from the drivers?

# **The New Auto Parts Store**

## **Notes for the Facilitator**

### **Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies**

Guiding Principle 3 states a commitment to “Perform my official duties and conduct my private affairs in a manner that avoids conflicts of interest, thereby preserving and enhancing public confidence in UNHCR”. The question, however, is whether this case does illustrate a conflict of interest.

The Staff Administrative Management Manual 1.2.7 says in part that “Staff members may not use their office or knowledge gained from their official functions for private gain, financial or otherwise, or for the private gain of any third party, including family, friends and those they favour”.

“1.2.19 Staff members may not be actively associated with the management of, or hold a financial interest in, any profit-making, business or other concern, if it were possible for the staff member or the profit-making, business or other concern to benefit from such association or financial interest by reason of his/her position with the Organisation”. And most directly:

“1.2.21 Staff members may not engage in any outside occupation or employment, whether remunerated or not, without the approval of the High Commissioner.” (It goes on to itemize types of employment that the High Commissioner might approve.)

UN Staff Regulations 1.2 (g) Private gain for self and family

UN Staff Rules 101.2 (o and p) Conflict of interest and profit making business

UN Staff Rules 1.2 (g) use of office for private gain

### **Discussion**

The issue is less Mr. Lin’s opening of the store than his lack of transparency about it. He should have spoken with his supervisor regarding his plans from the beginning. If all business is conducted outside of work hours and it is clear that Mr. Lin’s enterprise does not benefit from his relationship with UNHCR, there is a chance that it will be approved. But it may not be.

Avoiding any appearance of illicit benefit is key. Mr. Lin and his supervisor need to carefully consider not just the facts, but the public perception as well. Knowing that Mr. Lin works for UNHCR, will his neighbours assume that he is selling parts stolen from the organization?

Mr. Lin’s offer to purchase the discarded parts that the drivers have traditionally had the right to keep is questionable. With such a ready market, might other parts not actually “discarded” start to appear in the store? Is he, in effect, tacitly encouraging theft?

### **Possible further questions**

- What private businesses have you seen or heard of being run by UNHCR staff members? Was the organization officially aware of their existence?

- If Mr. Lin were just helping a friend start a shop rather than starting his own, would the implications be any different?
- If you were Mr. Lin's supervisor and you just discovered his new business, what would your first step be? What would you do next?

### Where to go for further advice

Mr. Lin's supervisor may want to consult with the Legal Affairs Section for advice in this case. The Ethics Office also provides advice on conflicts of interest.

#### The Ethics Office

Tel: +41 22 739 8957  
 +41 22 739 8794  
 Fax: +41 22 739 7381  
 Email: .....[ethicsoffice@unhcr.org](mailto:ethicsoffice@unhcr.org)

#### Legal Affairs Section

Tel: +41 22 739 7831  
 Fax: +41 22 739 7391  
 Email: [hqle00@unhcr.org](mailto:hqle00@unhcr.org)

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## A Peaceful Day at the Beach

It had been a particularly stressful week, and Miriam looked forward to the weekend. She and three women colleagues from the office, all international officers, had arranged to borrow a UNHCR vehicle for the day. They'd completed the paperwork, received authorization, and were happily planning a trip to the local public beach, about an hour away. A day of swimming and relaxing in the sun with friends, away from the stress of the office, was just what Miriam needed, she thought with a smile.

The next day the four women arrived at the beach by mid-morning, and Miriam drove out onto the sand to park, as was customary. Busy visiting with her friends, she didn't notice that she'd driven into a patch of particularly loose, deep sand. Soon the vehicle was deeply mired. Crowds of locals began to gather around the vehicle, laughing, and offering advice to the frustrated driver and her friends who were busy working with improvised shovels to dig out the vehicle. Then, unexpectedly, someone official-looking began snapping pictures of the vehicle—clearly marked with the UNHCR logo.

The next day, the third page of the local newspaper had a picture of four attractive foreign women in beachwear, digging out an official UNHCR vehicle. The accompanying article made several pointed remarks questioning UNHCR's official work requiring trips to the beach.

1. Are there aspects of the Code of Conduct applicable in this case study? If so, which ones?
2. If this is an "ambiguous area", what principles or judgement decisions apply?
3. Could the public embarrassment caused by this incident hinder UNHCR's ability to accomplish its mission?
4. How could this situation have been prevented?

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## A Peaceful Day at the Beach

### Notes for the Facilitator

#### Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies

Miriam has not violated the Code of Conduct regarding her use of an official vehicle, because she was careful to follow all procedures including proper authorization. One could argue, however, that Miriam has engaged in “...activities that compromise the image and interests of UNHCR” as stated in Principle Eight. While she did not predict that going with friends to the beach in a UNHCR vehicle would put her in a situation that compromised the agency’s image, it turned out that way. In Principle Eight, the Code establishes that public opinion is a legitimate concern with regard to staff behaviour in non-official settings.

UN Staff Regulations 1.2 (q and r) Care and use of assets

UN Staff Rules: 1.2 (q) Use property only for official purposes

Staff Administrative and Management Manual 1.2.25 Use and care of assets

#### Discussion

This is an excellent example of the need to go beyond specific rules to think about public perception and media attention. Upholding and promoting “the highest standards” requires thinking beyond the minimal explicit rules and guidelines in the Code.

Considering the broader implications of one’s decisions and actions in the eyes of all stakeholders, including the public, is a professional responsibility. Managers need to provide staff with guidance and feedback to enable them to exercise the judgement necessary to prevent negative publicity harmful to UNHCR’s mission.

#### Possible Further Questions

- If you were Miriam’s manager what advice or feedback would you give her?
- What can be done to repair the damage done to UNHCR’s public image?
- How might similar problems be avoided in the future?
- Are you aware of any similar incident? How was it handled?

#### Where to go for further advice

Miriam probably has no need to seek advice, but the Country Representative who established the local policy for use of vehicles may want to re-think the policy. In doing so, he might consult with the Department of Human Resources and the Legal Affairs Section.

##### The Division of Human Resources

HR Policy Email:

[hqpolicy@unhcr.org](mailto:hqpolicy@unhcr.org)

##### Legal Affairs Section

Tel: +41 22 739 7831

Fax: +41 22 739 7391

Email: [hqle00@unhcr.org](mailto:hqle00@unhcr.org)

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## The Modern Woman

Alima is a senior programme assistant in the UNHCR office, one of the most senior national staff members and highly respected by her colleagues. Alima comes from a very traditional and powerful local family and is proud of her culture. She often assumes the role of a mediator for problems between staff in the office and has proactively given advice of both a professional and a personal nature to colleagues.

Fatima has been recently employed by UNHCR as a finance assistant. Colleagues have noticed that she dresses as a Western woman and has a blunt, direct style of communicating.

Karim, the senior driver, recently heard and reported to colleagues that Fatima refused to marry her daughter to the deputy minister of foreign affairs despite numerous requests from his family. Colleagues are livid about Fatima's attitude and believe that she is being pretentious and disrespectful towards her community.

Alima decides to call Fatima after she notices that colleagues are starting to avoid her and speak badly about her. Fatima is grateful for Alima's concern, as she feels bullied by the men in the office. Alima tells Fatima that she should review the way she dresses and should try to behave more like a local woman. She also tells her that she ought to respect tradition and allow her daughter to be married as their culture calls for. Alima warns Fatima that she should refrain from bringing a bad name to UNHCR among the leadership of the country.

1. Which values and/or guiding principles of the Code of Conduct might be applicable in this case?
2. What advice would you give to Alima? How might she best be of help to Fatima?
3. What advice would you give to Fatima?

## **The Modern Woman Notes for the Facilitator**

### **Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies**

The fifth Core Value of the Code of Conduct says, “Respect the cultures, customs and traditions of all people. Strive to avoid behaving in ways not acceptable in a particular cultural context. However, if considered as directly contrary to an international human rights instrument or standard, we will be guided by the applicable human rights instrument or standard.”

UN Regulations 1.2 (a) Respect for all cultures

Staff Administrative and Management Manual core values 1.2.1 Respect for all cultures

### **Discussion**

Rumours about the private life of any UNHCR staff member and/or their family should be avoided. It is not Alima’s concern, nor that of the other staff, whom Fatima’s daughter should marry. Alima could be of great help to Fatima **not** by telling her how she should dress or behave, but by reaching out to her in friendship and support. As an unofficial leader in the office, Alima is undoubtedly influential with the others and could urge them to be more understanding and accepting of Fatima and her “untraditional ways”.

Fatima may not be aware of how she is perceived by others in the office. Alima may be able to give her feedback in a non-critical way. This would allow Fatima to make her own choices about whether or not to modify her behaviour to conform more closely to the norms of the office.

Note that the Code of Conduct does not say that we must adopt all aspects of the local culture and customs. Indeed, there will often be aspects of local culture that we feel we cannot adopt and still be true to our own values. The key is to be aware and to make conscious choices about which aspects of the culture to follow—knowing what the tradeoffs may be.

Fatima’s feeling of being bullied by the men in the office needs to be explored. This may be the aspect of the case that truly does involve potential misconduct, although we don’t have enough information to know for sure.

### **Possible further questions**

- Must Fatima cover if all of the other local women in the office do?
- What might Fatima do, without going against her own values, in order to gain greater approval and acceptance among her colleagues?
- Are there aspects of the local culture in your office that some staff find uncomfortable or even contrary to their own values? What are they? How do staff handle those aspects of the culture?
- What specific behaviours of the men would constitute “bullying” by UNHCR standards? How might it best be addressed?



## Where to go for further advice

Both Fatima and Alima might benefit from talking with someone at the Ethics Office and/or the Ombudsman.

### **Ombudsman's Office**

Confidential fax: +41 22 739 7340  
Tel: +41 22 739 7770  
Email: [Ombuds@unhcr.org](mailto:Ombuds@unhcr.org)  
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### **The Ethics Office**

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## The “Suitable” Applicant

A local UNHCR office recently advertised an opening for the post of senior secretary to the Representative. Mr. Davies, the head of administration, screened the applicants and chose three candidates, all equally qualified, with good references and experience.

Mr. Davies organized a panel to interview the applicants. All three candidates presented themselves very well during the interview, leaving Mr. Davies with a difficult decision to make.

After much thought, he chose Mr. Sangai and Mr. Lamb as finalists rather than Mrs. Tolpen. He reasoned that, because she has a 14-month-old child, her home obligations would likely distract her from work. Besides, a male secretary would have more authority when dealing with counterparts in the government..

Between the two remaining candidates, he ultimately chose Mr. Sangai over Mr. Lamb because Mr. Lamb happens to be from a minority group. Mr. Davies justifies his decision by saying, “As the applicant, in his position of senior secretary to the Representative, will be required to meet and work with senior governmental officials, the social standing of Mr. Lamb might become an obstacle to smooth relations between the Representative and the host government, both at the formal and informal levels. It is in the interest of the organization to recruit for this position an individual with a suitable background for establishing good relations with government officials.”

1. What Core Values of the Code of Conduct are at stake in Mr. Davies’ hiring decision? Has Mr. Davies violated the Code of Conduct in any way? If so, how?
  2. Has Mr. Davies done anything that might violate the binding staff regulations or rules of the UN?
  3. If you were in Mr. Davies’ position, how would you have handled the situation?

## The “Suitable” Applicant Notes for the Facilitator

### Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies

Core Value 4 of the Code requires staff members to show respect for all persons equally and to strive to remove all barriers to equality without any distinction of gender, ethnic origin, marital status and socio-economic status (among other distinguishing features).

Guiding Principle 9 of the Code includes the standard of refraining from any form of discrimination or favouritism in the workplace.

The SAMM Chapter 1, 1.2 Basic Rights and Obligations of Staff, Core Values, 1.2 states, in part: “Consequently, staff members shall exhibit respect for all cultures. **They shall not discriminate against any individual or group of individuals** or otherwise abuse the power and authority vested in them.” (Bold added)

UN Charter Article 8 Ensures gender equality

UN Staff Rules 1.2 (a) Non-discrimination between men and women

UN Staff Rules Article 4 Non-gender discrimination in selection

UN Charter Paragraph 2 Equal rights of male and female and Article 55.3 Universal rights without distinction

### Discussion

The main point of the scenario is that the most qualified applicant should have been selected based purely on merit rather than on such non-merit factors as marital status, ethnic background, or social status. You should acknowledge that while this may be challenging, it is in the long-term interest of UNHCR to set an example of fairness and equality in hiring even when it is not the norm locally.

Participants may suggest a perceived conflict between “exhibiting respect for all cultures” and “not discriminating” when discrimination against certain groups is an ingrained part of the local culture. In such cases, the admonition against discrimination takes precedence. (You might draw an analogy with female genital mutilation. The fact that it is culturally acceptable in some places does not make it acceptable to the United Nations.) You may want to discuss discrimination against minority groups in any culture, and whether hiring a minority is the right thing to do when it might jeopardise office effectiveness in liaising with the public and/or the government.

### Possible further questions

- Mr. Davies was operating from an ethical position that was quite acceptable in the local culture. How would you explain to him the need for the United Nations to follow different standards?
- Does social status play such an important role in the country where you are? Do other distinguishing factors such as gender, marital status, race, or ethnicity influence hiring decisions in your local culture? Do those local norms ever influence UNHCR hiring decisions locally?
- Was Mr. Davies’ reasoning valid when he ruled out hiring a woman with a young child because her family responsibilities would probably detract her from work? What if he had discovered that one of the other candidates was caring for an invalid

mother? Might hiring decisions *ever* take into account a candidate's outside-of-work responsibilities?

### **Where to go for further advice**

For informal advice and guidance on ethical issues such as those involved in hiring decisions, contact:

**The Division of Human Resources**

HR Policy Email:

[hqpolicy@unhcr.org](mailto:hqpolicy@unhcr.org)

**The Ethics Office**

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## Workplace Communication

Charlie is a repatriation officer working in the deep field. Now that things have changed for the better in the country of origin, UNHCR has begun a full-scale repatriation program across the border to process and assist all refugees wishing to return home. After the refugees' 20 years in exile, the eyes of the world are turned to the critical role UNHCR can play. Charlie has been sent to this operation as someone who can "get the job done", ensuring no one is forced to go home against their will, but securing speedy return for those who want to repatriate.

Charlie is fed up with Yasmine. She is in charge of the team interviewing and registering refugees for return. Each day the lines of refugees trying to register continue to grow, while the number processed decreases, and tensions are mounting amongst refugees. They want to get back quickly to get the assistance packages and land deals the government is offering, probably for a short time only. There are sit-ins, demonstrations, and rumours of riots, with the refugees calling in the local and international media to see how UNHCR is failing to do its job.

Charlie lets his feelings be known. He tells office staff he doesn't think Yasmine knows what she is doing. His email messages to Yasmine are short, terse and impatient. He never greets her, nor does he acknowledge her work. While he does call her in to find out why things are so delayed, he does not give her the opportunity to speak, but threatens to cut her post if the situation does not improve. Yasmine feels undermined and attacked. She believes she is doing the best she can in an impossible situation. She has been in various operations and has not had this problem before. She believes Charlie is unable to work with a woman, especially one from a different culture than his. Yasmine tries several times to call the Representative, and sends her emails too to ask for help, but she never hears back. The Representative sends a message to Charlie only, telling him to work things out. Charlie is enraged that Yasmine has "gone over his head".

Yasmine escalates the conflict and begins sending email messages to her team members to highlight how she is being discriminated against as a Middle Eastern woman. In these messages she also accuses Charlie of using office resources for personal purposes. She hints at abuse of office funds. Eventually one of these messages is copied to the media. Suddenly, the world's attention is no longer on the opportunity for refugees to go home, but on the credibility of UNHCR. Under pressure from NGOs, some states that had been funding the operation withdraw their support.

1. If you were Charlie's management coach, what advice would you give him in regard to how he is relating to Yasmine? Name at least two things he should do.
2. Do you think this is a case of Charlie discriminating against Yasmine based on gender or ethnicity?
3. The Representative probably felt she should be dealing with those staff that report immediately to her, like Charlie, rather than directly with Yasmine. Do you agree that this was correct action?
4. What might Yasmine have done to address the bad situation with Charlie, her supervisor, instead of telling others of what she felt as discrimination, and accusing Charlie of financial misconduct? Did she have other remedies? What would you have done?

## **Workplace Communication Notes for the Facilitator**

### **Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies**

If Charlie is guilty of sexual or religious discrimination, the following rules and regulations apply:

Core Value 4 of the Code requires staff members to show respect for all persons equally and to strive to remove all barriers to equality without any distinction of gender, ethnic origin, marital status and socio-economic status (among other distinguishing features).

Guiding Principle 9 of the Code includes the standard of refraining from any form of discrimination or favouritism in the workplace.

The Staff Administrative and Management Manual, Chapter 1, 1.2 Basic Rights and Obligations of Staff, Core Values, 1.2 states, in part: "Consequently, staff members shall exhibit respect for all cultures. They shall not discriminate against any individual or group of individuals."

UN Charter Article 8: Gender equality

UN Staff Rules 1.2 (a): Non-discrimination between men and women

UN Staff Rules Article 4: Non-gender discrimination in selection

UN Charter Paragraph 2: Equal rights of male and female without distinction

Damage to UNHCR's public image is mentioned in SAMM 105.2.2. Misconduct that may be subject to disciplinary measures includes but is not limited to: "Acts or behaviour that would discredit the United Nations" and SAMM 10 5.7.1. "Any Manager who receives a report of possible misconduct must promptly inform the IGO (subject to 5.4.2 above) along with the following initial assessments, whether the alleged misconduct has affected in any other way the credibility, integrity or image of the Office..."

The charges being made by Yasmine against Charlie are covered in:

SAMM 10 5.4.3. "Staff should report possible misconduct either directly to the IGO or to their Director, Representative or Chief of Mission (hereinafter referred to as "Manager"), who must then promptly inform the IGO."

SAMM 10 5.4.2. state that "All staff have a duty to report instances of misconduct as well as any information that relates to misconduct they have observed...Reports subsequently determined to be unfounded will not give rise to any action against the staff member who reported the conduct unless the report was made in bad faith. Using the investigation process in a malicious manner or otherwise providing information either known to be false or with reckless disregard for its accuracy may constitute misconduct and will be investigated as a separate act of possible misconduct.."

### **Discussion**

Charlie is showing common mismanagement of a difficult situation. He should meet with Yasmine in a non-threatening environment and give the time she needs to explain what is happening and why. (From the case description, we have no idea whether Yasmine truly is mishandling the refugee return operation or whether there are other causal factors such as lack of staff to oversee the registration process.) After this initial

meeting, he needs to ensure that further communication is primarily face-to-face, not via email, and is handled in a respectful way.

We don't know whether this is a case of discrimination or not. It certainly could be that Charlie is not giving Yasmine the support she needs because of his own bias against Middle Eastern women. But it is also possible that Yasmine is simply not capable of handling this difficult job, and she is using the accusation of discrimination to deflect criticism of her own shortcomings. It's important not to assume discrimination, inability, or to make any assumptions without knowing the facts.

The Representative is in a difficult situation. She needs to support and guide those who report directly to her, and she knows that if she starts bypassing them to deal with the members of their team directly she could undercut those who report to her. On the other hand, Yasmine's charges against Charlie are serious, and the Rep should not ignore them. In this case, she needs to speak directly with Yasmine.

Yasmine's actions are understandable in that they were undoubtedly due to utter frustration with the situation. Yet, they were both ethically wrong and ineffective. If she feels Charlie is showing bias, she should confront him directly with that information. If she actually has solid information in regard to financial malfeasance, she should report that to the Inspector General's office. Starting rumours was wrong.

The effect of what began as a disrespectful workplace communication issue has been damage to UNHCR's reputation and even reduced funding. This is not unrealistic. The media are eager to hear of problems with the U.N. and much less eager to report successful repatriation efforts. This makes it even more critical that we make ethical decisions and maintain respectful communication.

This case highlights some of the problems that can arise from misuse of email. We can hardly conduct business without it, and yet conflicts can be exacerbated easily when they are carried on electronically. Respectful workplace communication means showing respect via email as well as face-to-face. How did Charlie misuse email? What might he have better done instead?

### **Possible further questions**

- Have you ever seen a communication problem escalate to point of causing organisational damage? Describe it.
- Have you ever seen poor professional behaviour on the part of someone in a group that sometimes experiences discrimination? Was the supervisor able to address the behaviour without showing bias? Was he or she inhibited about calling attention to the behaviour for fear of being accused of discrimination?
- Have you experienced or seen a UNHCR supervisor who showed bias against someone of a different race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or physical ability?

### **Where to go for further advice**

Charlie needs to improve his basic managerial skills. He may be able to get advice from his Representative, who might refer him to take a management learning course through the Global Learning Centre or Management Learning Programmes.



The Inspector General's Office should be involved to investigate whether Yasmine's accusations of financial impropriety are true.

If Charlie refuses to meet with Yasmine and allow her to express herself, she should try again to speak with the Representative. She might also contact the Ombudsman's Office for advice on how to proceed.

**The Inspector General's Office**

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Intranet: Executive Office/Inspector General's Office

Internet: [www.unhcr.org/contact.html](http://www.unhcr.org/contact.html)

**Ombudsman's Office**

Confidential fax: +41 22 739 7340

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Email: [Ombuds@unhcr.org](mailto:Ombuds@unhcr.org)

**Intranet:** Staff Resources/Ombudsman

**The Global Learning Centre**

**GLC** – Global Learning Centre

Email: [hqtr00@unhcr.org](mailto:hqtr00@unhcr.org)

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## Pornographic Web Site

Errol is a Representative who has seen it all in UNHCR, and has survived several incidents in which either his life or those of his team members have been threatened. He has found it important to keep spirits light, to use humour from time to time, and to ensure the needs of his staff are met both professionally and personally. Errol often gives particular attention to the needs of his female team members. He knows how difficult it can be for women to move forward in their careers in UNHCR, and he has never discriminated in hiring or promotion, trying to help the Office meet its objective of having full gender representation. Errol takes both male and female staff out for coffee and private conversations, as a way to build strong personal relationships with all members of his team.

Osborne, the national finance assistant, has worked in the UNHCR office for over 20 years. He has a small room that virtually no one ever visits because it is at the end of the corridor and most of the programme and finance queries are managed through his supervisor, John. Osborne is often bored because he has been doing the same job for years, and he has gone as far as he can as a national staff in his position. He spends hours “surfing the web”. Sometimes he looks at a pornographic site or two, knowing no one will see him and thinking there is no harm. John knows about this but says nothing because he will be rotating soon, and feels there is no need to raise a potentially disruptive issue, since Osborne has been consistent in doing his job.

One day, Anoushka drops by unexpectedly to see Osborne because John is away. She sees the pornographic site Osborne is looking at and is deeply shocked and offended. She runs out of the room, but is too embarrassed to talk to Errol because he is a man. Instead, she goes straight to Deirdre, the female Deputy Representative who is also the SEA focal point. Anoushka is deeply distressed, and blurts out that she thinks all the men in the operation are doing this; that they are all condescending towards women; that she feels uncomfortable to eat lunch when the men are all there laughing together; and that she feels intimidated when the Representative asks her out for coffee alone. She explains to Deirdre that she had barely been able to convince her husband and family to let her work in an environment like the U.N., and now she herself thinks she cannot cope with the sexist behaviour and conduct she sees in the workplace.

Deirdre goes to talk with Errol. He calls in Osborne and confronts him. Osborne is angry and defensive. He says that he knows of several UNHCR staff in their field operation that trade supplies, food and special

treatment in exchange for sexual favours from young refugee women and girls. He adds that some of these staff arrange for the same refugee women and girls to provide sexual favours for government officials. The refugees, he says, are all happy with this arrangement because it greatly improves their conditions. Some have even gotten work permits as a result. Osborne says there is a double standard. All he did was look at a few pictures, in the privacy of his office on his own computer, and he has never imposed this on anyone. Besides, Anoushka should have knocked before she came in!

1. Which aspect of this case illustrates sexual harassment, which illustrates sexual exploitation, and which illustrates sexual abuse?
2. If you were Deirdre, what advice would you give Errol in regard to forming strong, supportive, relationships with the women he supervises—especially Anoushka?
3. Do you agree with the way Errol handled the situation with Osborne? If you were Errol, how would you respond to Osborne's accusation against the field staff?
4. If you were counselling Anoushka, what would you say to her?

## **Pornographic Web Site Notes for the Facilitator**

### **Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies**

This complex case has violations of many clauses in the Code as well as rules and regulations in the legal instruments. Guiding Principle 7 states that we will “Prevent, oppose and combat all exploitation and abuse of refugees and other persons of concern.”

Guiding Principle 8 applies to the accusations made of field staff: “Refrain from any involvement in criminal or unethical activities, activities that contravene human rights, or activities that compromise the image and interests of UNHCR.”

Guiding Principle 9 applies in regard to Osborne’s viewing of pornography in the office: “Refrain from any form of harassment, discrimination, physical or verbal abuse, intimidation or favouritism in the workplace.”

The Secretary-General’s bulletin on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse is being violated in many ways, including sections 3.2 (c, d, e, and f).

### **Discussion**

Osborne’s viewing of pornography in the office is sexual harassment because it creates an oppressive workplace atmosphere for women. His objection that Anoushka should have knocked is irrelevant.

Sexual abuse is taking place by the field staff and government officials, if Osborne’s accusations are borne out, because there would have been “actual ...intrusion of a sexual nature...under unequal or coercive conditions” as defined in the Secretary-General’s bulletin on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

Sexual exploitation also is taking place, if Osborne’s accusations are proven true, because there would have been “actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust, for sexual purposes...” as defined in the Secretary-General’s bulletin on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

Errol seems committed to supporting his female staff members, but some of the means he is using are creating discomfort. Instead of taking Anoushka out for coffee alone, how might he build a supportive professional relationship with her?

Osborne’s viewing pornography at the office is unacceptable. To what extent is it his problem and to what extent is it John’s fault for not having spoken to him about it?

Have you seen examples of a manager not addressing unprofessional behaviour because he or she is about to rotate and doesn’t want to have to deal with it?

Anoushka obviously has strong feelings about the male/female relationships in the office, whether they are based in fact or not. What might Deirdre and Errol each do to address Anoushka's distress?

How can Errol find out whether Osborne's assertions about the sexual exploitation and abuse in the camp are true or not? What are his obligations in this regard? Should he do his own investigation or involve the Office of the Inspector General?

What should Errol do or say in regard to Osborne's assertion that his viewing of pornography is a 'victimless crime' compared to what is going on in the camp?

What should he do or say in relation to Osborne's position that it is *his* office and computer to view things on?

### Possible further questions

- Have you experienced or seen sexual harassment in a UNHCR office?
- What might contribute to creating an "intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment" in the office for women? What about for religious minorities? Ethnic or racial minorities? Persons with disabilities? Persons perceived to be HIV positive?

### Where to go for further advice

Any of the characters in this case study might consult with the Ethics Office for advice. Errol should inform the Inspector General's Office of the allegation that sexual exploitation is taking place in the camp and request a full investigation. Anoushka could consult the Staff Welfare Section for advice and support.

#### The Inspector General's Office

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General's Office  
Internet: [www.unhcr.org/contact.html](http://www.unhcr.org/contact.html)

#### The Ethics Office

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Intranet: Staff Resources/Staff Welfare

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## Rumour-Mongering

Ziva has struggled from one duty station to another in deep field locations for 13 years, facing many hardships, operational challenges, and personal difficulties as a woman. Now she is the Senior Regional Protection Officer covering five countries in an area confronting one of the largest refugee outflows UNHCR has ever faced. She is determined to demonstrate her capacity to lead and to deliver, hopeful that this will pave the way for her next promotion. Ziva is happy that finally she and her female partner, Oxana, can live together, since Oxana is working with a large NGO in the same location. While their relationship has suffered through the course of various hardship duty stations, they are happy to finally now have a real chance to establish themselves.

Ziva finds that for the first time in her career with UNHCR, colleagues in the office are acting rather cold toward her. She enters rooms and people leave or stop talking; she asks colleagues out for coffee and they say they are busy, but five minutes later they are in the cafeteria with someone else; she sees people whispering in groups but when she comes near they fall silent. Ziva and Oxana are never invited to the homes or events of other colleagues when they have parties, and Ziva is left out of virtually all personal exchanges in the office. One day Ziva finds an anonymous note on her desk. It says that people “like her” are an embarrassment to UNHCR and that if she is truly concerned about refugees, she should just quit. Rumours are that Ziva is HIV+ and that she is putting others at risk of HIV/AIDS. Ziva is so shocked and distraught, she has to seek medical help. She knows of at least one person who has been spreading the rumours, and is considering what to do.

Ahmed has seen a post advertised in the office where Ziva works. Ahmed has worked in finance for years and is well recognized in his field. He calls to make an appointment for an interview, which is arranged for the following week. Ahmed mentions that he has a physical disability, and inquires about building access. He receives assurances that UNHCR is fully compliant with relevant standards and this will not be an issue. When Ahmed arrives for his interview, he finds there are three floors to the building. While he can wheel his chair onto the landing, there is no elevator or ramp to help him get to the third floor interview room. Ahmed asks if the interview can be held on the landing. Frank, the lead for the interview team, is annoyed with this because all their materials are in the interview room. Frank blurts out “If he can’t even get to the interview room, how is he going to do the job he is applying for? Are we supposed to accommodate him like this every day? First we have Ziva’s kind, and now we have this!”

1. What is the best way to handle malicious rumours? What might Ziva do to counteract the gossip and untrue rumours circulating about her?
2. No mention is made in the case of Ziva's supervisor. Does she or he have any responsibilities in the situation described?
3. What are UNHCR's responsibilities in regard to hiring someone with a disability?
4. Is there a general problem in the office with regard to accepting diversity? If so, what should be done about it?

## **Rumour-Mongering Notes for the Facilitator**

### **Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies**

The fourth Core Value clearly states, “We will show respect for all persons equally without distinction whatsoever of...sexual orientation...or any other distinguishing feature”. Therefore, Ziva’s actual sexual orientation is not a legitimate issue.

Also, Principle nine in the Commitment to UNHCR Code of Conduct says “I will not engage in or tolerate any form of harassment in the workplace, including sexual harassment”. Rumour mongering in this case is a form of harassment.

SAMM1.2.29: All UNHCR staff members bear responsibility for the maintenance of a harmonious working environment. This implies that in accordance with the standards of conduct of the international civil service, they will conduct themselves in a way that will ensure that the workplace is free of intimidation, hostility or offence and, in this context, of any form of sexual harassment.

UN Rules 1.2 (a) establishes non-discrimination as a standard for staff behaviour.

SAMM 1 Core Value states that staff members “shall not discriminate against any individual or group of individuals.”

SAMM 10 5.2.2: Misconduct that may be subject to disciplinary measures includes but is not limited to: “*harassment of, or threats to other staff members*”

### **Discussion**

Combating malicious rumours can be frustrating. It is often difficult to identify just who is starting them, and anyone confronted is likely to deny either originating or spreading them. Nevertheless, rumours can do serious damage in a workplace and must be combated. Some actions that help:

The head of the office must take a firm stand of zero tolerance for gossip and rumours. This can be conveyed in writing, but should be followed up in person such as announcements at staff meetings.

If Ziva knows who might be involved, she could confront the person in a nondefensive but direct and firm way, stating explicitly that the rumour is unfounded and that she expects the gossip to stop.

Other staff members can refuse to pass on rumours, and to make it clear to the person(s) spreading them that they do not participate in this destructive behaviour. Ziva needs the support of her supervisor in this unfortunate scenario. The supervisor should make it clear to all office staff that he or she expects full acceptance of Ziva as an integral part of the team. Periodic reminders are also necessary that discrimination of any kind is not acceptable.



UNHCR does not discriminate based on disability, as long as the person is capable of carrying out the responsibilities of the job with “reasonable accommodation”. That phrase usually encompasses such adjustments as providing work space on the ground floor for someone mobility-impaired if the office does not have an elevator, or providing a computer with special software for someone with vision problems. It would not necessarily require installation of an elevator or other very expensive accommodation.

It does seem that there is a generalised problem in the office with acceptance of diversity. If it were only Frank, he should be dealt with one-on-one. But the fact that many staff members have been involved in the gossip means that it needs to be addressed with the whole office.

In many UNHCR locations, sexual orientation is simply not an issue. Staff members are fully accepting of one another and socialize freely. However, in some sites it has proven to be a problem—although usually not as overtly as described in this case. More common than an anonymous note on the desk would be a simple lack of friendliness, an unwillingness to interact. Just as with racial, ethnic, or other types of discrimination, this is against the Code and can severely hamper the ability of UNHCR to function at its best.

The rumour about Ziva being HIV+ is one that needs to be addressed by the office through specific training. A person’s health status is in principle a private matter. Extensive materials are available for discussions and formal sessions on HIV in the UN workplace. Staff need to know that working with HIV+ colleagues poses no threat to them, and that such colleagues need the acceptance and compassion they would accord to a fellow staff member with any other chronic illness.

“Frank” in this case is the staff member with the most severe problem: one of strong bias against anyone who is different from him. His supervisor should counsel him.

### Possible further questions

- Have you been involved in any interviewing of candidates when someone with a disability applied? How was it handled?
- Are people of all sexual/affectional orientations fully accepted in your office? Would a transgender person find acceptance?
- Have you ever been the victim of rumours? What did you do to combat them? Was it effective?
- Have you ever helped stop rumours from circulating in the office? How did you do it?

### Where to go for further assistance

Ziva should first seek help from her supervisor or Representative. If this is not forthcoming, she might consult with the Ombudsman’s Office. If she feels that she has been discriminated against in terms of promotion, she might consult with Human Resources.

**Division of Human Resources Management**  
Recourses and Appeals  
APPB: [hqpe90@unhcr.org](mailto:hqpe90@unhcr.org)  
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## The Mobile Phones

Benjamin is responsible for IT procurement in his region. He frequently deals with corporations, including those providing telephone, computer and other types of electronic equipment. He must travel regularly to consult with these companies, negotiate the basic elements of purchasing contracts, and keep updated on recent technical advances that could prove useful to UNHCR in field operations.

Benjamin's travels are often to nice locations, capital cities and expositions. He has gotten to know some of the company sales representatives very well, and sometimes they offer to pay his airfare and to provide other services to encourage sales growth. Benjamin often accepts these perks and benefits with the rationale that this reduces expenses for UNHCR. He has decided to attend an upcoming conference and trade fair in Tokyo, where he has never been before. He proposes to the telecommunications company he has been dealing with that they pay for his airfare and advises them that UNHCR is considering a large purchase of mobile phones. The company readily agrees to pay for his air ticket and offers to extend the dates beyond the exhibition so that he can visit the country. While at the exhibition, the company offers Benjamin three free mobile phones, telling him that they want his UNHCR colleagues to see and try the product first hand.

When Benjamin returns to work, he shows his boss, Jun, two mobile phones from the company. He tells his boss of the greatly reduced price he negotiated on the cell phones if ordered in sufficient quantities. He also indicates that he would like to have a final meeting with another company before a decision is taken. He goes on to say that since there is extra money in his budget because he didn't have to pay for the airfare last time, that this time he will use his own budget and fly business class on the four-hour flight to see the other company. Jun knows that business class is only approved for flights of a certain length, much longer than four hours, but Benjamin is getting such good prices and, after all, it is his budget to decide how to use. Jun signs off on the business class flight and after showing the two mobile phones to team technical experts for their opinions, he gives the phones to two team members.

The next week, the Director of the Bureau is travelling in the region and undertaking some private sector fund-raising activities. She makes a stop to see the Chief Executive Officer of the company that paid for Benjamin's trip to Tokyo. The CEO greets her warmly, and implies the company is ready to make a generous contribution to UNHCR—particularly in light of UNHCR's likely purchase of phones. He offers the Director a free cell phone, saying he hopes UNHCR technical experts

have found the other three phones they donated to be the latest technology and very durable for use in the deep field. He thanks her for UNHCR's willingness to accept donations of this kind, noting that many other UN, NGO and other agencies will not accept gifts. He has brought along his external relations officer who takes a photo of him handing a phone to the Director.

1. How many types of misconduct can you identify that *Benjamin* has committed?
2. How many types of misconduct can you identify that *Jun* has committed?
3. What are some of the possible repercussions of their misconduct?

## The Mobile Phones Notes for the Facilitator

### Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies

The last part of Principle three states, “I will avoid assisting private persons or companies in their undertakings with UNHCR where this might lead to actual or perceived preferential treatment. I will never participate in activities related to procurement of goods or services, or in human resource activities, where a conflict of interests may arise”.

On the other hand, Principle six states, “I will protect, manage and utilise UNHCR ...financial...resources efficiently and effectively”. The challenge is finding a transparent ethical balance between these two Principles.

UN Staff Rules 101.2 (o and p) conflict of interest

UN Staff Regulations 1.2 (l) “gifts from a non-governmental source”

UN Staff Rules 1.2 (l) permission to accept gift from non-governmental source

UN Staff Rules 1.2 (i) accepting gift from a third party

Staff Administrative and Management Manual Ch 1, 1.2.7 and 19 and 21 private gain prohibited

### Discussion

This case has many examples of misconduct:

Benjamin--

- Has accepted merchandise, services, and perks from suppliers.
- Has solicited financial favours from suppliers (asking the phone company for airfare to the exhibition).
- Has manoeuvred to fly business class at UNHCR expense when economy class is standard.
- Has demeaned UNHCR’s image by accepting gifts, implying serious conflict of interest.

Jun--

- Has not adequately supervised Benjamin; either he is unaware of his misconduct or is ignoring it.
- Is accepting inappropriate gifts of valuable merchandise (the phones) without question.
- Has approved business class airfare against regulations.

Another aspect of the case that should be discussed is the *quid pro quo* implied in the phone company’s offer of a generous contribution “in light of UNHCR’s likely purchase”. Fair, transparent tendering for large purchases cannot take place when there are hidden understandings or gifts involved.

What are the possible consequences of the publicity photo of the phone company CEO with the Director of the Bureau? Is the fact that she is being handed a mobile phone in the photo meaningful or not?

UNHCR needs to examine sample merchandise before purchasing large quantities. What should happen with such samples? What does happen to such samples?

To what extent is Benjamin's budget his own, to spend as he wishes? Because he saved airfare expense by arranging to have it donated by a supplier, is that savings "his"? Should UNHCR buyers accept expenses being paid by a supplier?

What rules define when UNHCR staff members can accept expenses paid by a supplier? Is it up to Benjamin to decide if the phone company should pay his airfare or not?

Was Benjamin wrong to request authorization for business class airfare for a short flight, or was Jun wrong in authorizing it, or both of them?

Why do you think that Jun goes along with Benjamin's obvious conflicts of interest?

### **Possible further questions**

- Is this case realistic? Do actions like Benjamin's actually happen in UNHCR? What have you seen or experienced that is comparable?
- Is there any tie-in between private sector fund raising and UNHCR purchasing that you know of? What about countries that donate funds with a requirement that the money must be spent on goods and services purchased in their country? Is there any conflict in that?

### **Where to go for further advice**

The Ethics office provides guidance on financial disclosure and conflicts of interest.

#### **The Ethics Office**

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## Outside Business for Family's Future

Cesar is thrilled. After years of rotating in the deep field, he now has an appointment in the capital city of his country of origin. Now he has the chance to live with his wife and kids, to be near his extended family, to set down some roots for the future, and to keep working for refugees—a job he finds fulfilling. It has been years since he has been able to help his now-elderly parents, and since he has seen his kids every day. Now, he must focus on the future of his family.

Cesar is excellent at his job. He has worked in both administration and programme, and now he is the Senior Admin/Programme Officer for the country operations. He is well liked by both staff and refugee, and gets along with everyone. He has always put the interests of the refugees and of UNHCR first, and he is often looked up to for advice on standards of conduct and procedures within UNHCR. He has always been the one to facilitate the Code of Conduct sessions, wherever he was posted.

One day Cesar receives a completely unexpected telephone call from the Inspector General's Office in Geneva. The Investigations Unit advises him that he is under investigation for inappropriate and unauthorized "outside activities". He is interviewed for over two hours and asked many questions about his conduct and behaviour, including some relating to earlier postings. Cesar is shocked, embarrassed, and afraid.

After so many years of scraping by, when he came back to his home country he wanted to lay a good foundation for his family's financial well-being. Therefore, he opened a small family business under his name. This way, no matter what may happen to him in the future, his family would have a way to get by. He thought because the business related to purchasing/selling local office supplies it would be of no interest to the UN, and he did not report this to UNHCR or seek authorization.

Now, it turns out the supplier he does business with is also sometimes used for UNHCR operations in his country. Cesar, who is an alternate member of the Local Contracts Committee, is being accused of taking advantage of his position in UNHCR and being on the LCC to negotiate lower prices from the supplier. Cesar is desperate to protect his reputation, to protect his job, and to explain his intentions.

When Cesar finds out it was his own secretary who reported him to the IGO, he takes steps to have her post discontinued. He considers her disloyal, and he does not feel that she is dedicated to the office's core priorities.

1. Has Cesar broken either the Code of Conduct or any legally binding instrument by opening the small family business?
2. Is it fair that Cesar should be investigated, when he has been such an outstanding staff member for so many years prior to this?
3. Was Cesar's decision to have his secretary's post discontinued acceptable? What recourse does she have?

## Outside Business for Family's Future Notes for the Facilitator

### Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies

In Principle three, all staff members commit themselves to “Perform my official duties and conduct my private affairs in a manner that avoids conflicts of interest, thereby preserving and enhancing public confidence in UNHCR”. This commitment includes not engaging in “any outside occupation or employment without prior authorisation”.

The UNHCR Staff Administrative Management Manual 1.2.7 says in part that “Staff members may not use their office or knowledge gained from their official functions for private gain, financial or otherwise, or for the private gain of any third party, including family, friends and those they favour” .

“1.2.19 Staff members may not be actively associated with the management of, or hold a financial interest in, any profit-making, business or other concern, if it were possible for the staff member or the profit-making, business or other concern to benefit from such association or financial interest by reason of his/her position with the Organisation” .

And most directly:

“1.2.21 Staff members may not engage in any outside occupation or employment, whether remunerated or not, without the approval of the High Commissioner.” (It goes on to itemize types of employment that might be approved.)

If Cesar is investigated, he has legal protections also. The Staff Administrative Management Manual Chapter 10:5.12.7. The confidentiality of the investigative process is intended, *inter alia*, to protect the interests of a staff member subject to a preliminary investigation.

10.1.2 In conformity with Chapter 10 of the Staff Rules, a staff member who is subject to disciplinary proceedings must be accorded due process. The fundamental requirements of due process are that the staff member concerned has the right: a. to know the allegations against him/her; b. to see or hear the evidence against him/her; c. to rebut the allegations; d. to present countervailing evidence and any mitigating factors.

### Discussion

The issue is Cesar's lack of transparency about opening a business and his failure to obtain authorisation. He should have spoken with his supervisor regarding his plans from the beginning. If all business is conducted outside of work hours and it is clear that Cesar's enterprise does not benefit in any way from his relationship with UNHCR, there is a chance that it will be approved. But it may not be. In any case it must be approved in advance.

Avoiding any appearance of conflict of interest also is key. Cesar and his supervisor should have carefully considered not just the requirement for authorisation, but the potential public perception as well. Knowing that Cesar works for UNHCR (and even serves on the Local Contracts Committee) will his neighbours assume that he is profiting from his role in the organization? What kind of impact might that have?



In addition, Cesar's attempt to retaliate against his secretary is another serious issue. Is it ethical for him to do so? What rules and regulations apply? What can she do to protect herself?

### **Possible further questions**

- What would you do if you were in a position like the secretary?
- Have you ever experienced, seen or heard of something similar to this situation?

### **Where to go for further advice**

If Cesar has questions, he might consult the Legal Affairs Section. His supervisor may need advice from that office also, as he considers whether Cesar has done something unacceptable. His secretary should contact the Ethics Office for information and support as a whistleblower. It was her responsibility to report misconduct, and if she has been retaliated against specifically because of this, there is another case of alleged misconduct and she may require protection.

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## Work Hard and Play Hard

Jim was a young international staff member in a small field office. He had a reputation for high energy and hard work. He was also well known in the office for the wild parties he and his friends occasionally organised. A local staff member, Samuel, liked Jim but he was worried that Jim's off-duty social life was causing him to lose the respect of other people in the office. Samuel heard that the parties included lots of alcohol and prostitutes. Also, it was rumoured that some illegal drug use was going on. Samuel was also concerned that Jim's activities might reflect negatively on UNHCR and the rest of the staff.

After much consideration, Samuel decided to talk to Jim. He reasoned that since he was older and more mature than Jim, and since he was a member of the local culture, Jim might be open to his advice. So he arranged for a private man-to-man talk.

When Jim heard Samuel's concerns, Jim laughed and said, "My motto is to work and play hard! I need to relieve the stress occasionally or I'd burn out or go crazy. Besides our parties are more than 45 kilometres from here and we don't invite anyone who might be offended". Samuel replied that local people are very traditional and conservative and that they worry about negative foreign influences on their young men and women. Jim said, "That's why I drive so far to have a good time". Samuel responded, "That is another problem. When you use your UNHCR vehicle to drive there, people know you work here". Jim shrugged and replied, "You know that I'm not the only one who uses our vehicles for unofficial purposes occasionally".

1. What are the issues here? (Name at least three)
2. What should Samuel do?
  - a. Let someone else with more authority deal with the problem. After all, he did the best he could to counsel Jim.
  - b. Talk to the head of the field office about his concerns.
  - c. Give a copy of the UNHCR Code of Conduct to Jim with relevant sections underlined.
  - d. Urge Jim to use public transportation to get to the parties.
  - e. Try to find and suggest other more culturally acceptable ways for Jim to relieve his stress.

## **Work Hard and Play Hard Notes for the Facilitator**

### **Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies**

The third paragraph of the Introduction to the Code of Conduct states that the Code "...is intended to serve as an illustrative guide for staff to make ethical decisions in their professional lives, and at times in their private lives...". Therefore, Jim's private activities are a legitimate subject of UNHCR concern.

The fifth Core Value states, "We will respect the cultures, customs and traditions of all peoples, and will strive to avoid behaving in ways that are not acceptable in a particular cultural context...". Jim's parties may create conflict in the local cultural environment.

Principle eight of the Commitment to UNHCR Code of Conduct states in part, "Refrain from any involvement in criminal or unethical activities...".

The Secretary-General's Bulletin-Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of October 2003, in Principle 8 Point 5, states that "...the exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex or sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour is prohibited. This includes prostitution".

Principle six of the Commitment to UNHCR Code of Conduct requires that all staff members "Safeguard and make responsible use of ...resources to which I have access by reason of my employment with UNHCR". This item certainly applies to the vehicle assigned to Jim.

The UN Charter, Article 101 paragraph 3

UN Rules 1.2 (q) "use property and assets for official purposes"

UN Rules 1.2 (b) "uphold highest standards"

Staff Administrative and Management Manual 1.2.33 "substance abuse"

### **Discussion**

As a peer of Jim's, Samuel has tried to counsel him. That was certainly admirable, rather than first going to Jim's supervisor. But at this point there is little more that Samuel can do. His best course of action would be answers one and two: to express his concerns to the head of the field office.

There are two main discussion items regarding this scenario. The first is the extent to which UNHCR as an organisation has the right to interfere in a staff member's personal life. It is true that given the stress of a field assignment, staff need a chance to "unwind". As facilitator, focus the discussion on the question of whether his supervisor should interfere with Jim's personal choices for stress relief.

The second major point of this case is in regard to the Secretary-General's bulletin of October 2003, in which the use of prostitutes by UNHCR staff is specifically forbidden. This is true even in those locales where prostitution is legal.

There are several other items worth discussing here:

- Jim's use of the vehicle for an activity is unofficial and likely to damage UNHCR's image
- Jim's possible involvement with illegal drugs
- What kind of help Jim needs and how he can get it
- The effect of the parties on UNHCR's image with the local community

### Possible further questions

- Are there occasions when personal use of official vehicles is allowed? When? What are the criteria and who makes the decision?
- Have you ever been in a field situation where staff members' personal conduct offended or risked offending the local population? Tell us about it without using names.
- To what extent do the very nature of the work and the working conditions in a duty station such as Jim's cause deep stress and therefore problematic behaviour?

### Where to go for further advice

The Staff Welfare Section could provide confidential advice to Jim. The Head of Office may want to consult the Ethics Office or even the Inspector General's Office for advice, as well as consulting Staff Welfare to ask whether they think Jim is in danger because of his behaviour.

#### Staff Welfare Section

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## Sex, Power and Refugees

Cyril is a driver who transports UNHCR staff between the refugee camp and the capital city. Since he often has to spend the night at the camp, he frequently passes time with the drivers employed by the different IPs responsible for various services at the camp. Now that he has gotten to know them and socialised with them, he has begun to hear some drivers boasting about their sexual exploits.

Adid, a former soldier, has been especially vocal about how he never has to go without sex. Last week he said that he was with a single mother refugee with two small children, even though she is only 17 years old herself. According to Adid, she has been more than happy to “accommodate” him in exchange for the shoes and clothes he brings for her and the children when he makes trips to the nearby market town.

Cyril has been very reluctant to criticise Adid or to even bring up the subject. Since Adid is not a UNHCR staff member Cyril feels that it is not really his business what the other driver does. Besides, Adid is a member of a dominant ethnic group that has a long history of conflict with Cyril’s people and he doesn’t want to risk the driver’s retaliation. In any case, he suspects that the driver would just ignore his advice and laugh at him. Nevertheless, he is disturbed by what is going on.

1. What advice will you give Cyril? He should:
  - a. Warn Adid that his behaviour is wrong, and that he could get into serious trouble if he continues doing it.
  - b. Describe the situation to his own supervisor.
  - c. Ignore the situation since he has no responsibility for the behaviour of a staff member of an Implementing Partner.
  - d. Write an anonymous letter to a high-ranking official of the Implementing Partner where Adid works.
  - e. Do you have another suggestion?
2. Is it really “exploitation” if the woman seems happy with the exchange? What does the woman’s age have to do with the case?

## Sex, Power, and Refugees

### Notes for the Facilitator

#### Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies

Principle seven of the Commitment to UNHCR Code of Conduct requires all staff to “Prevent, oppose and combat all exploitation and abuse of refugees and other persons of concern”. Furthermore, the staff member “will never engage in any exploitative relationships—sexual, emotional, financial or employment-related—with refugees or other persons of concern”.

The last paragraph of the Introduction to the Code states, “All UNHCR staff are responsible for encouraging, advocating and promoting the dissemination of the Code of Conduct ..” and for implementing, monitoring and enforcing its standards. It is important to note that all implementing partners of UNHCR will have signed the sub-agreement stating that “(3) Exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour is prohibited. This includes any exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries.(4) Sexual relationships between personnel working of Projects/Sub-projects funded by UNHCR, and beneficiaries of assistance undermine the credibility and integrity of the work of the UN, and UNHCR in particular, and are strongly discouraged since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics.”

The Code, based on the International Convention on Rights of the Child and the UNHCR Guidelines on the Protection and Care of Refugee Children, prohibits sexual relationships of staff members with persons under the age of 18 years.

In the *Secretary-General's Bulletin Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse* of October 2003, staff members are instructed in section 3.2 (e) that even when the perpetrator is not in the same UN agency or even if not in the UN system, “he or she must report such concerns via established reporting mechanisms.”

Staff Administrative and Management Manual 1.2.28-32 “sexual harassment defined”  
Staff Administrative and Management Manual 1.3.6 “sexual exploitation and abuse”  
UN Rules 101.2 (d) “sexual harassment”  
UN Regulations 10.2 “serious misconduct” and “sexual exploitation”

#### Discussion

The issues in this case are how to encourage all staff members to neither tolerate nor ignore sexual exploitation of refugees by anyone, and how to enable them to report such abuse without fear of intimidation or reprisal. While it is true that the UNHCR Code of Conduct does not apply to Implementing Partners, our commitment is to “encourage” them to adhere to its standards. It is especially important as the Code is launched that staff share it and open dialogue on its contents with Partners.

In the *Secretary-General's Bulletin Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse* of October 2003, staff members are told in section 3.2 (e)

that even when the perpetrator is not in the same UN agency or even if not in the UN system, “he or she must report such concerns via established reporting mechanisms.”

Suggestions one and two are the best. That is, Cyril should speak directly to Adid if he feels he can do so without retaliation. And he should describe the situation to his own supervisor, who is at least ethically bound to take action, such as by notifying the appropriate manager of the Partner. He should also report it to the SEA focal point in the office (see Secretary-General’s Bulletin *Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse* of October 2003).

It would be useful to have teams discuss and agree upon a mechanism in the office to channel such information if a similar case should occur. Otherwise, if the information is ignored the behaviour may become almost acceptable.

### Possible further questions

- What can UNHCR do, practically, to encourage Implementing Partners to uphold the Code of Conduct?
- How would your advice have been different if Adid were a UNHCR driver rather than a staff member of an Implementing Partner? Is it unrealistic to expect peers to report on each other when sexual abuse of refugees is involved?

### Where to go for further advice

Cyril may want to contact the Ethics Office for advice. Since he is legally required to report the abuse “through established mechanisms” he needs to find out just what those mechanisms are in his area. His local HR office might be able to tell him.

#### The Ethics Office

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## Ruritanian Marriage

Alexander is the UNHCR Representative in Ruritania. He employs an excellent young Ruritanian man as his interpreter (GL-4). He is intelligent, hardworking, honest, conscientious and such a valuable asset to the office that Alexander recently gave him an exceptionally high rating on his PAR.

At an all-staff meeting, the young man asked Alexander if he would be free to attend a social occasion on an upcoming Saturday. Alexander, perhaps unwisely, had confirmed in the presence of others that he would be delighted to accept an invitation on that day. The young man then proudly announced that the occasion was his marriage to his 17-year-old childhood sweetheart. (The legal age of consent in Ruritania is 16 years, and early marriage is a cultural norm for Ruritanian girls.)

Alexander looked at the tastefully embossed wedding invitation card the young man had just handed him and realised, to his horror, that the bride's father is the Chief Justice of the Ruritanian Supreme Court, and that her mother is the Editor-in-Chief of *The Ruritanian Times*. Since UNHCR works with both the justice system and the media, Alexander certainly does not want to complicate these relationships by giving offence to two key contacts.

Should he:

1. Attend the wedding ceremony? (And thereby risk that he is seen to be endorsing a marriage with someone under the age of 18, the standard used for UN purposes, even though it is legal in the local context.)
2. Propose to the interpreter that he wait until she has turned 18 so that it is not seen to conflict with UN standards and age limits with regard to children? (His service to date has been exemplary; he has committed no offence under Ruritanian Law; and he is protected under Ruritanian Employment Legislation.)



## **Ruritanian Marriage Notes for the Facilitator**

### **Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies**

The last part of Principle eight is undoubtedly one of the most often discussed in the Code of Conduct. In part, it states that “As UNHCR is committed to the highest standards of protection and care for children, I am aware that I am expected not to engage in sexual activities with any person under the age of 18”.

The Notes give further guidance, stating that this principle does not apply to staff who may be married to someone under 18 in accordance with local laws and customs.

In the best interests of the child, the UNHCR Code of Conduct prohibits sexual relationships of staff members with persons under the age of 18 years.

### **Discussion**

The purpose of the last paragraph in Principle eight is to raise awareness of the importance of avoiding abuse of those persons that international standards define as “children”. Yet, in many countries persons aged 16 or 17 years are considered adults and able to wed. UNHCR is also committed to respecting local laws and customs. Therefore, it is important to know and understand local laws and cultural practices.

The Representative in Ruritania faces a decision that requires diplomacy and careful thought rather than blindly following a list of do’s and don’ts. If this does not appear to be a forced marriage, he might well choose to attend the ceremony. Another option would be to discuss the applicable part of the Code with his interpreter (who has presumably signed it already) and explain that because of his position, Alexander would be uncomfortable attending the ceremony, but that he certainly will take no action against the employee and that he wishes them a long and happy married life.

### **Possible further questions**

- Is it realistic or appropriate to think that the Country Representative would be able to determine whether or not the 17-year-old bride was marrying of her own free will? What if it was her family’s decision, and that is the local practice?
- Do you see any difference between a staff member engaging “in sexual activities with any person under the age of 18” when married to the person versus not being married to the person?
- Would there be any difference if it were a 58-year-old man marrying a 17-year-old girl?
- Would there be any difference if it were a 20-year-old female staff member marrying a 17-year-old male?
- Could Alexander discreetly show respect for the couple by sending a gift or inviting them to dinner?

### **Where to go for further advice**

The Country Representative may want to contact the Ethics Office for advice if he is not sure of the approach to take in regard to attending the wedding.

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## The Office Romance

Burt was a 53-year-old international staff member in a small field office. He had been seen dating Suann, a local 21-year-old secretary he supervises. Ruby, a friend of hers who also worked in the office, thought Suann should be warned that she could get into trouble because this type of office romance violates the UNHCR Code of Conduct. She felt close enough to Suann to bring up the topic discretely without embarrassing her.

Suann's first reaction was defensive. She said indignantly, "We're just dating! And besides, you know that there have been other couples in the office and nothing happened to them". Ruby decided to be persistent for Suann's own good. She said, "You could get hurt and even lose your job. Besides, he's just using you. Look at your age difference". Suann replied, "He's been divorced for more than three years and is very lonely. This is not just an affair! We're in love and are seriously considering getting married". It was obvious that she was not open to Ruby's advice.

What should Ruby do?

- a. Ignore the matter.
- b. Continue to try to convince Suann to give up the relationship for the sake of her reputation and her job.
- c. Discretely let Burt know that she is aware of the relationship and does not approve.
- d. Report the matter to her supervisor, who is a peer of Burt's.
- e. Send an unsigned note to the head of the field office suggesting that there should be more training done on the policy about sexual relations between supervisors and staff members who report to them.
- f. Do you have any other ideas?

## Office Romance Notes for the Facilitator

### Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies

The Commitment to UNHCR Code of Conduct requires that staff members commit to the statement in Principle nine, “I recognise that there is an inherent conflict of interest and potential abuse of power in having sexual relations with staff under my supervision. Should I find myself in such a relationship, I will resolve this conflict of interest without delay”.

Also, the sixth paragraph in the Introduction to the Code of Conduct states, “All UNHCR staff... have a role in implementing, monitoring and enforcing its [Code of Conduct] standards”.

UN Staff Rules 101.2 (d) sexual harassment

UN Staff Regulations 10.2 sexual harassment and serious misconduct

### Discussion

The major point of the discussion should be that Burt, as Suann’s supervisor, is primarily responsible for upholding the policy. You, as facilitator, should focus on practical ways to enforce the policies regarding sexual relations between supervisors and their supervisees. What might Burt do, if he truly is interested in a serious relationship with Suann? (Suann might transfer to a job not in the reporting line to Burt.) Also, there should be discussion of how staff members may report misconduct without fear of retaliation or other negative repercussions. Sending anonymous notes is never appropriate or effective, and can contribute to rumour mongering.

The best answers are probably two and four. If Ruby decides to report the matter to the Head of Office, it should not be done anonymously as in option five.

### Possible further questions

- Are there different implications between a romantic relationship between office-mates and between a supervisor and a supervisee?
- Is the age difference between Suann and Burt relevant? What if it were the other way around, with Suann being the older one?
- Does it matter that Burt is the supervisor and Suann the supervisee? What if the situation were a female supervisor and male supervisee?
- What if the romantic relationship were between two men or two women?
- What are the issues if there is no romantic relationship, but a supervisor and supervisee who are very good friends?
- In this scenario, Suann was definitely a willing participant. What if she were dating Burt just because she was afraid of losing her job? What would you recommend to Ruby? What would you recommend to Suann?

### Where to go for further advice

This is an incident where Human Resources might be of assistance. Suann might suggest to Ruby that she ask HR about the relationship.

#### **Staff Welfare Section**

Confidential Fax: +41 22 739 7370  
Tel: +41 22 739 8001  
Mobile (emergency) +41 0)79 202 2417  
Email: [Suzic@unhcr.org](mailto:Suzic@unhcr.org)  
[Hqsw00@unhcr.org](mailto:Hqsw00@unhcr.org)

#### **Division of Human Resources Management**

HR Policy: Fax: + 41 22 739 7313  
Email: [hqpolicy@unhcr.org](mailto:hqpolicy@unhcr.org)

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## Implementing Partner's Religious Activities

Marlene was a programme officer who oversaw the administration of an Implementing Partner with a contract to distribute tents and plastic sheeting for temporary refugee shelter. It had come to her attention that Andrew, an employee of the IP, was leading a Christian Bible-study group in this Muslim host country. After some investigation, she learned that he was a representative from the IP's organisation at home and that he was not involved in the project covered by the contract with UNHCR.

Nevertheless, she felt that his religious activities could easily cause a public scandal in the local press and outrage on the part of the host government. Furthermore, she was worried that his actions would be linked to UNHCR and endanger staff members associated with the project if the local population were to react violently.

She had an informal meeting with Andrew to try to avoid such a problem. He readily admitted that he was leading the Bible-study group but insisted that mostly foreigners and local converts to Christianity attended it. He said that sometimes-interested local people also attended and that his faith would not allow him to turn them away. He claimed to be aware of the potential danger and promised to keep these Bible studies "very discrete". He concluded by saying that he was sure that Marlene, as a fellow Christian, would certainly understand and support his position. She left feeling very dissatisfied and wondering what to do next.

What should Marlene do?

1. Accept Andrew's assurances that he would keep the matter discrete but monitor the situation closely to spot any potential problems that might develop.
2. Insist that he stop the Bible studies immediately and threaten to send a formal complaint to his home office if he refuses to do so.
3. Speak with the UNHCR Country Representative in order to get a senior-level decision.
4. Arrange to observe one of the Bible studies herself in order to get a direct personal assessment of the situation.
5. Send Andrew the Code of Conduct with appropriate sections highlighted.
6. Do you have any other advice for her?

## Implementing Partner's Religious Activities Notes for the Facilitator

### Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies

The fifth Core Value clearly states, "We will respect the cultures, customs and traditions of all peoples and will strive to avoid behaving in ways that are not acceptable in a particular cultural context".

The last sentence in the Introduction to the Code of Conduct states, "...staff are also urged to encourage partners to adhere to these standards and to join UNHCR staff in upholding them".

Staff Administrative and Management Manual 1.21 "respect for all cultures"

### Discussion

The discussion should be on practical steps that can be taken to help ensure that the IP will, in fact, support the Code in this instance. There have been actual cases where the IP's religious activity caused a strong negative reaction in the community, much to the detriment of UNHCR's image.

You may also want to discuss whether it would be different if Andrew were a staff member of UNHCR rather than an implementing partner. Many UNHCR staff members are very active within their religious traditions. Does UNHCR ever have a right to interfere in a staff member's religious practice? What if the staff member were trying to convert others?

Note that there is a significant difference between practicing one's religion and proselytising (recruiting) for that religion.

Answer three is probably best. She should speak with the Representative, and if concerns still linger, she might call for confidential advice from Staff Welfare, the Ethics Office, or the Ombudsman.

UNHCR cannot control the behaviour of all IP staff members, particularly when they are not working directly on a UNHCR project. We can, however, seriously consider whether we want to contract with that particular IP in the future.

### Possible further questions

- Are you aware of any incidents where a UNHCR staff member or an employee of an Implementing Partner allowed their religious practices to result in their "behaving in ways not acceptable in a particular cultural context"?
- To what extent does a programme officer who is overseeing the administration of a contract with an IP have a duty or a right to question or interfere with the non-contractual activity of the partner?

### Where to go for further advice

Marlene may want to contact the Ethics Office for advice.

#### The Ethics Office

Tel:	+41 22 739 8957
	+41 22 739 8794
Fax:	+41 22 739 7381
Email:	<a href="mailto:ethicsoffice@unhcr.org">ethicsoffice@unhcr.org</a>

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## The Puppy

Patricia is nearing the end of her term of service as Programme Officer in a SE Asian country. Two weeks ago her house was broken into. Unhurt, but shaken by the event, she shared what had happened with friends at the office and, informally, with some of the locals with whom she deals regularly. In describing the burglary, she mentioned that it probably would not have occurred if she'd had a watchdog like her neighbours all do.

Today, only a month before she is due to leave for an assignment in a different part of the world, one of the local Implementing Partners with whom she has had a particularly cordial relationship brought by a German Shepherd puppy as a gift.

<p>What is your advice for Patricia? Should she accept the puppy? Why or why not?</p>
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## **The Puppy Notes for the Facilitator**

### **Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies**

Principle three, second paragraph applies: “In accordance with Staff Regulations and Rules, I will not accept any honour, decoration, favour, gift, remuneration, from any government; nor will I accept these from any other source external to the United Nations without prior authorisation....”. Nevertheless, the Staff Rules and Regulations, which are the legal basis for determining acceptable and unacceptable conduct, do allow receipt of very nominal or token gifts such as a certificate of appreciation.

UN Staff Regulations 1.2 (l) “gifts from a non-governmental source”

UN Staff Rules 1.2 (l) permission to accept gift from non-governmental source

UN Staff Rules 1.2 (i) accepting gift from a third party

UN Staff Rules 1.2 (k and l) accepting gifts of minor value

### **Discussion**

This is a true incident, with only minor changes. After the group discusses the scenario and offers their opinions about what Patricia should do, read aloud the words of the actual person involved and ask the group to respond.

*What did you do?*

“I kept the dog. At first it was a mystery who had brought it. My housekeeper simply said ‘a man’ had brought the puppy by for me. Eventually I discovered it was a gift from the head of an Implementing Partner who provided and delivered food packs to the refugees. I’d been dealing with the organisation, and him, for a couple of years. I realise that we are not supposed to accept gifts, but there were three reasons that I did in this case.

First, I was leaving the country soon and really had no influence over UNHCR’s continued relationship with the organisation.

Second, from the way he explained it, it was clear that the puppy was meant as a ‘goodbye gift’ from him personally, and that he was showing appreciation for our past relationship, not trying to influence a future one.

Third, it’s hard enough to return or give away an inanimate object; how do you return a dog?!

“I certainly did not hide the fact that I’d accepted the dog. Everyone at the office knew about it. In the past, when suppliers gave things to staff members, we gave the gifts to local charities. No charity would have been interested in receiving a puppy, however. Our family had the dog for some 11 years. The kids, especially, loved him dearly”.

*Would you have accepted the puppy if it had been given early in your term as a Programme Officer?*

“No, that would have not been appropriate. I’m not sure what I would have done with him, but I wouldn’t have been able to keep him”.

### **Possible further questions**

What if the ‘good-bye gift’ was:

- a very expensive, pedigreed dog?
- a box of chocolates?
- a \$100-briefcase?
- two tickets to a concert?
- a large bouquet of flowers?

What are the criteria that you are using to decide what is appropriate to accept?

### **Where to go for further advice**

Patricia may want to contact the Ethics Office for advice as to whether she should keep the puppy or not.

#### **Legal Affairs Section**

Fax: +41 22 739 7391  
 Tel: +41 22 739 7831  
 Email: [hqle00@unhcr.org](mailto:hqle00@unhcr.org)

#### **The Ethics Office**

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 Fax: +41 22 739 7381  
 Email: [ethicsoffice@unhcr.org](mailto:ethicsoffice@unhcr.org)

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## Off-duty Political Job

Solomon was a local clerk in a UNHCR branch office in the capital city. His international supervisor, Mary, considered him a good employee. Mary learned that one evening another staff member had seen Solomon distributing pamphlets for the ruling political party while wearing his UNHCR t-shirt. The supervisor knew that Solomon's uncle was a long-time member of the party and was now a candidate for public office.

The supervisor visited Solomon in the office and noticed that he had a calendar from the political party on his wall. When she asked Solomon about his off-duty political activities, Solomon said that it was merely a temporary campaign job his uncle had asked him to do, and that it did not conflict with his on-the-job performance. Besides, he insisted, it is his right as a citizen of the host country to be engaged in political activities. But the unspoken reality was that in the local culture it would be almost impossible for a nephew to say "no" to his uncle.

What should Mary do?

1. Explain the problem to Solomon and ask him to give up the off-duty job.
2. Let him continue the job but demand that he not wear anything that would identify him as a UNHCR employee.
3. Tell Solomon to remove the calendar from his office.
4. Send a letter to the uncle explaining why Solomon cannot be permitted to pass out pamphlets.
5. Defer the problem to the manager to whom Mary reports.
6. Do you have any other solutions?

## **Off-duty Political Job Notes for the Facilitator**

### **Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies**

In Principle three, all staff members commit themselves to “Perform my official duties and conduct my private affairs in a manner that avoids conflicts of interest, thereby preserving and enhancing public confidence in UNHCR”. This commitment includes not engaging in “any outside occupation or employment without prior authorisation” and not accepting “supplementary payments or subsidies from a government or any other source or participate in certain political activities”.

UN Staff Regulations 1.2 (o and p) outside employment and activities

UN Staff Regulations 1.2 (h) allowable political activity

UN Staff Rules 1.2 (o and p)

UN Staff Rules 101.2 (r and s) political activity

UN Staff Rules 1.2 (h) limits of political activity

Staff Administrative and Management Manual Core value 1.2.6 and 23 political activity conflicts

Staff Administrative and Management Manual 1.28 and 1.2.27 graphics, posters, pamphlets

### **Discussion**

The discussion should focus on avoiding the exploitation of UNHCR for partisan political advantage. Also, Solomon needs to understand the negative impact of his conflict of interest and to avoid it in the future. Having the Code of Conduct may actually be helpful to Solomon in his possible confrontation with his uncle. (The fact that there is a clear statement of UNHCR’s expectations, in writing, should help make the problem clear to his uncle.)

Answer one is preferable, asking Solomon to give up the political job, after explaining why it is against the Code of Conduct.

### **Possible further questions**

- Why was his supervisor concerned about Solomon wearing the UNHCR shirt?
- Is it an issue whether passing out the pamphlets was a paid job or was simply something Solomon was doing as a favour for his uncle?
- Does the supervisor have a right to require Solomon to remove the political calendar from the wall in his office? What about other personal items, such as pictures of his family?
- Should someone talk to Solomon's Uncle? If so, who?

### **Where to go for further advice**

The Legal Affairs Section may be able to provide advice to Solomon and/or his supervisor.

**Legal Affairs Section**

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Tel: +41 22 739 7831  
Email: [hgle00@unhcr.org](mailto:hgle00@unhcr.org)

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**The Inspector General's Office**

Confidential Fax +41 22 739 7380  
Tel Hotline: +41 22 739 8844  
Confidential email: [inspector@unhcr.org](mailto:inspector@unhcr.org)  
Intranet: Executive Office/Inspector General's  
Office  
Internet: [www.unhcr.org/contact](http://www.unhcr.org/contact)

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## “He/she” Staff Member

Phil, a Protection Officer, always dresses in bright colours. His walk is somewhat feminine, and he tends to use female hand gestures. Everyone in the office assumes that he is homosexual, but Phil has never confirmed it. Another staff member from Phil’s home country said that at home he would be called a ‘he/she’, and that his behaviour would be considered somewhat unusual but would be accepted.

However, homosexuality is forbidden by the local religion and not tolerated by the local people in the country where he is posted. In fact, those accused of being homosexual are shunned, verbally abused, and sometimes even subjected to physical violence.

Max, Phil’s supervisor, is a tolerant person, but he is concerned about Phil’s safety on the streets. He is also worried about the embarrassment it might cause UNHCR if Phil were publicly accused. Finally, the gossip in the office seems to be disrupting the efficiency of the staff. Max feels that he has to do something.

Max is considering several alternatives:

1. Talk to Phil privately and discuss with him local sensitivities as well as implications of personal and professional actions on either the operation or for Phil personally, including any issues of personal safety.
2. Attempt to have Phil transferred to a post where homosexuality is not an issue with the local population.
3. Talk to Phil’s co-workers and the office staff and explain that no UNHCR staff member is to be discriminated against or gossiped about.
4. Ignore the situation because addressing it would focus even more attention on Phil and violate his privacy.
5. What action do you recommend to Max?

## **“He/she” Staff Member Notes for the Facilitator**

### **Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies**

The fourth Core Value clearly states, “We will show respect for all persons equally without distinction whatsoever of...sexual orientation...or any other distinguishing feature”. Therefore, Phil’s actual sexual orientation is not an issue.

Remember, the introduction to the Code of Conduct states that it is intended to serve as an illustrative guide for staff to make ethical decisions in their professional lives “and at times in their private lives”.

Also, Principle nine in the Commitment to UNHCR Code of Conduct says “I will not engage in or tolerate any form of harassment in the workplace, including sexual harassment”.

However, the fifth Core Value also states, “We will respect the cultures, customs and traditions of all peoples, and will strive to avoid behaving in ways that are not acceptable in a particular cultural context”.

UN Charter Article 8 equality of male/female

UN Rules 1.2 (a) non-discrimination

### **Discussion**

It is critical that, as facilitator, you do not let the discussion provoke a debate on homosexuality per se. The issues are whether Phil’s behaviour is in harmony with the Code, whether the staff’s reaction to Phil is in harmony with the Code, and how Max can best meet his obligations as a supervisor.

Max, Phil’s supervisor, should meet with Phil and discuss with him any issues of impact on the operation, or for Phil personally. Whether or not he is homosexual is not an issue. Rather, Max needs to point out the specific visible behaviours that might cause Phil problems in the local culture, which would be true regardless of the type of behaviour. Offices should offer a local briefing and orientation for all newcomers to help situate them and to understand the context.

Max’s concern about “embarrassment for UNHCR” if Phil is publicly accused of homosexuality is his own personal projection and not UNHCR’s concern. One of our Core Values is respect for diversity. Therefore, it might be necessary for UNHCR to explain at some point what diversity means for the organisation, but in no sense is our respect for diversity embarrassing.

If Max is sure that there is office gossip about Phil, he needs to address it. One way would be to reinforce with staff UNHCR’s commitment to respect for diversity in general.

Answers one and three, together, are probably best.

### **Possible further questions**

- Are there any differences that you see as causing discrimination in our office?
- What about ethnicity? First language? Local versus international staff? Level? Job area or function? Age? Skin colour? Size? Marital status? Physical appearance?
- Have you ever felt discriminated against or gossiped about? What was it due to? How did it make you feel? Did it interfere with your job? How did you resolve it?

### **Where to go for further advice**

If Max, Phil's supervisor, has questions about what to say to Phil, he might contact the Ethics Office. The Ombudsman's office could help facilitate dialogue.

#### **Ombudsman's Office**

Confidential fax: +41 22 739 7340  
 Tel: +41 22 739 7770  
 Email: [Ombuds@unhcr.org](mailto:Ombuds@unhcr.org)  
 Intranet: Staff Resources/Ombudsman

#### **The Ethics Office**

Tel: +41 22 739 8957  
 +41 22 739 8794  
 Fax: +41 22 739 7381  
 Email: [ethicsoffice@unhcr.org](mailto:ethicsoffice@unhcr.org)



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## Hansen's Disease

Nadia noticed that Manu, one of the clerks she supervised, had seemed depressed for the last month. Usually he was one of the more cheerful and humorous staff members in the office. But lately he looked sad and was absent from work quite frequently. She decided to take him aside and try to find out what was bothering him. She invited him to join her at a nearby café. After some hesitation, he accepted.

She tried to converse with him in order to help him relax but he answered her questions with brief, unenthusiastic replies. So she got to the point and asked directly, "Manu what's the problem? You haven't been yourself lately". He looked embarrassed and anxious, but opened up after she expressed her concern again.

Manu said dejectedly that he had been diagnosed with Hansen's disease. It was not fatal, he assured her, but it was very serious and 'shameful'. Nadia tried to console him and said that he could count on her support. Immediately following their talk, she looked up Hansen's disease in a medical dictionary and found that it is the medical name for leprosy. She was shocked and greatly saddened. She had heard that leprosy could be kept from being contagious with modern medications, but she knew that others in the office would be afraid and would likely shun Manu if they found out.

What are Nadia's responsibilities to Manu and to the rest of her staff?  
What should she do?

1. Keep the matter strictly confidential and say nothing about it to anyone.
2. Discuss it with Manu's doctor to see if there is anything she can do to support him.
3. Plan a strategy for calming the fears of the other staff members if they eventually find out.
4. Recommend that Manu be placed on extended medical leave.
5. Share the information confidentially with her supervisor and ask for advice and guidance.
6. Do you have any other suggestions for Nadia?

## Hansen's Disease Notes for the Facilitator

### Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies

The third Core Value states, "We will respect the dignity and worth of every individual, will promote and practise understanding, respect, compassion and tolerance, and will demonstrate discretion and maintain confidentiality as required".

The Commitment to UNHCR Code of Conduct, in Principle four, requires that a staff member commit to "respect my colleagues' privacy". Principle six states in part, "I will... not divulge any confidential information about ...colleagues".

UN Rules 104.

UN Rules 106.2 (h) notification of supervisor of contagious disease

UN Rules 104.16 medical examination to show that a condition will not impair the health of others

### Discussion

Clearly Manu has a right to keep his medical condition completely confidential if he wishes. Your discussion with the group should focus on how Nadia can maintain Manu's privacy and how to deal effectively with the reactions of other staff members if they do inadvertently learn about his illness. Answers one and three are correct.

If Nadia was still uncomfortable with the situation, she could ask Manu if he would approve of her speaking about it with her supervisor (answer five).

### Possible further questions

- Have you or anyone else in our office ever been a victim of "leaked" confidential information? How do you think it happened? How could it have been avoided?
- What if Manu's disease had been something that was contagious? Would Nadia's responsibilities then be any different?
- What might Nadia do if she finds that staff members are gossiping about Manu, guessing that something is wrong even if they do not know exactly what disease he has?
- What other diseases or health conditions might you encounter of which staff may be fearful or may stigmatise others? (HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, etc.)

### Where to go for further advice

Nadia might contact Medical Services for information on Hansen's disease and advice. Staff Welfare might also be of service.

#### Medical Service, DHRM

Medical Support:

Fax: + 41 22 739 7334

Email: [hqms00@unhcr.org](mailto:hqms00@unhcr.org)  
[Baduraux@unhcr.org](mailto:Baduraux@unhcr.org)  
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#### Staff Welfare Section

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Intranet: Staff Resources/Staff Welfare

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## The Housekeeper

Marije had been recently assigned to a duty station in a developing country and found herself working long hours. Given her workload, she was finding it impossible to find time to shop, cook, and clean her apartment. Soon a young refugee woman approached her in the office, asking if she needed some household help. She mentioned that one of Marije's co-workers had referred her. The woman was young, seemed trustworthy and, more importantly, was willing to work. Marije told her that she could start next week.

The following day a local woman approached Marije on the street and asked her if she needed a housekeeper. Marije now faced a dilemma: She knew that the Code of Conduct encouraged staff not to hire refugees in order to avoid any possible exploitation. But, she was planning on paying a very fair wage. In any case, how could she now tell the refugee woman that she had changed her mind?

What advice do you have for Marije?

1. She should turn down the local woman and hire the refugee.
2. She should speak with her supervisor about the issue.
3. She should hire the local woman, and explain to the refugee that UNHCR does not generally approve of refugees working for staff.
4. Do you have another suggestion for Marije?

## **The Housekeeper Notes for the Facilitator**

### **Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies**

Principle seven states in part, “I will act responsibly when hiring or otherwise engaging refugees or other persons of concern for private services. I will report in writing on the nature and conditions of this employment to my supervisor”.

Local laws would apply. If the worker did not hold a legal work permit, it would violate local law, and that is in principle a breach of UN Regulations.

### **Discussion**

The rationale for not having refugees work for staff is to help ensure that refugees are not exploited in unfair relationships with UNHCR employers. Likewise, the appearance of exploitation can also have a negative effect on the UNHCR's mission. Also, there is the potential for underpaying, sexual abuse, and other types of exploitation. On the other hand, providing private services such as cooking, cleaning, childcare, and gardening are often among the only employment opportunities available to refugees—especially to women.

In some situations, virtually everyone available for employment is a refugee or returnee, but that does not seem to be the case here. Answer two is best. Marije needs to speak with her supervisor about the situation. It could be that many staff have refugee housekeepers in that location, and that Marije can write up a simple statement as described in Principle seven, for her supervisor to keep on file. The statement would include the nature and terms of employment she is offering (salary, time off, benefits, etc.).

Another issue is the age of the “young refugee”. Although in many countries it is common for girls as young as 10- or 12-years to serve as domestic help, we need to comply with the International Convention on the Rights of the Child and not hire anyone under the age of 18. Also, local labour law may have a ruling on the age of domestic workers.

### **Possible further questions**

- Have you ever employed a refugee? Were the terms of employment equivalent or better than what you would have paid a local for the same work? Were locals available?
- Have you ever seen an exploitative refugee/employer relationship? What do you think contributed to it?
- What types of employment, other than household help, lend themselves to possible exploitation of refugees? How can this be avoided?

### **Where to go for further advice**

Marije can probably resolve this issue with her direct supervisor. If she feels she needs further advice, she might want to ask the Ethics Office.

#### **The Ethics Office**

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## Contracts to the Family

Solon is the procurement focal point at a UNHCR Branch Office. The major programme activity of this office is the repair of housing destroyed by a recent civil war, for occupation by returnees. His brother-in-law is the managing director of a large construction company in the region. This company has performed well on several past UNHCR contracts that were awarded through competitive bidding. This construction was completed before Solon began to work at UNHCR. The Programme Unit has just instructed him to tender (ask for bids) for the repair of 500 houses. This is one of the largest contracts ever awarded by the office.

1. Should Solon invite his brother-in-law's company to bid?  
(If he does not, UNHCR may be forced to select a company that is more expensive or less qualified.)
2. How can he avoid at least the appearance of a conflict of interest?

## **Contracts to the Family Notes for the Facilitator**

### **Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies**

The last part of Principle three states, “I will avoid assisting private persons or companies in their undertakings with UNHCR where this might lead to actual or perceived preferential treatment. I will never participate in activities related to procurement of goods or services, or in human resource activities, where a conflict of interests may arise”.

On the other hand, Principle six states, “I will protect, manage and utilise UNHCR ...financial...resources efficiently and effectively”. The dilemma is finding a balance between these two Principles.

UN Staff Rules 101.2 (o and p) conflict of interest

UN Staff Rule 1.2 (g) use of office for private gain

Staff Administrative and Management Manual Ch 1, 1.2.7 and 19 and 21 private gain prohibited

### **Discussion**

The construction company may be one of the most competitive in the region, since it has won contracts in the past. Therefore, to exclude them from bidding might be against UNHCR’s financial interests. Nevertheless, other considerations also should be taken into account.

The relationship is not “improper” under U.N. regulations, because Solon is not actively associated with the management of the company and he does not have any financial interest in it. Nevertheless, there is high potential that he may be able to benefit indirectly if his brother-in-law gets the contract. And you can be sure that the competition will know about the relationship and will be suspicious that he is going to give his brother-in-law preferential treatment if he lets him bid. In addition, it may be very difficult for him to maintain impartiality and confidentiality when family is involved. Principle three in the UNHCR code directly addresses this situation.

Solon should speak with his supervisor and explain the situation. The supervisor may want the brother-in-law’s company to bid, and so will remove Solon from involvement with this particular tender. Another option would be for the supervisor to allow Solon to administer the tender but not be involved in the selection process. Or, the supervisor may decide that given Solon’s well-known role in purchasing contracts, it would be best not to invite the company to bid.

This situation is an example of where the literal “rules” approach may not be enough. Instead, the supervisor needs to look at the wider issue of UNHCR’s public perception and reputation.

### **Possible further questions**

- What if the contract had only been for the purchase of a small quantity of construction materials, say less than \$5,000. Would it be acceptable then for Solon to invite the company to bid?
- Would there be a problem if the managing director of the company were a long-time friend of Solon's but not a relative?
- Why is it essential to avoid even perceived preferential treatment?
- Have you ever experienced or heard of this type of incident happening? Tell us about it, without using names.

### **Where to go for further advice**

It is not Solon but his supervisor who might need advice. The Ethics Office provides advice on potential conflict of interest cases. He might contact them to ask what parameters should guide his decision regarding whether or not to allow Solon's relative's firm to bid.

#### **The Ethics Office**

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## Compassion or Something Else?

Jovan has been a field assistant for about a year, and is well respected both by his co-workers and by the refugees at the two camps where he divides his time. Because he too suffered as a refugee when he was a child, he is particularly compassionate toward the refugees he now serves. They are from a different ethnic group, but he can identify with their needs and occasional feelings of hopelessness.

In the course of his ordinary work, Jovan has established an especially good friendship with one extended refugee family. The family consists of a widowed mother of 28, her children aged four, seven and nine, the woman's elderly father and the father's sister. Jovan frequently brings sweets to the children and on a few occasions has brought clothing to some of the adults. When the youngest boy in the family had a birthday, Jovan brought him a small toy. When he has time, Jovan sometimes stops by their simple home for a bowl of soup and a visit.

Yesterday one of Jovan's favourite co-workers—with a worried look on his face—took Jovan aside. "You signed the Code of Conduct", he explained. "Don't you realise what your relationship with the Kavarski family looks like? People are assuming that you're getting more than just supper over there".

What advice will you give Jovan? He should:

1. Give up his relationship with the family since co-workers and perhaps other refugees may assume he has a sexual relationship with the widow.
2. Continue the relationship with the family, but be particularly circumspect, such as by ensuring there is always another adult present when he is with the widow.
3. Assure his friend that nothing is going on, and continue the relationship with the refugee family.
4. Continue the relationship, but avoid giving anything to the family members since that might look like he expects something in return.
5. Do you have another suggestion?



## **Compassion or Something Else? Notes for the Facilitator**

### **Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies**

Jovan's behaviour seems to exemplify Principle one, in which we commit to "seek to understand" and "meet with ... regularly" the refugees with whom we work

UN Staff Rules 1.2 (a) abuse of power and authority and respect for culture  
Staff Administrative and Management Manual 1.3.6 sexual exploitation

### **Discussion**

The Code of Conduct has raised the issue of other people's view of certain relationships. (Just as some men, after attending a workshop on sexual harassment become nervous about being seen even speaking with a female co-worker for fear it will be seen as harassment.) It is very possible that Jovan truly enjoys the refugee family and they him, and that nothing is going on beyond natural, positive interaction along with his feelings of identification with and compassion for the refugee family.

However, Jovan should be aware that there might be a perception of his showing favouritism toward that particular family, which might result in unforeseen pressure on them and criticism from other refugees. A perception of favouritism might also limit his effectiveness in working with the other refugees and persons of concern. Jovan needs to be guided by the objectives of the operation in furthering support to persons of concern, and to ensure his actions do not undermine these objectives.

Jovan's relationship with the widow needs to be forthright and open. He should definitely discuss with the widow the possibility of misinterpretation by others. It is possible that she too perceives the relationship differently, and is hoping for more (perhaps encouraged by her friends). If he is not interested in a romantic relationship, he needs to make it clear. He might want occasionally to bring along other friends and try not to be seen alone with the widow.

If he is eating at their home, it would be reasonable for him to provide something in return, but his gifts should not be elaborate or expensive.

The best response is probably a mixture of two and three: assure his friend that no violation of the Code is taking place, and continue the relationship, but be very careful that he does not provoke gossip.

### **Possible further questions**

- Have you ever made friends with a refugee family? Did it cause any problems either for you or for them?
- What should Jovan do if he eventually realises that he is falling in love with the young widow?
- What are some ways to meet Principle one's objective of encouraging interaction with and understanding of our persons of concern, and yet at the same time avoiding any perceptions of favouritism?

## Where to go for further advice

Jovan might consult the Ethics Office.

### **The Ethics Office**

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## Mysterious Vehicle Parts

Clara was a particularly conscientious local UNHCR staff member in the administrative section of a branch office. Two months ago she saw some 4X4 vehicle parts for sale in the marketplace. She was suspicious because the parts looked new and were for a vehicle seldom used in that country except by UNHCR. She immediately reported the incident to her supervisor, José. He thanked her for being so vigilant and assured her that he would “look into the matter right away”, but never mentioned it to her again.

Clara continued to see similar parts for sale from time to time. So she asked José about his investigation. He told her in an irritated tone of voice to not worry about it, that it was being taken care of. In frustration, she told the head of the accounting department about it. But he also dismissed her concern with the comment that it was probably surplus stock from another country. In any case, it was not a high priority for him given his workload.

Clara considered going to the head of the warehouse but was afraid that he would take it as an accusation of theft and be personally offended. She did not want to provoke retaliation, but she was growing very frustrated for being ignored. (She guessed it was because she was a woman.) She concluded that no one in the branch office would take her seriously.

Then Clara heard that a delegation from one of the large donor countries was coming. Since no one in the branch office seemed to be interested, she thought perhaps she should pass an anonymous note to the delegation. She was positive **that** would result in action.

What are the different issues here?

What should Clara do?

- a. Talk to the Country Representative.
- b. Pass the note to the donor delegation.
- c. Confront the head of the accounting and demand that he conduct an investigation.
- d. Write to the Inspector General's Office in Geneva.
- e. Do her own investigation by asking the person selling the parts where he got them
- f. Do something else? What?

## **Mysterious Vehicle Parts Notes for the Facilitator**

### **Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies**

UNHCR's fourth Core Value states, "We will show respect for all persons equally without distinction whatsoever of ...gender...or any other distinguishing feature".

And, Principle four states, "As a manager/supervisor I will be open to the views of all team members".

If the vehicle parts are stolen, then Principle six applies: "I will protect...UNHCR ...material resources efficiently and effectively, bearing in mind that these resources have been placed at UNHCR's disposal for the benefit of refugees and other persons of concern."

Also, the last paragraph of the Introduction to the Code states, "All UNHCR staff ....have a role in implementing, monitoring and enforcing its standards".

UN Staff Rules 1.2 (r) Staff must respond to reports of theft

UN Staff Regulations 1.2 (q and r) care of assets and reporting abuse and misuse

### **Discussion**

Clara's frustration is caused at least as much by her perception that, as a woman, she is being ignored as it is by her guess that UNHCR vehicle parts are being sold on the open market. Clara feels that her opinion is not being taken seriously, possibly because the subject is vehicle parts, which is not considered a woman's domain in the local culture. Your discussion should be also on the importance of interpersonal communications in the office, and gender differences in communication.

The other issue is whether UNHCR vehicle parts are being sold from the warehouse. It is not Clara's job to determine that, but to report her suspicion, so the only alternative that is appropriate is number one. She certainly should not pass an anonymous note to the visiting delegation. (See the Notes dealing with Principle six regarding the disclosure of sensitive information.) She needs to follow normal channels by reporting first to her supervisor, which she has done, and then by reporting to the Country Representative. Only if that does not result in an investigation should she contact the Inspector General's Office.

### **Possible further questions**

- Do you think that most UNHCR employees would pursue the issue, or would they simply shrug their shoulders and ignore their suspicions? Are whistle-blowers (employees who report problems) more commonly rewarded or punished in some way for that action in UNHCR?
- In our office would a report made by a man be likely to be taken more seriously than a report by a woman? What about a report by an international staff member versus a local staff member? A level G-3 versus a P-4? Someone who works in IT support versus someone who works in a warehouse? What are the implications of our answers to these questions?

## Where to go for further advice

If Clara feels she tried to be a whistle-blower and was ignored, she should consult the Ethics Office, which implements the whistle-blower protection policy. If she feels that theft is taking place and her supervisor and his supervisor are refusing to take it seriously (or are involved), she should report it to the Inspector General's Office.

### **The Inspector General's Office**

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Tel Hotline: +41 22 739 8844

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Intranet: Executive Office/Inspector  
General's Office

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### **The Ethics Office**

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## New Business

As supply officer in a Regional Office for several years, Peter has become very knowledgeable about import/export requirements and the bureaucratic intricacies of trade in the region. In addition, his personal relationships within the government have been particularly useful on occasions when UNHCR had humanitarian goods delayed in Customs.

Peter's wife, Kathy, has been interested in oriental carpets for many years and has a large collection herself. Recently she has begun purchasing a few carpets at the local bazaar and selling them to friends and relatives in her home country. She found a strong demand, and has decided to open a carpet exporting business. Peter's experience and knowledge are turning out to be very useful to her. Peter has been careful, however, not to become directly involved with his wife's business. He limits himself just to offering general business suggestions.

Is Peter doing anything wrong?

## **New Business Notes for the Facilitator**

### **Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies**

Principle six commits employees to “Safeguard and make responsible use of the information and resources to which I have access by reason of my employment with UNHCR”.

Principle two says, “I will do my utmost to ensure that the conduct of members of my household does not reflect unfavourably on the integrity of UNHCR”.

UN Staff Rules, Regulation 101.2 (o and p) Conflict of interest

UN Staff Regulations 1.2 (m) Conflict of interest

Staff Administrative and Management Manual 1.2.7, 19, and 21 Private gain prohibited

### **Discussion**

The relationship between UNHCR and the spouse of a staff member is somewhat ambiguous. On one hand, the spouse is not an employee and therefore not under the same rules and requirements as the staff member. However, the families of international staff, and of all staff members in small offices, are often highly visible in the local community. The behaviour of the spouse and children can reflect either positively or negatively on UNHCR.

If Kathy has legal permission to work in the country and is following all the local regulations regarding establishment of a business, there is no problem. If Peter maintains his hands-off approach to Kathy's business and limits himself to general business suggestions, then he too is well within his rights.

Peter needs to pay particular attention, however, not to use his influence with the local officials in any way to gain special privileges for his wife. To do so would contradict Principle three of the Commitment to the Code of Conduct.

It would also be a good idea for Peter to discuss his wife's activities with his supervisor, as a way of being totally transparent and reducing any appearance of a conflict of interest. This is an incident where one must look beyond the “rules” to consider the broader principle of public perception.

### **Possible further questions**

- What similar problems have you observed with family members of UNHCR employees overseas? How were they resolved?
- Are there any limits on the actions of spouses and children of UNHCR employees? What? When?
- What about teenage children of international hire staff members, do they ever cause problems at the post? How, and what have you seen done to resolve the problems?
- Would there be an issue if it were Peter, and not his wife, who was engaging in a small business in his free time?

### **Where to go for further advice**

Peter may want to contact the Legal Affairs Section for an opinion on whether his wife's business in any way jeopardizes his own status.

**Legal Affairs Section**

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Tel: +41 22 739 7831

Email: [hqle00@unhcr.org](mailto:hqle00@unhcr.org)



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## Use of Assets

Sylvan and Hava, co-workers at the Branch Office, were sitting together over lunch at an outdoor café when a Toyota Land Cruiser with the UNHCR logo on the side went by. “Isn’t that the Rep’s car?” asked Hava. Sylvan rolled her eyes and gave a disgusted look. “Yes, and that’s his wife in back”, she replied. “I think she makes more use of that car and driver than he does, what with hauling the kids to school everyday and shopping in the bazaar at least twice a week, plus all her social calls. I handle his travel expenses, and his use of the car is always called ‘official’”.

“Hmmm”, said Hava thoughtfully. “And when I asked to use a UNHCR vehicle to go see my daughter in the emergency room at the hospital, I was turned down. It seems pretty unfair. I wonder if there’s anything we can do?”

If you were Sylvan or Hava, what could you do?
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## **Use of Assets Notes for the Facilitator**

### **Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies**

The UNHCR Code of Conduct, in Principle six, requires staff members at all levels to “...protect, manage and utilise UNHCR human, financial and material resources efficiently and effectively, bearing in mind that these resources have been placed at UNHCR’s disposal for the benefit of refugees and other persons of concern”.

Also, paragraph six of the Introduction to the Code of Conduct states that all UNHCR staff “have a role in implementing, monitoring and enforcing [the Code’s] standards”.

UN Staff Rules, Regulation 1.2 (g and r) Use of property for official use only; must report abuse

Staff Administrative and Management Manual 1.2.25 Use and care of assets

### **Discussion**

While the representative can assign use of a vehicle in certain circumstances, it is doubtful that shopping and taking the children to school could be considered such. The representative’s car is meant for his or her use in carrying out official functions, and there are specific provisions concerning any personal use as well which needs to be properly documented.

The best thing is to advise the Representative, either directly or perhaps through the administrative focal point, of the current and relevant policy. If Hava and Sylvan do not want to confront the representative directly, provision exists for filing a report with the Inspector General’s office. It should consist of a detailed description, signed by one or more staff members. Principles of confidentiality will apply.

### **Possible further questions**

- What instances of questionable behaviour have you seen in high-ranking UNHCR officials? (Don’t use names.) Was anything done about it?
- Do posts vary in their policies (official and/or unofficial) about private use of UNHCR vehicles?
- Is it realistic to expect that staff members will believe in the promise of whistleblower protection if they make a report against their superior?
- Besides vehicles, what other UNHCR assets are sometimes inappropriately “borrowed” by staff for their personal use?
- In our office or work group, how do we want to deal with misuse of assets (situations that would not merit writing to the Office of the Inspector General)?

### **Where to go for further advice**

Sylvan and Halva could ask the Ethics Office for advice, especially if they are considering being whistleblowers themselves. The Inspector General’s Office is where a formal complaint should be filed if they decide to do that.

**The Inspector General's Office**

Confidential Fax +41 22 739 7380

Tel Hotline: +41 22 739 8844

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[inspector@unhcr.org](mailto:inspector@unhcr.org)

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**The Ethics Office**

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## The Translator

Margaret was an international staff member in a UNHCR field office, tasked with gathering registration data from the refugees. However, in order to collect this information she needed someone to be her translator and there were no funds budgeted for the purpose. Very few refugees spoke any English. However, one refugee woman, Kista, who was a former schoolteacher, did have a bit of English speaking ability. Margaret immediately convinced her to volunteer to be her translator for the interviews she had to conduct. She turned out to be very helpful and soon became Margaret's friend.

Since Margaret was not able to pay Kista for her services, she looked for other ways to show her appreciation. Margaret often invited her to her living quarters to socialize and share meals. Occasionally, Margaret would give her a small gift such as a magazine or some article of clothing. She also took her out for lunch sometimes. After Kista had helped her with a particularly long, hard period of work, Margaret bought a CD player and a few disks of music for Kista. She was thrilled with the gift and proudly played the music for her friends and family members in the camp.

Is there anything wrong with Margaret's gift giving? Which of the answers below do you think are correct?

1. There is nothing wrong with showing gratitude for unpaid voluntary services from refugees that are helping the mission of UNHCR.
2. Meals and small gifts are fine, but the CD player was too much.
3. Margaret should not have invited Kista for meals in her living quarters.
4. Margaret should have tried to find several translators to use rather than relying only on Kista.
5. Do you have any other suggestions for Margaret?

## **The Translator Notes for the Facilitator**

### **Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies**

Principle three of The Commitment to UNHCR Code of Conduct requires that all staff members commit to the statement, “I will avoid assisting private persons...in their undertakings with UNHCR where this might lead to actual or perceived preferential treatment”.

Principle seven states in part, “I will never request any service or favour from refugees or other persons of concern in return for protection or assistance”.

UN Staff Rules 1.01.2 (i) Offering gifts to third parties in exchange for performance of official act

### **Discussion**

A larger issue here is why Kista is not being paid for her services. Nevertheless, refugees do sometimes volunteer to work alongside UNHCR staff.

The key topic for discussion is how to help Margaret avoid the perception by other refugees that she is showing favouritism to Kista—that the refugee’s service is being rewarded with extraordinary “protection or assistance”. Also, Margaret must be careful to not exploit Kista’s willingness to help her. In the third paragraph of the first Principle, with regard to refugees we are encouraged to “meet with them regularly, in order to fully understand their experiences and needs”. However, this needs to be done in a professional and appropriate manner. The potential difficulties lie in the possibilities of exploitation or perceived favouritism.

The best answer is probably number four. Finding several people to help translate would have helped avoid a perception of favouritism. She should also check and fully apply the policy with regard to use of refugees as interpreters, including payment. She should avoid entirely promoting a culture of gift-giving as a means of engagement ... either receiving or giving of gifts.

### **Possible further questions**

- Have you ever made close friends with a refugee family or individual? Did it involve gifts or services? Did that cause problems with the other refugees?
- Are you aware of any situations where such a friendship did cause problems?
- Was Margaret’s inviting of Kista to her living quarters an issue? What if her translator had been a male refugee? What about Margaret’s visiting at Kista’s home?
- Are situations like this common in the field, or are refugees usually paid for their services? What are the pros and cons of payment for services versus using volunteers? Does it vary by the type of work (unloading supplies versus translation, for example)?

### **Where to go for further advice**

Margaret should definitely talk this over with her supervisor. If she still feels she needs advice, she might contact the Ethics Office.

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## The Family Antique

Jean-Claude was a senior international UNHCR staff member who liked to collect works of art and antiques during his travels and his postings in other countries. He always visited local markets and dealers to find high quality items to add to his collection. When visiting one of the refugee camps in his region with the local governor, Jean-Claude mentioned his hobby. The governor brought Jean-Claude to the hut of an old man in the camp who had a few beautiful carvings brought across the border as family treasures when he left his country 30 years before. Jean-Claude asked the old man about the treasures and enjoyed a pleasant afternoon of drinking tea and listening to the stories of the old man and his family in their homeland.

Now, the governor and Jean-Claude had worked closely together for the past two years, and his culture is one that believes strongly in giving gifts to mark special occasions. The governor, knowing that Jean-Claude was soon due to leave the country for his next post, had taken note of Jean-Claude's interest. Several weeks later, at Jean-Claude's good-bye party, the governor handed Jean-Claude a present. It was one of the old man's most beautiful carvings, and Jean-Claude calculated it must be worth quite a bit. He was thrilled, and recalled with pleasure the old man's nostalgia the afternoon spent they had spent with the governor drinking tea in his hut.

1. What are the ethical issues regarding Jean-Claude's going-away present?
2. Are there any cultural issues regarding Jean-Claude's present? Explain.
3. What would you say to Jean-Claude?
  - Congratulate him on the lovely present
  - Say nothing – it's his business, not yours
  - Mention that he should check with the government antiquities authorities before taking the carving out of the country
4. What is your advice for Jean-Claude?

## **The Family Antique Notes for the Facilitator**

### **Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies**

The second paragraph of the Introduction to the Code of Conduct states, “It is recognised that UNHCR’s work often puts its staff in positions of power in relation to its beneficiaries. Staff have an obligation not to abuse this power”.

Principle seven of The Commitment to UNHCR Code of Conduct requires that staff members “...never engage in any exploitative relationships-sexual, emotional or financial, or employment related, with refugees or other persons of concern”. The Notes to Principle seven point out that we have to keep in mind that a financial relationship with a beneficiary, even one that we see as consensual and non-exploitative, could be perceived by others in the humanitarian community and the public at large as an abuse of power and trust or as a conflict of interest.

The Notes to Principle three of the Code tells us we must avoid accepting any gift from the government. It goes on to say, “When this is unavoidable, however, we must be extremely careful not to accept gifts of value which might constitute a real or apparent attempt to influence our decisions or actions.”

### **Discussion**

There are both ethical and cultural issues at play in this situation. The carving is more than a token gift, which makes it ethically unacceptable for Jean-Claude to keep. Yet, because gift giving is so central to the culture, he would offend the governor by not accepting it. His best strategy would be to graciously acknowledge the gift, and report it immediately to his Representative, who would decide what should be done with it.

The governor has a great power advantage over the older refugee and his family, and it is very important that he not be allowed to exploit them commercially. Entering into a financial transaction with a refugee can be questionable, even if it seems to be completely consensual. Jean-Claude does not know whether the carving was obtained in an exploitive way.

A second issue is that if Jean-Claude takes any of his purchased art out of the country, he will need to be sure that the government allows it, or he will be engaged in illegal activity. (Anything considered an ‘antiquity’ is usually controlled.)

### **Possible further questions**

- Have you ever purchased anything from a refugee? What? Was it a bargain?
- If the governor paid the price the refugee asked, could the transaction be considered exploitation? Why or why not?
- What other kinds of financial transactions between staff and persons of concern have you seen? Were they legitimate or not? Can you think of any examples of financial transactions between staff and persons of concern that are legitimate?

### **Where to go for further advice**

Jean Claude is most likely to get sound guidance locally, from his Representative. If he still wonders whether there is an issue, he might consult the Ethics Office.

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## Night Time Emergency

Manfred was known for his caring nature. But a month of 18-hour days in charge of UNHCR emergency operations in a refugee camp that was surrounded by rebel-controlled countryside had left him exhausted. At about 10:00 p.m. Manfred heard a knock on the door. It was the distraught roommate of his assistant, Jana, saying that Jana had a high fever and intense pain in her abdomen.

The camp doctor was already at Jana's quarters when Manfred arrived. "Appendicitis", he said grimly. "It could get suddenly worse. She should be hospitalised immediately". He went on to say that during his examination, Jana had told him that she'd had a mild appendicitis attack several months ago. She'd not mentioned it during the physical exam prior to emergency deployment for fear that she'd be declared ineligible.

This emergency gave Manfred an ethical dilemma. The hospital was more than two hours away. Although the Government was in control of most roads during the daytime, at night the rebels often ambushed vehicles and killed travellers or captured them for ransom. The U.N. had established a policy of not allowing any vehicles on the roads at night.

Manfred cared greatly for Jana, and ordered his very reluctant driver to make the trip to the hospital. Jana's roommate volunteered to accompany them. Three hours later, Manfred got a radio call. Jana was in surgery, but so was the driver. They had been attacked just an hour outside of camp. They got away, but the driver had taken a bullet in his arm and the car was seriously damaged.

1. Do you agree with Manfred's decision?
2. What were the factors that contributed to his making that decision?
3. Two people are in surgery. To what extent does the blame for that lie with Manfred and to what extent with the victims?

## Night Time Emergency Notes for the Facilitator

### Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies

Principle five states, “I will always consider the safety of staff in operational decisions”. And, “As a manager/supervisor, I will endeavour to ensure that the health and well being of staff and their families are not subjected to undue risk”. Furthermore, “I will remain aware of and comply with all instructions designed to protect my health, welfare and safety”.

Also, “If I have doubts regarding an instruction that I consider to threaten my safety or the safety of other persons, I will bring this immediately to the attention of my supervisor”.

UN Staff Regulations 1.2 (c) Safety and security for staff carrying out responsibilities

### Discussion

As you discuss the group’s response to what they would do in the situation, you can focus on the following issues:

- Did he make the right decision? Why or why not? Who might he have consulted with prior to making the decision?
- The basic cause of the crisis was that Jana did not resolve a pending health problem before accepting her emergency deployment. In addition, she was negligent in not reporting the problem during her pre-assignment physical examination for medical clearance. Her negligence put her own life as well as the lives of her roommate and the driver in danger.
- Manfred’s decision was certainly strongly influenced by his relationship with Jana, his assistant. He probably would have been more objective about the risk had it been a staff member he only knew slightly. The other important factor affecting his decision-making was his exhaustion. Assessing risk, especially life and death risk, requires a clear mind, which Manfred could not have had after a month with very little sleep.
- The driver had a right to refuse to risk his own life on the road. But realistically, it seems unreasonable to expect that a driver would refuse to obey a direct order except under the most unusual circumstances.

### Possible further questions

- Suppose the threat had been somewhat less, such as there having been a few ambushes in the past but no one hurt before. Should he have sent Jana to the hospital then?
- Given that the U.N. had ordered no night time use of the road, is there insurance coverage on the car? Medical coverage on the driver and passengers?

- Is Manfred responsible for Jana's health? Is Jana? Both of them? [Discuss the role of personal responsibility of staff for their own health but also the manager's responsibility for the well being of those supervised.]
- Do you know of any situations in which a UNHCR officer had to make a similar decision in which the safety/welfare of some staff members had to be weighed against the safety/welfare of others? Tell us about it.

### **Where to go for further advice**

In many ways this was a management judgment call rather than an ethical one that Manfred had to make. He should have called the designated security officials both in UNHCR and under the UN umbrella in the country, as well as the Representative, and likely the UN medical officer on duty. The HQs security staff are always on call and he could have called HQs as well to inform them, at least if he could not get through to anyone locally.

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## Returnees' Relocation Meeting

Nick, a field officer, was on an emergency deployment to a country where small transit centres were being used to initially host returnees. Returnees, however, were staying for months in these temporary centres. His immediate objective was to persuade as many returnees as possible to relocate to another camp in order to relieve the seriously overcrowded conditions at the transit camp. The new camp was closer to their home communities, but it was located in an isolated area with no towns nearby. The need to move the returnees was becoming urgent because a large influx of new returnees was anticipated soon and the transit centres would be needed.

Nick set up a public meeting to which all the long-staying returnees in the transit camp were invited. He asked Rudolph, a local staff member, to help him run the meeting. A very large group of people attended and the discussion was active and loud. Nearly everyone who spoke was opposed to moving to the new camp. Nick noticed that only men were speaking despite the fact that about a third of the people gathered were women.

Finally, an older woman spoke in favour of moving to the new camp because she wanted to be closer to her home and relatives. The men immediately shouted her down and told her to be quiet. The men next to her began pushing her to the sidelines.

Rudolph tried to restore order, but the meeting had become an unmanageable protest against the move. Nick finally had to end the meeting and tell the people to leave.

What would you do if you were in Nick's situation?

1. Mandate that a certain number of returnees must relocate to the new camp.
2. Call small meetings for the men and women separately.
3. Organise a series of small mixed group meetings.
4. Conduct a survey of a representative sample of the people in the camp to learn their feelings.
5. Send a team to the new camp to take photographs and report on the benefits of moving to it. Then use this information promote the idea of relocating there.
6. Do you have any other suggestions?

## Returnees' Relocation Meeting Notes for the Facilitator

### Relevant parts of the Code and other regulations and policies

The second Core Value states, "We are committed to the fullest possible participation of refugees and other persons of concern—as individuals, families and communities—in decisions that affect their lives". The fourth Core Value states in part, "We will show respect for all persons equally without distinction whatsoever of ...gender". And, "We will strive to remove all barriers to equality".

The first Principle of the Commitment commands staff to "Treat all refugees and other persons of concern fairly, and with respect and dignity".

Staff Administrative and Management Manual, Values 1.21 Equal rights for men and women

UN Charter Preamble, paragraph 2 Equal rights for men and women

UN Charter Article 1.3 "without distinction of sex"

UN Charter Article 55 (c) "without distinction"

### Discussion

After you have focused the group's response on what they would do in the situation, you can discuss the following issues:

- Nick was right in his desire to invite the returnees to participate in this major decision affecting their lives. Also, the idea of promoting the relocation is a good one. But to be effective, a strategy should have been developed well in advance of any meeting.
- Nick should have had a female national colleague with him, and ensured she was actively involved in planning a strategy for getting community buy-in for the move to the new camp.
- The decision to begin with a large, mixed-gender gathering probably was not wise. It would have been more effective to meet first in smaller groups with the men and women separately.
- Nick needs to find out why the men oppose the relocation and be ready with counter arguments. And he needs to find out whether the one older woman who spoke was representative of the other women in the transit camp. In addition, he needs to better understand the unwritten cultural rules that discourage women from speaking at mixed public gatherings and then find culturally acceptable ways to ensure that their views are discovered and incorporated in decisions.

Answers two, four, and five are all acceptable if they are **parts of a strategy**. The key is to develop a plan, and the strategy must include a way to get input from the women.

## Possible further questions

- We say that we're committed to our persons of concern having the fullest possible participation in the decisions that affect their lives, yet often we find it difficult to structure that participation in a meaningful way. How many ways can you think of in which refugees can be involved in this type of decision? What have you seen, experienced, or heard of?
- How can the women's input best be obtained considering the cultural values of the people?
- What should Nick do if it turns out that a very large percentage of the women want to relocate and a very large percentage of the men do not?
- Do you know of any situations in which a UNHCR officer had to develop a strategy for getting input particularly from female persons of concern? What did he/she do?

## Where to go for further advice

The Representative is the first person whom Nick should consult for advice. The Representative might then consult the Ethics Office, and they would make additional referrals to Operations and to Protection/policy sections to facilitate understanding of how to further participatory engagement in refugee contexts.

### The Ethics Office

Tel:	+41 22 739 8957
	+41 22 739 8794
Fax:	+41 22 739 7381
Email:	<a href="mailto:ethicsoffice@unhcr.org">ethicsoffice@unhcr.org</a>

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## Annex B: Resources and References

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# Resources and References

This annex provides extensive additional information that can be used to increase your own knowledge as a Code of Conduct focal point or facilitator or that can be used to look up answers to questions.

Materials are provided in three forms:

- Essential documents that are included in the hard copy Manual
- Documents not found in the hard copy Manual, but easily accessed in the electronic Manual via hyperlink
- References to materials not currently available, usually because they are still in draft form, about which you can request information from the Ethics Office

To make it easier to locate what you need, the materials are grouped by general topic.

Document formats are marked as follows:

- .pdf = Portable Document File (Adobe Acrobat Reader is needed to open)
- .ppt = PowerPoint slides (PowerPoint is needed to open)
- .xls = Excel spreadsheet (Excel is needed to open)
- .doc = MS Word document (Word is needed to open)

Note: Any title written in **blue** is the actual file name, which can be immediately accessed by hyperlink simply by clicking on it. The document's full name is in black *italics*.

Title	Format	Form
<b>KEY DOCUMENTS</b>		
<b>Code of Conduct</b> <i>Code of Conduct and Explanatory Notes 2004. Including the S-G's Bulletin-special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, 2003; 46 pages</i>	.doc	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/Code_of_Conduct_2004.doc">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/Code_of_Conduct_2004.doc</a>
<b>Grievance booklet</b> <i>Addressing grievances in UNHCR: Where to go for help, 2009; 15 pages</i>	.doc	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/Grievance_booklet.doc">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/Grievance_booklet.doc</a>
<b>Where to go for help</b> <i>Easy Reference: Where to go for further information, advice, or help with a work-related problem, 2009; one</i>	.doc	Hard copy hyperlink



page		
<a href="#">CoC Guidelines for Managers</a> <i>Code of Conduct Guidelines for Managers</i> , January 2004; 22 pages.	.pdf	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/CoC_Guidelines_for_Managers.pdf">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/CoC_Guidelines_for_Managers.pdf</a>
<a href="#">UN Charter</a> <i>Charter of the United Nations</i> ; 26 pages	.pdf	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/UN_Charter.pdf">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/UN_Charter.pdf</a>
<a href="#">UN Staff Rules and Regs</a> <i>STAFF RULES: Staff Regulations of the United Nations and Staff Rules 100.1 to 112.8, SECRETARY-GENERAL'S BULLETIN January 2002, updated 2008; Includes applicable Charter clauses, Staff Regulations, and appendices and annexes; 120 pages</i>	.doc	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/UN_Staff_Rules_and_Regs.doc">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/UN_Staff_Rules_and_Regs.doc</a>
<a href="#">UN Staff Regulations</a> <i>Staff Regulations</i> , 1 January 2008; 21 pages	.pdf	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/UN_Staff_Regulations.pdf">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/UN_Staff_Regulations.pdf</a>
<a href="#">UN Disciplinary Measures and Procedures</a> <i>Revised Disciplinary Measures and Procedures</i> Revised in August 1991; 7 pages	.pdf	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/UN_Disciplinary_Measures_and_Procedures.pdf">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/UN_Disciplinary_Measures_and_Procedures.pdf</a>
<a href="#">Standards of conduct Int'l Civil Servants</a> <i>Standards of conduct for the international civil service</i> , January 2002; 10 pages	.pdf	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/Standards_of_conduct_Int'l_Civil_Servants.pdf">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/Standards_of_conduct_Int'l_Civil_Servants.pdf</a>
United Nations Ethics Statement	.doc	Reference only: information available on request from the Ethics Office
<a href="#">SAMM Chapter 1</a> <i>UNHCR Staff Administration and</i>	.doc	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/SAMM_Chapter_1.doc">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/SAMM_Chapter_1.doc</a>

Management Manual, Chapter 1		
SAMM Chapter 10 UNHCR Staff Administration and Management Manual, Chapter 10	.doc	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/SAMM_Chapter_10.doc">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/SAMM_Chapter_10.doc</a>
SAMM Chapter 11 UNHCR Staff Administration and Management Manual, Chapter 11	.doc	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/SAMM_Chapter_11.doc">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/SAMM_Chapter_11.doc</a>

## DOCUMENTS ON SPECIFIC THEMES—FOR ANNUAL REFRESHER SESSIONS

This section will be added to each year along with guidance on the annual theme.

### Books:

- *Alternative Dispute Resolution in the Workplace - Concepts and Techniques for Human Resources Executives and their Counsel* - E. Patrick McDermott, Arthur Eliot Berkeley - Publisher, Quorum Books, 1996
- *Workplace Dispute Resolution Direction for the 21st Century* Sandra F. Gleason, Ed. Michigan University Press, 1997
- *Everyone Can Win: How to Resolve Conflict* Cornelius, H & Faure, S. (1995), East Roseville, NSW: Simon Schuster
- *The Magic of Conflict* Crum, T. (1999), Pocket Books
- *Getting to Yes* Fisher, R. & Ury, W. (1997), Arrow
- *Emotional Intelligence* Goleman, D. (1996) Bloomsbury
- *Working with Emotional Intelligence* Goleman, D. (1999) Bloomsbury
- *Human Relationship Skills* Nelson-Jones, R. (1986), London Cassell

### Web sites:

<http://www.studygs.net/conflex.htm>  
<http://www.viu.ca/conflict>  
<http://www.culture-at-work.com>

## POWERPOINT SLIDE SETS FOR USE IN SESSIONS

Guiding Principles-Kanchanaburi For use with the activity: Code of	.ppt	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/Guiding_principles.ppt">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/Guiding_principles.ppt</a>
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Conduct Review— PowerPoint; 16 slides		
<a href="#">Kenya '07 Refresher</a> General, 25 slides, some Swahili	.ppt	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/Kenya_07_Refresher.ppt">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/Kenya_07_Refresher.ppt</a>
<a href="#">Kenya '08- Preventing sexual exploitation and abuse</a> Outlines full-day session given to Urban Refugee Protection Network in 2008; 53 slides	.ppt	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/Kenya_08_Preventing_Sex_Exploit_abuse.ppt">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/Kenya_08_Preventing_Sex_Exploit_abuse.ppt</a>
<a href="#">Long general CoC session</a> <i>UNHCR Code of Conduct</i> ; Nov.2008 session on CoC given to Save the Children; 36 slides	.ppt	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/Long_general_presentation.ppt">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/Long_general_presentation.ppt</a>

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE		
<a href="#">S-G Bulletin-special measures protection</a> <i>SECRETARY- GENERAL'S BULLETIN Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, SGB/2003/13 9 October 2003</i>	.doc	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/S-G's_Bulletin_-_special_measures_protection.doc">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/S-G's_Bulletin_-_special_measures_protection.doc</a>
<a href="#">Statement of Commitment</a> <i>Statement of Commitment on Eliminating Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN and Non-UN Personnel;</i> 5 pages.	.pdf	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/statement_of_Commitment.pdf">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/statement_of_Commitment.pdf</a>
<a href="#">Implementation Guidelines for the Field on ST/SGB/2003/13</a> <i>Implementation Guidelines for the</i>	.pdf	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/Implementation_Guidelines_Field.pdf">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/Implementation_Guidelines_Field.pdf</a>

<i>Field on the Secretary-General's Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13); 2 pages</i>		
<b>ToRs Focal Points SEA</b> <i>Terms of reference for in-country focal points for sexual exploitation and abuse; Produced by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse; 3 pages</i>	.pdf	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/TORs_Focal_Points_SEA.pdf">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/TORs_Focal_Points_SEA.pdf</a>
<b>ToR for Networks</b> <i>Terms of Reference for in-country Network on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse; 2 pages</i>	.pdf	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/TORs_for_Networks.pdf">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/TORs_for_Networks.pdf</a>
<b>SEA Facilitator guide</b> <i>Guide for facilitated presentation of the film "to serve with pride" on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations and NGO personnel; 34 pages</i>	.doc	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/SEA_facilitator_guide.doc">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/SEA_facilitator_guide.doc</a>
<b>SEA FAQs</b> <i>Frequently asked questions on sexual exploitation and abuse by UN personnel and partners; Coordinates with video "To Serve with Pride"</i>	doc	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/SEA_FAQs.doc">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/SEA_FAQs.doc</a>
<b>Victim Assistance Policy</b> <i>62/214. United Nations Comprehensive</i>	.pdf	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/Victim_Assistance_Policy.pdf">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/Victim_Assistance_Policy.pdf</a>

<i>Strategy on Assistance and Support to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by United Nations Staff and Related Personnel; 4 pages</i>		
<a href="#">Appendix 2</a> <i>Appendix 2 of the UNHCR Sub-agreements: Standards of Conduct - Ensuring Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse; 2 pages.</i>	.doc	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/Appendix_2.doc">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/Appendix_2.doc</a>

<b>FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE, OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT, PROCUREMENT, AND RECEIVING GIFTS</b>		
<a href="#">Brochure on financial disclosure</a> From UNHCR Ethics Office, 2009	.pdf	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/Brochure_Financial_Disclosure.pdf">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/Brochure_Financial_Disclosure.pdf</a>
<a href="#">UN Bulletin on FinanDisclosure</a> <i>Secretary-General's bulletin: Financial disclosure and declaration of interest statements, April 2006; 5 pages</i>	.pdf	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/UN_Bulletin_on_FinanDisclos.pdf">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/UN_Bulletin_on_FinanDisclos.pdf</a>
Guidelines and procedures on gifts	.doc	Reference only: information available on request from the Ethics Office
Information on the authorization of outside activities	.doc	Reference only: information available on request from the Ethics Office
<a href="#">Procurement standards</a> <i>Supply Management Service Policy and Standard on Conduct of Staff, April 2006; 3 pages</i>	.pdf	<a href="http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/Procurement_standards.pdf">http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/staffresources/humanresources/coc/manual/Procurement_standards.pdf</a>



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## Annex C: Annual Theme for 2010

### Dealing with Workplace Conflict

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**Note that instructions for conducting particular activities are in *italics*.**

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# Annex C: Annual Theme for 2010

## Dealing with Workplace Conflict

The annual Refresher session provides all staff with an opportunity to review and enhance their understanding of the Code of Conduct and to identify potential ethical dilemmas so that appropriate steps can be taken to prevent and to resolve problems. Each year the Refresher session focuses on a particular theme. In 2010 the refresher sessions will address “dealing with workplace conflict (WpC).”

### Objectives

The objectives for the 2010 Refresher session on the Code of Conduct are for all staff members to be able to:

1. Apply the Code of conduct more consistently to their everyday decision-making both as individual staff members and within teams/operations.
2. Know where to go for further guidance or support when one is either a victim of or a witness to misconduct.
3. And for the annual theme, understand the dynamics of conflicts in workplace to be able to identify:
  - their possible sources / causes
  - the type of managerial and / or individual actions that could be taken to address them from both their prevention and resolution dimensions.
4. The overall objective is to help UNHCR staff to know how to address conflicts at their early stage to avoid that they fester, escalate and poison the work environment.
5. Disagreement and conflict is normal in any workplace. As diverse human beings with different roles, goals and personal perspectives we will necessarily have differences of opinion. The goal is to resolve these differences in positive ways – in ways that:

- respect the other person,
- consider multiple perspectives and possibilities, and
- value the legitimate needs of everyone involved.

Such a process can result in solutions or decisions that are creative and innovative. Decision-making and problem-solving is enhanced when differences are used to generate and expand the possible avenues for action.

When instead disagreements worsen and become unmanaged conflict there are often negative results for an employee. People may feel threatened – this feeling of threat can be physical but is often emotional, such as a threat to goals, status, job security, values or preferred outcome. Ineffectively managed conflict can impact the parties in many ways, such as:

- loss of sleep,
- anxiety,
- lowered morale
- decreased job satisfaction.

It can, on occasion, also take on a life of its own, drawing in other people or departments.

If the conflict grows - people, departments and the institution - all pay the price of deteriorating work performance. In very extreme circumstances it can lead to workplace violence. (Source: VIU Vancouver Island University, <http://www.viu.ca/conflict/deal.asp>)

Indeed, when conflicts are successfully handled there is a positive effect on work relationships: productivity, free expression of ideas and helpful initiatives find a fertile land to grow to the benefit of UNHCR's people of concern.

## Relationship of the theme to the Code of Conduct

WPC focuses on staff attitudes and behaviours in the UNHCR office rather than directly on refugees and other people of concern. Consequently, WPC focuses on a limited set of selected ethical questions as compared more generally with the Code of Conduct.

Therefore, it is important not to limit ourselves to *only* considering ethical behaviour in the office. We must also use the Code of Conduct as a wider lens through which to view our behaviour toward those we serve. This concept of course underlies the WPC as well, as our concerns and conduct within the office and agency will directly impact our behaviour and capacity in relation to persons of concern. All offices are invited to ensure that they *address* WPC issues in relation to their refugee work. All offices should consider as relevant within their operation the full dimension of ethical issues impacting conduct internally as well as in relation to others—including persons of concern, interlocutors, implementing partners, media and others in the full spectrum of UNHCR's work.

### Pre-session office preparation and post-session follow-up

It is important for the Representative, Chief of Mission or Director to take steps before the Refresher session to lay the groundwork. All managers should ensure that there have been discussions about the theme prior to the Refresher session, that everyone has had an opportunity to get involved in the pre-session preparations before it starts.

The senior manager in an office might highlight the theme and approach of the upcoming Refresher session in a monthly staff meeting. That would be an appropriate time to announce the focal point and/or session facilitator(s), to encourage input from everyone, and to distribute any pertinent materials. Consultations with the local Staff Association, the results of focus group discussions/participatory assessments, feedback from field offices, and other types of conversations will be important *before* the refresher session to ensure that the general concerns underlying the theme are actively identified and a platform for constructive consultation is established.

Just as adequate pre-session preparation will help keep the Refresher from being merely a one-off event, so will follow-up later. Working groups could be formed before or during the Refresher session to examine challenges identified. These groups must be given time to work and have a scheduled opportunity to feed back their conclusions to the rest of the office after a few weeks. Depending on the solutions they identify, more than one follow-up session may be necessary to test the changes of behaviour identified.

Posters and other visual reminders will help keep staff aware of the theme for the remainder of the year. Frequent mention in staff meetings will also help. Likewise, it will be important to include the theme as a topic in consultations with stakeholders, including Implementing Partners, refugees, interpreters, and government officials as appropriate. Focused discussion with staff associations can greatly assist in ensuring that issues are identified and proposals are outlined for practical, focused and constructive follow up.

Note that the session, as well as the discussions both before and after, should ensure sufficiently detailed analysis of the concerns surrounding Workplace Conflict. At the same time, it must be noted that the CoC Annual Refresher Session is not an appropriate forum for debating alleged current misconduct in the office, for mobbing or insinuation, or for targeting behaviour and conduct of one individual as opposed to another within the operation. The objective is to promote a clear understanding of the strengths, good practices and aspirations for appropriate conduct within UNHCR, as related to WpC and to identify effective, practical and realistic ways in which a given office can aspire to improve working relations and create a healthy environment.

With reference to the Code of Conduct, it should be noted again that all staff should remain cognizant of the fact that the best means for improving the conduct of others is to set the bar high through their own example. Staff must also recall that misconduct not only fails to meet the standards required of UN personnel, it undermines and thwarts UNHCR's ability to ensure the best possible support for persons of concern. Misconduct therefore blocks our ability to perform our mandate.

Offices are all invited to identify, and to share with the Ethics Office for purposes of broader dissemination, examples of good practices. Every day in operations around the globe, staff are demonstrating their commitment to these values and principles including in extreme and challenging contexts. Often we share too little information on these examples of excellence, but this is what delivery of UNHCR mandate depends upon. Facilitators are invited to ensure some examples of excellence in service within the context of WpC prevention / resolution are shared with the Ethics Office.

For more ideas on “keeping the Code alive” refer to [Section IV Integrating the code into everyday practice](#).

### Creating the Refresher agenda

General information on creating Code of Conduct session agendas can be found in [Section III Refresher sessions](#). The information that follows pertains specifically to creating the agenda for the 2010 Refresher session on the theme “Dealing with Workplace Conflict”.

As the facilitator or focal point responsible for the Refresher, you should begin by meeting with the senior manager in your office—the Representative, Chief of Mission, or Director. The senior manager will need to play a leadership role in promoting constructive dialogue and in facilitating active follow up, so consultation is essential. Discussions should also take place with staff associations and other key stakeholders within the operation, and staff generally will likely want to have an opportunity for consultation. The purpose of these meetings will be to:

- Decide on session content: the focus, emphases, and major issues to be addressed within the general parameters of the annual theme and session objectives, in light of any actual specific needs of your office. You need to know what are considered the most pertinent issues about WPC, where the emphasis will best be placed, what the expectations are, and how the session can most constructively be managed.
- Set session length—usually a half or full day.
- Determine dates and locations for the sessions.
- Establish groupings—who is to attend which session.



If you will have a number of participants who have not completed an introductory orientation to the Code of Conduct, you may be able to group these people separately and include more introductory material in their session.

- Define how and when participants are to be notified of the session they are to attend—usually via communication from the senior manager.
- Identify the pre-session groundwork that is to be laid by the senior manager.
- Receive authorization, if necessary, for any session-related expenses such as photocopying, purchase of supplies, and refreshments that are to be provided.

Once you have all the necessary information from these meetings, you can begin to design the agenda. Start with the information you gained from the planning meeting with senior staff and staff representatives, in which you identified the most pertinent issues

and any specific needs for your office. Then proceed to brainstorming possible activities that will help participants of the session(s) meet those objectives.

### Example

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During the meeting, the Representative in your host country agreed on the stated objectives for the session but wants you to place particular emphasis on “mobbing”, because there were a few cases in the office last year. She / He hopes the discussion in the Refresher session will shed some light on how to address the issue and identify some recommendations for improving the situation.

So, you make a note to include in the agenda discussions of a case study focused on “mobbing”. You will request volunteers for a special task force to look at the item about which the Representative is particularly concerned. You will also discuss as necessary with staff representatives to seek their input.

---

Your brainstorming of possible activities to include must be aimed specifically at helping session participants achieve each of the objectives. Don't let yourself be tempted by “fun to do” optional exercises that might be peripheral to the objectives of the session. At the point of brainstorming, don't be concerned with the timing of individual activities. We have included in this section of the Manual several ideas to get you started. Feel free to adapt these activities to the needs of your particular office, or to create new ones that fit.

The next step is to select the most appropriate of the activities you have identified, given your priorities and the amount of time you have for the session. This is the point at which you carefully consider the duration of each activity. In selecting what to include, remember to:

- Start with a more general activity (such as a review of the Code) and move to the more specific (such as application to particular situations).
- Mix more passive activities (watching a PowerPoint presentation, a video, or listening to a presentation) with more active exercises (small group discussions, individual or group-based tasks).
- Provide a break of fifteen minutes or more about every two hours.
- Allow seven hours for a full day session and 3.5 hours for a half-day session.
- Schedule start, end, lunch, and break times according to local custom.

### Sample agendas

These agendas are not provided for you to merely adopt as-is. Instead, consider them examples of how to make the necessary decisions in designing your own session agenda. Be sure you incorporate the theme, and have some review of the Code of Conduct sessions relating to workplace issues. Note that activities described in detail in this section of the Manual are written in *italics* in the agendas.

### Half-day sessions

#### Sample agenda

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Time</b>
Introduction: objectives of the session, agenda, ground rules		15 minutes
<i>Code of Conduct Review: Power Point</i>		45 minutes
<i>Where to go for help</i>		45 minutes
Break		15 minutes
<i>Identifying possible sources / causes of WpC</i>	Whole Group Method	30 minutes
Brainstorming on our strengths to solve / prevent WpC		15 minutes
<i>Identifying solutions</i> (prevention / resolution)	Whole Group Method	30 minutes
Summary by the facilitator (check-list / tips on prevent / solve WpC)		5 minutes
Evaluation		10 minutes

## Full-day sessions

### Sample agenda

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Time</b>
Introduction: objectives of the session, agenda, ground rules		15 minutes
<i>Code of Conduct Review: PowerPoint</i>		30 minutes
<i>Where to go for help—alternative version</i>		30 minutes
Break		15 minutes
<i>Celebrating Our Ethical Strengths</i> (general)	Small group method	1 hour
<i>Identifying possible sources / causes of WpC</i>		1 hour
Lunch		1 hour
Brainstorming on our strengths to solve / prevent WpC	Small group method	1 hour
Break		15 minutes
<i>Identifying solutions</i> (prevention / resolution)	Small group method	1 hour
<i>Ball Toss Wrap-up</i> (check-list / tips on prevent / solve WpC)		10 minutes
Evaluation		5 minutes

## Activities for the 2010 Refresher Sessions on the theme: Dealing with workplace conflicts

Note that the activities in this section are grouped by objectives. You will probably want to begin the session with an activity from the first section, which is aimed at accomplishing the first objective of helping participants be able to “Apply the Code of conduct more consistently to their everyday decision-making both as individual staff members and within teams/operations”.

You will follow, then, with activities focused on the objectives of the annual theme, and will finish the session with one of the wrap-up activities. This is true whether you are designing a half or full-day Refresher session. This general flow should be the same in both cases, while the number of activities that you include and their duration will vary according to the amount of time available.

### **Objective one: Code of Conduct review**

The first objective is for participants to be able to “Apply the Code of Conduct more consistently to their everyday decision-making both as individual staff members and within teams/operations”. In order to do this, staff need to have internalised the Code, so that it becomes a lens through which they view their everyday behaviour—both as individuals and as team members.

All Refresher sessions should begin with a Code of Conduct review activity of some sort that reminds participants of why the Code exists, what it contains, and what the Code implies for ethical decision-making. We should not assume that a single session each year is sufficient for all staff members to be able to integrate the Code of Conduct fully into their lives.

### ***Code of Conduct review: PowerPoint***

**Objective:** To review the content of the Core Values and Guiding Principles of the Code of Conduct

**Time:** From 30 to 45 minutes, depending on how much elaboration you provide and discussion you encourage. There are 15 slides.

**Number of participants:** Any size group. You may want to use a large group for this activity and then break into smaller groups for follow-up activities.

**Preparation:** While the slides might be used ‘as is’, it is highly preferable for you to customize them to your own location—at a minimum the title slide.

**Materials:** Projector, screen, copies of the Code of Conduct for participant reference. The PowerPoint slides recommended for this activity are found in the Resource section of this Manual or via this hyperlink: [Guiding Principles-Kanchanaburi](#).

### **Procedure**

Note that the text in *italics* is a suggestion of what you might say in your own words.

#### **1. Introduction to the Activity**

*While everyone has attended an orientation to the Code of Conduct, it may be helpful to review it before we talk about*

*specific applications.*

- *Who remembers when the Code was developed?*
- *What's the difference between the guidance provide by the CoC and the UN Staff Regulations and Rules, and the UNHCR Staff Administrative and Management Manual?*
- *The CoC has two parts to it; do you remember what they are?*

## 2. Slides

Go through the slides, elaborating briefly on each. Most are self-explanatory. It would be very helpful for you to have a volunteer from the audience read each value or guiding principle from a copy of the CoC before you show the slide dealing with it.

Below are notes on a few slides where you may want to make additional comments:

Slide 3: Blanks are left in the presentation to be filled in. Ask participants to volunteer the missing words. Be sure to involve everyone.

Slide 4: Ask for examples of fair and unfair treatment of refugees.

Slide 5: *What does it mean that “[The ultimate victims of public disputes between humanitarian agencies are often the beneficiaries](#)”? Can you think of an example?*

Slide 7: *How would you say our office rates on this value of creating a harmonious workplace?*

Slide 12: *This says sexual abuse must be reported via ‘established mechanisms’. What are the established mechanisms in our office for doing so?*

Slide 13: *Who can think of some kinds of personal conduct this might be referring to? What are some examples?*

Slide 14: *What kinds of ‘difficulties’ are being referred to?*

## Conclusion

*Are there any questions at this point about the **content** or **meaning** of the CoC?*



This next exercise is quite active and takes only about half an hour. It should be used only with groups who have already had a good orientation to the Code of Conduct, even if it was some time ago. If you are doing a full-day session, you might precede this activity with the PowerPoint presentation described above. In a half-day session with CoC-experienced participants, you may use this alone as an introductory activity.

### **Code of Conduct review: *Make it brief!***

**Objective:** To review the content of the Code of Conduct in a participatory, energetic way

**Time:** From 25 to 30 minutes: 2 minutes to introduce, 10 minutes to prepare in pairs and, for delivery, a minute per Value or Principle

**Number of participants:** Any size group

**Preparation:** Cut one copy of the CoC into slips with one Value or one Guiding Principle on each slip of paper.

**Materials:** Copies of the *Code of Conduct and Explanatory Notes June 2004* for each individual or pair; also, one copy of the code cut into slips as described above.

### **Procedure**

Note that the text in *italics* is a suggestion of what you might say in your own words.

#### **1. Introduction to the Activity**

*The Code can seem complicated, with all the words in the Explanatory Notes. But really, the ideas are quite simple. One way to be sure that you really understand the CoC is to see if you can summarize its meaning very briefly. In this exercise, each pair will be assigned one Value or Guiding Principle to explain in their own words, with no notes, in less than one minute.* [If you have more clauses than pairs, some pairs may need to volunteer to do more than one.]

#### **2. Preparation of pairs**

Pass out one (or more if necessary) of the slips to each pair. Tell them they will have only 8 minutes to prepare their summary (if necessary, you may actually give them 10). They should refer to the *Code of Conduct and Explanatory Notes* document, decide together on what the key elements are, and then practice delivering their summary(ies) without notes. Either one of the pair can present, or both of them can do it together.

3. **Delivery by pairs** Start with the Values, in order, and go on to the Principles, calling on each pair to deliver their summary. Move quickly from one to the next, with no discussion or elaboration other than perhaps a word of praise.
4. **Conclusion** *Great job! When we state complicated ideas in simple language, especially in our own words, we tend to remember them much better.*

Use of case studies that are carefully chosen for their relevance to the particular audience also can be an excellent way to help participants achieve the first objective of applying the Code of Conduct to their everyday decision-making. In a full-day session there may be time to discuss a few cases before moving on to objective two. You should look at the table that provides information on each case: [Information on the Cases](#). Identify those that address situations that seem appropriate to your location, read them through carefully, and choose a few of the most appropriate. Use either the large group or small group methodology for handling case studies as described in [Section VI. Activities for sessions on the Code of Conduct](#).

Other introductory activities to address the first objective also can be found in Section VI: Activities for sessions on the Code of Conduct. Consider using [Put Together the Puzzle](#) or [The Alphabet Game](#), both found in that section of this Manual.



It is not recommended that you use **The Quiz** as an opening activity, although it is listed as an optional activity in Section VI. People often have uncomfortable associations with testing, and you would not want to *begin* a session with something that might cause them stress.

### **Objective two: Where to go for further guidance**

The second objective is for staff members to be able to “Know where to go for further guidance or support when one is either a victim of or a witness to misconduct”. Participants need information on how and where they can receive advice if they are faced with an ethical dilemma in their professional lives. They should be aware of who is available locally to provide confidential advice and support, and what offices exist at headquarters to provide guidance if they witness misconduct or are a victim of it.

In a short session, you may have to simply pass out the handout [Easy Reference: Where to go for further information, advice, or help with a work-related problem](#) and walk through it with the group, answering questions (time: about 15 minutes). This handout is found after the next set of activity instructions.

NOTE: All offices will be required to report on whether they provided a copy of this document to each participant at a minimum.

If time allows, we recommend the following activity:

### ***Where to go for advice and help***

**Objective:** To ensure that all participants know how and where they can obtain support and guidance in regard to ethical decision-making or if they are the victim of harassment or discrimination on the job.

**Timing:** 45 minutes to an hour

**Participants:** The whole group, any size

**Preparation:** Go through the questions and mark the ones that seem most important for you to ask. (Don't try to use them all!) Be sure that you know the answers to all the questions: **both local and HQ** resources. This will require you to do some homework before the session.

**Materials:** The handout [\*Easy Reference: Where to go for further information, advice, or help with a work-related problem\*](#), is found immediately following these instructions.

### **Procedure**

Note that the text in *italics* is a suggestion of what you might say in your own words.

#### **1. Introduction**

*UNHCR is a large organization, and even those members who have been with us for a long time are not always sure just what the procedure is for reporting misconduct, for getting support and advice if you're the victim of misconduct, or where to get guidance if you're faced with an ethical dilemma yourself. The purpose of this activity is to ensure you know where to get the help you need for such situations.*

#### **2. Questions and responses**

Ask the group the following questions and put their responses on the board. If no one knows an answer, you should provide it and write it on the board. (At this point participants don't have the handout yet.) Encourage questions, especially for clarification, and discussion.

*Where could you go locally and at HQ to get help or*

*advice in the following situations?*

- Your supervisor refused to even consider hiring an otherwise qualified woman who applied as a clerk because she was hearing impaired.
- A staff member frequently makes disparaging remarks about the sexual orientation of a colleague.
- Your supervisor is abusive toward you verbally and in behaviour.
- You think a colleague in another section is getting a kickback from a supplier, but you're not sure.
- You heard two drivers talking about their sexual exploits in a refugee camp after dropping off the staff members they'd brought there.
- You feel bad about the fact that the refugee women don't seem to be consulted on important decisions, even though the men regularly are.
- The two staff in your office of a certain race are never invited to socialize with colleagues and, while treated politely, they are obviously not accepted by everyone.
- Your supervisor put a driver in danger by ordering him to take a dangerous route that you know has been declared out of bounds. The driver didn't have the nerve to complain for fear of losing his job.
- A colleague bought a painting from a refugee at a ridiculously low price. You're worried she took advantage of the refugee's desperate need for money.
- You visit the home of a colleague who works in the warehouse and notice he has a UNHCR aircon unit in his apartment, which is against regulations.
- You and your supervisor are definitely falling in love, although you've not yet acted on your feelings.
- A colleague accused you of taking home office supplies. You suspect he's just trying to cover up for missing supplies that he took.
- You are on the verge of burnout from work overload, compounded by serious family problems. You've lost 6 kilos, can't sleep, and have begun smoking again after having quit.
- You suspect that the colleague you share an office with may be HIV+ based on some things he's said and his frequent absences. You wonder if you are at risk of infection.
- The large first aid kit is missing from the vehicle you always use, and the driver says it's been gone for a couple of weeks.
- Three women in Finance are always gossiping about

others and have excluded a recently hired staff member in a hurtful way. She is distraught and has asked you what she should do.

- You've seen a local staff member from your office distributing political propaganda on the streets, although not during work hours.
- The local business that provides office supplies knows you work for UNHCR and gave you **a calendar** when you came into the store.
- The local business that provides office supplies knows you work for UNHCR and gave you **an expensive calculator** when you came into the store.
- You make jewellery as a hobby and have been thinking about selling it. You wonder if that would be allowed under UNHCR rules.
- One of your international colleagues came to work drunk today. You think he is mixing drugs.

## Handout

Pass out the handout *Easy Reference: Where to go for further information, advice, or help with a work-related problem*, and summarize the types of situations for which each office might be of assistance. Stress that it is preferable to deal with problems locally first, if possible. Encourage participants to keep the handout for easy reference.

## Alternative version of the activity

- Photocopy the situations and cut them into slips, one question per paper. Place them in a box or bag.
- Have participants take turns: draw a situation, read it aloud, and then answer the question of where they would go for help or guidance.
- Ask the whole group if they agree or would provide an alternative answer.
- Put answers on the board.
- Have the next participant draw a question.
- Summarise and distribute the handout as described earlier.

## Easy Reference: Where to go for further information, advice, or help with a work-related problem

Office	Type of Service	Contact Information	
Inspector-General's Office (Investigations)	Formal: Investigation of allegations of misconduct.	Confidential Fax: Telephone Hotline: Email:	+41 22 739 7380 +41 22 739 8844 <a href="mailto:inspector@unhcr.org">inspector@unhcr.org</a>
Ombudsman's Office	Informal: Guidance, advice and support for informal resolution of conflicts and workplace problems; confidential advice on where to go for help (Includes Respectful Workplace Advisors).	Confidential Fax: Telephone: Email:	+41 22 739 7340 +41 22 739 7770 <a href="mailto:Ombuds@unhcr.org">Ombuds@unhcr.org</a>
Ethics Office	Informal: Confidential advice on standards of conduct/application of Code of Conduct Formal: Management of protection from retaliation for reporting misconduct/cooperating with authorities. Management of Annual Financial Disclosure Programme	Confidential Fax: Telephone: Email:	+41 22 739 7381 +41 22 739 8838 or 8794 <a href="mailto:hgethics@unhcr.org">hgethics@unhcr.org</a>
Legal Affairs Section	Formal: Legal advice to staff on privileges and immunities, status as international civil servants (particularly regarding issues related to residency and taxation) as well as human resource matters.	Fax: Telephone: Email:	+41 22 739 7391 +41 22 739 7831 <a href="mailto:HQLE00@unhcr.org">HQLE00@unhcr.org</a>
Staff Welfare	Informal: Guidance and psychological support, including support for individual staff during formal grievance processes; and team interventions for affected teams (includes Peer Support Personnel).	Confidential Fax: Telephone: Email:	+41 22 739 7370 +41 22 739 8001 <a href="mailto:HQSW00@unhcr.org">HQSW00@unhcr.org</a>
Staff Council	Informal: Advice and referrals for informal resolution of grievances; advice on staff representation and staff-management relations.	Fax: Telephone: Email:	+41 22 739 7364 +41 22 739 8591 <a href="mailto:HQSR00@unhcr.org">HQSR00@unhcr.org</a>
Division of Human Resources Management	Informal: Advice on HR matters, including entitlements, contracts, administrative reviews (PAPS); Performance appraisal issues (PMU); Medical concerns (MS); HR Policy matters (Policy Section) Formal: Recourses and appeals of decisions on postings, contracts, non-granting of promotion (APPB/APPCC Secretariats) Performance Appraisal Rebuttals (PMU)	APPB Email: APPCC Email: HR Policy Email: Medical Service: PAPS Email: PMU Email:	<a href="mailto:hqpe90@unhcr.org">hqpe90@unhcr.org</a> <a href="mailto:hqpe91@unhcr.org">hqpe91@unhcr.org</a> <a href="mailto:hqpolicy@unhcr.org">hqpolicy@unhcr.org</a> <a href="mailto:hqms00@unhcr.org">hqms00@unhcr.org</a> <a href="mailto:hqpe00@unhcr.org">hqpe00@unhcr.org</a> <a href="mailto:hqpu00@unhcr.org">hqpu00@unhcr.org</a>

For more complete information, refer to *Addressing Grievances in UNHCR: Where to go for help*, 2009

### Objective three: Dealing with conflict in the workplace

The third objective of the 2010 Refresher session is:

- Understanding the dynamics of conflicts in workplace to be able to identify:
  - their possible sources / causes
  - the type of managerial and / or individual actions that could be taken to address them;
- Helping UNHCR staff to know how to address conflicts at their early stage to avoid that they fester, escalate and poison the work environment;
- Noting that when conflicts are successfully handled there is a positive effect on work relationships: productivity, free expression of ideas and helpful initiatives find a fertile land to grow to the benefit of UNHCR's people of concern.

We assume that senior management of the office has begun consultations on the annual theme as it has been announced. The Refresher session will give staff members an opportunity to place concentrated attention on the workplace conflict issues as an ethical dilemma.

### *Understanding the dynamics of workplace conflicts*

**Objective:** To list the values of conflict from both their destructive and polarizing as well as positive and constructive angles.

**Time:** about 15-30 minutes, including relevant video film if available.

**Materials:** Handout, DVD.

**Preparation:** Photocopy value list for participants

#### **Procedure**

Note that the text in *italics* is a suggestion of what you might say in your own words.

1. Identify advantages of a conflict

Distribute the handout to comment on advantages of WpC.

2. Identify disadvantages

Follow the same procedure to identify disadvantages of WpC.

#### **Summarise**

*We have identified both constructive and destructive values of WpC. Are there any specific examples of a constructive value experienced by your office that we can share with the Ethics Office? Good!*

## ***Identifying possible roots / causes of the conflict in the workplace***

**Objective:** List causes of conflict and assumptions about these causes.

**Time:** From 45 minutes to an hour.

**Number of participants:** Any size group; you will break them into smaller groups.

**Materials:** Copies of the handout.

**Preparation:** Handout for participants.

### **Procedure**

Note that the text in *italics* is a suggestion of what you might say in your own words.

1. Introduction to the Activity

*We are going to begin our examination of possible causes of WpC and analyze them together through comments, examples and we will try to understand how and why these causes are growing so as to better grasp their destructive or constructive nature.*

*We are going to do this in small groups. Just for fun, let's divide up in a new way. Everybody line up at the front of the room by your birthday, January 1 over here and December 31 over there.* Give instructions to the groups as described below, and send them off to work in different parts of the room or in nearby rooms.
2. Instructions for the small groups

You will probably have from 4 to 6 small groups. You may want to have the instructions written out and posted, or give a printed copy to each group.

*You are to list five possible causes of WpC and say how / why they have developed.*

*On the paper, write down the reasons why they developed.*
3. Small group work

Circulate among the small groups, being sure that they understand the instructions and remain on task. The amount of time you'll need to allow will depend on the progress of the work of an average group. When all groups have completed the task, bring them back together.
4. Whole group sharing

Call on each group, have them post their results and explain them briefly. Subsequent groups should not repeat in detail what has been already said.



5. Conclusion Have the whole group identify common causes and reasons for their growth in the workplace. Write these on a new flip chart sheet with the title **CAUSES OF WPC** and leave it posted visibly throughout the rest of the session, where you can refer to it—to remind the group of the causes they have to call on when facing WpC challenges.

The following activity is essentially the same as the one just described, except that it is done with the large group, without dividing into smaller groups. Keeping the whole group together is preferable if the number of participants is quite small (fewer than 12), if the group is not accustomed to small group work, or if there are language challenges.

### ***Identifying possible roots / causes of the conflict in the workplace***

**Objective:** List causes of conflict and assumptions about these causes.

**Time:** From 45 minutes to an hour.

**Number of participants:** Best with smaller groups, preferably no more than 12 participants.

**Materials:** Copies of the handout.

**Preparation:** Handout for participants.

#### **Procedure**

Note that the text in *italics* is a suggestion of what you might say in your own words.

1. Introduction to the Activity *We are going to begin our examination of possible causes of WpC and analyze them together through comments, examples and we will try to understand how and why these causes are growing so as to better grasp their destructive or constructive nature.*
2. Instructions *Let's begin by identifying possible causes of WpC. Write each cause identified on a flipchart. For each of them ask why do you think it develops and grows. Write the participants' responses on the flipchart.*
3. Conclusion Have the whole group identify common causes and reasons for their growth in the workplace. Write these on a new flip chart sheet with the title **CAUSES OF WPC** and leave it posted visibly throughout the rest of the session, where you can

refer to it—to remind the group of the causes they have to call on when facing WPC challenges.

***Identifying the type of managerial and / or individual actions to prevent / solve conflict in the workplace***

After the group has identified the roots / causes of WpC, it is now time to address the prevention and resolution challenges of workplace conflict.

Almost everyone has a tendency to jump directly from problem identification to defining solutions without first carefully examining what is causing the challenge. Yet, a proposed solution that does not address the actual cause(s) of the problem will not be likely to succeed. It is essential to begin analysing in general terms the nature of the problem. This is a review of the *office and team* and not the appropriate setting for condemnation of individuals. If there are particularly sensitive issues or current problems concerning individual conduct, such as harassment, abuse of authority or other forms of misconduct, it is best to outline the parameters for the discussion, and to emphasise sections on where and how to seek additional help for these specific situations. The WPC theme for 2010 CoC refresher sessions will not address these issues. Moreover, there are mandatory training modules designed for some of them. It may be necessary to recall the ground rules for discussion, and the objective of moving forward to addressing in general terms solutions for WpC.

Regardless of the method you use—whole group or small groups—your goal is to create a list of possible managerial and individual actions to: a) prevent WPC and b) solve WpCs.

**Objective:** To identify relevant actions that UNHCR staff members should take to prevent or resolve conflict at workplace.

**Time:** Between 45 minutes to an hour.

**Materials:** Board and flip chart paper, markers, copy of handout

**Procedure**

Note that the text in *italics* is a suggestion of what you might say in your own words.

**1. Review rules for brainstorming**

Remind the group of the rules for brainstorming: Share without censoring yourself or others. Brainstorming means just getting the ideas out. Quantity counts at this stage over quality. Evaluation comes later. Don't discuss the ideas at this point. The only questions allowed are for clarification of what is meant.

Guide the participants along the following items / ideas:

- a) WpC prevention: interpersonal skills for prevention; communication and conflicts; getting along with your boss; getting along with your colleagues; working with others.
- b) Resolution of WpC: tips for conflict resolution; build a check-list of actions for conflict resolution; new ideas.

## 2. Brainstorming

Write everything that is offered on a board or flip chart where everyone can see the list of ideas that may help prevent or resolve WpC.

Check with each person offering an idea to be sure it is recorded clearly, as meant.

Go around the group from one person to the next.

Ask the group if they see any ideas/items that should be added, either because they are saying essentially the same thing in different ways, or because they are closely related.

Draw arrows linking these.

Discuss items/ideas on the list and decide, as a group, if that idea is the best way to go. If everyone, or most of the group, agrees then leave it on the list. If not, cross it off.

If necessary, create a clean final list of the items/ideas and post it on the wall.

## 3. Go deeper

The identification of ideas should be analysed deeper than only at the superficial level. Do this by asking the group *the following questions*:

1) How good are you at managing conflict and why?

2) Which techniques do you use to avoid conflict?

3) Childhood messages about conflict (which of these messages dominates how you feel about conflict today?

Which messages could you discard? Which messages will you retain?)

4) Identifying steps for positive resolutions of WpC

(commitment to find a resolution that is mutually beneficial; trust; frame of mind that there is more than one way to look at the issues; belief that a solution exists; commitment to stay in the communication mode).

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## Summarise

At this stage, you should have a flip chart sheet for each action including “going deeper” ideas. *We have identified the areas that we need to work on, and have looked deeply at them. This has been an important step on preventing and resolving conflicts at workplace.*

### Concluding activities

It is important to wrap-up any Refresher session rather than simply dismissing the participants following the final activity. Depending on your time, the conclusion might be as simple as your summarising the day by focusing on how each of the objectives was met. Better yet, select one of the following concluding activities.

Remember to allow at least five to ten minutes for participants to complete the [Individual Evaluation Form](#) following the final activity. It is also very important that you honour the ending time that you set for the session, so plan your timing carefully as the session draws to a close.

### Ball toss wrap-up

**Objective:** To provide an active, fun, and interactive way to bring the session to a meaningful close

**Time:** At 5 to 10 minutes, this short activity can be done even in a half-day session.

**Participant numbers:** Everyone together, any size group

**Preparation:** Think through ahead of time what question you will use, based on the particular group.

**Materials:** Best is a small, soft ball; also acceptable is a wad of scrap paper bunched up into a ball

### Procedure

Note that the text in *italics* is a suggestion of what you might say in your own words.

#### 1. Summary words

*We have had an intense few hours together today, reviewing the important role the Code of Conduct should be playing in our lives. We have looked at workplace conflict and discussed its roots and causes as well as prevention and resolution strategies. Most importantly, we have defined some specific steps we will be taking to address WpC as an ethical issue both as individuals and as work teams.*

## 2. Instructions

*Now, before we leave, let's have one last sharing as a group.*

Give instructions briefly. Participants stand in a circle. You introduce the question that they will be answering. They will have a few seconds to think about it. Then you will toss the ball to someone as you ask the question. (Choose as the first person someone you're sure will be ready to provide an appropriate response.) After that person answers, he or she throws the ball to someone else while asking the question, and so on.

Be sure to keep track of who has not yet responded, so that no one is left out.

Choose one of the following as your question for the group:

- What was the most meaningful part of today's session for you?
- What new idea or thought are you leaving with today?
- Six months from now, what is one thing you are going to remember from this session?

## 3. Ball toss

Conduct the activity as described earlier. You begin; participants toss the ball and respond to the question, then throw it to someone else. Toward the end, you may need to indicate who should get the ball, so that no one is omitted.

## 4. Evaluation

*Please return to your desks now and complete the session evaluation form. You can drop it off here as you leave.  
Thanks for coming today.*

## **Poster reminders**

**Objective:** To conclude the session with a creative activity that produces a tangible reminder of the theme WPC as an ethical challenge to work environment.

**Time:** half an hour to an hour.

**Rationale:** It is important that the theme for this year's Code of Conduct Refresher session be brought to mind frequently. Posters with themes or mottos the participants have created will do this. Participants enjoy this opportunity; it allows them to express their creativity; and it results in a tangible product that can be used later. It can be especially potent if the poster reminds staff of ethical areas of WpC in which they want to improve both in terms of prevention and resolution.

**Preparation:** Prepare a sample poster or two yourself to show the group. They can be very simple.

**Materials:** For the short version of this activity, all you need is a stack of A-4 paper and a variety of narrow-tip markers, crayons, or coloured pencils. For the recommended longer version, which results in more elaborate posters, you need to have for each group of 4~6 persons:

- a sheet of poster board
- felt markers
- scissors
- glue
- coloured papers
- tape
- pens

It is necessary to have tables on which the groups can work.

**Suggestion:** Divide the participants into groups of 4-6 people. Fewer, and they will tend to be less creative; more, and not everyone will participate. Try to create a good mix of gender, function, age, ethnicity, etc. in order to encourage creativity.

## Procedure

Note that the *text in italics* suggests what you might say in your own words.

### 1. Introduction to the activity

*We're going to wrap-up the session today with something fun that will help us all remember the key thoughts coming out of our work together. Our theme for this year was WpC. We identified the areas of prevention and resolution in which we excel, and those on which we need to work. As a reminder in the coming weeks of what we discussed today, you're going to design some simple posters that we can place around the building.*

### 2. Organisation of the activity

Divide into groups of 4~6. Give instructions to first decide on their motto or saying and then decide how they want to illustrate it. Emphasize that artistic skill is less important than creating something visual that will make people **think**.

Tell each group where they are to work. Distribute the art materials or place them all in the front of the room where participants can take what they need, when they need it.

### 3. Small Group Work

Move from group to group to get them started. Some may be anxious to begin "playing" with the materials. Be sure that each group comes up with a theme, saying, or motto before

they start actually making the poster. If they have difficulty getting started, prompt them:

- What was the most important idea for you today?
- Think about a word or phrase that sums up one important message we discussed.
- What's critical for us to remember?

You might want to have the group members put their names on the poster, so that everyone knows who worked on each.

#### 4. Whole Group Presentations

Once the groups have identified their theme and written it on the paper (short version) or created an artistic poster (longer version), bring the groups together. Have each group hold up their poster for all to see and describe why they chose that particular motto or saying to represent this year's theme.

##### 1. Summary of the Activity

Summarise by commenting on how each of the posters reflects an important concept to remember, in order to consolidate what was learned today. Explain that the posters will be rotated on bulletin boards for all to see.

##### 2. Follow-up

Collect and post the artwork over the next weeks or months on the walls and bulletin boards in the office. Consider distributing particularly good posters to other offices, or exchanging them with other offices that have done the same activity.

Don't forget to distribute the evaluation forms, have participants complete them in the room, and request that they be placed in a container or stack anonymously before they leave.

**Congratulations for facilitating this session!** Do not forget to ensure that the Senior Manager's Annual Report on Code of Conduct Refresher Sessions form is filled in by the Senior Manager and forwarded to the Ethics Office. Also forward any examples of excellence identified by your office. One important example of excellence will now be the follow up and implementation of the proposals agreed on at this session.

## Handouts

The following handouts will help re-focusing the discussions on dealing with workplace conflicts and assist in going deeper into the subject. Facilitators should feel free to select part or all handouts to be used during the session, depending on the time allocated.

# Constructive Conflict

- Opens up issues of importance, resulting in issue clarification
- Helps to build as people learn more about each other
- Causes reassessment by allowing for examination of procedures or
- Increases individual involvement
- ... more ...



## **Destructive conflict**

- Diverts energy from more important issues and tasks
- Deepens differences in values
- Polarizes groups so that cooperation is reduced
- Destroys the morale of people or reinforces poor self-concepts
- ... more ...

## Benefits of managed conflict and the damage resulting from “out-of-control” conflict

Managed Conflict	Out-of-Control Conflict
Strengthens relationships and builds teamwork	Damages relationships and discourages cooperation
Encourages open communication and cooperative problem-solving	Results in defensiveness and hidden agendas
Resolves disagreements quickly and increases productivity	Wastes time, money and human resources
Deals with real issues and concentrates on win-win resolution	Focuses on fault-finding and blaming
Makes allies and diffuses anger	Creates enemies and hard feelings
Airs all sides of an issue in a positive, supportive environment	Is frustrating, stress producing and energy draining
Calms and focuses toward results	Is often loud, hostile and chaotic

Source: <http://www.viu.ca/conflict>

# Causes of conflict

- Misunderstanding
- Personality clashes
- Competition for resources
- Authority issues
- Lack of cooperation
- Differences over methods or style
- Low performance
- Value or goal differences
- Discrimination
- Communication deficiencies
- Disorganization
- Poor leadership
- Lack of honesty and openness
- Stress
- ... more ...

## **As a Manager, how good are you at managing conflict?**

- I actively listen to what the other person has to say
- I try to identify the underlying interests in a conflict situation
- I develop and analyze various resolution options
- I respect differences in opinion
- I am aware of cross cultural considerations when dealing with conflict
- I understand the positive outcomes that can be a result of conflict
- I have a clear understanding of what is expected of me
- I see the whole picture and not just my point of view
- I am free from bias and am objective in my dealings
- I always ask for other people's opinion
- I ask questions instead of giving orders
- I do not get angry over small issues
- I admit my mistakes when I am wrong
- I focus on the problem but not the person
- I always look at how the situation will affect the future
- I try to look for common ground as much as possible

Source: <http://www.preftrain.com>

## Exercise text: Conflict Resolution

Johnny and Ken share an apartment.  
For the past week Ken's friend has stayed over every night.  
This affects Ken's sleeping, and he didn't do well on a test one morning.

Using good conflict resolution skills, work through Johnny and Ken's issue and resolution to the problem.

**Select what you think is the best *italic* option and read the answer:**

*Hey Ken, can we talk about your friend spending nights here and how it's affecting me?*

*Hey Ken, why does your friend have to stay here all the time?*

*Johnny grabs Ken by the shoulder and tells him he's tired of this.*

Johnny first asks Ken if they can talk about the issue without challenging him on it.

Johnny summarized it clearly, without being offensive or attacking.

The second question is more attacking and catches Ken off guard and he is likely to respond in a negative, defensive manner.

The third option is totally inappropriate since it is more like a physical attack, and doesn't even refer to the issue!

**"Sure, what's up Johnny? You said you were chill with it before..."**

*I know we agreed it was ok. But last Thursday I wasn't able to sleep and so didn't do well on my test Friday morning. I'd really appreciate it if we could work something out.*

*Yeah I changed my mind, he stays too often and I don't like it!*

*Johnny should push Ken for reminding Johnny he was OK with it.*

The first answer is best: Johnny first acknowledges that he has changed his view, and has then given a specific example as to how this is affecting him. He is trying to help Ken understand his point of view. Keeping a calm tone encourages cooperation.

It is also important to have the goal of a compromise in mind. If Johnny is vague, or doesn't provide good examples or reasons, it is harder for Ken to understand him.

Both may then become defensive, and stop listening to each other. Johnny should instead remain calm and provide specific examples as to how it is affecting him.  
He is applying good feedback

Remember: the one who initiates the conversation, has responsibility to guide the situation to a good solution.

The third response is totally inappropriate since it is a physical attack.

**"Hey Johnny, your test scores are bad because you play video games all day!"**

*Please don't change the subject, Ken. I don't mind that your friend visits but I would really appreciate some kind of compromise.*

*What?! Who says I am getting bad test scores! I just need a good night's sleep!*

*Johnny punches Ken for insulting him.*

The first answer is the best: It is hard to stay calm when the other person begins to bring up or attacks you with other issues.

However, staying on subject and remaining calm helps a lot when dealing with conflict resolution.

The burden of controlling the conversation should stay with Johnny who initiates it since Ken is not prepared, and may not know how to react or bring up topics that he thinks relate...

So Ken was wrong in changing the subject out of his frustration since Johnny may have caught him off his guard. Johnny however should stay on subject and stay calm. And violence is never an option and a good way to ruin a friendship.

**"OK, I'm sorry, Johnny. If his visits are really bothering you, I can try to be flexible."**

*Thanks for understanding. I feel like it has been especially hard for my 8:00 class on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.*

*Ken, you should pick five nights next month that your friend can stay over!*

*Johnny shrugs and does not listen or accept that Ken is trying.*

The first is best. First of all, it is good to recognize that Ken has done two things: He has acknowledged that he changed the subject. Secondly he elaborates on what is bothering him (lack of sleep and poor performance on studies).

Johnny, through his body language, voice, and eye contact should pay attention to what Ken is saying, and give positive reinforcement to any helpful gesture he makes.

The second option is not bad even though we could interpret it as offering an alternative. Johnny should not tell Ken what to do when trying to resolve a conflict without offering a compromise. This causes resistance and hard feelings. Instead he should try to be considerate of Ken's feelings and viewpoint, and work into a solution with him.

Last option? Practice active listening.

**"Well Johnny, maybe I can ask my friend to not come over before your classes on Sundays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays."**

**"That's great Ken, and I can end video games by midnight on Wednesdays and play somewhere else on Friday nights."**

Here they have both built in a compromise. Johnny has offered something even though it was not the issue, but rather a gesture. Notice that Ken has taken the lead and made the first step, and Johnny is quick to acknowledge the gesture and offered something even if he did not consider it part of the issue.

Johnny could have just refused Ken, or told him that it was his problem. But by working together they both benefit.

**A collaborative conflict resolution process will not eliminate tension in a relationship immediately, but over time, eliminating the source of tension, and overcoming difficulties can result in growth for all of us.**

Source: [www.studygs.net](http://www.studygs.net)

# Going along with my boss

- Communicate effectively with my boss about my work
- Keep my boss informed about my work activities and issues
- Make sure I understand my boss' expectations
- Ask if things are not clear to me
- If necessary, review with my boss these expectations to make sure we both agree
- ... more ...



## Going along with my colleague

- Do not talk to your colleague in anger
- Analyze and think about the problem
- Set time to have a discussion
- Communicate effectively
- Be ready to listen
- Work together to solve the problem
- Do not vent to others – keep the matter confidential
- Keep working at it
- ... more ...

Source: <http://www.viu.ca/conflict>

# Commonly used responses to conflict

- Avoid the person or subject
- Change the subject
- Try to understand the other person's point of view
- Delegate the situation to someone else
- Play the martyr
- Give in
- Apologize
- Try to identify specifically what you agree or disagree on
- Whine or complain to get your way
- Pretend to agree
- Fight out
- Turn the conflict into a joke
- Work towards a mutual solution
- Find someone to blame

*Do you practice this often, occasionally, rarely?*

# Tips for conflict solving

- Ask questions
- Analyze expectations
- Recognize differing perspectives
- Identify mistakes
- Watch out for emotional triggers
- Focus on preventing escalation
- Take action to control the situation
- Commit to working it out
- De-escalate the conflict
- Stay calm
- ... more ...

Source: <http://blogs.techrepublic.com.com/10things/?p=995>



# CODE OF CONDUCT

**OFFICE OF  
THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES  
(UNHCR)**



## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **INTRODUCTION**

UNHCR's capacity to ensure the protection of and assistance to refugees and other persons of concern depends on the ability of its staff to uphold and promote the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct. We, the staff members of UNHCR, are personally and collectively responsible for maintaining these standards. Managers have a particular responsibility to uphold these standards, to set a good example, and to create a working environment that supports and empowers staff.

It is recognised that UNHCR's work often puts its staff in positions of power in relation to its beneficiaries. Staff have an obligation not to abuse this power.

This Code of Conduct is intended to serve as an illustrative guide for staff to make ethical decisions in their professional lives, and at times in their private lives. It is a moral code that does not have the force of law. It is designed to assist staff to better understand the obligations placed upon their conduct by the Charter of the United Nations and the Staff Regulations and Rules, which remain the only legal instruments that determine acceptable conduct in UNHCR. Signing the Code does not take away any acquired rights of UNHCR Staff.

While acknowledging that local laws and customs may differ from one country to another, the Code of Conduct is based on international legal standards. For example, children are defined as those under the age of 18. Guidance on appropriate interpretation can be found in the Notes to the Code of Conduct.

The Code applies to all UNHCR staff members, who will be requested to sign it. Persons holding a UNHCR consultant contract and interns will also receive the Code and be requested to confirm that they uphold its standards as far as applicable to their status. Governmental and non-governmental organisations and companies which, through their employees, work for UNHCR, will be requested to make the principles contained in the Code known to those persons in an appropriate manner.

All UNHCR staff are responsible for encouraging, advocating and promoting the dissemination of the Code of Conduct. They also have a role in implementing, monitoring and enforcing its standards. Staff are also urged to encourage partners to adhere to these standards and to join UNHCR staff in upholding them.

## CORE VALUES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

***UNHCR staff are committed to the following fundamental values and principles:***

- *As staff working within the United Nations system, we will ensure that our conduct is consistent with and reflects the values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations: respect for fundamental human rights, social justice and human dignity, and respect for the equal rights of men and women. We will assist UNHCR to actively promote adherence to the principles of international refugee law, international human rights law and international humanitarian law. We will be guided by the core values of the United Nations system, including professionalism, integrity and respect for diversity, and will maintain an international perspective at all times.*
- *As UNHCR staff, our primary commitment is to ensure the protection of and assistance to refugees and other persons of concern, in accordance with the mandate of the Office. We are committed to supporting the fullest possible participation of refugees and other persons of concern – as individuals, families and communities – in decisions that affect their lives.*
- *We will respect the dignity and worth of every individual, will promote and practise understanding, respect, compassion and tolerance, and will demonstrate discretion and maintain confidentiality as required. We will aim to build constructive and respectful working relations with our humanitarian partners, will continuously seek to improve our performance, and will foster a climate that encourages learning, supports positive change, and applies the lessons learned from our experience.*
- *We will show respect for all persons equally without distinction whatsoever of race, gender, religion, colour, national or ethnic origin, language, marital status, sexual orientation, age, socio-economic status, disability, political conviction, or any other distinguishing feature. We will strive to remove all barriers to equality.*
- *We will respect the cultures, customs and traditions of all peoples, and will strive to avoid behaving in ways that are not acceptable in a particular cultural context. However, when the tradition or practice is considered by the relevant organ of the United Nations to be directly contrary to an international human rights instrument or standard, we will be guided by the applicable human rights instrument or standard.*

# COMMITMENT TO UNHCR CODE OF CONDUCT

***As a staff member of UNHCR, I commit myself to:***

***1. Treat all refugees and other persons of concern fairly, and with respect and dignity.***

I will always seek to understand the difficult experiences that refugees and other persons of concern to UNHCR have faced and survived, as well as the disadvantaged position in which they – particularly on the basis of gender, age or disability – may find themselves in relation to those who hold power or influence over aspects of their lives.

I will always seek to care for and protect the rights of children, and act in a manner that ensures that their best interests shall be the paramount consideration.

If my job involves direct work with refugees or other persons of concern, I will meet with them regularly, in order to fully understand their experiences and needs, and to explain the role of UNHCR and the scope of its work.

I will keep myself informed about UNHCR's policies, objectives and activities and about refugee concerns, and will do my utmost to support the Office's protection and assistance work.

***2. Uphold the integrity of UNHCR, by ensuring that my personal and professional conduct is, and is seen to be, of the highest standard.***

I will demonstrate integrity, truthfulness, dedication and honesty in my actions. I will be patient, respectful and courteous to all persons with whom I deal in an official capacity, including refugees and other persons of concern, representatives of operational and implementing partners, governments and donors.

I will observe local laws, will meet all my private legal and financial obligations, and will not seek to take personal advantage of any privileges or immunities that have been conferred on me in the interest of the United Nations. I will do my utmost to ensure that the conduct of members of my household does not reflect unfavourably on the integrity of UNHCR.

***3. Perform my official duties and conduct my private affairs in a manner that avoids conflicts of interest, thereby preserving and enhancing public confidence in UNHCR.***

My actions will be free of any consideration of personal gain, and I will resist any undue political pressure in decision-making. I will neither seek nor accept instructions regarding the performance of my duties from any government, including my national authorities, or from any authority external to the United Nations.

In accordance with Staff Regulations and Rules, I will not accept any honour, decoration, favour gift, remuneration, from any government; nor will I accept these from any other source external to the United Nations without prior authorisation. I will not engage in any outside occupation or employment without prior authorisation. I will not accept supplementary payments or subsidies from a government or any other source, or participate in certain political activities such as standing for or holding public office.

I will avoid assisting private persons or companies in their undertakings with UNHCR where this might lead to actual or perceived preferential treatment. I will never participate

in activities related to procurement of goods or services, or in human resource activities, where a conflict of interests may arise.

**4. *Contribute to building a harmonious workplace based on team spirit, mutual respect and understanding.***

I will show respect to all colleagues, regardless of status or position, and will allow all colleagues the opportunity to have their views heard, and to contribute from their knowledge and experience to team efforts. I will communicate openly and share relevant information (subject to confidentiality requirements) with other colleagues, and will endeavour to respond in a timely manner to queries.

I will respect my colleagues' privacy, and avoid misinformation. I will seek to resolve differences and solve problems when they arise. I will contribute to building constructive dialogue, guided by mutual respect and an open, positive approach, between management and staff representatives.

As a manager/supervisor I will be open to the views of all team members. I will provide timely feedback on the performance of each team member through guidance, motivation and full recognition of their merits.

**5. *Promote the safety, health and welfare of all UNHCR staff as a necessary condition for effective and consistent performance.***

I will remain aware of and comply with all instructions designed to protect my health, welfare and safety. I will always consider the safety of staff in operational decisions. If I have doubts regarding an instruction that I consider threatening to my safety or the safety of other persons, I will bring this immediately to the attention of my supervisor.

As a manager/supervisor, I will endeavour to ensure that the health and well-being of staff and their families are not subjected to undue risk. I will promote a healthy work-life balance for staff, and will respect staff entitlements.

**6. *Safeguard and make responsible use of the information and resources to which I have access by reason of my employment with UNHCR.***

I will exercise due care in all matters of official business, and not divulge any confidential information about refugees, colleagues and other work-related matters in accordance with the staff regulations and rules and current guidelines.

I will protect, manage and utilise UNHCR human, financial and material resources efficiently and effectively, bearing in mind that these resources have been placed at UNHCR's disposal for the benefit of refugees and other persons of concern.

**7. *Prevent, oppose and combat all exploitation and abuse of refugees and other persons of concern.***

I undertake not to abuse the power and influence that I have by virtue of my position over the lives and well-being of refugees and other persons of concern.

I will never request any service or favour from refugees or other persons of concern in return for protection or assistance. I will never engage in any exploitative relationships – sexual, emotional, financial or employment-related – with refugees or other persons of concern.

Should I find myself in such a relationship with a beneficiary that I consider non-exploitative and consensual, I will report this to my supervisor for appropriate guidance in the knowledge that this matter will be treated with due discretion. I understand that both



my supervisor and I have available to us normal consultative and recourse mechanisms on these issues.

I will act responsibly when hiring or otherwise engaging refugees or other persons of concern for private services. I will report in writing on the nature and conditions of this employment to my supervisor.

**8. Refrain from any involvement in criminal or unethical activities, activities that contravene human rights, or activities that compromise the image and interests of UNHCR.**

I will neither support nor take part in any form of illegal, exploitative or abusive activities, including, for example, child labour, and trafficking of human beings and commodities.

As UNHCR is committed to the highest standards of protection and care for children, I am aware that I am expected not to engage in sexual activities with any person under the age of 18. (Further guidance is given in the Notes to this Code of Conduct).

**9. Refrain from any form of harassment, discrimination, physical or verbal abuse, intimidation or favouritism in the workplace.**

I will not engage in or tolerate any form of harassment in the workplace, including sexual harassment and abuse of power.

As a manager/supervisor, I will not solicit favours, loans or gifts from staff, nor will I accept unsolicited ones that are of more than token value.

I recognise that there is an inherent conflict of interest and potential abuse of power in having sexual relations with staff under my supervision. Should I find myself in such a relationship, I will resolve this conflict of interest without delay.