



**LED e G**

**LADAKH ECOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT GROUP**

# **CODE OF CONDUCT & ETHICS**

**(THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES BY WHICH ALL STAFF AGREE TO WORK)**

The aim of this Code of Conduct is to establish clear guidelines for the expected behavior of all staff members.

This Code is upheld by LEDeG's commitment to safeguarding the environment and social well-being. In line with this Code of Conduct, LEDeG staff comprises employees, volunteers, interns, and freelance consultants.

All LEDeG staff members must read and fully understand the content of this Code. If they have any questions, it is their duty to seek clarification from their supervisor.

Failure to adhere to any stipulations outlined in this document may lead to disciplinary measures, termination, or even legal consequences.

LEDeG staff members are also obligated to inform beneficiaries and other parties involved in LEDeG's work about this Code, including the procedures for reporting misconduct and staff failures. Reports and concerns will be treated seriously and handled confidentially.

As part of LEDeG's commitment to a "zero tolerance approach" regarding violations of the Code of Conduct, it is the responsibility of each individual to consistently align their behavior with LEDeG's values, principles, and the following requirements.

## **I WILL SHOW RESPECT TO OTHERS**

I will demonstrate equal respect to all individuals, regardless of their nationality, race, ethnicity, tribe, gender, religious beliefs, political opinion, or disability.

I will engage in a fair, honest, and considerate manner towards others, treating them with dignity and respect. I will comply with national laws and honor local culture, traditions, customs, and practices consistent with UN conventions.

I will contribute to fostering a positive work environment characterized by teamwork, mutual respect, and understanding.

I will dress appropriately in line with the task and cultural context.

Consequently,

I will refrain from participating in any form of discrimination, harassment, or abuse (whether physical, sexual, or verbal), as well as intimidation or exploitation, and I will not infringe on the rights of others in any way

## **I WILL MAINTAIN EXEMPLARY CONDUCT, BOTH PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL...**

...by upholding the requirements and principles of LEDeG, utilizing LEDeG's manuals, policies, guidelines, handbooks, internal regulations, and procedures, striving for exceptional standards in my work, taking responsibility for my actions, and refraining from misusing my authority as a representative of LEDeG.

I will avoid behaviors that could undermine my ability to perform my duties or harm LEDeG's reputation.

I will ensure that my personal and professional conduct consistently aligns with principles of non-racism, non-discrimination, gender sensitivity, and environmental consciousness.

As a result,

I will neither endorse nor engage in any criminal, unlawful, exploitative, or harmful activities, such as child labor, pedophilia, forced prostitution, human trafficking, or the trade of illicit substances.

I will never knowingly support, tolerate, or promote terrorism or the actions of those who embrace terrorism.

I will not request or solicit personal payment, services, or favors from others, especially beneficiaries or individuals within the populations we aim to assist, in exchange for our aid, support, goods, or services of any kind.

I will not possess or profit from the sale of illegal goods or substances.

I will refrain from consuming alcohol or using substances in a way that impairs my ability to perform my job or damages the reputation of LEDeG. Similarly, I will never operate an LEDeG vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs. I understand that if I become aware of any staff members operating LEDeG motorized transportation while under the influence, it should be reported as a violation of the Code of Conduct and security regulations, which will result in disciplinary action.

I will decline any bribes or significant gifts (excluding small tokens of appreciation valued under Rs 1000, which I will promptly inform my project manager/Executive Director about) from governments, beneficiaries, individuals in need, donors, or any others.

I will not engage in any business transactions on behalf of LEDeG with family, friends, or any personal or professional contacts related to the supply of goods or services to LEDeG or any employment-related matters unless authorized.

I will not possess weapons or wear military uniforms within the premises and vehicles of LEDeG while on duty. I am committed to preserving the environment and minimizing any negative impacts on it.

I will not utilize the organization's computer or any other equipment to access, download, produce, or circulate inappropriate material, such as pornography or child exploitation.

I understand that sexual exploitation and abuse are considered serious misconduct and may result in termination of my employment.

I will not engage in any sexual activities involving children (individuals under the age of 18) and understand that this is strictly prohibited regardless of the legal age of consent. Mistaken belief about a child's age does not serve as a defense.

I will not offer money, employment, goods, or services in exchange for sex, including sexual favors or any form of humiliating, degrading, or exploitative behavior, and I am aware that this is strictly prohibited. This includes the exchange of assistance that is owed to beneficiaries. I am obligated to foster and maintain an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and abuse and promotes adherence to this code of conduct. Project Managers have specific responsibilities in supporting and implementing systems to uphold this environment.

## **I WILL COMMIT TO PROTECT LEDEG'S BENEFICIARIES**

By acknowledging the challenging situations experienced by victims of disasters and recognizing their disadvantaged position when compared to those in positions of authority, I am committed to consistently giving priority to the rights of the most vulnerable individuals. This includes children, particularly orphans and children separated from their families, women, single parents, the elderly, people with disabilities, those dealing with chronic illnesses, and minority groups facing heightened risks. My primary focus will always be to actively support LEDeG's efforts in providing assistance and protection, ensuring the welfare of the beneficiaries or the relevant population.

As a result,

I will refrain from any actions that contradict LEDeG's established operational guidelines, manuals, handbooks, and procedures, or that may jeopardize the safety of our beneficiaries or the people under our care.

I will not misuse the authority and influence derived from my position to exert control over the lives and well-being of those we aim to assist.

I will never seek or accept services or favors from the beneficiaries, individuals within the community, fellow staff members, or any others in exchange for the assistance or protection we offer.

I will steer clear of engaging in any exploitative relationships, whether they involve sexual, emotional, financial, or employment-related aspects, with those who depend on our humanitarian aid.

I will not engage in any sexual relationships with individuals benefiting from humanitarian assistance and protection, particularly when such relationships involve an improper use of my rank or position. I am fully aware that such relationships are strictly prohibited, as they undermine the credibility and integrity of humanitarian efforts.

I will not conceal any information regarding prior criminal convictions, charges, or civil proceedings, particularly those related to child abuse, whether this information comes to light before or during my tenure with LEDeG.



## **I WILL ENSURE TO BE ATTENTIVE TO THE SAFETY & SECURITY OF MYSELF & OTHERS...**

... by being aware of and following LEDeG's policies and procedures regarding security and safety, and reporting any areas of concern to the Executive Director.

As a result,

I will not engage in behavior that puts my safety or the safety of others at unnecessary risk.

## **I WILL PROTECT LEDEG'S RESOURCES AND ASSETS...**

... by handling LEDeG's financial resources and property with care, and by carrying out my official duties and managing my personal affairs in a way that avoids any conflicts of interest.

Specifically,

I will ensure that LEDeG's resources are not misused and are protected from theft, fraud, or any other damage.

If I have any potential conflicts of interest with a supplier, service provider, or business partner (such as familial relations or share ownership), I will disclose them.

I will not use any offices, property, or knowledge gained from my position at LEDeG for personal gain, whether financial or otherwise, or for the benefit of any third party, including family, friends, or those I prefer.

I will protect, manage, and utilize LEDeG human, financial, and material resources efficiently and effectively, bearing in mind that these resources have been placed at LEDeG's disposal for the benefit of beneficiaries or other persons of concern to LEDeG.

I will responsibly maintain electronic files and archives, keeping in mind the need to protect privacy. It is strictly prohibited to process, download, store, or disseminate any information that may be considered illegal, offensive, or inappropriate.

I will use the computer equipment and information systems provided to me in full compliance with LEDeG's principles and regulations.

Consequently,

I pledge not to pursue personal benefits from my job at LEDeG and will resist any undue political influence while making decisions. Specifically, I will neither receive nor offer bribes, including kickbacks, of any sort.

I will not seek or accept instructions regarding my job performance from any government entity or external authority other than LEDeG. I will not accept any honors, awards, favors, gifts, or compensation from any authority, nor will I accept them from any other external source without prior authorization, except for small tokens of appreciation valued under Rs 500.

I will not engage in any outside occupation or employment unless given prior authorization. I will not accept extra payments or subsidies from a government or any other source.



I will not aid private individuals or companies in their dealings with LEDeG if it could result in perceived or actual preferential treatment. I will never participate in procurement or human resource activities where there may be a conflict of interest and will always adhere to LEDeG's policies, guidelines, and instructions.

## **I WILL PROTECT THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF LEDEG'S INFORMATION AND DATA...**

... by handling LEDeG's information and data cautiously and with discretion.

Specifically,

I will protect and use the information I have access to responsibly as a result of my employment with LEDeG.

I will exercise caution in all official matters and not share any confidential information about beneficiaries, individuals of concern, and other work-related issues with LEDeG colleagues and other partners.

I will be careful and discreet when it comes to political, military, or security matters in official or private communications, including phone calls, radio messages, emails, social media, and letters.

When involved in communication activities, I will ensure that individuals and their situations are depicted accurately in terms of their abilities and vulnerabilities. I will make necessary efforts to explain how photos and stories will be used and obtain permission from individuals for their use.

Consequently,

I will not disclose any confidential information obtained while working for LEDeG to any third party, both during and after my employment, unless legally obligated to do so. I understand that breaching professional confidentiality may result in compensation claims and/or legal action.

I will not make any statements to the media or journalists on behalf of LEDeG.

I will not share statements, articles, books, or other material for publication, including on internet blogs, websites, online media, social media, and public electronic forums, if they relate to LEDeG's activities or interests without prior approval from the Board Members. I am dedicated to responsibly managing any personal social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, in accordance with the law and the guidelines outlined in this Code of Conduct. I will not disclose any confidential professional matters, share any confidential information about beneficiaries and individuals of concern to LEDeG, colleagues, or other work-related issues, or represent LEDeG in any way.

## **I WILL REPORT ANY INCIDENT OR CONCERN RELATING TO THIS CODE**

To ensure the implementation of this Code of Conduct, we must not only follow it ourselves, but all staff members of LEDeG also have a responsibility to report any potential incidents, abuses, or concerns that we witness or become aware of within LEDeG.

As a result,

If I have any concerns or suspicions about sexual abuse or exploitation by a colleague, whether within the same organization or not, I must report these concerns to one of the board members.

I will report through appropriate channels any matter which appears to break the standards contained in the Code of Conduct.

I understand that violating this Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action, termination of employment, or even legal consequences. Moreover, intentionally making false accusations or reports is considered a breach of the Code of Conduct and will be met with disciplinary action.

Date: .....

Location: .....

Staff member's first and last name: .....

Signature: