

# Code of Ethics



## HUBI & VINCIANE FOUNDATION

The Hubi & Vinciane Foundation is a Belgian public interest foundation, established in 1982. It invests at least 90% of its resources in projects in Benin in West Africa. Together with its directors, management and staff in Benin, cooperating partners, volunteers and supporters in Benin and Belgium, the Foundation is committed to cooperation for development.

To this end, the Foundation has over the years, developed an integrated approach to regional development, focusing on the problems of malnutrition.

Its approach is based on three pillars:

- health care, with a focus on detecting and combating malnutrition in women and children;
- education, advocating gender equality;
- agriculture, with the development of small-scale, family and ecological entrepreneurship.

The Foundation strives to help achieve the United Nations sustainable development goals (SDG) in Benin.



<https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals.html>

## FOUNDATION'S CODE OF ETHICS

The Foundation develops activities in line with its core values and ethical standards. It does so with its administrators and teams in Benin and Belgium, as well as with cooperating partners, interns, volunteers and supporters.

The Code of Ethics, as described below, is based on the core values to which the Foundation adheres. The code formulates the principles that guide the Foundation and all those involved. All those who work for or with the Foundation in Benin and Belgium accept the code of ethics and apply it in the execution of their mission and their relations with all stakeholders.

### ***1. Fundamental values***

The Foundation's mission and vision are based on six core values. These values are a source of inspiration and a guideline in achieving the social mission of our organisation.

#### **Social, ecological and economic sustainability**

We are convinced that sustainable development seeks a balance between social, ecological and economic interests. We aspire to sustainable societal changes in the social and political, environmental, economic and technological fields so that they contribute to a healthy and peaceful environment with prosperous citizens and well-functioning ecosystems. In this way, we want to achieve global sustainable development (SD) goals progressively at the local level.

#### **Gender equality**

Development can only be achieved through genuine mutual involvement in a relationship of equality. Regardless of gender, race, age, religion or belief, we allow everyone to contribute to our projects. Growth is only possible through cooperation in mutual respect. Equality of women and men is central to this.

#### **Empowerment of all actors**

People can only work on their own and take responsibility if they are given a voice and influence over their living conditions and commitment. For us, empowerment is a process of emancipation, in which people push the limits of their social situation and social commitment. Real change cannot only be achieved at the individual level. It is a personal and collective process to shape life with others.

#### **Equal partnership**

Each person has his or her own identity and is a unique person. We, therefore, cherish diversity and promote dialogue that connects people. We respect the opinions, knowledge and experience of all those involved in our projects and their beneficiaries.

### **Acting ethically and transparently**

Dignity, reliability, sincerity and honesty are at the heart of ethical and transparent conduct. We practice it in everything we do and at all levels, without pursuing self-interest.

### **Mutual trust and respect**

Mutual trust and respect are the basis for enabling people to grow. Power and calculation, on the other hand, paralyses us. This applies to directors and managers as much as to employees and beneficiaries. If we give trust or enjoy trust, if we respect each other or know how to respect each other, we feel better. It makes us collectively more creative and effective so that we can achieve our goals.

## ***2. Ethical Principles***

The Foundation's Code of Ethics embodies its core values. It formulates a number of important ethical principles, which the Foundation as an organisation, and all those involved in it, endorse.

### **1. In its policy, organisation and operation, the Foundation commits to:**

- Draw up each year, in close consultation with all the parties concerned, and in particular with the management and the local team in Benin, a transparent political plan containing a feasible work programme.
- Use efficiently and effectively the resources at its disposal for the implementation of the objectives set out in its statutes and which are translated into concrete projects.
- Make every effort to limit the overhead costs of support and fundraising functions to 4% of expected annual income. This percentage may be revised by a well-considered decision of the Board of Directors.
- To use only professional and sound fundraising methods, in accordance with its core values as a volunteer organisation of volunteers who provide their knowledge and experience for free to the Foundation.
- To report transparently on activities carried out and results achieved, as donors and other stakeholders have a right to information and accountability on the functioning of the Foundation.
- Provide financial and content information to all interested parties upon request, as appropriate.

### **2. The directors, officers, staff, interns, and volunteers of the Foundation are committed to:**

- Contribute to the preservation of the integrity and reputation of the Foundation by ensuring that their personal and professional conduct is consistent with its core values.

- Treat all persons with and for whom they are engaged with respect and dignity; they commit to avoid all forms of intimidation, discrimination, exploitation or abuse.
- Promote human rights, defending the environment and opposing unethical practices.
- Rely, in the exercise of their functions within the Foundation, on their objective view of its mission and vision, which aim at integral development in a spirit of constructive debate.
- Apply high standards of integrity, both in the exercise of their mandate and in the performance of their duties and in their relations with each other and with all persons involved in the operation of the Foundation.
- Respect the limits of their powers and duties, to the extent determined by the Board of Directors.
- Treat information about the Foundation's donors, financial sponsors, suppliers and partners as strictly confidential.
- Never use their position within the organisation for personal gain or to favour another organisation to which they belong. Nor will they use the Foundation's name for personal purposes that have nothing to do with the Foundation's mission.
- Avoid any type of conflict of interest, especially in situations that could give rise to a conflict between the interests of the Foundation and personal interests. In the event of a potential conflict of interest, total openness is the rule adhered to by the members of the Foundation.

The Foundation's Board of Directors will clearly communicate the above values and principles.

Every director, employee, intern and volunteer agrees to abide by the code of ethics and to be questioned on this subject.

Validated by the Board of Directors of the Hubi & Vinciane Foundation on 20 February 2020.

**Pascale Van Assche** Executive Director

**Marc Vervenne** Chairman

***Signature of the person concerned  
Preceded by the words "Read and Approved".***