

UNITAR Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy

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Introduction

1. The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) conducts activities with many stakeholders around the world. It is in the direct interest of UNITAR to ensure that any ethical misconduct, such as fraud and corruption, is absent from these activities. Furthermore, as a part of the UN system and in support of the Sustainable Development Goals (particularly SDG 16, Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), UNITAR proactively supports the prevention of all fraud and corruption, and has zero tolerance for such practices.
2. Any act of fraud and corruption in UNITAR's activities depletes funds, assets and other resources necessary to fulfil UNITAR's mandate. Fraudulent and corrupt practices can also seriously damage UNITAR's reputation and diminish donors' trust in its ability to deliver results in an accountable and transparent manner. Furthermore, it may affect staff and personnel effectiveness, motivation and morale, and impact on UNITAR's ability to attract and retain a talented work force.
3. UNITAR will rigorously pursue disciplinary and other actions against perpetrators of fraud and corruption, including recovery of financial loss suffered by UNITAR.
4. UNITAR is committed to preventing, detecting and addressing all cases of suspected misconduct in breach of [the Charter of the United Nations](#) and [Standards of conduct in the International Civil Service](#), including acts of fraud and corruption, through raising awareness of fraud risks, implementing controls aimed at preventing and detecting fraud and corruption, and enforcing this Policy.

Rationale

5. The present Policy further expands on existing integrity and ethics oversight mechanisms by taking into account the administrative circular dated 22 May 2007 on the application of [the Policy on Financial Disclosure, Declaration of Interest, and Impartiality Statements](#) (AC/UNITAR/2007/5), the administrative circular dated 25 March 2009 establishing [the Integrity and Ethics Oversight policy and appointing a new Integrity and Ethics Oversight Committee \(IEOC\)](#) (AC/UNITAR/2009/02), and the administrative circular dated 24 April 2012 promulgating [the Guidelines applying to preliminary fact-finding administrative investigations reported to the Integrity and Ethics Oversight Committee \(IEOC\)](#) (AC/UNITAR/2012/06).
6. The Secretary-General's Bulletin related to [the United Nations system-wide application of ethics: separately administered organs and programmes](#) (ST/SGB/2007/11) applies to

UNITAR. Until such time as the Institute designates an ethics officer, UNITAR has accepted to delegate some ethics oversight functions to the Ethics Office of the UN Secretariat, including, but not limited to, (a) administering the financial disclosure programme; (b) undertaking the responsibilities assigned to the Ethics Office under the Organization's policy for the protection of staff against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations; and (c) providing confidential advice and guidance to staff on ethical issues.

Definition

7. The concept of integrity enshrined in [the Charter of the United Nations](#) includes all aspects of behaviour of an international civil servant, including such qualities as honesty, truthfulness, impartiality and incorruptibility¹.

8. Fraud is defined as the intentional, false representation or concealment of a material fact for the purpose of inducing another to act upon it to his or her detriment. Examples of fraud include, but not limited to, the following actions:
 - Fraud committed to obtain undue financial benefits or entitlements under the Staff Regulations and Rules, including fraudulent insurance claims, claims for dependency or other staff benefits or entitlements, processing the cost of personal travel as part of an official travel;
 - Fraud involving third parties, in the context of procurement and financial administration, including collusion with contractors, bid manipulation, kickbacks or reporting false expenditure. This also includes accepting hospitality such as meals or entertainment, or accepting gifts, monetized or in-kind, from a vendor;
 - Fraud committed to cause the Institute to act in a manner other than it would have acted with full knowledge of the genuine information, including false educational credentials or professional qualifications on a personal history form in the context of a job application, fraudulent appraisal reports or certificates, staff members using their authority to hire persons without disclosing that they are related to these persons, failure to disclose financial interest or other conflict of interest with a prospective contractor or supplier;
 - Forging documents knowingly, preparing false entries in UNITAR systems or making false statements to obtain a financial or other benefit for oneself or another/others;
 - Forging the signature of a UNITAR staff member or forging a document purporting to be from UNITAR to induce a party outside UNITAR to act;

¹ Definition similar to the UN Secretariat's Information Circular ST/IC/2005/19 related to [Reporting of suspected misconduct](#).

- Using another’s IT identity or password, or creating false identities/passwords, without consent or authority to manipulate UNITAR processes or cause the approval or denial of actions;
 - Misrepresenting UN employment status to obtain a benefit from a government or private sector entity;
 - Failing to disclose a financial or familial interest in a business or outside party while participating in the award/management of a contract to the benefit of that business or outside party; and
 - Falsifying documents, making false statements, preparing false entries in UNITAR systems or other deceptive acts to the detriment of those someone seeks to disfavour, or to discredit a person, programme or the Institute.
9. Corruption is the act of doing something with an intent to give an advantage inappropriate with official duties to obtain a benefit, to harm or to influence improperly the actions of another party.
10. Actions taken to instigate, aid, abet, attempt, conspire or cooperate in a fraudulent or corrupt act, also constitute fraud or corruption.

Scope and application

11. This Policy applies to all programming and operations activities of UNITAR, including projects and programmes funded by UNITAR, as well as those implemented by UNITAR. This Policy aims to prevent, detect and address acts of fraud and corruption involving:
- Regular staff members (fixed-term contract, temporary contract) holding a UNITAR letter of appointment (“regular staff members”);
 - Non-staff personnel, including remunerated and non-remunerated fellows, individual contractors, consultants, interns, trainees and collaborators (collectively “non-staff personnel”);
 - Implementing partners and responsible parties engaged/contracted by UNITAR for a UNITAR-funded project (“implementing partners” and “responsible parties”, respectively).
12. UNITAR vendors, including actual or potential contractors of suppliers of goods and services (collectively “vendors”) are expected to adopt and enforce robust policies combatting fraud and corruption. UNITAR is committed to ensure that all vendors are aware of UNITAR’s policy on zero tolerance for fraudulent and corrupt practices.

Preventive measures

Building fraud and corruption prevention into project design and delivery

13. When developing a new project, it is important to ensure that risks of fraud and corruption are fully considered in the project design and delivery processes. This is especially important for high risk projects, such as those that are complex and involve vendors and implementing partners or that operate in high risk environments. Fraud and corruption are included as elements of financial risk to be assessed as part of the project risk management exercise, and is incorporated into [the UNITAR Project Document Template](#). Risk management plan is compulsory for projects budgeted at US\$1 million and above and, although discretionary, is recommended for projects below this threshold.
14. Managers are responsible for ensuring that the risk of fraud and corruption is identified during the project design phase. They are to consider how easily fraudulent acts might occur and be replicated in day-to-day operations.
15. This Policy shall be referenced in grant agreements to implementing partners, and provisions shall be included in such agreements with a view to preventing, mitigating or responding to alleged fraudulent or corrupt activity.

Training and awareness

16. All regular staff members and remunerated fellows must take and obtain a certificate of the mandatory online ethics training "[Ethics and Integrity at the United Nations](#)", available on Inspira in both French and English.
17. All other categories of personnel, other than those mentioned in the paragraph 16, are encouraged to complete the ethics training "[Ethics and Integrity at the United Nations](#)".
18. Regular staff members and non-staff personnel are requested to attend any ethics training that may be organized by the Human Resources Section.
19. The ethics training aims to explain the ethical expectations that UNITAR has set for its regular staff members and non-staff personnel, raise awareness of the policies, regulations and rules within the UNITAR workplace, to help make informed decisions, to promote an ethical culture throughout the Institute, and to prevent misconduct.

20. All documents related to policies, regulations and rules as well as all training materials shall be posted or linked to on the Institute's intranet for easy reference.
21. Vendors, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs), are made aware of and accept that they are subject to [the UN Supplier Code of Conduct](#), through the instructions on fraud and corruption issued within standard bidding documents and their signed bid submission.

Adherence to standards and code of conduct

22. Each regular staff member must realize that fraud and corruption, whatever its extent and form, is contrary to the standards of conduct expected of international civil servants prescribed in [the UN Charter](#), [the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations](#) (ST/SGB/2017/1), [the ICSC Standards of Conduct in the International Civil Service](#), and [the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of United Nations Staff Members](#) (ST/SGB/2002/13). These standards have been summarized in a user-friendly guide: [Putting Ethics to Work](#).
23. Non-staff personnel are also expected to uphold the standard of conduct set forth in [the Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials, and Experts on Mission](#) (ST/SGB/2002/9), and the provisions contained in their respective contracts and applicable Terms and Conditions.
24. Similarly, vendors, as well as NGOs and CSOs participating in a procurement process, accept to abide by [the UN Supplier Code of Conduct](#). They are required to ensure actively that their management processes and business operations align with UN principles, including, but not limited to its standards of ethical conduct regarding fraud and corruption, conflict of interest, gifts and hospitality, and post-employment restrictions. They are required to report any instances of wrongdoing.

Due diligence in recruitment, promotion and awarding contracts and grants

25. Integrity is a paramount consideration in the recruitment or promotion of regular staff members as well as the contracting of non-staff personnel. In this context, the UNITAR hiring manager and/or the Human Resources section should ensure that the Institute is recruiting or promoting individuals that meet the standards of conduct expected of regular staff members and non-staff personnel. This can be achieved, for instance, by asking a specific question for integrity in reference checks for short-listed candidates, professional experience and academic checks. In addition to this, the standard application, through the

P11 form, requires the disclosure of information about the possible existence of family relationships of direct relevance to their work at UNITAR.

26. UNITAR requires all of its vendors to be qualified, as well as eligible. UNITAR shall not award a contract to any vendor, including NGOs or CSOs (as a responsible party, implementing partner or as a vendor), that has been debarred by UNITAR or any other UN agency, fund or programme, as indicated on [the UN Ineligibility list](#)². Awarding a contract to an ineligible vendor may only occur if the vendor is in the process of rehabilitation.

Responsibility

27. UNITAR regular staff members, non-staff personnel, implementing partners and responsible parties must be aware of their responsibility to prevent fraud and corruption. In this regard, managers are responsible for raising awareness on this Policy, and reiterating the duty of all personnel to report instances of alleged fraud and corruption. Managers are also required to make regular staff members, non-staff personnel, implementing partners and responsible parties and vendors contracted/engaged by their respective offices aware of this Policy.
28. Managers are expected to act as role models and, through their actions and behaviours, set the tone for the rest of the Institute. They should foster a culture of zero tolerance for fraud and corruption, and ensure that any practices not aligned with this Policy are dealt with expeditiously.
29. Regarding financial responsibility of regular staff members, [Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations](#) (ST/SGB/2013/4) Rule 101.2 stipulates that all United Nations staff members who contravene the Financial Regulations and Rules or corresponding administrative instructions to be held personally accountable and financially liable for their actions.

Reporting procedures

30. Individuals with information regarding fraud or other corrupt practices or misconduct against UNITAR or involving UNITAR staff, non-staff personnel, implementing partners and responsible parties, are expected to report this information. All incidents of fraud and corruption are to be reported, and will be assessed and investigated by IEOC or other external enforcement offices, as appropriate.

² Registration is available to those with valid UN email addresses.

31. Allegations of suspected misconduct or breach in integrity and ethical conduct may be made to the Executive Director, supervisors, members of IEOC in case of specific issues, by any regular staff member or non-staff personnel of the Institute. In addition, a hotline (hotline@unitar.org) is available to all regular staff and non-staff personnel for them to report any suspicions about a fraudulent or corrupt activity, or a failure to observe the standards of conduct expected of an international civil servant. All emails sent to the hotline are sent only to the current Chair of IEOC at the time of the report.
32. Regular staff members and non-staff personnel may submit reports of fraud or ethical misconduct anonymously, in which case it is recommended, for the effectiveness of investigative follow-up, that the persons submitting a report be as specific as possible and include detailed information listed below. For anonymous reports, a report number and code are used to allow the individual making a complaint to follow up and to check if the assessing officer has requested further information. However, anonymous allegations are often more difficult to pursue as there may be no way for IEOC to clarify the information provided or to ask questions. If the reporter chooses to remain anonymous, the reporter may consider providing IEOC with a means to contact him or her if further information or clarification is needed – for example, the reporter may provide a free web-based email address (e.g. hotmail, yahoo or gmail) with an assumed name or alias that will allow him or her to retain his or her anonymity. Anonymous reports can be submitted through an online form available on the UNITAR intranet.
33. In order for investigations to be successful, complaints should be as specific as possible. To the extent possible, they should include details such as:
- The type of alleged wrongdoing;
 - When, where and how the wrongdoing occurred; and
 - Who was involved and may have knowledge of the matters being reported.
- Relevant documents or other evidence should be included with the report or provided as soon as possible. However, the absence of any of the above details does not prevent investigation of allegations of fraud or corruption.
34. The identity of the parties, the suspicions which are reported, the status and results of the investigation will not be disclosed or discussed with anyone other than those who have a legitimate need to know, such as those on IEOC.
35. Requests for confidentiality by persons making a report will be honoured to the extent possible within the legitimate needs of the investigation. All investigations undertaken are

confidential; information will only be disclosed as required by the legitimate needs of the investigation.

36. UNITAR does not tolerate any form of retaliation against whistle-blowers that have reported allegations of wrongdoing or cooperated with a duly authorized audit or investigation. The Secretary-General's bulletin [Protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations](#) (ST/SGB/2017/2) applies to UNITAR.

Investigation of allegations

37. All allegations of fraud and corruption are taken seriously. Upon receipt of an allegation, IEOC will assess the case to determine if there is sufficient ground to warrant an investigation. If there is sufficient ground to warrant an investigation, IEOC will then decide if the case will be investigated internally by IEOC, or the case will be referred to external enforcement offices, such as the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS).
38. The OIOS is the primary office charged with investigating high-risk, complex matters and serious criminal cases – including complex fraud and corruption cases – which it has classified as “category I³” cases. The IEOC will refer any case that falls under “category I” to the OIOS for investigation.
39. In respect of cases considered to be of lower risk to the Institute – classified as “category II⁴” by OIOS –, IEOC may conduct investigations and/or administrative inquiries.
40. In addition, if IEOC receives any report of retaliatory action against individuals because they have reported misconduct or cooperated with a duly authorized audit or investigation, the case may be referred to the Ethics Office. The Ethics Office conducts

³ [Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on strengthening the investigation functions in the United Nations](#) (A/58/708), paragraph 26: OIOS has classified high-risk, complex matters and serious criminal cases as belonging to category I. Inquiries into such matters are best handled by independent, professionally trained and experienced investigators. When programme managers or others identify such cases, they should be brought to the attention of the professional investigators in the respective office's oversight unit or to OIOS. Category I cases would normally include the following: *Serious or complex fraud; other serious criminal act or activity; abuse of authority or staff; conflict of interest; gross mismanagement; waste of substantial resources; all cases involving risk of loss of life to staff or to others, including witnesses; substantial violations of United Nations regulations, rules or administrative issuances; complex proactive investigations aimed at studying and reducing risk to life and/or United Nations property.*

⁴ The same document as above, paragraph 27: Cases of lower risk to the Organization are classified by OIOS as belonging to category II and include the following: *Personnel matters; traffic-related inquiries; simple thefts; contract disputes; office management disputes; basic misuse of equipment of staff; basic mismanagement issues infractions of regulations, rules or administrative issuances; simple entitlement fraud.*

“preliminary reviews” of retaliation complaints to ascertain whether a prima facie case of retaliation exists. Such a “preliminary review” is not considered to be an investigation. However, if the Ethics Office finds a prima facie case of retaliation, it then refers the matter to OIOS for a complete investigation.

Action based on investigations

41. Fraud and corruption, if committed by any member of personnel, constitutes misconduct for which a disciplinary measure may be imposed, including dismissal, in accordance with UNITAR policies.

42. The allegations, if substantiated by the investigation, may result in disciplinary and/or administrative actions or other actions taken by UNITAR, depending on the case. The outcomes may include the following measures:
 - a. For regular staff members, disciplinary and/or administrative actions;
 - b. For non-staff personnel, non-renewal or termination of their contract or other action as deemed necessary;
 - c. For vendors, implementing partners, NGOs and CSOs, termination of the contract and exclusion from doing business with UNITAR and/or other sanctions;
 - d. Referral to the national authorities of a Member State for criminal investigation and prosecution; and
 - e. Recovery of financial loss and/or assets suffered by UNITAR, and to return funds recovered to the respective funding sources.

All resolved fraud and corruption cases should be considered, with appropriate care for confidentiality, for use as an example for regular staff members and non-staff personnel.