



**THE RAIN WORKERS**  
*Let women rise!*

# Code of Conduct

## THE RAIN WORKERS

### Network for sexual and reproductive Health

#### Introduction

The foundations of this catalogue of values were developed together with trainers, full-time employees and members of the Executive Board and the final result was approved by the Executive Board on 20<sup>th</sup> of February 2023. Several contents were incorporated into this process:

- Feedback and experience from local RAIN WORKERS trainers and RAIN WORKERS,
- Observations and analyses by the Head Office team and representatives of all committees,
- Analysis and evaluation of current ethics processes and their "state of the art" results in the NGO sector, with a focus on international cooperation.

All full-time and voluntary employees of THE RAIN WORKERS were invited to actively participate in this process.

#### Binding Nature of the Directive

The provisions of this Code of Conduct are binding for all full-time and volunteer employees of THE RAIN WORKERS. Trainers in particular are called upon to consciously fulfil their increased responsibility and role model function and to act accordingly.

Violations of the Code of Conduct can cause lasting damage to the reputation of THE RAIN WORKERS and damage the organisation. They may therefore have consequences for the employee concerned under labour law (e.g. dismissal, loss of function, revocation of membership).

#### THE RAIN WORKERS

The core activity of THE RAIN WORKERS is to empower people in partner countries by imparting knowledge on family planning and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). This education programme is called "Knowledge as a Chance".

The result is self-determination over one's own body, responsible sexual behaviour and sustainable family and life planning. Derived from our work to educate and train multipliers to disseminate SRHR knowledge, we see ourselves as an educational NGO for women's empowerment wherever we are active: in the Global South as well as in the Global North.

Through our work, we build a perpetual cycle of empowerment: Empowered women lead to healthy sustainable families - this strengthens society as a whole and leads to healthy change. Our slogan is: **Let women rise!**

## **We hold the following position and values with regard to our "Knowledge as a Chance" programme**

### **Training and Communication of our Content on Site**

In our training courses, we recognise the knowledge of our partners, promote the acquisition of knowledge and the ability to reflect, make decisions and plan, and provide new ways of thinking.

In the workshops, we offer participants a safe space in which local taboos (such as homosexuality, safe abortion, masturbation) can and should be addressed openly, even if it is not (yet) possible to communicate them in public. Our participants should be encouraged to think critically and scrutinise.

The local partner organisations apply the appropriate content independently and autonomously during the on-site placement.

### **Training Materials and BIG 5 TEACHING TOOLS**

In dialogue with our trainers, the tools and training materials are subject to constant critical reflection and a regular improvement process.

### **Exchange at Eye-Level**

We are aware that as a Northern NGO, as "whites", we have privileges that are based on colonial and racist patterns, even if we deeply reject them. For this very reason, we try all the more to regard equality and equal value as the determining factors in our working relationships with partner organisations, workshop participants and any other people who cooperate with us.

Training and other forms of cooperation are always a reciprocal exchange between us and our partners and partner organisations. We learn from each other.

### **Relationships with Partner Organizations**

We disclose when full-time staff members or board members are simultaneously active in organizations that operate in the same field. This information is transparently available on our website.

Full-time staff members and board members do NOT make private payments to project partners or to current or former RAIN WORKERS.

All relationships with project partners are based on transparent and professional processes.

## Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

We use AI-powered tools, such as ChatGPT, to make our work more efficient and of higher quality – especially for linguistic revision, proofreading, and optimization of texts.

We ensure that no sensitive or personal data is entered, and we carefully review all AI-generated content before reusing or publishing it.

AI serves as a supportive tool – the content responsibility always lies with us. Donation letters or personal communication with supporters are NOT generated by AI.

## Family (sustainable & healthy)

Each person is free to decide what they understand by family. We recognise any form of cohabitation of at least one adult person with at least one child as a "family"; we understand other forms of cohabitation of adults as "relationships".

The physical, psychological and mental health of a family whose size is chosen by both partners on the basis of economic, social and personal opportunities is important to us.

A sustainable & healthy family refers to:

- all members of the family,
- Mother and child health,
- early knowledge of sexual and reproductive health,
- access to and use of modern contraceptive methods,
- the observance of human rights, women's rights and children's rights.

## Family Planning

We see family planning as a human right that is inextricably linked to pregnancy planning. This helps women to determine the number of pregnancies and their role as parents themselves and thus to take their life planning into their own hands.

We see family planning as an essential contribution to realising the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and reducing poverty.

## Feminism

For us, feminism means standing up for equal opportunities for all genders and an end to predetermined gender roles. We stand for self-determination, freedom and equality for all people.

## Fundraising and Ethics

The work of THE RAIN WORKERS is financed by public funding as well as private monetary donations.

We accept donations and enter into partnerships with companies, foundations, institutions, or private individuals only when their business practices and values align with those of THE RAIN

WORKERS and support our image. We specifically seek partnerships with companies whose products and services have a positive impact on both people and nature.

We reserve the right to refuse financial contributions from companies that are not compatible with our ethical principles.

Excluded Industries:

- Manufacturers and/or distributors of armaments
- (Military) supporters of totalitarian governments, regimes, or parties
- Prostitution, human trafficking, child labor, etc.
- Media with pornographic or racist content
- Manufacturers and/or distributors of tobacco products
- Gambling industry

All other industries are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The key criterion is the positive impact on people and the environment. Our ethical principles, human rights, feminist values, the implementation of the SDGs, fair working conditions, and adherence to current supply chain regulations are of the highest priority.

THE RAIN WORKERS is happy to cooperate with institutions and donors who are aware of their social, ecological, and societal responsibilities. Adherence to the UN Human Rights Convention, prohibition of discrimination, and diversity management are important criteria. CSR programs (Corporate Social Responsibility) concerning people, animals, and the environment, as well as compliance with WHO declarations, are welcomed.

We do not accept funds from illegal sources. The decision to reject a donation is made after careful review and ultimately by the board and management. We reserve the right to refuse a donation without providing a reason. The use of the name and logo of THE RAIN WORKERS requires prior explicit written approval from the association.

THE RAIN WORKERS uses all funds appropriately and as efficiently as possible to ensure the best possible professional support for the beneficiaries of the association. Our annual reports, including the source of donations and the use of funds, are publicly available on THE RAIN WORKERS website.

### **Holistic approach**

The uniqueness of our programme lies in the fact that we teach medical, psychosocial and human rights content that is presented in an easily understandable way using educational and didactic tools. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and human rights serve as our global framework.

### **Gender-based Violence (GBV)**

We reject patriarchal structures and systems of oppression that tolerate and promote violence against women, men and non-binary genders in terms of physical, mental and emotional health and economic freedom.

With our educational work, we empower people and enable new paths beyond patriarchal patterns. We give society the impetus to develop healthy role models for all genders. In this way, we make a strong contribution to ending GBV.

### **Genital Self-Determination**

We are in favour of genital self-determination for children and adults, and explain the physical, psychological and mental problems that genital mutilation and circumcision can cause.

In accordance with the purpose of our organisation, we focus on prohibited practices of female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C), which constitute serious bodily harm and torture.

### **Gender Models**

We recognise that the binary gender model, which defines biological predispositions as exclusively female or male, is outdated in terms of social self-definitions and gender identities. It is a global fact that people have diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, even if it is often taboo and prohibited by law.

### **Gender-equitable Society**

We know that boys and men play a key role in the transformation to "healthy" gender-equitable societies. They are an important target group both as multipliers and trainers and as participants.

We motivate them to recognise their individual, family and social responsibility as brothers, partners, fathers, friends, decision-makers and educators, to define and position themselves as new "role models".

Early, structural, holistic education changes hardened, oppressive role stereotypes and empowers young people to develop healthy, new understandings of their roles. In this way, they contribute to gender equality. This applies to our educational and awareness-raising work in both the Global North and the Global South.

### **Global South and Global North**

We use the terms "Global South" and "Global North" to describe different political, economic and cultural positions in a global context. The Global South describes a disadvantaged social, political and economic position. Global North describes the primarily "white" world, which belongs to the globally privileged class due to its economic resources.

We are aware that the previously used terms "developing country" or even "third world" express a Eurocentric and hierarchical view that we reject.

### **International Co-operation**

We use the term "International Cooperation" instead of "Development Cooperation" because, for us, it represents the collaboration between the Global North and the Global South to jointly address global challenges.

We are aware that the currently used term "Development Cooperation" is intended to express a partnership. However, due to the dependency of the partners, power imbalances, and often a lack of sustainability, this term is criticized.

We agree that International Cooperation must

- be open to self-determined development paths,
- align with minimum human rights standards,
- and meet the aspect of sustainability.

### **Children's Rights and Needs**

We recognise the importance of providing information about sexual and reproductive health and rights as early as possible and about family planning in terms of education and life planning. Through our work, we support the realisation of children's rights, particularly with regard to the protection of physical integrity and opportunities for education and care.

### **Cultural Awareness and Intercultural Competence**

We have understanding and respect for the other languages, behaviours, habits, traditions and cultures of our partners. We have the willingness to learn to understand that other cultures have a different perception of the world or ways of life.

We recognise diversity and try to interact with each other without prejudice, aware of our own cultural and social characteristics. The following key factors guide our cooperation with our partners:

- Respect, empathy and tolerance
- Openness and impartiality
- Ability to change perspectives
- Willingness to learn and adaptability
- Ability for reflection and error culture

### **Human Rights**

We are committed to upholding the principles of the UN Universal Convention on Human Rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and provide information about them.

### **Networks and Partnerships**

THE RAIN WORKERS is competent in the training of multipliers on sexual and reproductive health and rights and the development of corresponding projects and curricula. We contribute our skills where they are lacking and cooperate with partners who complement our expertise. We refer to people and organisations with complementary expertise and services. We therefore see ourselves as a networking NGO.

## Personal Rights

We respect the dignity and personal rights of our training participants and request permission to use their images and personal information (name, marital status, profession, statements).

We handle sensitive photos of children with care and avoid the typical Africa-suffering-victim discourse.

## Patriarchy / Patriarchal Structures

We reject patriarchal structures because they systematically restrict self-determination, sexual and reproductive rights, and equal participation. We advocate for a feminist practice based on solidarity, justice, and a critical examination of power—both in our project work and within our internal structures. We consciously focus on non-discriminatory language, diverse perspectives, and the empowerment of marginalized voices.

## Politics, Religion, Ethics

THE RAIN WORKERS is politically and denominationally independent. Cooperation is unconditional and without discrimination of gender, sexual orientation, origin, religion, political views or ideology. We respect the local structures.

## Termination of Pregnancy

Every pregnant woman should be able to decide for herself whether she wants to carry the child to term and become a mother. All the more so when it comes to teenage pregnancies, unplanned/unwanted pregnancies or the result of sexual abuse and rape.

We are in favour of free access to abortion, but we know that this is not possible in many countries. We advise women who wish to have an abortion to do so under medical supervision.

We also respect unborn life. That is why we reject abortion as a method of family planning and regard it as an emergency. We provide information about the medical and psychological risks of abortion. Our educational mission is to prevent and inform about contraceptive methods to avoid unplanned/unwanted pregnancies.

Our vision is a world of safe and free access to information on contraceptive methods, abortion and consensual sexual behaviour.

## Self-Determination

The dissemination of "Knowledge as a Chance" increases the chances of a self-determined and responsible life with regard to individual sexual and reproductive health and rights.

We open up spaces for reflection on what conditions are necessary to fulfil the basic needs of the individual, the family and society as a whole. We encourage people to plan their lives in order to fulfil the best possible and self-determined life (in the sense of the SDGs) for themselves, their children and their entire family.

The final decisions regarding life and family planning are made individually.

## Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)

Sexual and reproductive health is a human right. All people are entitled to decide freely and responsibly about their own bodies and reproduction. We are aware that many people, especially girls and women, are denied these rights, which is why we attach great importance to emphasizing the concept of rights.

## Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

We are working to achieve the 2030 Agenda defined by the UN, and communicating family planning and sexual and reproductive health and rights are THE levers for achieving these global goals.

Our work covers the following SDGs in particular:

- SDG 1: No poverty
- SDG 2: No hunger
- SDG3: Good health and well-being
- SDG 4: Quality education
- SDG 5: Gender equality
- SDG 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions
- SDG 17: Partnerships to achieve the goals

## Language

Language creates visibility and reality. Gender-equitable language is an important aspect of promoting gender equality.

We use written and spoken gender-neutral or gender-sensitive. We reject the generic masculine, which understands the male form as the universal norm, as it excludes half of humanity.

With our trainings, we also help people overcome their inability to express themselves: individuals gain the vocabulary for sexual and reproductive body parts, learn to articulate their experiences, and are empowered to recognize and assert their rights.

## Language and FGM/C

In addressing the topic of female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C), we use language that clearly identifies the violence and human rights violation without being unnecessarily shocking, stigmatizing, shaming, or retraumatizing. We follow international recommendations, particularly the EU guidelines, which emphasize the use of respectful and non-violent language.

Our goal is to educate, create space for understanding, and empower those affected. In our communication, we ensure that the term "mutilation" is only used in contexts where it

precisely highlights the injustice. In other cases, we use the more neutral term "cutting" or the local terminology to enable a nuanced, culturally sensitive approach that does not further traumatize or stigmatize the affected individuals. At the same time, we respect the experiences of survivors and provide them with the space to share their own stories and perspectives without re-victimizing them or labeling them as victims.

## Trainers

Trainers at THE RAIN WORKERS bear great responsibility and act as role models. They see collaboration with partners as a joint development. They are co-operation partners who share complex, taboo knowledge. They treat the participants in training as equals. They are learners themselves in the workshops.

Trainers are partners who do not dictate, but offer perspectives and promote individual decisionmaking skills.

## Contraceptive Methods, Contraceptives

We try to take into account mistrust and fear of modern contraceptives, family and social obstacles, religious prohibitions and cultural guidelines and still give people an enlightened, fact-based view.

We emphasise the use of modern contraception, but natural contraception may as well be a recommendation in certain circumstances. We do not carry out medical interventions or distribute contraceptives - unless this is an agreed part of an education project. Our local partners refer to the local availability of contraceptives.

Signature of the Executive Board and management: 20<sup>th</sup> of February 2023

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