



Transparentem Code of Professional Ethics

PREAMBLE

Transparentem transforms industries by allying with workers and communities to uncover abuses in global supply chains and drive labor and environmental justice. Transparentem believes that this approach supports the protection of human rights and promotes positive changes. Throughout our work, we strive to adhere to the highest standards of ethical human rights practice, which include: ensuring the provision of information that is accurate and fair; minimizing harm that may result from our actions; acting independently by avoiding improper influence; holding ourselves accountable; and focusing on the experience and perspectives of people affected by human rights abuses.

Transparentem declares these five principles as the foundation of its ethical human rights practice, including promotion of workers' rights and environmental justice, and requires adherence to these principles by all employees and consultants, and promotes these principles among its partners.

A note of acknowledgement: In developing its own Code of Professional Ethics, Transparentem reviewed several other organizations' documents on ethical principles. The following sources were particularly helpful and, in some cases, Transparentem directly adopted their principles:

- Society of Professional Journalists, [Code of Ethics](#)
- The Fourth Pillar Initiative, [Centering Communities in Business & Human Rights 2.0](#)
- International Labor Organization, [Ethical Guidelines for Research on Child Labor](#) and [Ethical Guidelines for Research on Forced Labor](#)
- National Association of Environmental Professionals, [Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Environmental Professionals](#)
- [Principles of Environmental Justice](#), Environmental Justice Platform adopted at The First People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit
- Conservation International's [Code of Ethics](#)

SEEK TRUTH AND REPORT IT

Human rights practice should be fair, encouraging stakeholders to make their own well-informed judgments based on the provision of accurate information.

Transparentem personnel should:

- Take responsibility for the accuracy of the information they gather and disseminate. Verify information before using or distributing it. Use original sources whenever possible.
- Provide context. Take special care not to misrepresent or oversimplify in promoting, previewing, or summarizing information and points of view.
- Describe sources clearly. The public is entitled to as much information as possible to judge the reliability and motivations of sources.
- Reserve anonymity or confidentiality for sources that request it or who may face danger, retribution, or other harm, and have information that cannot be obtained elsewhere. Explain why anonymity was granted.
- Maintain high standards in the collection and reporting of scientific data.
- Allow entities to whom harms are attributed to respond to criticism or allegations of wrongdoing.
- Be vigilant and courageous about holding those with power accountable.



- Avoid stereotyping and examine the ways their own values, identity and experiences may influence their work.

MINIMIZE HARM

Ethical human rights practice treats sources, subjects, colleagues and members of the public as human beings deserving of respect and of rights protection.

Transparentem personnel should:

- Ensure that workers, communities, and the environment are not worse off after the work is completed. Wherever possible the work should result in improvements.
- Assess risks and create strategies to mitigate risks to workers, communities, and the environment throughout our work.
- Ensure fully informed consent by workers and community members.
- Protect identities of workers and community members who may face danger, retribution, or other harm.
- Be cautious when making promises, but keep the promises they make.
- Balance the need for information against potential harm or discomfort caused by gathering or dissemination of that information.
- Use heightened sensitivity when interacting with children, survivors of sexual exploitation and abuse or other trauma, and subjects who are inexperienced or unable to give consent due to mental health or other reasons.
- Respond to safety and security concerns of workers and communities and respond with care to security incidents in a timely manner.
- Ensure cultural and gender considerations are incorporated into investigations and all forms of engagement.
- Consider the fundamental human right to development when it conflicts with ideal standards of environmental stewardship. Recognize that communities most impacted by climate change and environmental degradation often bear the least responsibility for causing it.
- Value the fundamental human right to privacy. Any access, review, or collection of private data or confidential information must be supported by a legitimate organizational purpose.
- Use vetted and approved data systems to ensure secure data.

ACT INDEPENDENTLY

Human rights practice should seek to eliminate bias of all kinds.

Transparentem personnel should:

- Avoid conflicts of interest, real or perceived. Disclose unavoidable conflicts.
- Refuse gifts, favors, fees, free travel and special treatment, and avoid political and other outside activities that may compromise integrity or impartiality, or may damage credibility.
- Be wary of sources offering information for favors or money. Do not pay affected workers or community members for access to information. Identify content provided by outside sources, whether paid or not.
- Deny favored treatment to donors or any other special interests, and resist internal and external pressure to influence reporting.
- Never offer or promise anything of value to improperly influence or reward an action or decision.

BE ACCOUNTABLE AND TRANSPARENT

Ethical human rights practice means taking responsibility for one's work, by explaining one's decisions to stakeholders and the public and holding oneself to high standards of human rights protection.

Transparentem personnel should:

- Explain the ethical basis of choices and processes to workers, communities, and stakeholders. Encourage a civil dialogue about human rights-based practices.
- Respond quickly to questions about accuracy, clarity, and fairness.
- Acknowledge mistakes and correct them promptly and prominently. Explain corrections and clarifications carefully and clearly.
- Expose any unethical conduct, including within one's own organization.
- To the extent possible without causing harm, be transparent about Transparentem's procedures and methods for data collection and interpretation.
- Clearly describe the evidence for information we disclose and publish.
- Strive to ingrain sustainability into our organizational culture, including consideration of our impact on the environment, climate and human rights.
- Respect international conventions that promote and protect human rights and promote adherence to the same standards by all employees, contractors, and partners.
- Abide by applicable domestic laws.
- Monitor, evaluate, and learn from all processes and projects to strengthen adherence to ethical standards and enhance protection of workers, communities, and the environment.

CENTER WORKERS AND COMMUNITIES

Ethical human rights practice seeks to understand the experience, perspectives, and views of people whose human rights have been violated or are under threat. Respect is due to the agency of people who have been systematically marginalized.

Transparentem personnel should:

- Understand the local context of investigations.
- Create alliances and collaborate with local stakeholders.
- Make workers and communities affected by labor and environmental abuses central to the development of and advocacy for recommended solutions. Promote their ability to participate in all aspects of decision-making.
- Understand that workers and communities are diverse and have diverse and evolving interests and views, but do not use this diversity as an excuse for lack of consultation or failing to center them.
- Promote workers' and communities' rights to advocate for themselves and to engage governments and business enterprises on issues that affect their lives and livelihoods.
- Recognize that workers and communities are the primary experts on their own living, working, and environmental conditions. Promote the elimination of obstacles to workers' and communities' participation, including discrimination and retaliation, and the provision of resources to enable active participation.
- Treat all workers and community members equitably with gender and cultural sensitivity. Pay special regard to the rights, culture and histories of indigenous peoples.