

Taksvärkki's ethical principles and operating instructions for personnel, board members, volunteers and others acting on behalf of the organization

### Purpose of the Code of Conduct is to:

- make visible the values and the ethical guidelines that Taksvärkki and its representatives commit to follow in their operations
- protect the children and young people involved in the activities and define how we work with minors
- make visible the legal protection for victims of mistreatment
- help identify and prevent potential abuse
- provide guidance on how to proceed in cases of misconduct

### General principles:

The organization's staff, volunteers, board members and people acting on its behalf commit to respect and promote human rights, national and international law, and to treat all those involved in the operation with respect and equality.

Those covered by the Code of Conduct must:

- commit to the promotion of equality and refrain from any form of discrimination
- protect children and young people involved and respect their rights
- address detected misconduct, exploitation, harassment and abuse

Those acting on behalf of Taksvärkki are aware of and responsible for the ethical implications of their operations. Ethically sustainable operations also create and maintain a positive public image of the work done by the organization. When starting a new position at Taksvärkki or representing Taksvärkki, one should read this Code of Conduct and be responsible for understanding their significance and following them in their own operations.

Taksvärkki supports and promotes equality in all its activities. This should be reflected when representing the organization in public and participating in campaigns. In the recruitment of volunteers and staff, people belonging to different linguistic, cultural and other minorities are also encouraged to apply for positions in Taksvärkki.

## 1. Knowledge of and commitment to Taksvärkki's operating principles and values

- Taksvärkki's operating principles and values are recorded in its organizational strategy paper, the principles of which the person involved in the operations commits to. The key operating principles and values in all operations are e.g. equality, non-discrimination, respect for diversity and different viewpoints, and appreciation and support for young people's own activeness.
- Those working in Taksvärkki must be aware of their position in the field of the organization and the related power relations and responsibilities. Actors shall refrain from any abuse of power. The key power relationships that emerge in activities are the relationship of the adult to the young person or the child, the relationship of the financier to the recipient of the funding, and the relationship of the rich state to the less prosperous one.
- Taksvärkki's actors have an obligation to treat everyone (e.g. volunteers, young actors, project participants) equally, regardless of age, culture, gender, marital status, abilities, social or economic status, political opinions, skin color, ethnic background or physical traits, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or any other personal factor.
- Young people involved are seen as active citizens, playing an important role in building a sustainable society

## 2. Ethical principles in communication

Taksvärkki's communication highlights and reflects the voices of the young people participating in projects in the Global South. In Finland, communication highlights especially the views of young people from the perspective of equality, and the action of young people for the development of society.

In all communication, children and the young people are encountered and presented as an individual or as a representative of their youth group, respecting their own views. These views are not used to reinforce stereotypes by generalizing them to the views of a continent, ethnic group, or the like. Messages are collected and transmitted through as equal an encounter as possible. Where possible, young people belonging to vulnerable groups will be given a voice. The interviews or image material to be published will be delivered to the subject of the interview or description.

### **The following principles are to be considered in interviews:**

- The individual protection of the interviewee is maintained and his or her dignity is respected.
- The interviewee has the right to refuse or interrupt the interview at any time.
- If necessary, the confidentiality of the interviews must be agreed in advance (eg evaluations).
- The use of the young person's name (first name and last name) involved in volunteering, school visits or program activities will be agreed on a case-by-case basis. The surname of the minor is not mentioned in any context.
- Interviews with children and young people must be authorized by a guardian.
- The child has the right to say who they want to be present during the interview, for example parents or a teacher. One on one interviews with a child is not desirable.

### **Children in pictures or videos and use of material:**

Capturing images includes both photography and video. The guidelines apply in particular to images in which the child or young person is identifiable, with the exception of images taken in a public place where there are many people and the individual does not stand out much.

- When shooting and using images, the individual protection and dignity of the subjects are taken into account and respected.
- The child must be portrayed with respect and their description must not have any negative consequences for the child and his or her relatives.
- Young people and guardians of minors in pictures and videos need to understand where and how widely the material is used.
- Filming or photographing of children under the age of 18 requires the permission of the child's guardian. Permission to photograph young people who are involved in development co-operation projects is always secured from the project partner. In Finland the permission is asked through a teacher before a school visit or workshop.
- The use of the young person's name (first name and last name) involved in volunteering, school visits or program activities will be agreed on a case-by-case basis. The last names of minors are not published under any circumstances.
- Everyone has the right to refuse to be photographed or filmed, even if the guardian has given permission.
- Staged situations are not presented as authentic.
- Children and young people also have the copyright to the pictures they take themselves that are used in Taksvärkki's communication.
- Concord's "*Code of Conduct on Images and Messages*" also provides general guidance on the use of images.

### 3. Protection of children and young people involved in the activities and respect for children's rights

Taksvärkki commits to treat children and young people in a way that respects their rights, physical integrity, inviolability and dignity, and considers their best interests equally. Respect for children and maintaining trust are central to all activities. When working with children and young people, special attention is paid to ensuring the safety of the operating environment. In this case, staff, volunteers and others involved in the activity have a responsibility and obligation to intervene in the exploitation of children or young people or in situations that threaten safety.

#### Dealing with minors during school visits

- Taksvärkki's global citizenship educators, regional coordinators and other representatives are guests in schools and youth centers, and the responsibility for young people lies with the teacher or instructor.
- During school visits and workshops, a separate *Taksvärkki's guide for safe workshops* is followed, which the volunteers are introduced to during their training. The key principles of the guidelines are respect for children and young people, encouragement, non-discrimination and respect for privacy.
- School visits and workshops are conducted in confidence. No offensive or derogatory information or opinions will be shared with children and young people during the event.
- *Teacher's values and ethical principles* (OAJ) are followed when hosting workshops in schools: respect for human dignity, truthfulness and justice.

#### Minors involved in events

- At events or in the office, minors are always accompanied by two adults, unless otherwise agreed with the child's guardian, teacher or counselor.
- At least one adult is present in public areas.

- An adult representative of Taksvärkki has the main responsibility for their own events, even if the children are involved in planning or implementing the event.
- Minor volunteers, team members or interns are not overburdened, and the workload must be suitable for their age.

### **Children and young people participating in Taksvärkki Fundraising Day**

Schools and educational institutions traditionally organize a Taksvärkki Fundraising Day on their own initiative. The event is part of schoolwork and the day is organized by the educational institution itself. Taksvärkki instructs educational institutions and employers on the responsibilities and obligations related to Taksvärkki work on an institution-by-institution and employer-by-employer basis, and generally via websites and social media. Key guidelines and responsibilities include:

- Taksvärkki Day must not be too burdensome or challenging for the child's level of development or age
- The employer must comply with legislation and labor market agreements during working hours and in relation to workload
- Schools have their own insurance for school time, but Taksvärkki also takes out insurance for all Taksvärkki Day participants

### **Communication with children and young people**

Communication with the minors involved in the activity takes place, if possible, through a teacher or a youth counselor. Communication with the students involved in the collaborative project takes place through the teacher.

Two adult representatives of the organization must be involved in the work-related contact with the minor volunteer or trainee. Two adults are also involved in an email, WhatsApp, or other communication chains.

## **4. Intervening unfair treatment, exploitation and misconduct**

Taksvärkki adheres to principles of openness, transparency and accountability in all its activities. This guide supports individuals representing the organization to prevent misconduct. Financial irregularities are also prevented by a comprehensive financial code and internal and external audit. If, in spite of everything, irregularities are detected, they will be addressed and reported as follows:

- In co-operation with schools or youth groups, the primary responsibility lies with the institution and the teacher or counselor. If misconduct or abuse is detected during the workshop, the person in charge will be notified verbally. If the abuser is the person in charge of the workshop, his or her supervisor will be notified of the abuse.
- In activities where Taksvärkki is the main responsible organizer, the executive director will be notified in writing of any misconduct or serious violation of this Code of Ethics or any suspicion thereof. The executive director is required to hear the suspected party and is responsible for following up the misconduct. If the suspect of serious misconduct is a member of the permanent staff and the suspicion turns out to be true, the final decision is made by the board of the association on the basis of a written report from the executive director.
- A staff member or volunteer is required to notify the chairperson of the association in writing if he or she suspects the executive director of abuse of power or other serious misconduct. In this case, it is the responsibility of the chairperson to consult the executive director. The board of the association makes decisions based on the hearings.
- If the abuse is of a criminal nature, the person responsible is obliged to report the crime to the police.

## 5. Taking care of the reputation and inviolability of the organization

Those involved in Taksvärkki's activities create and maintain the organization's public image. They do not publicly violate Taksvärkki's ethical guidelines, nor do they spread untrue, misleading or offensive views about Taksvärkki. Adherence to ethical guidelines and values is a key factor in maintaining a good public image and demonstrates a commitment to the values of the organization. When representing Taksvärkki, staff, volunteers, trustees or others act on behalf of the organization in accordance with the ethical guidelines, also on social media.

### **On social media and email:**

- All relevant comments and questions will be answered
- When employees write on social media as private individuals about things related to Taksvärkki, they need to make it clear that the opinions are their own.
- Taksvärkki's own accounts and accounts using Taksvärkki's name respect the rules and copyrights of the online communities. All published material must be licensed.

## 6. Development co-operation project partners

Development cooperation project partners are required to have their own ethical guidelines, which are submitted to Taksvärkki for review and which are in line with Taksvärkki's ethical guidelines. The ethical standards required by Taksvärkki from its project partners, as well as the rules on internal and external audit to prevent corruption, are included in the program manual and project-specific cooperation agreements made available to project partners. Cooperation agreements include an obligation to act in accordance with these ethical guidelines and anti-corruption guidelines.

The ethical guidelines included in the program manual for project partners pay particular attention to the safe environment for young people involved in the project, especially for the prevention of violence, sexual harassment and any form of abuse in the project environment. The guidelines also include the code of conduct and operating instructions related to project visits of Taksvärkki's representatives.

### **Action to be taken when irregularities are detected in development cooperation projects:**

- If, on the basis of Taksvärkki's own monitoring and other inspections, activities are found to be in serious breach of regulations and guidelines, the co-operation agreement may be terminated. Any observed breaches or development points in terms of ethical basis for operations will be discussed with the project partner and corrective actions will be recorded.
- If corruption is found in project activities supported by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry is notified of this through an online notification service and by responsible official of Taksvärkki to the Ministry in writing.
- More detailed and more practical level guidelines for development cooperation project activities are recorded in the programme manual.

## 7. Ethical principles of business cooperation

There is a separate guideline on the ethical principles of business cooperation, the key principles of which are common values, especially with regard to the rights of young people and children.