



STREETNET INTERNATIONAL CODE of CONDUCT

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS

Respect and equality

It is important for members to develop respect and equality between themselves, which will include respecting the leaders they have elected into positions.

Majority decisions and freedom of expression

Freedom of expression is one of the fundamental principles of democracy. This means that all individual members have the right to express their views and organise or canvas in support thereof. However, should they not succeed in having their views adopted by the majority, they should support and recognize the decision of the majority.

The right to freedom of expression does not mean incitement to violence, promoting hatred based on race, ethnicity, gender or religion, which might cause harm to an individual or the organization.

The process of reaching decisions should always be democratic. Members should have the opportunity to engage in meaningful discussion to enable them to reach decisions.

Therefore it is essential that if the majority of members agree on a particular issue, it should have the blessing of the rest, even if all do not agree with the majority. Majority decisions should be recognized and respected by all in the organisation.

Violence or slander

Individual freedoms and rights are part of democratic principles.

No violence or intimidation should take place within any of the organizations in the alliance. Any form of dispute or disagreement should be subjected to a process of deliberation and airing of different views, and settled through democratic methods.

Suppression of views is anti-democratic, and should not be allowed. Personal or political slander and the spreading of rumours should also be disallowed as undemocratic.

Differences should be subjected to an open debate amongst members and resolved as such.

Discipline

Members should exercise self-discipline as individuals in the organization, because ill discipline leads to organizational dysfunction.

Members should be disciplined in the context of the organization, which shall mean carrying out mandates of the organization as agreed democratically by constitutional structures.

Members as individuals should be self-disciplined in relation to personal behaviour, as it plays an important role as to how people conduct themselves in the treatment of others.

Honesty and loyalty

Members should all be honest and loyal to the organization. This means that members should at all times act or behave in a way that shows they have the interests of the organization at heart.

Corruption either in the workplace or the organization shall mean any act whereby a person or group of persons engages in fraudulent practices or moral deterioration. Members who engage in such actions shall be seen to be dishonest and disloyal to their organization and colleagues.

Members are bound to act according to the policies and uphold the constitution as the supreme law of the organization. Members have the right to defend their organization against any form of process that might lead to the dissolving of the organization.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ELECTED LEADERS

Honesty

- Shall mean fair and just in character and behaviour.
- An elected leader must be honest with members and the organization.
- Each and every leader will be expected not to steal or misuse the organisation's funds.
- Each and every leader will be expected not to engage in any fraudulent activity.
- Any money collected on behalf of the organization will be banked and spent in accordance with the purpose intended for, as outlined in the constitution.
- Assets of the organization will be used for organizational purposes and may not be used for personal gain without approval or knowledge of the organization – e.g. hired cars, equipment and buildings (offices).

- Leaders are expected to be truthful to the organization. This will mean giving correct reports and not concealing or manipulating things for their own benefit.
- Leaders are expected to act at all times in the benefit of the organization and not use their positions to benefit themselves.

Loyalty

This means owing allegiance to devote to the organization.

- An elected leader shall be loyal to the organization and the members who elect him/her. A leader will at all times act in the interests of the organization and its members.
- If an elected leader belongs to other organizations or institutions, s/he shall make sure that his/her involvement is not in conflict with the organization.
- Elected leaders are expected not to discuss organizational issues with other organizations or gossip about the organization.
- Elected leaders are expected to be open. If any has problems with someone in the organization, s/he must resolve it with the person or within the organization.
- At certain stages there could be conflicts in terms of loyalty, where an individual is loyal to a particular person or structures within the organization. In such cases the individual must always be guided by what is in the interests of the organisation as a whole.
- Elected leaders should have open attitudes – they should be open to different views and encourage the expression of different views throughout the organization.
- Elected leaders should at all times avoid cliques. They should encourage open discussions and dialogues with a view to resolving differences in a democratic way within the structures of the organization.

Conflicts of interest

Elected leaders should avoid conflicts of interest which make it impossible for them to primarily serve the interests of the members who elected them.

- In the case of street vendors, informal market vendors and hawkers, it is clear that municipal employees, market managers or labour brokers are not in a position to primarily and unambiguously serve the interests of their members at all times – and therefore municipal employees, market managers or labour brokers cannot be eligible to be elected as leaders in the organization.
- In the case of elected leaders who are subsequently appointed to work for any level of government, they will be expected to choose between (1) whether to decline the government position or (2) to resign their elected position.
- In the case of vendors who have their own employees, they need to ensure that they do not intentionally or unintentionally promote the position of more privileged vendors like themselves at the expense of poorer survivalist street vendors, market vendors and hawkers.

- In the case of male leaders, they are expected to always promote women leadership in conformity with the gender policies of the organization, even when this may be at the expense of their own personal ambitions.

Criticism

An elected leader should encourage criticism of him/herself within the organization.

- Criticism can be positive (building) or negative (destructive). A leader will at all times encourage positive criticism. In a case where someone wants to discuss someone in their absence, a leader should insist that the person be given the opportunity to be present.
- Criticism should not be used as a tool to undermine a person's work. Consideration should be given to contributions made by each person.
- Criticism should at all times be specific, so that it may be understood – not vague or general.

Discipline

Discipline shall mean systems of rules to maintain organizational control.

Elected leaders should be self-disciplined, i.e:

- they should not act on their own;
- they should show what they believe to be the correct way to discuss and decide matters according to the structures of the organization;
- they should not make unfounded allegations or spread rumours;
- they will always respect decisions taken by the structures of the organization, whether or not they personally agree with such decisions.

Resolving differences

Leaders should always be willing to do whatever it takes to resolve personal differences between themselves in the broader interests of the organization, no matter what the costs to themselves.

The personal reputation of a leader is always enhanced by selfless behaviour, including willingness to forfeit personal status for the broader good of the organisation.

Personal behavior

Personal behaviour means the way people conduct themselves in the treatment of others – and it plays an important role in an organization.

Personal behaviour of elected leaders is very important to the organization as it could have consequences for the organization.

Abuse of substances while on organizational business should be refrained from or avoided. Even after hours at StreetNet events, leaders are expected to set an example and not induce substance abuse by those of their colleagues who are not accustomed thereto.

Personal relationships should not be detrimental or bring negative effects to the organization. Personal relationships which compromise the personal integrity of women leaders in their organizational and/or personal lives are subtly undermining to StreetNet's gender policies and unacceptable in the organization.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PAID EMPLOYEES

(referred to as “staff”)

This document does not replace staff conditions of service, but is a guide to staff over and above the conditions of service, as to what is expected of them in terms of their conduct in the organization.

Honesty

This means being fair and just in character and behaviour.

- Staff should be honest to the organization in executing their duties.
- Act in a way that maintains the honour and dignity of the organization by not engaging in fraudulent practices or morally degenerative activities.

Loyalty

- Staff have to always work within the policies and constitution of the organisation.
- Staff cannot engage in activities which could adversely affect the organization.

Discipline

- Staff should act in a disciplined manner as they are often the face of the organization to the public – exemplary in terms of how to discuss issues within the organization, showing correct ways of discussing issues within the organisation's structure and context.
- Staff should be self-disciplined in terms of personal behaviour, which means staff should conduct themselves in a manner as set out within the systems of the organization that maintains rules of control.

Implementation

Staff should be objective in the way that they deal with issues. The role of the staff is to further the interests of the organization, i.e. to represent the organization and carry out mandates. In the process of implementation staff should be objective.

Non-discrimination

Staff should uphold the principles of non-discrimination based on sex, race, ethnicity, and disability within the organization.

Professionalism

Staff should carry out their duties in a professional manner, i.e. maintaining high and quality standards in the execution of their duties.

Professional standards should be viewed in the organization context – that is not in a corporate context but a democratic context for the benefit of street vendors, informal market vendors and hawkers.

This means being reliable, e.g.

- being on time at work and for appointments;
- keeping promises that you make, and not making those that you cannot keep;
- being efficient and getting the work done;
- becoming skilled at all aspects of the work;
- being committed to the job and the objectives of the organization;
- carrying out the tasks related to the job on behalf of the organization or members within the context of authorization and duty obligations as outlined in the job description and conditions of service.

Professionalism does NOT mean looking down on members with a low level of education or literacy. Staff are accountable to the members of the organization no matter how little formal education they may have.

Correct attitude towards street vendors, informal market vendors and hawkers

Essentially the organization is an organization for street vendors, informal market vendors and hawkers, who are often marginalized in society, and therefore it is important for staff to distance themselves from such social attitudes and to develop a correct and respectful attitude towards the members.

Helping members to take decisions and democratic control over their organization and not becoming an authority over them.

Show respect to members on a daily basis. Always remember to be accountable to them.

Being patient, not assuming that they understand issues that were not properly explained.

Do not abuse your position of knowledge and experience to undermine the constitutional authority of the members.

Use of organizational facilities

As part of the work of staff, they use facilities of the organization, such as telephones, faxes, offices (and sometimes vehicles or cell phones). It is therefore important to maintain these facilities in good working order as far as possible.

Property of the organization should be used with care and within the parameters as defined by the organization.

Relations with colleagues (co-workers)

It is important that sound relationships develop between co-workers.

Staff members should not undermine the confidence of other staff members.

Staff should rise above personal issues and act in a manner in which they build and promote sound relations.

Staff members should not take steps, because of animosity or personal advantages, to secure the dismissal of another staff member.

Staff should treat fellow co-workers with respect.

Negative personal relationships should not affect the manner in which staff carry out their work or work together.

Promote good interpersonal relationships.