

A Code of Responsibility for Alliance-Respons

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4 April 2017

Composition of a Draft Code of Responsibility is underway. The Code of Responsibility is a strategic intervention that is both functional and aspirational for the Alliance:

The utility/function of the Code is to provide guidance for the leadership and members of the Alliance for Responsible and Sustainable Societies: internal procedures, project work, partnerships, and relationships in spheres beyond the Alliance. The Code will articulate how responsibility is operational in the practices, policies and governance of the Alliance. In many respects, the practices of Alliance-Respons are already consistent with the Code. By adopting the Code, the Alliance commits to being an exemplary model and to holding itself accountable to the ethic of responsibility in policies, procedures and practices.

The aspiration of the Code is to encourage, by example, other initiatives to articulate and put into practice their commitments to responsibility as a foundational principle. Furthermore the Code is a tool for engaging broader discussions about how to place responsibility at the core of the transition to sustainable societies.

The Code adapts principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities and the [Draft] Universal Declaration of Interdependence and Responsibility, both of which are informed by decades of consultation and implementation among diverse cultures and groups around the world. The Code is further informed by groups and organizations (from many cultures and regions) that express a value of responsibility while having different missions and objectives.

The Code of Responsibility is distinct from a Code of Conduct

The Code represents an intentional shift from conventional codes of conduct/conflict of interest that specify proscribed behavior (what NOT to do) to voluntary adoption of a Code of Responsibility that articulates shared values and associated behavior (what TO DO).

This project is an outcome of deliberations by the Alliance-Respons Advisory Committee. Alliance-Respons initially planned to compose a Code of Conduct to guide the deliberations, actions and decisions of its governing body (initially the Steering Committee, now the Advisory Committee). Codes of Conduct are generally normative, providing guidance in the interest of maintaining integrity of a single organization, company or profession. Such Codes also serve as indicators of the boundaries of acceptable behavior and practice, and may be used as legal disciplinary regimes to ensure conformity, inclusion and exclusion.

As an international network asserting and promoting responsibility as a common ethical principle, the Alliance's impact and credibility call for the Alliance to model exemplary practices: our internal and external actions and procedures must align with the advocacy of responsibility as a universal ethical principle. On reflection, the Steering Committee proposed, instead of a Code of Conduct for the Alliance for Responsible and Sustainable Societies, to develop a Code of Responsibility.