

ANTI-CORRUPTION POLICY

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This Anti-Corruption Policy serves as the basis for Left International Forum's anti-corruption work. It clarifies how Left International Forum defines corruption and how it affects our development cooperation work. It also outlines our basic principles for combating corruption, both in general and within the organisation. The Policy is annexed to all our agreements with partner organisations.

1. Background

Corruption is a serious obstacle to peace, democracy, and sustainable development. It affects marginalised groups, who pay higher costs and have less access to essential public services and decision-making positions.

Corruption is widespread in many countries where Left International Forum has partner organisations. Fighting corruption is a prerequisite for Left International Forum to contribute to a democratic and equal world with respect for human rights.

2. Left International Forum's definition of corruption

Left International Forum defines corruption as the abuse of trust, power, and position for improper gain that benefits a person, organisation, or other.

Corruption can be both financial or non-financial, and it can include different types of behaviours and irregularities, among other things, but not limited to:

- **Favouritism/conflict of interest:** Unfair favouring of a person or group at the expense of others.
- **Nepotism:** Improper use of one's employment or position to favour or benefit relatives, friends, associates or another partner.
- **Fraud:** Falsification of documents, brand fraud, financial fraud, procurement fraud, facilitation payments, bias, deception, embezzlement, forgery, the unnecessarily wasteful use of resources, and theft.
- **Bribery, including the bribery of foreign officials:** Providing goods or services in return for improper compensation.
- **Sharing of profits:** Kickbacks, cuts, etc.
- **Misuse of power and/or position:** The use of entrusted power and/or position for personal gain.



- **Sextortion:** The use of entrusted power for sexual favours. For example, in exchange for food, medical help, etc.
- **Failure to act:** For example, failure to report to management/donor or police when suspicions arise.

3. Obligation to report

Employees, interns, Board Members, contracted consultants, and partner organisations are required to act on any suspected corruption cases and to inform Left International Forum in accordance with this policy. Failure to report suspicion may lead to legal action or other disciplinary measures. Fear of losing public or financial support will never be accepted as an excuse for failure to report. Left International Forum has a whistleblower system that allows for the reporting of suspicions of internal corruption or other serious misconduct. All reported cases following this policy are investigated.

Left International Forum reserves the right to withdraw support or deny funding to partner organisations when there are strong indications of corruption or fraud, even if these cannot be proven or when a conviction is not made in a court of law.

4. Challenge to development

All national legislation considers corruption illegal, but there are considerable variations in how the legal systems define and address corrupt behaviour. What may appear to some as illicit or illegal practices might be seen by others as legally and culturally acceptable.

Petty corruption encourages and lays the basis for large-scale corruption and vice versa. Therefore, it is not possible to distinguish between practices that may be generally accepted and expected and those that may be considered "more serious". Local legislation, rules, and regulations must be respected, but never used as an excuse to support corruption or other unethical behaviour. Left International Forum is subject to Swedish legislation and regulations, independent of where and with whom the organisation works.

Corruption poses a serious challenge to development. It undermines democracy and good governance by subverting formal processes. It weakens economic development by generating distortions and inefficiency. Corruption increases the vulnerability of people living in poverty and denies them free and fair access to services that all people are entitled to.

All organisations involved in development cooperation risk being affected by, exposed to, or participating in corruption. Corruption challenges Left International Forum's development work objectives and the organisation's fundamental values.

Left International Forum's support of partner organisations aims to strengthen democracy, political parties, and civil society. Through our support, we work to combat corruption at the societal and political levels, both of which play essential roles in curbing it.



5. Left International Forum's basic principles to combat corruption

Left International Forum's approach towards corruption is always to prevent, never accept, always inform, and always act, even when it might lead to delays, hindrances or total obstruction of operations. To achieve this, Left International Forum is conducting systematic anti-corruption work to create knowledge and promote preventive measures, where mistakes are avoided and failures traced. The following basic principles are guiding our work to fight corruption:

Awareness: To combat corruption and other irregularities, Left International Forum and its partner organisations must be aware of this anti-corruption policy. The aim is to foster a proactive approach to identifying and mitigating risks. Although this policy against corruption and other irregularities is global and absolute, the training and engagement of all involved must be adapted to the local context.

Transparency: An essential part of transparency is having a close but professional relationship with partner organisations. Existing statutes, policies, strategies, plans, decisions, reports, and financial and governance issues must be transparent for staff and others. By providing insight into activities, control is strengthened and confidence is built among employees, donors, partner organisations, and the people for whom the activities are intended.

Accountability: Responsible persons or organisations must be held accountable for their actions by people or groups who have been given the confidence to conduct the work or through legal bodies. To ensure accountability, the Left International Forum and the organisations it supports must have proper oversight structures with clear lines of accountability.

Competence: Left International Forum and partner organisations must have adequate financial and internal control systems and sufficiently competent staff to comply with and work with them. Left International Forum must ensure these systems are in place before signing an Agreement with a partner organisation.

Non-discrimination: Abuse of power perpetuates discrimination; thus, it becomes crucial to consider non-discrimination as a basis for anti-corruption work.

Participation: To fight corruption in practice, civil society organisations must own and influence all relevant processes within the projects at different levels.

The Left International Forum must provide opportunities and platforms for both its own organisation and partner organisations to discuss corruption and its combat. This will ensure increased awareness, transparency, accountability, and competence.

6. Development of anti-corruption work

This policy shall apply to all procurements, including those made by partner organisations.

Boards, governing and oversight structures, and management are responsible for assuring and developing internal control tools and procedures to combat corruption. In practice, preventing corruption is the responsibility of all involved in development cooperation financed by Left International Forum and should be embedded in day-to-day activities.



7. Ownership and follow-up

The Board of Left International Forum reviews this policy annually. The Secretary-General is responsible for ensuring compliance with the policy and related documents, and for keeping them up to date and relevant.

Related documents:

- Whistleblowing policy
- Code of conduct
- Procurement policy
- Order of delegation
- Agreements with partner organisations
- Humentum Financial Health Check