



# Integrity Charter

## Introduction

Geomoun is a Belgian NGO that supports projects that aim to improve the rights of children, their communities and their environment. The projects' design in itself may be important, the professional, relational and human skills of the people who carry them are of crucial importance for their success.

Geomoun's Code of Integrity is built on the universal and everlasting principle: "do as you would be done by." This code thus states that, beyond your own self, you should treat others as your other self. If the code is accompanied by procedures that allow concrete actions to be taken in case the values it defends aren't respected, the integrity shared by the people involved in Geomoun's projects is above all a shared natural law, that of putting oneself in the place of others. This exercise mobilises both reason and empathy and seems to be the basis of coexistence in society, whatever the era, cultural or religious origins. The code is framed on the International Conventions on Human Rights.

Geomoun ensures that its activities are set out in accordance with high standards of independence, integrity, confidentiality, discretion, professionalism and respect for the law and for people.

The integrity and deontology charter applies to the members of the management structures (GA, CA) and all people involved in the implementation of projects supported by Geomoun.

This applies to all relationships with partners and its guiding principles are:

## 1° Commitment

- 1.1 Comply with Geomoun's mission, its area of action and intervention principles.
- 1.2 Adopt a behaviour with respect to Geomoun's values.
- 1.3 Promote gender.
- 1.4 Act independently and impartially, countering any attempt to instrumentalise the actions to preserve Geomoun's mission and the interest of the recipients.

## 2° Respect, Integrity and Conflict of Interest

- 2.1. Respect others and ensure that partners are treated equally.
- 2.2. Respect Children's Rights and consider the child's best interests as the highest stake involved.
- 2.3. Respect national and local laws at all times.
- 2.4. Never accept a situation in which judgement could be influenced by a personal interest, secondary and distinct from the organisation.

- 2.5. Never accept a benefit in order to hijack a decision-making mechanism or in exchange of having an influence on diverting a decision.
- 2.6. Never use any level of physical or verbal violence nor threaten violence.
- 2.7. Prohibit and actively discourage all forms of harassment, including verbal, non-verbal, written or physical abuse.
- 2.8. Never engage in acts of sexual abuse, and report any such acts which has come to their awareness.
- 2.9. Never engage in acts of sexual exploitation and abuse, and report any such acts which have come to their awareness.
- 2.10. Demonstrate the same integrity in both personal and professional activities.

### **3° Transparency and Confidentiality**

- 3.1 Financial transparency: ensure the ethics of the funds that Geomoun mobilises (income and expenses) by being responsible of a sound and transparent, moral and ethical operational and financial management, in accordance with the rules described in Geomoun's procedures manual.
- 3.2 Transparency in collaboration: the targeted aims and activities are shared with all our members and partners.
- 3.3 Transparency in communication in general: messages aim to inform all stakeholders in a spirit of mutual respect and trust.
- 3.4 Confidentiality: the organisation protects and respects the confidentiality of personal data and treats data in accordance with current legislation.

### **4° Loyalty**

- 4.1. The members of the management structures undertake to loyally accomplish their mission and to devote their efforts to the promotion of Geomoun's activities.
- 4.2. The project managers must be guided by the desire to serve and highlight the beneficiaries of the projects: accompany their initiatives; make their expertise known; support their positions without alienating freedom of thought and opinion.
- 4.3. The people in charge of the projects and all those involved in their implementation are aware that they are on the same boat, they favour the defence of the association over the defence of their own personal interests. They commit themselves to show respect and loyalty to each other and to express and resolve their conflicts and differences using the measures of conflict resolution provided within the institution.
- 4.4. Avoid "gossiping."
- 4.5. Never report false facts in bad faith.
- 4.6. Seek to develop trust in and of each person.

### **5° Responsibility**

- 5.1. Commit to doing one's best, seeing that behind every constraint is an opportunity to improve and bounce back.
- 5.2. Answer for one's decisions, those of the association and its actions.
- 5.3. Participate in the continuous improvement of risk management systems and local dysfunctions that could limit the expected impact of the projects.

- 5.4. Ensure that human, financial and material resources are used to the objectives set by Geomoun's projects and its partners.
- 5.5. Advise and guide all persons involved in the implementation of projects to develop adequate supervision and control of their own tasks and to those they delegate.
- 5.6. Keep in mind that project leaders speak on behalf of the Geomoun association when they speak in front of the media and not in their personal name.

## **6° Diversity**

- 6.1. Seek to understand the complexity, diversity and strangeness of the human world.
- 6.2. Fight against intolerance, racism and xenophobia.
- 6.3. Commit to a pluralist and sustainable society, concerned with protecting its multicultural and multi-religious dimensions, promoting gender equality, inclusion, and social and environmental sustainability.
- 6.4. Support pacification processes by supporting local democracy, participatory governance, the recognition of civil society, all local legitimacies and developing mediation actions.
- 6.5. Support decentralisation processes and strengthen the autonomy of local authorities, which guarantees effective management that is as close as possible to the specific characteristics of the territories and the expectations of their populations.
- 6.6. Enhance local community to local community cooperation as a vector of solidarity, development, mutual knowledge and diplomacy.

## **7° Probity, independence and impartiality**

- 7.1. Geomoun's project managers, at all levels of intervention, are neutral, impartial and trustworthy. They are bound by professional secrecy.
- 7.2. They are discreet at all times in their personal political activities and in the expression of their own personal opinions and beliefs.

## **8° Denunciation of abuse**

- 8.1. When an employee is confronted with an ethnic problem with regard to the rules of good conduct cited above, he or she reports it to the complaints manager who will apply the established procedure

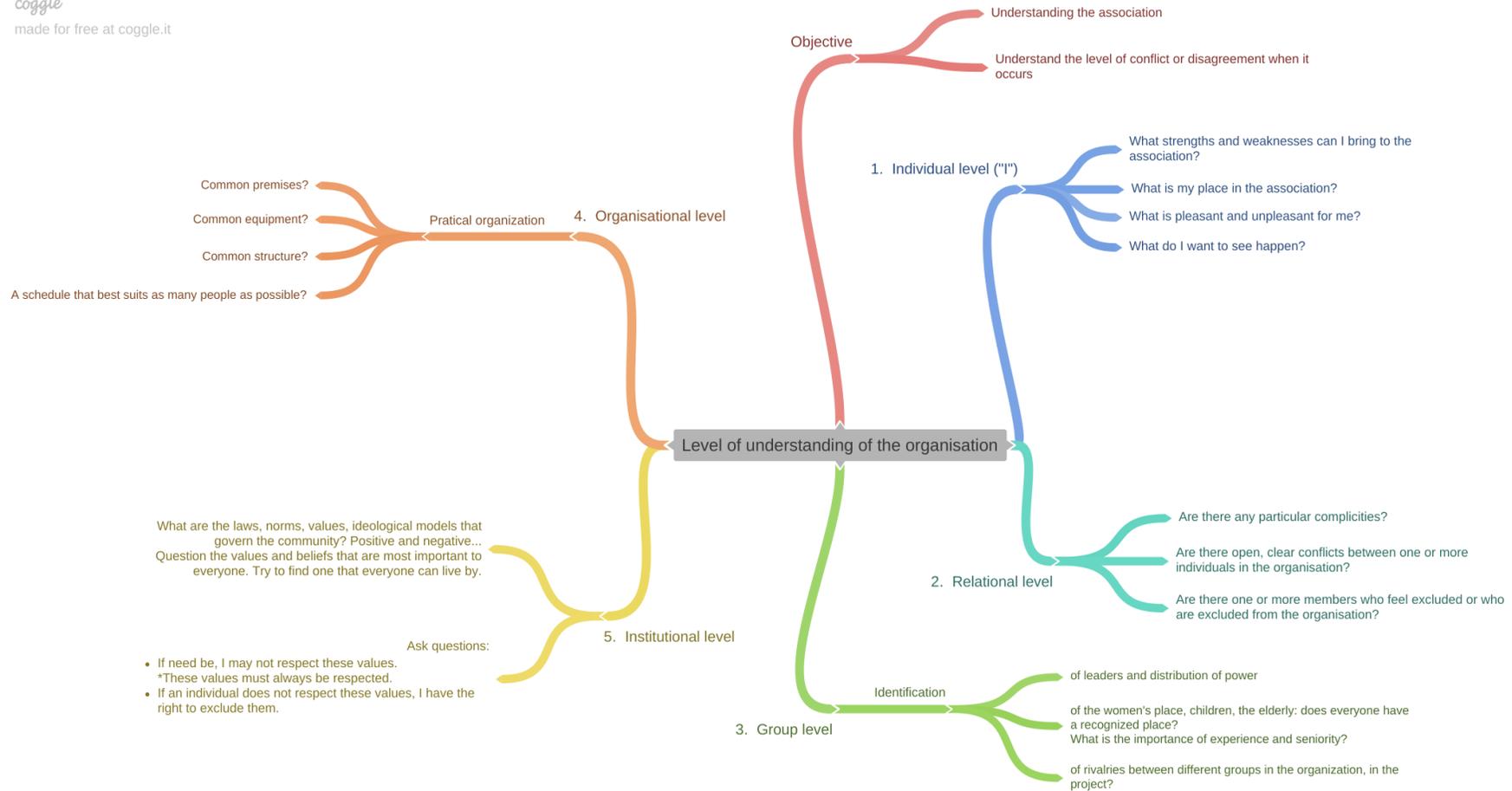
## Application procedures of the Integrity Charter

To reinforce the effective application of the Integrity Charter, a communication process is planned at the start and during the project.

The tool that will be used is based on the analysis of the 5 levels of understanding of Geomoun but also of its partners. They allow to identify the risks linked to the integrity charter.

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## 1. Geomoun in Belgium

- Signature of the charter by the employees of the association, the Board of Directors and the General Assembly.
- Annual assessment of levels of understanding, identification of changes and analysis of related risks.
- Identification and clear communication of the people in charge of the process's application

## 2. Geomoun on-site

- Work on the values and the partner organisation based on the reflection scheme above.
- Identification of the risks linked to the Integrity Charter.
- Adjustment of the Integrity Charter according to the local context (but the framework is and remains imperatively the international conventions on human rights) and risk analysis.
- Identification and clear communication of the people responsible for the application of the process, at Geomoun and within the partner association.

## 3. Identification of the people in charge

Within Geomoun, three functions are defined:

The “**Integrity Manager**” ensures the application of the points of the code in order to maintain a true culture of integrity within the organisation based on values and rules, but also on a logic of transparency and continuous improvement. He or she identifies risks and procedures for controlling potential integrity violations and incorporates them into the partnership policy. It ensures that complaints are dealt with quickly and efficiently. It regularly evaluates the integrity situation within the organisation and proposes avenues for improvement and action plans, also based on active exchange between peers. He or she communicates regularly on integrity violations.

This function is attributed to the Director of Geomoun, Cécile NUYT. E-mail: [cecile@geomoun.org](mailto:cecile@geomoun.org)

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The “**Integrity Advisor**” is the person to whom any employee or volunteer of the organisation can turn in confidence and confidentiality to obtain advice on integrity.

This function is attributed to the President of Geomoun, Damien Vincent. E-mail: [damien.vincent.ltl@gmail.com](mailto:damien.vincent.ltl@gmail.com)

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The function of “**Integrity Complaints Manager**” consists in identifying and suitably dealing with any integrity complaints filed within the organisation. He or she suggests to the

integrity manager possible improvements regarding the internal integrity systems on the basis of the cases handled and the analyses carried out.

This function is attributed to Johanna de Villers, member of the GA.

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