



World Food Programme Ethics Office: 2014 Annual Report Summary

"Every day, we work to make life better for the people we serve. We do this by always serving efficiently, effectively and with the highest standards of conduct and integrity."

Ertharin Cousin
WFP Executive Director

"The Ethics Office has put together this summary of the Ethics Office Annual Report to share the many dimensions of the work done through the Ethics Office in 2014. Starting from a solid foundation created by WFP's first Ethics Officer, Joseph Scalise, maintained by WFP's Ethics Officer ad interim, Gerald Moore, resulted in the opportunity for me, as the new Ethics Officer, to hit the ground running, which is apropos working for WFP!

The Ethics Office progressed in all the areas of its mandate. For example, we saw a tremendous increase in the requests for advice and guidance — more than 60 from 2013, and, for the first time since its inception in 2009, WFP had 100% compliance to its Annual Disclosure Programme. The Ethics Office developed and delivered new trainings and developed and executed, in partnership with heads of other divisions, new communications on salient topics. The Ethics Office has also undertaken several new initiatives — development of an ethics e-learning, which is considered a best practice in the UN and expected by various stakeholders; revisions to policies and practices to reflect our current structure and reality; and more.

I ask you to read on about the activities of the Ethics Office in 2014 and I thank you for welcoming me into WFP — our mission and the hard work and commitment of each of you for the people we serve epitomizes working and living with integrity."

Bonnie E. Green
Director, Ethics Office

Introduction

What distinguishes WFP is our ability to deliver and deliver well. This means delivering with integrity.

The ethics offices across the UN system were established to cultivate and nurture a culture of ethics, integrity and accountability; thereby, enhancing trust in, and the credibility of, the United Nations, both internally and externally. The WFP Ethics Office was established and is maintained in order to assist the Executive Director in fostering the highest standards of integrity in the observations and performance of our work, as required by the Charter of the United Nations, and in accordance with the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service.

In October 2014, WFP implemented a Code of Conduct, unique to WFP. The WFP Code of Conduct is a guide to fundamental principles and standards of WFP and the UN, and related administrative issuances.

The work of the Ethics Office is reported through the following categories:

- **Advice and Guidance**
- **Training, Education and Outreach**
- **Standard Setting and Policy Support**
- **Protection Against Retaliation—Whistleblower Protection Policy**
- **Annual Conflicts of Interest and Financial Disclosure Programme (FDP)**
- **Ethical Leadership, Culture and Metrics**

The Ethics Office is an independent office and a formal component of the Internal Justice System in WFP.

The WFP Ethics Office is also a member of the Ethics Panel of the UN and the Ethics Network for Multilateral Organizations, and coordinates with the other Rome-Based Agencies.

The Annual Report upon which this summary is based is the first annual report from the new Director of the Ethics Office, who joined WFP in April 2014.



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Highlights

Advice and Guidance

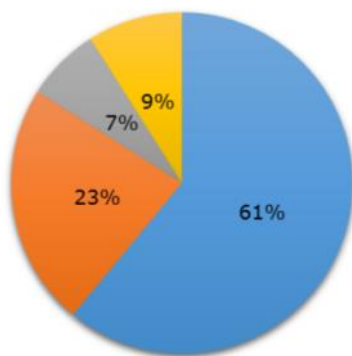
An important component of acting in accordance with expected standards of conduct involves advising and guiding WFP personnel. Through this support, the Ethics Office helps to foster an “organization-sensitive” approach to conduct.

In 2014, the Ethics Office received 160 requests for advice and guidance from employees and management. This number represents a 60% increase from the 104 requests registered in 2013, and does not include requests for advice and guidance on Protection Against Retaliation and the FDP.

In addition, in 2014, the Ethics Office initiated an expanded dialogue with senior management on the type of advice and guidance the Ethics Office can provide.

The increase in requests is likely a reflection of this expanded dialogue, having a full time Ethics Officer again, other Ethics Office initiatives, and the creation of additional tracking mechanisms. It also illustrates trust in the Ethics Office and WFP.

Advice and Guidance by Type



- Outside Activities
- Standards of Conduct and Other
- Gifts, Awards and Hospitality
- Employment related

Training, Education and Outreach

Training, education and outreach activities are critical to raising the ethical consciousness of an organization.

In 2014, a concerted effort was made to enhance outreach in various forms. Respectful Workplace Advisors (RWAs) – who have also been designated as “Ethics Ambassadors” since 2012 – were trained on standards of conduct so as to be a knowledge resource in the field. Due to the nature of the role of RWAs, their training is especially useful as it creates a multiplier effect within the organization in terms of awareness. Since 2012, a total of 123 RWAs have been trained, with 23 trained in 2014. An additional 30 participated in a series of briefing conference calls on the WFP Code of Conduct.

The Ethics Office also created and conducted several other training sessions for WFP employees reaching an additional approximate 125 through live presentations and an additional 400 through revised awareness and training materials through the Ombudsman. Other forms of outreach included interviews and forums.

Working with the then Director, Procurement and with the purpose to educate our vendors and suppliers on our no-gift policy, all 12,000 suppliers received a focused communication on WFP’s expectations of conduct.



Standard Setting and Policy Support

"I am pleased to report that the staff in the Iran Country Office received the WFP Code of Conduct along with a personalized letter from me during our CO retreat. It was well received and we even had fun as I personally handed out the Code – so much so, we took pictures! Thank you for providing resources for me to endorse and share with my team."

Negar Gerami
Country Director

In order to foster an organizational culture of ethics, transparency and accountability, the Ethics Office undertakes frequent and consistent advocacy on related topics. In 2014, the Ethics Office provided guidance to management on the incorporation of ethical standards in organizational practices, processes and policies.

The Ethics Office provided input on 19 policies and practice covering various topics like: internal controls, procurement manual, privacy, information security, in addition to undertaking an active role, alongside HR and Legal, on the WFP Code of Conduct and corresponding circular.

Following the implementation of the WFP Code of Conduct, the Ethics Office conducted an awareness and communications campaign around the WFP Code of Conduct. Senior management engaged directly with WFP personnel in their respective divisions and offices with resources disseminated by the Ethics Office. Positive feedback was received.

The WFP Code of Conduct

- Adopted in October 2014.
- Comprised of 11 bulleted points of high level expectations of WFP. Applicable to all WFP personnel – all contract types, all levels.
- Aimed at helping WFP employees to more easily understand and, consequently, adhere to the standards and policies of WFP and the UN.
- Based on policies essential to helping WFP personnel to display standards of competence, integrity, impartiality and discretion, and represent the ideals of WFP and the UN.
- Evolved from interviews conducted by the WFP Internal Justice Review Panel of 2014.



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Protection Against Retaliation - Whistleblower Protection Policy

The Whistleblower Protection Policy applies to all WFP personnel, including national and international staff members, consultants, interns, service contract holders or special service agreement holders and United Nations volunteers.

The main objective of the Whistleblower Protection Policy is to provide protection against retaliation for those who report misconduct, provide information in good faith on wrongdoing by one or more employees, or cooperate with a duly authorized audit or investigation.

The Ethics Office is responsible for administration of the Whistleblower Protection Policy.

The Ethics Office received four requests for protection against retaliation, with the following outcomes in 2014:

- One case found with no *prima facie* case of retaliation.
- One case in which the individual was provided retaliation protection.
- One case in which the individual requested the review remain pending the provision of additional information.
- One matter under review.

All reviews have since been concluded.

As part of UN coherence, the WFP Ethics Office works with the Ethics Panel of the United Nations to ensure WFP's Whistleblower Protection Policy remains in alignment with others in the UN system.

More about UN coherence

Ethics Panel of the United Nations

The Director of WFP's Ethics Office together with the directors of the ethics offices of the United Nations Secretariat, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNOPS, UNRWA and UNHCR form the Ethics Panel of the UN.

The Ethics Panel is mandated by the Secretary-General's bulletin on United Nations system-wide application of ethics: separately administered organs and programmes (ST/SGB/2007/11) for the purpose of enabling harmonisation of ethical standards and policies of the UN Secretariat and of the separately administered organs and programmes.

In 2014, the Ethics Panel addressed issues of common interest, for example, related to coherence on ethics advice and annual reporting, state of the respective financial disclosure programmes, protection against retaliation policies and practices, plus real-time interactions on ethical considerations.

Ethics Network for Multilateral Organizations

The Director of WFP's Ethics Office is also a member of the Ethics Network for Multilateral Organizations, which is a UN-wide network established pursuant to the framework of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination in support of the Secretary-General's promotion of system-wide collaboration on ethics-related issues within the UN family.

Rome-Based Agencies

The Ethics Officers of the three Rome-Based Agencies coordinate periodically, sharing best practices.

Membership in these networks has proven resourceful for insights into ethical issues unique to the UN and with respect to working within the other ethics offices in the UN.

Annual Conflicts of Interest and Financial Disclosure Programme (FDP)

Financial Disclosure Programme Participants

- All staff members at the D-1, D-2, Country Director, Deputy Country Director, Head of Office/Sub-Office, Head of Area Office levels.
- All staff members whose occupational duties include procurement authority in WINGS to release Purchase Orders of any type. Note: Those who have authority to release only MPOs are excluded.
- All Oversight (audit/investigation), Investment (Treasury), Procurement and Legal Officers, other than Legal Officers in the Administrative and Employment Law Branch.
- Those who are members of a Vendor Management Committee (Local Purchase Committee, Purchase Contract Committee) or have a regular access to confidential procurement information and documents.

Facts and Figures

The Ethics Office is mandated to administer the FDP annually as a means for helping to identify and address personal conflicts of interest as part of preserving and enhancing personal and institutional integrity. As personal conflicts of interest are eliminated or mitigated in the best interests of WFP, the FDP is a critical risk management tool to both employees and WFP.

In 2014 and for the first time since its implementation in 2009, the compliance rate for the FDP was 100 percent.



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- The FDP was initiated in 2009; 2014 was the sixth annual FDP.
- 1,086 WFP employees participated in 2014, an increase of 90 from 2013 and an increase of more than 500 from the first FDP.
- The FDP had three parts:
 - Conflicts of Interest Questionnaire;
 - Eligibility Questionnaire; and
 - Financial Disclosure Statement.
- The Ethics Office used a secure, integrated online database.
- Submissions were reviewed by an external consultancy firm, which has been working with WFP since 2009, under the direction of the Ethics Office.
- Actual, perceived and potential conflicts of interest identified were addressed directly by the Ethics Office.

Ethical Leadership, Culture and Metrics

"I welcome the vision of the new Ethics Office to approach ethics as a culture to adopt rather than a rules book to follow. This deepens the importance of ethical practices in our daily work to accomplish our mission."

Corinne Fleischer
Director, Supply Chain

A strong ethical culture is comprised of many facets—foundational standards, common understanding of expectations, leadership and “tone from the top” commitment, and more.

To celebrate the display of integrity by leaders and each one of us everyday, the Ethics Office has initiated several additional tracking mechanisms in order to provide metrics for activities it conducts.

Through discussions with executive leadership and others within the organization on current impressions of the Ethics Office and future expectations, the Ethics Office received feedback instrumental in understanding its role in WFP to date and in shaping its future direction in accordance with its mandate.

Looking Ahead

During its initial years, the Ethics Office has been successful in establishing policies and supporting materials related to its mandate. Within endorsement from the Executive Director, the Ethics Office has initiated the review of those policies and supporting materials with the purpose to revise and reflect the current WFP structural landscape and lessons learned since the adoption of the policies and practices.

In addition, the Ethics Office has been engaged by senior management in support of proactive ethical considerations in operational and strategic decision-making. Thus, while advice and guidance as related to individual integrity was and remains an important component to the work of the Ethics Office, the Ethics Office has initiated a holist, integrated approach to ethics in WFP in 2014—an approach that is continuing in 2015.



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Contacts

Bonnie E. Green

Director, Ethics Office

E-mail: Bonnie.Green@wfp.org

Phone: +39 06 6513 2911

FoodSat: 1301 2911

Catherine Colmay

Senior Administrative Assistant

E-mail: Catherine.Colmay@wfp.org

Phone: +39 06 6513 2710

FoodSat: 1301 2710

You can also address your queries to the confidential mailbox at:

WFP.Ethics@wfp.org

Full report of the Ethics Office is available in Annex IV of the Annual Performance Report for 2014 at: <http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/eb/wfpdoc063825.pdf>

For more information please contact the Ethics Office at: WFP.Ethics@WFP.org