

# **Ethiopian Civil Society Organizations Council**

**/ECSOC/**



## **CODE OF ETHICS**

**FOR CSOs PARTICIPATING IN THE NATIONAL DIALOGUE**

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**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**



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## **Section One: General Provisions**

### **Preamble**

The Ethiopian Civil Society Organizations Council (herein after ECSOC) took the initiative to establish a Reference Group (RG) within its secretariat to participate in the national dialogue. Accordingly, the Reference Group (RG) mainly composed of CSOs working in the area of democracy, dialogue, governance, peace building, conflict resolution, human rights and other related issues has been established in April 2022 with the aim of serving as a standing platform that sets strategic directions regarding the national dialogue.

This code of ethics for CSOs therefore, sets out standards of behavior for CSOs who are participating in the national dialogue.

### **1. Issuing Authority**

The secretariat of the council has issued this code of ethics for national dialogue pursuant to the authority granted to it by the Civil Society Organizations Proclamation and CSO Council Code of Conduct.

### **2. Short Title**

This code may be cited as ‘CSOs Code of Ethics for National Dialogue.’

### **3. Definitions**

In this code of ethics

‘Reference Group’ shall mean the general platform of CSOs who are voluntarily committed to participate in the national dialogue under one umbrella

### **4. The Objective**

The objective of this code of ethics is to enable the civil society sector to contribute its part to the national dialogue by consolidating and coordinating the efforts of various CSOs with high ethical standards; building a culture of transparency, accountability, integrity and respect for others; and mitigating risks of exclusion that might negatively affect the process of the national dialogue; thereby paving the way to contribute towards a successful national dialogue, and enhancing the influence of the sector as a whole in all phases of the process.

### **5. Scope of Application**

This code of ethics shall be applicable only to CSOs participating in the national dialogue under the platform of the Reference Group. Additionally, the application of this code is limited to the official period of the national dialogue.

## **Section Two**

### **Ethical Principles for CSOs Participating in the National Dialogue**

#### **6. The Effect Ethical Principles**

In addition to as well as without contradicting the Ethiopian Civil Society Organizations' Council Code of Conduct, and the principles of national dialogue stated under article 3 of the National Dialogue Establishment Proclamation No 1265/2021, each CSOs and the Reference Group as a collective body shall be directed by the following ethical principles.

#### **7. Neutrality**

1. CSOs and the Reference Group shall carry out their engagements and activities in a principled, reasonable and constructive manner.
2. They may not take sides in whatever form imaginable at any stage of the dialogue process.

#### **8. Unity of Purpose and Coordination**

1. CSOs should participate and engage at all phases of the national dialogue in a coordinated and unified manner.
2. The possible duplication of efforts and competitions among CSOs should be avoided.

#### **9. National Ownership**

1. The CSOs shall engage in the process of national dialogue in the way that ensures national ownership.
2. Each CSO should be responsible to protect the national dialogue process from unnecessarily interventions, and partisan interests and actors.
3. CSOs should refrain from involving in ambiguous and pernicious activities affecting the credibility of the process.
4. They shall play a watchdog role over actors that attempt to disrupt or spoil the process of the national dialogue.

#### **10. Civility**

1. CSOs shall contribute to a civil dialogue process by promoting principled, tolerant and truly dialogical environment throughout the period of the national dialogue.
2. CSOs shall refrain from engaging in any kind of destructive behaviors affecting the dialogue environment.

## **11. Public Trust and Good Faith**

1. CSOs should act in the ways that inspire the general public and various stakeholders to develop trust the process and engage in good faith. They shall behave in the manner that rebuilds trust among the public and main state holders participating in the national dialogue.
2. They should disseminate reliable information to the society at large and educate them about the national dialogue related issues to enhance the trust infrastructure.
3. CSOs may not engage in activities that discharge hope and a positive image in the minds of the people about a peaceful solution to the multiple ills of the society.

## **12. Accountability**

1. CSOS shall be responsible for their commissions and omissions that create harmful consequences.
2. CSOs should avoid any harmful outcomes and proactively behave in a manner that enhances their and other stakeholders' accountability.

## **13. Inclusiveness**

The Reference Group shall ensure the inclusion of various segments of the society including women, youth, people with disabilities, and other marginalized groups and the proper reflection of their interests in the national dialogue.

## **14. Mutual Respect**

Civil Society Organizations shall respect other people and ideas, living out a commitment to listen and learn from difference in daily conversation during all phases of the national dialogue.

## **15. Transparency**

CSOs shall be open to stakeholders including media and shall provide information timely and properly on what they are doing, where and how they are performing their responsibilities.

## **16. Respecting the rules**

Civil Society Organizations shall respect this code of ethics for national dialogue, and they should strive to the realization of these ethical principles and the correction of those CSOs breaching the code of ethics.

## **Section Three**

### **Code of Ethics Compliance and Enforcement**

#### **17. Promotion and Dissemination of the Code of Ethics**

The ECSOC shall promote this code of ethics to all members of the Reference Group and other stakeholders by all possible means.

#### **18. Monitoring the Compliance of the Code of Ethics**

1. ECSOC shall monitor the observation of the code of ethics by the CSOs participating in the national dialogue
2. The ECSOC may utilize the appropriate monitoring tools, including demanding periodic reports, minute reviews, tracking deliverables, and holding review meetings with CSOs to carry out its monitoring responsibilities.

#### **19. Code of Ethics Enforcement Mechanisms**

1. This code of ethics binds all CSOs who are taking part in the process of the national dialogue.
2. The ECSOC shall be responsible for overseeing the enforcement of this code of ethics. For this purpose, it in consultation with CSOs establishes a Central Code of Ethics Monitoring Committee (CCEMC).
3. The CCEMC comprises five members, selected from the executive committee of the council (Ex com), the secretariat of the council and CSOs.
4. The CSOs and the secretariat of the council each contribute two members to the CCEMC while one member shall be selected from the executive committee.
5. The CCEMC shall be chaired by a member selected from the executive committee/secretariat of the council. The secretary of the CCEMC shall be from the CSOs.
6. The CCEMC shall prepare its own working procedure that enables it to carry out its functions properly.

#### **20. Powers and Mandates of the CCEMC**

1. The CCEMC meet once a month at the office of the secretariat to review and discuss about CSOs' compliance with the code of ethics.

2. The CCEMC may rebuke the CSOs violating the code of ethics by their peers on the Reference Group platform.
3. The CCEMC, on the basis of the risk posed by the violation, may publicly names and shames, or/and bars the CSOs from participating in the national dialogue under the structure of the Reference Group.

## **Section Four Miscellaneous Provisions**

### **21. Repealed Matters**

1. Bilateral memorandum of understandings (MoUs) made by individual CSOs with the National Dialogue Commission (NDC) that contradict with this code of ethics may not have effect as long as their roles in the reference group.
2. Individual CSOs shall continue their pending engagements in the process of the national dialogue without undermining the coordinating role of the RG.

### **22. The Amendment of the Code of Ethics**

This code of ethics can be amended at any time with the support of more than 50 % ( 50+1) of the members of the Reference Group, attending and voting.

### **24. Effective Date**

This code of ethics shall be effective from Februray 2023 the day of its endorsement by the majority members of the RG.

Addis Ababa  
Ethiopia