

# SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

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Approved by: Executive Board  
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Created by: Communications  
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Binding on:

- All employees of Welthungerhilfe (Association and Foundation)
- All employees, executives, and committee members of partner organisations
- All employees, executives, and committee members of social businesses
- All freelancers working for Welthungerhilfe
- All persons and groups volunteering for Welthungerhilfe
- All suppliers and service providers of Welthungerhilfe

The currently applicable version of this document is available in the intranet <https://bit.ly/2J5QvPH> and on the webpage [www.welthungerhilfe.de/code-of-conduct](http://www.welthungerhilfe.de/code-of-conduct).

## 1. Introduction

Social media make it possible for anyone to share information with the whole world. This means that Welthungerhilfe's Employees and Contributors effectively serve as global ambassadors for the organisation. As its public face, they can help build trust in the organisation and raise its profile with the public. For this reason, Welthungerhilfe<sup>1</sup> encourages its Employees and Contributors to use social media to address issues related to Welthungerhilfe through their private accounts.

Employees and Contributors are free to choose whether to interact through social media and are personally responsible for any content they share. However, Welthungerhilfe's Digital team is happy to provide support and advice upon request.

## 2. Objectives

The objectives of this Policy are:

- to establish rules of conduct on private social media accounts, in order to promote civil behaviour;
- to help to identify misconduct by raising awareness of potential risks;
- to prevent misconduct and raise awareness of legal risks; and
- to express existing contractual obligations in clear terms.

## 3. Scope

The provisions of this Policy apply to:

- a) Welthungerhilfe (Association and Foundation) employees, regardless of their type of contract (including full-time employees, temporary personnel, interns and personnel on loan), the scope of their responsibilities and the location of employment.
- b) Employees, executives, and committee members of partner organisations<sup>2</sup> receiving material or non-material support from Welthungerhilfe.
- c) Employees, executives and committee members of social businesses that Welthungerhilfe holds shares in.
- d) Freelancers working for Welthungerhilfe on a contractual basis.
- e) People and groups volunteering for Welthungerhilfe (e.g. members of the Programme Advisory Committee or action groups).
- f) Suppliers and service providers for Welthungerhilfe.

Members of the Association's bodies (the General Assembly, Supervisory Board, and Executive Board) of Welthungerhilfe as well the Foundation's Executive Board and management commit themselves to respecting this Policy. Hereinafter, the persons specified in points b) through f) above are referred to as Contributors.

This Policy applies worldwide, serving as the minimum standard for each and every Employee and Contributor. It complements Welthungerhilfe's Code of Conduct as well as the policies, international standards, and codices mentioned therein. Employees and Contributors must also observe the laws

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<sup>1</sup> **Welthungerhilfe:** this term refers to both the association Deutsche Welthungerhilfe e.V. and the foundation Deutsche Welthungerhilfe.

<sup>2</sup> **Partner organisations:** all local, national, and international partners who have signed a memorandum of understanding or a partnership agreement with Welthungerhilfe, including community-based organisations, civil society groups, non-governmental organisations and advocacy partners.

that prevail at their place of deployment. In the event of discrepancies, the stricter standard will prevail.

Welthungerhilfe will not be liable for the actions of Contributors who violate this Policy despite having previously given their agreement to the Policy in writing.

## 4. Definition

**Social media** refers to digital technologies and media such as blogs, wikis, forums, chats, and social networks that allow users to connect and communicate with each other online. Communication, content sharing, and other interpersonal exchanges take place either between individual users or in a specific community. Social media platforms include Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Welthungerhilfe also includes messenger services such as WhatsApp in its definition of social media.

## 5. Rules of Conduct

On the Internet, the boundaries between private and professional spheres are often ambiguous. Personal statements expressed in a private capacity can easily be construed as statements made by the person in a professional capacity. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but a social media post intended to be private might have the potential to cause damage or even endanger colleagues, partner organisations, Welthungerhilfe as a whole, or the people we aim to assist. To avoid such negative consequences, make sure to observe the rules below.

### 5.1 Be Smart

Social media do not provide the same protections as private spaces. Only post things that you would also be comfortable saying to strangers or shouting out loud in public, such as at a marketplace! Before publishing, double-check that the post is clearly formulated and not open to misinterpretation, using your common sense. People, especially project participants<sup>3</sup>, should be represented in an ethical, respectful, and dignified manner. If you are personally involved, disappointed, angry, or frustrated, it helps if you avoid posting right away. With some distance it is easier to respond objectively.

Social media permit free discussion. However, they are not the appropriate forums for voicing internal criticisms or discussing problems encountered at work. This should instead always be done through direct conversations with the individuals concerned/ the supervisor or via Welthungerhilfe's *Complaint Response Mechanism*.

If you discover that you made a mistake, do not merely delete the erroneous entry; instead, make sure that you set the record straight. Indicate that you edited the post after publication. Deleting comments should always be the very last resort.

Social media transcend all national borders. Consider how your words and images might be perceived in other cultures. Be aware that your smartphone and computer may be searched at border crossings. Before each trip, review whether your devices contain images or videos that authorities

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<sup>3</sup> **Project participants:** target groups (beneficiaries) of programmes and projects implemented by Welthungerhilfe or its partner organisations; members of communities in which Welthungerhilfe and its partner organisations are active; anyone who is actively participating in programmes or projects of Welthungerhilfe or its partner organisations and who is not categorised as either an Employee or a Contributor.

could find objectionable, thereby potentially endangering your work or that of the entire organisation.

The Internet never forgets. Assume that everything that you ever publish is archived and can be found by colleagues, bosses, donors, and authorities.

Statements made by Employees or Contributors that insult, discriminate against, or harass others are categorically unacceptable. This also includes images and statements in pictorial form, so ensure that your profile pictures and other published images also meet this requirement.

Additional information is provided in the following documents:

- [Complaints Response Mechanism Policy](#)
- [Policy against Sexual violence](#)

## 5.2 Be Transparent

Use your real name, especially if this is required by the respective platforms' guidelines or if your comments and statements concern Welthungerhilfe. Although you are permitted to indicate that you work for Welthungerhilfe, never create the impression that your private account is an official profile or that you are representing an official position. In your profile, you can make clear that yours is a private account, for example by adding the disclaimer: "Views are my own", or by writing in the first person ("I", "me") to show that you are stating a personal opinion.

It is prohibited to use official logos, e.g. the Welthungerhilfe logo or campaign logos such as the one for "Riding against Hunger", in private accounts (as a profile or background picture). However, a picture of you wearing a T-shirt with such a logo is acceptable. Do not use "Welthungerhilfe" or "WHH" as part of your profile name.



Examples of social media profiles of Welthungerhilfe Employees

### 5.3 Observe Legal Requirements

Every text, image, and video automatically enjoys copyright protection. Only publish content if you are certain that doing so will not infringe copyright laws. Be aware that most documents online have restrictions on their use by third parties (licensing fees). If in doubt, Welthungerhilfe recommends against publishing any third-party texts, images, or videos. This does not apply to sharing or re-tweeting contributions made by others.

If people are depicted, their right to control their own image must be observed. This means that the individuals represented must have given written consent (see [Model Release](#)). Such consent has already been obtained for the photographs stored in Welthungerhilfe's video and photo archive on its intranet.

Internal communications and confidential information are not suitable for publication on social media. Agreements to abide by data protection and confidentiality regulations signed in conjunction with employment contracts also apply when using social media. As a rule, social media use during working hours is private and governed by IT-usage regulations.

Additional information is provided in the following documents:

- *Organisational Directive Employment Conditions for Domestic Employees/ staff working abroad, § 11 /§ 13, Rewards and Gifts*
- *Model Release*
- *Information Security Policy*

### 5.4 Be Careful

It can be dangerous to release information about certain countries on social media. Before making a decision to publish, ensure you are properly informed about the country you are travelling in or about which you want to post information<sup>4</sup>. Ensure that you do not post any information that could endanger you, partner organisations, project participants, third parties, or the work of Welthungerhilfe itself. Depending on the country in question, dangerous information might include political statements as well as details about travel dates and destinations, upcoming deliveries or distributions, and cooperation with partner organisations.

In general, it is acceptable to publish photographs of Welthungerhilfe Employees if they agree (see § 5.3). However, never publish any content in which employees of partner organisations (Contributors) or other individuals can be identified unless you are authorised to do so by the person in question. If their cooperation becomes public, it could have negative consequences for them and for Welthungerhilfe.

Remember that the metadata<sup>5</sup> hidden in data, images, and videos reveal more information than you may like.

### 5.5 Do Not Open Official Accounts

New profiles, pages, groups, or events on social media of an official nature or pertaining to a Welthungerhilfe project or office may only be established by Country Directors, communications experts, or members of the Digital team in Welthungerhilfe's Head Office. In every case, the Head Office's Digital team must be consulted in advance.

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<sup>4</sup> Sources for country information include the Security Advisor, Welthungerhilfe's Country Director, or travel and safety advisories from German embassies or the Federal Foreign Office.

<sup>5</sup> **Metadata:** data containing information about the characteristics of other data.

## 6. Reporting Requirements and Consequences for Violations

Anyone with concerns, suspicions or knowledge of incidents regarding violations of this Policy is obligated to immediately report them to the Compliance Unit at Welthungerhilfe's Head Office ([complaints@welthungerhilfe.de](mailto:complaints@welthungerhilfe.de)). Any report submitted to management or via national complaint lines to Welthungerhilfe must be passed on by them to the Compliance Unit. Welthungerhilfe also offers anonymous reporting online or via a telephone hotline for whistle-blowers. All information regarding breaches of this Policy is treated as strictly confidential in accordance with the Organisational Directive on Whistleblowing. Nobody who reports violations or submits information regarding violations with honest intent, needs to fear any disadvantage or other consequences, even if the report later turns out to be unfounded. Deliberately false accusations made for the purposes of harming others will not be tolerated. The failure to report an incident will also constitute a violation of Welthungerhilfe's policies.

Violations of this Policy may result in disciplinary measures, up to and including immediate termination and/or the annulment of collaboration agreements. Welthungerhilfe will report criminal offences in compliance with applicable laws.

Additional information is provided in the following documents:

- Complaints Response Mechanism Policy
- Organisational Directive on Whistleblowing

Internet: [www.welthungerhilfe.org/complaints](http://www.welthungerhilfe.org/complaints)

Confidential e-mail address: [complaints@welthungerhilfe.de](mailto:complaints@welthungerhilfe.de)

Whistleblowing hotline: +49 (0) 228 2288 577

This Policy was approved by the Executive Board on 10. April 2019

  
**Mathias Mogge**  
Secretary General

  
**Christian Monning**  
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