



World Food Programme Ethics Office: 2015 Annual Report Summary

“WFP’s duty to the people we serve requires each one of us to work with the highest ethical standards, whatever our role, toward achieving Zero Hunger. As the stewards of public and private contributions, we are responsible to serve with honesty, truthfulness, impartiality and incorruptibility. This annual report demonstrates the vital role the Ethics Office plays ensuring we do just that, with integrity and full compliance to our individual and collective responsibilities working for a public international civil organization.”

Ertharin Cousin
WFP Executive Director

“The purpose of this summary of the Ethics Office Annual Report is to share accomplishments throughout WFP in 2015. This is the first report covering a full year of my tenure and it draws attention to initiatives emanating from the Ethics Office and actions by WFP colleagues.

I am pleased to highlight the enhanced traction in all the areas of the Ethics Office mandate. There was, again, a sizeable increase in consultations, with many being preventive in nature, and by WFP employees, as individuals, managers and leaders. This reflects well on trust in the Ethics Office and I am very proud of this substantial growth.

Helping all of us to feel comfortable coming forward in good faith with concerns is critical to WFP operating competently and fairly. The Ethics Offices continues to support a “speak-up” culture, to support mandatory reporting requirements and to help alleviate fears of retaliation, which are evident from WFP GSS results. Related, through the utmost discretion and confidentiality, the Ethics Office administered the Whistleblower Protection Policy and the seventh Annual Financial Disclosure Programme, which had 100% compliance, the second and consecutive time in its history.

Having knowledge about standards of conduct is critical to enabling good decision making. Spearheading targeted and organization-wide awareness and communications campaigns on areas like child labour, anti-corruption, conflicts of interest enhances knowledge of expectations of conduct and knowledge of practical tools and resources.

Our commitment to integrity is holistic. It must be holistic to continue to maintain the trust of all our stakeholders—the people we serve, the communities we work in, host governments, States Members, partners and the public.

I encourage you to read on and I thank you for acting with integrity in all you do for the people we serve toward a world without hunger.”

Bonnie E. Green
Director, Ethics Office

Introduction

How we deliver continues to be as important as what we deliver. Integrity in the way we serve and work with each other is paramount to achieving a Zero Hunger World.

The Ethics Office assists the Executive Director in nurturing a culture of ethics and accountability to enable all WFP employees to perform their functions with the highest standards of integrity as required by the Charter of the United Nations and in accordance with the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service, the WFP Code of Conduct and other related administrative issuances.

The Ethics Office fulfils this role through its mandated activities:

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



The Ethics Office also furthers **UN Coherence** as a member of the Ethics Panel of the UN (EPUN) and the Ethics Network for Multilateral Organizations (ENMO), and in periodic coordination with the other Rome-based Agencies.

As part of **Reporting and Administration**, the Ethics Office compiles an annual report, upon which this summary is based, which is the second annual report from the current Director, Ethics Office, who joined WFP in April 2014.



Highlights

Advice and Guidance

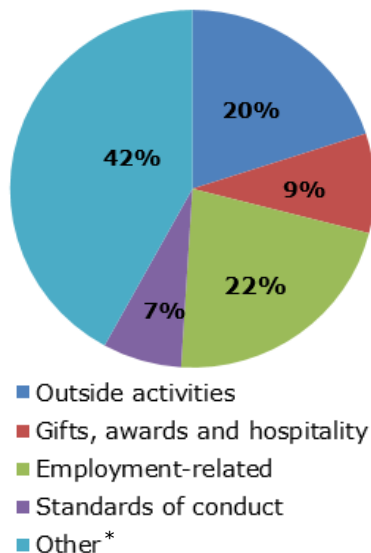
"I wanted to share the very productive outcome – a cash contribution to WFP – from one of our most loyal and committed service providers, which resulted from a constructive discussion with the Ethics Office at the end of the year on how to manage gifts. Thank you for this timely and helpful advice."

Judith Thimke
Chief, OSCS

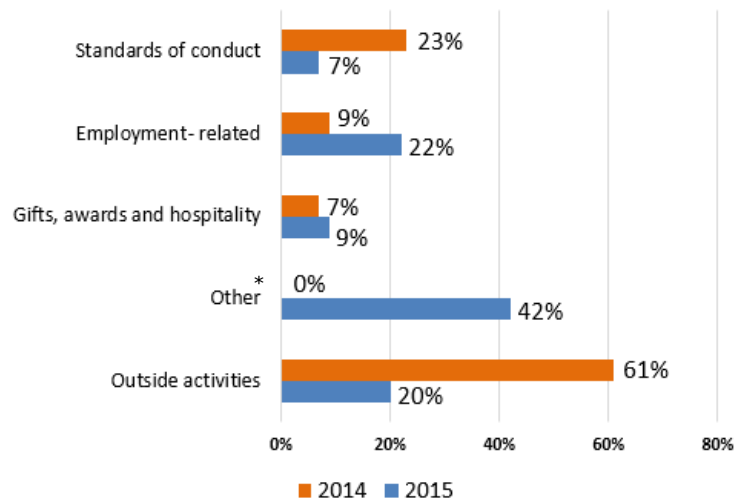
Advising and guiding WFP personnel with respect to matters, as individuals and as managers, is critical to helping WFP personnel make ethical decisions and take appropriate actions, no matter the contract type or level.

In 2015, the Ethics Office recorded **252 requests for advice and guidance**, excluding advice and guidance related to the FDP, Protection against Retaliation and other ad hoc advice. This was a **57% increase from 2014** (160 requests), and a **147% increase from 2013** (102 requests).

Advice and Guidance by Type



2014-2015 Advice and Guidance Data Comparison



*Note: new category

The 2014-2015 comparison data showed:

- ◇ Substantial decreases in the percentages of requests related to “outside activities” (from 98 in 2014 to 51 in 2015) and to “standards of conduct” (from 37 in 2014 to 17 in 2015).

The differences were likely due to:

- a change in tracking “outside activities” and employment-related requests; and
 - the addition of an “other” category, which captured matters formerly categorized under the “standards of conduct” category.
- ◇ A fairly substantial increase in employment-related requests (from 14 in 2014 to 55 in 2015).

The increase was likely due to:

- the elimination of a form of contract previously used in WFP, resulting in more part-time consultants, necessitating input from the Ethics Office; and
- a change in tracking queries which resulted in shifting some from the “outside activities” category to the “employment-related” category.

Standard Setting and Policy Support

An important part of fostering a culture of ethics and accountability is to ensure that policies, processes and practices of WFP reflect WFP's standards of conduct and the expectations of integrity, transparency and accountability required by WFP.

The Ethics Office recorded input on **50 policies in various forms** (circulars, policies, guidance, and other administrative issuances and documentation), covering different areas - confidentiality, internal controls, personal data protection and privacy, and more.

From 2014 to 2015, there was a substantial increase in the number of reviews because the Ethics Office also gave input on policies as a member of the Executive Management Group (EMG). This positively reflected WFP's appreciation of the inclusion of an ethical lens in its governance and operations.

In addition, the Director, Ethics Office actively participated on matters related to gender, protection against sexual exploitation and abuse, sustainability, and diversity and inclusion.



Protection Against Retaliation—Whistleblower Protection

The Ethics Office continued to administer the Whistleblower Protection Policy. The major objectives of the Whistleblower Protection Policy are to enable an environment of reporting without fear of retaliation and to protect all WFP personnel from retaliation for reporting misconduct or providing information on wrongdoing in good faith or cooperating with duly authorized audits and investigations.

"We each have a duty to report misconduct, and we have the right to be protected from any retaliation for doing so. It is my firm commitment to create a comfortable and strong ethical environment for all of you to raise good faith concerns of fraud, corruption and other misconduct—significant to preventing, deterring and uncovering misconduct."

Sarah Gordon Gibson
Country Director, Laos

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

The Ethics Office worked on **seven cases for protection against retaliation**:

- one case was closed with no prima facie finding of retaliation;
- four cases continued from 2014, one of which resulted in protection measures; and
- two cases continued into 2016.

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

Education, Outreach and Training

The Ethics Office continued to concentrate on education, outreach and training as critical initiatives to raise awareness on core ethical values, standards of conduct and expected behaviour, and to foster the ethical consciousness of WFP.

Ethical Leadership Dialogue

The Ethics Office initiated an e-mail exchange from the Director, Ethics Office, to managers at levels D-1 and above, for the purpose of creating a dialogue on ethical considerations among leadership and supporting a “speak-up” culture.

On-line Training

Pursuant to the review of the WFP Internal Justice System, the Ethics Office created an alpha version of a mandatory on-line training on ethics - to be finalized and rolled out in 2016.

Training Sessions

The Ethics Office reached approximately **240 WFP employees through live presentations**, and briefed a total of 90 Respectful Workplace Advisors (RWAs) through conference calls.

Since 2012, RWAs act as “Ethics Ambassadors”, assisting the Ethics Office and WFP in raising awareness on ethics and standards of conduct. **RWAs trained a total of 246 WFP employees** through ethics related outreach.

Organization-Wide Awareness and Communication Campaigns

Four awareness and communication campaigns were conducted organization-wide, covering:



- anti-corruption, centered around the International Anti-Corruption Day;
- WFP’s policy and practices on gifts;
- the first anniversary of adoption of WFP Code of Conduct; and
- proper child labour practices, centered around the World Day Against Child Labour.

WFP leadership spearheaded the campaigns, setting the “tone from the top”.

“We are discussing our strategy to contribute in raising awareness on child labour and fighting for a world with no child labour. We are highly committed to allow children exerting their right to food and to education, including a safe and quality learning environment offering good nutritious meals.”

Pascale Micheau
Country Director, Armenia



Annual Auction of Gifts

In December, the Ethics Office organized an internal auction of gifts received and accepted by WFP personnel for courtesy and practical reasons.

Those gifts were duly reported and turned over to the Ethics Office during the year, per WFP’s policy and practices on gifts. A total of **32 gifts** were logged by the Ethics Office.

The Ethics Office organized two auctions: on-site for WFP personnel at HQ and a separate on-line auction open for the first time to all WFP personnel worldwide.

Both auctions were well received and considered successful tools for raising awareness on WFP’s policy and practices on gifts.

Proceeds were donated to WFP operations in the Central African Republic.

Annual Conflicts of Interest and Financial Disclosure Programme (FDP)



For the second consecutive year, the **compliance rate** for the FDP was **100%**.

The FDP is administered annually by the Ethics Office for the purpose of helping to identify and address personal conflicts of interest — as part of preserving and enhancing personal and institutional integrity.

The FDP is a mandatory component of WFP's commitment to transparency and public confidence-building and a crucial risk management tool to both employees and WFP.

Facts and Figures

- The FDP was first initiated in 2009; 2015 was the seventh annual FDP exercise.
- FDP participants were required to complete a Conflicts of Interest (COI) Questionnaire; an Eligibility Questionnaire; and a Financial Disclosure Statement.
- The Ethics Office used a secure, integrated online database to collect the information.
- **1,221 WFP employees participated in 2015**, an increase of 135 from 2014 and an increase of more than 600 from the first FDP.
- 20 participants were exempted, so **1,201 WFP employees completed the COI Questionnaire**. 221 were flagged for possible conflicts of interest, reviewed and cleared.
- From those who completed the Eligibility Questionnaire, **1,021 WFP employees** were required to also **file the Financial Disclosure Statement**.
- 22 participants in the Financial Disclosure Statement were flagged as possible conflicts of interest; none were determined to be actual conflicts of interest.
- Four additional cases were reviewed and cleared by the Ethics Office. One conflict of interest was identified and addressed. Another case was pending review.

FDP Participants

- Employees at D-1 and D-2 levels, all Country Directors, Deputy Country Directors, Heads of Office/Sub-Office, Heads of Area Office.
- All employees whose occupational duties include procurement authority in WINGS to release Purchase Orders of any type. (Those who have authority to release only MPOs are excluded).
- All Oversight (audit and investigation), Investment (Treasury), Procurement and Legal Officers, excluding the Administrative and Employment Law Branch.
- All employees who are members of a vendor management committee or have regular access to confidential procurement information.



“Let me assure you that our engineering team has sensitized the global engineering community around [ethics] values—capturing them in manuals, trainings and contracts to robustly support country operations. We have also trained new colleagues on what it means to be an international civil servant.”

Dominik Heinrich
Country Director, Lebanon
Former RMM Director

Ethical Leadership

An ethical culture is formed by many dimensions — foundational standards, common understanding of expectations, leadership and “tone from the top” commitment.

The Ethics Office continued to play a critical role in setting and reinforcing the “tone from the top” commitment, working closely with WFP leadership. The Director of the Ethics Office also provided confidential advice to managers and leaders one-on-one, and as part of the Executive Management Group.

Reporting and Administration

The Ethics Office initiated several tracking mechanisms to measure its activities and monitor the types of matters being addressed.

Measuring and maintaining this data is critical to ensure the work of the Ethics Office is relevant to WFP and its employees, resulting in more efficient administration, infrastructure and day-to-day work.

More about UN Coherence

Ethics Panel of the United Nations (EPUN)

The Ethics Office continued to participate in the activities of the EPUN, together with the heads of the ethics offices of the UN Secretariat, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNOPS, UNRWA and UNHCR.

As part of its ongoing activities, the Ethics Panel addressed ethics matters having system-wide implications and 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, and more.

Ethics Network for Multilateral Organizations (ENMO)

In July, the Ethics Office participated in a panel discussion on “Collaborative Efforts on Training and Education in Ethics” at the annual ENMO meeting. ENMO 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, and now maintained independently.

Rome-based Agencies

The Director, Ethics Office continued to engage with other Rome-based Agencies periodically.



Looking Ahead

The Ethics Office concentrated on education and outreach to increase awareness and knowledge through engaging and relevant targeted and organization-wide awareness and communication campaigns and by developing awareness and training materials for delivery by the Ethics Office and others.

The substantial increase in the volume of consultations may have been, in part, a result of the education and outreach initiatives and, with respect to the increase in consultations by management, in part, a result of increased visibility of the Ethics Office through the Director's participation on the Executive Management Group and engagement otherwise. Additional consultations with the Ethics Office on standards and policies and on WFP initiatives and activities reflected Management's appreciation for the inclusion of an ethical lens in its governance and operations. No matter the derivation or the form, the substantial increase and depth of consultations positively reflect on the trust in and credibility of the Ethics Office.

The perceptions of WFP personnel on ethics and standards of conduct were measured in the 2015 Global Staff Survey, showing improvements from 2012 but also some significant shortfalls, which were discussed with the Executive Management Group.

The Ethics Office also concentrated on administration and infrastructure for the purpose of creating efficiencies and for enhanced metrics to inform its initiatives while maintaining the Financial Disclosure Programme and the administration of protection against retaliation matters under the WFP Whistleblower Protection Policy with the utmost confidentiality and attention.

In 2016, the Ethics Office will continue its activities in all mandated areas of work and to approach ethics holistically, and continue to work independently yet respectfully with Management.

The Ethics Office was and remains committed to nurturing a culture of ethics, integrity and accountability within WFP, available to all WFP personnel and Management, to foster a strong organizational ethical culture to enable WFP to fulfil its mission toward a Zero Hunger World.

Contacts

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Full report of the Ethics Office is available in Annex IV of the Annual Performance Report for 2015.