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UNIVERSITE D'ABOMEY-CALAVI  
CENTRE DE RECHERCHE POUR LA LUTTE CONTRE LES MALADIES INFECTIEUSES TROPICALES (CReMIT)/  
**TROPICAL INFECTIOUS DISEASES RESEARCH CENTRE (TIDRC)**  
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## CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

POLICY CODE: TIDRC/HR/CCP-01

VERSION 1

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TIDRC/UAC RESEARCH GRANTS MANAGEMENT OFFICE

## MESSAGE FROM THE CENTER RESEARCH GRANT MANAGEMENT OFFICE HEAD

The Tropical Infectious Diseases Research Center/University of Abomey-Calavi (TIDRC/UAC) is dedicated to advancing scientific knowledge to combat infectious diseases that disproportionately affect tropical regions. Our mission—to conduct high-impact research, train the next generation of scientists, and translate discoveries into public health solutions—demands the highest standards of integrity, collaboration, and ethical behavior.

This Code of Conduct is our shared commitment to uphold these standards. It serves as a guide for our decisions and actions, ensuring that our work is not only scientifically rigorous but also morally sound and respectful of all individuals and communities involved. It applies to every member of our community—researchers, lab and administrative staff, interns, students, and visitors—and reflects the values of the Tropical Infectious Diseases Research Center/University of Abomey-Calavi (TIDRC/UAC) and the principles of global scientific citizenship.

I ask each of you to read this document carefully, internalize its principles, and hold yourself and your colleagues accountable. Together, we will build and sustain a center where excellence and ethics go hand in hand.

**Mr Sena Gregoire DANGBEME**  
RGMO Head, TIDRC/UAC

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## 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This Code of Conduct establishes the standards of professional and ethical behavior expected of all individuals associated with the Tropical Infectious Diseases Research Center/University of Abomey-Calavi(TIDRC/UAC).

**Purpose:** To foster a culture of integrity, safety, respect, and accountability; to protect the welfare of research participants and personnel; to safeguard the environment and the community; and to uphold the reputation of the Tropical Infectious Diseases Research Center/University of Abomey-Calavi (TIDRC/UAC).

**Scope:** This Code applies to all faculty, staff, students, postdoctoral fellows, visiting scientists, interns, consultants, and collaborators when they are representing the Center or conducting activities under its auspices, whether on or off TIDRC/UAC premises.

## 2. CORE PRINCIPLES

Our conduct is guided by the following core principles:

**Integrity:** we are committed to honesty, transparency, and rigor in all aspects of our research and professional activities.

**Respect:** we treat all individuals with dignity, fairness, and respect, valuing diversity of thought, background, and experience.

**Excellence:** we strive for the highest quality in our scientific work, education, and community engagement.

**Responsibility:** we are accountable for our actions and for upholding the public trust placed in us as researchers.

**Collaboration:** we work collegially and constructively, sharing knowledge and resources to advance our shared mission.

## 3. SCIENTIFIC INTEGRITY AND RESEARCH PRACTICE

### 3.1. Data management and reproducibility

All research data must be accurately recorded, stored securely, and retained for a specified period as per funder and TIDRC/UAC guidelines. Falsification, fabrication, or selective reporting of data is strictly prohibited. Primary data must be available for review by supervisors and collaborators and, where appropriate and ethical, shared with the broader scientific community upon publication.

### 3.2. Authorship and publication

Authorship must be based on a significant intellectual contribution to the conception, design, data acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of the work, as well as drafting or revising the manuscript. All authors must approve the final version and agree to be accountable for the work. "Guest" or "gift" authorship is unacceptable. All sources of

funding and potential conflicts of interest must be disclosed in all publications and presentations.

### 3.3. Peer review

Peer review must be conducted objectively, confidentially, and in a timely manner. Reviewers must decline to review if they have a conflict of interest. Information gained during peer review must not be used for personal advantage.

## 4. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN TROPICAL INFECTIOUS DISEASE RESEARCH

### 4.1. Research involving human subjects

All research involving human participants must obtain approval from the relevant Institutional Review Board (e.g., the TIDRC/UAC Ethics Committee or the national CER-ISBA) *before* any research activities begin.

The principles of the Declaration of Helsinki and the Belmont Report will be upheld, including:

**Informed Consent:** participants must provide voluntary, informed consent based on a clear understanding of the research purpose, procedures, risks, and benefits, in a language they understand.

**Privacy and Confidentiality:** personal data of participants must be protected and anonymized whenever possible.

**Minimization of Risk:** research protocols must be designed to minimize potential harms to participants.

### 4.2. Research Involving Animals

All research involving vertebrate animals must be approved by the relevant Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. The "3Rs" principle (Replacement, Reduction, Refinement) must guide all animal research to ensure humane treatment and minimize suffering.

### 4.3. Biological and Environmental Safety

All TIDRC/UAC personnel must comply with national and international biosafety and biosecurity regulations. Their work with infectious agents or hazardous materials must be conducted at the appropriate containment level (BSL-2, BSL-3).

Waste must be disposed of according to established protocols to protect human health and the environment.

### 4.4. Community Engagement and Benefit-Sharing

Research conducted in local communities must be done in partnership and with respect for local customs and leadership.

We are committed to translating research findings into public health benefits for the communities that participate in our studies.

## 5. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT IN THE WORKPLACE

### 5.1. Respect and non-discrimination

TIDRC/UAC provides equal opportunities to all individuals regardless of age, ancestry, color, disability, gender, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, or any other status protected by law.

Discrimination and prejudicial behavior are strictly prohibited.

### 5.2. Harassment and bullying

TIDRC/UAC has a zero-tolerance policy for any form of harassment, including sexual harassment, and bullying. This includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, or any intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

### 5.3. Conflict of interest

All TIDRC/UAC personnel must avoid situations where personal, financial, or other outside interests could compromise, or appear to compromise, their professional obligations to the Center, its research, or its staff.

Actual or potential conflicts of interest must be disclosed promptly to the Center Deputy/Director.

### 5.4. Use of center resources and facilities

TIDRC/UAC resources, including equipment, supplies, funds, and IT systems, are to be used for official Center business and research activities. Personal use must be incidental and not interfere with work or deplete resources. Any use must adhere to all specific safety and operational protocols for laboratories and equipment.

## 6. COLLABORATION, MENTORSHIP, AND TRAINING

### 6.1. Internal and external collaboration

Collaboration is strongly encouraged at TIDRC/UAC and should be conducted with mutual respect, clear agreements on roles, responsibilities, and intellectual property.

Agreements with external partners, including other research institutions, industry, and government bodies, must be formalized and transparent.

### 6.2. Mentorship and supervision

TIDRC/UAC senior researchers have a responsibility to provide effective mentorship, fostering the scientific, professional, and ethical development of junior colleagues, students, and staff.

Supervisors must provide clear expectations, constructive feedback, and fair evaluations.

### 6.3. Training environment

TIDRC/UAC is committed to providing a stimulating and supportive environment for learning. Trainees are expected to be proactive in their development and adhere to the same high standards of conduct as all other members of the Center.

## 7. REPORTING VIOLATIONS AND PROTECTIONS

### 7.1. Reporting mechanisms

Any individual who witnesses or suspects a violation of this Code of Conduct has a responsibility to report it. Reports can be made through the following channels:

1. **Immediate Supervisor or Principal Investigator:** for most work-related issues.
2. **Center Research Grants Management Office Head:** for issues involving a supervisor or other sensitive matters.
3. **TIDRC Named Person:** The named person will be available to receive confidential reports at Email [rgma.office@cremituac.org](mailto:rgma.office@cremituac.org) / Address 01 BP 526 Cotonou.

### 7.2. Non-retaliation

TIDRC/UAC strictly prohibits retaliation against any individual who, in good faith, reports a suspected violation or participates in an investigation. Anyone found to have engaged in retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action.

## 8. CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE

Violation of this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, which will be proportionate to the nature and severity of the offense. Potential consequences may include, but are not limited to:

1. Verbal or written warning.
2. Mandatory training or counseling.
3. Suspension with or without pay.
4. Revocation of access to facilities or resources.
5. Dismissal or termination of employment or affiliation.
6. Referral to the appropriate TIDRC/UAC authorities or legal bodies for further action.

## 9. Review and Revision

This policy shall be reviewed every three (3) to five (5) years

Revisions shall follow the same approval process as initial adoption

## 10. REFERENCES

- ✓ The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (ALLEA): Revised Edition 2023. (Source for principles of reliability, honesty, respect, and accountability).
- ✓ The Singapore Statement on Research Integrity (2010): (Source for foundational principles of research integrity, including data management and authorship).
- ✓ World Medical Association (WMA): Declaration of Helsinki – Ethical Principles for Medical Research Involving Human Subjects.
- ✓ The Belmont Report: Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research (1979).
- ✓ CIOMS (Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences): International Ethical Guidelines for Health-related Research Involving Humans (2016). (Specifically referenced for community engagement and benefit-sharing in low-resource settings).
- ✓ World Health Organization (WHO): Laboratory Biosafety Manual, 4th Edition.
- ✓ National Institutes of Health (NIH) / CDC: Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories (BMBL), 6th Edition.
- ✓ United Nations (UN) System: Model policies on harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination, and abuse of authority.

## 9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

All members of the TIDRC/UAC community are required to acknowledge that they have received, read, understood, and agree to abide by this Code of Conduct.

**Please sign and return this page to the TIDRC/UAC Research Grant Management Office.**

I, the undersigned, acknowledge that I have received and read the TIDRC/UAC Code of Conduct (TIDRC/HR/CCP-01). I understand the standards and policies contained within it and agree to comply with them as a condition of my affiliation with the Center.

Full Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Position/Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Approval & adoption

This Code of Conduct Policy, TIDRC/HR/CCP-01 is hereby formally approved and adopted as the official policy of the Tropical Infectious Diseases Research Center/University of Abomey-Calavi, effective February 18, 2026



  
**Salako J. BJOGBENOU**

Head of Environment Data Management  
and University Training Unit (UEGDFU)  
Deputy Director of Tropical Infectious  
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