



# 6

## **CODE OF CONDUCT & ETHICS**

### 6.1 Purpose

- To promote ethical behavior, professionalism, integrity, and respect within the organization and in all interactions with stakeholders.

### 6.2 Scope

- This policy applies to all board members, employees, volunteers, interns, consultants and contractors.

### 6.3 Core Values and Principles

- **Integrity:** Always act in the best interest of the organization.
- **Accountability:** Be responsible for decisions and actions.
- **Respect:** Treat everyone with dignity and fairness.
- **Transparency:** Be open and honest in communication and conduct.
- **Excellence:** Strive for high standards and continuous improvement.

### 6.4 Professional Conduct

- Maintain high standards of personal and professional behavior.
- Avoid actions that bring the organization into disrepute.
- Represent the organization appropriately in public forums and on social media.

### 6.5 Respect and Non-Discrimination

- Promote a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Discrimination, harassment, or bullying based on race, gender, religion, disability or any other status is strictly prohibited.
- Equal opportunities must be ensured at all levels.

### 6.6 Confidentiality

- Protect sensitive organizational and beneficiary information.
- Do not disclose confidential information without proper authorization.
- Breach of confidentiality may lead to disciplinary action.

### 6.7 Use of Organizational Resources

- Resources (vehicles, computers, funds, etc.) must be used only for authorized purposes.
- Misuse or personal appropriation of resources is prohibited.

## 6.8 Conflict of Interest

- Avoid situations where personal interests conflict with official duties.
- Declare any actual or potential conflict in accordance with the Conflict of Interest Policy.

## 6.9 Bribery, Corruption, and Fraud

- Bribes, kickbacks, or unethical inducements must not be offered, accepted, or solicited.
- Any suspected fraud or corruption must be reported immediately through the appropriate channels.

## 6.10 Substance Abuse and Criminal Conduct

- Possession, use, or distribution of illegal drugs or working under the influence is strictly prohibited.
- Any involvement in criminal activity will be grounds for dismissal and legal action.

## 6.11 Reporting Misconduct

- Staff are encouraged to report unethical behavior without fear of retaliation.
- Reports may be made through line managers, HR, or anonymous whistleblowing channels.
- Investigations will be fair, confidential, and timely.

## 6.12 Disciplinary Measures

- Violations of the Code may result in disciplinary actions including warning, suspension, demotion, or termination.
- The organization reserves the right to refer cases to law enforcement where necessary.

## 6.13 Roles and Responsibilities

- **All Staff:** Understand and comply with the Code.
- **Supervisors/Managers:** Set an example and enforce compliance.
- **HR/Board:** Provide training, receive reports, and coordinate disciplinary actions.

#### **6.14 Acknowledgment and Training**

- All staff must sign an acknowledgment form confirming receipt and understanding of this policy.
- Training on the Code of Conduct shall be provided upon onboarding and periodically thereafter.

#### **6.15 Policy Review**

- This policy shall be reviewed every two years or as needed based on changes in legal or organizational requirements.



# 7

## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

### 7.1 Purpose

To safeguard children from harm, abuse, exploitation, and neglect in all organizational programs and activities, and to promote their well-being and development.

### 7.2 Scope

This policy applies to all staff, board members, volunteers, interns, contractors, and partners who interact with children or are involved in programs that impact children

### 7.3 Guiding Principles

- **Best Interests of the Child:** Every decision and action must prioritize the child's safety and well-being.
- **Zero Tolerance for Abuse:** Any form of abuse—physical, emotional, sexual, or neglect—is strictly prohibited.
- **Participation and Dignity:** Children must be treated with respect and allowed to participate in decisions affecting them.

### 7.4 Definitions

- **Child:** Any person under the age of 18.
- **Abuse:** Any action or lack thereof that results in actual or potential harm to a child.

### 7.5 Recruitment and Vetting

- All employees, volunteers, and consultants must undergo background checks before engagement.
- Reference checks must ask specific questions about past conduct with children.
- Contracts must include clauses on child protection responsibilities.

### 7.6 Code of Conduct with Children

- Maintain appropriate physical and emotional boundaries.
- Never be alone with a child in a secluded environment.
- Avoid giving personal contact details or befriending children on social media.
- No form of corporal punishment or degrading treatment is permitted.

## 7.7 Reporting and Response Procedures

- Any suspicion, allegation, or incident of child abuse must be reported immediately to the designated Child Protection Officer (CPO).
- Reports may also be made to local authorities where necessary.
- Confidentiality must be maintained, and actions must prioritize the child's safety.

## 7.8 Investigations and Disciplinary Action

- All reported cases shall be investigated fairly and promptly.
- Perpetrators may be suspended during investigations.
- Proven misconduct will result in termination and possible legal referral.

## 7.9 Partner Organizations and Contractors

- All partners and vendors working with children must adhere to this policy.
- MoUs and contracts must reference compliance with child safeguarding standards.

## 7.10 Training and Awareness

- All staff and volunteers must undergo annual training on child protection.
- Children must be informed about their rights and how to report concerns.

## 7.11 Monitoring and Compliance

- Regular spot checks and monitoring visits shall assess compliance with safeguarding standards.
- Feedback from children and communities will inform improvements.

## 7.12 Roles and Responsibilities

- **Child Protection Officer:** Lead on training, reporting, investigation, and compliance.
- **Managers and Supervisors:** Promote safe environments and supervise frontline staff.
- **All Staff and Volunteers:** Observe, report, and uphold child protection commitments.
- **Board:** Provide oversight and accountability..

## 7.13 Policy Review

This policy shall be reviewed every two years or earlier if there are legal changes or incidents that require a revision.



**12**

**GENDER EQUALITY  
& INCLUSION**



### 12.1 Purpose

- To promote an inclusive, equitable, and respectful work and program environment where everyone has equal access to opportunities, resources, and rights regardless of gender, age, disability, ethnicity, or background.

### 12.2 Scope

- This policy applies to all staff, board members, volunteers, contractors, partners, and program beneficiaries.

### 12.3 Guiding Principles

- **Non-Discrimination:** Zero tolerance for discrimination based on gender, disability, or any other status.
- **Equity:** Ensure fair treatment and access to resources for marginalized groups.
- **Empowerment:** Foster participation and leadership among underrepresented groups.
- **Respect:** Value diversity and promote dignity and respect for all individuals.

### 12.4 Gender Mainstreaming Strategies

- Integrate gender perspectives in planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.
- Conduct gender impact assessments for all programs.
- Collect and use sex-disaggregated data in reporting and analysis.

### 12.5 Inclusive Recruitment and HR Practices

- Ensure job adverts, interview panels, and hiring practices are inclusive.
- Provide flexible working arrangements and reasonable accommodations.
- Promote women's leadership and equal representation in management and governance roles.

### 12.6 Addressing Discrimination and Harassment

- Provide clear mechanisms for reporting gender-based violence, harassment, or discrimination.
- Investigate complaints promptly and fairly.
- Offer protection and support to affected individuals.

## 12.6a Prevention of Sexual Harassment

- Sexual harassment is a form of gender-based violence and a violation of human rights.
- The organization upholds a zero-tolerance approach to any behavior that constitutes sexual harassment.
- Sexual harassment undermines equality, safety, and dignity and will not be tolerated in any form, including among staff, beneficiaries, or partners.
- This policy reinforces the HR Policy provisions and ensures that gender dimensions of harassment are recognized and addressed.
- Training, awareness, and active prevention will be integrated into all gender equality efforts.

## 12.7 Gender-Sensitive Programming

- Design interventions that address the specific needs and barriers faced by different gender groups.
- Promote the participation of women, youth, and persons with disabilities in program activities.
- Avoid reinforcing gender stereotypes in materials, messaging, or outreach.

## 12.8 Capacity Building and Awareness

- Conduct regular gender and inclusion training for staff and partners.
- Raise awareness through campaigns, workshops, and communication materials.

## 12.9 Monitoring and Evaluation

- Include gender and inclusion indicators in all M&E frameworks.
- Conduct periodic gender audits to assess progress.
- Report regularly to management and the board on gender equity outcomes.

## 12.10 Roles and Responsibilities

- **Gender Focal Person:** Lead implementation, training, and reporting on this policy.
- **Management:** Ensure organizational commitment and resources.
- **All Staff:** Promote inclusion and challenge bias in daily work.
- **Board:** Provide strategic oversight and support inclusive leadership.

## 12.11 Policy Review

- This policy shall be reviewed every two years or earlier based on significant organizational, legal, or social developments.