



# MAHBOBA'S PROMISE

An Australian Aid Organisation

Code of Conduct – The Way We Work

Date of Document

## 1. Why this matters.

Mahboba's Promise Incorporated (MPI) is committed to providing safe, ethical and professional care that provides the power of choice to vulnerable women and children of Afghanistan. This policy sets out the behavioural expectations for people representing, working with or employed by Mahboba's Promise.

## 2. Purpose

This Code of Conduct (the Code) sets out the conduct expected of MPI associated personnel while associated and contracted to MPI. Breaches of the Code are grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

## 3. Scope

This Code of Conduct applies to all people associated with Mahboba's Promise. This includes:

- Employees, board members, volunteers, contractors, interns, researchers, visitors and work placements (associated people)
- Donors, vendors, partners and suppliers who have contact with beneficiaries or who have access to beneficiaries' information (partners and services providers)

## 4. Values and Principles

Mahboba's Promise upholds the values of compassion, tolerance and peace.

**Compassion:** We feel and express compassion for people in need through acts of kindness that uphold the mission, purpose and standards expressed in our policies. The behaviours expressed in this code ensure we not only model integrity, honesty, transparency and due diligence but that we

advocate and promote the same in our partners and communities where we live.

**Tolerance:** We know that self-sufficiency takes time, resources and courage. These things require our dedication and commitment and an open mind and way of working. We listen and learn so we can hear the needs and strengths of those we work with to empower.

**Peace:** We do not discriminate and recognise diversity makes us stronger. We know that not all people start at the same starting line and consider and ensure our actions model and promote equity, equality, uphold human rights and enhance the quality of life for the people we serve. When we have different opinions, we seek mutual understanding and afford one another mutual respect for different lived experiences.

## 5. Responsibilities

It is the **responsibility of all** associated people, partners and some service providers to ensure:

- Policies are read, understood and able to translate changes into action
- Provide feedback if changes are inconsistent with achieving the mission, purpose or core functions in a specific context or situation
- Support and encourage colleagues to work in a way that upholds the Code
- Report any suspected breaches in accordance with the Mahboba's Promise Complaints Procedure, to a manager, a member of the executive team or the Mahboba's Promise Whistleblowing Policy as soon as possible

**Managers or those with a leadership responsibility** are expected to model and set examples of behaviour that aligns with this Code. This includes creating and maintaining a working environment that supports Mahboba's Promise people in holding up and celebrating these standards. The Code empowers leaders to educate, mentor and manage behaviour, and requires them ensure all staff and key volunteers receive training about the Code. It also requires leaders to identify, prevent and respond immediately and

appropriately in the event a possible, suspected or actual breach or incident of non-compliance occurs.

## 6. The Code

All Mahboba's Promise people, partners and stakeholders are expected to uphold the integrity and reputation of MPI and partners by ensuring professional and personal behaviour matches MPI's values and principles.

### **We are personally accountable and responsible**

- To deliver excellence in service to our donors, sponsors and most of all, the vulnerable women and children of Afghanistan (rights holders)
- For using MPI resources efficiently, safely and in ways that achieves results
- Not engage in fraternization and avoid relationships in the course of professional duties which involve, or appear to involve, preferential treatment or improper use of power or position
- We ensure private interests do not conflict directly or indirectly with obligations to the organisational interests and report any real or perceived conflicts of interests as soon as they are identified
- We take personal responsibility for all issues over which we have control and the way these are achieved
- Use any information obtained in the course of Mahboba's Promise work or partnership to gain an advantage or to cause detriment to Mahboba's Promise or another person
- Adherence to all legal and organisational health and safety requirements in force at the location where we work, including with MPI partners or suppliers
- Compliance with local security guidelines and be proactive in informing management of any organisational or safety or security risks
- We do not pursue relationships that occur while we conduct our work that involves (or appears to involve) unequal or improper use of power or positions (we do not fraternise, engage in prejudice or preferential treatment)

### **We value and harness diversity, inclusion and equality**

- Respect and value one another, recognising that diversity makes the organisation and its people stronger and more capable of finding new and sustainable solutions for rights holders
- Foster, promote and contribute to workplaces that are equitable and free from any form of bullying, harassment or discrimination and always work towards the best interests of children
- We treat everyone fairly and with respect, and never harass, victimise or discriminate, especially in the provision of services on the grounds of sex (including pregnancy), sexuality, transgender status, race, colour, ethnic or ethno-religious background, descent or national identity, marital status, disability, age, educational achievement, political conviction or religious belief, carer responsibilities or other grounds covered by relevant legislation
- Always use language and behaviour that is appropriate, that is never harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, culturally inappropriate or that is intended to shame, humiliate, belittle, degrade or exploit another person

### **We are rights-based**

- We endorse and defend the human rights and commit to respecting and safeguarding those rights in all decisions and actions
- Uphold the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Convention on the Rights of the Child, including in countries where laws, customs or traditions contravene these declarations
- We operate with the principal of do no harm
- Exercise powers and discharge duties with care and diligence, in good faith, in the best interests of Mahboba's Promise and the organisation's beneficiaries
- We maintain a zero tolerance of any form of exploitation, abuse, bullying or harassment (especially of a sexual nature), the exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour, or any other exchanges for personal gain
- For the above reason, we do not engage in the use of prostitutes
- Never engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children or vulnerable adults, including child labour or trafficking
- We never physically assault a child or vulnerable adult
- Never emotionally or psychologically abuse a child or vulnerable adult

- Never engage in sexual activity with a child (persons under the age of 18) and know that mistaken belief in the age of a child will not be tolerated as a defence
- Maintain a safe work environment
- Adopt a survivor centred approach, prioritising the rights, needs and wishes of the survivor while ensuring procedural fairness to all parties
- Commit to continue any investigation of sexual misconduct or harassment to closure, as far as reasonably practicable, despite whether the position ends before the commencement or conclusion of the investigation process

### **We operate with a culture of excellence**

- Comply with any lawful and reasonable direction given by someone in Mahboba's Promise who has the authority to give the direction
- Behave in a manner consistent with the position of authority and power and as a representative of Mahboba's Promise
- We ensure that our activities, particularly humanitarian responses, manage the risk of making gender inequalities and inequitable power structures worse – at home and overseas
- Protect the privacy of Mahboba's Promise, associated people, program participants and beneficiaries, understanding that in many cases their personal safety relies on the data and privacy protection
- Be consistent with sector standards and uphold the Australian Charities and not-for-profit Commission governance standards and Australian Council for International Development Code of Conduct
- Use property responsibly for business purposes, ensuring it is in good working order and do not expose property or assets to situations where theft or damage could occur

## **7. Definitions**

Harm	Anything that individuals, institutions or processes do or fail to do that directly or indirectly causes intentional or unintentional consequences that are unwanted by those experiencing it.
Leaders	Management Committee, CEO, Senior Management Team, Team Leaders

Bullying	Repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards a worker or a group of workers that creates a risk to health and safety.
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## 8. Associated Policies

- [Child Protection Policy](#)
- [Protocol for the Safety and Protection of Children and Young People](#)
- [Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Harassment Policy](#)
- [Privacy Policy](#)
- Communications Policy
- [Human Rights and Disability Inclusion Policy](#)
- [Code of Conduct for Accompanying Mahboba to Fundraising Events](#)
- [Code of Conduct for Visitors](#)
- [Code of Conduct for Staff or Volunteers in Afghanistan](#)
- [Code of Conduct for Australian Staff Volunteers](#)
- [Volunteer Code of Practice](#)

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