

Mahboba's Promise Disability Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is:

1. To acknowledge the high prevalence of disability in the communities Mahboba's Promise works with.
2. To ensure that any people or children with disabilities involved in our projects are not discriminated against or stigmatised in any way.
3. To promote the rights and recognise the strengths and contributions of people with disabilities.
4. To encourage the participation of people with disabilities in program planning, monitoring and advocacy.
5. To reinforce our Code of Conduct and Human Rights Policy so that the way we work ensures people with disabilities are included, considered and engaged in all our activities.
6. To protect any potential or current employees from discrimination based on disability from MPI staff, volunteers or rights holders; and
7. To encourage awareness and understanding of disability in the communities where relevant.

2. Scope

The policy applies to any projects undertaken by Mahboba's Promise Incorporated (MPI) and all current and prospective staff, volunteers or rights holders involved in our activities. This policy complements our Human Rights Policy as MPI considers disability inclusion a basic human right.

3. Context

There is a lack of reliable data to know how many people with disabilities there are in Afghanistan. This is primarily due to challenges accessing reliable data. The Ministry of Martyrs and Disabled (MMD) most recent data indicates that there are between 80,000 to 2 million people with a disability. The types and needs of this group of Afghan citizens is not clear, particularly what percentage experience congenital or disease-related disability versus victims of war and violence.

Individuals and children suffering from mental disabilities or health challenges are labelled *diwanas* and face great stigma in Afghan society. Women with disabilities are a particularly high-risk group, often facing discrimination within the family unit. Access to health care, education or employment is rare and they are vulnerable to physical and sexual abuse.

MPI is committed to upholding our responsibility to monitor and understand through considered action throughout all our activities, the barriers to inclusion that people with a disability face. MPI will ensure that our activities do not harm and do not reinforce existing inequalities or barriers. We achieve this through careful evaluation of our activities and accessible feedback mechanisms.

4. Definitions

Disability

The conditions of disability for the purpose of this policy are taken from the Australian *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth).

They are defined by:

- Total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions.
- Total or partial loss of a part of a body.
- The presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness.

- The malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body.
- A disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction.
- A disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment, or that results in disturbed behaviour.

MPI considers any episodic, or loss of long-term physical, mental intellectual or sensory impairment which hinders and places barriers to various interaction and limit a person's effective participation in society on an equal basis.

Discrimination

Discrimination can be direct or indirect. Direct discrimination refers to the unfavourable treatment of a person with disability compared to the treatment of a non-disabled person in similar circumstances. Indirect discrimination occurs when a person with disability is required to comply with conditions that cannot be carried out by him/her due to the disability.

Stigmatisation

The shaming, branding or labelling of a child or person with a disability with intent to exclude them from normal community life.

Policy

MPI is determined to prevent discrimination against persons with disability as far as possible within its projects. It aims to do this by:

- Developing and maintaining recruitment and training procedures that are non-discriminatory towards people with disabilities.

- Creating an environment in the projects that is free from discrimination and in which all staff, volunteers and children are treated with dignity and respect.
- Providing all staff, volunteers and rights holders with awareness training to ensure that they understand their rights and responsibilities.
- Providing an easily accessible procedure for complaints relating to the issue.
- Treating complaints in a fair, timely and confidential manner.
- Setting standards of acceptable behaviour for all employees, volunteers and rights holders.
- Encouraging the reporting of breaches of this policy.
- Regularly reviewing the policy, complaint handling and training requirements.

Equal Opportunity

The organisation is committed to staffing processes based on ability, experience and qualifications. The decisions made about staffing must be free from discrimination when:

- Interviewing and selecting employees or volunteers for the projects.
- Any terms, conditions and benefits offered as part of employment.
- Selecting children or community members as rights holders for the projects.
- Selecting members to take part in vocational training courses.
- Considering employees for transfer, promotion or dismissal.
- Where possible, promote consultation with people with disabilities and contextualise the barriers to inclusion and participation.

Women With Disabilities

Mahboba's Promise recognises that women with disabilities tend to be at greater risk of being discriminated against and alienated from regular community life. Particular effort will be made to engage women with disabilities in our projects, and to protect them from abuse and discrimination. This includes ensuring women with a disability are involved with program planning, design, implementation and feedback. Only

through a “nothing about us, without us” approach can we ensure we do no harm and reduce the barriers many women face in accessing services and support.

Responsibilities

All members involved with the community projects will be required to undergo training for anti-discrimination awareness.

The management has a responsibility to:

- Monitor and evaluate the environment and ensure that no discrimination or stigmatisation takes place.
- Model appropriate behaviour towards people with disabilities, treating them with dignity and respect.
- Ensure that staff and other members understand the policy.
- Give fair consideration to any complaints and consider appropriate action
- Promote opportunities for inclusion by people with disability or their representative organisations.
- Monitor and evaluate the organisation’s progress promoting equality throughout our activities.

The staff and volunteers have a responsibility to:

- Refrain from engaging in discriminatory behaviour.
- Report incidences of discrimination against people with disabilities involved in projects.
- Raise awareness and understanding about disability in the community where appropriate.

Breaches

Anyone can make a complaint or lodge a grievance with MPI or a partner or donor if they believe there has been a breach of this policy. Complaints and grievances will

be managed in accordance with our Whistle Blowers Policy and Complaints Management Policy.

All complaints of discrimination will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly, fairly and confidentially.

Any disciplinary action will be determined by the MPI Management Committee in consultation with MPA. Action may include the following:

- Meeting to discuss breach and opportunity for person to provide their account of the situation.
- Performance management and/or disciplinary action.
- Further education on the Disability Policy and Code of Conduct.
- Formal warning and monitoring.
- Transfer to other duties.
- Suspension.
- Internal investigation.
- Report to police in case of physical abuse.
- Dismissal.

Document Control	
Risk Level:	High (two years)
Approval Date:	Operationally approved 09/05/2023
Next Review Date:	09/05/2025
Responsible Position:	Operations Manager