

## **Mahboba's Promise Partnership Policy**

### **1. Why this Matters**

Mahboba's Promise Inc. (MPI) is committed to building the capacity of local communities, people and organisations with whom we partner to ensure the vulnerable women and children of Afghanistan (rights holders) are empowered with choices that improve their immediate and long-term safety and resilience. This policy ensures that our partnerships accelerate our mission by applying our four key partnership principles of equity, mutual respect, transparency and accountability.

### **2. Scope of the Policy**

- The Policy covers all partnerships (or significant collaborations) undertaken by MPI in Australia and overseas. This policy applies to all MPI Management Committee, staff and volunteers and extends to MPI partners and associated implementing organisations within Australia or overseas.
- A partnership is defined as a joint working arrangement where the partners:
- Are independent legitimate bodies.
- Agree to cooperate to achieve common goals.
- Create an accountable organisational structure or process to achieve outcomes and financially transparent.
- Accept shared responsibility for decision making and the delivery of actions and outcomes.
- Plan and implement a jointly agreed plan with joint resources.
- Share relevant information, pool risks and rewards.

### **3. Developing New Collaborations or Partnerships**

Before entering a major new collaboration (involving more than a month of resources or more than 10,000 AUD in MPI resources) or partnership, MPI must ensure that the partner is committed to the same principles, values and goals as MPI.

MPI must also determine if the new partner has the required capacity to behave in ways that are compliant with all relevant jurisdictional laws and regulatory standards, the Australian Council for International Development Code of Conduct and any relevant donor or third-party regulatory standards. In Afghanistan, this includes the

Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief and Development (ACBAR Code of Conduct).

To confirm suitability, capability and capacity, the Due Diligence Check List (Annex A) must be complete, to understand the strengths and limitations of the new partner and ensure the relevant organisational processes are complete. This due diligence ensures our partnerships are productive but importantly, it ensures our organisation, people and the most vulnerable women and children of Afghanistan (rights holders) are safeguarded.

The following essential questions must be confirmed and in place before any partnership agreement is entered into:

- Is their own mission, vision and purpose aligned with MPI's vision, mission and values?
- Are they committed to pursuing clear and mutually agreed activities, outputs and outcomes that accelerate MPI's purpose?
- Confirm that they are not on the [DFAT Consolidated List](#) and [National Security Australia Listed Terrorist Organisations](#) and [United Nations Security Council Consolidated List](#).
- Is the partner willing and/or able to learn, including participate in an independent or conduct internal monitoring and evaluation of their work, behaviour, safeguarding and protection and standards of compliance?
- How will the potential partner document, store and share information necessary to assist in program evaluations, privacy and confidentiality? How will it differentiate humanitarian and development assistance funding and reporting?
- Does the potential partner have the capabilities and capacity to complete the work?
- What are the gaps in capability or capacity, and is it possible to support their capacity and knowledge development through training and additional collaboration?
- Will the organisation be working with or impacting vulnerable people and children? If so, do they have a proven track record of effective child protection? Are they willing and able to sign onto and commit to the Child

Protection Policy, Protocol and Code of Conduct? This includes the commitment to relocate, reassign or suspend an individual from their role and functions in the best interests of the victim/survivor.

- Is the potential partner willing to sign in acknowledgement of their commitment to the MPI Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy and policies relating to counter terrorism, fraud, corruption, bribery, disability inclusion, gender equality, environmental management, risk management and privacy in the event their own policies are deemed insufficient? Is the partner also willing to comply with the standards in the [ACFID Code of Conduct](#)?
- Can the organisation show how it builds diversity, promotes equality and ensures inclusion? How does the partner ensure no person is discriminated against because of their age, gender, religion, ethnicity, physical or intellectual ability or political affiliation.
- Do they have mechanisms in place to appropriately manage the financial aspect of the project, including tax laws? How will they provide evidence that funds and resources will be used for the agreed purpose only and will not be used for non-development work?
- Does the organisation have a functional complaints and whistle-blowing policy and system?
- Who are their sub-contractors or partners they will be using to deliver the activities?
- Does the organisation promote any religious, political or other partisan agenda that may put MPI at risk?

Once the Due Diligence Checklist is complete and relevant evidence and findings are collected, a file is created in MPI file drive which summarises the potential new partners' capacity assessment.

#### **4. Partner Capacity Assessments**

Sustainability is one of MP's values, fostering self-reliance through comprehensive evidence-based projects. Prior to the commencement of each project, MP conducts a partner capacity assessment. The assessment ensures that the project to be conducted is meeting the needs of the partner country and partner organisation. The

assessment also ensures that the project will address cross cutting issues such as gender, people with disabilities and child protection. The information gathered through the capacity assessment is used to develop the project design.

## **5. Partnership Agreements**

Once the potential partner has passed the Due Diligence and capacity assessment process, MPI and the partner enter into a partnership agreement. This document outlines the terms, scope and activities of the partnership. It identifies interests, roles and responsibilities, limitations and risks. This document reduces the chance for misunderstanding, miscommunications, incorrect assumptions, conflict and activity failure.

Importantly, this agreement honours the entity as meeting MPI's standard and acknowledges them as a peer in the pursuit of MPI's purpose. To be called an MPI partner is meaningful and is something to celebrate.

MPI has a standard partnership agreement template that contains the mandatory and good practice standards. This template must be used in all new MPI partnerships to ensure MPI can meet our own good standard and compliance.

## **6. Reviews**

Throughout each project, opportunities are available to review project activities, implement recommendations and make changes to future projects. This review allows for ongoing collaboration and reflection by all partners to support mutual learning and suitable capacity building.

To assist achieving this, MPI has developed a Partnership Health Checklist. This checklist helps MPI and their partners to understand progress, learning, impact of activities, manage risk and identify new opportunities. For many partnerships, there is an element of knowledge exchange and capacity strengthening. For there to be a need for partnership means there is a gap or resources each requires of the other.

The health check process helps us to track this growth and exchange, by supporting our partnership managers to build interpersonal relationships with their partners through shared learning, understanding, reflection, adaptation and growth.

Equally, this process can also identify when there is a need to either exit or graduating from a partnership. Partnerships require time, money and resources. Sometimes a Health Check can help identify and plan for a need to close out of a partnership. There may be many reasons, including successful achievement of outcomes, the mutual value and purpose no longer aligns or is at odds or a conflict or grievance that is unable to be resolved.

## **7. Grievances**

MP recognises the rights of individuals and partner organisations to lodge a grievance and have it resolved quickly and fairly. To enable MP to conduct an investigation into a grievance, the organisation is reliant upon the in-country contact to liaise with the individual lodging the grievance. The involvement of an in-country contact in this process ensures the matter is handled sensitively and comfortably in line with cultural sensitivities. The in-country contact liaises with the MP Executive Officer who (in line with the Grievance Policy) compiles a report and makes a recommendation to the Board.

## **8. Policy Review**

The MP Partnership Policy is reviewed on an annual or as needs basis, as determined by the Management Committee or Executive Manager.

## **9. Resources**

ACFID Code of Conduct Quality Principle: Development and humanitarian responses enable sustainable change through the empowerment of local actors and systems.

Related MP Documents:

- Counter Terrorism Policy.
- Child Protection Policy.
- Child Protection Code of Conduct.
- Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Policy.
- Complaints Resolution Policy.
- Control of Funds Policy.
- Whistleblower Policy.













## Document Control

<b>Risk Level:</b>	Very High (one year)
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