

Appendix 1: Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct must be signed by all staff members and volunteers BEFORE starting to perform their duties.

NISMA ARSIS considers all forms of child abuse as unacceptable and admits that has a duty to safeguard children, which means to ensure they are safe, to promote their wellbeing as well as to protect them from harm and abuse. Neglecting, physical, emotional/psychological and sexual abuse are the main forms of abuse.

Our Child Protection Policies and Procedures represent the measures we will undertake aiming to protect children. This includes taking proactive actions to prevent situations of harm and abuse as well as taking action to respond to situations where the child is suffering, or may be/is being abused.

A child is every human being under the age of 18 as defined in the UN Convention on Human Rights, 1989.

Part of our safeguarding policy is also the criterion that all staff (including employees, counselors and interns), full-time or part-time, must accept and sign the safeguarding policy and specifically agree to work in accordance with the Code of Conduct, which sets out responsibilities for child protection and expectations for the behaviors of the staff members. **THIS CRITERION IS MANDATORY.**

Any form of unacceptable conduct that violates the Code of Conduct must be reported. In case of situations not foreseen by the Code of Conduct, NISMA expects its representatives to make fair judgments giving priority to *"the best interests of the child"*.

NISMA respects the Convention on The Human Rights and the five following principles:

- I. Children's rights: All NISMA staff should respect and promote children's rights. First of all, they must protect the right of every child to live safely, without being at risk of abuse or exploitation, and must always work for the best interests of the child.
- II. Zero tolerance: NISMA does not tolerate any form of abuse and takes the necessary measures to implement child safeguarding policy.
- III. Risk Management: NISMA ensures that risks are identified and minimized from the planning phase to the implementation phase activities.
- IV. Responsibility of each: The successful implementation of child safeguarding policy is based on the individual and joint responsibility of all representatives of NISMA including staff. NISMA aims to ensure that the programs of partner organizations comply with international safeguarding standards.
- V. Duty to notify: Any suspected breach or any proven breach of the current Code of Conduct should be reported immediately to the child protection supervisor or contact person for NISMA. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the procedure.

BY SIGNING THE CODE OF CONDUCT I HEREBY AGREE TO:

In every case I will:

- **Treat children with respect and equality**, regardless of age, gender, language, religion, opinion or nationality, social or ethnic origin, status, class, caste, sexual orientation or any other characteristic.
- **Help children participate in decisions** that affect them according to their age and level of maturity.
- **Maintain means of communication** and build trust with children and their families, communities, staff and other volunteers, and representatives of partner organizations so that concerns can be shared and discussed.
- Use methods that include **non-violent and positive behaviors** when supervising children.
- Encourage children and communities to **talk openly about their interactions** with adults and each other.
- **Inform** children and communities of their rights in order to report any distressing situations and how they may raise a concern.
- **Empower** children so that they can better protect themselves.
- Make sure another adult is present **or try to be visible** when I am in contact with a child.
- Try to respect the **independence of the child** and ensure to not perform actions that a child can perform himself.
- **Plan activities** and organize the workplace in such a way that reduces the risk of injury given the age and development of the child.
- Ensure that information about children, families and communities **remains confidential**.
- Behave in a way that sets a **good example** (avoids smoking, do not show disrespect to colleagues, etc.).
- **Get permission** from children and their parents before photographing, recording or using the child's image, for what they have said or their story. This includes explaining how the photos will be used. This explanation will be given to the children and their parents.
- Make sure that the child **is not presented in a degrading way** or in a way that can be interpreted by others as sexually suggesting.
- Raise any **concerns and doubts** about the Safeguarding Policy with my manager/ supervisor or contact person for child protection.
- Immediately report any suspicions or allegations to the Child Protection Contact Person for any conduct which is not in line with the principles of Safeguarding Policy and the Code of Conduct, including any form of child abuse, even if the information or allegations are unclear.

Under any circumstance I will not:

- **Engage in any form of sexual relationship** with anyone under the age of 18, regardless of the legal age when engaging in sexual activity is permitted, in accordance with local law and customs. Misunderstanding about the age of the child cannot be used as protection.
- **Exchange money, labor, goods, services or humanitarian aid** for sexual favors or subjecting a child to another form of humiliating, degrading or abusive behavior.
- **Touch children, use inappropriate language or make inappropriate suggestions**, provoke, tease or humiliate the child or show disrespect for cultural practices. This includes acting in a way that can have a negative impact on the child's self-esteem and feelings of self-worth.
- **Use the child labor** (for example through household chores).
- **Discriminate**, treat children unequally or unfairly, for example by favoring or excluding others.
- Invite a child or their relatives to **my house** or establish a relationship with the children and/or their families, which may be following outside normal professional boundaries.
- **Work with or transport a child alone** without the prior authorization of my manager, unless it is absolutely necessary for the safety of the child.
- Be under the influence of **drugs or alcohol** while working with children.
- Take photograph or make videos for **other uses that are not strictly professional** unless the Local Delegation gives permission.
- Watch, publish, produce or distribute child **pornography**, and/or display child pornography.
- **Show the faces** of children who are sexually exploited, victims of trafficking, abuse, in conflict with the law, associated with armed groups or who can easily be found even if their identities have changed.
- Photograph or publish pictures of children **completely naked or clothed in a way that does not suit** the situation in which they find themselves.
- Present children as **victims** (weak, helpless, helpless, desperate, etc.).
- Publish a story or image that could **endanger** the child, their family or community.
- Use pictures that **have not been checked or approved** by my line manager or post unofficial pictures or information about children on our personal websites or social networks (like Facebook: Instagram; ect).
- Keep in touch with children and their families through **social media**, only if a specific NISMA project requires me to do so and I have been given permission.
- Ignore or fail to report any concerns, suspected violence or violations of child safeguarding policy and Code of Conduct to the Child Protection Contact Person.

I understand that, in case of suspicion or allegation of a breach of the Code of Conduct by me:

NISMA will take any action they deem necessary, which may include, but is not limited to:

- Provide assistance to the victim and take immediate steps to protect and support the child.
- Attempts to prove the facts in the most objective way possible (the presumption of innocence prevails) while protecting the reputation and confidentiality of the adults involved.
- Undertaking disciplinary actions, which may result in suspension or termination of the contract.
- Initiate legal proceedings and/or report to the competent authorities any violations of the Code of Conduct which may violate national legislation.
- Take appropriate measures to ensure that such incidents do not recur for example, by informing other organizations, which may request professional references regarding the termination of the contract due to a violation of child protection principles (in framework of the applicable legislative framework for information protection).

Declaration of commitment

I, the undersigned.....

Declare, that I have received, read and understood the child safeguarding policy of the NISMA ARSIS and I am committed to recognizing it and agreeing to work in accordance with it.

I understand that any case of non-compliance with the Code of Conduct may lead to the termination of my contractual relationship with NISMA ARSIS, as well as other disciplinary or judicial proceedings as mentioned above.

In addition, I declare that I have no criminal record of child molestation (which I have not previously stated) nor am I aware of any reason why anyone might consider me not eligible to work with children. The NISMA ARSIS reserves the right to notify other institutions which may request professional references regarding the termination of the contract for serious violations of child protection principles within the applicable legislative framework for information protection.

Date.....in.....

Signature.....