

SAFEGUARDING CODE OF CONDUCT

BACKGROUND

1. This Code of Conduct is to be read in conjunction with the ACMS Policy for Safeguarding Children and Adults-at-risk. ACMS is committed towards providing a welcoming, inclusive and a safe environment for all children and adults-at-risk to learn and grow in Christ.
2. ACMS' staff, Consultants, Board of Trustees, Co-Mission Partners, and Direct volunteers must agree to this Code when working with children and adults-at-risk. They must maintain clear professional boundaries and highest degree of ethical conduct at all times.
3. The Code of Conduct should be included into all employment contracts. Breaches of this Code by staff are grounds for disciplinary action which may include termination of employment contracts.
4. This Code of Conduct is also applicable to the Board of Trustees, Consultants, Co-Mission Partners, and direct volunteers. Breaches of this Code may result in termination of trustee, partner, and volunteer roles.
5. This Code of Conduct sets out the behaviour protocol which ACMS expects from every person associated with or representing the organisation.

I WILL

- a. Treat all children and adults-at-risk in a manner which is respectful of their rights, integrity and dignity, and consider their best interests regardless of age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity or national origin, nationality, language, place of residence, marital status, state of physical or mental health, disability, state of pregnancy, religion or belief, social-economic or cultural background, political beliefs, and any history of conflict with the law.
- b. Make sure that children and adults-at-risk I work with are well-informed on their safe-guarding and protection rights, know what to do if they have a concern, and participate in the decisions that affect them.
- c. Plan and organise my work and the workplace to create and maintain an environment which prevents the abuse and exploitation of children and adults-at-risk. I must be aware of situations which may present risks and take appropriate action to minimise the risk to children and adults-at-risk.

- d. Be transparent and honest in my actions and whereabouts in my dealings with children and adults-at-risk participating in ACMS' programmes, projects, events, and activities.
- e. Take responsibility to ensure that I do not place myself in positions where there is a risk of allegation being made. I will ensure that either another adult is present when I am working with children/adults-at-risk or I am working with the children/adults-at-risk in an open place visible to others.
- f. Disclose all charges, convictions, and other outcomes of an offence, which occurred before or during association with ACMS that relate to abuse and exploitation of a child/adult-at-risk.
- g. Report any concerns, suspicions, incidents or allegations of actual or potential abuse or exploitation to a child/adult-at-risk that I have either witnessed, are made aware of, or suspect according to ACMS reporting procedures.
- h. Cooperate fully in any ACMS investigation of concerns or allegations of abuse or exploitation to a child/adult-at-risk.
- i. Disclose or discuss any personal and confidential information about any suspected or proven child/adult-at-risk abuse or exploitation or protection cases only with the Safeguarding Manager according to ACMS reporting procedures.
- j. Comply with all relevant international conventions¹ and national law and regulations in relation to child labour. In unavoidable situation, if:
 - a) My own child below 18 years old has to help out in the family farm/land and enterprise, I will make sure that he/she has time for education and rest.
 - b) My own child below 18 years old has to get a job² I will make sure that he/she is not exploited and performing harmful work.
 - c) I have to hire a child below 18 years old for domestic or other labour, I will make sure the child is not exploited and performing harmful work.

I WILL NOT

- a. Act in ways that is intended to shame, humiliate, belittle, or degrade children and adults-at-risk, or carry out any form of emotional abuse.

¹ The international standards are the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

² This does not include working in family farm/land or enterprise.

- b. Discriminate against, show differential or preferential to, or favour particular children and adults-at-risk to the detriment of them or others.
- c. Use physical punishment/discipline or use physical force of any kind (e.g., hitting and physical assault) towards children and adults-at-risk.
- d. Use inappropriate, offensive, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, culturally inappropriate or discriminatory language when speaking with a child/adult-at-risk.
- e. Behave provocatively or inappropriately with a child/adult-at-risk (e.g., fondle, hold, kiss, hug, or touch) in an inappropriate, unnecessary or culturally insensitive way.
- f. Condone or participate in behaviour of a child/adult-at-risk that is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
- g. Do things of a personal nature that a child/adult-at-risk can do for him/herself (e.g., going to the toilet, bathing, or changing clothes). If this is necessary, I will inform my superior first and be as open as possible in my behaviour.
- h. Invite unaccompanied children/adults-at-risk into my house or any other personal residential location or accommodation, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger.
- i. Have a child/adult-at-risk with whom I am in contact during work stay overnight at my house or any other personal residential location or accommodation.
- j. Sleep in the same room or bed with unaccompanied children/adults-at-risk with whom I am in contact during work. If this is absolutely necessary, I must obtain my superior's permission, and ensure that another adult is present if possible.
- k. Develop sexual relationships with children/adults-at-risk or engage in any practice with or develop behaviour towards children/adults-at-risk that may be interpreted as abusive or exploitative.
- l. Engage in any form of sexual activity or develop physical/sexual relationships with any child below 18 years old regardless of the local age of consent. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defence.
- m. Engage any child/adult-at-risk in any form of sexual activity which involve the exchange of either money, goods, assistance, employment, or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour.

- n. Make contact and/or spend time with any child/adult-at-risk or family members associated or formerly associated with ACMS' work that is not authorised by my superior. This includes but is not limited to visits and any form of communication via phone, messenger app, social media, emails, and letters (e.g., phone number, email address, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, WeChat, Skype, webcam, etc.).
- o. Use any computer, mobile phone, video/digital camera, or other electronic devices to exploit, harass or bully children/adults-at-risk.
- p. Use any computer, mobile phone, video/digital camera, or other electronic devices to access, view, create, download or distribute pornography/child pornography, particularly abusive images of children/adults-at-risk.

USE OF CHILDREN OR ADULTS-AT-RISK'S IMAGES

When photographing or filming or live streaming children/adults-at-risk for work purpose, I must:

- a. Ask permission³ from the children/adults-at-risk or their parents or their guardians before taking photographs or filming or live streaming them. I must explain to them how and where the photographs or film or live streaming will be used and for what purpose. Also, I must respect their decision to say "No" and assure them that there will be no negative repercussions from refusing to consent.
- b. Assess and endeavour to comply with local traditions, culture or restrictions for reproducing personal images before filming or photographing a child/adult-at-risk.
- c. Ensure photographs or films, or live streaming present the children/adults-at-risk in a respectful manner and do not impact negatively their dignity and privacy. Children/adults-at-risk should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive.
- d. When appropriate, the use and transferring/sending of the images or films or videos must not put the child/adult-at-risk of being identified or located. I will ensure files of images or films or videos with recorded identifying details are stored confidentially.
- e. Not post photographs/videos taken of children/adults-at-risk during any ACMS' programmes, projects, events, and activities on my personal or private social media sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blog, website, etc.) without the permission of ACMS and if posted, it will only be strictly for the purpose of promoting ACMS' programme/activity. If permission is granted, there must be clear references to my work and profession.

³ Refers to informed consent

GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING ON CHILDREN⁴

When reporting on children/adults-at-risk for work purpose, I must:

- a. Always provide an accurate context for the child/adult-at-risk's story or image.
- b. Not further stigmatize any child/adult-at-risk. I will avoid categorizations or descriptions that expose a child/adult-at-risk to negative reprisals, including additional physical or psychological harm, or to lifelong abuse, discrimination or rejection by his/her local communities.
- c. Always change the name and obscure the visual identity of any child/adult-at-risk who is identified as:
 - i. A survivor of sexual abuse or exploitation,
 - ii. A perpetrator of physical or sexual abuse,
 - iii. HIV positive, or living with AIDS, unless the child, a parent or a guardian gives informed consent,
 - iv. Charged or convicted of a crime,
 - v. A child combatant, or former child combatant who is holding a weapon or weapons,
 - vi. An asylum seeker, a refugee or an internal displaced person.
- d. Confirm the accuracy of what the child has to say, either with other children or an adult, preferably with both. When in doubt about whether a child is at risk, report on the general situation for children rather than on an individual child.

PERSONAL CONDUCT OUTSIDE WORK OR ENGAGEMENT WITH ACMS

ACMS' staff, Consultants, Board of Trustees, Co-Mission Partners, and direct volunteers are required to adhere to the Policy for Safeguarding Children and Adults-at-risk and the Safeguarding Code of Conduct both at work and outside work.

⁴ Adapted from the UNICEF's guidelines.

ACMS does not dictate the belief and value systems by which staff, Consultants, Board of Trustees, Co-Mission Partners, and direct volunteers conduct their personal lives. However, conduct by them outside work that are inconsistent with the Policy for Safeguarding Children and Adults-at-risk and this Safeguarding Code of Conduct may be considered a violation of both the Policy and the Code.