



**REPUBLIC OF SOMALILAND
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION
TECHNOLOGY (MICT)**

**EASTERN AFRICA REGIONAL DIGITAL INTEGRATION PROJECT
(EA-RDIP)**

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PROJECT WORKERS





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Introduction

This Code of Conduct applies to all personnel and anyone representing the EA-RDIP project. The EA-RDIP project contracts of employment or assignment and conditions of service for all personnel.

It is recognized that the work of EA-RDIP project often puts personnel in positions of power in relation to their own colleagues, partners, and beneficiaries. All personnel have an obligation not to abuse this power. This Code of Conduct is developed to promote safety, ensure respect for the people with whom the EA-RDIP Project staff come into contact, and guide EA-RDIP Project staff to understand what is considered acceptable professional and ethical behaviors.

This Code of Conduct is intended to serve as a guide for all personnel on how to uphold the ethical foundation of the project's views and actions. It also aims to help personnel ensure that we protect the communities we work with and that our work does no harm. In line with the principles set forth in the EA-RDIP Project ESF and other project policies, The EA-RDIP Project aims at promoting an open and respectful work environment with the highest standards of integrity. A healthy work environment and social, GBV, and Occupational health and safety (OHS) are instrumental in terms of promoting awareness, prevention, and adherence.

I acknowledge that adhering to environmental, social, health, and safety (ESHS) standards, following the project's occupational health and safety (OHS) requirements, and preventing sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment, and other forms of gender-based violence (GBV) and violence against children (VAC) is important. All forms of GBV or VAC are unacceptable in the workplace or when interacting with communities.

General Rules of Conduct

- All Project Staff must comply with criminal and civil laws in force in the Republic of Somaliland.
- The values that are enshrined in Somaliland's constitution, which are fundamental to human rights, protecting the dignity of the human person, and respect for the rights

of all, are the guiding principles of all staff working with or providing services to the EA-RDIP project.

- Tolerance and understanding of the basic human values that are essential for the work of EA-RDIP project Staff are undertaken on the ground.
- All staff must respect all persons equally, without any distinction whatsoever. This respect should foster a climate and a working environment sensitive to the needs of all.
- All Project Staff must apply the Code of Conduct during both working and non-working hours and abstain from any conduct that they know or appear inappropriate.
- All Project Staff are obliged to comply with all policies and procedures as included in the security guidelines.

Duties and Authority

- All Project Staff should fulfill their work duties with integrity and follow working schedules and requirements as per their contract.
- All Project Staff should perform their official duties in a manner that preserves and enhances public confidence in their own integrity and that of the project.
- All Project Staff must carry out their duties efficiently and to the required standards.
- All Project Staff must follow the country's guidelines and policy regarding political neutrality and must not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their work.
- Any Project Staff who wishes to seek public office must inform the Project Implementation Unit/ MICT and refrain from using project benefits for any political gains and tender his/her resignation.

Respecting the Dignity of All

- All Project Staff are expected to respect the dignity of people receiving the project assistance or benefiting from the project both directly and indirectly.
- In no instance should the need for assistance justify any person being exposed to situations that undermine their dignity, whether they occur during the identification of their needs or risks, or while the services are carried out.

Discrimination, Intimidation, Or Violence

- All Project Staff are expected to refrain from any form of discrimination based on status, gender, religion, nationality or ethnic group, language, marital status, age, disability, or clan/political affiliation.
- All Project Staff are required to display irreproachable conduct with the beneficiaries of the project, employing caution when dealing with the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.
- All Project Staff should avoid offering preferential treatment towards individuals, use his/her position of authority or power to give favors to any specific groups, and must remain courteous to the communities in the project-targeted locations.

Fraud, Conflict of Interest, and the Abuse of Power

- Conflict of interest may occur when project staff interests interfere with the performance of his/her official duties or call into question the qualities of integrity, independence, and impartiality required from the project staff. This can happen when personnel, directly or indirectly, benefit improperly or allow a third party and/or pressure groups to benefit from project activities using power or authority.
- All Project Staff are expected to refrain from any action aimed at obtaining an unauthorized benefit, such as money, goods, services, or other personal

or commercial advantages in any form.

- All Project Staff are forbidden to solicit or accept money, gifts, or favors of any kind in exchange for contracts, benefits, or employment offers.
- In dealing with suppliers and consultants, all recipients must favor the interest of the project, refraining from engaging in any behavior that could result in personal gain.

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Gender-Based Violence

- All Project Staff should not engage in any form of sexual exploitation or abuse –for instance, exchanging money, employment, goods, or services for sex or sexual favors, or making promises or favorable treatment dependent on sexual acts – or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior. This includes any project-related assistance due to community members. Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse constitute acts of serious misconduct and are therefore grounds for disciplinary measures, including summary dismissal.
- All Project Staff should not participate in sexual contact or activity with children (persons 18 or under). A mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defense. Consent from the child is also not a defense or excuse.
- All Project Staff must remain vigilant during the field visit for all instances of sexual or gender-based violence and, where discovered, report such instances to the GBV focal points or the designated project grievance mechanism for further referral to the GBV service provider.
- All Project Staff be aware that sexual exploitation and sexual abuse constitute acts of serious misconduct and are therefore grounds for disciplinary measures, including summary dismissal.

Harassment, Abuse, and Sexual Relations in the Place of Work

- Harassment in any shape or form is an affront to human dignity and all project staff to EA-RDIP PROJECT must not engage in any form of harassment or abuse. All Project Staff must be provided guidance on what constitutes harassment and abuse of authority and how unacceptable behavior will be addressed.
- All Project Staff must not use language or behavior towards women, children (persons under the age of 18), or men that are inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, or culturally inappropriate.
- All Project Staff, regardless of sex, age, position, type of contract, or status, are responsible for ensuring that the workplace is free from harassment, exploitation, and abuse. In addition, they are also responsible for discouraging and reporting unacceptable behavior.
- All Project Staff are entitled to enjoy a work environment that is free from discrimination and harassment – psychological, verbal, sexual, or any other form – and abuse. The Project Management Unit/MOES will not tolerate any deeds or conduct by any member of the project staff that could be considered harassment, exploitation, or abuse.
- All project workers should not engage in any form of sexual harassment to a co-worker - for instance, making unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct, of a sexual nature, including subtle acts of such behavior e.g., looking somebody up and down; kissing, howling or smacking sounds; hanging around somebody; whistling and catcalls; giving personal gifts; making comments about somebody's sex life etc. Sexual harassment constitutes acts of serious misconduct and is therefore grounds for disciplinary measures, including summary dismissal.

- All Project Staff members are responsible for taking assertive action if they believe they are subjected to, or become aware of, harassment, intimidation, discrimination, or abuse, regardless of its nature and who the alleged offender is, either by immediately bringing the unwelcome conduct to the attention of the offender – who may not be aware of the possible offense – or by reporting it to the direct line manager or through the GBV designated Grievances Mechanism in place.
- All managers are required to display a high level of professional behavior and personal conduct and ensure that any incident relating to unacceptable behavior is promptly addressed and corrective action taken, as established by the code of conduct.

With Regard to Children Under the Age of 18

- Wherever possible, ensure that another adult is present when working in proximity of children.
- Not invite unaccompanied children unrelated to my family into my home unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger.
- Use any computers, mobile phones, video, and digital cameras appropriately, and never exploit or harass children or access child pornographic material through any medium (see also “Use of children's images for work-related purposes” below).
- Refrain from physical punishment or discipline of children.
- Refrain from hiring children for domestic or other labor, which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage, which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or places them at significant risk of injury.
- Comply with all relevant local legislation, including labor laws in relation to child labor.

Use of Children’s Images for Work-Related Purposes

When photographing or filming a child for work-related purposes, I must:

- Before photographing or filming a child, assess and endeavor to comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images.
- Before photographing or filming a child, obtain informed consent from the child and a parent or guardian of the child. As part of this, I must explain how the photograph or film will be used.
- Ensure photographs, films, videos, and DVDs present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive.
- Ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts.
- Ensure file labels do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically.

Use of Drugs

- All Project Staff members should not be under the influence of drugs while on duty.

Use of Assets

- The Project Staff are expected to return any assets provided by the project for carrying out specific functions to at the end of the assignment unless an alternative solution has been advised in writing. Unjustified possession of assets will always be considered as misappropriation.

Use of Vehicles

- All Vehicles provided by the project to staff can be used only for the operations of project activities and for safety reasons. Any other use, not

expressly authorized, implies that the user personally assumes all costs and risks involved.

Use of Equipment and It Instruments

- All equipment and IT facilities can be used only for the operations of project activities, and all due care and precautions should be adopted while using them.

Duty of Discretion

- All Project Staff must maintain the utmost discretion regarding project information acquired in the course of their work and all information must be treated confidentially...
- All Project Staff must not permanently store outside the workplace documents, including in electronic format, that were created in the course of their work for the purpose other than their work.

Right and Obligation to Report and Investigate All Violations

- All Project Staff have the right and obligation to report any known or suspected violation of this code of conduct.
- Any reported information concerning the violation of one or more of the Code's rules will be kept strictly confidential, will be registered and securely archived and will only be disclosed through the right channel.
- The Project Management Unit retains the right to initiate an internal investigation to acquire further information regarding the alleged violation of one or more provisions of the Code. Any such investigation will be confidential and timely.
- The Project Staff or any person subject to the complaint must be offered the opportunity to explain and / or respond to the charges made before any

disciplinary action is taken. In the case of a criminal offence, the concerned party must be informed that, in addition to disciplinary action, the case may be reported to the relevant legal authorities for further investigation.

- Any declaration or intentionally false accusation against another member of staff or third party will be considered gross negligence, which may lead to the individual being held responsible within the limits provided for by current legislation.

Staff Awareness, Safeguards, and Healthy Working Environment

- All Project Staff remain responsible for their actions. It is the responsibility of staff to read the Code of Conduct. If any of the provisions contained within this Code of Conduct and related codes of practice are not fully understood the project staff must, in their own interests, seek clarification from their project managers.
- All Project Staff must be briefed about this Code of Conduct and any disciplinary measures individually or at a team meeting by the Project Management Unit.
- The Project Management Unit is required to provide all project staff with a safe and healthy working environment, recognizing the possible inherent dangers and limitations presented by the local environment, and will ensure that reasonable precautions are taken to protect relevant staff in high-risk or life-threatening operations.

Implementation of the Code

- The Project Management Unit are required to ensure that all personnel contracts include appropriate incorporation of this code and relevant and applicable labor laws terms and conditions will be clearly communicated and available in a written form to all personnel in a format and language that is accessible to them.
- All Project Staff must sign a declaration acknowledging intent to comply

with the Code of Conduct.

- The Ministry of Information and Communication Technology employing Project Staff are responsible for the provisions of the code. They are required to take a strong stance against misconduct, reminding staff at all levels to comply with the code of conduct.
- They are also required to report cases to the Project Management. Unit or the grievance redress mechanism in place or the social development specialist.
- All project beneficiaries must be informed of the code of conduct when the project is launched and again at the midway point of project implementation.
- All project beneficiaries must have access to means of reporting any cases or potential cases of misconduct through a safe and reliable means as established by the project grievance mechanism.

Sanctions

I understand that if I breach this Code of Conduct, my employer (Ministry of Education and Science) will take disciplinary action, which could include:

- I. Oral warning.
- II. Written warning.
- III. Additional training.
- IV. Loss of up to one week's salary.
- V. Suspension of employment (without payment of salary), for a minimum period of one month up to a maximum of six months.
- VI. Termination of employment; and report to the police if warranted.

Declaration

I, the undersigned, (name of the staff)

(title)_____certify
that I have read the Code of Conduct, that I understand all its provisions, and that I
undertake to adhere to it.

I am aware that failing to comply with the Code shall result in disciplinary actions and
that a serious lack of compliance could result in immediate dismissal.

In witness whereof, the undersigned has signed on this day of

Date: _____

Signature: _____

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