

MEDACROSS

ETHICAL CODE

2023 REVIEW





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1. Introduction

The Ethical Code is an official document created by MedAcross Onlus, approved by the Board of Directors. It includes the principles and norms that need to be followed for all those who work for the organization. The purpose of this Code is to declare and share the values that MedAcross intends to refer to the reference of all work pursued by the organization.

The present Code is binding and must be respected by all staff members and by anyone who carries out activities on behalf of MedAcross, anywhere, both in Italy and abroad. Everyone who works or collaborates with MedAcross, without distinction and exception, undertakes to observe, promote and enforce the principles of this Code.

The Code is available on the MedAcross'website and can be consulted in a paper version in the Medacross'offices.

The control over compliance with this Code is exercised by the Supervisor Commission as expressed in the Italian decree no. 231 of 8 June 2001, which guarantees compliance with the norms and principles expressed in the present Ethical Code and carries out monitoring and verification activities on the application of appropriate sanctions.

The MedAcross Board of Directions has adopted this Ethical Code by January 20th 2020, with immediate effect.

2. Inspiring values

MedAcross is an Italian non-profit organization, founded in Turin in 2016 with the aim of:

- Provide free medical assistance to people in developing countries, with particular attention to children and young people;
- Train medical and nursing staff on-site, in order to create independent health structures and generate jobs;
- Bring support for humanitarian interventions, by collaborating with other organizations already operating in the area.

MedAcross believes that good health and well-being are everyone's right, no one excluded. This is why is committed to providing basic care to patients, regardless of age, gender, social and health status.

MedAcross is an association created by doctors and other professionals who put their skills at the service of the organization, with the aim of promoting health as a universal right. The training of local medical and paramedical staff is at the core of our work, together with close attention to the collaboration with local authorities and health structures in planning the interventions. We believe that these assets are essential in creating a lasting and sustainable improvement in universal healthcare.

3. Ethical principles of conduct

The general ethical principles that inspire the work of MedAcross and which it proposes to adhere, represent the founding values through which it intends to carry out its mission.

The organization and every person who is part of the organization with their skill and competence commit themselves to follow the principles of:

- Independence and neutrality: to operate without being conditioned by private interests and in autonomy from government policies, maintaining equidistance from both political parties and religious denominations.

- **Participation:** involving institutions, communities, associations and local organizations to analyze problems, identify the most appropriate solutions in respect of the cultures, customs and traditions of the beneficiaries.
- **Legality:** knowing and observing the codified disciplines (laws, equivalents acts, regulations) issued by International and National Institutions and in particular norms against corruption, norms relating to accounting records and financial statements, personal data protection, health and safety and labour regulations.
- **Solidarity:** spreading and affirming the culture of solidarity through information and awareness-raising for the defence and respect of fundamental rights of all people.
- **Non- discrimination:** guaranteeing uniform treatment and opportunities, regardless of the age difference, gender, ethnic group, nationality, religion, sexual orientation and disability.
- **Health and safety at work:** guaranteeing the health and safety of the workplace. In this regards, the organization adopts the appropriate measures to avoid risks associated with carrying out each business. Where these measures are not feasible, the organization strives for an adequate assessment of existing risks, with the aim of countering them immediately and, where possible, to ensure their elimination.
- **Transparency:** ensure transparency in all activities. Each operation and transaction is recorded and authorized, it is verifiable, legitimate, consistent and reasonable, according to the law, the internal organizational regulation and donor's requests.
- **Respect for the person's dignity:** do not tolerate any form of harassment in psychological, moral or sexual forms. All these are considered harmful conduct for human dignity by the organization. It also ensures prompt protection to victims without prejudice.
- **Responsibility:** to act with professionalism, attention and caution, using the best scientific information available and avoiding any abuse or waste of resources.
- **Interculturality and respect for cultures and customs:** operate with respect for the local culture, fostering intercultural dialogue and promoting the rights and dignity of the person.
- **Sustainability of the interventions:** realize projects by enhancing the existing structure, present staff and economic resources with the aim of concrete and lasting development, spreading skills to promote the complete autonomy of the counties in which activities take place.
- **Innovation:** pursuing the continuous improvement of skills, refining methods and operational strategies that are able to implement innovative and increasingly effective approaches.
- **Efficiency and effectiveness:** carefully manage the funds used, to respond primarily to the needs of the beneficiaries.

4. Rules of conduct for internal and external relations

MedAcross considered human resources as its main resource and promotes the development of their skills, aspirations and professionalism. At the same time, MedAcross requires all recipients to respect its mission and the ethical principles expressed in this Code.

The rules of conduct, deriving from general ethical principles, also regulate relations with donors, partners, private companies, suppliers, beneficiaries, the press/media and authorities.

a. Relations with Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries must be involved in the choices concerning the actions that involved the, therefore they must be informed in a transparent way about ethical principles that inspire MedAcross work, as well as the resources used on the activities and results of the projects.

b. Relations with Partners

As part of its activities, the organization:

- promote and favors the active involvement of local partners for the implementation of activities and the pursuit of its goals and objectives;
- commit to offering training, develop skills and create professionalism in local organizations with which it collaborates, with the aim of encouraging direct management of activities and resources by the partners;
- work with the aim of building lasting relationships based on actual needs and projects' sustainability;
- does not accept dependence relationships with profit entities, nor to be connected on their interests, nor to have a relationship that limits the freedom of act and decision related to organization purposes.

MedAcross is committed to choose the partners, both public and private, for the realization of the activities based on the following criteria:

- sharing of ethical principles, mission and objectives of the organization;
- absence of profit in relation to shared activities;
- availability to plan and manage activities together with the organization.

c. Relations with Donors

MadAcross use public and private funding and its own resources for the implementation of its activities in Italy and abroad.

The organization:

- defines procedures, actions, processes, responsibilities within the Board of Directors and with the help of external collaborations to clarify the identification of donations' provenience and highlight possible conflicts of interest and critical issues in the management of activities;
- prohibits the use of donations received for purposes that differs from what has been offered to the organization;
- maintains its independence from private or governmental interests. Therefore there will not be variations in funding activities connected to the founder's interests;
- ensure timely reporting on the use of the donations;
- diversifies financing sources through fundraising activities for individual citizens, private organizations, public bodies and non-profit organizations in order to maintain their autonomy and guarantee the continuity of its activities;
- prohibits offering of promising money to other non-monetary benefits to receive funds.

Relations with donors must be based on the utmost correctness, transparency and completeness of information of the supported initiatives, the activities that need to be supported and the purposes of the fundraising activities already received.

For every donation, the organization undertake to:

- state the acquisition of the donation
- respect the donor's privacy and respect, if requested, their anonymity

d. Relation with the Suppliers

MedAcross bases the relationship with suppliers on principles already explained in the general section, such as: social responsibility, ethics, sustainability, quality, convenience, price, capacity and efficiency.

The suppliers with whom the organization stipulates contracts must comply with local laws and regulations of donors and the ethical principles contained in this Code.

e. Relations with Employees, Collaborators, Volunteers, Members of the statutory bodies

MedAcross considers human resources as its main resources and promotes the development of their skills, aspirations and professionalism. At the same time, it requires all recipients to respect its mission and the ethical principles expressed in the Code.

The professionalism of the operators are fundamental values for the achievement of the organization's goals and objectives. All people involved, in any capacity, to the organization's activities are ethically responsible for their behavior and are aware that they represent the organization itself with their actions. The organization promotes the participation and involvement of operators in the management of the organization and activities. Each person in the organization is required to know and respect the principles of the Code of Ethics. Please refer to the Human Resources Manual for duties of operators and organization.

This protocol establishes guidelines for the management of volunteers working in high-risk countries on behalf of MedAcross. The aim is to ensure the safety, health and well-being of volunteers and to maximize the positive impact of humanitarian activities. This protocol must be integrated with local laws, MedAcross policies and applicable international standards.

1. Volunteer selection: Volunteers are selected by MedAcross staff and subject to approval by the Board of Directors, based on CVs and an interview with candidates. The criteria for selection are the following: educational qualification, work experience, volunteer experience, language skills, motivation and availability. Following the selection process, suitable volunteers are classified into one of the following categories:

VOLUNTEERS TYPE A: Volunteers with specialized medical and operational skills (e.g. doctors, nurses, logisticians)

VOLUNTEERS TYPE B: Volunteers with non-medical skills that can be used in projects (e.g. researchers on topics necessary for the construction of projects, technicians, photojournalists)

VOLUNTEERS TYPE C: Volunteers without specific skills (e.g. researchers on topics partially related to the projects, students)

2. Reimbursement of expenses: Reimbursement of expenses varies according to the type of volunteer:

VOLUNTEERS TYPE A: full reimbursement: travel, food and accommodation, on-site logistical support.

VOLUNTEERS TYPE B: partial reimbursement: food and accommodation, logistical support; travel expenses are excluded.

VOLUNTEERS TYPE C: on-site logistical support.

3. Risk assessment: 3.1 Personal and professional reference checks of volunteers are carried out. 3.2. Volunteers must provide detailed information on their personal, professional and health history, including any physical or mental health problems.
4. Field support: 4.1. The NGO must provide ongoing support to volunteers during their period of service, including appropriate supervision and a dedicated point of contact for urgent matters.
5. Evacuation and repatriation: 5.1. The NGO must develop an evacuation and repatriation plan for emergency situations or increased risks on site. 5.2. Volunteers should be informed about evacuation procedures and designated assembly points. 5.3. The NGO should maintain an up-to-date list of emergency contact information for volunteers and local embassies or consulates.

f. Relations with media and press

MedAcross communications to the outside world must be truthful, complete and verifiable, non-aggressive, respectful of the rights and dignity of the person. The organization addresses the press and communication bodies through designated persons, who must operate with fairness, availability, prudence and transparency.

The professionals of the organization called to illustrate or provide external data or information regarding objectives, results and points of view of the organization, are required, in addition to compliance with internal procedures, to obtain authorization from their contact person, as well as to agree on the contents with the competent office.

g. Relations with the Authorities

With regard to any requests of any nature from Italian or foreign authorities, and in general in any contact with them, the organization undertakes to provide the utmost cooperation and make truthful and representative statements of the facts, refraining from conduct that may obstruct, in full compliance with the law and in compliance with the principles of loyalty, correctness and transparency.

h. PSA Physical and Sexual Abuse

This protocol aims to ensure the safety and well-being of all persons involved in MedAcross activities, including staff, volunteers and programme beneficiaries. The protocol is based on international ethical standards and globally recognised guidelines. Procedures must ensure confidentiality and protection for those who report abuse. Conduct thorough background and reference checks for all paid staff and volunteers. It is essential to ensure that those working for the NGO have no history of abusive conduct. Raise awareness of physical and sexual abuse among programme beneficiaries through education and information dissemination. Promote the

empowerment of people to be able to recognise and report abusive situations. Involve local communities in the awareness and prevention process by organizing workshops and meetings to openly discuss the issue of abuse and to promote a culture of respect and protection.

As an NGO committed to creating a safe and secure environment for all individuals we serve, we recognize the utmost importance of implementing robust safeguards and protocols to protect against such misconduct.

We hereby pledge the following commitments to ensure the safety and well-being of all individuals associated with our organization:

1. Prevention Measures: a. Developing and implementing comprehensive policies and procedures that outline clear guidelines for preventing physical and sexual abuse, including appropriate behavior, reporting mechanisms, and disciplinary actions. b. Conducting thorough background checks, including reference verification and criminal record checks, for all staff members, volunteers, and individuals in positions of trust. c. Providing regular training sessions and educational programs to enhance awareness, understanding, and recognition of physical and sexual abuse, as well as promoting respectful and safe interactions among all individuals. d. Establishing a safe reporting system that encourages and facilitates the confidential disclosure of any suspected cases of abuse, ensuring protection from retaliation for whistleblowers.
2. Intervention Measures: a. Designating a designated safeguarding officer or team responsible for handling all reports of physical and sexual abuse promptly and appropriately. b. Collaborating with relevant authorities and agencies, such as law enforcement and child protection services, to ensure the swift and thorough investigation of reported incidents. c. Providing immediate support and assistance to victims, ensuring their physical, emotional, and psychological well-being, and connecting them with appropriate counseling and medical services.
3. Response Measures: a. Taking decisive and proportionate disciplinary actions against individuals found responsible for physical and sexual abuse, which may include termination of employment or volunteer positions, and cooperating fully with any legal proceedings. b. Ensuring that victims and survivors have access to legal representation and support throughout the investigation and judicial process. c. Conducting internal reviews and assessments of our prevention and response measures periodically, to identify areas of improvement and implement necessary changes.

By implementing these measures, MedAcross commits to fostering a culture of safety, trust, and respect within our organization. We understand the devastating impact of physical and sexual abuse on individuals and communities, and we remain steadfast in our dedication to preventing and addressing such misconduct.

i. Gender equality, disability and social inclusion

MedAcross rejects any discrimination in selection processes, recruitment and performance appraisals. Zero tolerance is applied towards any form of violence in the workplace. MedAcross provides training and development opportunities for all staff to build capacity where gaps are identified. MedAcross employs medical and logistics teams with deep local connections and understanding of local cultures.

I. Child Protection

MedAcross condemns all forms of abuse and violence against children committed inside or outside the organization.

MedAcross is committed to ensuring the rights of children and adolescents by making the following commitments:

-Awareness-raising: We are committed to ensuring that MedAcross staff, its representatives and the staff of partner organisations are aware of the issues surrounding sexual abuse and exploitation and the risks to children associated with these. The children themselves and their families will be made aware, in the most appropriate manner, of the rules of conduct they can expect from staff and representatives and how they can possibly make a report of suspected abuse.

-Prevention: We are committed to ensuring that MedAcross staff, its representatives and the staff of partner organizations minimize risks in order to prevent harm to children. We will create an environment in which children's rights are protected at all times and possible abuse is prevented.

-Reporting: We are committed to ensuring that MedAcross staff, its representatives and the staff of partner organizations are clear about when to report a suspicion of possible abuse and what action to take.

-Response: We are committed to ensuring effective intervention in response to any report of abuse by supporting, safeguarding and protecting the child involved.

5. Circulation and application of the Code

MedAcross undertakes to ensure timely internal and external dissemination of the Code of Ethics by:

- the distribution to all recipients of this Code of Ethics;
- posting it on the notice boards in all its offices;
- making it available to Third Party Recipients and any other stakeholders through the organization's website.

To this end, MedAcross requires all recipients to sign a written declaration confirming that they have read the Code and that they will comply with the provisions contained.

a. Supervisory Committee

As per Decree. 231/2001 on "Discipline of administrative liability of legal persons, companies and associations, including those without legal personality, pursuant to art. 11 of the law of 29 September 200 n. 300 "- the Supervisory Committee (SC) is established.

The SC, with full and autonomous powers of initiative, acts as guardian of the Code of Ethics and Conduct.

It also has the task of assessing the adequacy of the organization and management model (hereinafter the "organization model") adopted by the organization, as well as supervising its observance and dissemination.

The responsibility for following this Code of Ethics and Conduct lies with each recipient. All the employees and collaborators who take on a supervisory role are responsible for its promotion and application within the limits of their competences and functions.

b. Violations notice to the Supervisory Committee and sanctions

MedAcross is required to adopt an adequate violation reporting policy, in order to mitigate the risk of any violations.

Relations with subjects who carry out control and auditing activities must be based on the principles of timeliness, correctness and transparency. All the recipients must be fully collaborative, avoiding any obstructive behavior in their relations with the SC. In case of non-observance of the principles and rules expressed in the Code of Ethics and Conduct and in the Organizational Model by the directors, employees, collaborators, suppliers or other subjects required to comply with it, detected by the SC, the organization reserves the right to take the necessary measures both in

terms of corrective actions and sanctions, in a gradual manner with respect to the seriousness of the violations.

MedAcross has provided appropriate communication channels to facilitate the process of reporting any violations to the SC. In particular, a specific e-mail address has been activated (cdv@medacross.org) to which to send reports on non-compliance with the Code. Reports can be made in Italian and English, even anonymously.

In any case, MedAcross, in compliance with the regulations in force, undertakes to guarantee confidentiality and to ensure the absence of forms of retaliation, discrimination or penalization against whistleblowers. The SC transmits reports relating to violations, even potential, of the Code of Ethics to the Board of Directors in order to be able to assume all consequent decisions.

The violation of the rules of the Code of Ethics and the relationship of trust established with the organization leads to disciplinary actions, the revocation of powers and functions, referral to the competent authorities or compensation for damage.



www.medacross.org