

## **VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT**

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### **Introduction**

An organisation's most valuable resource is its people. Volunteers play a crucial role in executing HEKIMA's mission. The HEKIMA management team is committed to providing leadership by supporting and valuing volunteer contributions while promoting the standards of behaviour outlined in this document.

HEKIMA has adopted this Code of Conduct to guide volunteer involvement. Please read it carefully and contact the HEKIMA Volunteer Coordinator with any questions. By signing on the final page, you acknowledge your understanding of and commitment to adhering to this Code of Conduct

### **Vision, Mission, and Value**

**HEKIMA's Vision:** A community where children and youth are free from poverty, injustice, and exploitation.

**HEKIMA's Mission:** To use a child-centred approach to inspire children and youth to make the impossible possible by unlocking their full potential and advocating for their rights.

**HEKIMA Values:** Resilience, Belonging, Integrity, and Partnership.

### **Definition of Volunteer**

A "volunteer" contributes time, skills, and effort to support HEKIMA's mission without expecting compensation beyond potential reimbursement for expenses. Volunteers perform tasks under the direction of and on behalf of HEKIMA. Individuals must be officially accepted and enrolled as volunteers to engage in assignments or projects by HEKIMA. Unless explicitly stated otherwise, **Note,** "Volunteers are considered an integral part of the HEKIMA team, though they are not considered employees."

## Purpose of the Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct ensures that volunteers understand and uphold culturally appropriate, safe, and respectful standards. It aims to;

- Protect volunteers and safeguard HEKIMA's partners and beneficiaries.
- Complement local legislation and HEKIMA's organisational policies and guidelines specific to each program.

**Reference:** [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)

## HEKIMA's Commitment to You

HEKIMA upholds the standards set by the United Nations to respect the human rights of all people, especially children and beneficiaries. We welcome volunteers and supporters from all backgrounds.

## Your Commitment to HEKIMA

As a HEKIMA volunteer, you represent the organisation, and your actions reflect on yourself and HEKIMA.

## Principles of Conduct

1. **Respect:**
  - Treat all volunteers, staff, and community members with courtesy, respect, and dignity.
  - Avoid insensitive or offensive language and behaviour.
  - Honour local culture, customs, and practices.
2. **Safety First:**
  - Follow the instructions of team leaders and program coordinators.
  - Practice safe work habits and promptly report unsafe conditions to your supervisor.
3. **Zero-Tolerance Policy:**
  - The use of alcohol, illegal drugs, inappropriate attire (such as revealing items of clothing, clothing with offensive symbols or language, or attire that does not align with local cultural norms), or weapons on HEKIMA property or volunteer sites is strictly prohibited.
4. **Respectful Behavior:**
  - Protect beneficiaries and children from exploitation and abuse.
  - Avoid inappropriate relationships with volunteers, staff, or community members.
5. **Gift-Giving Protocol:**
  - Consult HEKIMA staff before giving gifts to prevent misunderstandings or jealousy.
6. **Asset Protection:**
  - Safeguard HEKIMA's assets and avoid fraud.

## 7. Confidentiality:

- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of beneficiaries, staff, and fellow volunteers.

## Volunteer Expectations

- **Meals and Kitchen Participation:**

Volunteers are encouraged to assist with meal preparation and household chores. It's a valuable opportunity to bond with the host family and have cultural exchanges.

- **Dress Code:**

Respect local customs by wearing culturally appropriate clothing. Women should wear skirts or dresses that fall below the knee, and men should avoid sleeveless shirts in public.

- **Behaviour Guidelines:**

- Be courteous and respectful to your host family, staff, and community members.
- Inform your host family in advance if you will miss a meal or return home late.
- Participate in household chores to build relationships and show appreciation.

- **Cultural Exploration:**

During free time, volunteers are encouraged to explore local attractions, such as nearby beaches and historical heritage sites, to help them understand and appreciate the local culture.

## Lessons from Master Safety Trainers

These rules and guidelines are designed to protect everyone's safety and must be actively followed by all. Best practices HEKIMA uses:

- Offering volunteer orientations that include a safety briefing.
- Post safety rules in visible places or have pocket-sized guides.
- Ask volunteers always to wear hard hats on a building site.
- You should avoid activities posing safety risks to you/ others.
- Report unsafe conditions to the supervisor.
- Engaging in fraudulent activity regarding HEKIMA's assets, operations, or beneficiaries is also prohibited.

## Community Service

HEKIMA may accept volunteers participating in student community programming initiatives, student intern projects, corporate volunteer programs, and other volunteer referral programs. In all such cases, a formal written agreement must be established with the originating organization, school, or program before the commencement of any volunteer assignments. This agreement should clearly outline the responsibilities for the management and care of the volunteers. It is the volunteer's responsibility to ensure that this agreement is secured with the appropriate organization before beginning their assignment.

## **Liability**

Volunteers must be aware of the risks associated with volunteering. Further, volunteers hereby waive any claims against, indemnify and hold harmless HEKIMA, its respective officers, directors, employees, sponsors, representatives, and volunteers from any liability, including attorney fees, that may result from illness, personal injury, property damage, or wrongdoing resulting from involvement with the HEKIMA volunteer program.

## **Volunteers under the age of 18 years**

Volunteers under 18 must accompany a parent or legal guardian during all volunteer activities. The parent or legal guardian must review and co-sign this Code of Conduct and provide written consent for the minor's participation.

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

HEKIMA does not discriminate based on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or age. Volunteers must uphold these principles.

## **Representing HEKIMA**

Volunteers are only requested to contact organisations or individuals on behalf of the HEKIMA if a staff member gives them express direction. Volunteers should seek prior consultation and approval from the appropriate staff before any action or statement that may significantly affect or obligate HEKIMA. These actions may include, but are not limited to, public statements to the press, coalition or lobbying efforts with other organisations, or any agreements involving contracts, resources, finances, or other obligations. Volunteers are authorised to act as HEKIMA representatives as expressly indicated in their job descriptions and only to the extent of such written specifications.

## **Screening/Reference Checks**

Volunteers must submit samples of previous work and/or professional references for some tasks. The task/job description will outline such requirements.

## **Copyright/Ownership Issues**

All materials created by volunteers for HEKIMA—including graphic designs, web content, narratives, research, compilations, and instructional texts—become the property of HEKIMA upon submission. Volunteers will be acknowledged for their contributions as deemed appropriate."

## **Contacting other volunteers**

Occasionally, volunteers may need to contact fellow volunteers regarding their activities with HEKIMA. All such communications are expected to adhere to standard professional practices. HEKIMA staff will only share phone numbers or email addresses between volunteers and will not disclose any additional personal information without the explicit consent of all parties involved.

### **Ending Your Volunteer Role**

You may conclude your volunteer role with HEKIMA upon completing an assignment or during periods of inactivity. If you decide to withdraw from our list of active volunteers, we kindly request the opportunity to conduct an exit interview, which can be held in person, by phone, or via email.

### **Non-Compliance Dismissal**

"Failure to adhere to any part of this Code of Conduct may result in suspension or termination of the volunteer relationship with HEKIMA. Before dismissal, each volunteer will have the opportunity to discuss the reasons for potential suspension or termination with supervisory staff."

### **AS A VOLUNTEER of the HEKIMA, I WILL:**

- I represent HEKIMA with professionalism, dignity, and pride, and I conduct myself courteously and appropriately.
- **Commit to completing tasks** that I accept, ensuring follow-through and reliability.
- **Exhibit respectful and exemplary conduct**, serving as a positive role model to others.
- **Pursue ongoing training** for my volunteer role by attending meetings, engaging in self-study, and participating in relevant learning opportunities.
- **Engage in training opportunities** to enhance my ability to work effectively with diverse audiences.
- **Display respect and courtesy** toward employees, fellow volunteers, and community members.
- **Respect the privacy** of the organisation's members and maintain confidentiality when handling sensitive, private, and personal information.
- **Ensure a safe environment** for volunteers, program participants, visitors, and clients by refraining from any form of harm, including discrimination, sexual harassment, physical force, verbal or mental abuse, neglect, or other harmful actions.
- **Keep HEKIMA staff informed of progress**, concerns, and challenges within the programs you participate in.
- **Collaborate effectively** as a team member with employees and fellow volunteers.
- **Adhere to HEKIMA policies**, including the Code of Ethics, Privacy Policy, Conflict of Interest Policy, and Volunteer Code of Conduct.
- **Maintain professionalism** by separating personal opinions and actions from those

made on behalf of HEKIMA.

- **Do not misbehave** on and off duty, as this could compromise program effectiveness.
- **Promote and support HEKIMA's mission** by contributing to developing effective, sustainable grassroots programs.

### **AS HEKIMA VOLUNTEER, I WILL NOT:**

- Use vulgar or inappropriate language. •
- Solicit gratuities, gifts, or bequests for personal or professional benefit. •
- Use or be under the influence of illegal drugs. •
- Consume or be under the influence of alcohol or consume tobacco at HEKIMA events.
- Use or be under the influence of illegal drugs.
- Solicit gratuities, gifts, or bequests for personal or professional benefit.
- Use or be under the influence of illegal drugs. •
- Consume or be under the influence of alcohol or consume tobacco at HEKIMA events.
- Discriminate based on role, colour, religion, sex, national, origin, marital status, disability or sexual orientation.

### **Volunteer Communication Guidelines**

To maintain the highest standards of professionalism and respect, communication between volunteers and beneficiaries, including children and their families, Volunteers must adhere to the following guidelines;

1. All communication (in-person, phone, or written) with beneficiaries must be coordinated and supervised by HEKIMA staff.
2. Phone communication between volunteers and beneficiaries should be limited and only permitted with prior approval from the organization.
3. Field visits and engagement in activities involving beneficiaries must be conducted under staff guidance to ensure appropriate boundaries and adherence to HEKIMA policies.

These measures are in place to protect the privacy and well-being of beneficiaries while ensuring effective collaboration between volunteers and HEKIMA.

**Declaration:**

I have read the information above and understand my responsibilities regarding the volunteer code of conduct and confidentiality of program information.

By signing this, I agree to follow these rules and refer any confidentiality questions to the Executive Director and his designees. Please maintain strict confidentiality standards to avoid losing volunteer privileges. Once all necessary clearances are submitted, the organisation will advise me of my effective date.

I agree to follow the Volunteer Code of Conduct at all times. I understand that failure to follow the Volunteer Code of Conduct could result in a restriction of my volunteer time.

**Volunteer Printed Name:**

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**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_**Volunteer Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Please email the signed copy to:****Executive Director**

HEKIMA

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