

UNIVERSAL MAIDENS ASSOCIATION CAMEROON



(UNIMAC)

Declaration Receipt No: 17/E.29/1111/VOL.8/ALPAS of 29/10/2021
"Empowering Lives, Eliminating Exploitation: Together, We Build a Better Future."



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CODE OF CONDUCT

1. INTRODUCTION

The **UNIMAC Code of Conduct** establishes the ethical principles, standards, and expectations that guide the behavior of all **UNIMAC** staff and contract partners. As an organization committed to improving the quality of life for underprivileged populations, particularly young women and children, **UNIMAC** upholds the highest standards of integrity, respect, and excellence. This Code of Conduct is designed to ensure that all staff and contract partners contribute to preventing unethical and criminal activities and promote a culture of ethical behavior and accountability.

1.1 Scope

This Code of Conduct applies to all **UNIMAC** staff, including permanent and temporary employees, volunteers, interns, and consultants, as well as contract partners, including suppliers, contractors, and any other entities working with or on behalf of **UNIMAC**.

1.2. Our Beliefs

- Equal opportunities for all, regardless of religion, sex, ethnicity, race, or geographical location.
- Transparency and accountability to our donors and constituencies, ensuring openness, frankness, and honesty in all communications, transactions, and operations.
- Commitment, passion, and dedication to achieving our vision.
- Fairness and equity in all our endeavors.

1.3. Core Values and Principles

- ❖ **Integrity:** Conduct all activities with honesty, transparency, and fairness.
- ❖ **Respect:** Treat all individuals with dignity and respect, recognizing their rights and contributions.
- ❖ **Excellence:** Strive for excellence in all endeavors, ensuring high-quality and impactful work.
- ❖ **Accountability:** Take responsibility for actions and decisions, ensuring accountability to stakeholders.
- ❖ **Collaboration:** Foster a spirit of collaboration and teamwork, both within the organization and with external partners.

- ❖ **Commitment to Child Protection:** Uphold and promote the highest standards of child protection in all activities.

2.0. Standards of Conduct

2.1. Professional Conduct

All members of staff and volunteers must ensure:

- ❖ **Compliance with Laws and Policies:** Adhere to all applicable local, national, and international laws and regulations, as well as UNIMAC policies and procedures.
- ❖ **Conflict of Interest:** Avoid conflicts of interest, both real and perceived and disclose any potential conflicts to supervisors or relevant authorities. Declare at the earliest opportunity any actual or apparent conflict of interest having a bearing on their responsibilities.
- ❖ **Confidentiality:** Protect confidential information obtained through work and do not disclose it without proper authorization. All computers are passworded.
- ❖ **Accuracy of Records:** Ensure that all organizational records, including financial and operational records, are accurate, complete, and truthful as stated in the *Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption Policy*.
- ❖ **Use of Resources:** Utilize UNIMAC resources responsibly and for their intended purposes, avoiding waste and abuse.

2.2. Ethical Conduct

- ❖ **Anti-Corruption:** Do not engage in, facilitate, or condone bribery, corruption, or any form of unethical conduct. (*See the Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption Policy*).
- ❖ **Fair Dealing:** Engage in fair and honest dealings with all stakeholders, including beneficiaries, partners, donors, and the public.
- ❖ **Respect for Human Rights:** Promote and respect human rights, ensuring that all actions and decisions uphold the dignity and rights of individuals.
- ❖ **Non-Discrimination:** Do not discriminate against individuals based on race, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or any other characteristic.

2.3. Child Protection

- ❖ **Safe Environment:** Create and maintain a safe environment for children, free from abuse, exploitation, and harm.
- ❖ **Mandatory Reporting:** Report any concerns or allegations of child abuse or exploitation by UNIMAC's child protection policy and procedures.
- ❖ **Appropriate Behaviour:** Always interact with children in a manner that is respectful, appropriate, and protective of their well-being. (*See the Child Protection Policy*.)

2.4. Preventing Unethical and Criminal Activities

- ❖ **Vigilance:** Remain vigilant and proactive in identifying and preventing unethical and criminal activities.
- ❖ **Reporting Mechanism:** Utilize established reporting mechanisms to report any suspected unethical or criminal activities, including fraud, corruption, and abuse.
- ❖ **Cooperation with Investigations:** Fully cooperate with internal and external investigations into allegations of unethical or criminal activities.

3.0. Responsibilities

3.1. Responsibilities of UNIMAC Staff

All UNIMAC staff must:

- Understand and adhere to the Code of Conduct and all related policies and procedures (*Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption Policy, Child Protection Policy, Financial Management Policy, Procurement Policy, etc*).
- Serve as role models of ethical behavior and integrity.
- Promptly report any violations of the Code of Conduct to supervisors or designated authorities.
- Participate in training and awareness programs related to ethical conduct and compliance.

3.2. Responsibilities of Contract Partners

All UNIMAC partners must:

- Ensure compliance with the Code of Conduct and all contractual obligations with UNIMAC.
- Maintain high ethical standards in all activities and interactions with LISUDEV.
- Report any concerns or violations of the Code of Conduct to designated UNIMAC authorities.

4.0. Implementation and Enforcement

The Director all UNIMAC managers, UNIMAC board are responsible for ensuring:

- ❖ That the Code of Conduct is communicated to all staff and contract partners and is readily accessible.
- ❖ Provide regular training and awareness programs on the Code of Conduct and related policies.
- ❖ Monitor compliance with the Code of Conduct and evaluate its effectiveness regularly.
- ❖ **Sanctions and Disciplinary Actions:** Apply appropriate sanctions and disciplinary actions for violations of the Code of Conduct, up to and including termination of employment or contracts.

5.0. Roles and Responsibilities

All members of staff and volunteers are responsible for:

- ❖ Acting with propriety in the use of assets and resources of UNIMAC entities;
- ❖ Conducting themselves by the principles set out in applicable codes of conduct or equivalent, including:
 - ✓ Declaring at the earliest opportunity any actual or apparent conflict of interest having a bearing on their responsibilities;
 - ✓ Alerting line managers where they believe the opportunity for fraud or corruption exists;
 - ✓ Reporting details immediately to their line manager of any suspected or actual fraud or corruption; and/or any suspicious acts or events which might give rise to a suspicion of fraud or corruption; and
 - ✓ Assisting in any investigations by making available all relevant information and by cooperating in interviews.

A higher senior management, up to and including the director, should be notified if a staff member is unable for any reason to report a suspected fraud or corruption occurrence to their line manager. Employees who are still afraid to report misbehavior internally have the option to use the confidential misconduct reporting service; reportcorruption-universalmaidens@gmail.com

5.1. “THE DOs and DON’Ts”

5.1.1. THE DON’Ts

- ❖ We prohibit all forms of fraud and corruption with a zero-tolerance policy.
- ❖ Do not make or receive any payments or gifts, or provide or receive other favors, to or from any public official, political figure, representative of a regulatory body or government agency, nor to or from any of our suppliers, program partners, or any other party (whether public or private) to influence or reward any act or decision to grant a license or regulatory approval, obtain or retain business, or to seek any other unlawful or improper purpose of advantage.
- ❖ This prohibition excludes gifts and hospitality of minor value that are in keeping with general business practices and which are not subject to reasonable interpretation as an improper inducement. Offices may wish to maintain a register of gifts and hospitality.

5.1.2. THE DOs - In critical situations, act as follows:

- ❖ Ignore or reject any hints of committing an act of fraud or corruption;
- ❖ Try to have someone as your witness to support you;
- ❖ Agree to nothing improper, even if the suggestion includes a “charitable donation”; and
- ❖ Maintain fair and accurate records, documenting the details of any requested, attempted, or actual act of fraud or corruption, as soon as possible after the event.

5.2. Whistleblowing

A whistleblower is a board member, employee, contractor, or volunteer – who reports known or reasonably suspected misconduct within UNIMAC. The disclosure may be reported anonymously. All whistleblowers are protected against reprisals following reporting.

“IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING”

Report all suspected, requested, attempted, or actual acts of fraud or corruption to your own or other more senior manager, or uses the **Safe Call** confidential reporting service reportcorruption-universalmaidens@gmail.com

A strategy for supporting and protecting staff that raise concerns is available and covers:

- ❖ Procedures for assessing risks upon receiving a report.

Methods for reporting victimisation

- ❖ Processes for handling victimization complaints
- ❖ Methods of support

5.3. Investigation

The Director and the Board are responsible for the initial investigation of the report of actual or suspected fraudulent and irregular practice to assess if a formal investigation by, and reporting to, external parties is warranted. External parties may include the organization's auditor, investigative consultant, regulators, and government authorities. A written record of all investigative activities and outcomes is made by the Director and/or Board.

5.4. Post-incident

Following a suspected or confirmed incident of fraudulent or irregular practice, the organization's financial risks and control measures are reviewed and amended where necessary.

5.5. Policy Review

This governance policy shall be reviewed every two years or as needed to reflect changes in the organization or its operating environment.

NB: This governance policy ensures that UNIMAC and all her stakeholders operates with integrity, transparency, and accountability, fostering trust and confidence among stakeholders and enabling the organization to achieve its mission and vision effectively. Every employee of UNIMAC must read, understand, and sign this policy manual, which is available in the conference room.

