

MSCI CODE OF CONDUCT

For all Mustard Seed
Ireland Representatives

***Review & Updates:**

This Code of Conduct will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to ensure its relevance and effectiveness.

***Last Reviewed: June 2024**

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Mustard Seed
Communities Ireland

CARING FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE

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Foreword

MSCI

Everyone in Mustard Seed Communities Ireland (MSCI), is responsible for championing our culture. Our success depends on us weaving our culture into every aspect of our operation. It shapes how we behave, both collectively and individually. To live our culture, we need to know and understand our purpose and exhibit the behaviours that drive our values.

This Code of Conduct serves as our compass as we strive to achieve our mission 'to uplift the most vulnerable populations across the developing world'.

Working with our partners our goal is to care for children with disabilities who have been abandoned and to alleviate poverty through long-term sustainable programming. Through the provision of education, nutrition, and skills training programmes MSCI strives to improve the economic, social and spiritual conditions within marginalized communities.

We will only achieve this by what we do, defining and meeting a standard of behaviour that is truly world-class.

I promise to live up to these principles in the way I personally operate, and I hope that everyone connected to Mustard Seed Ireland will too.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Billy Glennon".

BILLY GLENNON

Chairman, Mustard Seed Communities Ireland (MSCI)



Who is MSCI

Mustard Seed Communities Ireland

Mustard Seed Communities is an international non-profit dedicated to caring for the most vulnerable populations throughout the developing world. Founded in Jamaica in 1978 by Monsignor Gregory Ramkissoon, as a home for a handful of children with disabilities, today MSC has grown into schools, farms and small businesses across Jamaica, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, Zimbabwe and Malawi. All of Mustard Seed's outreach programmes are designed in collaboration with local marginalized communities, empowering generations, through early childhood education, vocational training, nutrition programmes, and sustainable agriculture to break out of the cycle of poverty.

Mustard Seed Ireland is part of a larger international family (Mustard Seed Communities International). Mustard Seed Communities Ireland operates independently and has its own constitution and governance documents and an independent board of trustees, all locally appointed and free to make independent decisions on strategic and operational issues.

In this regard, Mustard Seed Ireland's operations in Ireland has direct management and oversight of overseas development projects, which particular focus on Africa; Zimbabwe and Malawi, where Mustard Seed has operations focusing on education, nutrition, sustainability, and community outreach projects. Funds raised by Mustard Seed Ireland through charitable activities support overseas projects as agreed by MSC Ireland's board and trustees and are directly managed end to end accordingly.

Scope and Purpose of the Code:

This Code sets expectations for all those who work with us. We also expect those who deal with us to be aware that this Code underpins everything we do, and in order to work with us they need to act in a manner consistent with it.

A code of conduct cannot envision every issue that might arise in Mustard Seed's daily activities. Rather, it serves to document MSCI's commitment to professional, ethical and legal conduct.

In line with our vision, mission and values, this Code of Conduct defines the expected behaviours of all MSCI representatives in their conduct and how they carry out their activities, to include employees, directors, trustees, volunteers, partners and programme participants. For the purposes of this document, all parties will be referred to as Mustard Seed Ireland Representatives.

Our Mission

Caring, Sharing, Training



Through the positive interaction of caring, sharing and training, our mission is to uplift the most vulnerable populations and communities across the developing world, especially children with disabilities who have been abandoned. Working with our partners our vision is to alleviate poverty through long-term sustainable programming. Through the provision of education, nutrition, and skills training programmes MSCI strives to improve the economic, social and spiritual conditions within marginalized communities.

Our Core Values:-

- **Compassion:** We approach all our work with a deep sense of empathy and kindness.
- **Integrity:** We act honestly, ethically, and transparently in all our endeavours.
- **Respect:** 'Everyone Matters' at Mustard Seed Communities Ireland. We believe in the inherent worth of every individual and are committed to treating everyone with dignity and respect, valuing diversity, and inclusion.
- **Excellence:** We strive for the highest standards in everything we do.

Our Guiding Principles:

- **Empowerment:** Our core mission values of mutual respect, caring, sharing, and training guide our efforts to uplift the most marginalized communities. Working together with our partners we strive to create a supportive and empowering environment where all individuals and communities can thrive and achieve self-sufficiency and a better quality of life.
- **Community Engagement:** We collaborate with our partners and local communities to understand their needs and develop sustainable solutions.
- **Accountability:** We are accountable to our donors, beneficiaries, and the broader public through responsible stewardship of resources.

Through our safeguarding initiatives, educational programmes, and unwavering commitment to our guiding principles, MSCI aims to create a community where everyone feels valued and empowered.

Mustard Seed Communities Ireland

Code of Conduct

Mustard Seed Communities Ireland is only as strong as its reputation, which is directly impacted by all those with whom it works. All Representatives, when engaging in Mustard Seed activities or travelling in connection with Mustard Seed are required to conduct themselves in a manner that upholds the dignity and respect of every individual and to perform their duties with the utmost integrity, in accordance with this Code of Conduct and all related policies and procedures.

Mustard Seed Ireland considers safeguarding children and adults at risk of abuse, exploitation, or harassment as a critical aspect of its Mission, Vision, and Values. Therefore, it places a strong emphasis on preventing abuse and exploitation across its programmes and activities. Mustard Seed Ireland has a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination of any kind, both internally and externally.

While this Code of Conduct does not cover all prohibited behaviours, inappropriate conduct not explicitly addressed may still result in disciplinary action.

Stewardship & Financial Management:

As a non-profit organization dependent upon the financial support of generous private and corporate donors, MSCl is committed to organizational transparency.

MSCl will exercise good governance with a focus on transparency and accountability, ensuring clear definitions of authority, responsibility, and accountability, as well as adequate internal controls.

Audits & Record keeping

MSCl and those managing funds under its name will:

- Adhere to professional accountancy and audit standards as required by law and fulfil all financial and reporting requirements.
- Maintain proper bookkeeping and prepare annual financial statements
- Prepare an annual report detailing activities, projects, and budgets, showing how these have supported MSCl's objectives
- Undergo an annual audit by an independent, qualified auditor, with the audit report made available to stakeholders.
- Maintain records for required audit trails as per relevant regulations
- Use registered bank accounts for all transactions
- Record and report all information accurately and honestly
- Ensure no representative signs or submits any false document or statement.

Zero Tolerance for Fraud, Money Laundering, and Corruption:

MSCI will not tolerate fraudulent activity, money laundering, or corruption, which includes any illegal or deceptive behaviours intended for inappropriate financial or other benefits. This includes monetary gains, increased status, or beneficial information. Suspected fraud, money laundering, corruption, or other improper gain will be investigated, and legal action will be taken if necessary.

Fundraising:

MSCI and those raising funds on its behalf shall:

- Engage in responsible, ethical, and legal fundraising activities, complying with all applicable laws
- Decline funding suspected to originate from illegitimate or illegal activities
- Ensure all solicitation and communication materials accurately reflect MSCI's mission and intended use of the funds
- Use contributions in accordance with donor intentions and seek explicit consent for any repurposing of funds.
- Protect personally identifiable information and provide a mechanism for individuals to remove their information from records sold, rented, or exchanged with other organizations.
- Report fundraising results using accurate and consistent accounting methods that conform to relevant guidelines or regulations

Programme Partners, Vendors & Third Parties:

It is MSCI's intention only to cooperate with organizations and individuals that agree to honour MSCI's Code of Conduct. Before collaborating with an external partner, MSCI will determine if the collaboration may have negative consequences in any country where it works, and/or a negative impact on its reputation. If these consequences cannot easily be avoided, MSCI shall refrain from entering into the relationship.

Intellectual Property & Confidential Information:

All Representatives share a responsibility to protect MSCI's intellectual property and confidential information. Representatives will not disclose any confidential or proprietary information obtained as a result of their involvement with MSCI.

Health & Safety:

The health and safety of MSCI's Representatives is a top priority. At MSCI we are committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for everyone.

- MSCI provides medical evacuation insurance protecting all representatives when actively traveling and participating on its behalf.
- MSCI will modify its programme activity and initiate tactical risk mitigation protocols as needed.

Media & Photographic Policy:

All Representatives are expected to ensure that the portrayal of individuals and their circumstances is accurate and respectful, reflecting their dignity, capacity, and vulnerability. At Mustard Seed Communities Ireland, we are committed to ensuring that our use of images, messages, and film footage upholds the following principles:

- **Respect for Dignity:** We are dedicated to portraying the people involved with the utmost respect for their dignity and humanity.
- **Equality:** We believe in the equality of all individuals, regardless of their background, and strive to reflect this belief in all our representations.
- **Fairness, Solidarity, and Justice:** Our imagery seeks to promote fairness, solidarity, and social justice.

In line with these principles, we also commit to:

- **Truthful Representation:** Accurately depicting any situation or individual in order to foster a deeper public understanding.
- **Avoiding Stereotypes:** Steering clear of imagery that could be seen as sensationalistic or discriminatory against individuals, communities, or locations
- **Informed Consent:** Using images, messages, and case studies only with the informed participation and consent of the individuals involved, or with parental/guardian consent when necessary.
- **Amplifying Voices:** Ensuring that those whose stories are being shared have the opportunity to communicate their narratives in their own words.
- **Privacy and Anonymity:** Respecting the wishes of individuals regarding whether they want to be named or identifiable, and acting in accordance with their preferences.
- **Adherence to Human Rights Standards:** Upholding the highest standards of human rights and ensuring the protection of vulnerable individuals in all our imagery.

Safeguarding:

MSCI is dedicated to safeguarding all individuals associated with our organisation. It is our priority to ensure that every person within our community; trustees, employees, volunteers, programme participants, programme partners and those we serve are safe and valued in the workplace and across our programmes.

MSCI does not discriminate against, nor tolerate harassment or bullying of any of its Representatives based on race, colour, creed, religion, sex, age, disability, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, sexual orientation, gender orientation, political opinions, or any other impermissible factor. MSCI will not tolerate sexual misconduct or stand for any harassment of any kind. Harassment can unreasonably interfere with an individual's work performance and create an intimidating or offensive work environment.

Concerns related to discrimination, harassment or bullying should be reported as soon as possible and will be addressed. Email: safeguarding@mustardseedireland.ie.

MSCI has a detailed Safeguarding Policy in place, which aligns with international best practice (IASC - Interagency Standing Committee) and details its commitment to protect all those in contact with MSCI from harm, and defines the types of harm, behaviours and abusive activities and practices that are not tolerated.

Interagency Standing Committee: IASC 6 Core Principles:

<https://psea.interagencystandingcommittee.org/update/iasc-six-core-principles>

1. "Sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian workers constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment.
2. Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defence.
3. Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour is prohibited. This includes exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries.
4. Any sexual relationship between those providing humanitarian assistance and protection and a person benefitting from such humanitarian assistance and protection that involves improper use of rank or position is prohibited. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of humanitarian aid work.
5. Where a humanitarian worker develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation by a fellow worker, whether in the same agency or not, he or she must report such concerns via established agency reporting mechanisms.
6. Humanitarian workers are obliged to create and maintain an environment which prevents sexual exploitation and abuse and promotes the implementation of their code of conduct. Managers at all levels have particular responsibilities to support and develop systems which maintain this environment."

Duty to Report:

All Representatives have a duty to comply with the principle of: “If you see something say something.” MSCI wants and needs to know when it is not meeting its own standards. MSCI expects its Representatives to notify it of violations of its Code of Conduct, ethical concerns or other concerns related to misconduct or questionable activities. If in doubt, report. Concerns are most quickly resolved if reported in person at the time of the event to the leaders of the relevant programme; however, for those unable to or uncomfortable reporting the concern at the time it occurs, reports can be submitted by email to:- safeguarding@mustardseedireland.ie

Reports may be submitted anonymously, and all reports are treated as confidential. Those who submit reports in good faith shall be protected against any form of harassment, intimidation, discrimination or retaliation.

Those who engage in any retaliatory conduct against a good faith reporter will be subject to disciplinary action. Information regarding reporting is included on MSCI’s website, by visiting www.mustardseedireland.ie and included as part of onboarding materials for all representatives.

As a representative of Mustard Seed Communities Ireland, you agree to conduct all activities in line with the following principles and standards:

- **Zero Tolerance for Exploitation and Abuse:** I understand that Mustard Seed Communities Ireland has zero tolerance for exploitation, abuse, and harassment.
- **Best Interests of Vulnerable Individuals:** I will promote and protect the best interests of children and adults who may be vulnerable or at risk.
- **Prohibition of Harm:** I will not engage in behaviour that causes harm, including physical, sexual, emotional abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and will report any such incidents.
- **Encouraging Reporting:** I will support an environment where safeguarding concerns and complaints can be freely reported.
- **Reporting Safeguarding Concerns:** I will report any safeguarding concerns immediately and understand my mandatory duty to report.
- **Prohibition of Sexual Interactions:** I will not engage in sexual interactions with anyone under 18 years of age or enter into sexual relationships with any representatives or engage in commercial sexual transactions.

Professional Conduct/Ethics

Code of Conduct

- **Professional Integrity:** I will ensure my personal and professional conduct reflects the highest standards, aligned with the Vision, Mission, and Values of MSCI. I will act with honesty and integrity, avoid conflicts of interest and maintain confidentiality of sensitive information unless disclosure is authorized or legally mandated.
- **Equality, Respect & Dignity:** I will treat everyone with dignity and respect, without discrimination based on culture, ethnicity, race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, disability, marital status, family status, or membership in any minority or marginalized group.
- **No Tolerance for Misconduct:** I will refrain from any form of bullying, harassment, victimization, discrimination, abuse, intimidation, or exploitation, and respect the rights of others.
- **Safeguarding Commitment:** I will uphold the organization's safeguarding commitments in both my professional and personal life. I will prioritize the safety and well-being of children and vulnerable adults in all actions and decisions and adhere strictly to MSCI's safeguarding policies and reporting procedures and ensure appropriate behaviour and boundaries when interacting with vulnerable adults and children.
- **Responsible Use of Power:** I will not abuse the power inherent in my role.
- **Workplace Conduct:** My behaviour, both during and outside of work, will not undermine my ability to perform my role or reflect poorly on the organization.
- **Substance Abuse:** I will not work under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or illegal substances.
- **Avoiding Offense:** I will ensure my actions and conduct do not offend others or tarnish the reputation of the organization.
- **Respect for Local Laws and Customs:** I will respect local laws and customs and seek guidance from senior management on addressing harmful practices and norms, prioritizing MSCI's policies and Code of Conduct. I will engage with overseas partners and communities in a respectful and inclusive manner, listen and incorporate the views and needs of community members in programme planning and implementation and promote local ownership and leadership in community projects.
- **Media and Photographic Guidance:** I will ensure that the portrayal of individuals and their circumstances is fairly represented (delete this line in red) in terms of their capacities and vulnerabilities in terms of their dignity, capacity and vulnerability, in line with MSCI's Use of Images Policy, and additional guidelines listed in MSCI's Safeguarding policies.

Respect for Catholic Identity:

I recognize that Mustard Seed Communities Ireland is a Catholic agency. While I have the right to hold personal opinions, I will not engage in behaviour that could cause reputational damage to the organization.

Criminal Activity:

- **No Criminal Involvement:** I will not engage in criminal activities, violate human rights, or compromise the work of MSCl and its partners.
- **Protection from Exploitation:** I will not exploit or abuse representatives and will report any such behaviour immediately.
- **Illegal Goods or Substances:** I will not use, distribute, sell, or possess illegal goods or substances.
- **Disclosure of Convictions:** I will disclose any current or past criminal convictions or charges, especially those related to child abuse, upon joining or while working with MSCl.

Corruption and Conflicts of Interest:

- **Conflict of Interest:** I will declare any personal, family, or financial interests that may affect my work with MSCl.
- **Fraud and Corruption:** I will act in accordance with the Fraud, Theft, Corruption, and Bribery Policy and report any suspicious incidents.
- **Political Involvement:** I will inform MSCl if I am nominated for any political role.
- **Board Memberships:** I will disclose if I hold any board positions, whether paid or voluntary.
- **Avoiding Conflicts:** I will not act in situations where my personal interests conflict with the interests of MSCl or its partners.

Security, Health, and Safety:

- **Personal Responsibility:** I will take responsibility for my own health, safety, and welfare.
- **Colleagues' Safety:** I will not engage in activities that could endanger the health, safety, or wellbeing of my colleagues.
- **Risk Management:** I will be aware of and manage health, safety, and security risks appropriately.
- **Compliance with Security Policies:** I will adhere to local security guidelines in line with MSCl's Security Policy.
- **Health and Safety Policies:** I will follow all organizational health and safety policies and procedures.
- **Incident Reporting:** I will report any concerns, near misses, or incidents promptly.
- **Public Health Guidelines:** I will comply with national and international public health guidelines as deemed appropriate by MSCl.

Acknowledgment:

Please Sign

All Representatives are required to read, understand and acknowledge this Code of Conduct. By doing so, they commit to upholding the principles and standards outlined herein.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Contact: Mustard Seed Communities Ireland

Address: Vision Consulting, The Priory, John St W, Usher's Quay, Dublin 8, Ireland

Email: info@mustardseedireland.ie

For any question or concerns regarding this Code of Conduct, please contact Dervilla Gannon, MSCI, email: info@mustardseedireland.ie

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