

---

*September 2024*

---

*Policy*

---

IMS' Code of Ethics

---



## Revision history

Version	Date	Name	Description
1.0	30/10/2019	CSO	Adoption
2.0	25/09/2024	LRF	Update

OWNER: MLH  
APPROVED/REVISED DATE: 25-09-2024  
CATEGORY: POLICY

# 1. Introduction

IMS is committed to upholding the highest ethical standards in all its endeavors. This Code of Ethics (henceforth Code) outlines the ethical standards that guide IMS' actions, ensuring transparency, integrity, trust, and accountability.

As IMS staff, we are all personally and collectively responsible for maintaining these standards. We are expected to conduct ourselves in accordance with this Code as well as our contractual obligations. We shall confirm our adherence to IMS' core values, and IMS' regulatory and policy frameworks as described in IMS' Staff Handbook. It is everyone's responsibility to be updated on the latest version of IMS' institutional policies and other governing documents available on [Wire Files](#).

## 1.1 Scope

This Code applies to all IMS staff and board members at all times, independent of our location, function, type or length of contract.

The general conditions of IMS' Partnership contracts define the ethical expectations IMS has on its partners while implementing projects or core activities funded by IMS. Suppliers and any third party contracted to perform assignments on behalf of IMS shall adhere to IMS' Supplier Code of Conduct.

## 1.2 Why Ethics matter?

The success of IMS and its mission depends on maintaining the respect and confidence of our founders, donors, the public, and our partners and stakeholders around the world.

It is fundamental that we discharge our duties with independence, honesty, and integrity. The obligation to do what is right must be an essential part of the character of IMS and must underscore everything we do. When taking decisions, we must always be guided by a culture that reinforces making the appropriate, ethical choice.

## 1.3 Implementation, awareness, and ownership

The responsibility to implement this Code lies with all staff members. An introduction to the Code is given during the onboarding process when all employees sign off that they have read and understood the Code.

People managers shall ensure that staff uphold this Code in their daily work. To support its implementation, HR provides tools, trainings and support for how to comply and implement the Code.

The ownership of the Code lies with HR.

## 2. IMS' Core Values

IMS' core values are defined in the 2024-28 Global Strategy ([link](#)), and cover the following five dimensions:

- **Trust:** IMS operates from a foundation of integrity, confidence and trust. We stay accountable through mutual respect and transparency, building trust-based relationships with our partners, colleagues and stakeholders.
- **Inclusion:** IMS seeks to foster environments in which diverse identities and ideas are respected, valued and supported. We respect differences and will strive towards diversity, equity, inclusion and justice from an intersectional perspective, with a vision to transform prevailing power dynamics.
- **Solidarity:** IMS fosters solidarity through coalitions, partnership and teamwork. We act in solidarity with the struggles of our partners, colleagues, those who are marginalised, disadvantaged and oppressed. We believe in community, collaboration, and know that we are stronger together.
- **Responsiveness:** IMS listens and reflects on the world around us to craft timely responses that are not preconceived but contextually relevant. We strive to develop comprehensive understandings, act as a catalyst for change and local ownership, ensuring we learn from the past to find solutions that respond to the needs of the future.
- **Ambition:** IMS strives to do its very best for those it serves. Humble, self-reflective, courageous and open to new ideas, we push for progressive change that is needed. We strive to be professional, creative, innovative, and make work rewarding for our colleagues.

## 3. Code of Conduct

Ethical conduct means respecting the principles laid out in this Code. We are responsible for our own professional and personal conduct. However, commitment to upholding IMS' ethical principles, values, and reputation requires the concerted effort of all personnel, people managers, and the organization. At each level, it requires commitment to IMS' mandate, to each other, and to creating a workplace that reflects IMS' ethical principles and core values as embodied through this code.

### 3.1. Conflict of Interest

Embodied in IMS' Conflict of Interest Policy ([link](#)), we avoid situations where personal interests conflict with the organization's mission and interests. Transparency and disclosure are essential when conflicts arise.

### 3.2 Sexual and other harassment

Embodied in IMS' Policy on Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Bullying ([link](#)), together we create a safe work environment by never harassing or bullying a colleague, and by making a complaint if we feel that we have been subject to such an act.

### 3.3. Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment

Embodied in IMS' Policy on Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment ([link](#)), IMS prohibits sexual exploitation and abuse and considers such acts as a serious misconduct. IMS forbids the exchange of money, employment, goods, assistance or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior, regardless of whether such an activity (e.g. prostitution) is legal in the country

of work. IMS, furthermore, forbids sexual activity with persons under the age of 18, regardless of the local age of consent. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not an acceptable defense.

### 3.4 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

Embodied in IMS' Global Strategy, we fully embrace the DEI agenda which is an integral part of our work. This means that we seek to ensure respect and equal opportunity for all, and that we acknowledge the multitude of identities, experiences, and ways of moving through the world. Together we foster a work environment in which people of all identities, are welcome, valued and supported, as expressed in IMS' Gender and Diversity policy ([link](#)).

### 3.5 Anti-corruption and financial integrity

Embodied in IMS' Anti-corruption Policy ([link](#)), IMS has zero tolerance on corruption. This means that we never engage in any form of corruption, bribery or other financial improprieties or illegalities. We maintain accurate financial records in compliance with applicable legislation and in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices. We ensure that donations are used for their intended purposes and in line with IMS' mission and vision. We comply with applicable donor rules and regulations.

### 3.6 Cyber security and proprietary information

Embodied in IMS' IT Policy ([link](#)), we use IMS' IT equipment and networks in a responsible manner and exercise good judgement for personal use of such equipment. We adhere to the Policy for protection of Personal Identifiable Information ([link](#)) through which we ensure that proprietary information is protected and handled in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

### 3.7 Accountability

We hold ourselves accountable for our actions. When mistakes occur, we learn, rectify, and improve. We report suspicions of irregularities and breaches of IMS' policies and procedures, including this Code, through IMS' external Whistleblower function ([link](#)). In accordance with IMS' Whistleblower Policy ([link](#)), IMS staff will never be punished for reporting suspected irregularities.