ماعت للسلام والتنمية وحقوق الإنسان
Maat For Peace, Development, and Human Rights

Maat for Peace, Development, and Human Rights Organization

Code of Conduct & Ethics

2026

Preamble

This document, which the Board of Trustees of Maat for Peace has been commissioned to draft, represents a contract/covenant between all associated parties, and is a condition of employment, engagement, or affiliation with Maat.

In addition to this document, all employees and affiliates are required to comply with the Organization's Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH) Policy, Anti-Corruption Policy, and Conflict of Interest Policy.

These policies form an integral part of Maat's governance and compliance framework and are designed to prevent misconduct, protect beneficiaries and stakeholders, promote ethical behavior, ensure transparency in decision-making, and safeguard the responsible use of organizational resources. Any violation of these policies may result in disciplinary action and, where applicable, referral to the competent authorities in accordance with Egyptian law and Standards of partners and donors in funded projects.

This document consists of:

- Purpose and Scope
- Legal Frameworks and Compliance Regulations
- Code of Work Ethics
- Code of Professional Conduct

First: Purpose and Scope

This Code of Conduct establishes the ethical, professional, and legal standards governing the conduct of all individuals acting on behalf of Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights Association (Maat), including members of the Board of Trustees, employees, consultants, interns, volunteers, researchers, experts, contractors, and any other persons representing the organization.

The Code aims to ensure that all activities undertaken by Maat are conducted in accordance with the principles of integrity, accountability, transparency, respect for human rights, non-discrimination, and compliance with the laws and regulations of the Arab Republic of Egypt in all aspects of the organization's work and is intended to safeguard the credibility, independence, and reputation of the organization while advancing its mission of promoting human rights, democracy, sustainable development, good governance, and the rule of law.

The purpose of this Code is to provide clear guidance on the values, principles, and standards that govern the conduct of personnel in their interactions with colleagues, beneficiaries, partners, donors, government institutions, service providers, media representatives, and the wider public. It aims to foster a safe, respectful, inclusive, and professional working environment; prevent misconduct, abuse, discrimination, fraud, corruption, and conflicts of interest; and ensure that all organizational activities are carried out in accordance with applicable laws, organizational policies, and internationally recognized ethical standards.

By establishing clear standards of conduct and accountability, this Code seeks to strengthen organizational governance, protect the rights and dignity of all stakeholders, ensure responsible stewardship of resources, and reinforce public confidence in Maat as a professional, independent, and trusted civil society organization committed to serving the public interest.

In its entirety, it guarantees the continuity of Maat's respectable image, so that the respect it has built, since 2005 and till today, is maintained.

This document shall be binding for all these parties after they review it and sign every page. It also is a commitment towards the broader public Maat interacts with.

Second: Legal Frameworks and Compliance Regulations

Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights Organization conducts all its activities in accordance with the Constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt, applicable national legislation, and internationally recognized principles of human rights, transparency, accountability, and good governance.

All Board members, employees, consultants, volunteers, interns, contractors, and individuals acting on behalf of the Association are required to comply with the legal and regulatory framework governing civil society organizations, labor relations, financial management, data protection, anti-corruption measures, and the protection of human dignity and fundamental rights.

All personnel shall perform their duties in compliance with:

- The Constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt.
- Egyptian Civil Associations Law No. 149 of 2019 and its Executive Regulations.
- Egyptian Labor Law No. 12 of 2003, as amended.
- Egyptian Penal Code and all relevant anti-corruption provisions.
- Personal Data Protection Law No. 151 of 2020.
- Child Law No. 12 of 1996, as amended.
- Relevant provisions governing workplace harassment, discrimination, and violence.

In addition to national legislation, Maat is committed to adhering to the standards, principles, and obligations arising from donor agreements, partnership arrangements, and internationally recognized frameworks relevant to human rights, development, democracy, safeguarding, anti-corruption, and organizational integrity.

All personnel have an individual responsibility to familiarize themselves with the legal and regulatory requirements relevant to their duties, to seek guidance when uncertainties arise, and to report any suspected violations of applicable laws, regulations, or organizational policies. Ignorance of legal obligations shall not exempt any individual from responsibility. Any breach of applicable laws, donor partners requirements, or internal policies may result in disciplinary measures, contractual remedies, financial recovery procedures, referral to competent authorities, or other actions deemed necessary to protect the interests, reputation, and legal standing of the organization.

Through its commitment to legal compliance, ethical conduct, transparency, and accountability, Maat seeks to maintain the trust of beneficiaries, partners, donors, public institutions, and the communities it serves, while ensuring that its work contributes effectively to the promotion of human rights, democratic governance, sustainable development, and the rule of law.

Where donor partners requirements impose higher standards than national legislation, the higher standard shall apply unless prohibited by Egyptian law.

Third: Code of Work Ethics

The Code of Ethics represents the basic ethics, values, and principles we aspire to achieve and that have settled throughout the years of practical experience. This part, although shorter than the Code of Conduct, is more general. It is also publishable and relates to the general principles by which we are governed, and which are centered around our values and vision. The principles and ethics that we believe in include the following:

- **Up-holding human rights in general:**

1. Non-discrimination and the eradication of all forms of violence on grounds of gender, marital status, class, age, religion, ethnicity, color, beliefs, education, physical and/or psychological disability, or otherwise. In all cases the dignity of others shall be preserved.

2. Facilitate the access of target groups to financial, legal, and psychological resources.

3. Respect differences in intellectual and personal choices in line with Maat's mission and vision.

4. Acknowledge the abilities of others and assert and encourage their professional and intellectual development.

5. Promote inclusion, by involving, versus excluding, employees in decision-making processes. Expand the base of people aspiring to change their lives for the better by supporting them in exploring their priorities and taking them into account. All while stimulating a strong local, regional, and international women's movement capable of broadly advocating for their demands and garnering the widest possible public support.

6. Promote integrity and professional ethics - at the private and public level - and stand firm against any misleading allegations or defamation attempts.

7. Promote and defend democratic values and practices externally and at the very least internally and call for their activation at the public level.

8. Provide a safe work environment internally, and externally (for our associates); Maat undertakes to provide a work environment for employees and associates, that is free from threats or other difficulties faced at work, by (including, but not limited to): resolving personal conflicts peacefully, lending an ear to all concerned parties, and appealing to impartial parties to propose fair solutions to the conflicting parties; safeguarding internal information; providing occupational safety, etc.).

9. Continuously advance the capabilities and skills of employees and target groups.

Fourth: Code of Professional Conduct

This Code is based on the principles and values of Maat's Code of Ethics; it is more specific as it includes permitted, required, or prohibited practices and practical activities, and its provisions are interconnected and concern everyone and is therefore longer.

The following are the basic factors for the application of the Code of Ethics:

A. *Behaviors with Target Groups*

1- Individual Responsibility

All Maat's staff are expected to offer their help to the target groups to achieve their basic objectives without expecting additional compensation; everyone is encouraged to voluntarily sacrifice part of his/her time and employ their professional skills towards this goal.

2- The Dignity and Worth of the Human Person

We shall treat every person with respect for his/her dignity and cultural, social, economic differences, and seek to develop their capacity and advance their opportunities to enable them to effect the change themselves according to their actual needs, rather than imposing a bottom-down approach.

3- Inter-Human Relations

Employees in direct communication with the target audience shall realize that solid human relations are an important factor in bringing about change. Yet, it should be carefully avoided to compromise professional barriers as that could harm work ethics (e.g.: intimate relationships, authoritarian style, disclosing data about the organization, or adopting proposals without the primary stakeholders' full knowledge and previous fully informed consent, etc.).

4- Integrity

Our interactions amongst ourselves and with others are based on mutual trust. We are committed to abide by the standards of work ethics and values; hence we must act in consistency with our mission and develop good behavioral practices with others as well as among ourselves. This also requires that we treat information from people we interact with confidentially and/or obtain written permission for disclosure. They must be provided with a copy of their accounts and signed that they conform with what was stated and their consent to disclose it. If there is doubt that the information has not been clearly communicated to the target group, it must be explained in simple terms to ensure that it has been delivered correctly and unambiguously. Any harm to the reputation and credibility of the organization must be carefully avoided.

5- Safeguarding and Protection

Maat is committed to safeguarding all individuals who interact with the organization, particularly children, youth, women, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups. Personnel shall act in the best interests of beneficiaries, avoid any form of exploitation, abuse, neglect, or harmful behavior, report safeguarding concerns immediately, and adhere to all safeguarding policies and procedures.

6- Professional Competence

Professional competence entails social responsibility towards others, ethical responsibility towards co-workers, particularly the responsibility we bear as professionals towards social work and our professional responsibility towards the wider community in general is also part of it. This requires keeping abreast of the latest technologies and proposed interventions and consulting experts specialized in the field in question.

B. *Behaviors with Co-workers*

1- Mutual Respect

We all shall treat each other with respect and present each other's achievements and qualifications fairly, inside and outside the organization. It should be refrained from making negative remarks, inside the workplace or in front of outside parties, when assessing the competence level of female and male colleagues, or about the origin, color, sex, religion, marital status, creed, age, or different backgrounds of team members.

2- Non-Tolerance with Sexual Harassment

Any action or conduct constituting sexual harassment is unacceptable, whether it is a word, deed, look, gesture, or facial expression. If any such action occurs, a written or oral complaint shall be immediately submitted to the Executive Director or any member of the Board of Trustees. This clause also relates to Maat's detailed policy of protection from sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.

3- Interdisciplinary Cooperation

Co-workers shall collaborate and contribute to decisions that may affect the safety of target groups by providing analyses on prospects and their implications for the organization's values. They shall highlight their work experience and share current and emerging experiences and information. Colleagues who assume supervisory duties or provide career guidance have the responsibility to set clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries for colleagues.

4- Disagreements among Co-workers

Disagreements should not lead to someone taking advantage of the opportunity to obtain alternative positions or benefits at the expense of vulnerable groups, favoring this or that party. Rather disputes shall be resolved by:

- **Direct communication with the colleague concerned and seek face-to-face resolution; if this fails, an investigation committee, considered impartial by all sides, can be requested to decide on the matter after hearing the parties in disagreement. The committee can also consider hearing witnesses about the facts in dispute, before submitting its conclusions to the Executive Director and the Board of Trustees to take a final decision.**

This clause shall apply to any form of transgression, irregularity, or evaluation discrepancies (including, but not limited to condescending behavior towards others, diminishing and ridiculing of other opinions, dismissive remarks on the professional incompetence of colleagues, or even verbal or physical bullying or sexual harassment). The application of gradual sanctions shall be decided in accordance with the provisions of the foundation's bylaws.

C. *Institutional Behavior*

1- Political Neutrality and Independence

While Maat promotes democratic values, human rights, and civic participation, personnel shall maintain professional independence and impartiality in the organization's activities, avoid using Maat resources to support partisan political campaigns or any candidates, and ensure that advocacy activities remain consistent with Maat's mission and legal obligations.

2- Conflict of Interest

No individual shall use their position, authority, access to information, or organizational resources for personal gain or for the benefit of family members, associates, or affiliated entities. Maat shall maintain procedures for the identification, disclosure, management, and documentation of conflicts of interest to ensure transparency, accountability, and public trust. Failure to disclose a conflict of interest or attempts to improperly influence organizational decisions may result in disciplinary measures and other actions deemed appropriate by the organization.

3- Anti-Corruption and Anti-Fraud

All personnel have a duty to prevent, detect, and report suspected instances of fraud, corruption, or unethical conduct. Reports made in good faith shall be treated confidentially

and investigated promptly, fairly, and impartially. Maat is committed to protecting whistleblowers from retaliation and to taking appropriate corrective, disciplinary, and legal action against individuals found to have engaged in corrupt, fraudulent, or unethical practices.

4- Confidentiality

It is prohibited to disclose information about Maat without obtaining written permission from the direct supervisor, signed by a Board of Trustees member, responsible for the topic to be disclosed.

5- Transparency

Employees shall provide all details in the relevant registers on the tasks they carry out - including data related to the means of communication and addresses of the target groups - as well as to facilitate deliveries and ensure a smooth continuation in the future if they leave work.

6- Integrity and professional ethics

Including but not limited to refraining from accepting valuable gifts from third parties, using the workplace for personal purposes, committing acts that harm the reputation of the organization, exploiting knowledge of secrets of work, colleagues, or target groups to defame or make public, drug or alcohol abuse in the workplace, allowing personal disputes to turn violent.

7- Continuing education

Managerial employees shall seek to develop their own expertise and that of the executive staff. This includes current knowledge and information and practical and ethical developments that emerge in the areas of work.

8- Non-discrimination

Any form of discriminatory acts based on sex, marital status, class, religion, ethnicity, color, creed, education, age, or physical and psychological disability shall not merely be refrained from but include to not promote, facilitate, tolerate, or abet any form of discrimination.

9- Assets preservation

Employees will be attentive to the demands of shared living. They will keep their workspaces and common facilities - such as the bathrooms, kitchens, and halls - clean and tidy at all times. Supplies will be returned to their place immediately after use so others can find them when needed, especially kitchen supplies and electronic equipment such as cameras and Data Show.

10-Professionalism

Employees should not meet guests in the offices. Meetings are held in the conference rooms. Employees should reserve a time, notifying the administrative team on the number of guests, to avoid overlapping meetings in the same room. Employees cannot meet guests for personal reasons in the offices. Employees must do their utmost to not let their personal circumstances and lives affect their ability to perform their professional duties efficiently.

11- Social Media and Public Communications

Personnel representing Maat shall communicate accurately and responsibly, avoid publishing misleading, discriminatory, defamatory, or inflammatory content, distinguish personal opinions from official organizational positions, and protect confidential information and organizational integrity when using social media and public platforms. In addition, only authorized individuals may issue official statements on behalf of Maat.

12- Acknowledgment:

All personnel affiliated with Maat shall read, understand, and comply with this Code of Conduct and any related organizational policies.

D. Behavior with the wider Community

1- The Foundation as a whole - leadership and employees - must contribute to the advancement of public safety and security from the local to the global level.
2- The Foundation shall demand living conditions that meet the basic human needs of all people, appreciate social, economic, political, and cultural values related to human rights, and uphold institutions whose mission contributes to social justice.
3- The Foundation, through its policies and employees, shall be involved in activities that contribute to the promotion of equal access of all people - especially vulnerable and marginalized groups - to resources.