

## **Code of Conduct for the prevention of Sexual Abuse and Exploitation**

PhilinCon trustees, staff (paid and voluntary), contractors and project partners may work in positions of power both in the Philippines. The work of PhilinCon is guided by the Philippines law.

The Code of Conduct below should be followed by all trustees, staff, contractors and project partners **when working in the Philippines**. They are expected to follow this Code of Conduct regardless of local laws. All persons associated with PhilinCon will be expected to sign a copy of the Code of Conduct to signal their commitment to its terms.

### **Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Code of Conduct**

This Code of Conduct outlines expected standards of behaviour for PhilinCon's trustees, staff, contractors and project partners (hereafter referred to as staff and partners) towards children, young adults and community members where work is being done. It has been designed to give all who work with Niokolo Network (staff and partners) the confidence to carry out their roles and ensure that positive relationships are developed and maintained.

Staff and partners have a responsibility to avoid actions or behaviour that may constitute poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour and should ensure that a culture of openness exists wherein actual or potential breaches of *the Code* may be challenged. Building a positive relationship with the community members you are working with is paramount and it is important that all consider the power dynamics involved in all NGO - community relationships and partnerships, not only those involving children.

*The Code* applies to conduct in work or funded project activity roles, but PhilinCon expects staff and partners to also apply these good practice principles in their personal lives. Any violation of this policy occurring in relation to staff and others outside their professional roles (i.e. concerns regarding their behaviour towards children or adults that would constitute a breach of this *Code of Conduct*) may lead to PhilinCon considering follow up action.

**Sexual exploitation** involves an imbalance of power in favour of the abuser where coercion, intimidation, violence and/or enticement are used to sexually abuse a child or an adult. This can emerge from a seemingly consensual relationship with the child.

**Sexual abuse** is an abusive [sexual behaviour](#) by one person upon another.

**All PhilinCon staff are prohibited from engaging in the following harmful behaviour, including but not limited to:**

- ! Any behaviour or activity that could amount to sexual exploitation and abuse
- ! Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defence.
- ! Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour.
- ! Any other activity that is intended to cause physical or emotional harm, humiliation or exploitation of any individual.
- ! Any activity, practice or behaviour that suggests staff or partners have abused their position of power and is engaging any individual based on inherently unequal power dynamics.
- ! Sexual relationships between staff and any individuals that are based on unequal power dynamics are strongly discouraged since they may undermine the credibility and integrity of the work of Niokolo Network.

**In addition, staff and partners must:**

- ! Create and maintain an environment that prevents all forms of exploitation and abuse and promotes the implementation of this *Code of Conduct*.
- ! Report any concern or suspicion of exploitation, including sexual exploitation, abuse or breach of the *Code of Conduct* by a fellow member of staff immediately via the established reporting mechanisms (focal point)
- ! Make sure you know how to contact your focal point if you need to manage disclosures of abuse.
- ! In the event of a violation or suspected breach of the Code of Conduct, please contact Rebecca Tandung as soon as possible to discuss next steps.

I \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_  
understand and agree to abide by the above principles and *Code of Conduct*. I understand that any breaches of the above Code will be responded to in accordance with the policies in place and may result, among other things, in the immediate termination of my contract with PhilinCon.

If you see or hear anything relating to these behaviour, please contact immediately Dr. Rebecca Tandung, Chairperson- Board of Trustee of PhilinCon and safeguard contact independent to operational side of PhilinCon. All information shared will be kept in confidence.