

Land of Hope

Code of Conduct

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1. INTRODUCTION

Land of Hope is fighting for children's right, focusing on the so-called witch children in Nigeria. We work in the spirit of our Vision, Mission and Values, guiding our actions, decisions and relationships as we advocate against child-witch branding, a menace which has led to the stigmatization, torture, abandonment and killing of thousands of children in Nigeria.

Land of Hope is organized and operating as a not-for-profit and non-governmental organization, which means that any surplus that is generated through our operations is utilized solely to help fulfill our mission and stated purpose. Accordingly, Land of Hope is politically independent and not part of, or controlled by, any government or any intergovernmental agency.

Land of Hope is the sponsor of African Children's Aid Education and Development Foundation (ACAEDF) who manages the day-to-day operation of the organisations's children centre, also named Land of Hope, in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. ACAEDF is a leading non-profit/non-governmental organization registered under the relevant laws of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Donations to Land of Hope will be used to safeguard the running of the children centre, which includes school and education fees, food, nutritional and medical care, hospital treatment of tortured children, clothing, staff salary, operation and maintenance of Land of Hope and advocacy programs.

2. MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

Mission: We save innocent children, accused of witchcraft, from exclusion, torture and death. With care, protection and education for the children and by educating their surrounding communities, we lay the foundation for a future, where children grow up to be independent, active and social individuals who contribute to the development of their community.

Vision: A world where no child suffers due to the superstitions of adults

Values: Education, Children's rights, Involvement, Progress, Perseverance, Credibility, Independence

These are the core beliefs our organisation is built on and they serve as the foundation and frame of reference for all our activities and organizational planning. As an NGO, we have an obligation to utilize all of our resources effectively and efficiently toward accomplishing our stated purpose.

Land of Hope has developed the following Code of Conduct to ensure the highest standards of ethical practices and organizational integrity among all persons and entities affiliated with the organisation. It sets out our expectations, commitments and requirements regarding ethical conduct, basic compliance with applicable law, respect for human rights, child protection and anti-corruption. The code is relevant across borders, applying to everyone working for and with us, from our board members, employees, volunteers and partners to our donors, supporting associations and sponsors. The content of our Code of Conduct is an integral part of our DNA.

3. CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Land of Hope has formulated a Child Protecting Policy to promote the protection of children's rights. Our Child Protecting Policy is binding for all trustees, staff members, volunteers, donors, visitors, contractors and partners of Land of Hope and ACAEDF.

Land of Hope and ACAEDF personnel will do all they can to ensure that the rights of children are fully upheld and that children are effectively empowered to claim these rights. Safeguarding is broader than child protection, because it is about more than just preventing children from harm.

Land of Hope believes that vulnerable children need to be loved and cherished and not discriminated against. The best interest of the child is paramount, and we will strive to promote the general well-being of the child in everything we do. All forms of abuse and exploitation of children are unacceptable and must be discontinued. Land of Hope accepts that steps must be taken to protect children from those adults who might abuse their trust and access to them through the organisation's work.

Land of Hope works with stigmatized and other vulnerable children who have a particular set of vulnerabilities. Many children have faced serious level of abuses due to the belief in child witchcraft or other similar superstitions. Land of Hope does not believe that children can be witches and is not concerned with proving or disproving the existence or non-existence of witchcraft. Rather, we work to engage positive change on the way children should be treated using love and tolerance.

Land of Hope recognizes the inherent right to freedom of religion and belief unless it infringes upon the rights, safety, welfare, development or quality of life of the child. Accordingly, all trustees, staff members, volunteers, donors, visitors, partners and contractors of Land of Hope and ACAEDF will be expected to assume this fundamental position which is that a child cannot be a witch. Child protection is a corporate and an individual responsibility. All staff will be made familiar with and sign this policy, implementing it in all organizational activities. Associations with anyone and partnerships with any agency found to be stigmatizing the child or engaging in any kind of abusive and exploitative relationships with children will be broken. All interactions with children should be carried out with the best interest of the child at heart and should be grounded in the principles contained within The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

4. ANTI-CORRUPTION

Corruption is a considerable obstacle to democracy and has profound adverse effects on economic and sustainable development, particularly harming the poor and vulnerable, including the communities in Nigeria where the organisation works. Despite being the largest oil producer in Africa, Nigeria has the largest number of people living in extreme poverty, with an estimated 87 million Nigerians, or around half of the country's population, thought to be living on less than \$1.90 a day. Corruption is one of the major causes of poverty in Nigeria. Therefore, Land of Hope has zero tolerance for corruption as it goes against our mission and core values.

In all our activities, we are guided by the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence as enshrined in the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid. In accordance, we are committed to complying with all applicable laws, rules and regulations, acting in an ethical, sustainable and socially responsible manner. We expect the same in our relationships with all stakeholders.

Land of Hope's work is based on national and international funds, private and public donors, membership fees, corporate sponsors and other resources entrusted to the organization by public and private donors. It is crucial that our donors have full confidence in us and feel confident that their entrusted donations and resources are not subject to corruption. Any direct or indirect involvement in corrupt acts damages our integrity and credibility. Therefore, all employees, volunteers and partners, as well as all persons and entities affiliated with Land of Hope have a responsibility to ensure that corruption is prevented and additionally, to expose it if it occurs.

5. HUMAN RIGHTS AND DIGNITY

Land of Hope complies with and support The UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which sets out basic rights and fundamental freedoms to which all human beings are entitled, laying the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world. It declares that human rights are universal – to be enjoyed by all people, no matter who they are or where they live.

Every year, we mark the “Human Rights Day”, teaching our children that whenever and wherever children's rights are abused and abandoned, we and future generations are all at risk. Teaching children about their rights, especially the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is fundamentally imperative, adhering to article 42 “*all adults and children should know about this convention*”.

Regardless of race, color, sex, age, social origin, birth, deformity or other status and condition, it is important that we as an NGO stand up for human rights and dignity, especially the rights of the stigmatized children in Nigeria. They are human - they are not witches. Their rights to education, security, hope, a good life, a great future, opportunities and others are **non-negotiable**.

At all times, Land of Hope employees, volunteers and associated partners must protect and promote human rights and work actively to address issues of concern. Based on the UDHR and the UNCRC, the following declarations guide our behavior:

- All children everywhere have rights, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status.
- All children everywhere have the right to an education
- All children everywhere have the right to express themselves freely
- We will protect any person’s fundamental human rights
- We take a proactive approach to support and promote the Child Rights Act in Nigeria.
- We support, protect and promote the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- We support, protect and promote The UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- We recognize that all people are born free and equal in dignity.
- We do not tolerate any form of child labour.
- We do not tolerate any form of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment.
- We do not tolerate any form of slavery, servitude or forced labour. The right to be protected against slavery and servitude is absolute and it can never be restricted.
- We respect equal opportunities and fight discrimination.
- We respect the right to freedom of association.
- We respect the individual’s right to freedom of thought, belief and religion unless it infringes upon the rights, safety, welfare, development or quality of life of other individuals.
- We respect the integrity of families and support family-based life.

6. TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

As an NGO, we have a responsibility to demonstrate to the public that our activities and goals are consistent with our values. In order to achieve our vision of a world where no child suffers due to the superstitions of adults, we need to be open about what we do and how we do it, so our donors and supporters have faith in that their entrusted money and resources are spend wisely.

Land of Hope is transparent in all of our dealings with local governments, the public, donors, members, associates and other interested parties, except for personnel matters and proprietary information. On our website, we publish a wide range of relevant information, including annual reports, organizational structure and information and stories about our work.

We are accountable for our actions and decisions, not only to our donors and supporters, but also to our staff, volunteers, members, associates and the public at large.

If you cannot find what you are looking for on our website, please contact our Vice President by e-mail: tina@landofhope.global