AFRICA SCHOOL ASSISTANCE PROJECT

Policies and Practices
statement of policies & practices

The Africa School Assistance Project (ASAP) has developed the following specific policies and practices for its staff, board members and for all individuals who interact with ASAP and its representatives or beneficiaries. The goal of these specific policies and practices is to foster professionalism within ASAP’s organization and simultaneously give its donors confidence in how ASAP conducts its business. For the purposes of this document, the term “staff” shall include all board members, employees, volunteers and interns of ASAP.

code of ethics

ASAP has adopted a code of ethics to guide its board members and staff in their conduct when acting on behalf of ASAP. The code contains broad principles reflecting the types of behavior ASAP expects towards constituents, donors, employees, peers and the public. This policy is not intended as a stand-alone policy. It should not be considered a comprehensive statement of ASAP’s ethical standards, nor does it answer every ethical question or issue that might arise. Rather, it is a small part of a broader effort to create and maintain a quality organization that gives ethical conduct the highest priority.

Staff should:

• Act at all times in accordance with the highest ethical standards and in the best interest of ASAP, its members, constituents, donors, and reputation;

• Demonstrate professional respect and responsiveness to constituents, donors and others and make all reasonable efforts to satisfy their needs and concerns within the scope of our mission;

• Make every effort to understand, respect and support our constituents from other cultures;

• Respect the confidentiality of sensitive information about ASAP and its constituents, donors, board and employees;

• Comply with applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and fiduciary responsibilities in an effort to create transparency in all of our operations;

• Provide credible and effective oversight to the organization’s work without personal bias;

• Accept no commissions, gifts, payments, loans, promises of future benefits or other items of value from anyone who has or may seek some benefit from ASAP in return, other than occasional gifts of nominal value that are in keeping with good business ethics;

• Appropriately acknowledge contributions from other individuals and organizations who help facilitate our goals;

• Engage in truthful fundraising activities.
compliance, monitoring, & reporting
ASAP management is responsible for communicating this Code of Ethics to all Staff.

donor relations policy
ASAP raises funds from donors in the United States and abroad. ASAP respects its donors and has put in place a Donor Relations Policy to clarify its policies and procedures regarding recognition of gifts, donor privacy and honoring donor intent.

• donor information
ASAP collects and maintains the following donor information:
  • Contact information including as name, address, telephone number, and email address;
  • Giving information
  • Information provided by the donor in the form of comments and suggestions

Every reasonable precaution shall be taken to protect the confidentiality of such information. Donor’s personal information is collected to establish and manage ASAP’s relationship with donors, to analyze giving patterns, process gifts, and provide donors with documentation of their charitable contributions. In addition, personal information may be used to publicly recognize donors if permission is given by the donors.

• prohibition against sharing donor information
ASAP does not sell, rent, trade, or share its donor list with any other organization.

• discontinuing contact upon request
It is the policy of ASAP to communicate with donors according to their expressed preferences whenever possible. ASAP will discontinue or change the method used to contact any person upon that person’s oral or written request to the organization.

• gift acknowledgement and recognition
ASAP recognizes donors’ contributions by various means, but it respects the desire of those donors who wish to remain anonymous. With approval, ASAP may list donors in printed materials, annual reports, press releases, newsletters, proposals, and reports, as well as in pieces on ASAP or its website or social media platforms. Gifts accepted by ASAP shall be acknowledged in writing to the donor, and in accordance with the Internal Revenue Code and United States Income Tax Regulations.

• gift and acceptance
ASAP actively solicits gifts and grants to further the mission of the organization, and has adopted the following Gift Acceptance Policy. When considering whether to solicit or accept gifts, the organization will consider the following factors:
  • Whether acceptance of the gift will compromise any of ASAP’s core values;
• Whether the donor’s intent is compatible with ASAP’s intent in soliciting the gift;
• Whether accepting the gift will damage ASAP’s reputation;
• Whether ASAP, instead of the donor, will be the primary beneficiary of the donation;
• Whether the gift is consistent of prior practice;
• Where the gift is offered in a form that ASAP can use without incurring substantial expense or difficulty;
• Where the gift will encourage or discourage future gifts.

All decisions to solicit and/or accept potentially controversial gifts will be made by the Executive Director in consultation with the Board of Directors.

photographs & videos
Staff regularly take pictures and video of the children and communities who benefit from our projects. These images are used for clear purposes with an obvious benefit for ASAP’s work. If a child or parent or guardian objects to, or appears uncomfortable with being included in a picture or film, their wishes shall be respected and ASAP associates shall not include them in pictures or films.

confidentiality
Our clients and other parties with whom we do business entrust ASAP with important information relating to their businesses or personal lives. It is our policy that all information considered confidential will not be disclosed to external parties or to employees without a “need to know.”

protection of children served by ASAP
ASAP believes all children have the right to be protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence, as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. It is therefore made clear to all staff or representatives of ASAP that ASAP does not tolerate child abuse in any form and that all suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

ASAP recognizes that we work in communities whose cultural attitudes and accepted behaviors towards children can be different from our own. In addition, ASAP does not manage or control schools; we facilitate communities to run their own schools. Therefore, our approach to child protection must reflect the fact that we cannot control directly what takes place in those schools.
Every effort will be made, however, to create an environment that respects the rights of children and rejects abusive behavior.

**dealing with concerns of child abuse**

Suspected incidents of child abuse observed in Africa should be reported to the Project Director for the location of the alleged abuse and to the Executive Director. ASAP will conduct an investigation in line with local procedures or otherwise follow the required protocol of the local jurisdiction. ASAP will sever all relations with any individual found to have committed child abuse and will comply with the local jurisdiction in any related criminal prosecution.

Suspected incidents of child abuse observed in the United States should be reported to the Executive Director and will be reported to law enforcement agencies and in accordance with applicable law. ASAP will sever all relations with any individual found to have committed child abuse and will comply with the local jurisdiction in any related criminal prosecution.

No action will be taken against any Staff if he/she raises a legitimate concern about suspected abuse and it is determined to be unfounded. However, any Staff making false and malicious accusations of child abuse may be subjected to discipline, up to and including termination of employment or volunteer service.

**financial transparency**

Upon request, ASAP provides projected budgets for each of its projects and annual budgets. Annual reports are made available within 60 days of the closing of the fiscal year. ASAP also conducts internal and external audits. Completed audits are available upon request.

**responsible tourism**

ASAP is committed to providing a volunteer experience that promotes appreciation and conservation of Tanzanian culture. ASAP strives to ensure that all aspects of its work conforms to responsible tourism practices and promote culturally appropriate, environmentally sound, and sustainable local development.

**contractual partnerships**

ASAP collaborates with individuals, organizations, communities, governments and private and public enterprises to develop community schools, improve the quality of education in Africa, and provide volunteer experiences. Whenever major expenditures are undertaken for goods or services ASAP ensures that the terms of partnership are clearly defined through legal contract.
losses and fraudulent acts

ASAP’s reputation is a valuable asset. Consequently, ASAP staff and representatives may never engage in fabrication, misappropriation or fiscal irregularities that may compromise our position. Investigations will be conducted without regard to length of service, position, title, or relationship.

Without attempting to exhaust the acts that may be deemed as fabrication, misappropriation or fiscal irregularities, the following are examples of fabrication, misappropriation, or fiscal irregularities:

- Any dishonest or fraudulent act;
- Forgery or alteration of any document or account belonging to ASAP (including, but not limited to timesheets, payroll records and accounts, travel and expense reports, cash advance records and accounts, procurement documents, project materials and equipment inventory records, and monitoring reports);
- Forgery or alteration of a check, bank draft, or any other financial document;
- Misappropriation of funds, supplies, project materials and equipment, or other assets;
- Impropriety in the handling or reporting of money, financial transactions or bidding procedures;
- Accepting or seeking anything of material value over $25 USD from vendors or persons providing services/materials to ASAP; and/or
- Destruction or misappropriation of records, furniture, fixtures, or equipment.

Each Staff member has an obligation to report losses, illegal acts and other violations to the Executive Director if he/she observes such conduct, or receives information about such conduct that is reasonably creditable. The report may be verbal or in writing, and should provide details of the incident, including date, location and the names of witnesses. Making frivolous claims may lead to corrective action including termination of employment or volunteer service. ASAP will not tolerate any form of coercion, intimidation, reprisal or retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, reports losses or illegal acts, or provides information or assistance in an investigation.