

**The Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages**

Zest4Kidz is a signatory to the 2006 Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages (“the Code”). The Code has been written by NGOs working in the areas of emergency relief, long term development and development education.

The purpose of the Code is to provide a framework on which organisations can build when designing and implementing their public strategy. The Code offers a set of guiding principles that can assist practitioners in their efforts to communicate their organisation’s programmes and values in a coherent and balanced way.

Signatories to this Code are acutely aware of the many challenges and difficulties entailed in conveying the scandal and injustice of poverty while striving to meet the ideals of the Code. It is a reality of our world today that many of the images of extreme poverty and humanitarian distress *are* negative and cannot be ignored. To ignore them would run counter to the spirit of this Code which is to portray the reality of the lives of people with sensitivity and respect for their dignity.

Images and messages should seek to represent a complete picture of both internal and external assistance and the partnership that often results between local and international NGOs.

The values of human dignity, respect and truthfulness as outlined in the Code, must underlie all communications. The signatories to this Code are committed to these principles, and will translate them into internal policies and procedures. They are also committed to working constructively with others whose work involves communicating on issues of global poverty, to explore ways of reflecting these principles in other fields of communication.

By signing and promoting the Code, NGOs will continue to keep the development agenda very much in the public eye and to look beyond the sound bite or single image to reflect the values espoused in this Code.

**Code of Conduct on Images and Messages:**

Guiding Principles:

Choices of images and messages will be made based on the paramount principles of respect for the dignity of all people concerned, belief in the equality of all people, acceptance of the need to promote fairness, solidarity and justice.

Accordingly, in all our communications and where practical and reasonable within the need to reflect reality, we strive to:

Choose images and related messages based on values of respect, equality, solidarity and justice,;

Truthfully represent any image or depicted situation both in its immediate and in its wider context so as to improve public understanding of the realities and complexities of development;

Avoid images and messages that potentially stereotype, sensationalise or discriminate against people, situations or places, use images;

Use images, messages and case studies with the full understanding, participation and permission of the subjects (or subjects’ parents/guardian);

Ensure those whose situation is being represented have the opportunity to communicate their stories themselves;

Establish and record whether the subjects with to be names or identifiable and always act accordingly;

Conform to the highest standards in relation to human rights and protection of the vulnerable people.

**Based on the values and requirements of the Code, we specifically ask that our volunteers:**

* **Do not take photos or make videos that will harm dignity, degrade, or make a spectacle of people**
* **Should only take photos or make films when it is appropriate to do so and will not offend others**
* **Should be highly sensitive as to what photos, films and stories they publish online, particularly when these are of children or vulnerable adults. Subjects should, as far as possible, know when they are being photographed or filmed. When subjects do not wish to be photographed or filmed, this must be respected.**

**Signature:**

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, have read and understood the Dochas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages, and agree to abide by the above requirements in my volunteering work for Zest4Kidz.

Signed: Date: