



# **MAHOLA**

## **A local health care system**

### *Health & Safety Policy*

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**A**

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Mahola Health & Safety Officer

*Approved by:*

Mahola Project Leader

Mahola Local Coordinator

*Authorised by:*

Chairman/woman of the Mahola Steering Committee

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# Mahola – a local health care system

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines and direction regarding health & safety aspects throughout the Mahola project, and the entire life cycle of the local health care system that the Mahola project aims to develop.

This ‘Mahola’ system is a complex and integrated system in the sense that it contains multiple system elements such as People (e.g. ambulance drivers, nurses and/or mid-wives, first aiders and cleaners), Hardware (e.g. ambulance vehicle and buildings), Processes (e.g. how to deal with a patient from an administrative viewpoint), Information (e.g. policies such as an environmental protection policy and a child protection and safeguarding policy, procedures, job descriptions, templates for checklists and contracts), as well as the related Equipment and Supplies to operate and maintain the system over time (see Figure 1).

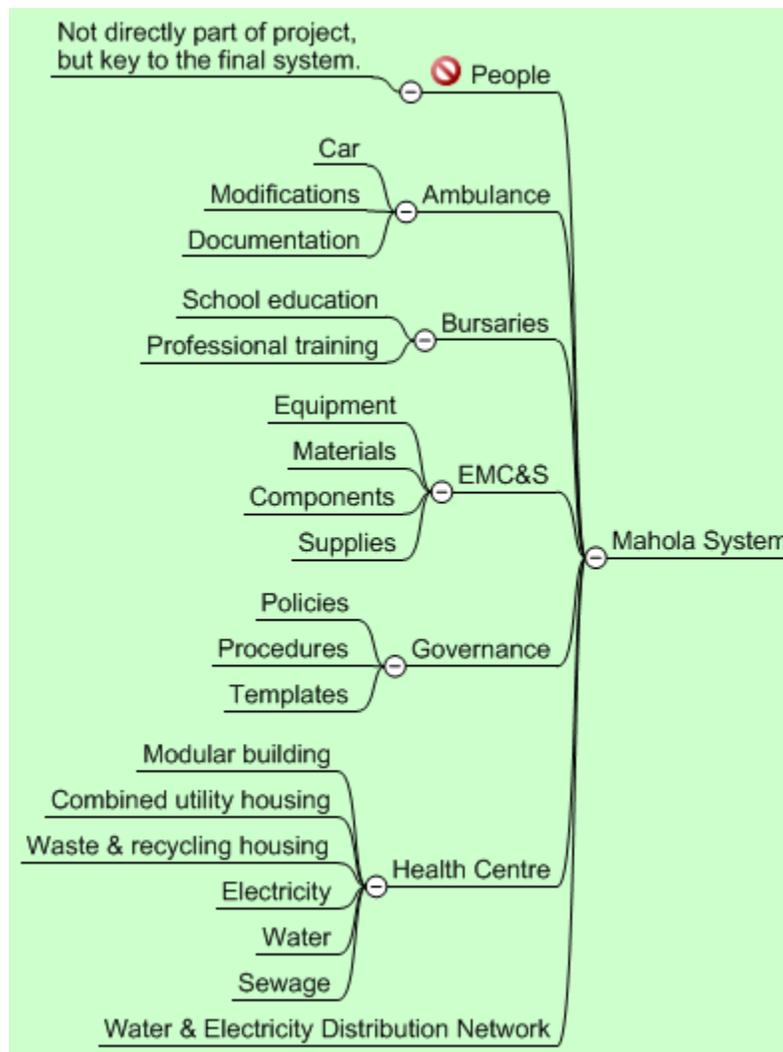


Figure 1: Elements of the local health care system

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Therefore, questions regarding health and safety aspects during all project phases, i.e. the system development; the operation and maintenance of the local health care system; as well as in case of the disposal of certain components thereof, have to be anticipated, investigated and answered in order to ensure health and safety of all members and users of the Mahola system; both directly (e.g. removing health and safety hazards or dangers) and indirectly (e.g. via increased awareness among the local population in general).

‘Health’ can be defined as the absence of disease or ill health; whereas ‘Safety’ can be defined as the absence of risk of serious personal injury. The Mahola system will provide workplaces, work equipment and use work methods which are safe and pose no risk to health; appropriate instructions and training for all members of the system and the wider public; necessary supervision; health and safety arrangements adapted to suit the size and the nature of the system; and any necessary personal protective clothing and equipment free of charge. Furthermore, the Mahola system will ensure that the hours of work do not adversely affect employees' health and safety; and take measures to eliminate any extreme physical and mental fatigue.

A more comprehensive collection of standardised definitions, guidance and recommended practices for the context of health care can be found in the British National Health Service – Workplace Health and Safety Standards [1].

The Mahola Project acknowledges a responsibility to patients, their families, staff members, volunteers and the general public, and we express our commitment towards implementing operations that will promote health and safety. The Mahola Project will consistently strive to raise awareness in the community, encourage participation and educate all concerned, even those who live locally but are not formally involved in health and safety matters.

This policy governs the management of the health and safety aspects of our project and the resulting health care system, with focus on everyone who is using or contributing to the Mahola system in one way or another. It includes the continuous improvement of health and safety not only during the project itself, but throughout the entire life cycle of the healthcare system. The policy will be reviewed and updated regularly by a nominated Health & Safety Officer and validated by the local Steering Committee.

## **2. SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT**

During the development of the local health care system from the system specification via the concept and detailed design, right to the implementation and integration of the system, decisions have to be guided by relevant health and safety related objectives.

The main health and safety objectives during the system development are the following:

- Inclusion of health and safety related requirements into the Systems Engineering efforts, in particular during the detailed design phase (e.g. consideration of necessary health and

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safety related aspects and taking these into account in the Implementation & Integration Steps as appropriate);

- Health & Safety awareness of the members of the multi-disciplinary on-site support team and local volunteers;
- Elimination and/or mitigation of health and safety hazards during the implementation and integration of the Mahola system on-site (e.g. related to open cess pools, electricity, wildlife, sunshine exposure, overheating, physical and mental exhaustion of volunteers);
- Awareness of the local population regarding health and safety related hazards during the implementation and integration of the Mahola system;
- Availability of on-site first aid capacity during all local implementation and integration activities.

### **3. SYSTEM OPERATION & MAINTENANCE**

During the operation and maintenance of the local health care system and throughout its entire life cycle, decisions have to be guided by relevant health and safety objectives.

The main health and safety objectives during the system operation and maintenance are the following:

- Health & Safety awareness of all members of the Mahola system, including employees and volunteers; as well as patients (depending on their capacity) and family members and other visitors;
- Elimination and/or mitigation of identified health and safety hazards during the operation and maintenance of the Mahola system;
- Health & Safety awareness of the local population, in particular school children;
- Availability of around the clock first aid capacity at the health centre, as well as via the extended network of First Aiders.

### **4. DISPOSAL OF SYSTEM COMPONENTS**

During the disposal of system components of the local health care system throughout its operational life, and at the end of the system life cycle, decisions have to be guided by relevant health and safety objectives.

The main health and safety objectives during the disposal of system components are the following:

- Elimination and/or mitigation of identified health and safety hazards during the disposal of system components of the Mahola system;

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- Awareness of the local population regarding health and safety related hazards during the disposal of system components;
- Availability of on-site first aid capacity during all activities related to the disposal of system components.

### **5. HEALTH & SAFETY OFFICER**

The local Steering Committee will nominate a responsible Health & Safety Officer. This office can be held in parallel with any other positions in the local health care system. The nominated focal point for health and safety matters will drive the continuous improvement efforts to promote health and safety within the Mahola system.

In particular he/she will:

- Make all staff members and volunteers, local pupils and their families aware of the importance of health and safety, as well as of proven approaches to ensure it;
- Regularly review the local practice;
- Initiate related improvement actions and/or projects;
- Regularly review and update this policy as needed;
- Regularly report to the Steering Committee on all Health & Safety matters;
- Support the Administrator by providing inputs for regular reporting;
- Support the Trainer by providing inputs for and actively participating in delivering related training and awareness sessions.

### **6. REFERENCES**

- [1] British National Health Service, Workplace Health and Safety Standards, <http://www.nhsemployers.org/~media/Employers/Publications/workplace-health-safety-standards.pdf> (accessed 16 September 2016), revised 2013.