



Inclusive Governance For Voluntary Organisations A Study Report



VANI
Celebrating 30 Years
VOICE OF THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

Civic Engagement Alliance

Inclusive Governance for Voluntary Organisation Study Report

Author: Voluntary Action Network India (VANI)

November 2019

Copyright (c) Voluntary Action Network India

The content of this book can be reproduced in whole or in parts with due acknowledgement to the publisher.



@TeamVANI



@vani_info

Published by:

Voluntary Action Network India (VANI)

VANI HOUSE, 7, PSP Pocket,

Sector-8, Dwarka, New Delhi 110 077

Phone: 91- 11 – 49148610, 40391661, 40391663

E-mail: info@vaniindia.org

Website: www.vaniindia.org

Printed by:

M/s Print world

Email: printworld96@gmail.com

CONTENTS

PREFACE	03
AIM OF THE DOCUMENT	05
➤ MANAGEMENT POLICIES	07
• HUMAN RESOURCE POLICY	09
• ANTI-SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY	21
• ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY	29
➤ FINANCIAL POLICIES	31
• FINANCIAL POLICY	33
• CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY	43
➤ GOOD PRACTICES	47
• CHILD PROTECTION POLICY	49
• GENDER POLICY	57
• DISABILITY POLICY	59
• DIVERSITY POLICY	71
➤ EXTRANEIOUS POLICY	75
• COMMUNICATION POLICY	77
• SECURITY POLICY	79

PREFACE

In the changing socio-economic and political environment, it is imperative for voluntary development organizations to strengthen their internal systems and processes to maintain the transparency and accountability. While actively working for bringing the change in the lives of people and contributing to the growth of the country, voluntary organizations need to be prepared for the external challenges which depends on organization's internal strength. It is really necessary for any organization to make the working environment conducive and also inclusive.

While the organizations are already in the process of following good governance as reflected in their sound human resource and related policies. This document will confirm an organization's commitment to accountability and transparency towards its internal and external stakeholders. However, it is the need of the hour to move beyond accountability and transparency and bring inclusivity in organizational processes. An organization needs to promote and set up policies that promotes inclusivity and be functional to provide the space through appropriate structures and systems.

Through these efforts the manual provides model policies to meet the standards required for a transparent, accountable and inclusive governance system within voluntary sector. VANI has always worked towards strengthening the organizations and the sector, this manual will contribute enormously towards this aspect. The policies outlined in this document are only templates and frameworks, organizations should feel free to adopt and adapt the content according to their needs and requirements. Modifications made could depend on the size, nature, scope and thematic focus of the organization. In order to provide intensive support to small and medium organizations.

I would like to acknowledge and extend my gratitude to Civic Engagement Alliance for sponsoring this project; Ms. Shruti Sharma, Programme Officer, for compiling and editing the document; Mr. Arjun Phillips, Programme Manager for overall guidance.

Harsh Jaitli
Chief Executive Officer

AIM OF THE DOCUMENT

For organizations to survive and thrive in today's complex, diverse, and global environment, it is essential to attain an open and inclusive work culture. It is imperative to have policies and practices that are essential for consistency and also promotes inclusiveness in an organization's daily operations. These policies and practices can provide the direction and allow the employees to not only understand their responsibilities but also that of their coworkers, which will foster a cooperative and inclusive work environment in the organization. According to Catalyst's Inclusive Leadership: The View From Six Countries report, in India 62 percent of innovation is driven by employee perceptions of inclusion. Additionally, employees become more innovative and better team players when they feel more included and go beyond what is required thereby achieving workgroup objectives.

A diverse workforce brings a unique set of experiences and perspectives, which are essential for developing new ideas and innovation. Organizations should therefore use inclusion as a tool to collaborate with diverse employees and fully realize their talents. If an organization needs to grow and compete in today's hanging environment, they need to foster a culture that accepts the diverse experiences and perspectives of every individual. Thus, an effectively formulated and implemented inclusive policies, allows employees to understand their roles and levels of responsibility and help in eliminating misunderstandings, ensuring that every employee understands the behavior that is acceptable within the organization.

Since the voluntary sector has been struggling to build a positive image among the masses. They are considered to be non-professional and their contribution to the development has been invisible. This manual will help Voluntary organizations to higher plane of standardization and professionalism that is much required for the sector. Without proper policies, guidelines and procedures in place, can destroy an organization's reputation. This will have serious implications for organization and voluntary sector as a whole. The clearly written policies and implementation will help to boost the image amongst the donors, partners, members, government, beneficiaries, private sector and other stakeholders. Further, the stakeholders are also increasingly focusing on such policies in place in organizations as part of their funding criteria. Thus, the policies discussed in this document provide the framework for promoting inclusive governance in voluntary organizations and to facilitate the smooth functioning and strengthening the organizations from within. Voluntary organizations can adapt these policies according to their size, geographical coverage, location, etc. to enhance the accountability and transparency of their organization.



**MANAGEMENT
POLICIES**

HUMAN RESOURCE POLICY

Human resource (HR) policies are the formal rules and guidelines that organizations put in place to hire, train, assess and reward members of their workforce. The policy is a formal statement covering areas such as employment, compensation, benefits, leave, etc that employees are expected to follow. These rules are documented and approved by the appropriate authority. HR policies address issues that are important to the organization's mission or operations. They ensure that the organization complies with pertinent legislation and adheres to terms of collective agreements. The policy must be regularly reviewed and updated. Further, the HR policy encourages fair and consistent treatment of employees. Policies on recruitment, discipline and leave, for example, ensure that all managers follow the same process. A HR policy provides the framework for managing staff, while allowing managers to respond and adapt to individual situations. A sound HR policy is a necessity in the growth of any organization; it reflects the values of the organization. Thus, it is suggested that every voluntary/non-profit organization with employees should develop a HR policy and procedures.

Need for a human resource policy

- It serves as a guide to employees on how to conduct themselves in the workplace.
- It provides rules on how employees should perform their jobs and interact with one another, contributing in creating a positive work environment for all.
- It helps the organization and other members in the organization to know the terms and conditions of their employment.
- A good, written HR policy manual can be an enormously effective tool in disseminating employer expectations regarding worker performance and behavior.
- Prudent and comprehensive human resource management policies can save significant amounts of management time that can then be spent on other activities.

MODEL HUMAN RESOURCE POLICY

1. PREAMBLE

Human resource is the most significant resource of any organization. It is considered the backbone of an organization. An organization acquires and uses all other resources on the basis of its human resources. This HR manual provides the policies and procedures for managing the staff. It also provides guidelines that the organization will use to administer these policies, including the correct procedure to be followed. It is designed to be the primary reference document for communicating and interpreting HR policies, programmes and procedures to employees working in the organization. HR policies are systems of codified decisions, established by an organization, to support administrative personnel functions, performance management, employee relations and resource planning.

2. AIM OF THE POLICY

This HR policy contains guidelines on how people should be managed in the organization. It aims to ensure that any HR issue is dealt with consistently in accordance with the values of the organization and in line with certain defined principles. It provides a comprehensive service which works to promote the best use of the staff's talents and abilities so that they can deliver the best possible services in the organization.

3. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

The HR policy applies to all staff, members, volunteers and those working on behalf of the organization. In order for the policy and procedure to be effective, it is essential that any employee who is involved in any aspect of the organization is aware of this document and follows it. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the senior management in conjunction with the HR department to ensure that the policy is followed by all employees.

4. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The HR manual is published and maintained as a guide for supervisors and managers so that HR matters can be handled more consistently and equitably throughout the organization.

5. OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

- To acquire or sharpen capabilities required to perform various functions associated with present and future roles.
- To develop capabilities as an individual and to discover the inner potential for organizational purposes.
- To develop an organizational culture in which teamwork contributes to professional and effective performance.
- To deploy human resources effectively as per changing requirements and competencies.
- To give each employee a clear understanding as to what the organization expects and allows him/her to do/not do.
- For effective, efficient and smooth functioning of the organization.
- To accomplish organizational goals with efficient use of resources.
- To develop overall multi-dimensional personalities of each employee.
- To increase to the fullest an employee's job satisfaction and self-actualization.
- To achieve and maintain high morale among employees.
- To inculcate a sense of team spirit, teamwork and inter-team collaboration.
- To develop and maintain a quality of work life.

6. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS

The overall aim of the recruitment and selection process is to attract, obtain and retain people with required competencies in order to satisfy the human resources needs of the organization.

Sources of recruitment There are two sources of recruitment, i.e., internal and external recruitment. Internal sources of recruitment (where possible) are usually considered, since it is cost effective and serves as motivation for existing employees. External recruitment is undertaken through the following means:

- The organization's databank consisting of direct applications received from various persons seeking employment;
- Advertisements in widely circulated national/local newspapers and relevant journals, the organization's website and through popular job placement agencies;
- Campus recruitment from premier academic institutes in the country;
- Walk-in interviews.

Process of selection

The process of selection comprises any one and/or a combination of the following:

- Preliminary Interview
- Written Test
- Skill/Competency Test
- Group Discussions/ Presentations
- Personal Interview

Interview panel

- The panel for the preliminary interview comprises concerned representatives from the programme/functional area and HR. It is mandatory to associate a female employee in the interview panel.
- The panel records its evaluation of each interviewee on the prescribed Interview Assessment Sheet and hands over the same to the HR department for further processing.
- Candidates considered suitable by the panel are called for a final interview with the head of the organization.
- The interview assessment sheets are treated as 'confidential' and kept in a separate folder. Reimbursement of travel expenses for outstation candidates Travel Expenses by the shortest route subject to production of ticket/receipt will be reimbursed for the outstation candidates called for the final interview. Post-selection
- After the selection process is over, finalizing the salary of the selected candidates is done by the HR department based on an individual's qualification, relevant experience and merit. While doing so, internal parity is also taken into consideration.
- Selected candidates are issued letters of intent giving brief details of the contract employment. Formal letters are issued to the new incumbent on joining.
- Candidates who are not selected or short-listed for consideration against future requirement are sent a letter informing them of their status within seven days of completing the process.
- All appointments are subject to satisfactory medical and reference check prior to the issue of the letter of intent. Employment and initial review period.
- Selected candidates employed on contractual basis are initially on a consolidated monthly salary for a specified period. The contract can however be reviewed after an initial period of 3 (three) months (if the contract is for one year or more).
- During this review period, it is the responsibility of the supervisor to closely observe and monitor an employee's performance, conduct, work habits, attitude, potential, suitability, etc, and the employee must be given feedback from time to time by the supervisor/in-charge/HR department. If an employee's work habits, attitude, performance and conduct are found to be satisfactory, the contract continues as scheduled; otherwise it may be terminated without assigning any reason, without notice or payment in lieu of notice at any time during the review period.
- The HR department shall maintain a proper written record of the discussions held between the employee and the supervisor/HR department, and should also ensure that the assessment report/recommendation is submitted to the appointing authority at least fifteen days before the completion of the review period for a decision allowing the employee to continue till the expiry of the stipulated contract period. The HR department is responsible for follow up with the concerned supervisor to complete the process in time.
- The contract period may be extended, depending on requirement.

7. INDUCTION

A new entrant joining the organization has to complete the joining formalities on the day of joining. S/he is required to submit originals and a photocopy of each of the following documents:

- Release letter from previous employer (if in service)
- Certificate of last salary drawn
- Certificates/marksheets of academic and professional qualifications
- Experience certificates
- Certificate in support of date of birth
- Two passport size photographs
- Identity proof: photocopy of PAN Card/Voter ID/Passport/Ration Card (computerized only)

The original documents shall be returned after necessary verification.

Following prescribed forms are also to be filled in:

- Joining report
- General nomination
- Bio-data form False information furnished by an applicant in her/his application for a vacancy shall disqualify her/him and make her/him liable to dismissal.
- The HR department acquaints a new employee with organizational aspects such as vision, mission, strategies, core values, historical background, organizational structure, location of field offices (if any), programmes, work processes, systems, procedures, objectives and functioning of various committees, services/facilities available in the office, etc. S/he will also be handed over the HR Policy and Induction Booklet for reading. The HR manual must be returned to the HR department. The HR department shall also provide clarifications that a new entrant may seek. S/he will then be introduced to the head of department.
- The HR department shall send an e-mail to all employees in head office and state/district/field offices introducing the new employee.
- The HR department shall organize an orientation programme for new employees (preferably on their day of joining) on issues related to support functions such as HR, administration, finance and accounts, project monitoring systems, etc.
- With the aim of helping the new employee to understand the organization in the right perspective, remove her/his anxieties, address her/his concerns and help her/him fit into the new environment and culture quickly, it is compulsory for new entrants to have a mentor for an initial period of 6 (six) months. The HR department will explain the mentoring scheme and assign mentors. 8.

8. PROBATION AND CONFIRMATION

Probation or the review period and appraisal are necessary to make sure both the organization and the employee are satisfied that the role is as advertised and is being performed satisfactorily. Permanent/ongoing employment is given only when the employee satisfactorily completes her/his probation.

- New entrants appointed against regular positions shall be kept on probation for a minimum period of 6 (six) months.
- Performance of employees on probation shall be assessed using the prescribed probation evaluation format only.
- Extension of the probation period at the time of final assessment is not allowed without valid reason.
- Probationers shall be confirmed subject to all-round performance being judged 'satisfactory'

by the respective head of department.

- As deemed fit, the probation period shall be extended for 3 (three) months at a time and not more than two times.
- In case a probationer is not confirmed even after the second extension of probation period, s/he shall be issued a written communication of removal from the service of the organization.
- A reasonable time (maximum of 7 [seven] days) shall be allowed in regard to removal.
- In the absence of written communication with regard to confirmation after the 6 (six) month probation period, the concerned probationer shall automatically be deemed to be confirmed.

9. DISCIPLINE AND CODE OF CONDUCT

Norms of discipline and conduct

- The organization expects its employees to maintain the highest standard of conduct at all times, maintain absolute integrity and devotion to duty, and that an employee will do nothing which is not acceptable by the organization.
- No employee shall commit any misconduct. Without prejudice to the generality of the term 'misconduct', any acts of commission or omission performed in violation of the norms described herein will constitute misconduct.
- Every employee shall, in accordance with the laws applicable to the organization for the time being, and policy and procedures laid down by the organization, perform the duties entrusted to her/him from time to time.
- All employees shall furnish correct and complete information regarding name, age, qualification, previous experience and employment, etc, at the time of employment or during the course of employment in the organization.
- No employee shall act in any manner which amounts to sexual harassment of another person.
- No employee shall share any information, confidential or otherwise, about the organization with any person whosoever except in the interest of the organization's work or with written permission of the competent authority.
- Every employee shall safeguard the organization's goods and property; and see that all books, records and articles belonging to the organization are safely kept and maintained at the premises and are not removed without the express permission of the competent authority or lost or damaged in any way.
- During the tenure of her/his service, every employee shall devote her/his full time and attention to the affairs of the organization in all respects, and fully conform to directions and rules of the organization. No employee shall accept any other employment or consultancy assignment or make herself/himself directly or indirectly interested in the business of any other person or entity without the prior written permission of the competent authority. Model Policies for Inclusive Governance in Voluntary Organization.
- Every employee shall comply with the orders and instructions of the organization and its nominated functionaries and shall conscientiously work to fulfill its functions and purposes. S/he shall make her/his utmost endeavor to promote the interests of the organization and serve at such places and in such capacities as may be required from time to time.
- No employee shall indulge in physical violence of any kind or use abusive language with any other employee of the organization.
- Every employee shall observe courtesy and politeness, and refrain from any riotous or disorderly behavior or any behavior not conducive to the smooth functioning of the organization, not only when dealing with office colleagues but also when representing the organization in any forum or with any external agency.
- No employee shall consume liquor/drugs within the office premises, or while on duty, or in a public place in a manner that brings disrepute to the organization. No employee shall smoke

on the organization's premises, except in places where smoking is expressly permitted.

- No employee shall publish or cause to publish any article or statement bearing on the affairs or reputation of the institution in any journal, book or research paper without permission from the organization.
- No employee shall enter into monetary dealings with her/his colleagues, subordinates or clients, nor shall s/he accept any presents from them.
- No employee shall take up any other employment, whether for gain or not, without prior written permission of the competent authority. Further, no employee shall, except with the previous written permission of the competent authority, engage herself/himself, directly or indirectly, in any trade, business, profession or vocation.
- Every employee shall present herself/himself at her/his place of work at the stipulated time, and maintain punctuality in office and other work assignments.
- No employee shall seek leave on false pretexts.
- An employee convicted by a court of law or arrested shall promptly report the facts of her/his conviction or arrest to her/his supervisor.
- Every employee shall generally conduct herself/himself in a manner that is consistent with office discipline and good reputation of herself/ himself and the organization. Page 21 Model Human Resource Policy.
- No employee shall join or continue to be a member of an association, the objects or activities of which are prejudicial to the interests of the organization as also to the sovereignty and integrity of India, public order or morality.
- No employee will indulge in any act involving moral turpitude, or which amounts to a criminal offence.

Disciplinary action for misconduct

- Disciplinary action will be taken against an employee who commits any misconduct, or otherwise acts in violation of the norms of discipline and conduct stated above, by following the principles of natural justice or the law applicable to the organization in this respect for the time being.
- Disciplinary action may entail: Written warning, Withholding of increments, Discharge from service with one month's notice or payment of one month's salary in lieu of notice, Dismissal from service without notice or payment of one month's salary in lieu of notice if the employee is proved to have committed misconduct involving moral turpitude/major misconduct.
- Where a disciplinary proceedings against an employee is being contemplated or is pending, or where any criminal proceedings against an employee are under investigation or trial, and the organization is satisfied that it is necessary or desirable to place the employee under suspension, the head of the organization, or a functionary so authorized by him, may by an order in writing suspend the employee with effect from such date as may be specified in the order and on such conditions, including those related to payment of subsistence allowance as may be stipulated in the letter of suspension. A statement setting out in detail the reasons for such suspension shall be supplied to the employee within a week from the date of suspension.
- An employee who is placed under suspension under the clause mentioned above shall not be entitled to any salary for the period of suspension in case the charge or charges against her/him are established in the course of an enquiry, and s/he is sought to be dismissed or discharged. In case the charges are not proved to cause dismissal or discharge, the employee will get full salary for the period of suspension, after adjusting the subsistence allowance paid to her/him.

10. WORKING HOURS AND ATTENDANCE

Working hours

- The normal working hours in the organization should be 45 hours (including lunch) per week, as specified from time to time Attendance
- All employees will have to record their attendance in accordance with the procedure laid down in the organization.
- It is expected that every employee be in office punctually at the stipulated time.
- Habitual late attendance will be deemed as breach of discipline.

11. SALARY AND ALLOWANCES

- The organization favours competitive, stimulating and fair remuneration structures offering an overall competitive and attractive compensation package. Remuneration includes salary and allowances as well as social, pension and other benefits.
- Wage and salary structures are kept simple, avoiding unnecessary complexity so as to provide effective compensation and reward.
- Remuneration structures specifically facilitate the implementation of a flat organizational structure and are flexible so as to be easily adapted to the evolution of market conditions. This means broad bands which allow sufficient flexibility to effectively reward high professional insight and performance as well as individual potential.
- It is the responsibility of each manager to propose, within the framework of the company policy, the remuneration of her/his reportees, taking into account the local market, individual performance, skills and potential for development.
- It is also the responsibility of each manager, if needed with the support of the HR department, to communicate properly, clearly and with sufficient transparency the individual remuneration of each staff member taking into account her/his professional performance and her/his specific responsibilities.
- The HR department sees to it that the implementation of the remuneration policy is fair throughout the organization and that its spirit is duly reflected.

12. SALARY INCREMENTS

Normally, an increment is considered after the completion of each year/contract. It is generally as per the terms of the contract of each employee. In case of contract employees, a fresh contract is made with/without increment. In case of regular employees, increment/no increment is considered at the end of each completed year of service. Increments are considered based on the recommendations of the concerned departmental heads, evaluation of performance, contribution to the organization and other factors like regularity, timely reporting, absenteeism, etc. These are to be generally followed as per the employee's performance evaluation report.

13. LEAVE

All employees are eligible to take leave as and when required. This HR policy aims at treating employees with utmost faith and giving due importance to their comfort and personal needs. However, it is expected that employees will always keep their supervisor informed of their leave plans, more so if they want to go on a planned vacation, other than cases of exigencies. Planned vacation for the year must be intimated to the supervisor, such that planned organizational activities can be aligned better. It is also expected of the employee to keep her/his supervisor informed of

the leave address and contact phone number, as the case may be, along with the preferred time that s/he may be contacted. Application for leave must be made on the prescribed form and approved by the head of the organization before the employee proceeds on leave.

- All employees covered under this policy shall be eligible for leave with remuneration.
- Such leave may be sanctioned subject to the leave being due. In counting the period of leave, intervening holidays and weekly off days will not be counted as leave. Leave can be availed in multiples of half day.
- All types of leave must be availed of only with prior sanction. Where it is not possible to obtain prior sanction, the office must be intimated within two working days, with reason for inability to obtain prior sanction.
- Availing leave is not a matter of right. A supervisor has the discretion to refuse, postpone or curtail leave according to the exigencies of service and the situation.
- Any unauthorized absence will entail loss of pay. In addition, the employee shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Sick leave with remuneration

Permanent employees are allowed 10 (ten) working days as sick leave during a period of 12 (twelve) months (1 year). S/he may be granted sick leave, with remuneration only if s/he hands in a satisfactory certificate signed by a medical practitioner who contains the following information:

- A statement that the employee is not capable of performing her/his duties;
- The period necessary for recuperation;
- Registration number of the medical practitioner.

Maternity leave

- A female employee who has put in at least one year of continuous service will be allowed 180 days maternity leave with full salary (as per Sixth Pay Commission of the Central Civil Services (Leave) Rules, 1972).
- Leave will also be granted to a female member in case of adoption of a child.
- This leave will also be admissible in case of adoption, miscarriage or medical termination of pregnancy (MTP) where considered necessary by a competent medical authorities for up to 42 (forty-two) calendar days immediately following the day of her miscarriage or MTP.
- This leave can be combined with earned-cum-sick leave, if supported by a medical certificate.
- A certificate from a registered medical practitioner or a government hospital should support the application for maternity leave. If extension is required, a similar certificate should support the application.

Paternity leave

Male employees who are expecting to take care of a newborn child or seeking to adopt a child can avail paternity leave of up to 15 (fifteen) days. The paternity leave request should be submitted by the employee a month prior to the expected date of delivery of the child. The paternity leave request should state when the employee would like his leave to start. Any change in date should be intimated by submission of a fresh application. Any additional leave being availed in a block with the paternity leave should be applied for separately. The approval of the additional leave is at the discretion of the supervisor.

Leave without pay

If an employee does not have any leave to her/his credit, and if such absence has the approval of the sanctioning authority, the days of absence from duty will be treated as leave without pay. Payment of annual leave When an employee's service with the employer is terminated, s/he will be paid the cash value of the annual leave standing to her/his credit. Encashment of annual leave An employee may encash annual leave standing in her/his credit, subject to the following conditions:

- S/he must have completed at least 1 (one) year of service.
- Encashment is only permitted once, annually.
- Not less than 5 (five) days may be encashed.
- At least 50 per cent of the annual leave accrued in the particular year must remain in the credit of the employee.

Unauthorized absences from work

Unauthorized absences from work will, apart from any disciplinary action that may be taken against an employee, be regarded as absence without remuneration. If an employee is absent from work for 5 (five) consecutive working days or more without the consent or knowledge of the employer, such employee may be summarily dismissed.

Emergency leave

If an employee needs to take temporary absence from work because of emergencies, then s/he should ask management for leave as soon as possible after s/he becomes aware of the need to take leave.

Sanctioning authority

The head of the organization will be the competent authority to sanction leave without pay. Immediate supervisors will be the sanctioning authorities for grant of leave in respect of the employees working under them.

Maintenance of leave record Leave records of all employees are maintained by the HR department. For this purpose, necessary attendance record, information about absence, on leave/tour, etc., is forwarded by the field offices to head office on a monthly basis.

14. FLEXI-TIME

To ensure punctuality in attendance, the organization follows the following system: Any employee reaching office within half an hour of her/his stipulated time will be required to compensate by working late for the duration they were late on the same day. If an employee does not compensate for the late coming on that very same day, it will be treated as non-compliance of the rule and half-day leave will be deducted accordingly.

15. HOLIDAYS

The organization observes 8 (eight) festival holidays in addition to the 3 (three) national holidays, i.e., 26 January, 15 August and 2 October, each year. Festival holidays for head office and field offices (other than the national holidays) are determined and announced by the competent authority in respect of each calendar year, prior to the commencement of the year. Where expedient, such holidays may vary for different locations to suit local conditions.

16. TRAVEL

It is to be ensured that the travelling employee arrives at the place of activity safely and has the appropriate and adequate standards of lodging to ensure maximum work productivity, under the prevailing circumstances. All travel shall be by the shortest route to the place of destination. For any arrangement regarding transportation, accommodation or any kind of logistics, the person shall be advised at least two days in advance. Hotel accommodation and transportation will be arranged by the organization. Further, women staff is not asked to travel alone after 6 pm or before 7 am.

17. INTERNET USE IN THE OFFICE

Internet connectivity is provided by the organization for official use. Limited private use is permitted if the private use does not interfere with a person's work. Inappropriate sites, e.g., pornographic and gambling sites, are not to be accessed. Management has the right to access an employee's computer to check if private use is excessive or inappropriate.

Failure to comply with these instructions is an offence and will be subject to appropriate investigation. In serious cases, the penalty for an offence, or repetition of an offence, may include dismissal. Staff needs to be aware that some forms of internet conduct may lead to criminal prosecution.

18. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

The organization will, as far as practicable, provide a safe work environment for the health, safety and welfare of its employees, contractors, visitors and members of the public who may be affected by the work. To do this, the organization has:

- Developed and maintained safe systems of work, and a safe working environment;
- Consulted with employees and health and safety representatives on safety;
- Provided information and training to employees regarding health and safety;
- Assessed all risks before work starts on new areas of operation, e.g., buying new equipment and setting up new work methods, and has regularly reviewed these risks;
- Removed unacceptable risks to safety;
- Provided employees and contractors with adequate facilities (such as clean toilets, cool and clean drinking water, and hygienic eating areas). Ultimately, everyone at the workplace is responsible for ensuring health and safety at that workplace.

Smoking Policy

The organization has a non-smoking policy. Smoking is not permitted in the office at any time. Smokers who need to take breaks should do so in their allotted breaks (no more than 3 [three] per day in addition to their lunch break). These breaks must be limited to 10 (ten) minutes from leaving the workplace to recommencing work. Excessive smoking breaks will be regarded as absenteeism and performance improvement action may be taken.

Alcohol and drugs policy

The organization will do its utmost to create and maintain a safe, healthy and productive workplace for all employees. It has a zero tolerance policy with regard to the use of illicit drugs and alcohol on the premises. Contravening this may lead to instant dismissal.

19. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The purpose of performance management is to improve performance. It is an ongoing process. It should include informal and formal reviews. The organization encourages a two-way process, i.e., employees can also give management feedback on performance. All employees will undergo a formal performance review with their immediate managers at least three times a year.

Procedure

- The manager and the employee agree on the date for a performance appraisal meeting.
- The manager and employee meet, and openly and constructively discuss performance over the period.
- The manager and the employee agree on objectives and outcomes for the next appraisal period.
- Training and development is considered as part of the process.
- Notes should be taken of the meeting and copies kept.
- Outside this formal process, employees are encouraged to raise any issues they have when they arise.

20. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Learning:— Learning is part of the company culture. Each employee, at any level, is conscious of the need to continuously upgrade her/his knowledge and skills. The willingness to learn is therefore a non-negotiable condition to be employed by the organization.
- Training:— Training programmes should, as much as possible, be based on action learning and reduce ex-cathedra teaching to the strict minimum. It is necessary to make optimal use of e-learning programmes as a complement to or a substitute for formal training programmes. According to needs, the programmes should be made available at the workplace to enlarge the access to training. It is the role of each manager to assess progress achieved as a result of training programmes.

Regular counselling and guidance are the best tools for improving performance and for helping people develop their skills. It also allows employees to correct errors swiftly and to transform them into a positive learning experience. In an organization with flat structures this supports better delegation. Direct personal contact should always be given preference over written communication, whenever possible.

21. CHANGES IN PERSONAL DATA

Employees have a personal responsibility and an obligation towards herself/himself and the organization in providing accurate information on personal data. Any change relating to name, marital status, children, address, awards, distinctions or professional qualifications should be correctly and promptly communicated to the HR department for records. Absence of information can lead to an inconvenience and a handicap in administration of benefits which are sometimes time bound and may get time barred. Utmost care should be taken to pass on such information on time.

22. OFFICE LOAN

To meet emergency requirements, employees are allowed to take an office loan, but they have to specify the reason for taking such loan through written application to the head of the organization.

Such loan applications can be made after at least one month's service has been put in. The loan is permissible to the extent of one month's basic + D.A. and adjustable over a maximum of 10 (ten) equated monthly installments. In case of contract staff, if the remaining period of contract of the applicant is less than 10 (Ten) months, then the number of installments will accordingly be reduced in number.

23. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE AND APPEAL

Procedure

- The grievance procedure aims at redressal of grievances of an employee in the shortest possible time and promotes harmonious relations between the organization and its employees.
- Any employee having a grievance arising out of employment should report to her/his immediate supervisor and seek redressal of the grievance. If the grievance is not settled within 15 (fifteen) days or if the employee is not satisfied with the decision of the supervisor, the aggrieved employee can:
 - Report to the concerned head of department for redressal of the grievance.
 - If the head of department is also not able to sort out/redress the grievance in the next 15 (fifteen) days, the employee can report this to Model Policies for Internal Good Governance in Voluntary Organizations Page 30 the HR head who will put across the grievance for appropriate decision with all facts to the competent authority within the next 21 (twenty one) days of the complaint coming to it.
- Any complaint regarding sexual harassment shall be directly made to the chairperson/any member of the Committee against Sexual Harassment for appropriate action.
- The appellate authority in this regard will be the head of the organization whose decision will be final and binding.

Appeal

Appeal against any decision of the head of the organization in respect of the HR policy or any other service matter will be with the organization's governing committee.

24. REVIEW OF THE POLICY

The organization aims to keep its HR policies current and relevant. Therefore, from time to time, it will be necessary to modify and amend some sections of the policies and procedures, or to add new procedures. Any suggestions, recommendations or feedback on the policies and procedures specified in this policy are welcome.

25. DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT

To be signed by all governing body members, staff, volunteers, visitors. A copy will be kept on file in the office. I declare that:

- o I have read and understood the organization's human resource policy.
- o I will work within the procedure as laid out in the human resource policy.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

ANTI-SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Sexual harassment at the workplace has remained one of the central concerns of the women's movement in India since the early 1980s. In 1997, the Supreme Court of India issued the Vishakha Guidelines to be followed by employers to tackle the incidents of sexual harassment of women at the workplace. In 2004, Lawyers Collective and other civil society organizations formulated a draft bill on sexual harassment which was approved by the Union Cabinet in 2010. Women's groups are now lobbying to get the bill on sexual harassment at the workplace passed by parliament which will help in reducing the cases of sexual harassment at the workplace.

The Vishakha Guidelines on sexual harassment at the workplace was a response to the most controversial and brutal gang rape of Bhanwari Devi, a Rajasthan state government employee who tried to stop the wedding of a girl child less than a year old. It was part of her job in the villages to prevent child marriages. Outraged by the audacity of this woman – of low caste, no less – who dared to challenge their traditions, five men from the upper-caste family of the infant gang-raped Bhanwari Devi in the presence of her husband. The police and doctors all dismissed her claim. A trial court set free the accused. After an extremely humiliating legal battle in the Rajasthan High Court, Bhanwari Devi did not get justice and the rapists were allowed to go free. This enraged a women's rights group called Vishakha. They filed a public interest litigation in the Supreme Court of India asking the court to take action against sexual harassment faced by women in the workplace. The Vishakha Guidelines were thus formulated, auguring well for the status of women in India.

However, even after this achievement, the ground realities remain the same. Very few efforts have been made to implement the Vishakha Guidelines. Most organizations do not have anti-sexual harassment policies, very few complaints committees have been set up, service rules are not amended regularly, and the judgement is ignored both by public and private employers.

Dealing with sexual harassment at the workplace

As women increasingly join the workforce, it is the duty of the state and the organizations women are working in to provide for the wellbeing and respect of its citizens in order to prevent frustration, low self-esteem, insecurity and emotional disturbance, which, in turn, could affect the organization's efficacy, leading to loss of productivity and loss of reputation for the organization or employer. In fact, the recognition of the right to protection against sexual harassment is an intrinsic component of the protection of women's human rights. It is also a step towards providing women independence, equality of opportunity and the right to work with dignity.

The five major things that every organization and employees working in the organization should know:

- I. Understand what sexual harassment is: All employees in the organization should be aware of the meaning of sexual harassment and the procedure to deal with it.
- II. Formulate an anti-harassment policy: Every organization, whether small or big, should have a formal, official policy against sexual harassment at the workplace on the basis of the Vishakha Guidelines.
- III. Set the right example: Even small, casual, start-up environments need to treat the issue seriously. Make a point to talk and be the picture of professionalism. Make it clear that crude jokes and sexual remarks are not accepted within the organization.
- IV. If a situation occurs, take immediate action: As soon as a complaint is filed or a situation is witnessed, it is time to initiate an investigation. All the relevant facts related to the complaint should be gathered immediately and strict action should be taken against the defaulter.

- V. Work towards prevention: Prevention is an important step to minimize the risk of sexual harassment in the organization. In addition to creating a policy and setting the right example, employees of the organization should feel comfortable enough to report an incident. Sexual harassment training should be given to all employees, especially to members who will be dealing with the sexual harassment complaints.

MODEL ANTI-SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

1. PREAMBLE

On 13 August 1997, the Supreme Court of India passed a judgment on sexual harassment at the workplace. The judgement, known as the Vishakha Guidelines, provides a definition of sexual harassment, mechanisms to address complaints related to sexual harassment as well as steps to be taken by the employer and other responsible persons towards prevention of sexual harassment at the workplace. These guidelines apply to all government, non-government and private sector organizations, hospitals and universities as well as the unorganized sector. The judgement directs employers to set up a complaints committee against sexual harassment where women can seek redressal for their complaints.

The Vishakha Guidelines and the Prevention of Sexual Harassment at Workplace Bill have made it explicit that it is mandatory on the part of the employer to ensure an environment which is free from any kind of threat of sexual harassment and exploitation. It is in this context that the organization has adopted this anti-sexual harassment policy to prevent incidents of sexual harassment at the workplace.

The anti-sexual harassment policy is a statement of intent that demonstrates the organization's commitment to employees to work in an environment free from the embarrassment, intimidation or humiliation caused by discrimination and sexual harassment.

2. AIM OF THE POLICY

The aim of the anti-sexual harassment policy is to promote a productive and pleasant environment free of sexual harassment in the organization. Complaints are to be dealt with quickly, thoroughly and confidentially. Sexual harassment, whether verbal or physical, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

3. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

The anti-sexual harassment policy applies to the head of the organization, all staff, members, volunteers and those working on behalf of the organization. Specifically, the provisions of this policy are applicable to:

- All women employees of the organization, regardless of the nature of their contract, duration of employment or position in the organization.
- Women volunteers, consultants and interns, regardless of the duration of their association with the organization.
- Women employees of partner organizations who come in contact with organization. Action under this policy will be initiated in cases where any of the above is subjected to sexual harassment by an employee, inside or outside the office. In cases where an employee is subjected to sexual harassment by a third party who is not the organization's employee, this policy mandates immediate action to protect the complainant and to initiate action against the harasser.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY The objectives of the policy are:

- Prevent discrimination and sexual harassment at work and in work-related activities.
- Ensure that managers and staff are aware of their responsibilities regarding sexual harassment.
- Maintain an environment that is free from sexual harassment and discrimination.
- Alert all members and employees of the organization to the fact that sexual harassment and discrimination are prohibited by law.
- Establish a mechanism for receiving complaints and to provide a procedure by which the organization will deal with these complaints.
- Reinforce effective personnel management and appropriate workplace behaviour and encourage respect for others and high ethical standards.

5. PREVENTIVE STEPS TAKEN BY THE ORGANIZATION

It is the duty of the employer or responsible persons in the workplace to prevent or deter the commission of acts of sexual harassment and to provide for the resolution of acts of sexual harassment by taking all steps required. The organization:

- Recognizes sexual harassment as a serious offence and publicizes that sexual harassment is a crime and will not be tolerated;
- Recognizes the responsibility of the organization to prevent and deal with sexual harassment at the workplace;
- Formulates an anti-sexual harassment policy;
- Prohibits sexual harassment at the workplace and this is notified, published and circulated in appropriate ways;
- Ensures that sexual harassment as an issue is raised and discussed with all new recruits and existing employees at meetings from time to time;
- Inform third party suppliers and clients about the policy, what is meant by sexual harassment and the rights of the affected person, and the consequences to the harasser;
- Has constituted a complaints mechanism;
- Conducts periodic training for all employees, with active involvement of the complaints committee;
- Prominently displays names and contact numbers of members of the complaint committee;
- Takes care of the safety and protection of women staff while planning for travel and out-of-office visits to ensure that their exposure to risks of sexual harassment is minimized;
- Creates awareness of the rights of female employees in this regard, in particular by prominently notifying the guidelines in a suitable manner;
- Initiates disciplinary action against perpetrators.

6. WHAT SHOULD A SEXUALLY HARASSED EMPLOYEE DO?

- Do not ignore the sexual harassment
- 6. Do not blame yourself
- 7. Talk to others about the sexual harassment
- 8. Name or describe the harassment
- 9. Create a witness to the sexual harassment
- 10. Avoid delay in reporting
- 11. File a formal complaint

All employees should also ensure that the employer/organization implements the anti-sexual harassment policy and no sexual harassment complainant is victimized.

7. ADVANTAGES OF AN ANTI-SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY FOR THE ORGANIZATION

- A safe working environment
- Improved interpersonal relations
- Higher work performance and productivity
- Less absenteeism
- Retention of valued employees
- Increased profitability
- Enhances public image
- Better practice

8. COMMITTEE AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT (CASH)

In accordance with the Vishakha Guidelines, an appropriate complaints mechanism has been created in the organization for redressal of the complaint made by the victim. Such a complaints mechanism ensures time-bound treatment of complaints. The committee is empowered to receive complaints, attempt informal resolution through mediation, conduct formal enquiries and recommend appropriate actions for redressal and punishment. Complainants or witnesses are not victimized or discriminated against while dealing with complaints.

Composition of the committee

- The committee shall have minimum 3 (three) and maximum 7 (seven) members.
- Not less than half of its members should be women.
- The committee shall be headed by one member [chairperson], who shall mandatorily be a woman and shall be ratified by the governing body/ executive body of the organization.
- In the event of the chairperson of CASH being unable to discharge her duties for a period exceeding 21 (twenty-one) days, CASH shall designate from amongst its members a woman to the post of acting chairperson for that period. The acting chairperson of CASH shall have all the powers and duties of the chairperson. As and when the chairperson resumes duty, the acting chairperson shall cease to hold office.
- Membership to the committee shall be for a period of two years. Thereafter, membership will be renewed or new appointments made.
- At least one male representative should be on the committee.
- All meetings of the committee shall take place as and where is mutually agreed by the members.
- Any member against whom a complaint of sexual harassment or criminal charges are made and is prima facie established shall cease to hold membership to CASH.
- Further, to prevent the possibility of any undue pressure or influence from senior levels, such a complaints committee should involve a third party, either another voluntary organization or another individual, who is familiar with the issue of sexual harassment.
- The head of the organization is the ex-officio member of the committee.

Eligibility to be appointed to CASH Every member of the committee must have:

- Completed at least one year of service in the organization.
- Have no previous record of allegations of sexual harassment.
- Be gender sensitive and have knowledge about women's issues.

Disqualification of chairperson and members

A person shall be disqualified from being appointed, elected, nominated or designated as, or for being continued as, chairperson/member of CASH if there is any complaint concerning sexual harassment pending against her/him, or if s/he has been found guilty of sexual harassment/serious misconduct.

9. PROCEDURE TO FILE A COMPLAINT

- Any employee who feels that s/he has been harassed is strongly urged to immediately bring the subject to the attention of any member of CASH.
- Complaints can be communicated to any member of the committee either verbally, in a written statement, through e-mail or dropped in the complaint boxes provided on the premises.
- If the complaint is communicated verbally and the complainant is unable to express the same in writing, it is the responsibility of the committee members to take this forward. One of the members will write out the complaint on behalf of the complainant, ask them to read and sign the same, in the presence of two witnesses. Enquiries and proceedings will not be taken forward in the absence of a written complaint.
- If the complainant is comfortable then s/he can also inform his/her immediate supervisor of the situation. The supervisor must then inform a CASH member of the situation.
- The CASH member will register the complaint and then inform the chairperson of the committee, who will take a decision on the next course of action.
- If the case is against any of the CASH members, then the complainant may address her/his complaint directly to the chairperson of CASH.
- If the complainant feels that s/he cannot disclose her/his identity for any particular reason, the complainant shall address the complaint to the head of the organization and hand over the same in person or in a sealed envelope.

10. PROCEDURE FOR ENQUIRY BY CASH

- The committee shall conduct a detailed enquiry into the complaint.
- In the course of investigating any complaint of sexual harassment, the committee shall ensure that the principles of natural justice are adhered to, namely:
 - Both parties shall be given reasonable opportunity to be heard along with witnesses and to produce any other relevant documents before the committee.
 - Documents which form part of official record shall also be given to the complainant if need be.
 - The committee shall be empowered to do all things necessary to ensure a fair hearing of the complaint including all things necessary to ensure that victims or witnesses are neither victimized nor discriminated against while dealing with a complaint of sexual harassment. In this regard, the investigating committee shall also have discretion to make appropriate interim recommendations vis-à-vis an accused person pending the outcome of a complaint, including suspension, transfer, leave, change of office, etc. The complainant should have the option to seek transfer of the perpetrator or seek her/his own transfer.
- The committee shall allow both parties to produce relevant documents and witnesses to support their case. Documents produced by either party shall be affixed with that party's signature to certify the document as original/true copy.
- The party against whom the document/witness is produced shall be entitled to challenge/cross-examine the same.
- The committee shall sit on a day-to-day basis to record and consider the evidence produced by both parties.

- Minutes of all proceedings of the committee shall be prepared and duly signed by the members of the committee.
- The committee may also examine documents, including confidential files and records pertinent to the case.
- If the complaint is against the chairperson or any member of the committee, that person will temporarily be suspended from the committee, until the investigation is over and a final decision is reached.
- Enquiries and/or complaints will be investigated as quickly as possible.

11. COMMUNICATION OF FINDINGS

- After completion of the investigation, both parties will be informed of the results of that investigation.
- At the close of the investigation, the committee will submit a report in writing, stating its findings and recommending the appropriate course of action.
- The investigation will be conducted in as confidential a manner as is compatible with a thorough investigation of the complaint.
- All complaints shall be heard and finally determined within a period of 90 (ninety) days of the complaint having been made. A report of the case, findings and recommended action (if any) proposed by the committee shall be completed within this time.
- An employee filing a bonafide sexual harassment complaint shall be protected from reprisals or retaliation as a result of filing the complaint. The committee will make every effort to strike a balance between the parties' desires for privacy and the need to conduct a fair and effective investigation.
- In case either of the parties is not satisfied with the decisions of the committee then s/he can approach the head of the organization or the governing board for further redressal. The final decision, however, needs to be taken in consultation with the committee.

12. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

If the committee determines that sexual harassment has occurred, it will make appropriate recommendations regarding necessary action to be instituted to remove the offensive conduct and, where appropriate, to institute disciplinary action. The complainant's views may be taken into consideration for this purpose. In appropriate cases the harasser may also be required to pay monetary compensation.

Disciplinary action for those found guilty will differ depending upon the magnitude of the misconduct. These include:

- Counselling
- Warning
- Verbal or written apology to the harassed
- Suspension
- Transfer
- Forfeiture of annual increment
- Stopping of promotion (reverting, demotion)
- Adverse entry in personal file
- Termination of employment (with or without reference of behaviour to the next employer)
- Debarring from supervisory duties
- If the committee decides that either the harassed or the harasser should be transferred then preference of choice will be given to the harassed
- Filing FIR under Indian Penal Code (IPC) by the complainant, depending upon the severity of

the case and as per the wish of the complainant

- Sexual harassment by senior staff is considered serious and attracts stringent measures and higher penalties.

Where the act of sexual harassment constitutes a specific offence under Indian Penal Code (IPC) or any other law in force in India, the organization's management is under duty to follow a course of action as prescribed under the law.

Remedial measures: CASH can provide the harassed person with:

- Adequate compensation for any wages or salary lost as a result of harassment and/or failure on part of the organization to take necessary action for redress.
- Leave with pay during the period of investigation.
- The option of remaining or resigning from her/his present position without any kind of disadvantages with respect to the job profile.

13. THIRD PARTY HARASSMENT

Where sexual harassment occurs as a result of an act or omission by any third party or outsider, the organization will take all steps necessary and reasonable, in terms of support and preventive action, to assist the affected person.

14. CONFIDENTIALITY OF PROCEEDINGS

Any allegation of sexual harassment is potentially damaging to a person's reputation and credibility. Therefore it is necessary to treat all cases in the strictest confidence. To ensure the integrity and confidentiality of sexual harassment cases, CASH members must ensure that files are kept in a locked filing cabinet and are not left on desks or any other accessible areas. A break in confidentiality or communication of damaging material may result in legal action being commenced by the respondent or other parties.

15. TRAINING ON GENDER SENSITIZATION

The setting up of a complaints committee and an anti-sexual harassment policy lays a strong foundation for a sexual harassment free workplace. However, effective training programmes are essential to sensitize/train all staff members, men and women, to understand what sexual harassment is, to recognize sexual harassment, deal with it when it occurs and prevent it. A training programme is the best way to ensure proper understanding and implementation of the policy. It is the best forum to communicate to employees what behaviour is acceptable and what is not, in a non-threatening atmosphere of mutual learning. Training for members of the complaints committee and others who are going to be instrumental in implementing the policy is very essential. Their training should include a component of gender sensitization, along with the procedures for taking complaints, for enquiry, etc.

16. DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT

To be signed by all governing body members, staff, volunteers and visitors. A copy will be kept on file in the office.

I declare that:

- 1) I have read and understood the organization's anti-sexual harassment policy and have attended/will attend the sexual harassment awareness training.
- 2) I will work within the procedure as laid out in the anti-sexual harassment policy.

- 3) I have not been accused or convicted to any offence involving sexual harassment.
- 4) I understand that if a complaint is brought against me regarding sexual harassment while engaged in the organization's activities, the allegation will be thoroughly investigated in cooperation with the appropriate authorities.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

17. REVIEW OF THE POLICY The policy will be reviewed from time to time and revised to keep it up to date.

ENVIRONMENT POLICY

An environmental policy is an organization's declaration of commitment to the environment. It should unify the environmental vision of all key stakeholders: employees, management, partners, shareholders, customers, and suppliers. It is one of the first steps to reducing an organization's environmental footprint. An environmental policy should be long-lasting, with specific consideration given to growth, expansion, and long-term goals. As the policy will represent the views and goals of the organization, it should be approved by senior management. When writing an environmental policy, keep it short and simple, and focus on commitments that are realistic, achievable, and relevant to the organization's activities and practices.

The following commitments or principles by the organization:

- Educate staff on relevant environmental issues.
- Reduce waste.
- Establish a green procurement policy.
- Seek a recycling service provider, if available, and establish an office recycling program.
- Minimize use of water and energy.
- Comply with applicable provincial and federal environmental regulations, as well as worker safety legislation.
- Minimize impact of transportation: employee commuting, travelling for meetings and conferences.
- Seek environmentally friendly cleaning, washroom, and office supplies.
- Minimize use of hazardous and toxic substances found in the office.
- Support local environmental actions within the community.

The organization that will focus on putting the policy ideals into practice.

EDUCATING STAFF

Educate staff about the environmental policy and ask all staff and management to commit to the policy. The environmental policy will improve employee morale by showing the organization's commitment to the environment.

Model Environmental Policy

The organization recognizes environmental protection as one of our guiding principles and a key component of sound business performance. The organization will work in a manner that ensures a safe and healthy workplace for our employees and minimizes our impact on the environment. We will operate in compliance with relevant federal, provincial, and municipal environmental legislation, and we will strive to use environmental best practices in all we do. We will:

- Incorporate environmental concerns and impacts into all of our decision-making and activities;
- Promote environmental awareness among our employees and encourage them to work in an environmentally responsible manner;
- Train, educate, and inform our employees about environmental issues that may affect their work;
- Reduce waste by initiating recycling programs within the office – including the recycling of paper, cardboard, beverage containers, plastic containers, and other materials that are accepted by a recycling provider;
- Purchase environmentally responsible products that have been selected based on criteria including- toxicity, durability, use of recycled or re-furnished materials, reduced energy and/or

water consumption, reduced packaging, and ability to be recycled, refilled or re-furbished at the end of its useful life;

- Promote efficient use of resources throughout our facility including water and energy;
- Avoid unnecessary use of hazardous materials and seek alternatives whenever feasible;
- Regularly communicate our environmental program to our clients, customers, and the public and encourage their support;
- Strive to continually improve our environmental performance by periodically reviewing our environmental policy in planning our current and future activities; and
- Investigate and initiate recycling programs and/or safe disposal options for materials such as e-waste and hazardous waste.

Signature _____

Date: _____



**FINANCIAL
POLICIES**

FINANCIAL POLICY

Financial administration is one of the most pivotal functional areas of administration, as the effectiveness and growth of any organization significantly depends on the efficient utilization of its financial resources. The management of finance is one of the inescapable responsibilities of administrators. Financial resources are very critical as it determines the expansion and contraction of other resources. Financial management of not-for-profits is similar to financial management in the commercial sector in many respects; however, certain key differences shift the focus of a not-for-profit financial manager. A for-profit enterprise focuses on profitability and maximizing shareholder value. On the other hand, a not-for-profit organization's primary goal is not to increase shareholder value; rather it is to provide some socially desirable need on an ongoing basis. A not-for-profit generally lacks the financial flexibility of a commercial enterprise because it depends on resource providers that are not engaging in an exchange transaction. The resources provided are directed towards providing goods or services to a client other than the actual resource provider. Thus, not-for-profit organizations must ensure that money donated for a specific purpose must be used for that purpose. That purpose is either specified by the donor or implied in the not-for-profit's stated mission. There are five building blocks non-profits need for good financial administration and to maintain financial accountability and transparency:

1. Maintain records of all transactions as they are the basis of accountability.
2. Maintain internal controls in the organization so that money is not misused.
3. Prepare accurate budgets, in order to know how much money will be needed to carry out the work.
4. Write and review financial reports that include income and expenditure over a certain period of time.
5. Establish clear financial policies and procedures.

MODEL FINANCIAL POLICY

This financial policy is formulated to understand the policies and procedures of bookkeeping and fund management.

1. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The purpose of the financial policy is to make the financial conduct of the organization transparent and establish a benchmark for evaluating the organization's conduct on financial parameters. In addition, it can be helpful in improving financial management skills. Its purpose is to help the organization.

- Record all financial transactions
- Monitor and control expenditures
- Satisfy statutory reporting requirements
- Ensure timely and accurate financial and management reporting to donors and grant-makers.

2. PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ORGANIZATION

Maintenance of books of accounts Accounting is a basic management tool which, if used properly, will enable the board and any other members related or unrelated to the organization to determine the correct financial status of the organization.

The books of account shall be maintained in computerized accounts (generally in Tally software) and in the case of any specific requirement by a funding partner, in their prescribed software.

The organization shall maintain exclusively three sets of books of accounts as follows:

- One set of books of accounts for receipts and utilization of foreign contribution as required under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), 2010.
- A second set of books of accounts for government/national grants collected and spent by the organization. This set of books are to be kept for easy accounting, monitoring and reporting to the government/donor agency from time to time.
- A third set of books of accounts for local funds collected and spent by the organization (non-fund resources such as memberships, sale of publications, donations, etc.).

Types of accounting There are two types of accounting:

- Cash system- In the cash system of accounting, entries are made only when cash is received or paid and no entry is made when receipts or payments are due.
- Mercantile system- Under the mercantile system (accrual system), an entry is recorded on the basis of the amounts having become due for payment or receipt, whether or not payment is made or the amount received.

3. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Cash transactions

The norms for cash transactions are laid down below:

Cash payments

- Cash payments are only to be made if the supporting documents are obtained to that effect;
- The accountant fills in, on payment voucher(s), the 'Project Title' and the 'Name of Programme' for which the expenses have been incurred and sends the same to the authorized signatory for approval;
- The authorized signatory gives approval on payment voucher(s) and supports thereof;
- The accountant obtains the recipient's signature on cash payment voucher;
- Where cash payment is more than Rs. 5,000/-, a revenue stamp of Re 1/- must be affixed and the recipient's signature obtained thereon;
- Cash payment voucher must be entered in the main cash book only;
- A serial control number must be given to each payment voucher;
- Cash book folio number must be mentioned on each payment voucher;
- No cash payments are to be made to any outside parties engaged with the organization on a regular/routine basis;
- In case of one-time payment, ensure that cash payment is kept below Rs. 20,000 on a single day to a particular person. If required, make the payment through a bank draft/pay order;
- Follow authorization norms in case of cash advances to outside parties and staff/workers;
- Advance payment to staff/workers shall be done only on the basis of an authorized plan for programmes/travel plans.

Cash receipts

- No cash must be accepted unless the receipt is authorized as per the authorization procedure;
- Receipts must be pre-numbered at the time of printing;
- The receipt must be printed in duplicate. First copy is for the donor/party, and the second copy for accounting references and records;
- A receipts control register is to be maintained to record cash receipts for ready reference;

- A cash receipt voucher will be made for total cash received during the day giving reference of cash receipts and the receipt control register;
- Reference of cash receipt voucher will be given in the receipt control register;
- The accountant must clearly mention the purpose for which cash has been received;
- Cash book folio will be mentioned on the cash receipt voucher;
- The blank cash receipts must be kept in safe custody.

Cash book(s)

- The organization maintains separate cash books for foreign currency (FC) funds as well as local funds;
- All cash transactions related to FC funds are to be routed only through one FC cash book;
- All cash transactions related to local funds must be routed only through one local cash book;
- The accountant must clearly mention the programme/expenses head with respective project name in the cash book;
- Ensure that brief narration of nature of transaction is given in each case;
- The accountant must mention ledger folio against each cash voucher entered in the cash book;
- Do not alter the project name, programme/expenses head and amount;
- If the change is inevitable, do so by clearly striking it off and writing again;
- The cash book(s) must be closed every day mentioning physical balance of cash available. The accountant should mention denomination of cash in the cash book itself at the close of day.

Physical control of cash and monitoring

- The organization's cash must be kept in a secure location, preferably a steel safe fixed in a wall;
- No personal cash should be mixed with the organization's cash;
- Physical control of cash must be with the cashier/accountant of the organization;
- Cash should never be moved out of the organization's premises without a corresponding payment voucher and authorization;
- Deposit cash on the day immediately following the date of receipt in the designated bank account;
- Withdrawal of cash should be done only after proper planning for programme or administrative expense have been approved by the authorized signatories;
- Keep cash at the barest minimum;
- Insure cash-in-safe and cash-in-transit to the extent of necessary volume and safety;
- Carry out periodic physical verification (without any notice to cashier/ accountant) in a proper format meant for this purpose;
- The persons responsible for physical verification must be rotated;
- Stern action must be taken in case of a discrepancy which is beyond explanation of the cashier/ accountant and any other party involved.

Bank transactions

The organization is required to adhere to the guidelines enumerated below: Bank payments

- Bank payments mean payments through cheques or direct debits by bank(s) only. A draft/pay order (made on cash payment) should be treated as cash payment and be recorded in the books of accounts as per the guidelines in the section on Cash Payments;
- No authorization of cheque payments must be made unless supported by a bank payment voucher.

Routine payments

- In case of payment for monthly salaries, only one payment voucher needs to be made. A statement mentioning cheque numbers and amounts against the cheque for each staff can be attached to the voucher for one-time authorization;
- In case of any advance payment to staff, advance request form must be attached with the voucher for authorization;
- No payment should be made without the ledger copy/detail of that particular account being attached to the bank payment voucher.

Payment to outside parties/creditors

- No bank payment voucher must be entertained unless supported by the party's accounts in the books of the organization;
- Party's accounts in the organization's books of accounts must be properly reconciled with all bills raised and payments made till date before another bill is considered for payment;
- Insist on statement of accounts from the party, if necessary, for account reconciliation;
- The accountant needs to ensure that payments to parties are done only on or after the due dates.

General

- The accountant must check availability of funds in the bank from where the cheque is to be issued;
- The accountant must ensure, at the time of obtaining authorization, that the supports attached to the bank payment voucher are also signed;
- All cheques issued must be crossed 'Payee's Account Only' unless it is for internal cash withdrawals;
- Complete details of cheques issued must be mentioned on the payment voucher;
- On payment voucher(s), the accountant must fill in the 'Project Title' and the 'Name of Programme' for which the expenses have been incurred;
- The particulars of the bank payment voucher must be entered in the bank book/ledger as soon as the cheque is issued;
- The accountant must obtain the recipient's signature on the payment voucher;
- A serial control number must be given to each payment voucher;
- Folio number must be mentioned on each payment voucher;
- Where payment is more than Rs. 5,000/-, affix a revenue stamp of Re 1/- and obtain the recipient's signature thereon;
- The cheque issued must be entered in the cheque/draft issue control register;
- In case the recipient is an outside party, an official receipt must be requested. Bank books/ ledger
- The organization may opt for a separate bank book or maintain the bank account(s) in the main ledger itself;
- The organization must maintain separate bank books/ledgers for foreign currency (FC) funds as well as local funds;
- All bank transactions related to FC funds must be routed only through one FC bank book/ ledger;
- All bank transactions related to local funds must be routed only through one local bank book/ ledger;
- The accountant must clearly mention the programme/expenses head with respective project name in the bank book/account;
- Brief narration of the nature of transaction must also be given in each case;

- The accountant must mention ledger folio against each bank voucher entered in the bank book;
- Avoid alteration in the project name, programme/expenses head and amount;
- If it becomes necessary to alter anything for some reason, do so by clearly striking it off and writing again;
- The bank book/account must be closed every day and reflect bank balances.

Maintaining cheque books/deposit slips

- Never keep blank cheques after both authorized signatories have signed the cheque;
- Signed and unsigned blank cheques must be kept in the steel safe used for keeping cash;
- Avoid giving post-dated cheques unless absolutely necessary, but never without approval;
- Avoid giving bearer cheques to a complete stranger;
- Do not leave any blank spaces in cheques between the figures and at the start of the box meant for filling the amount in figures. Also, do not leave any spaces when writing amount in figures;
- Strike out the blank spaces after the name and figures in words;
- Preferably use indelible ink pen for filling cheques;
- In case of cancellation of any cheque, deface the cheque diagonally with a good ball pen;
- If the bank payment voucher has been made earlier for the cancelled cheque, prepare a bank receipt voucher and record it in the bank book/ account to avoid any confusion in future;
- Mention detail of cheques issued in the cheque counterfoils. It serves as ready reference and is also useful at the time of preparing bank reconciliation;
- Do not attach the deposit slips with bank receipts vouchers;
- Keep all the deposit slips separately and safely till the bank statements are reconciled.

Personal advance/loan Obtaining/authorization of advance

- Employees who have worked in the organization for more than three years are eligible for a personal advance/loan except in emergency cases;
- Request for personal advance/loan must be submitted in the desired format 15 (fifteen) days prior to actual need, except for emergency cases;
- Before arriving at the decision of granting the advance/loan and amount thereof, the finance committee considers the paying capacity of the person, association with the organization and past track record(s) of repayments (if any);
- The finance committee fixes the maximum tenure, installments, rate of interest, etc, as per the paying capacity of the person;
- The finance committee makes arrangements for such funds from the local fund pool after proper consultation with the accounts department;
- In no case will the finance committee recommend an advance/loan amount in excess of an employee's accumulated funds and the organization's contributions thereon;
- The complete proceedings of the finance committee must be documented;
- The finance committee grants its approval in the minute book giving complete details of the employee, loan amount, tenure, installment amount, etc;
- In case of emergencies, the advance can be granted by the head of the organization only on the basis of recommendation of the finance committee;
- Based on the finance committee's recommendation, the authorized signatories initial the requisition form for an advance and forward it to the accountant for payment;
- The payment of such advance/loan must be made by an 'A/c Payee' cheque, or cash if cheque payment is not feasible;
- The accountant must ensure that no advance/loan is given out of FC funds.

Repayment/settlement of advance/loan

- The accountant must ensure that the advance/loan is recovered from the concerned person on a regular basis in the manner recommended by the finance committee;
- In case of a person leaving the organization, outstanding advance/loan amount must be adjusted at the time of full and final settlement.

Salary advance Obtaining/authorization of advance

- Request for salary advance must be made in the recommended format only;
- The salary advance is granted as per the authorization norm, subject to an upper ceiling of one month's salary;
- No salary advance is granted in case of any outstanding salary advance/ personal advance/ loan already existing in an employee's name;
- No salary advance is granted for three months after the salary advance has been settled except in case of an emergency;
- In case of an emergency, authorization of advance is required by one step further in the Authorization Norm.

Repayment/settlement of advance

- Monthly deduction of salary advance is to be made in a maximum of 2 (two) installments;
- In case an employee is leaving the organization, outstanding advance must be adjusted at the time of full and final settlement. Bank receipts
- Every cheque, draft and pay order must be entered in the receipts control register;
- Receipts must be pre-numbered as explained in the section on Cash Receipts;
- The receipt must be printed in duplicate. First copy is for the donor/party and the second copy for accounting references and records;
- A bank receipt voucher must be prepared for all bank receipts in a single day;
- Reference of bank voucher must be given in the receipt control register;
- The accountant must clearly mention the purpose for which the cheque/ draft has been received;
- Bank book/ledger folio must be mentioned on the bank receipt voucher.

Bank account

- The organization will hold a bank account.
- All income and expenditure must go through the organization's bank account.
- The signatories to the bank account are the chairperson, treasurer and the director.
- Two signatories are required on each cheque.

Income

- All income is receipted.
- All income is banked into the organization's bank account.
- No unbanked income is used for petty cash.
- Ideally, income is to be accounted for daily but banked weekly. All income, no matter how small, is always banked by the end of the month.

Expenditure

- All expenditure must have an approved budget allocation.
- No blank cheques are to be signed by any cheque signatory.

- The administration officer will sign cheques only when two board members are unavailable.
- Where possible, services are to be obtained by setting up of an account with payment to be made on the 20th of each month.
- All payments over Rs. 5000/- are to be made by cheque payment.
- Every cheque payment must have a payment voucher completed.
- Each payment voucher is to be authorized by the people who sign the cheque it relates to.
- Payment vouchers are to be signed by the person who receives the cheque, wherever possible.
- Separate payroll records are to be kept for all salaries and wages.
- Small payments under Rs. 2500/- may be paid using the office petty cash, at the discretion of appropriate authority.
- The office petty cash total is Rs. 10,000/-.
- No cash cheques are to be issued over Rs. 10,000/-.

Accounting for income and expenditure

- Income and expenditure is to be accounted for.
- Electronic records must be kept using a linked Excel cash book.
- Income and expenditure data is entered into the cash book on a regular basis, at least weekly.
- Bank reconciliation is carried out monthly.
- Bank reconciliation is to be checked by the appropriate authority and the finance committee.

4. INTERNAL CONTROLLING SYSTEMS

Roles and responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of the chairperson, treasurer, financial committee, board of directors, directors and administrative secretary as related to financial management are discussed below. Chairperson In relation to the organization's financial management policies and procedures, the chairperson undertakes to:

- Ensure the organization has written financial policies and procedures that have been adopted by the organization's board;
- Ensure that the board and staff have a copy of these, have read them and understand them;
- Ensure financial management policy is implemented effectively;
- Ensure a yearly budget is prepared and approved by the board and that a six-monthly review is carried out;
- Ensure the board meets regularly to review and approve financial reports;
- Liaise with the treasurer and financial committee to ensure financial reports are prepared;
- Read and question financial reports;
- Act as a cheque signatory;
- Check the payment voucher and the individual cheque before signing and authorizing the payment.

Treasurer

In relation to the organization's financial management policies and procedures, the treasurer undertakes to:

- Ensure the financial management policy is implemented effectively;
- Liaise with the chairperson on financial matters and bring any irregularities to her/his attention urgently;
- Ensure a yearly budget is prepared and approved by the board;
- Ensure financial reports are prepared for the board and check their accuracy;
- Present these reports to the board and be able to answer questions on these reports;

- Act as a cheque signatory;
- Check the payment voucher and the individual cheque before signing and authorizing the payment;
- Check the bank reconciliation against the bank statement;
- Ensure cheque books are completely correct and are readable;
- Regularly carry out spot checks on procedures and financial documents.

Financial committee

In relation to the organization's financial management policies and procedures, the financial committee undertakes to:

- Liaise with the chairperson on financial matters;
- Meet regularly to review and approve financial reports prior to the board meeting;
- Check the bank reconciliation against the bank statements;
- Carry out spot checks, as appropriate, on procedures and financial documents;
- Check the payment voucher file to ensure all payment vouchers for that period have been completed.

Board members

In relation to the organization's financial management policies and procedures, the board members undertake to:

- Attend board meetings regularly;
- Read and understand the organization's financial policy and procedures;
- Learn to understand the financial budgets and financial reports;
- Approve the organization's annual budget;
- Read and question financial reports that are tabled at the board meetings;
- Approve these financial reports and specifically the monthly payments.

Director

In relation to the organization's financial management policies and procedures, the director undertakes to:

- Manage the organization's financial systems efficiently;
- Prepare the annual budget in consultation with the chairperson and treasurer;
- Act as a cheque signatory;
- Check the payment voucher and the individual cheque before signing and authorizing the payment;
- On a monthly basis check the payment voucher file to ensure all payment vouchers for that month have been completed fully;
- Check the monthly bank reconciliation against the bank statement;
- Assist, as necessary, with the preparation of the monthly financial report and review it;
- Inform the treasurer if any budget line is close to budget;
- Ensure all financial records are kept up to date.

Administration secretary

In relation to the organization's financial management policies and procedures, the administration secretary undertakes to:

- Receipt all income and expenditure daily;
- Ensure all income is banked by the last day of the month;

- Make all payments on the due date using a payment voucher;
- Ensure all appropriate documents are attached to payment vouchers and file them in cheque order;
- Ensure the voucher is signed by any client after receiving payment;
- Take responsibility for the cash box and petty cash recording;
- Input income and expenditure data into the electronic cash book on a weekly basis and ensure these are identical to the hard copy;
- Backup all financial electronic files weekly;
- Carry out the monthly bank reconciliation;
- Prepare the monthly income and expenditure report and submit this to the director for presentation at the monthly board meeting;
- Ensure records are kept up to date.

5. FINANCIAL REPORTING

- A monthly bank reconciliation report is prepared and printed. This reconciliation is reviewed and checked by both the director. It is to be attached to the bank statement it relates to and filed in the bank statement file.
- Monthly income and expenditure reports for the organization are prepared and printed by the administration secretary.
- Monthly financial reports are presented by the treasurer at the monthly board meeting.
- After approval by the board and signed by the treasurer, the report is filed in a separate file.

Record keeping

The files are to be kept in a safe and secure place known to and approved by the treasurer and chairperson.

The following records are to be kept and maintained by accounting staff

- Physical records: Receipts books, cheque books, income file, payment voucher file, bank statement file, monthly income and expenditure files.
- Electronic records: The Excel cash book is to be backed up on a weekly basis onto a diskette or USB drive.

At the end of the financial year, the financial records for that year are to be archived and stored in a safe place.

Annual accounts and audit

- Annual accounts are to be prepared.
- Annual accounts are to be audited.
- Annual accounts are to be presented to members at the Annual General Meeting.

Misuse of funds

- Any suspected misuse or misappropriation of funds will be investigated by the chairperson and treasurer.
- The investigation has to follow fair procedures. Once completed and the facts clearly established, the chairperson/treasurer will take appropriate action. For minor issues this may be kept to internal disciplinary action. For serious offences, the matter will be referred to the police.
- The chairperson will inform the board of any serious offences and the action taken.

6. STATUES APPLICABLE TO VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS

There are two major acts applicable to voluntary organizations – the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 and Income Tax Act, 1961.

7. REVIEW OF THE POLICY

The financial policy will be reviewed from time to time to keep it updated.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

In recent years, there has been increased scrutiny of non-profit organizations by government regulators, by the public and the media. In considering the challenges, Daniel L. Kurtz and Sarah E. Paul, leading experts in the area of non-profit boards and authors of the book, *Managing Conflicts of Interest: A Primer for Nonprofit Boards* (2nd ed.), say that, 'the most effective way to prevent conflicts of interest from becoming problematic is to take a proactive approach to manage them. Such an approach involves creating an environment that promotes open communication, transparency, and accountability among board members and staff', but ultimate success will depend 'on the establishment and enforcement of a conflicts of interest policy and a disclosure procedure'.

A conflict of interest situation is one in which an individual has competing interests or responsibilities and is therefore required to make a decision favouring one of those interests or responsibilities, which could be to the detriment of the organization s/he is associated with. Whenever people are involved in more than one organization there is potential for conflict of interest which can include financial, material, relational or informational benefits. However, a strong conflict of interest policy is quickly becoming an essential document for non-profit organizations. A conflict of interest policy is intended to serve as a guide for employees in structuring their relationships with other organizations and outside ventures in view of their responsibilities. Board/staff members are expected to make reasonable enquiry as to whether their relationships and activities fall within the provisions of the policy. It is not the intent of a conflict of interest policy to regulate or eliminate all situations of conflict of interest, but rather to enable employees to recognize situations that may be subject to question and ensure that such situations are properly reviewed and, if necessary, resolved as applicable. Thus, it is recommended that all voluntary organizations, whether small or big, formulate and effectively implement a conflict of interest policy which will further facilitate the exercise of good governance practices in the organization.

MODEL CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

1. PREAMBLE

Conflict of interest arises whenever the personal or professional interests of an employee are potentially at odds with the best interests of the organization. However, all employees are required to act in good faith towards their organization and need to be aware of the potential for a conflict of interest to arise and should always act in the best interests of the organization.

2. AIM OF THE POLICY

The overall goal of a conflict of interest policy is to make clear that no organization or individual benefits inappropriately because of a relationship with either staff, partners or board members of the organization. The conflict of interest policy is intended to increase the awareness of employees to the potential for conflict and to establish procedures whereby such conflicts may be avoided or properly managed.

3. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy is directed not only to directors and officers, but to all employees who can influence the actions of the organization. For example, this would include all who make decisions, all persons who might be described as 'management personnel', and anyone who has proprietary information concerning the organization.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

- To ensure that deliberations, contractual arrangements and decisions are made in the interests of the organization as a whole;
- To protect the interest of the organization when it is entering into a transaction, contract or arrangement that might benefit the private pecuniary interest of an interested director, staff member or related parties;
- To protect both the organization and individuals involved from any appearance of impropriety and to ensure compliance to statutory and best practice requirements.

5. TYPES OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- Self-dealing: In the staff/board member's role, the individual makes decisions that affect her/him financially or materially as a private citizen or along with any associated parties.
- Accepting benefits: The staff/board member accepts substantial gifts, bribes, services, or other significant benefits that may be perceived to influence the staff/board member.
- Influence peddling: The staff/board member accepts benefits in exchange for exerting influence or giving preferential treatment to the giver of the benefit.
- Using confidential information: The staff/board member uses confidential information acquired with respect to the organization's work for private interest or gain.
- Post-appointment: Confidential information that has been gained in the staff/board member's role is used for private advantage after leaving the organization.

6. GIFTS

The board/staff member should not give or receive, directly or indirectly, any gift or other favour that may influence the exercise of the organization's function, performance of duty or in other ways possibly harm the organization. Gifts are defined as but not limited to services, travel, entertainment, material things or favours. In order to respect local traditions and conventional hospitality, minor gifts are accepted. Cash gifts are not acceptable. All employees are expected to show good judgement and when in doubt, contact their superiors.

7. COMMITTEE ON CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The audit and conflicts committee of the board shall have primary responsibility for the administration and monitoring of compliance with this policy.

8. AVOIDING CONFLICTS

When a member of the board of directors has a relationship with another development organization, maintaining a transparent relationship is the key to avoiding conflicts of interest. Whenever there is potential for conflict of interest, it is important to make complete and accurate disclosure of the circumstances to each side, and to receive informed consent from each. Where there is no consent, and the conflict cannot be resolved, then one or both relationships must be ended. Board members are expected to act ethically and with integrity. In carrying out their obligations, they must do their best to avoid ethical, legal, financial or other conflicts of interest.

9. PROCEDURE FOR ADDRESSING CONFLICT OF INTEREST

In connection with any actual or possible conflicts of interest, a staff/ board member must disclose in writing the existence and nature of her/ his interest to the audit and conflicts committee prior to

the consideration of the proposed transaction or contract.

- For each interest disclosed, the disinterested members of the audit and conflicts committee shall determine whether a conflict of interest exists.
- In all cases, decisions involving a conflict will be made only by disinterested persons. A person who has a conflict of interest shall not participate in or be permitted to hear the board's or committee's discussion of the matter except to disclose material facts and to respond to questions. Such person shall not attempt to exert her/his personal influence with respect to the matter, either at or outside the meeting.
- When the conflict involves a decision-maker, the person with the conflict ('interested party'):
 - (i) must fully disclose the conflict to all other decision-makers;
 - (ii) may not be involved in the decision of what action to take (e.g., may not participate in a vote) but may serve as a resource to provide other decision-makers with needed information.
- The committee will monitor proposed or ongoing transactions of the organization (e.g., contracts with vendors and collaborations with third parties) for conflicts of interest and disclose them to the board and staff, as appropriate.
- When there is a doubt as to whether a conflict exists, the matter shall be resolved by vote of the board of trustees, excluding the person(s) concerning whose situation the doubt has arisen.

10. VIOLATIONS OF THE CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

- If the board or executive committee has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and give the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.
- If, after hearing the member's response and after making further investigations, the audit and conflicts committee determines that the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall recommend to the board to take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action without prejudice to any sanctions that may be prescribed by law.
- The violation of this conflict of interest policy is a serious matter and may constitute cause for removal or termination of a staff/board member, or the termination of any contractual relationship the organization may have with an interested person or other party.

11. RECORDS OF PROCEEDINGS

The minutes of the audit and conflicts committee shall contain:

- The names of staff/board members found to have a material financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest; the nature of the interest; any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present; and the decision of the audit and conflicts committee as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed;
- The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the actual or potential conflict of interest; the content of the discussion; and a record of any votes taken in connection therewith.

12. CONFIDENTIALITY

Each director, officer, employee and volunteer shall exercise care not to disclose confidential information acquired in connection with disclosures of conflicts of interest or potential conflicts, which might be adverse to the interests of the organization. Furthermore, board/staff members shall not disclose or use information relating to the organization for their personal profit or advantage or the personal profit or advantage of their family member(s).

In dealings with consultants, s/he shall not at any time communicate to any person or entity any

confidential information acquired in the course of the services, nor shall the consultant make public the recommendations formulated/documents received, prepared or released in the course of, or as a result of, the services except with the prior written consent of the organization. 'Confidential information' means any information or knowledge acquired by the consultant arising out of, or in connection with, the performance of the services that is not otherwise available to the public. In the event of any breach of the stated provisions, the consultant shall make good any loss/cost/damage/any claim whatsoever preferred by the client or any third party against the organization concerned.

13. DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT

To be signed by all governing body members, staff, volunteers, visitors. A copy will be kept on file in the office.

I declare that:

- I have read and understand the organization's conflict of interest policy.
- I will work within the procedure as laid out in the conflict of interest policy.
- I have not been accused or convicted to any offence involving conflict of interest.
- I understand that if a complaint is brought against me regarding conflict of interest while engaged in the organization's activities, the allegation will be thoroughly investigated in cooperation with the appropriate authorities.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

14. REVIEW OF THE POLICY

The audit and conflicts committee shall periodically consider whether and how this conflict of interest policy should be revised or amended to better meet its objectives. Any changes to the policy shall be communicated to all staff and volunteers. Once the conflict of interest policy is adopted, it must be used and treated as a living document and not put on a shelf and forgotten. A copy of the conflict of interest policy should be readily available at every board meeting, and the policy should be referred to as necessary in the same way as are the organization's bylaws. Additionally, review and discussion of the conflict of interest policy and completion of a disclosure statement should be part of every new board member's orientation, as well as existing board members should update their respective disclosure statements on a recurring basis.



GOOD PRACTICES

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Child protection is crucial to ensure that children under 18 years of age have the rights, confidence and environment in which they can make choices, express their views and communicate effectively with other children and adults. Children cannot become empowered change agents to improve their lives, and that of their families and communities, if they are not safeguarded from abuse, discrimination and harm of any kind, be it physical, sexual, emotional or neglect. Thus, it is necessary for all voluntary organizations dealing with children to develop a child protection policy that is appropriate to their own culture and system.

Any organization that works with children has a fundamental duty of care towards them, a duty of care to protect their rights and safeguard them from all forms of abuse and exploitation. Organizations should ensure that all staff, volunteers, observers and contributors of the organization shall protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse. Further, they must find ways to let children and youth express their opinions and give them a voice to actively participate in addressing challenges that they face all over the world.

Advantages of a child protection policy

There are several advantages in formulating and implementing child protection standards:

- Although no policies or processes can offer complete protection to children, sections laid out in a policy, if followed well, will minimize the risk to children of abuse and exploitation.
- By implementing the policy all the staff working in the organization will have clear guidance regarding their own behavior around children and what to do if they notice or are told about inappropriate behavior on the part of others.
- By implementing the policy, the organization makes clear its commitment to safeguard the children they work with.
- The policy will help in protecting the rights of children and dealing with the problem of child labour.
- The policy will provide a framework for the recruitment, selection, suitability and deployment of individuals working with young people.

Children have the right to be protected from all exploitative and vulnerable situations. All employees of the organization must learn to deal with these issues. But that is possible only if they are aware of the real problems and risks that children face and of the remedies that are available in law and policy to change the situation in the best interests of children. A child may need legal help and protection. Resisting legal action when a child needs it the most is a common mistake all of us often tend to make. Hence, all voluntary organizations must continuously strive to create and sustain protective, safe, healthy and stimulating environments for children and for that they have to formulate and properly implement a child protection policy.

MODEL CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. PREAMBLE

A child protect. and beliefs and describes the steps that will be taken in meeting this commitment to protect children. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) shall be the guiding principle for implementing basic rights of all children up to the age of 18 years. The Government of India acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1992 and is

committed to its full implementation for the benefit of children. There are other laws pertaining to children in India, such as the Juvenile Justice and Care and Protection Act, 2000, The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation Act), 1986 and the Immoral (Prevention) Traffic Act, 1956 (amended Act of 44 of 1986), which provide guidelines for the safety and security of children. This policy is in conformity with the above laws.

2. AIM OF THE POLICY

The overall goal of this policy is to ensure the highest standard of protection for children from all forms of child abuse, exploitation, harm and neglect. It also outlines practical steps to increase the organization's capacity to promote children's rights and create a safe and protective environment for children. While it is not possible to eliminate risk entirely, much can be done to reduce opportunities for child abuse and discrimination.

3. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

The child protection policy and related procedures and guidelines apply to all staff, members, volunteers and those working on behalf of the organization whose work involves contact and communication with children and people under the age of 18, or whose work/contribution directly or indirectly affects or has the potential to affect children.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

- To ensure the practice of the highest levels of child protection standards in the organization.
- To establish a well-defined and practiced reporting mechanism for child protection violations and time bound redressal system.
- To ensure assessment and management of child protection risk in the organization.
- To ensure that there are basic minimum standards of child protection adhered to by all associates of the organization.
- To create consciousness and awareness about child protection and child rights.
- To focus on child labour as a major part of the agenda and work to solve the problem of child labour.

5. CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse or maltreatment constitutes 'all forms of physical and/or emotional ill treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.'(WHO, 1999). 'Child abuse is a global phenomenon and occurs in all countries and in all societies. It involves the physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect of children. It is nearly always preventable.

Types of abuse

Physical abuse and neglect: Physical abuse includes inflicting physical injury upon a child. This may include burning, hitting, punching, shaking, kicking, beating, or otherwise harming a child. It may be the result of over-discipline or physical punishment which is not appropriate to the child's age. Physical neglect may include failing to provide adequate food or appropriate clothing, medical care, supervision, or proper protection from harm.

Emotional abuse (also known as verbal or mental abuse or psychological maltreatment): This

can include caregivers threatening or terrorizing a child, using extreme and/or bizarre forms of punishment. Other forms of emotional abuse may include ignoring, belittling, rejecting, using derogatory terms, excessive blaming or excessive isolating. Emotional neglect may include a lack of love, emotional support or attention, or excessive inconsistency.

Sexual abuse: Child sexual abuse is the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared and that violates the laws or special taboos of society. It ranges from inappropriate contact to rape, and non-contact abuse such as forcing children to observe sexual acts and pornography.

Child sexual abuse includes:

- An adult exposing her/his genitals to a child or persuading the child to do the same.
- An adult touching/fondling a child's genitals or making the child touch the adult's genitalia.
- An adult involving a child in pornography, which includes exposing a child to pornographic material.
- An adult having oral, vaginal or anal intercourse with a child.
- Any verbal or other sexual suggestion made to a child by an adult.
- An adult persuading a child to engage in sexual activity.

Commitment of the organization

The organization prohibits discrimination against children on the grounds of religion, ethnicity, gender, language, or any other characteristic. It supports religious, language and ethnic diversity and tolerance amongst its representatives and beneficiaries. Further, it creates environments that protect and enhance the rights and opportunities for children with disability in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability.

The organization protects the children it works with/represents from discrimination which is unequal treatment of children based on personal or group characteristics. There are many forms of discrimination based on characteristics such as:

- **Religious discrimination:** Treating a child less favorably than another on grounds of her/his religion or belief, or lack thereof.
- **Ethnic discrimination:** Negative or degrading treatment on the basis of one's ethnicity (racial, cultural, national or tribal background).
- **Gender:** Gender discrimination occurs when either males or females are privileged over the other group. In most societies, gender discrimination entails the privileging of males over females, who are denied equal power, status, access and rights.
- **Language:** Occurs when a child is treated differently and/or negatively for the way s/he speaks or the language s/he uses to communicate.
- **Disability:** Occurs when a child with physical, emotional, social or communicative impairment is denied right to education, health care, birth registration or recognition of legal capacity equal to a child without disability.

6. CORE VALUES ADOPTED BY THE ORGANIZATION

All the members of the organization need to adopt the following values with regard to children.

- **Dignity and intrinsic value of every child:** To create a safe environment that promotes the dignity and intrinsic value of each child, regardless of ethnicity, race, colour, language, religion, opinion, gender, origins, birth status, ability, or belonging to a particular group.

- Children’s right to participate: To recognize that children are active and competent contributors to their own development with the right to participate in decisions affecting their lives in accordance with their development or evolving capacities.
- Empowerment: To encourage the empowerment of children to develop capacities for self-protection and advocate on their own behalf for issues that concern them.
- Respect for children’s rights: To promote the four core principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC): non-discrimination; the best interest of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and respect for the views of the child.

7. RECRUITMENT AND SCREENING OF STAFF dealing with Children

All staff and volunteers will be appointed and measures to ensure that all necessary checks are carried out on individuals expected to work with children and young people will be taken.

Pre-selection checks include the following:

- Completion of application form and photo identification with proof of residence.
- Receipt of two references with the application form.
- Verification of qualifications.
- Verification of identity and proof of address.

The following should also be taken into consideration while recruiting:

- Governing body members, staff and volunteers will be carefully and properly screened during their recruitment period, including obtaining a police check where possible or necessary.
- Governing body members, staff and volunteers will be carefully and properly screened during their recruitment period which includes agreeing to sign the child protection policy and stating that there has been no violation of the policy by them.
- Governing body members, staff and volunteers will attend the annual child protection training organized by the organization.
- In the best interests of children, the organization must not hire anyone with a prior conviction for child abuse, pedophilia or related offences.
- The organization reserves the right not to hire an applicant if the background check reveals that the person is not suitable to work with children.

8. ACTION TAKEN TO PREVENT ABUSE

Staff training It is essential that all the staff and volunteers are aware of the rights of child development. The organization head and leadership staff encourage this matter to be discussed in an honest and open manner by the staff. In addition, there are regular staff training sessions on child protection. These trainings include:

- What is child abuse.
- How can abuse be prevented, and the role of staff in prevention.
- Symptoms of child abuse.
- The procedure for responding to alleged abuse.
- Roles and responsibilities regarding child protection matter.
- Use of resources that might be used with the children to teach them about abuse.
- How to communicate with and respond to children that have been abused, or that make allegations of abuse.

Training is provided to staff members responsible for dealing with complaints and disciplinary

procedures in relation to child abuse and inappropriate behavior towards children. Staff dealing with children are not allowed to consume alcohol or tobacco on the office premises.

Education programmes for children

In addition, all children are made aware of what child abuse is, how to protect themselves, and how to respond in the event of abuse occurring. There are regular teaching sessions with all children. These teaching sessions cover:

- The concept of 'good touch' and 'bad touch'.
- How to say 'No' to abuse.
- A clear procedure regarding whom they should go to if they are afraid of abuse or if they know of abuse occurring.
- How they can express themselves appropriately.
- An age-appropriate sex education programme.
- Not blaming themselves for the abuse.

A series of resources (worksheets, games, videos, stories, etc) about child abuse and discrimination, preferably in the children's first language, are used to aid these teaching sessions.

9. GUIDELINES TO PREVENT ABUSE AND DISCRMINATION

It is important that all staff and volunteers protect themselves from allegations of abuse by demonstrating good practice. This means that they will avoid putting themselves in a position where they could be accused of abuse or of attempting to abuse a child. Examples of this include:

- A male caregiver in a girl's area or a female caregiver in a boy's area should be very careful when entering children's bedrooms.
- Caregivers who are alone with a child should keep the door of the room open.
- Children should not be permitted to enter any staff member's private rooms.
- Counselling or disciplining children should be done in an appropriate place, preferably a location where there are see-through doors. Other staff members should be made aware of the counselling or disciplinary meeting that is taking place.
- It is preferable that a lone staff member should not travel alone in a vehicle with a single child.
- There should be clear procedures for dealing with medical and first aid issues.

Rules and regulations that prevent child-on-child abuse:

- No more than one child is allowed into the same toilet cubicle at any one time.
- There are no closed or locked bedroom doors.
- There should be adequate supervision of play areas and children's living quarters.

The organization recognizes that appropriate physical touch by caregivers is important in a child's development. It is important, however, that staff avoid any appearance of inappropriate behavior. Staff and volunteers may not hold, kiss, cuddle or touch children in a culturally insensitive way. Staff members should use good judgement, wisdom and caution in becoming personally involved with children who have emotional and/or psychological problems.

Inappropriate physical contact includes the following:

- Demanding hugs and kisses;
- Touching chest, genital area, upper legs, buttocks, waist and stomach;
- Making the child sit in the Centre of the caregiver's lap;

- Seductiveness or suggestive contact;
- Physical contact of any kind which is done for the pleasure or satisfaction of caregivers;
- Any touching used to express power or control over a child, except holds/ restraints that are used to prevent a child from hurting herself/himself or others.

10. PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH SUSPECTED OR ALLEGED CHILD ABUSE

The focus is always placed on safeguarding and protecting the child. All employees of the organization must treat any suspected abuse seriously. No one should ignore it, hoping it will go away. All suspected abuse must be reported immediately to the immediate supervisor and/or head of the organization. Any adult who withholds information or covers up any kind of abuse may be considered an accomplice.

When child abuse by a member of staff is suspected, the following procedure will be followed:

- Anyone who suspects child abuse is taking place must discuss the situation s/he has observed with her/his supervisor and/or the head of the organization.
- The supervisor will contact the head of the organization within 24 hours. An action plan to respond to the matter will be developed and implemented immediately. This plan will include setting up a small committee of three or more persons to investigate the alleged abuse.
- Should an allegation be made against the supervisor, the head of the organization will appoint someone to oversee the investigation.
- The supervisor (or the designated person investigating the incident) will, as soon as practical, convene a special meeting of the committee appointed to review the suspected behavior.
- The accused must be relieved of all duties or contact with children until the investigation is completed.
- All procedures followed in handling the allegation will be documented. Factual elements of an investigation may include interview notes, witness statements, hardcopies of e-mails, medical reports, and in some cases audio or video tapes. These need to be gathered in a timely and methodical manner. All documentation should be kept securely locked away.
- During the investigation, all details will be held in confidence by the committee. This is to protect both the staff member and child from potentially damaging information being circulated prior to verification of the facts.
- The head of the organization will be kept informed of all developments in the investigation. If the committee considers the member of staff or volunteer to be guilty of the abuse, appropriate action, up to and including dismissal and legal action, will be determined and implemented.
- After the investigation is completed, a plan for communication to the wider affected community will be developed and implemented by the committee. A plan to provide the abused child with any necessary support, including counselling as appropriate, will also be developed and implemented.
- The supervisor or another designated person may, as appropriate, notify the parents/guardians of the children who are involved in the alleged abuse, and inform them of the steps that the organization has taken.

When child abuse by a child towards another child is suspected, the following procedure will be followed:

- Anyone who suspects child abuse will discuss the situation s/he has observed with her/his supervisor.
- The supervisor will contact the head of the organization within 24 hours. An action plan to

respond to the matter will be developed and implemented immediately.

- All procedures followed in handling the allegation will be documented and the head of the organization will be provided with copies of all such documentation.
- A plan to provide the abused child with any necessary support, including counselling as appropriate, should be developed and implemented.
- If the child is found to be guilty of abuse, immediate and appropriate action will be taken. This course of action will depend on the following factors:
 - The nature of the offence;
 - The age of the child;
 - The child's behavioral history in the organization;
 - The likelihood of the offence being repeated.
- The supervisor or her/his designate may, as appropriate, notify the parents/guardians of the children who are involved in the alleged abuse, and inform them of the steps that organization has taken.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

In all matters dealt with as part of this policy, it is essential to respect the need for confidentiality. In certain circumstances, any lack of confidentiality may have devastating effects on the lives of children and may also result in serious consequences for adults involved in the process. In responding to issues and concerns regarding possible abuse and discrimination, staff and others must exercise extreme vigilance in protecting information and must pass on this information only to those people who need to be aware of it.

12. RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THIS POLICY

It is the responsibility of all managers to ensure that staff and others for whom they have line management responsibility are made aware of the policy and that the systems and procedures required to operate the policy are effectively in place. It is the responsibility of all staff to fulfill their part in implementing this policy, particularly by raising awareness if they suspect abuse is taking place.

13. DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT

To be signed by all governing body members, staff, volunteers and visitors. A copy will be kept on file in the office.

I declare that:

- I have read and understand the organization's child protection policy and have attended/will attend the child protection training.
- I will work within the procedure as laid out in the child protection policy.
- I have not been accused or convicted of any offence involving physical or sexual abuse of children or young people.
- I understand that if a complaint is brought against me regarding the abuse of children while engaged in the organization's activities, the allegation will be thoroughly investigated in cooperation with the appropriate authorities.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

14. CHILD PROTECTION CODE OF CONDUCT

All staff of the organization must sign up to and abide by this code of conduct.

- Treat children with respect regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.
- Not use language or behaviour towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate.
- Not engage children in any form of sexual activity or acts.
- Wherever possible, ensure that another adult is present when working in the proximity of children.
- Not invite unaccompanied children into your home, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger.
- Not sleep close to unsupervised children unless absolutely necessary, in which case a supervisor's permission must be obtained, and ensure that another adult is present, if possible.
- Use computers, mobile phones, or video and digital cameras appropriately, and never to exploit or harass children or to access child pornography through any medium.
- Refrain from hiring children for domestic or other labour which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage, which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury.
- Comply with all relevant legislations related to children, including labour laws in relation to child labour.
- Immediately report concerns or allegations of child abuse in accordance with appropriate procedures.
- Should not do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves.
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse
- This is not an exhaustive or exclusive list. The principle is that staff should avoid actions or behavior which may constitute poor practice or potentially abusive behavior.
- Be aware of situations which may present risks and manage these, plan and organize the work and the workplace so as to minimize risks.
- Ensure that a sense of accountability exists between staff so that poor practice or potentially abusive behavior does not go unnoticed.
- Empower children– discuss with them their rights, what is acceptable and unacceptable, and what they can do if there is a problem.

15. REVIEW OF THE POLICY

The policy will be reviewed regularly by the organization.

GENDER POLICY

The Gender Policy defines organization's explicit commitments to support gender equality and the principles expressed in these international agreements. The accompanying implementation guideline sets out mechanisms and minimum common standards for all employees, members and Regional Offices. This policy statement therefore strives to make collective programming efforts more effective, builds on commitments made in the existing Policy Statements and reflects subsequent developments in gender equality policies of development organizations working to end poverty and social injustice. It thereby sets the stage for increased accountability.

Background

This harmonized policy represents the first step of organization to take a cohesive and coordinated approach to gender. The policy defines organization's explicit commitments to support gender equality and the principles expressed in the agreements. The policy can be tailored to maintain and complement members' diversity, whilst supporting common strategies and standards of action and accountability. Organization's vision is to seek a world of hope, tolerance and social justice; where people live in dignity and security. The organization commits to address discrimination in all its forms and recognizes that power relations between girls and boys, men and women are unequal, and that such inequalities should be addressed. As such, the organization must approach its work in a gender sensitive way.

Purpose

Through this Policy, the organization commits itself to ensure that gender equality is fully incorporated in all work. The organization seeks to promote equal realization of dignity and human rights for girls, women, boys and men, and the elimination of poverty and injustice. By articulating common standards and commitments, this harmonized policy aims to:

- Create a transparent and consistent message on organization's commitment to gender equality and facilitate working relationships with national governments and other organizations.
- Create synergies by combining the strengths, good practice and lessons learned to-date by other organizations who have existing policy-level documents.
- Facilitate more coordinated action by employees/members at the national, regional and state levels.
- Streamline Regional Office programming considerations in relation to gender.
- Facilitate common accountability mechanisms for Regional Offices such as common 'meet or exceed' minimum standards.
- Facilitate the tailoring of implementation approaches to Regional Office needs while concurrently producing comparable results against the objectives for gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Provide credibility in engaging with partners and allies on gender at both programming and advocacy.

Scope

This policy describes specific commitments, implementation mechanisms and common standards for organizations to ensure gender equality is fully incorporated in its work. It calls on organization to work in a collaborative way towards the goal of gender equality in all aspects of work, as well as urges individual members to strengthen their own actions to ensure the human rights of women, girls, boys and men are equally promoted and protected.

Rationale

While there has been emphasis by the organization on promoting gender equality in all aspects of its work, evaluations point to clear gaps in promoting gender equality. Internally, within organization, many project proposals, evaluations and reviews point to the importance of gender analysis and interventions to promote gender equality in order for us to make a significant impact on social injustice. The organization focusing on women's empowerment is one of the most comprehensive organizational scans of how well they advance women's empowerment.

Gender Policy Commitments

Through this policy the organization seeks to promote equal realization of dignity and human rights for girls, women, boys and men, and the elimination of poverty and injustice. Specifically, this policy is intended to improve the explicit incorporation of gender in programmatic and organizational practices.

The organization commits to:

- a) Promote gender equality as an explicit internationally recognized human right.
- b) Address systemic and structural practices that create barriers to the realization of women's rights and gender equality; including prevention and response to gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse.
- c) Support the empowerment of women and girls as a key strategy toward ending poverty, conflict, human suffering and gender inequality.
- d) Actively involve men and boys as allies in promoting gender equality.
- e) Analyze and implement strategies to manage potential risks and harms to women, girls, boys and men.
- f) Engage and coordinate with partners, governments, funders and civil society organizations to promote and support effective, creative and impactful ways to promote gender equality
- g) Monitor, evaluate and institutionalize organizational learning regarding specific gender equality results.
- h) Actively hold us and others accountable to gender equality standards.
- i) Ensure that key organizational policies, systems and practices including but not limited to budgeting, human resource recruitment, training and management, and decision-making support women's rights and gender equality.
- j) Ensuring adequate funding to realize our commitments.
- k) Apply these commitments within organization and across all programme areas using integrated planning approaches and recognized gender sensitive tools and techniques.

Policy Implementation

The policy is accompanied by proposed implementation arrangements, common standards and supporting definitions. More operational guidance and enforcement will be developed as required to support the policy implementation. To ensure the policy is effectively applied and achieves expected results, each member can further tailor implementation to their own organizational arrangements.

Review of the Policy

The policy will be reviewed regularly by the organization.

DISABILITY POLICY

Objective

The objective of this policy is to facilitate organization commitment on the management of disability issues in the workplace with a view to:

- (a) ensuring that people with disabilities have equal opportunities in the workplace;
- (b) improving employment prospects for persons with disabilities by facilitating recruitment, return to work, job retention and opportunities for advancement;
- (c) promoting a safe, accessible and healthy workplace;
- (d) assuring that employer costs associated with disability among employees are minimized – including health care and insurance payments, in some instances;
- (e) maximizing the contributions which workers with disabilities can make to the enterprise.

Principles

- The principles inform the underlying international labour standards, including the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159), and Recommendation (No. 168), 1983.
- Effective workplace disability management practices based on evidence, best practice and experience enable workers with disabilities to contribute productively to the organization and to maintain valuable work expertise.
- The principle is based on the conviction that employers benefit from the employment of people with disabilities, who can make a significant contribution at their place of employment, in jobs matched to their skills and abilities, if disability related issues are appropriately managed. It is also based on evidence that organization may gain from the retention of experienced workers who become disabled and on indications that significant savings can be made in terms of health costs, insurance payments and time lost, if an effective disability management strategy is in place.
- In accordance with ILO standards, special positive measures aimed at effective equality of opportunity for and treatment of disabled people at work are not regarded as discriminating against other workers.
- Disability management practices are most effective when based on positive cooperation among governments, employer's organizations, worker's representatives, worker's organization and organizations of persons with disabilities.

Application

The policy is intended to be of benefit to:

- (i) private and public sector employers of different sizes, located in urban and rural areas of industrialized countries, developing countries and countries in transition;
- (ii) employers' organizations in their role as providers of information, advisory and other services to their members, as well as advocates of employment opportunities for disabled persons;
- (iii) workers' organizations in their role of representing the interests of workers, including those with disabilities, in the workplace and in national consultation and negotiation processes;
- (iv) public sector agencies with responsibility for national policy concerning the promotion of employment opportunities for people with disabilities and its implementation;
- (v) persons with disabilities, regardless of the cause or nature of the disability;
- (vi) organizations of persons with disabilities in their role in promoting employment opportunities for persons with disabilities;

- (vii) other workers at the workplace by their recognizing a supportive environment exists for them to maintain employment, should they become disabled, regardless of cause.

The provisions of the code should be considered as basic ingredients for the effective management of disability issues in the workplace. They can assist employers in maximizing the benefits to be gained through employing or retaining workers with disabilities. They can contribute to ensuring that workers with disabilities can make a valued contribution, and that they have equal opportunity and are not subject to discrimination, within the legal framework set by national legislation.

General duties of employers and workers' representatives, and responsibilities of competent authorities

General duties of employers

- To manage disability-related issues in the workplace, employers should adopt a strategy for managing disability as an integral part of their overall employment policy and specifically as part of the human resource development strategy. This strategy may be linked to employee assistance programmes, where they exist.
- The disability management strategy should include provision for: (a) recruiting jobseekers with disabilities, including those who have not worked before and those who wish to return to work after a period of nonemployment; (b) equal opportunity for employees with disabilities; (c) job retention by employees who acquire a disability.
- The disability management strategy should be linked to a workplace-level policy on promoting a safe and healthy workplace, including provision for occupational safety and health measures, risk analysis of any adaptation adjustment or accommodation, early intervention and referral to treatment and rehabilitation of those who acquire a disability while in employment and a mentoring system to ensure that integration of new employees is fostered.
- The strategy should be in accordance with national policy and legislation and incorporate the principles of equal opportunity and mainstreaming, underpinning the relevant ILO Conventions and in particular Convention No. 159.
- The programme should be formulated in cooperation with workers' representatives, in consultation with individual disabled employees, occupational health services, where they exist, and, where possible, with organizations of persons with disabilities. In developing the programme, employers may also benefit from consultation with the competent authorities and expert agencies with specialist knowledge regarding disability-related issues.
- The disability management strategy within the workplace should be coordinated utilizing existing representational structures or by a new structure established for the purpose. The person or persons responsible for the coordination of the programme should receive training in disability management or have access to qualified personnel.
- Employers should seek to cooperate with the employment services in matching jobseekers with disabilities to jobs suited to their ability, work capacity and interest.
- Employers should ensure that people with disabilities in their employment are treated equally with non-disabled workers in terms of benefits in kind such as transport or housing.
- Employers' organizations should act as advocates, among their members, for the promotion of employment opportunities for disabled persons and job retention of those who acquire a disability while in employment. They may do this, for example, by providing practical information and advisory services, particularly to small companies, publicizing the advantages to business of managing disability in the workplace, promoting partnerships between employers in relation to disability management and by advocating disability management strategies in consultation processes at national and international levels.

- To promote the introduction of disability management strategies in the workplace, employers' organizations should introduce and implement such a strategy for their own employees.

Responsibilities of competent authorities

- The competent authorities should advocate the adoption of workplace disability management strategies by employers, as part of a national policy to promote employment opportunities for people with disabilities in the private and public sectors.
- The competent authorities should include disability-related issues in the general framework of economic and social regulations, taking into account national conditions and practice.
- The competent authorities should periodically review all rules and regulations governing employment, job retention and return to work in the public and private sectors, to ensure that they do not contain elements of discrimination against people with disabilities.
- The competent authorities should undertake periodic reviews of their systems of social protection, including employee compensation, to ensure that adequate support is provided and that no undue obstacles are inadvertently placed in the way of persons with disabilities in entering employment, retaining their job or occupation, or returning to the open labour market and paid employment.
- The competent authorities should facilitate employers in the management of disability issues in the workplace, and in the recruitment, retention or return to work of people with disabilities, by assisting them to identify high quality placement, technical advisory, rehabilitation and other support services, both public and private. On-site safety and health committees, employee assistance programmes, industrial relations units and equality committees may also be suggested according to national circumstances and national legislation.
- The competent authorities should ensure that the services of the different agencies required by employers are of high quality and provided in a coordinated and timely manner.
- The competent authorities should set out criteria determining what is reasonable for the purposes of adjustment or accommodation in accordance with national law and practice.
- The competent authorities should make available technical supports, wage subsidies and other incentives to promote or facilitate employment opportunities and job retention for people with disabilities and inform employers of these incentives.
- The competent authorities should seek to involve employers' organizations in providing advice to and also working with the employment service and other relevant services, to ensure that they are adequate and effective. They should also invite employers' organizations to participate in or sponsor awareness-raising campaigns on disability and employment.
- The competent authorities should facilitate contacts between employers' organizations and workers' organizations, and with relevant professional agencies, service providers and organizations of persons with disabilities, to exchange information regarding disability management in the workplace, including: (a) developments in techniques and technology for the adaptation of workplaces; (b) systems of work placement and work experience for persons with a disability; (c) adjustments in systems of advertising and interviewing for recruitment and promotion of persons with disabilities; (d) practice in relation to ethical issues relating to disclosure of information on workers with disabilities and awareness-raising in the field of disability.
- The competent authorities should monitor and periodically evaluate the effectiveness of any incentives or technical advisory services on employment related disability matters, in promoting opportunities for the employment, job retention and return to work of workers with a disability.
- To promote the introduction of disability management strategies in the workplace, competent authorities should introduce and implement such a strategy for their own employees, and become model employers in relation to the recruitment of people with disabilities, equal opportunity for workers with disabilities, provision for job retention and return-to-work measures.

- The competent authorities should consider measures to promote employment, job retention and return-to-work opportunities for people with disabilities, which incorporate specific actions for women with disabilities.

General duties of workers' representatives

- In promoting policies of equality of employment opportunity for workers both at the level of the individual employer and in the national consultation and negotiation processes, workers' organizations should actively advocate employment and training opportunities for persons with disabilities, including job retention and return-to-work measures.
- Workers' organizations should actively encourage workers with disabilities to join their organizations as members and to assume leadership roles.
- Workers' organizations should actively represent the interests of workers with disabilities to management and in any works council, safety committee or other workplace committee, and should promote positive action aiming to foster their inclusion in the workplace, including awareness-raising among managers and staff, and any required adjustments or adaptations.
- Workers' organizations should sensitize and train their members concerning disability through awareness-raising events and union publications featuring disability equality issues.
- To promote a healthy and safe workplace, workers' organizations should: (a) strongly advocate adherence to existing occupational safety and health standards and the introduction of early intervention and referral procedures in accordance with this code; (b) cooperate with and participate in disability information and prevention programmes offered by the employer and/or organizations of persons with disabilities for the benefit of the workers.
- To promote the introduction of disability management strategies in the workplace, workers' organizations should introduce and implement such a strategy for their own employees.
- Workers' organizations should raise employers' awareness of specific labour laws, Conventions and technological support that will facilitate the access of disabled persons to employment.
- Workers' organizations should encourage members to cooperate with return-to-work programmes developed by the employer, in accordance with this code, for early return to work.

Framework for the management of disability issues in the workplace

Developing a strategy on disability management in the workplace

- Employers should consider the management of disability issues in the workplace a priority task which contributes to business success, and regard it as an integral part of the workplace human resource development strategy.
- The disability management strategy should be formulated in accordance with national legislation, policy and practice, taking account of national institutions and organizations in the field.
- In formulating a strategy for managing disability issues in the workplace, employers should collaborate with worker representatives and consult with disabled workers or their representatives.
- The strategy at workplace level should complement the human resource development strategy in its aim to maximize the contributions and abilities of all staff, including those with disabilities and support adherence to occupational safety and health standards and related early intervention and referral procedures in accordance with the principles of this code.
- The disability management strategy could consider provision for workers who hold family responsibility for a disabled person or persons.
- The disability management strategy in the workplace should include provision for consultation from the employment service or other specialist agencies, where necessary, to ensure that the

individual with a disability is well matched to the job in terms of ability, work capacity and interest, as is usual in recruitment procedures.

Communication and awareness-raising

- The disability management strategy in the workplace should be brought to the attention of all employees, in language which can be easily understood, in cooperation with worker representatives.
- General information should be provided to all employees on disability in the workplace, along with specific information about the enterprise strategy, and about any adaptations which may be needed in a working environment, workstation and work schedules to enable workers with disabilities to optimize their effectiveness. This could form part of the general induction to employment for supervisors and staff or of a disability awareness session. In conjunction, an opportunity should be given to all employees to raise any questions which they may have about the prospect of working with a disabled co-worker.
- Inputs from specialist agencies, which may include organizations of persons with disabilities, should be sought, if necessary, in planning these information and awareness-raising sessions in the workplace.
- Employers, including senior managers, should signal their commitment to the disability management strategy, through such measures as they consider appropriate regarding the recruitment of people with disabilities and the retention of employees who acquire a disability.
- Employers, employers' organizations, workers' organizations, competent authorities and organizations of persons with disabilities should consider collaboratively publicizing strategies on disability issues and information on the implementation of these policies.
- Employers should inform their suppliers and sources of procurement of their strategies on disability management, with a view to encouraging good practice.
- In promoting strategies on managing disability in the workplace, groups of employers and employer organizations should consider arranging exchanges of information and training on the subject with relevant public sector agencies, expert agencies and other firms.

Evaluating effectiveness

- Employers should evaluate the effectiveness of their workplace strategy on the management of disability at regular intervals and make improvements where required.
- Worker representatives at the workplace should have access to the evaluation and participate in it.
- Competent authorities, in order to assess the effectiveness of their support, if any, to these programmes, may require information from the employer.
- All information regarding the disability management programme should be made anonymous and confidentiality protected, before being distributed.

Recruitment

Preparing for recruitment

- The principle of non-discrimination should be respected throughout the recruitment process, to ensure maximal benefit to the employer and equitable opportunities for candidates with and without disabilities. Employers could, for example, include a statement about commitment to equal opportunity in their recruitment procedures and in job advertisements, use a logo to signal that such a policy is in force within the enterprise, specifically invite applications from people with disabilities, and state that candidates will be considered solely on the basis of their abilities.

- Employers should ensure that the recruitment process attracts applications from as many qualified people with disabilities as possible. They could do this, for example, by consulting with the employment service for disabled persons, or other special agencies by ensuring that job vacancies are publicized in a format which is accessible to people with different disabilities – in print, on radio, on the Internet – by providing job application materials in a range of formats.
- Where employers rely on agencies for the management of recruitment, the competent authorities could collaborate with employers' organizations, relevant organizations of persons with disabilities and advertising associations to develop advertising practices which attract applications from jobseekers with disabilities.
- Competent authorities should assist employers by facilitating the recruitment of disabled persons through the use of effective job placement services. The competent authorities should also facilitate the arrangement of technical advice, wage subsidies and other incentives as appropriate.
- Organizations of employers and workers, and competent authorities, where appropriate, could prepare guidelines to assist in the employment of people with disabilities in urban and rural areas. These guidelines should reflect national and sector circumstances.
- Employers' organizations could support the recruitment of workers with disabilities by working with service agencies, employment services and organizations of persons with disabilities to ensure that the services provided effectively meet employer needs.
- In considering a candidate with a disability for a specific job, employers should be open to making adjustments, if required, in the workplace, workstation and work conditions, to maximize the ability of this candidate to perform the job. Advice and guidance on appropriate adjustments may be obtained from employment services or specialist agencies, including organizations of or for persons with disabilities. Adjustments, where required, should be planned in consultation with disabled and non-disabled workers, and be made with the agreement of workers' representatives and the disabled worker or workers involved.

Interviewing and testing

- Pre-employment tests and selection criteria should focus on the specific skills, knowledge and abilities regarded as essential to the functions of the vacant job. Care should be taken in selecting the tests to ensure that they are in a format which is accessible to disabled applicants. Similarly, selection criteria should be carefully examined to ensure that they do not inadvertently exclude persons with disabilities.
- Members of interview panels in the private and public sectors should be provided with guidance on the interview and selection process of persons with disabilities.
- Employers should consider ways of enabling candidates with disabilities to participate and perform at interviews on an equal basis with other candidates, for example by permitting a sign language interpreter or an advocate to be present.
- In issuing invitations to interview, employers could encourage candidates to state in advance any specific needs or accommodations they may require in order to participate in the interview.
- Adjustments in the recruitment process to take account of the different needs of disabled jobseekers, and the rationale for such adjustments, should be communicated to disabled candidates and employees.

Employee orientation to jobs

- Employers should arrange an orientation to the company or service, the working environment and the job for each newly recruited worker with a disability, in the same way as for non-disabled workers.

- Employers should ensure that information essential to the job and workplace, such as job instructions, works manuals, information on staff rules, grievance procedures or health and safety procedures are communicated to employees with disabilities in a format which assures that they are fully informed.
- In offering a job to a disabled candidate, the employer should indicate any disability-related adjustments to the working environment, workstation, work schedules or training which are proposed and consult with the candidate further on the subject. Any special job training or personal support required should also be discussed at this time.
- Workers' representatives and co-workers should be consulted about any substantial adjustments made or planned, to take account of specific needs of an employee with a disability.
- Employers should cooperate with the competent authorities or other relevant agencies in facilitating courses for management, supervisors, or co-workers who wish to learn alternative communication techniques, to better communicate with colleagues who have difficulty speaking, hearing or understanding verbal language.
- Once the recruitment of a person with a disability has taken place, follow-up services may be important in ensuring that any problems which may arise are swiftly identified and resolved. In this context, employers and the employee with a disability could benefit from continued contact with the employment services and other relevant agencies. Employers should consult these services and agencies directly, if necessary, and facilitate workers with disabilities in also maintaining contact, with a view to promoting their satisfactory integration into the workplace.

Work experience

- Where employers are not immediately in a position to employ a disabled worker, they could consider providing work experience opportunities to jobseekers with disabilities, to enable them to acquire the skills, knowledge and work attitude required for specific jobs in the workplace. Such workplace-based experience can help make the jobseeker's skills more relevant to the employer's requirements. It also provides the opportunity for an employer to gauge a disabled worker's abilities and capacity, and perhaps to consider recruitment once the training period has been completed.
- Where work experience is provided, employers may assign a supervisor or senior worker to assist the person. Alternatively, the services of a job coach may be provided through the employment services.

Work trials and supported employment placements

- The competent authorities should facilitate work experience, work trials and supported employment by providing employers and persons with disabilities with technical advice, as required, and by informing them of incentive schemes available to subsidize any costs involved, such as wage costs or costs of adaptations to premises, tools or equipment.
- As an alternative to immediate recruitment or the provision of work experience opportunities, employers could consider giving a disabled person a work trial or a supported employment placement, in accordance with national law and practice. As with work experience, these will provide the employer the opportunity to assess ability and capacity. In some cases, recruitment may follow. Even where this does not result, a work trial or a supported employment placement provides disabled jobseekers with valuable work experience which increases their subsequent employability.
- In the case of supported employment, the competent authorities could facilitate the provision of job-coach services and ongoing follow-up throughout the placement, either directly through the public employment services, or through other specialist agencies.
- On completion of work trials, the competent authorities or other specialist agencies could follow

up with the employer, to review the trial's success and make other arrangements, if necessary. These could include the transfer of the work trial to a different job within the company or elsewhere, or the organization of additional training or other supports for the disabled person.

Progress review

- Employers should keep their recruitment process under review, in order to ensure that it is accessible to people with different types of disability.
- The competent authorities should undertake regular reviews of the effectiveness of measures to promote employment opportunities for disabled persons and take steps to improve the effectiveness of these measures, where necessary. These reviews should be carried out in consultation with employers and worker representatives, as well as representatives of disabled persons.

Promotion

Career development

- Workers with disabilities should be afforded equal opportunities with other workers at the workplace to acquire the skills and experience necessary to advance in their careers.
- Information about career development and promotional opportunities should be made available and communicated in a range of formats accessible to workers with different disabilities in the enterprise. Particular attention should be paid to accessibility, where such information is provided electronically.
- Workers with disabilities should be encouraged to apply for promotion, particularly where it appears that they may be reluctant to do so, because of an impairment or other obstacle arising from their disability, or perceived obstacles in their working environment.
- In considering workers for promotion, employers should take account of their prior experience, if any, competencies, present performance and capabilities, in addition to formal qualifications suitable to the essential requirements of the job.

Employer-sponsored training opportunities, manuals and courses

- Opportunities for workers with disabilities to avail of in-service training programmes should be developed and publicized. The use of readers, interpreters and adapted materials should be facilitated, where required, by the competent authorities, or by organizations of or for persons with disabilities.
- Employers should consider adjusting time schedules, venues and programmes to facilitate and maximize the participation of persons with disabilities in measures intended for the career development of all employees.
- In developing training opportunities, employers or groups of employers should ensure that these are accessible to disabled persons.
- Workplace training handbooks and materials should be accessible to persons with communication impairments and intellectual disabilities, including alternative formats for printed materials and use of visual illustrations, in place of text when the need arises.

External vocational training

- A policy of equal opportunity should be implemented in workplace-based enrolment for vocational training by making courses available and accessible to all employees, including those with disabilities and modifying course manuals and materials, where necessary.

- The competent authorities should ensure that educational and training structures are accessible to persons with disabilities to enable them to have access to open employment.
- In selecting external training services and opportunities, employers should take account of the venue accessibility for workers with disabilities.

Review and appraisal

The performance appraisal of workers with disabilities should take place according to the same criteria applied to the same or similar jobholders.

DEFINITIONS

Adjustment or accommodation

Adaptation of the job, including adjustment and modification of machinery and equipment and/or modification of the job content, work organization and the adaptation of the work environment to provide access to the place of work and working time to facilitate the employment of individuals with disabilities.

Competent authority

A minister, government department or other public authority having the power to issue regulations, orders or other instructions having the force of law.

Disability management

A process in the workplace designed to facilitate the employment of persons with a disability through a coordinated effort addressing individual needs, work environment, enterprise needs and legal responsibilities.

Disabled person

An individual whose prospects of securing, returning to, retaining and advancing in suitable employment are substantially reduced as a result of a duly recognized physical, sensory, intellectual or mental impairment.

Discrimination

Any distinction, exclusion or preference based on certain grounds which nullifies or impairs equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation. General standards that establish distinctions based on prohibited grounds constitute discrimination in law. The specific attitude of a public authority or a private individual that treats unequally persons or members of a group on a prohibited ground constitutes discrimination in practice. Indirect discrimination refers to apparently neutral situations, regulations or practices which in fact result in unequal treatment of persons with certain characteristics. Distinction or preferences that may result from application of special measures of protection and assistance taken to meet the particular requirements of disabled persons are not considered discriminatory.

Employer

A person or organization employing workers under a written or verbal contract of employment which establishes the rights and duties of both parties, in accordance with national law and practice. Governments, public authorities and private companies as well as individuals may be employers.

Employee assistance programme

A programme – either jointly operated by an employer and a workers' organization, or by an employer alone, or a workers' organization alone – that offers assistance to workers and frequently also to their family members, with problems liable to cause personal distress, which affect or could eventually affect job productivity.

Employers' organization

An organization whose membership consists of individual employers, other associations of employers or both, formed primarily to protect and promote the interests of members and to provide services to its members in employment-related matters.

Equal opportunity

Equal access to and opportunities for all persons in employment, vocational training and particular occupations, without discrimination, consistent with Article 4 of ILO Convention No. 159.

Impairment

Any loss or abnormality of a psychological, physiological or physical function, including the systems of mental function.

International labour standards

Principles and norms in all labour-related matters which are adopted by the tripartite International Labour Conference (governments, employers and workers). These standards take the form of international labour Conventions and Recommendations. Through ratifications by member States, Conventions create binding obligations to implement their provisions. Recommendations are nonbinding instruments which provide guidance on policy, legislation and practice.

Job adaptation

The adaptation or redesign of tools, machines, workstations and the work environment to an individual's needs. It may also include adjustments in work organization, work schedules, sequences of work and in breaking down work tasks to their basic elements.

Job analysis

Making a detailed list of the duties that a particular job involves and the skills required. This indicates what the worker has to do, how he or she has to do it, why he or she has to do it and what skill is involved in doing it. The analysis can also include facts about tools used and machines operated. A job analysis is usually the first step in the placement process.

Job retention

Remaining with the same employer, with the same or different duties or conditions of employment, including return after a period of paid or unpaid absence.

Mainstreaming

Including people with disabilities in employment, education, training and all sectors of society.

Occupational health services (OHS)

Health services which have essentially a preventive function and which are responsible for advising the employer, as well as the workers and their representatives, on the requirements for establishing and maintaining a safe and healthy working environment to facilitate optimal physical and mental health in relation to work. The OHS also provide advice on the adaptation of work to the capacities of workers in light of their physical and mental health.

Organizations of persons with disabilities

Organizations which represent persons with disabilities and advocate for their rights. These can be organizations of or for persons with disabilities.

Return to work

The process by which a worker is supported in resuming work after an absence due to injury or illness.

Vocational rehabilitation

A process (which might include training or retraining) which enables disabled persons to secure, retain and advance in suitable employment and thereby furthers their integration or reintegration into society.

Works council/workplace committee

A committee of workers within the enterprise with which the employer cooperates and which is consulted by the employer on matters of mutual concern.

Worker/employee

Any person who works for a wage or salary and performs services for an employer. Employment is governed by a written or verbal contract of service.

Workers' representatives

Persons who are recognized as such under national law or practice, in accordance with the Workers' Representatives Convention, 1971 (No. 135), whether they are: (a) trade union representatives, namely representatives designated or elected by trade unions; or (b) elected representatives, namely representatives who are freely elected by workers of the undertaking in accordance with provisions of national laws or regulations or of collective agreements and whose functions do not include activities which are recognized as the exclusive prerogative of trade unions in the country concerned.

Working conditions

The factors determining the circumstances in which the worker works. These include hours of work, work organization, job content, welfare services and the measures taken to protect the occupational safety and health of the worker.

Working environment

The facilities and circumstances in which work takes place and the environmental factors which may affect workers' health.

Workplace

All the places where people in employment need to be or to go to carry out their work and which are under the direct or indirect control of the employer. Examples include offices, factories, plantations, construction sites, ships and private residences.

Workstation

The part of the office or factory where an individual works, including desk or work surface used, chair, equipment and other items.

Work trial

Work activity to provide experience in or test suitability for a particular job.

DIVERSITY POLICY

Diversity means being inclusive of everyone. In many ways, diversity initiatives complement non-discrimination compliance programmes by creating a workplace environment and organizational culture for making differences work. Diversity is about learning from others who are not the same, about dignity and respect for all, and about creating workplace environments and practices that encourage learning from others and capture the advantage of diverse perspectives. It is essential for the growth of every organization that diversity is adopted as a universal principle, enabling individuality to flourish regardless of gender, ethnicity, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, marital status, age, disability, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs. The DIVERSITY policy is designed to promote fair and equal treatment of all employees and to prevent discrimination, victimization and harassment. It is to be communicated to all employees of the organization. The organization is responsible for developing, implementing, maintaining and communicating appropriate policies and initiatives that embody and action values of diversity. Thus, the policy is to be formulated to acknowledge the responsibilities of the organization to actively promote equality and combat discrimination against DIVERSITY.

MODEL POLICY

1. PREAMBLE

The policy largely aims to show that an organization's internal system does not discriminate employees on the basis of sexual orientation in any way. Under the policy all employees are to be given equal opportunity and access to training and development to enable them to progress both within and outside the organization. No one who works in the organization, or who applies for a job, receives less favorable treatment on the grounds of sexual preference.

2. OBJECTIVES

- To ensure that all citizens, regardless of sexual orientation and preference have equal opportunity to compete for and obtain employment with the organization.
- To encourage and allow talented individuals with different personalities, points of view, skills and approaches to collaborate in an environment of mutual support.
- To promote equal opportunity in all areas of employment and prevent acts of discrimination, segregation, unfair treatment or harassment of members of the organization, job applicants and those with whom the organization engages.
- To understand better the needs of the diverse client base and the communities in which organization work.
- To continuously monitor the effectiveness of the policy and take proactive measures to advance it.
- Respect and value differences and ensure dignity at work for all employees.
- Make full use of the talents of the entire workforce.
- To create equal opportunities and a conducive environment for all at the workplace.
- Promote DIVERSITY mainstreaming in the operations of the organization and to support efforts to attain equality amongst all.
- To promote greater involvement of men and women belonging to DIVERSITY community in decision-making processes.

3. PURPOSE

The policy is committed to promoting equality and promoting a culture that actively values differences

and recognizes that people from different backgrounds, orientations and experiences can bring valuable insights to the workplace and enhance the efficiency of our work. The policy aims to create an inclusive organization, where every person is valued, respected and built upon, with ability to recruit and retain a diverse workforce that reflects the communities it serves. Within this framework the policy specifically refers to measures to provide equality of opportunity and the facilities that it can provide to its workforce and job applicants.

The policy aims to proactively tackle discrimination or disadvantage and aims to ensure that no individual or group is directly or indirectly discriminated against for any reason with regard to employment or accessing its services. The organization is committed to an inclusive workplace that embraces and promotes DIVERSITY.

4. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of the organization, workers and all job applicants. Where services are provided by external contractors or third parties, these contractors or third parties are responsible for adhering to the organization's DIVERSITY policy while providing services on behalf of the organization. However, if any issue becomes apparent with regards to DIVERSITY or equality in relation to any contractor or third party, it will be taken very seriously by the organization in the strongest possible terms with the contractor or third party.

5. COMMITTEE/MECHANISM FOR ENSURING DIVERSITY OF DIVERSITY

Committee dealing with DIVERSITY issues in the organization – are detailed here.

Mainstreaming approach

Mainstreaming is established as the overall strategy for promoting and strengthening equality in the organization.

Principles of mainstreaming

All voluntary organizations are mandated to fulfil this demand for mainstreaming of DIVERSITY in all their activities. The basic principles of mainstreaming are:

- Initial definitions of issues/problems across all areas of the human settlement field should be done in such a manner that differences and disparities are visible and diagnosed.
- Analysis should always be carried out in both recommendations to policy and planning as well as in operational areas of work before implementation and decisions are made by the organization.
- Systematic use of analysis, sex-disaggregated data and commissioning of sector-specific DIVERSITY studies and surveys are required for all areas of activity.
- Responsibility for implementing the mainstreaming strategy is system-wide, and rests at the highest level within the agency and its departments; and adequate accountability mechanisms for monitoring progress in the interventions need to be established within each and every area of work. The staff and management are also to be committed to promoting and ensuring their collaboration with partners and other agencies.
- Political will from senior management by providing competent leadership and enabling allocation of adequate resources for gender mainstreaming, including necessary additional financial and human resources in the implementation of the agenda.
- DIVERSITY mainstreaming requires that efforts be made to broaden such employee's equitable participation at all levels of decision-making within the human settlement field. In all

interventions of the organization, care will be taken to ensure that they are consulted equally with others and they are involved in projects, program and decision-making processes on an equal basis with all. It should also be ensured that assessments are made in every case of the likely impact of the activity on equality in the community served.

- A specific DIVERSITY mainstreaming strategy should be formulated, and priorities for its interventions should be established within every branch and unit within the program.
- Provision of training to all personnel at the headquarters and in the field is essential, as well as appropriate follow-up in order to strengthen competence and knowledge regarding DIVERSITY mainstreaming and awareness of staff and management.

Who is accountable and responsible for the implementation of the policy?

The responsibility for dealing with DIVERSITY issues is at the highest level of management. The head of the organization will always be ultimately accountable for the end result of the programme's work as well as its policy decisions, and the implementation of the such policy. However, the head of the organization will not be able to implement the direct demands of the policy. Therefore, to support staff in implementing the objectives of DIVERSITY issues, a unit should be established with the aim of building capacity and strengthening awareness within the programme. DIVERSITY specialists within the Unit will provide support to all levels of the programme in order to enable a better understanding of and attain policy objectives.

Another support function within the programme can be the DIVERSITY Task Force, consisting of focal points from all branches and divisions within the organization. The members can meet on a regular basis to discuss and develop strategies and institutional mechanisms for DIVERSITY mainstreaming within the organization. The conveyor of the task force, elected by the task force, takes part in senior management meetings in order to incorporate a neutral perspective in decision-making and the procedures at this level. The task force would also be responsible for assessing DIVERSITY mainstreaming work within the programme on an annual basis.

This implies that the head of the organization, together with senior management, has the overall responsibility to ensure that mainstreaming is implemented, and they are accountable for the outreach and impact of its objectives.

Committee— A committee is to be established to tackle the issues of DIVERSITY groups in the organization. The committee should involve employees and managers from all departments and at all levels. It is essential to make sure that every person and group in the organization is represented on the committee.

Key purpose of the committee: To institutionalize a culture of inclusion where accepting varied perspectives is an integral part of the organization, from daily decision making to strategic planning and career development.

Training: The organization should be committed to ensure that its staff and managers are trained in equality and diversity and adequate training is provided so that managers are able to operate this policy. Equality form an integral part of the organization's induction package. Managers are to ensure that all new entrants are made aware of this policy.

Responsibilities: All staff have a collective responsibility to ensure this policy is successfully implemented; there are also specific responsibilities within this. The board, head of the organization and senior management are responsible for:

- o Providing leadership on the equality and diversity strategy and policy, acting as overall champions to ensure the policy is implemented;

- o Communicating the strategy and policy, internally and externally

Managers at all levels are responsible for:

- ❖ Implementing the policy as part of their day-to-day management of staff and in applying employment policies and practices in a fair and equitable way;
- ❖ Ensuring equality issues are addressed in performance;
- ❖ Ensuring all staff act in accordance with the policy, providing necessary support and direction;
- ❖ Managing effectively and dealing promptly when investigating issues relating to potential discrimination;

Each employee is responsible for:

- ❖ Implementing the policy in their day-to-day work and in their dealings with colleagues and visitors;
- ❖ Ensuring their behavior is appropriate to the policy and that they treat people with respect and dignity;
- ❖ Not discriminating against other employees;
- ❖ Notifying their line manager of any concerns with regard to the conduct of other employees, service users, the public or third parties.

6. NON-COMPLIANCE WITH THE POLICY

The organization will not tolerate any behavior from staff which breaches this policy. Any such breaches should be regarded as misconduct and may lead to disciplinary action including dismissal from employment without notice.

7. REVIEW OF THE POLICY

It is to be ensured that the DIVERSITY policy is reviewed annually to take into account changes within the organization, legislation, etc. Often titles are changed within the working environment that is not reflected in policy; this may make it difficult for an individual to know whom they can turn to if they feel harassed or discriminated against.



**EXTRANEOUS
POLICIES**

COMMUNICATION POLICY

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to control and reduce the communication cost in an effective way. Telephones are the most convenient and fastest mode of communication but for long distance communication, they are expensive.

There are other modes for fast communication such as courier, fax or e-mail. And out of these, e-mail is fast and more affordable. NGO prefers to use e-mail for out of station correspondence to reduce the communication costs. Telephones can be used for local calls and in emergency for national & international long-distance calls. Internet service at the office can be used to download and send email and to conduct work-related research.

Guidelines

NGO provides the following guidelines to its staff to control telephone use.

- a. Telephone users are requested to keep their conversations short in order to keep the cost down and to keep the lines open for other people in and outside the office that need to use the telephone.
- b. In general, employees should avoid using phones for non-official calls and are encouraged to use STD/ISD facilities available outside the office. However, the non-official calls will be billed to employees at prevailing rates. To keep track of such calls, a record sheet is provided to each employee working in the office in order to make it easier to remember to record the long-distance calls (STD / ISD). All long-distance calls should be recorded on this sheet along with all required information and submit to the finance division each month.
- c. In order to minimize communication costs as much as possible, email should be used rather than fax or direct long-distance calls.
- d. Copies of all in-coming and out-going official communications (fax, letters sent or received) should be filed. The employees sending / receiving important e-mails should be responsible to print and file such e-mails. A copy should go in the central file system.
- e. Efforts should also be made to keep fax messages short and to send long documents by fax only in urgent cases.
- f. Regarding international phone calls, the need for the official call should be discussed verbally with the President , unless exceptional circumstances make this impractical

INTERNET AND EMAIL

Choice mail, email, and Internet usage assigned to an employee's computer or telephone extensions are solely for the purpose of conducting Organization activities. Some job responsibilities at the organization require access to the Internet and the use of software in addition to the Microsoft Office suite of products. Only people appropriately authorized, by organization may use the Internet or access additional software.

Internet Usage

Internet use is authorized to conduct organization activities only. Internet use brings the possibility of breaches to the security of confidential organizational information. Internet use also creates the possibility of contamination to the system via viruses or spyware. Spyware allows unauthorized people, outside the Company, potential access to Company passwords and other confidential information.

Removing such programs from the organization network requires IT staff to invest time and attention that is better devoted to progress. For this reason, and to assure the use of work time appropriately for work, we ask staff members to limit Internet use. Additionally, under no circumstances may organization computers or other electronic equipment be used to obtain, view, or reach any pornographic, or otherwise immoral, unethical or non-business - related Internet sites. Doing so can lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

E mail usage at Organization

Email is also to be used for organization activity only. Organization confidential information must not be shared outside of the organization, without authorization, at any time. You are also not to conduct personal activities using the organization computer or email. Keeping this in mind, the employees consider forwarding non-business emails to associates, family or friends. Non-activity related emails waste organization time and attention.

Emails That Discriminate

Any emails that discriminate against employees by virtue of any protected classification including race, gender, nationality, religion, and so forth, will be dealt with according to the harassment policy. These emails are prohibited at the organization. Sending or forwarding non-activity emails will result in disciplinary action that may lead to employment termination.

Organization owns employees Email

Keep in mind that the organization owns any communication sent via email or that is stored on organization equipment. Management and other authorized staff of the organization have the right to access any material in email or on computer at any time. The employees do not consider electronic communication, storage or access to be private if it is created or stored at work.

SECURITY POLICY

Purpose

The purpose of the security policy is to record and communicate the guiding principles and responsibilities that form the governing framework for security risk management. The policy provides managers and staff direction and guidance to enable organization's programme objectives to be effectively implemented while at the same time protecting (to the extent possible) organization's employees, reputation and assets from harm.

Applicability and Policy Implementation

The security policy applies to organization (as independent legal entities and employers), and their employees. In certain circumstances, and depending on the nature of the relationship, the policy may apply to associated personnel. The security policy shall be routinely implemented as part of program or operational management activities. The Security Protocol outlines the architecture by which security will be managed. It is acknowledged that the local operating context will influence how the security policy is put into practice, however the principles contained in the policy shall be reflected in local security and/or crisis management plans and procedures.

Principles

In the context of the Organization security policy, principles contain the overarching rules and beliefs that govern Organization's approach to security management. The principles are intended to provide clarity to certain policy positions and guide risk management decisions and actions.

Vision

Organization recognizes that working in complex environments may entail staff being present in insecure and violent contexts. Affiliates undertake to reduce the risk of operating in such environments by effective security management. Close collaboration of Affiliates in the management of security will lead to effective and efficient programme delivery, as well as seeking greater safety and security of staff and assets. This protocol outlines the architecture by which this vision will be realized through provision of principles, standards and guidance.

General agreements

1. Staff safety and security is a higher priority than the protection of material assets, the preservation of programmes or the expression of advocacy objectives.
2. Affiliates recognize the impact that their staff behavior, actions and programmes may have on Organization's overall reputation and brand and hold each other accountable.
3. Security management is an integral part of programme management and as such subject to systematic and methodical discussion at all levels.
4. The right of individual staff to withdraw from insecure situations is supported by all Affiliates.
5. In our humanitarian work, affiliates work according to the principles in the Code of Conduct for The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief.
6. Affiliates agree not to use armed guards and that staff will not carry or take up arms. However, the exceptional use of armed guards may be authorized by the Executive Director (ED) of the Managing Affiliate (MA), following a collective risk analysis and decision by all Affiliates

present. The ED will advise other Affiliate ED's present of the specific circumstances of the authorization.

7. Affiliates agree not to make statements or undertake activities that could compromise Organization's standing as an independent party, based on Organization's policies and principles, and sign-off systems and procedures.
8. Affiliates will respect the confidentiality of what has been shared with them.

Global Agreements

Affiliates must have a Global Security Policy and a Crisis Management Plan in place. The Organization Security Network Working Group monitors compliance on an annual basis, on behalf of the PDG. The Global Security Policy should be proportionate to the Affiliates mandate, programme and mode of operation. It should clearly articulate the expectations the Affiliate has of its employees and the responsibility the Affiliate assumes on behalf of its employees.

The Crisis Management Plan establishes arrangements and resources required to manage a critical security incident that is so complex or acute it cannot be managed adequately within the normal scale of operations. The plan provides a framework for necessary steps during such a crisis and its immediate aftermath.

LIST OF VANI PUBLICATIONS

- India's Development Cooperation with ASEAN (English & Hindi)
- Sustainability in the Context of Indian Civil Society Organisations (English & Hindi)
- Financing Sustainable Development on Civil Perspective on AIIB (English)
- C20 Engagement Strategy for India's Civil Society (English & Hindi)
- Study on Capacity Building and Need Assessment of Voluntary Organisations (English)
- Civic Charter in Indian Context (English & Hindi)
- Food Security and Agriculture (English & Hindi)
- India's Grants and Investment in Africa (English & Hindi)
- Poverty and Inequality on BRICS Nations (English & Hindi)
- Development and Approach of BRICS New Development Bank (English & Hindi)
- Towards Enabling Environment for the Voluntary Sector in India - A Study Report (English, Hindi & Assamee)
- Study on Implementation and Impact of Istanbul Principles in India (English)
- Financial Sector Reforms in India (English & Hindi)
- Self-Certification A Study Report (English)
- A Study Report on Three New Formations BIMSTEC, BBIN and Blue Economy (English & Hindi)
- Declaration for Responsible Governance & Management of VOs (Hindi & Hindi)
- Model Policy on Foreign Funding for Voluntary Organizations in India (English)
- Model Policy on Registration - A Study Report (English)
- Income Tax Act for The Voluntary Sector - A Study Report (English)
- India-Africa Partnership: A Civil Society Perspective (English)
- Development Finance and Cooperation in SSC with Special focus on India (English & Hindi)
- Status of Voluntary Organizations in Disturbed States - A Study Report (English & Hindi)
- Critical Review of Financial Inclusion - In G20 Countries with Focus on India (English & Hindi)
- Bringing People in from the Cold - Ensuring Inclusive Growth in India (English & Hindi)
- Corruption and Governance in India - Current Status and Way Forward (English & Hindi)
- Sustainable Development in India - Review and Way Forward (English & Hindi)
- Policy Brief of Revisiting the National Policy on Voluntary Sector and Need for A National Policy on Volunteering (English & Hindi)
- Enabling Environment of the Voluntary Sector in India A Study Report (English & Hindi)
- Status of the Voluntary Sector in India A Report (English)
- Civil Society Engagement in Aid Effectiveness Discourse (English)
- Changing Dynamics Between VOs and Private Sector (English)
- Involving Voluntary Organizations in Governments Plans and Projects (English)
- India's Global Footprints (English)
- India's Development Assistance: Trends, Challenges and Implications for CSOs
- India's Role in the G20: A Civil Society Approach (English)
- Model Policies for Internal Good Governance in Voluntary Organizations (English & Hindi)
- The Hand Book in Good Governance for the Voluntary Sector (English)
- Contribution and Challenges of Voluntary Organizations Working on Religious Minority A Primer of the Study Report (English & Hindi)
- Contribution and Challenges of Voluntary Organisations Working with Women A Primer of the Study Report (E& H)
- Role and Contribution of Voluntary Organisations in Health & Nutrition A Primer of the Study Report (English & Hindi)
- Challenges of the Grassroots Voluntary Organisations A Primer of the Study Report (English & Hindi)
- Role and Contribution of Voluntary Organisations on Water & Sanitation A Primer of the Study Report (English & Hindi)
- Contribution and Challenges of Voluntary Organizations Working with Dalits A Primer of the Study Report (English & Hindi)
- Contribution of CSR on Thematic Issues of Education, Health and Nutrition, and Water and Sanitation A Primer of the Study Report (English & Hindi)
- Revisiting the National Policy on Voluntary Sector and Need for a National Policy on Volunteering (English & Hindi)
- Civil Society Accountability Principles and Practice (India Toolkit) (English)

Civic Engagement Alliance

Civic Engagement Alliance (CEA)

Civic Engagement Alliance (CEA) : CEA is a strategic partnership programme supported by The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA). The partnership aims to ensure that in and by this partnership, the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and the civil society at large, both in the 'Global South' as well as the overall global context, can contribute to reducing inequality and injustice in societies for fair economic and social development. Central in this partnership are the women as (productive) actors in the communities as well as caretakers and consumers who have special needs. Under the CEA program, one of the important pathways is to create enabling space for the CSOs.

About Voluntary Action Network India (VANI)



Voluntary Action Network India (VANI) is an apex body of the Voluntary Organisations.

- Founded in 1988 to act as a promoter/Proector and collective voice of the voluntary sector.
- Base of 15000 non-governmental organisations spread in 25 states of india.
- Resource Center for publications, research work, articles, important, documents and information about and related to the voluntary sector.

Objectives:

- As a platform, to promote voluntarism and create space for voluntary action.
- As a network, attempt to bring about a convergence of common sectoral issues and concerns for building a truly national agenda of voluntary action in India. In addition, facilitate linkages of various efforts and initiatives of the India voluntary sector, which succeed in strengthening a united and sustainable movement of change.
- An association, work towards fostering value based voluntary action and log term sustainability especially amongst our members.

Areas of work

- Promoting practices of good governance in the voluntary sector.
- Articulating independent voices of the sector
- Research and advocacy of policies and law effecting the voluntary sector.

Voluntary Action Network India (VANI)

VANI HOUSE, 7, PSP Pocket,

Sector-8, Dwarka, New Delhi - 110 077

Phone: 011-49148610, 40391661, 40391663

Email: info@vaniindia.org Website: www.vaniindia.org