Resources and contacts

The People in Aid Code

The People in Aid Code is a tool to help organisations to improve their human resource management and enhance their capacity to fulfil their mission. The Code was developed in response to the human resources issues affecting organisations working in relief and development.

The guiding principle is that people are central to the achievement of an organisation's mission. People who work for an organisation deserve respect and good management, and an organisation's effectiveness and success depends on the contributions of all staff and volunteers.

1 **Human resources strategy** A human resources strategy is central to an organisation's strategy. An organisation's success depends on the fact that staff understand the part they play in achieving the organisation's objectives.

2 **Staff policies and practices** Human resources policies should be effective, fair and transparent. Policies must enable organisations to achieve both effectiveness in their work and good quality of working life for their staff.

3 **Managing people** Good support, management and leadership of staff is key to an organisation's effectiveness. Management policies, procedures and training equip managers to prepare and support staff in carrying out their role effectively, to develop their potential and to encourage and recognise good performance.

4 **Consultation and communication** Effective development, implementation and monitoring of human resources policies and practices rely on appropriate consultation and communication with the people who work for an organisation.

5 **Recruitment and selection** Policies and practices should aim to attract and select a diverse workforce with the skills and capabilities to fulfil an organisation's requirements.

6 **Learning, training and development** Relevant training, development and learning opportunities are important in helping staff to work effectively and professionally. An organisation's ability to meet its goals and objectives is significantly enhanced by an investment in learning.

7 **Health, safety and security** The security, good health and safety of staff are a prime responsibility of an organisation. Organisations have a duty of care to ensure the physical and emotional well-being of their staff before, during and on completion of their employment.

By implementing this Code, organisations show various stakeholders the quality of its human resource management. For example:

■ Staff and volunteers will recognise the efforts the organisation is making to improve the support and management provided to them

■ Potential staff and volunteers will see the organisation as an employer of choice

■ Donors will see evidence of a commitment to strengthening internal capacity and systems to improve quality of aid delivery.

■ Poor people will have the assurance that their needs are being met by competent and supported staff.

For more detailed information about the Code, information about becoming a member of People in Aid or to gain recognition for implementing the Code, look at the website **www.peopleinaid.org** or email **info@peopleinaid.org**.

Child protection

It is good practice to carry out a police check on staff and volunteers before they work directly with children. They should also receive information about child protection during their induction with the organisation. It is everyone's responsibility to minimise the risks to children, themselves and the organisation. Abuse is generally described in these broad categories:

- **Physical** e.g. hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, drowning or suffocating.

- **Sexual** e.g. forcing or tempting a child to witness or take part in an activity that is sexual in nature. This also includes using language related to sexual issues.

- **Neglect** e.g. failing to meet a child's basic physical and psychological needs, such as failing to feed, clothe or protect a child from harm.

- **Emotional** e.g. persistent emotional ill-treatment that causes harm to the child's emotional development such as telling a child they are worthless, unloved and inadequate which makes them frightened, and prone to exploitation or corruption.

It is helpful to write a child protection policy that sets out acceptable standards of behaviour of staff and volunteers, and provides advice on how to protect themselves, children and the organisation, and how to manage child protection issues when children raise them.

Key advice

1 Be visible to others when working with children, whenever possible.

2 Respect boundaries of children and keep your distance.

3 Be aware of situations which may present risks and manage these.

4 Plan and organise your work and workplace to minimise risk.

5 Be open. Create and maintain a non-defensive attitude and an open culture in which to discuss issues and concerns.

6 Create a culture of mutual accountability so that any potential abusive behaviour can be challenged.

7 Listen to children who say they have been abused, react calmly and ensure there is support for the child, such as getting urgent medical attention if necessary.

8 Report any concerns as soon as possible to those in authority so that the matter can be taken further.

9 Find out about national laws and guidance on child protection. In most countries, organisations are expected to report allegations of child abuse to the local police and the social services department for them to take further action.

Useful websites

Children's Rights
www.unicef.org

Keeping Children Safe training materials
www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk

Advice for Churches / Christian organisations
www.ccpas.co.uk

Staff in Humanitarian work
www.hapinternational.org

International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect
www.ispscan.org