

# Managing humanitarian personnel

**Good people management skills are central to the success of any organization. Failure in this area can lead to low motivation, poor performance and loss of good staff. This has a cost for the organization as well as negatively impacting on the quality of projects and on accountability to communities and to donors.**

Commitment 8 of the Core Humanitarian Standard states that ‘communities and people affected by crisis receive the assistance they require from competent and well-managed staff and volunteers’ and sets out the following:

## Guiding questions for monitoring Key Actions

- Are the organisation’s mandate and values communicated to new staff?
- Are staff performance managed, under-performance addressed and good performance recognised?
- Do staffs sign a code of conduct or similarly binding document? If so, do they receive orientation on this and other relevant policies which allows them to understand it properly?
- Are complaints received about staff or partners’ staff? How are they handled?
- Are staff aware of support available for developing the competences required by their role and are they making use of it?

## Guiding questions for monitoring Organisational Responsibilities

- Are procedures in place for assessing human resource needs in relation to programme size and scope, in conjunction with HR?
- Does organisational planning make provision for future leadership needs and for developing new talent?
- Do staff policies and procedures comply with local employment law and follow recognised good practice in managing staff?
- Does all staff have updated job descriptions and objectives, including specific responsibilities and objectives?
- Is the rewards and benefits structure fair, transparent and consistently applied?
- Is all staff provided with an induction and updates on performance management and staff development policies and procedures?
- Are all staff (and contractors) required to sign a code of conduct (that covers the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse) and provided with an appropriate induction on the code of conduct?
- Does the organisation have a security policy and guidelines which are location specific and known to staff?

## Scaling up human resource capacity

Prepare to:

- include staff capacity needs and recruitment plans in contingency planning
- develop succession plans
- develop ‘emergency’ recruitment procedures
- assemble basic orientation and briefing materials
- formalise handovers
- invest in developing capacity of junior staff
- develop talent management
- approach former staff or partners

## Working with volunteers

- Manage volunteer recruitment like staff recruitment with clear terms of reference and a thorough interview process
- Identify who will be responsible for managing volunteers.
- Make everyone aware of volunteer roles and responsibilities.
- Fully brief volunteers on entitlements and working conditions
- Ensure sufficient funds to cover e.g. transport, food
- Motivating and retaining volunteers is just as important as for staff

### Additional resources on All In Diary website

HR Toolkit for Small and Medium Nonprofit Actors © 2017  
Cornerstone ondemand/CHS Alliance  
Most Important Staffing Factors for Emergency Response © ECB 2006

### Web links for further information

CHS Alliance: <http://chsalliance.org>