Safety and Security
Policy

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Responsible			
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Introduction

Action for Humanity is a UK based registered charity working to provide humanitarian and development assistance to the most vulnerable population affected by disasters, conflicts and extreme poverty. Its vision is to be the leading charity combining humanitarian and development approaches in assisting affected people and marginalised communities in fragile contexts and crisis areas worldwide.

Action for Humanity employs hundreds of people around the world. Many of these people live and work in hazardous and insecure environments. As responsible employers, Action for Humanity acknowledges their obligations to provide, safe and secure workplaces.

Purpose

The purpose of this security policy is to record and communicate the guiding principles and responsibilities that form the governing framework for safety and security risk management.

The policy provides Representatives which include Trustees, Employees and Volunteers, at both headquarters and country offices, direction and guidance to enable Action for Humanity's programme objectives to be effectively implemented while at the same time protecting (to the extent possible) Action for Humanity's employees, reputation and assets from harm.

Governing documents

The security policy is complementary to the following governing documents:

- Action for Humanity Code of Conduct
- The Core Humanitarian Standards [1]
- The Code of Conduct for The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief[2]

Complementarity Manuals & Plans

The security policy forms part of the set of the following documents and agreements that Action for Humanity willingly commits to:

- **Action for Humanity's Safety and Security Manual[3]** – Action for Humanity's safety and security manual depicts the practical processes and procedures for implementing the safety and security policy
- **Action for Humanity's Annual Country Safety and Security Plan[4]-** A detailed annual plan will be developed by each country office in line with the processes depicted in the safety and security manual.
- **Action for Humanity's Crisis Management Plan[5]** – the principles and practicalities that guide management of any critical incidents and crises within the organisation**.** These are to be developed at both headquarters and country offices.

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[1] https://www.chsalliance.org/

[2] https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/who-we-are/the-movement/code-of-conduct/signatories-to-the-code-of-conduct/.   Action   for Humanity is a signatory

[3] Annexure G

[4] Annexure A

[5] Annexure E

- **Country Offices Safety and Security quarterly reports**[6] -Reports submitted on a quarterly basis listing any safety and security, incidents, changes in security levels and highlighting new or foreseeable safety and security risks.

Applicability and Policy Implementation

The security policy applies to Action for Humanity and their employees. In certain circumstances, and depending on the nature of the relationship, the policy may apply to associated personnel e.g. consultants, interns, volunteers etc. The security policy shall be routinely implemented as part of programmes and operational management activities. The Action for Humanity safety and security manual outlines the procedure by which safety and security will be managed. It is acknowledged that the local operating context will guide 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.

Approaches to Safety and Security Management

Safety and Security must be actively managed, not just planned for, and is most effective when fully integrated into programme and operational management. Managers must ensure security of persons and programs is given a high priority, through objective setting, key performance indicators and work planning/scheduling etc.

Acceptance approaches reduce or remove threats by gaining widespread acceptance (political and social consent) in the community for Action for Humanity's presence and activities. Building positive relationships and promoting understanding of Action for Humanity through establishing the organisations legitimacy as an impartial and independent humanitarian actor, achieves this.

Protection approaches aim to reduce risk by reducing vulnerability, through protective devices and operating procedures. Protective devices can be communications equipment, reliable vehicles, use of Action for Humanity's branding (e.g. displaying the logo), or perimeter protection for premises. These are to be included in country safety and security and crises management plans.

Deterrence approaches aim to reduce risk by containing or deterring the threat by applying a credible counter-threat (e.g. suspension or withdrawal of activities, or the use of armed guards *in exceptional and authorised circumstances only* or calling for military intervention)[7]. This approach is generally to be considered as a last resort and is decided according to specific procedures and authorisation levels detailed in the safety and security manual.

Fundamentals of the safety and security policy

The fundamentals contain the all-encompassing rules and beliefs that govern Action for Humanity's approach to security management. The principles are intended to provide clarity to certain policy positions and guide risk management decisions and actions.

These are listed below:

Duty of Care & Security of Personnel

Security of personnel (whether employees or others) shall always remain a higher priority than the protection of material assets, the preservation of programs or the protection of Action for Humanity's reputation.

Action for Humanity's duty of care is exercised through the application of the security policy, and other management policies and procedures. The systems developed to manage duty of care include (but are not limited

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[6] Annexure C

[7] Application to be made through the Armed Protection authorization form, Annexure F

to) informing employees about work-related risks, preparing employees to manage and treat risks, and seeking to ensure post-incident care (e.g. counselling for victims, their families, and/or colleagues) is available to employees.

Risk Ownership & Delegation

Security management is a line management responsibility in Action for Humanity. All employees and the various governing boards and executive officers are risk owners. Risks owners are defined as *"the persons with the decision making authority and accountability to manage risks."* [8]

The exact level of risk ownership, accountability and responsibility of these individuals or collective bodies will vary depending on their assigned roles and may be influenced by national laws or regulations concerning legal liabilities.

Informed Consent & Right to withdraw from duties and duty stations

All employees shall be informed of the foreseeable risks related to their role and their place of work by their respective line managers. By accepting the assigned duties after having been provided with relevant information, the employee is generally deemed to have provided their informed consent to accept these risks and the risk mitigation processes implemented by the employer.

Employees may decline to undertake an assigned duty if their individual risk tolerance is lower than that of their employer. Likewise, employees may withdraw from a location. If withdrawing from a duty station for security reasons, employees shall immediately inform their line manager and as soon as practical, record the reasons for the withdrawal. Such cases shall be subject to procedural review by the employer.

Individual Obligations to safety and security risks

Action for Humanity employees are obliged to work with their employers to manage risks and are responsible for taking reasonable and meaningful actions to manage their own safety and security. Individual behavior is key to an employee's own safety and security as well as that of the organisation, co-workers and the effect on program objectives. Negligent actions that create self-generated risks are likely to lead to dismissal or other disciplinary action. Safety & Security and Gender

Men and women can and often are affected differently by specific threats. Similarly, men and women may perceive risk differently because gender influences an individual's vulnerability to certain threats. Action for Humanity's security policy recognizes gender as a potential vulnerability factor when assessing risks. This may impact risk mitigation options e.g. deciding to deploy or not deploy only men or only women to a certain context for a specific program objective. Risk assessments, local security management plans and subsequent risk treatment options shall explicitly communicate how gender is considered within the local context for country offices and travel from headquarters.

Management of Information

Action for Humanity should act responsibly to ensure personal and other information is used, stored or disposed of appropriately, and should have regard to relevant regulatory requirements. Plans at headquarters will follow principles of GDPR. Local plan may also need to address privacy or data protection in terms of electronic networks, and/or hard copy files

Delegations, roles and responsibilities

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[8] **Risk owners** are the persons with the decision making authority and accountability to manage risks (ISO 31000/2009 & ISO Guide 73/2009)

The ownership, delegation of roles and responsibilities is detailed in the safety and security manual. In summary:

CEO, Chairman and Trustees

- Full implementation of Action for Humanity's safety and security policy
- Ensuring adequate resources are made available to address security management needs
- Ensuring a crisis management plan process is developed, implemented, and periodically tested
- Holding line managers and employees to account for individual behaviours and attitudes towards security risk management
- Timely reporting to governing bodies **Heads of Department-Headquarters**

Programmes:

- Ensuring safety and security management needs are identified and effectively communicated in program proposals and reports
- Identify safety and security risks along with mitigation in every project

Finance:
- Ensure safety and security management costs are reflected in proposal budgets and communicated to senior management e.g. CEO and trustees

Country Directors:

- Effectively delegating specific security management roles, tasks and functional responsibilities (whether to security-specific employees or others)
- Leading and managing the review and updating of local Safety and Security Plans for the country and field offices
- Contributing to establishing a local security information network

Line Managers – Generic:

Line managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring their staff and associated personnel have access to the safety and security policy and manual.
- Monitoring compliance to security policies, plans and procedures by their staff
- Reporting security incidents up and down their management line
- Identifying staff security training, learning and development needs and ensure access to the training (including appropriate planning and resourcing)

Individual Employees:

Action for Humanity employees are responsible for:

- Complying with all security policies, procedures, directions, instructions, regulations or plans
- Taking care of their own safety and security and of the staff they manage
- Actively contributing to the development and maintenance of security management policy and procedures
- Reporting security incidents up and down their management line

Security Levels:

Action for Humanity's security management and actions shall be guided by assessing foreseeable risks in each

operating context. A detailed security level table has been developed for reference[9].

Country Safety and Security Plans

Annual Country Safety and Security plans (CSSP) will be developed and shared by all country offices. These CSSP's will be subject to periodic review in line with the quarterly safety and security report to ensure the information remains current and up to date. These plans shall be accessible to all employees and associated personnel working in the operating context relevant to the plans. These plans and all associated documents must be translated into the appropriate working language.
The Crisis Management Plan

The crises management plan establishes procedure and required resources to manage a critical safety or security incident that is extremely acute e.g. kidnap, and 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.

Security Incident Reporting

All security incidents, including minor incidents, must be reported immediately via the Serious incident reporting (SIR) mechanism.

Reporting of SIRs in the UK:

All serious incident reports are submitted to the board of trustees and the charity commission in the United Kingdom.

Reporting of SIRs in the country of operation:

As the country offices are locally registered, the Country Directors at the country level will follow local laws and report serious incidents to the relevant regulatory authorities as per their requirements.
Safety and Security Protocols

Action for Humanity recognises that working in complex environments may entail staff being present in insecure and violent contexts. Hence the organisation has developed detailed safety and security protocols which are detailed in the safety and security manual. This safety and security protocol is mandatory by all country offices.

Agreements

This policy entails the following agreements

General agreements

1. Staff safety and security is a higher priority than the protection of material assets and the preservation of various programmes.
2. Staff recognise the impact that their staff behaviour, actions and programmes may have on Action for Humanity's overall reputation and brand, and hold each other accountable.
3. The right of individual staff to withdraw from insecure situations is supported by all staff.
4. All staff 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 authorised for country offices by the CEO following a collective risk analysis and decision. This will only be requested through an application. The process is detailed in the safety and security manual.

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[9] Annexure B

5. All staff agree not to make statements or undertake activities that could compromise Action for Humanity's standing as an independent entity
6. All staff, consultants and volunteers will respect the confidentiality of what has been shared with them.

Country level agreements

1. The Country Director (CD) in consultation with the safety and security focal person and managers present in that country, is responsible for ensuring an appropriate security management mechanism is in place.
2. The process includes an annual country safety and security Plan (CSSP) (details in the safety and security manual) that applies to everyone in country. The creation and maintenance of the CSSP is a consultative, participatory and collaborative effort to ensure ownership and compliance. The CSSP must be reviewed every year or more frequently if the security context changes significantly.
3. As part of the CSSP, the CD is also responsible for ensuring the development of security levels according to the agreed five levels system (details in the safety and security manual). Although the security levels headings are fixed, the indicators and actions must be made context and risk specific.
4. Where possible the CD consults in order to set the appropriate security level. However, the CD has the express right to set the security level including the evacuation of staff for all offices. The decision is binding on all staff and they must comply.
5. The right of staff to withdraw from locations because of insecurity, prior to such a decision by the CD, is supported by all staff.
6. Certain tasks may be delegated to a focal person for practical reasons, but the responsibility cannot be delegated.
7. As Action for Humanity has field offices, location specific plans must be developed and maintained by the appropriate staff. The CD ensures quality and consistency with the overarching CSSP.
8. The safety and security focal person is responsible for ensuring that all staff and visitors comply with the security management system.
9. The CD is held accountable by the CEO and has the right and duty to report any concerns about the functioning of security management to the board of trustees.
10. Should staff members disagree about security management issues they can take their concerns to their line management or the CD.
11. If issues cannot be resolved by the CD, they should be escalated to headquarters, initially the Head of Programmes and then to the CEO.

Despite the process outlined above; urgent decisions may be taken by the CD and are binding. Escalation to headquarters and the CEO may take place simultaneously, but the urgent decision is binding and applied immediately.

Policy review

The comprehensive review of the policy will take place on yearly basis; however, the Trustees may ask to review the policy in the middle of the year to ensure policy is consistent and effective.