

PPRD East 2

Set of Templates and Guidelines for
Certification of Civil Protection Volunteer
Organisations



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Introduction

During the 2nd phase of the PPRD East Programme, most of the Programme's Partner Countries (PCs) launched development of national legislative and institutional frameworks for civil protection volunteerism (CPV). Integral part of these frameworks should be, *inter alia*, procedures for certification of CPV organisations as it is inevitable to guarantee that all CPV organisations meet requirements set up in the national legislation. As a part of this certification procedure, the CPV organisations need to develop and submit a number of policies and documents which proves that the CPV organisation implement high quality standards of volunteers' management according to the national legislation, and is eligible to conduct volunteer activities in the civil protection field.

To facilitate the process of certification procedure development in PCs, and to harmonise their conditions and parameters amongst the PCs themselves and between the PCs and EU, the PPRD East 2 Programme adapted this Set of Templates and Guidelines that were developed under EU funded BE DRIN project (www.bedrin.eu) for certification and registration of volunteer organisations in the EU Aid Volunteers (EUAV) initiative.

Additionally, when a CPV organisation decides to become part of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative, it can apply to become either sending (SO) or hosting organisation (HO). This application process includes also certification of the organisation by an Evaluation Committee established by the EU Commission.

To be certified as the sending organisations, the CPV organisation will need to complete an evidence-based self-assessment form, showing that they comply with and commit to all the standards and procedures of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative, in areas such as duty of care rule, health and safety, equality rules, amongst others.

To be certified as the hosting organisations, the CPV organisation will need to complete a self-assessment form and submit it together with three references, in order to demonstrate their capacity to comply with and commit to the requirements of the EU Aid Volunteers initiative.

For the complete self-assessment form, regulations, requirements visit the EUAV website:

https://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/eu-aid-volunteers_en

Social and professional recognition

The institutional recognition of a volunteer is fundamental for the long-term affiliation and support to an organization. The following are suggestions on how to encourage it in very practical terms:

1. helping your volunteers to demonstrate what they know, what they learned, what they have achieved

a. **Training:** develop a template for a certificate to attest participation to a training program.

Include:

- your logo and/or logo of the project under which the training took place and logos of other organisations or public bodies involved
- name of the volunteer/employee that attended the training
- course title or brief description of the subject matter or objective of the training
- dates the training took place
- if there was a final test, it is possible to include also test results, as in any academic certificate
- signature of the person responsible for training activities within the organization or head of the organization.

b. **Participation in a project or activity:** develop a template for a certificate to attest participation in a project or activity. Include the same kind of information as above. Instead of the course title, include title of the project or brief description of the activity. It is possible to indicate also the function or role the person discharged (logistician, facilitator, mentor, etc.)

c. **Letters of reference:** provide letters of reference for your volunteers/trainees/employees

Devise a format for a letter, on the organization's letterhead and signed by the person in charge or by the supervisor/mentor, in which you include:

- name of the volunteer/employee/trainee
- dates of the time the person worked/volunteered for your organisation and in what capacity
- skills the person acquired and tasks that were assigned to him/her
- evaluation of his/her results
- recommendations for aspects to be improved, if any
- possible employment for which the acquired experience and skills would qualify the volunteer/employee/trainee
- contacts of the organisation and/or the person writing the reference

RECOMMENDATION: Attach to the certification application samples of these templates, to show how you would provide professional recognition and contribute to employability of your volunteers

2. help your volunteers to feel good about their experience and about being part of a community

Foster a sense of belonging by including them in social activities: social dinners, celebrations of important moments in the organisation's life or history, get togethers etc. If you send out seasonal greetings, include them in the address list, etc.

Include them in the external communication of the organisation. In this day and age, this means having a social media policy to regulate use of the social media, since your volunteers will be associated with your organisation on these very public forums. It takes some effort to devise a social media policy and

implement it, but it's worth it. The social media nowadays are how people stay connected and involvement in the social media is a great way to help your volunteers feel they are part of the life of the organization and that they are valued.

RECOMMENDATION: If you have a social media policy or want to devise one and have at least a working draft of it, attach it to the certification application to show how you provide social recognition to volunteers

3. keep in touch with your volunteers and keep them involved

The EUAV programme requires sending and hosting organizations to help volunteers stay connected with EUAV activities.

Keep an updated mailing list of your current and past volunteers (and/or use social media) to let them know about conferences, workshops, new projects and other activities that relate to their experience as volunteers. Ask them to attend these and report or write about it on your social media. If new opportunities for volunteering arise, ask them if they want to take part.

RECOMMENDATION: write a short description of how you plan to keep in touch with your volunteers and to keep them involved with your own organisation and with EUAV activities.

This outline is not meant as an exhaustive treatment of the topic at hand but only as a work tool to facilitate understanding of requirements.

Debriefing Template

Once a volunteer has been deployed, both during an emergency or in peace time, it is fundamental to keep track of his/her activities. A debriefing (written or oral), after the activity is a great exercise that can provide information for lessons learned, and data for the population of a database or for the development of statistics (i.e. no. of hours worked, days of deployment, main activities implemented by the volunteers...).

Debrief Purpose	
Date:	
Time:	
Duration:	
Location:	
Room Set-up:	
Facilitated by:	
Topics:	
Welcome	
General overview of the process	
Issues to be covered	
Activities/objectives of the deployment	Indicators
e.g. training of first responders	How many persons have been trained? How many training have been performed?
Supervisor's reflections	
Volunteer's reflections	
Questions to be reflected on: What, for me, were the most positive aspects of the deployment? What, for me, were the most negative aspects of the deployment? For me the most significant thing I have learnt during this event has been...	

Function	Projects
HO representative	
Line Manager	
Media	
Logistics	
HO focal point	
Safety & Security	
Communications	
Administration	
What will happen to the output	
How to ensure sustainability	
Conclusion	

Handover Briefing Template

In the case of long lasting emergencies or activities the turnover of volunteers could be required. In this case handover procedures, exemplified in this template, provide the necessary information for the incoming team to rapidly understand the situation and start operating promptly.

Handover Briefing:	
Date:	
Time:	
Duration:	
Location:	
Facilitated by:	
Visual Aids:	

Welcome & Introduction of Hosting Organizations and Volunteers
HO and Volunteers Personal Needs
Where will the team sleep? Where do they get safe food & water? How do they pay for things – ATM Cash, Travellers Cheques, Credit / Debit Cards
Safety & Security
UN Security Status National Security Status Any security incidents / crime
Top Priorities

Current top 5 priorities

Main Tasks being developed

What plans are currently being developed?

Handover of Critical Data / Documents / Equipment

Passwords, Contact Numbers, Email Accounts, Door Entry Codes, Passes

Final Questions

Conclusion

Outline of a policy on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults

Certain volunteer organisations (VO) are set up and focus to assist or take care for those who are particularly vulnerable it means children or young people under 18 years of age and/or adults who are in need of receipt of a regular support and/or elderly people. Volunteer organisations are responsible for ensuring that those vulnerable groups/individuals who are benefiting from or working with their organisation are not harmed in any way. The VO have a legal duty to act prudently with fully respect to the rights and dignity of these groups and this means that they must take all reasonable steps within their power to ensure that this does not happen. Moreover, such a policy is mandatory for the certification of the Hosting Organization accordingly to the EU Aid Volunteer self-assessment. An outline is herewith presented covering the main points.

1. Introduction (why is the policy adopted and what is its purpose) and declaration of your organization's position on this topic. *The certification requires a position of "zero tolerance" which should include sexual abuse.*

Example:

[Organisation name] is committed to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults from all forms of mistreatment or abuse, including sexual abuse. No form of mistreatment or abuse will be tolerated or ignored.

If your organization has an existing code of conduct that indicates the appropriate behaviour to be adopted with children and vulnerable adults, or if such a code is in the process of being defined, include also a reference to the code of conduct.

2. Definitions: define what is meant by mistreatment / abuse / sexual abuse and define who are the persons protected by the policy. Make reference to any applicable national regulations.

3. Indicate who is required to follow the policy. E.g. managers, employees, organization volunteers, contractors, partners, EUAV volunteers etc.

4. Indicate who is responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented:

E.g. identify a person (director / president, person in charge of personnel, other person specifically appointed by the organization) that has the responsibility to make sure that the policy is followed.

5. Indicate how you plan to make sure that the policy is known by all concerned -

E.g. ensure that the policy is on the organization's website if it has one, in the documentation that is delivered to employees, volunteers, contractors etc. as soon as possible (when first coming in contact with the organization or at least when they join or take part in the organization's activities) and is among the topics covered in the training / information / preparation / orientation courses held by your organization.

This certification requires also that the organization is committed to creating an open environment in which these topics are discussed clearly.

6. Establish a procedure to follow in order to report an incident (or a suspected incident) of mistreatment / abuse / sexual abuse:

- a. timeframe for reporting
- b. to whom it should be reported
- c. how to submit a report (e.g. there may be a specific chain of command to follow, or a form to guide the person who does the reporting in regard to the details that should be reported - where, who, when, what, who was present, etc.)
- d. include ways of protecting confidentiality

Indicate the actions that the person responsible for receiving the report (step 6 b) should put in place: e.g. open an internal investigation, notify the governing bodies of the organization, alert social services, forward the report to the competent authorities etc.

Important: This procedure must take into account the country's regulations (e.g. If the law imposes an obligation to immediately report an incident of this nature to the authorities, the timing required by law must be taken into account in devising the procedure)

7. Indicate what action will be taken as a result of an incident report. In addition to reporting to the competent authorities, there must also be a clear indication of the sanctions imposed by the organization internally. *The certification requires a "zero tolerance" position: those who have committed an abuse must not be allowed to repeat it and the penalties must be sufficiently severe and fit to prevent repetition of the abuse.*

8. Provide guidance on how to behave towards the victim. At a minimum, the policy should include the obligation to ensure that the victim is kept safe and give guidance on how to support victims

9. Ensure that anyone who reports an abuse (whistle-blower) will be supported and protected from threats, attempts at revenge, exclusion or other negative consequences.

10. Include the date on which the policy is adopted, by which organism of the organization it was approved, when it enters into force and ensure that the policy is integrated with the existing rules / guidelines / codes of conduct and within the training programs implemented by the organization.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- use simple and plain language - the policy must be accessible to all interested parties. Using language that everyone can understand is one of the main ways to ensure that the content of the policy is known and applied by all concerned.

- policies can be integrated and changed over time. You might want to start with a policy that is complete but not overly complex or detailed; it can always be integrated later on the basis of the evidence gathered during the implementation.

- use, as much as possible, a participatory approach, involving those who will have to implement and apply the policy - this way, you will avoid establishing a policy that is far away from the reality of the organization and that may not be applied because it is not realistic or does not fit the needs of your organization.

The certification application requires only a commitment to establish a policy. However, showing that you are already working on one and attaching even a preliminary draft on which the organization is discussing will show your commitment and give strength to your application.

Outline with basic content for an equal opportunity and non-discrimination policy

Volunteering organisations must commit to eliminate discrimination and promote equality and diversity in its own policies, practices and procedures and in those areas in which they operate. This applies to the organisations' staff and volunteers. Both local volunteers and hosted volunteers should be treated equally and with same attention, courtesy and respect regardless of their disability, gender, marital status, race, racial group, ethnic or national origin, nationality, religion or belief or sexual orientation. Moreover, such a policy is mandatory for the certification of the Hosting Organization accordingly to the EU Aid Volunteer self-assessment. An outline is herewith presented covering the main points.

1. Introduction:

Purpose (why the policy is being adopted and what it's for) and Statement of Principle: a declaration of the organization's position concerning equal opportunity and non-discrimination.

Please note that the EU prohibits discrimination based on gender, age, race, ethnic origins, religion and personal beliefs, sexual orientation, social standing, marital status and disability.

In order to satisfy these requirements, therefore, your policy must cover at least these categories.

2. Definitions:

Define which behaviours are prohibited under your policy.

Discriminatory behaviour is generally defined as follows:

- unwanted behaviour or unfavourable treatment motivated by the fact that the person belongs to one of the categories covered by the policy

Harassment is generally defined as a discriminatory behaviour that creates a hostile, intimidating or non-inclusive environment

3. Scope:

- specify who is required to act in accordance with the policy: for example, your managers, employees, volunteers, partners, consultants, EUAV volunteers, subcontractors, etc.
- specify which aspects of your organization's activities fall under the policy.

The EUAV initiative requires that all aspects of its volunteers' experience be protected from discrimination, including recruitment and selection, training and development, codes of conduct, performance management, living and working conditions, particularly payment and conditions for early termination of the volunteer engagement.

In order to satisfy the above requirements, therefore, your policy must cover at least these aspects of the volunteer's experience.

4. Implementation and dissemination

Describe how your organization will ensure that the policy is implemented and known to all concerned.

For example,

ensuring that the policy is published on the organization's web site or other public channels;

establishing that a copy of the policy is handed to all concerned at the earliest opportunity (when first coming in contact with the organisation or, at the latest, when they join the organisation or begin participating in its activities);
integrating the policy within existing regulations and training programs.

5. Management of complaints

Describe how complaints will be handled and who is responsible for receiving them and taking action. Preferably, prescribe specific steps to follow up on a complaint and indicate the office, section or person/s within the organisation who are tasked with each step.

6. Protection of whistle-blowers

The policy should include the organisation's commitment to protect those who come forward to report an incident from any negative consequences.

This is an outline, not meant to be exhaustive, but provided as a work tool to facilitate the partner in defining the procedures needed to meet certification requirements.

Living and working conditions

This template summarises in practical terms what you need to provide to volunteers to ensure adequate living and working conditions to them.

WHAT KIND OF ACCOMMODATION DO YOU NEED TO PROVIDE FOR A VOLUNTEER?

A clean room, which can be locked
Access to a bathroom and clean water

Ex. Room with a host family, single housing, shared apartment with other volunteers

Housing must be located at a reasonable distance from the workplace.
Take into account language issues when determining housing allocation.
Allow interaction with other expatriates and facilitate inclusion within the local community.
Be sure to provide means to communicate with the SO, the HO and relatives.

The HO interacts with the landlord and, where possible, takes care of payments of housing costs, heating and other related costs.

The accommodation and its location must be in accordance with the procedures to ensure health, safety and security that have been agreed with the SO.

WHAT IS NEEDED?

- a person that deals with finding accommodation for volunteers and takes care of relations with the landlord, facilitates inclusion, etc.
- information material for volunteers mentioning all the practical information needed to facilitate inclusion and to ensure security and safety in accordance with the procedures of health, safety and security.
- a part of the induction process dedicated to living and working conditions in which volunteers receive information in person and can obtain clarifications, have a chance to specify any special requirements (i.e. volunteers with disabilities), ask questions, etc.

WORKING CONDITIONS

The working conditions are defined together with the VO on the basis of the procedures normally applied by the VO and must be discussed and agreed with the volunteers. There are however some minimum standards to be respected.

Working hours

No more than 40 hours / week.
Work schedule must leave room for the development goals of the volunteer defined in the tasks assignment and the performance objectives.

In addition to complying with national laws and EU directives (Directive 2003/88 / EC), overtime should be negotiated with the volunteer and take into account his/her needs for physical and psychological well-being.

Leave

No less than 2 days of leave per month.

Treatment must be equivalent to that of local staff employed in similar jobs.

Must include: ordinary leave, sick leave, home leave (if the deployment period is over 18 months), leave to be with the family or maternity/paternity leave (on the request of a volunteer whose deployment exceeds 6 months; it also includes home leave in case of volunteers with children under 12 years of age), special leave in case of bereavement or serious illness of parents, children, brothers / sisters, spouse or registered partner of the volunteer.

Cumulating leave at the beginning or at the end of the deployment period is discouraged.

Workspaces

The volunteer must be provided a work space of his/her own that reflects the assigned tasks and is in accordance with the procedures agreed with the SO in order to ensure safe, secure and healthy working conditions.

This outline is not meant as an exhaustive treatment of the topic at hand but only as a work tool to facilitate understanding of requirements.