Code of Good Practice
Comhlámh

CODE of GOOD PRACTICE

2019-2021

Development workers & volunteers in global solidarity

Comhlámh

1. OUR VALUES:

SOLIDARITY

Solidarity is about interconnectedness and interdependence, and taking longer-term action in partnership on issues identified by those most affected. It involves a recognition of power differentials and acting to empower people.

Volunteer Sending Agencies work to support change in relation to the issues identified as priorities by those that are most affected.

Volunteer Sending Agencies operate in sustainable and equal partnerships with the organisations and local communities they work with, ensuring that volunteers and staff recognise power differentials and commit to equal relationships and mutual support.

RESPECT

Respect is about openness and flexibility in the way we think and act. It involves empathy, humility, having a reflective and critical awareness of ourselves and others and of structures and systems.

Volunteer Sending Agencies work to create contexts where people of different identities, beliefs, understandings and situations live in harmony.

Volunteer Sending Agencies operate in a manner that is critically reflective in ensuring respect between colleagues; between the agency and its staff and volunteers; between the agency and the partner organisations and local communities with whom it works; between volunteers and partner organisations; and between the agency and the public.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Social justice is about recognising our common humanity and our diversity. It involves a commitment to systemic change to advance freedom, protection of human rights and equality of outcomes, particularly in economic terms and in power relations.

Volunteer Sending Agencies work to address the root causes of poverty and exclusion.

Volunteer Sending Agencies operate in a manner that recognises, identifies and responds to structural and systemic inequalities.

ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY

Ecological sustainability is about understanding ourselves as integrated with and impacting on the environment whilst recognising and acting on our individual and collective responsibility in this regard.

Volunteer Sending Agencies work to ensure a positive relationship between their work and the world they seek to sustain and to have a positive impact by enabling sustainable action and promoting resilience.

Volunteer Sending Agencies operate in a sustainable manner that assesses, takes account of and minimises their impact on the natural world when carrying out their projects.

INTEGRITY

Integrity is about honesty, transparency, quality, and accountability. It involves ensuring actions and behaviours are in tune with the values held by the organisation.

Volunteer Sending Agencies work to establish and advance organisations characterised by good governance, multi-directional accountability, and a capacity to accept critiques and implement change to improve practice.

Volunteer Sending Agencies operate in a manner that is honest and transparent in their actions, and accountable to the general public, donor organisations, and partner organisations and local communities with whom they work.

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Comhlámh

2. THE PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDE OUR WORK:

SOLIDARITY

PRINCIPLE 1: The programmes, projects and volunteer roles of our organisation are based on sustainable, mutual, and equal partnerships which recognise and address power differentials between our organisation and those we work with.

PRINCIPLE 2: The programmes, projects and volunteer roles of our organisation are based on aims and objectives that are mutually agreed with local communities and partners, are aligned with priorities identified by and valuable to local communities, and that are sustainable.

PRINCIPLE 3: Our organisation enables ongoing commitment to, understanding of, and engagement by volunteers in issues of global development through development education approaches.

RESPECT

PRINCIPLE 4: Our organisation accepts and values the diversity and individuality of volunteers and provides for their varying support needs.

PRINCIPLE 5: Our organisation ensures respect between the people in our organisation and between the organisation (staff, volunteers, contracted or other personnel) and the local community and partners involved in its work.

PRINCIPLE 6: Our organisation brings an understanding of diversity to bear in planning and implementing its programmes and projects that responds to the different identities of people within the local community and operates in a manner that is sensitive to and takes account of this diversity.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

PRINCIPLE 7: Our organisation pursues programmes and projects that seek to address the root causes of injustice, poverty and inequality.

ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY

PRINCIPLE 8: Our organisation acts to ensure a positive relationship between its work and the world it seeks to sustain, to enable sustainable action by and resilience within local communities and partners, and to support volunteer roles that take account of their impact on the natural world and minimise any negative impact.

INTEGRITY

PRINCIPLE 9: Our organisation ensures honesty and transparency in its work, enables quality in its programmes, implements appropriate volunteer recruitment procedures, and ensures an accountability to local communities and partners, the general public and donors, and members, staff and volunteers.

PRINCIPLE 10: Our organisation takes steps to ensure the protection, safety and well-being of volunteers and to underpin their informed commitment to, understanding of and engagement in their role.

PRINCIPLE 11: Our organisation takes steps to prohibit, prevent, and address inappropriate behaviour by staff, volunteers, contracted or other personnel, in relation to children, vulnerable adults and the local community.

PRINCIPLE 12: Our organisation is committed to child-safe volunteering.

PRINCIPLE 13: Our organisation gives expression to, promotes and communicates the values of solidarity, respect, integrity, social justice and ecological sustainability through its plans, policies, procedures and practices.

All Code volunteer sending agencies are on a journey of continuous improvement in implementing the Code standards. Progression is awarded by a Code icon which reflects an organisation's growth and stage along this journey.

VALUE: SOLIDARITY

PRINCIPLE 1: The programmes, projects and volunteer roles of our organisation are based on sustainable, mutual, and equal partnerships which recognise and address power differentials between our organisation and those we work with.

Indicators

1.1 We collaborate with local partners and communities in developing, implementing and evaluating our programmes - in particular in volunteer recruitment, training, and placement; and in developing and reviewing materials for programme promotion.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Analysis and/or workshop plan between the Volunteer Sending Agency (VSA) and the local partner to identify power differentials;

- Correspondence between the VSA and the local partner which detail collaborative approaches to developing volunteer programmes (e.g. minutes of meetings, shared workshops, email correspondence);

- Partnership agreements/memorandum of understanding (MOU) which reflect collaboration between the VSA and local partners for the implementation of the overall volunteer programme;

- Partnership agreements/MOUs/programme plans between the VSA and local partners which identify specific roles of the VSA and local partners in the recruitment, training and placement of volunteers and in regular evaluation processes;

- Communications which reflect collaboration between the VSA and local partner relating to recruitment and selection of volunteers;

- Agreements/ programme plans which detail collaborative arrangement between the VSA and local partners for the development and review of promotional materials;

- Correspondence which reflects collaborative approach between the VSA and local partners for the development of materials and review of materials; ensuring that materials are reviewed at grassroots level;

- Promotional materials translated to local language(s) of local partners and surrounding community;

- Promotional messages, materials and channels of communication that are ethnically, culturally and linguistically sensitive; and sensitive to diverse gender identities, sexual identities, religions and to age, disability, socio-economic or any other status.

Indicator

1.2 Our programme plans and budgets explicitly note how resources and support are provided to local partners and include a focus on the sustainability of the local partner organisation and the programme in which the volunteer is involved.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Annual programme plans, reports, tenders or budgets that outline resources and supports provided to local partners;

- Annual programme plans, reports, tenders or budgets that outline/demonstrate:
    - measures to ensure that funds are spent efficiently;
    - efforts to make projects more sustainable;
    - support for the local economy;
    - transfer of skills and use of local talent;
    - support for training of volunteers in-country.

- Annual programme plans, reports, tenders or budgets that outline/demonstrate:
    - capacity/training needs of local partners, and plans to address these needs;
    - volunteer placements targeted at capacity development of local partners

        and/or to increase knowledge and critical understanding of global justice issues and to promote and enable continuous engagement of volunteers.

- Programme agreements/MOUs that outline:
    - VSA commitments measured against partner organisation's expectations;
    - Steps taken to deliver programmes consistently when volunteer numbers and capacity may be inconsistent from year to year.

PRINCIPLE 2: The programmes, projects and volunteer roles of our organisation are based on aims and objectives that are mutually agreed with local communities and partners, are aligned with priorities identified by and valuable to local communities, and that are sustainable.

Indicators

2.1 We collaborate with local partners and communities to ensure programme design, planning, implementation and evaluation are mutually agreed, are aligned with priorities identified by and valuable to local communities, and seek to be sustainable.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Detailed needs assessment in communities carried out by local partner or in collaboration with the VSA used for programme planning, implementation and evaluation;
- Participatory needs based assessments carried out at the community level used for programme planning, implementation and evaluation;
- Needs assessment of organisational and or programme capacity of local partner and/or VSA and identification of how the volunteer programme and volunteer roles aim to work to build capacity; and/or increase knowledge and critical understanding of global justice issues and promote and enable continuous engagement;
- Situation analysis by the VSA to identify context and needs in order to identify particular local partners which work according to the priorities of the local communities and seek to be sustainable;
- Documents of shared planning, implementation and evaluation processes between the VSA and local partner (minutes of meetings, shared workshops emails etc).

2.2 We work with local partners to provide training, induction and mentoring to volunteers.

Suggested Evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- MOUs/volunteer programme work plans which detail local partner involvement in the induction, training and mentoring of volunteers

- Documents reflecting collaboration between the VSA and local partner in developing and planning of training, induction and mentoring programmes that reflect a sharing of values, methodology and content

- Local partner induction and training plans / inputs from local partner in induction, training and mentoring plans

- Attendance list/report on volunteer's participation in induction, training and mentoring provided by local partners

- Feedback from volunteers on the induction, training and mentoring they received from local partners

- Feedback from local partners on successes and challenges in carrying out induction, training and mentoring

- Documents outlining shared and regular review and evaluation processes between the VSA and local partner.

PRINCIPLE 3: Our organisation enables ongoing commitment to, understanding of, and engagement by volunteers in issues of global development through development education approaches.

Indicators

3.1 We support and enable volunteers to engage with global development issues, including issues of social justice and ecological sustainability before, during and after their placement.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Partnership agreement/MOU between the VSA and the local partner detailing the inclusion of development education as an integral aim and part of the volunteer programme;

- Training plans/outlines for development education workshops between the VSA and the local partner;

- Promotion, direct advertisement and recruitment messaging and processes detail that development education is a key part of the overall volunteer programme, including at pre-departure, placement and post return stages;

- The VSA's website links to:
    - Comhlámh's website sections including 'Issues to Consider' https://comhlamh.org/issues-to-consider/ and 'Trainings and Courses' https://comhlamh.org/training-and-courses/; Comhlámh's online pre-decision and post return courses, 'Where Do I Start' https://comhlamh.org/where/ and 'What Next' https://volunteeringforthefuture.com/;
    - Irish Development Education Association (IDEA) website;
    - Other development education organisations and/or resources.

- Procedures for/evidence of signposting volunteers to Comhlámh's supports and Coming Home Guide and weekends, trainings, online courses and member activist groups through:
    - Training, induction and placement plans;
    - Volunteer information pack;

- Volunteer manual;
- Records of email contact with volunteer.

■ Training, induction and placement plans which include development education on global development, social justice and ecological sustainability by the VSA and/or local partner;

■ Qualifications and experience of VSA personnel responsible for delivering training;

■ Records/certificates of attendance of VSA personnel attending development education courses (including skills development and training for trainers), seminars and conferences;

■ Use of self-guided learning plans including Comhlámh's Volunteering for the Future Training Companion https://volunteeringforthefuture.com/resources/;

■ VSA participation in Comhlámh's Volunteering and Development Education Working Group; or Dóchas Development Education Working Group or membership of IDEA;

■ Tracking sheet showing volunteers' participation in development education workshops and courses, including online and webinar courses and discussions;

■ Resources and supports provided to enable volunteer reflection on experiences and placement, including:

- Distribution of Comhlámh's Learning Journal and/or Volunteer Charter;
- Facilitation of blog post and/or podcast etc.

■ Post return provision of information and promotion of trainings on global development, social justice and ecological sustainability;

■ Accreditation or award that reflects engagement on global justice issues at home (e.g. Global Citizenship Award, #SDG Challenge, university and engagement awards or other accreditation arising from their volunteering.

■ Tracking of volunteers' ongoing involvement in global justice issues.

VALUE: RESPECT

PRINCIPLE 4: Our organisation accepts and values the diversity and individuality of volunteers and provides for their varying support needs.

Indicators

4.1 We do not discriminate, we take steps to prevent all forms of harassment and sexual harassment and bullying, and we make reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities. Our work reflects a commitment to promoting best practice in equality, inclusivity and diversity.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Equality statement(s) of the VSA and local partners;
- Equality, diversity, inclusivity and non-discrimination policies and procedures which reflect (at a minimum) the 9 grounds for non-discrimination under Irish equality legislation;
- Equality proofing mechanism/checklist to ensure all policies and programmes take into account the likely impact on a group, including on the basis of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race/ethnicity and membership of the Traveller community;
- Action plan to advance equality and diversity;
- Recruitment policies and procedures which are aligned with equality, diversity and non-discrimination policies;
- Anti-harassment policies and procedures which includes sexual harassment and on the other 8 grounds under Irish equality legislation;
- Outline of internal organisational training/induction on equality, diversity and/or harassment;
- Record/certificate of attendance for VSA personnel attending training on equality, diversity and social inclusion;
- Grievance or complaints procedure to deal with complaints about harassment which outlines how it is disseminated to local partners and the wider community;
- Whistleblowing policy which is compliant with The Protected Disclosures Act (2014);
- Reasonable accommodation policy and/or strategy for people with disabilities.

4.2 We show a commitment to inclusion of all volunteers; encourage applications from potential volunteers from diverse backgrounds, experiences and circumstances; and provide supports and make reasonable adjustments as needed by this diversity of volunteers, including in-country support, within the means available.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Recruitment strategies which reflect a commitment to promoting diversity including on the basis of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race/ethnicity and membership of the Traveller community and socio-economic status;

- Recruitment policies, procedures and guidelines which are fair and inclusive of the above;

- Diversity and inclusion strategies;

- Targeted advertisements and marketing materials focused on under-represented groups;

- Recruitment procedures demonstrating an openness to placing any volunteer with specific needs overseas;

- Positive action measures including:

- Targeted fundraising support for under-represented groups;

- Specific support packages for volunteers from under-represented groups including specific training and/or mentoring opportunities;

- Reserved places on a volunteer programme for members of an under-represented group.

- Records/certificate of VSA personnel participation in training on equality and diversity; and in assessing the needs of, and working with, diverse volunteers;

- Qualifications/CV of personnel supporting volunteers;

- Training manual of the VSA/local partner is inclusive of, and works to promote, diversity;

- Correspondence with local partners demonstrating an understanding of the capacity limitations of partners to support specific needs;

- Examples of how volunteers are informed about the local context they will encounter in the project location and how that will relate to their specific needs;

- Documentation designating a person responsible for reviewing training and support needs of volunteers as part of the annual planning process.

PRINCIPLE 5: Our organisation ensures respect between the people in our organisation and between the organisation (staff, volunteers, contracted or other personnel) and the local community and partners involved in its work.

Indicators

5.1 We have, we communicate and we implement a code of conduct that ensures relationships between our organisation and local communities and partner organisations are characterised by respect for and accommodation of diversity, with a particular focus on anti-racism.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Code of conduct which includes addressing anti-racism and the prevention of all forms of exploitation, harassment, discrimination, intimidation and abuse;

- Induction/training input on the Code of Conduct for volunteers;

- Records to show that volunteers are required to sign a code of conduct to signify they understand and will comply with its provisions;

- Records which show that Comhlámh's Volunteer Charter is given to all volunteers;

- Records/certificate of attendance for VSA personnel in Comhlámh's (or other training) on the development and implementation of code of conduct principles.

5.2 We have developed and implemented guidelines on good practice relating to messaging and imagery which ensure that the local community is portrayed accurately and not put at risk, sensationalised or stereotyped.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Listing of the VSA as a signatory to the Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images & Messages;

- VSA's policy regarding external communication which reflects the principles of the Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images & Messages;

- Policy/guidelines commonly developed and shared by the VSA and local partners on visual literacy;

- VSA's guidelines regarding external communication shared with suppliers (e.g., graphic designers);

- VSA's materials, including online & printed materials, reflecting that VSAs are implementing the Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images & Messages and/or own internal guidelines;

- Documentation that shows volunteers are made aware of the VSA's Messages & Images guidelines/policy, including use of images on social media through information pack or volunteer manual;

- Inputs in volunteer training and inductions on the use of images and messages consistent with Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images & Messages and/or VSA's guidelines or policy;

- Records/certificates of attendance for VSA personnel training on the use of images and messages, visual literacy and ethical communication.

PRINCIPLE 6: Our organisation brings an understanding of diversity to bear in planning and implementing its programmes and projects that responds to the different identities of people within the local community and operates in a manner that is sensitive to and takes account of this diversity.

Indicators

6.1 We ensure that our programmes and projects are based on an analysis of the diverse identities of people within the target community and take account of their specific needs in benefitting all members of the target community.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Mapping of diverse identities within target community;

- Gender and diversity needs analysis carried out by local partner and/or VSA; or local partner with other local organisations/agencies;

- Participatory research tools including the recruitment and training of community representatives to carry out needs analysis of specific groups;

- Assignment of Gender and Diversity Focal Point within the VSA and/or local partner;

- Gender and diversity equality proofing mechanisms for all programmes;

- Programme and project plans specifically address diverse identifies and needs;

- Outline of targeted initiatives within overall programme plans to address specific needs.

VALUE: SOCIAL JUSTICE

PRINCIPLE 7: Our organisation pursues programmes and projects that seek to address the root causes of injustice, poverty and inequality.

Indicators

7.1 We have a commitment to social justice at home and abroad and an understanding of social justice as a global and interconnected issue.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- VSA's mission statement, values and goals and strategic plan reflect a commitment to the broad social justice agenda and addressing the issues of injustice, poverty, inequality and the root causes of these;
- VSA's membership and/or involvement in networks, organisations, campaigns and actions on social justice issues in Ireland and internationally;
- VSA images and messaging connecting local and global issues;
- Training plan or outline of workshops for VSAs and local partners to develop an understanding of root causes of injustice, poverty and inequality.

7.2 Our programmes and projects, as part of our goals, address issues of injustice, poverty and inequality and the root causes of these.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Minutes of meetings/workshop plans between the VSA, local partner and/or local community to identify structural inequalities and power dynamics;
- Programme planning based on documented research and analysis of injustice, poverty and inequality at the local, regional and national levels;
- Participatory research tools including the recruitment and training of community representatives to carry out research to identify root causes and communities' experiences;
- Programme and projects plans have clear aims and objectives to address the root causes of poverty, social injustice and inequality;
- Evidence based targeting of those experiencing injustice and inequality.

VALUE: ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY

PRINCIPLE 8: Our organisation acts to ensure a positive relationship between its work and the world it seeks to sustain, to enable sustainable action by and resilience within local communities and partners, and to support volunteer roles that take account of their impact on the natural world and minimise any negative impact.

Indicators

8.1 Our programmes and projects are based on an analysis of the challenge of ecological sustainability and are tested at design and review stages for their impact on ecological sustainability.

- Evidence under 8.1 to be developed in 2019/2020

8.2 Our processes and manner of operating are planned and implemented to take account of their impact on the natural world and minimise any negative impact.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Records/certificates of participation of VSA personnel attending workshops, conferences, events, trainings on ecological sustainability issues and the circular economy;

- Participation of VSAs and or local partners in "Eco" awards such as The ECO-Sustainability Awards, Green Awards, or equivalent overseas;

- Participation of VSA personnel in working groups on ecological sustainability;

- Inputs on ecological sustainability an integral part of development education programme with a clear focus on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);

- Inputs in pre-departure training on potential impact of volunteering and how to mitigate negative impact including, e.g., flights and other travel, travelling light in terms of baggage, water and energy use, use of plastics, sharing of resources, leave no trace principles, and ethical options for further travel and leisure activities;

- Ecological sustainability initiatives with volunteers prior to, during placement and on return;

- Volunteer handbook/policy that commits volunteers to act in a sustainable manner when overseas with regard to water, energy, food, buying of products etc;

- Workshops with returned volunteers to share eco-tips learnt overseas and supports to encourage them to become ecological sustainability advocates;

- Workshops with local partners on ecological sustainability issues and integration of learning from local partners into operational policies etc of VSAs;

- Support for/participation in activist groups, advocacy networks, strategies or campaigns on ecological sustainability issues and the SDGs;

- Waste reduction, energy saving and pollution prevention measures and policies in Ireland and overseas including:

    - Use of Fairtrade and environmental friendly products including tea/coffee, cleaning products, bathroom and tissue products, stationary and marketing materials;
    - Water efficient toilets;
    - Energy saving initiatives including timed thermostats, turning off unused lights and equipment;
    - Paper and packaging recycling; paper and print reduction (printing double sided, paperless office practices);
    - No to plastic: cups, access to refill for water bottles, support for Conscious Cups campaigns;
    - Vegan/vegetarian/locally sourced and sustainable food for catering at events;
    - Composting facilities;
    - Herbs and plants in the office and meeting spaces;
    - Overseas accommodation to include water harvesting.

- Travel measures and policies to reduce and mitigate negative impact of travel in Ireland and overseas including:

    - Video conferencing for meetings in Ireland and with overseas partners;
    - Commuting: by foot, use of public transport, carpooling, bike to work schemes and workplace accommodation for cyclists, travel expenses policy to include expenses for public transport and cycling;
    - Remote /e-working policies for staff and volunteers;
    - Flights: use of carbon calculations and development of VSA carbon budget for the year, consideration of greener ways to travel (bus, electric car, train), minutes of review of need to fly and consideration as to whether there is someone locally based that can do the work, carbon offsetting;

- Procurement policies which stipulate for Ireland and overseas operations:

    - The use of locally sourced, ethical and sustainably grown and produced materials and food for infrastructure, projects, catering, trainings in Ireland and overseas which support local economies;
    - No to plastic and if using marketing materials (t-shirts etc) goods used should be ethically sourced;
    - Use of reusable bottles, filters, chlorine tablets and water tanks for overseas operations;

- Development/support for the use of sustainable and ethical initiatives in Ireland and overseas including:

    - Sustainable water and energy initiatives;
    - Renewable and recycling processes, up-cycling initiatives;
    - Ethical banking products.
- Records/certificates of attendance of VSA and/or local partner personnel in health and well-being programmes including self-care and building resilience programmes.

VALUE: INTEGRITY

PRINCIPLE 9: Our organisation ensures honesty and transparency in its work, enables quality in its programmes, implements appropriate volunteer recruitment procedures, and ensures an accountability to local communities and partners, the general public and donors, and members, staff and volunteers.

Indicators

9.1 We provide fair and balanced information about our organisation.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- VSA website, social media and/or printed materials detailing:
    - Key organisational information (history, values and aims; who we are, what we do, how to get involved);
    - Organisation status (e.g. charity, company, trust);
    - Local partners;
    - Funders and sponsors;
    - Listing and/or links to policies, including safeguarding policies;
    - Registration and/or compliance with relevant national governance standards.
- Information pack sent in response to queries about volunteering opportunities with detailed information on the organisation.

9.2 We provide fair and balanced information about placements we offer, including clear volunteer role description and skills requirements, and we are realistic about what the placement may achieve.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Overview of volunteer roles available and programme costs involved are communicated to potential volunteers through:
    - VSA website;
    - Information pack sent in response to query about volunteering opportunities;
    - Email correspondence;

- Promotional material which encourages realistic volunteer expectations;
- Detailed volunteer roles, skills description and key placement information, including programme costs on website and/or in information pack sent to volunteers;
- Information provided to potential volunteers on expectations and mandatory requirements for post-return engagement;
- Testimonials/blogs/stories of returned volunteers which are communicated to potential volunteers;
- Database, which is General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliant, of returned volunteers who are willing to engage with potential volunteers through a variety of media including face to face and on line;
- Procedures/guidelines for facilitating contact between outgoing volunteers and those who have returned;
- Records which are GDPR compliant, of contacts between outgoing volunteers and those who have returned;
- Programme outlines, emails, training manuals/plans showing that returned volunteers are invited to speak at training or information events.

9.3 We are committed to good governance and implement high standards in this regard.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- VSA's website, social media and/or printed materials detailing registration and level of compliance with relevant national governance standards including:
    - Comhlámh's Code of Good Practice logo, descriptor and website section;
    - Code of Good Practice for Good Governance of Community Voluntary and Charity organisations;
    - Irish Development NGOs Code of Corporate Governance;
    - Charities Governance Code.
- Publication of annual reports and accounts on website;
- Dissemination plan for annual report;

9.4 We implement a volunteer policy that sets out clear procedures for recruitment, induction, support, appraisal, addressing grievances and disciplinary matters.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Volunteer policy outlining overall procedures for recruitment, screening and selection processes;
- Information provided to potential volunteers outlining recruitment and selection processes;

- Guidelines for those responsible for recruiting, screening and selecting volunteers;
- Sample application forms which incorporate screening;
- Set criteria and assessment procedures for the interviewing of volunteers on the basis of knowledge, skills, attributes and motivation required;
- The experience, professional development and training of those responsible for recruiting volunteers shows them to be suitability qualified for the role;
- Training plan for VSA personnel responsible for recruitment;
- Records/certificates of attendance of VSA in recruitment training;
- Grievance and disciplinary policy and procedures;
- Records to show discipline and grievance policy and procedures are understood and signed by all volunteers.

9.5 We are committed to good practice in raising funds

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Written commitment of the VSA to work to current best practice standards in raising funds;
- Records/reports that the VSA is signed up to and/or compliant with codes of good practice on fundraising including:
    - The Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising;
    - The Charities Institute Ireland Fundraising Codes of Good Practice;
    - Guidelines for Charitable Organisations Fundraising from the Public;
    - Code of Practice for Face to Face Fundraising.

9.6 We undertake regular monitoring and evaluation of our programmes and volunteer placements, jointly with local communities and partners and with volunteers, and use feedback from these processes to inform annual planning and programme revision.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Partnership agreements/MOUs agreeing M&E framework between VSA and local partners;
- Monitoring and evaluation strategies agreed between VSA and local partners which provides for monitoring, regular review and evaluation of volunteer programmes which include the identification of key outcomes for local communities;

- Monitoring, review and evaluation templates for volunteer roles, profiles and placements to ensure placements are appropriate and effective
- Monitoring, review and evaluation templates for volunteer training, induction and supports;
- Planning template which includes integration of evaluation outcomes;
- Outline of review and evaluation questions, target groups and methodologies;
- Volunteer feedback on their experiences, issues, key outcomes and suggestions for change throughout the volunteer placement through:
    - Monitoring records of local partner and or VSA;
    - Feedback/evaluation forms;
    - Creative and arts methodologies;
    - Collated and anonymised notes in compliance with GDPR from one to one and/or group operational debriefing and other events with returned volunteers present.
- Local partner feedback, review and evaluation through:
    - Review and evaluation templates/forms;
    - Notes of shared review and evaluation meetings and workshops between VSA and local partners.
- Local community feedback, review and evaluation through:
    - Feedback/evaluation forms;
    - Interviews;
    - Creative and arts methodologies;
    - Workshop plans;
    - Recruitment and training plans for engaging community members as evaluators.
- Evaluation reports;
- Dissemination plan for sharing of evaluation conclusions;
- Outline of how learning is integrated into future planning processes.

9.7 We conduct operational debriefing at the end of volunteer placements to inform future programme development.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Volunteer policy on operational debriefing;
- Operational debriefing schedule and activities shared with volunteers (in emails, information pack, volunteer manual etc) before placement;

- Guidelines for of local partner and/or VSA debriefers for one to one and/or group operational debriefing;

- Outline of questions/templates for local partners and/or VSA debriefers for one to one and/or group operational debriefing;

- Records of volunteers attending one to one and/or group operational debriefing;

- Template for recording outcomes of operational debriefing;

- M&E framework or plan which includes how outcomes of operational debriefing works to inform future programme development;

PRINCIPLE 10: Our organisation takes steps to ensure the protection, safety and well-being of volunteers and to underpin their informed commitment to, understanding of and engagement in their role.

Indicators

10.1 We provide mandatory comprehensive preparation, training and induction to volunteers, utilizing appropriately skilled, qualified and experienced personnel.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Volunteer policy on preparation training and induction of volunteers;

- Guidelines for volunteer preparation, training and induction for all volunteers;

- Training and induction manuals of VSA and/or local partner;

- Training agenda/outlines with timeframes including for:
    - Volunteering, development and global justice;
    - Development education
    - Self care;
    - Intercultural awareness;
    - Visual literacy and ethical communication;
    - Comhlámh's social welfare services;
    - Policies and procedures, including safeguarding policies, Code of Conduct, use of Images and Messages and Health, Safety and Security policies;

- Medical/fitness certification, travel arrangements including visa requirements and insurance;
- Comhlámh's Volunteer Charter;
- Comhlámh's supports and services (including debriefing) trainings, online courses & member groups;

▪ Attendance list indicating volunteer participation in training and induction;

▪ In country orientation materials;

▪ Details of experience and skills of those in VSA and/or local partners responsible for delivering training showing them to be suitably qualified for the role;

▪ Records/certificates of attendance of VSA participation in ongoing professional development related to volunteer training and induction, including Comhlámh's training programmes.

10.2 We offer volunteers additional information about volunteering, including its context of global development and its role in relation to social justice and ecological sustainability.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

▪ VSA's website links to the Comhlámh website, Support and Services Section, trainings and Volunteer Charter;

▪ VSA's website links to organisations and sources of information about volunteering nationally and internationally;

▪ Briefing note for VSA personnel that provide guidance on Comhlámh's services and courses and other providers of information on volunteering;

▪ Information pack sent in response to queries about volunteering opportunities which includes information on global development, social justice and ecological sustainability;

▪ Records/certificates of attendance of VSA personnel participation in training on global development, social justice and ecological sustainability;

▪ Training outline or plan on global development, social justice and ecological sustainability issues;

▪ Documentation showing that returned volunteers and members of diaspora communities contribute to training and/or information events;

▪ Signposting to VSA's post-return training on continuous engagement on global justice issues.

10.3 We have systems in place to support volunteer well-being during pre-departure training, their placement and on their return.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Annual programme plan and/or budget detailing overall supports (including mentoring) provided to volunteers throughout and after the placement;

- Volunteer manual/information pack detailing all supports provided during throughout the placement and on their return;

- Volunteer manual/information pack on protection of mental health;

- Comhlámh's Supports and Services being promoted to all volunteers including:

    - Social Welfare Services;

    - Coming Home Guide and Weekend;

    - Debriefing and counselling.

- Procedures for referrals and/or anonymised records of referral to Comhlámh's or other agencies counselling and support services;

- Distribution of Comhlámh's leaflet 'Supports and Services for Overseas' to all volunteers;

- Training plan inputs on budgeting and Comhlámh's social welfare services with regard to the protection of volunteers' financial interests;

- Outline/guidelines of overall mentoring and/or support services for volunteers to be provided by VSA and local partner when overseas;

- Procedures for the designation of local focal point and/or mentors designated to brief volunteers and to provide continuous assistance to volunteers during their placement;

- Plan for diaspora community members involved in mentoring volunteers;

- Provision of templates or resources for critical reflection on their volunteer experiences (e.g. Comhlámh's Learning Journal; blogs, podcasts);

- Records/certificates of attendance for training of VSA and local partner personnel in dealing with incidents and accidents;

- Outline/guidelines of support and counselling services provided to volunteer on return;

- Information leaflet for volunteers which lists internal/external personnel and/or agencies providing counselling, critical incident, stress management and other supports;

- Records/certificates of attendance for VSA personnel in training on self- care and building resilience.

10.4 We ensure that all volunteers are offered appropriate one to one and/or group personal debriefing at the end of their placement.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Copies or links to VSA's debriefing policies and procedures which reflect a clear divide between operational debriefing; and one to one and/or group personal debriefing and those responsible;

- Extract from recruitment material/agreement detailing that debriefing is a mandatory requirement of the volunteer placement;

- Debriefing schedule and activities shared with volunteers (in emails, information pack, volunteer manual etc) before placement;

- Records of volunteers attending one to one and/or group personal debriefing;

- Records/certificates of attendance for VSA personnel responsible for debriefing attending Comhlámh's debriefing training and/or masterclass sessions;

- Records/certificates of attendance for VSA personnel responsible for debriefing attending other external training on debriefing and credentials of same;

- Qualifications and experience of VSA personnel responsible for providing debriefing;

- Guidelines on one to one and/or group personal debriefing for those responsible for debriefing which includes signposting to continuous engagement;

- Outline of questions/templates of planned one to one and/or group personal debriefing and those responsible;

- VSA's procedures for support and supervision of debriefers;

- Records of VSA personnel participation in peer support meetings for debriefers;

- Procedures for providing referrals to Comhlámh's debriefing services if not provided internally within the organisation;

- List of the VSA's external contacts that provide debriefing for returned volunteers;

- Records of referral to Comhlámh's debriefing services and/or other external debriefing services which are GDPR compliant;

- VSA's policy on facilitating debriefing for partner organisation staff.

10.5 We have systems in place for the protection and safety of volunteers.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Information provided to volunteers stating that medical insurance is compulsory and whether the VSA or volunteer is responsible for getting insurance;

- VSA's policy on travel insurance including the need for health and emergency evacuation cover;

- Information provided to volunteers stating the responsibility of the VSA and local partner for the volunteer being overseas ceases at date of end of overseas placement, and insurance cover also ceases if applicable;

- VSA's policy requiring certificate of fitness and detail of system for secure filing and storage of same in line with GDPR;

- Risk assessment and management procedures and protocols;

- Evacuation plan;

- Policies/guidelines on health, safety and security;

- Volunteer manuals/information packs which include health, safety and security policies;

- Volunteer manual/information packs which include specific details of contacts in local partners prior to departure; and emergency contacts and relevant embassy information;

- Training plan outline including input on health, safety and security policies and procedures and local contexts and particular safety considerations;

- Records/certificates of attendance of VSA personnel training on health, safety and security;

- Records of written assessments of security, travel and health risks for each placement and written schedule for review while volunteers are on placement;

- Signed documentation that volunteers are fully aware of policies and security, travel and health risks before they embark on the trip;

- Template for keeping records of placement related health difficulties, safety and security issues which is GDPR compliant;

- Sample file of past placement related incidents and action taken;

- Links to documents detailing actions taken in response to learning from prior incidents.

10.6 We recognise volunteers' contributions and provide volunteers with a certificate, statement of service, or a reference letter upon request on completion of the programme.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Photos, records of attendance, etc. from recognition ceremonies that are held for volunteers;
- Newsletter, archived website information, etc. acknowledging the contribution volunteers have made while overseas;
- Sample certificates;
- Sample statement of service;
- Sample reference letter;
- Signposting to Global Citizenship Awards/#SDG Challenge etc.

PRINCIPLE 11: Our organisation takes steps to prohibit, prevent, and address inappropriate behaviour by staff, volunteers, contracted or other personnel, in relation to children, vulnerable adults and the local community.

Indicators

11.1 We have comprehensive safeguarding guidelines, systems, and disciplinary procedures in place to prevent and address inappropriate behaviour of staff, volunteers, contracted or other personnel towards:

1) each other 2) the local community 3) vulnerable adults and 4) children

Suggested evidence (some evidence is mandatory) - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Risk assessment and mitigation plan templates **(mandatory)**;
- Safeguarding policies and procedures (which are compliant with Irish legislation and policy and reflective of international best practice standards) in relation to children and vulnerable adults **(mandatory);**
- Code(s) of Conduct/Behaviour with regard to child and vulnerable adult safeguarding that covers: **(mandatory)**
  - Appropriate language;
  - Appropriate communications;
  - Banning of alcohol and drugs;
  - Gifts to children;
  - Physical contact with children;

- All forms of abuse, including emotional abuse;
- Putting themselves in a vulnerable situations;
- Inappropriate relationships with children and vulnerable adults including exploitative and sexually abusive relationships;
- Child labour;
- Photos, images, social media, website, internet and email communication;
- Reporting responsibilities.

- Code of Conduct/Behaviour which addresses sexual exploitation, sexual abuse and harassment, bullying and all other forms of harassment **(mandatory)**;

- Disciplinary and grievance policies which includes clearly outlined consequences for breaching Code of Conduct/Behaviour **(mandatory);**

- Dissemination plan/distribution list for communicating of above policies to VSA personnel and all volunteers;

- Signed documentation that volunteers are fully aware of safeguarding policies, codes of conduct/behaviour and disciplinary policies and procedures;

- Sample volunteer application forms screening questions asking about skills, experience, work with children and vulnerable adults;

- Guidelines on screening practices and/or interview templates provided to those responsible for recruiting and selecting volunteers for VSA and/or local partner including: **(mandatory);**

  - Procedures for Garda Siochána/Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) vetting of all volunteers; statutory declarations or local legal equivalent where criminal record checks are unavailable or unreliable;
  - Verbal and written referee checks;
  - Behavioural-based interview questions.

- Policy/procedures for Garda/PSNI vetting of all volunteers **(mandatory);**

- Appointment of Designated Liaison Person(s) with contact details **(mandatory);**

- Qualifications and/or experience of VSA Designated Liaison Person(s);

- Records/certificates of attendance of Designated Liaison Person in relevant child protection and safeguarding training;

- Records/certificates of attendance of VSA personnel in training on child and vulnerable adult protection and developing safeguarding policy;

- Self audit templates or certification of completion of online audits;

- Template for the recording of all incidents, complaints, concerns, allegations in compliance with GDPR;

- Planning documents demonstrating how recorded incidents, complaints and allegations are incorporated into revised programme plans;

- Lists of contacts for specialist advice, information, and reporting on child/vulnerable adult safeguarding.

11.2 We engage with and support local partners with regard to issues of safeguarding children, vulnerable adults and the local community to ensure common systems, mutual learning and development of good practice.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Partnership agreement/MOU between VSA and local partners addressing the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults;

- Outline of training workshops participated in/delivered by or shared between the VSA and local partners;

- Documentation reflecting discussion on safeguarding issues between VSA and local partner including dedicated meetings, sharing of resources, development of shared policy and risk assessment and mitigation plans;

- Shared child and vulnerable adult safeguarding policy(s) and code of conducts between the VSA and local partners;

- Shared template for risk assessment and mitigation between the VSA and local partners.

PRINCIPLE 12: Our organisation is committed to child-safe volunteering.

12.1 If working with orphanages/institutions for children, we only send skilled volunteers in a capacity-building role to support de-institutionalisation. These skilled volunteers have the relevant expertise to support de-institutionalisation strategies and processes and if direct work with children is planned, are trained to work with vulnerable and traumatised children.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Partnership agreements between the VSA and the partner detailing the role of volunteers in the de-institutionalisation processes including prevention and family strengthening programmes, family reunification and community reintegration processes; alternative care needs assessments and community based social services;

- Recruitment and selection policies; criteria and assessment procedures detailing requirement for volunteers to have:
    - Relevant qualification for working with children that has been issued by the national awarding body responsible for that sector;

- Completed specific accredited training to work with vulnerable and traumatised children if there will be direct work with children;
- Training in de-institutionalisation strategies;
- Training and/or specific skill set in change management, capacity building or organisational supports.

▪ Volunteer role description detailing specific responsibilities in de-institutionalisation process.

12.2 If working with orphanages/institutions for children we support the development of sustainable and responsible de-institutionalisation strategies and structures, which work to safeguard each child's best interests and/or develop and implement a withdrawal plan to phase out from this work.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

▪ Participation of VSA personnel in meetings on the issue of volunteering, orphanages and deinstitutionalisation;

▪ Records/certificates of attendance of VSA personnel and/or local partner in training on family and community based care, alternative care models and de-institutionalisation strategies;

▪ Communication strategy;

▪ Written commitment from the VSA to support family and community based care and to work with local partners and relevant authorities to end the institutionalisation of children;

▪ Partnership agreement/MOU detailing the role of the VSA and the orphanage/residential institution in the de-institutionalisation strategy;

▪ Documentation evidencing the planning and implementation of de-institutionalisation strategies between the orphanage/residential institution, relevant social services and the VSA;

▪ Documentation evidencing the planning and implementation of comprehensive individual needs assessment with relevant social services;

▪ SMART action plan agreed between the VSA and local partner including set timeframes for the transitioning away of sending volunteers to work in orphanages;

▪ VSA exit strategy which provides set timeframes, communication strategies and transition supports for the orphanage/ residential institution.

PRINCIPLE 13: Our organisation gives expression to, promotes and communicates the values of respect, solidarity, integrity, social justice and ecological sustainability through its plans, policies, procedures and practices.

Indicators

13.1 Our strategic and action plans and programmes, our internal policies and procedures, and our communications and materials clearly reflect our values and our commitment to solidarity, respect, integrity, social justice and ecological sustainability.

Suggested evidence - **Copies of/extracts or screenshots from/links to:**

- Records of VSA personnel participation in Code of Good Practice Peer Support Meetings;
- Records of feedback from Peer Support Meetings, trainings, meetings to VSA personnel;
- Minutes of discussion on; outline/outcomes of shared workshop between the VSA and local partner on the Code of Good Practice, its values and principles;
- Outline/plan for/review of:
    - VSA's strategy, action and programme plans from a values based perspective including the values of solidarity, respect, integrity, social justice and ecological sustainability;
- Strategy, action, programme plans and promotional material which reflect the above values.