Human Resources (HR) Toolkit for Small and Medium Nonprofit Actors

Providing You with the Building Blocks to Strengthen Your HR Framework

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INTRODUCTION

In the nonprofit and the humanitarian and development sectors, your organisational effectiveness and ability to successfully deliver on your mission is closely linked to your ability to attract, develop, retain and engage the right talent.

In order to properly support and enable your teams, and deliver as an organisation, you need to ensure you have a formalised and systematised framework for your people management practices.

Not everybody needs or can become an expert. But everyone ought to be able to access expertise at point of need. This toolkit has been designed to provide individuals in charge of human resources (HR)[1] with:

- Guidance and good practice to inform the development and/or enhancement of HR policies.
- A series of questions to assess their current HR framework and identify the required activities and priority actions to strengthen it.
- Suggested resources that can help address potential gaps. In order to access the free resources hosted on DisasterReady.org, please create a user profile the first time you visit the platform, then access the various resources via the search engine using the resource title or keywords.

Important Note: This toolkit is not intended to provide country-specific or legal advice, but rather systems and procedures informed by good practices and shared learning across organisations and HR practitioners.

Building Blocks for Human Resources (HR)

This toolkit leverages an array of existing resources and good practice principles to help you improve your HR system. More generally, it is intended to support your organisation to build upon existing HR processes and systems and formalise your people management framework.

It contains tools, tips, suggested activities and sign-posting to resources for those who manage HR in your organisation to enhance people management practices, embed good HR practices and encourage sharing of learning.

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[1] This might be programme/operation teams, Fin/Admin managers, those planning/responsible for tactical HR – anybody in charge of putting/improving basic HR systems.

> *TIPS: Make a note of all the actions highlighted by this diagnostic exercise so at the end you can work on your priority list.*

The information provided can be used as a diagnostic tool to assess the gaps and areas of priorities, to inform the setting or formalising of an HR system, and/or to create an organisation's HR manual. Each user can decide the best way to utilise it to meet their specific needs.

> *TIPS: It is helpful to collate all the details about the way your organisation works in an Employee (Staff) Handbook. This is particularly useful for new employees so that they can quickly understand how your organisation operates, and also acts as a handy reference point for existing employees and managers about the day to day queries and questions that can arise. The handbook can list your policies and summarise briefly the keynotes, referring the reader to the main document.*

Good practice HR activities

HR practices will invariably differ from one organisation to another – and even from one department to another within the same organisation. They will be influenced by a variety of factors such as organisational culture, the leadership team, who is actually in charge of HR, the size of the programme, local labour laws and customs.

However, there is still a range of HR activities that should occur across the board. Below is a (non-exhaustive) list of suggested activities to get started with when formalising your HR framework and for which you will find more in-depth guidance in this toolkit:

- **Open and fair recruitment processes**: all open positions should be open to everyone and candidates should be selected for their skill set, not their connections or relationships. Avoiding nepotism also strengthens the overall organisational culture.
- **New employee onboarding**: all new starters should receive essential information about your organisation, its mission, its general structure, the expected behaviours (e.g. briefing on code of conduct) their benefits and performance expectations.
- **Regular staff meetings**: the Country Director (or a member of the leadership team) should hold regular staff meetings with all the teams (to include national and international staff) to provide useful updates and create a space for staff to share concerns and suggestions, and ask questions.
- **Employment contracts**: all staff must have a current, legally valid employment contract countersigned by either a member of the leadership team or the local HR representative.

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- **Annual performance reviews**: individual's goals should be discussed and agreed, in alignment with the mission and goals of the team, department and organization. All staff should receive a formal, meaningful performance review assessing both performance and behaviors directly tied to compensation and development plans as applicable. Regular conversations Performance reviews are critical to employee and organisational success.
- **Compensation grids:** all offices need to have a robust and justifiable compensation scheme based on relatively current market data. All staff must have a job description linked to a salary grade on the grid.
- **Clear and accessible HR policies and manual**: all staff should have access to extremely clear policies related to paid leave, timesheets, discipline and grievance processes, etc. This should be covered during their onboarding and thereafter during regular reviews to ensure current knowledge of the HR policy framework.
- **Secure HR records**: HR records and personal information should be consistent and comprehensive, and be stored in a secure location with restricted access. Any personally identifiable information found in a public location (printing area, copy room, etc.) should be given to the HR department for immediate shredding.

> *TIPS: What does a successful HR function look like?*
>
> *At its best, a HR function is able to develop the right staff and support the organisation by:*
>
> - *Finding employees through fair, creative and proactive candidate sourcing.*
> - *Selecting employees who bring the right skills, experience and also the right behaviours.*
> - *Orienting and onboarding new employees to maximise productivity and engagement.*
> - *Organising training around technical and management skills.*
> - *Providing market-based pay and benefits in an equitable manner.*
> - *Organising meaningful performance evaluations that help drive strategic goals and support employees' growth.*
>
> *Ensuring policies are clear, accessible, communicated to all staff and consistently applied. To find out more about the HR function, refer to the HR Manual sections 1.2.*

Key HR functions

This toolkit is designed from a strategic planning perspective and outlines six key areas of work that are necessary for an organisation to meet the basic requirements of an HR system. Each of these areas is outlined in more detail below. There are some quick audit questions included to help you reflect on your own organisation and its HR needs. Some questions will be easy to address, whilst others might require more in-depth follow-up action.

1. **Envision**: HR strategy & workforce planning
2. **Hire**: Recruitment, selection and on-boarding
3. **Manage**: HR policies and practices, performance management, rewards
4. **Inspire**: Learning & development, engagement, recognition
5. **Care**: Health & safety, staff wellbeing, duty of care
6. **Retire**: Transition & separation

SUGGESTED RESOURCES AND TRAINING:

*For templates and additional guidance for each of these key HR functions, download the **HR Manual** and the **Handbook for measuring HR effectiveness** from the* CHS Alliance website*.*

ENVISION

The HR function often falls under the remit of the Finance & Administration manager. In order to ensure efficient management of the HR activities, meet the performance objectives of an organisation and motivate staff, there is a strong business case to establish solid HR processes and procedure, with an HR practitioner in place as a focal point and expert lead as a minimum.

There are many benefits to having a dedicated HR role in place – these are just a few examples:

- The organisation is kept up to date on legal issues and the latest employment law development.
- A coordinated approach can be taken with regard to strategy, policy and practice to ensure the organisation has a fair, effective and consistent way of managing its staff.
- Staff feel valued and encouraged to stay with the organisation and they have a place to go to for advice and guidance.

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SUGGESTED RESOURCES AND TRAINING:

*Find out more about the roles and responsibilities of the HR Manager in the **HR Manual** of the CHS Alliance, section 1.3.*
*Read the case studies from **ActionAid Brazil** and **Dwelling Place Uganda** on the* CHS Alliance website*.*

It is also essential to have the various policies in writing and easily accessible to all staff – with regular review and updates to ensure compliance and relevancy. They will need to be adapted to local customs and labour law.

The person responsible for HR plays a key role in developing and implementing these policies that should be consistent, fair and transparent.

TIPS: Ensure you have access to in-country legal advisors to ensure compliance, guidance in case of issues and review of legal documents (e.g. employment contracts); be part of the networks of other NGOs in country/UN clusters etc. to be connected with peers and be part of the collective learning. There is no need to reinvent the wheel!

1.1 HR Strategy

The management of HR should be an integral part of an organisation's strategic framework to ensure it supports the overall mission of the organisation.

An HR strategy is a coordinated set of actions aimed at aligning and integrating the culture, people and systems to achieve the goals and articulate a vision for the organisation. It should be informed by good practice and be planned with the support of the leadership team.

Quick audit:

➔ Does your organisational strategy explicitly state and value staff for their contribution to its objectives?
➔ Does your organisation follow through with implementing contributions and feedback from staff?
➔ Does your organisational strategy allocate sufficient human and financial resources to achieve the HR strategy?
➔ Does your HR strategy reflect your commitment to promoting inclusiveness and diversity?

SUGGESTED RESOURCES AND TRAINING:

*For templates and additional guidance, download the **Handbook for Developing a HR Strategy** and read the case study from **BRAC Bangladesh** on the* CHS Alliance website.

1.2 Organisational Structure

This refers to the way an organisation is designed and it is used to define the hierarchy and relationships in place. It identifies each job, its function and where it reports to within the organisation. It is usually illustrated using an organisational chart.

Quick audit:

➔ Is the organisational chart available and easily accessible to all staff so they can reference it as required?
➔ Is it accurate and up-to-date? When was it last updated? What is the process to update it?
➔ Is the structure (still) suitable to enable the implementation of the organisation's strategy and meet its goals?
➔ Does it offer clarity on the management and communications lines?

SUGGESTED RESOURCES AND TRAINING:

*For additional **Guidance on Organisational Design**, visit* Mindtools.com *and download resources on* DisasterReady.org *on **Decision Making** and **Effectiveness**.*

1.3 Organisational Culture

These are the values, beliefs, norms and habitual "way of doing things" of an organisation.
Organisational culture impacts and influences every aspect of HR management.
Consequently, organisational culture and people management practices need to be aligned in order to support each other to create the right environment for staff to thrive and achieve the mission of the organisation.

The question of ethics is often intrinsically linked to organisational culture. All staff members are responsible for creating and maintaining an environment that supports and promotes adherence and buy-in with the culture of their organisation and, beyond it, with the standards and regulations governing the aid sector. Ethics and values ought to be seen as a priority and enacted in every day transactions.

HR plays a key role in ensuring an overall climate of compliance, trust and comfort for staff to speak about potential ethical or compliance issues. It is important that HR creates and facilitates an environment where awareness of ethics and values is paramount in the work your organisation does and is instilled in the staff with whom you engage.

Quick audit:

➔ What type of culture prevails in the organisation?
➔ How well is the culture serving what the organisation is trying to achieve?
➔ Do people management interventions support and promote desired cultural attributes or conflict with them (e.g. how performance is managed, what is recognised and rewarded, who has access to learning and development opportunities)?
➔ Do you have a code of conduct in place, and expected standards of behaviours and organisational values clearly communicated to staff?

> *TIPS: Code Conduct policies should be universal and displayed as such so they serve as a constant reminder for all staff.*

SUGGESTED RESOURCES AND TRAINING:

*Read the blog on **Building Organisational Leadership and Culture** and the one-pager on **Nurturing Effective Work Relationship** on the* CHS Alliance website*.*

1.4 Workforce Planning

This refers to the process of:
- Determining the human resource needs of the organisation.
- Ensuring that the organisation creates the correct number and type of jobs to meet these needs.
- Supporting the scale up of human resource capacity in time of surge.
- Recruiting the right skills, knowledge and attitudes
- Developing existing staff to ensure that the organisation can achieve both its current objectives and its longer-term strategic goals.

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Quick audit:

➔ How suitable is the current level of staffing and overall skills profile?
➔ What forecasting tools for future staff needs and skills profile are being used? Is there a defined succession planning process in the organisation?
➔ Is there a clear relationship between country, regional and organisational strategy planning?
➔ What constraints exist in achieving desirable levels and skills of staffing, including in time of surge?

SUGGESTED RESOURCES AND TRAINING:

*Read the case study from **Action Against Hunger Spain** on the* CHS Alliance website*.*

1.5 Job design

This is the process by which roles are created to carry out specific jobs, or reviewed (updated) to more effectively meet the requirements and the objectives of the programmes.

Quick audit:

➔ How are existing roles identified and designed? Is there a consistent approach to job design?
➔ Have existing roles been analysed/reviewed recently?
➔ Does the job design process take account of your specific ways of working (i.e. matrix team management, project base work flow, remote management, etc.)?
➔ Are management roles "doable", i.e. designed with realistic spans of control?
➔ Are the job evaluations and grading done consistently for all the categories of staff?

SUGGESTED RESOURCES AND TRAINING:

Check the CIPD *website for their factsheet on **Job Design**,* University of Cambridge *for **Principles of Job Design** and the* Start Network *report on **Transforming Surge Capacity**.*

HIRE

The policies and practice of the organisation pertaining to recruitment and selection must aim to attract and select a diverse workforce with the skills and capabilities required to fulfil its mission. The methods

used should be done with the goal of attracting the widest pool of suitable candidates. Their effectiveness and fairness should be monitored to ensure compliance and that good practice is maintained.

> *TIPS: Recruiting is a two-way street…remember how much your "employer brand" matters when it comes to attracting the right talent.*

Please check Module 1-"Recruitment, Selection and Induction" of the HR Manual.

2.1 Recruitment policy

A recruitment policy is an official statement of the purpose, values and principles of staff recruitment in an organisation, which all staff are expected to follow.

Quick audit:

➔ If you are operating internationally, is the recruitment policy contextualised for each country?
➔ Are the responsibilities and accountabilities clear and known by all staff to ensure a fair and consistent process?
➔ Do you have a diversity and equality policy in place (even if it is not required by law)?
➔ Is adequate training provided to those involved in recruitment and selection on critical topics such as interview skills and diversity policy?
➔ Is the policy appropriate to the needs of the programme and adapted to the "market"?

SUGGESTED RESOURCES AND TRAINING:

*Find out more guidance in the **Recruitment and Selection Policy Guide** and within the case study from **ActionAid Uganda** on the* CHS Alliance website*. Read the **Employer Brand** blog on* Cornerstone OnDemand *website.*

2.2 Recruitment procedures

These procedures represent an official statement of the detailed process and practices which all staff are expected to follow in the recruitment of new staff. This enables the organisation to attract and

select a diverse workforce with the skills and capabilities required to fulfil the requirements of all roles. The process should be fair, transparent and consistent to ensure the most appropriate person is appointed for each role.

Recruiting managers often consider recruiting to be largely administrative and often delegate the hiring process—and even hiring decisions—to relatively junior staff. Yet, the risks from a poorly executed recruitment process can be costly. Failing to fill open positions results in lost productivity; and hiring the wrong candidates can create internal and external liabilities

Quick audit:

➔ How do you mitigate risks post interview and assessments (i.e. conducting adequate checks: employment reference, health checks, criminal records, etc.)?
➔ Is there appropriate and consistent documentation? Is it stored in a secure location with restricted access?
➔ Do interviewed candidates receive feedback when unsuccessful?
➔ How is adherence to the procedures encouraged? Are responsibilities clear and understood?
➔ Is there adequate use of various selection methods and assessment tools?
➔ Are there procedures in place supporting a fair process and the recruitment of a diverse workforce?
➔ Are you leveraging your staff's networks for peer-to-peer referral?
➔ Does the policy consider the local/national recruitment platforms (e.g. LinkedIn, local newspapers, community centres)?

> *TIPS: A well-managed recruitment process*
>
> o *Starts with clearly identified objectives converted into a well-written job description and specification. Don't advertise a job until you know exactly what you need and can articulate it to your candidates.*
> o *Has a specific recruiting lead assigned to each open job? The lead is responsible for ensuring that the process runs smoothly and that the right candidate is selected.*
> o *Includes a structured and well-defined interview process and qualified interview panel with training provided to all staff involved in recruitment.*
> o *Involves an active sourcing strategy, rather than a passive approach of posting an ad and waiting for replies.*

SUGGESTED RESOURCES AND TRAINING:

*Read the case studies from **Action Against Hunger UK** and **Oxfam GB** on the* CHS Alliance website*.*

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TIPS: Reference Checks

- o *A minimum of two professional references should be obtained to gain an understanding of the candidate's suitability. When possible, it is preferable to have a reference from a former supervisor.*
- o *Examples of questions may include "Tell me about the candidate's most important contributions to the achievement of your organisation's mission and goals" and "What was the applicant's reason for leaving your company?"*

2.3 Job descriptions

These are formal documents that specify the accountabilities and responsibilities of a particular job and describe the skills, knowledge, attitudes and experience of a suitable post-holder for that job. These are used through the entire recruitment process and can be used for the setting up of objectives in the initial cycle of performance management.

Each employee should have a job description that delineates, at a minimum, the position title, job classification, salary grade, a general summary of overall responsibilities, minimum qualifications, and job-related competencies. It may also include more specific roles, responsibilities, and targets.

Quick audit:

- ➔ Do you have a job description for every role in your organisation?
- ➔ Are they kept up-to-date and accurate for all roles?
- ➔ Is the format appropriate, consistent and legally compliant?
- ➔ Do they have performance standards/key result areas? Or, where applicable, links to the Competencies Framework in place in the organisation?
- ➔ Do they include common core areas of responsibility (e.g. security, child protection/PSEA[2], etc.) as well as specifics to the role?

TIPS: Avoid designing a job description with a particular individual in mind, it must be about what needs to be achieved through the role rather than "cutting corners" to shorten the recruitment process.

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[2] Protection from Sexual Abuse & Exploitation – see resources on the PSEA Taskforce website.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES AND TRAINING:

*For additional **Guidance on Writing a Job Description**, visit Mindtools.com and download **All In Diary "Managing People – Recruitment and Selection"** on DisasterReady.org.*

2.4 Onboarding

Also, often called "Induction", this is the process through which a new staff member is introduced to their new organisation, equipped to acquire the necessary knowledge and supported to drive productivity quickly.

A strong onboarding program is also important to helping make a great impression about your organisation by sending the message that employees are considered a priority and that employee success is of utmost importance.

Traditionally, onboarding is thought to be an HR responsibility. Whilst HR should play an active role to ensure consistency across the whole organisation and monitoring, a truly effective and impactful onboarding process requires the buy-in of all departments, with participation by line managers being particularly important. In fact, line managers are the most influential person in an employee's work life so it is crucial to start on the right footing when bringing on board new staff members.

Quick audit:

- ➔ How is the individual induction designed? How does it support the organisation culture?
- ➔ Who is responsible to ensure it happens for every new starter?
- ➔ Are line managers systematically involved in the process?
- ➔ Does it prepare the employee to be able to make a contribution swiftly?

TIPS: Suggested practices

- *Line manager Outreach: HR should take time to sit down with the line manager of a new employee prior to their arrival to explain the importance of the onboarding process and ensure that the line manager understands that it is their responsibility to be prepared and proactive.*
- *Pre-Arrival Preparation: When an employee arrives, they should be greeted in a way that makes them feel expected and welcome. This requires timely preparation prior to the start date.*
- *First Day Orientation: On the first day, each new employee should meet with both HR—to review and complete essential paperwork—and their line manager, to get acquainted with the job requirements, the office environment and culture, and what the line manager will expect from the employee during the first week.*
- *Buddy System: We encourage each office to set up a buddy system. The idea is to pair each new employee with an existing employee who will act as a buddy. We recommend that it be someone of a similar level, but from a different department. This person can be a resource for questions that a new hire may not wish to ask their line manager. It is also a good way for the new employee to meet people beyond their team/department.*
- *"Day 10" Orientation: New employees often experience information overload during the first days of the new job. We recommend holding a "Day 10" orientation to provide an opportunity for the employee to ask follow up questions and to provide feedback about their experience to date. This session can be 1-hour long, but may be more or less depending on the number of questions the employee has. This should be held by HR.*

SUGGESTED RESOURCES AND TRAINING:

*For additional guidance, check the CIPD website for their factsheet on **Induction**, read the case study from **World Vision** on the CHS Alliance website and download **All In Diary "Managing People - Briefing and Handover"** from DisasteReady.org.*

MANAGE

HR policies and practices must enable the organisation to achieve effectiveness in its programs and provide a supportive working environment to its workforce. Organisations should aim higher than simply meeting the minimum legal requirements.

All policies and practices relating to staff employment should be set out in writing, be easily accessible to all staff and should be monitored and updated regularly to ensure compliance with legal provisions and relevance to cultural norms and operating context. They should be implemented in a consistent and fair manner.

There should be a governance process in terms of how policies and practices are carried out. Many organizations have a specific policy review committee to ensure fair and just policies that are also keeping to current standards.

Appropriate guidance and training should be provided to managers so they are equipped and supported to effectively implement these policies.

Quick audit:

➔ Do you have current and consistent contracts (including terms & conditions) of employment for all categories of staff?
➔ Are all policies up-to-date, legally compliant and easily accessible?
➔ How often are staff trained/reminded about the key HR policies?

3.1 Performance Management

Implementing an effective performance management process is admittedly difficult and can be time-consuming for HR, as well as employees and line managers. However, it is actually one of the most powerful exercises available to an organisation. A weak system can be very damaging to the organisational culture, the morale amongst staff and the ability to meet the objectives of the programmes.

A performance review is a periodic evaluation of an individual's job performance. As part of the performance management system, staff appraisal is the process of ensuring that each staff member:

- Agrees on objectives and plans for the year with their line manager and is given opportunities for merit increases and promotions.
- Regularly receives feedback on their performance and the progress they have made towards achieving planned objectives.
- Identifies, with their line manager, areas for improvement along with opportunities for growth via learning and development plans.
- Has regular opportunities to plan for their career development.

> *TIPS: Feedback is important because constructive feedback*
> - *Encourages learning and growth*
> - *Brings attention to concerns and opens the door to solving them*
> - *Creates an atmosphere of teamwork and support*
> - *Fosters an environment of mutual respect and support*
> - *Allows everybody to work better together*

Please check Module 2-"Performance Management" of the HR Manual.

Quick audit:

➜ What approach is used and do staff feel some ownership of the process?
➜ Is the purpose fully understood and does it enable staff engagement? Are staff aware if their performance is tied to their compensation?
➜ What recording system is used? Is the documentation adequate and not overly cumbersome?
➜ Are the review meetings handled well enough? (e.g. enough time to prepare, allowance of enough time for meeting)
➜ Do staff reviews relate to job descriptions and are linked to team/organisation goals?
➜ Are managers provided with adequate training to have high quality and honest conversations on performance?

> *TIPS: Suggested Practices*
>
> *Feedback, whether positive or developmental in nature, should not be reserved for the formal review period. Line managers should seek to give this feedback on a regular basis by meeting individually with employees once per week. In addition to discussing the tasks and activities of the day-to-day job responsibilities, this meeting is an opportunity for the line manager to give feedback.*
>
> *We also encourage all HR Managers to implement training around the local performance process, especially for line managers – this will:*
> - *Allow employees to receive highly desired feedback on their work*
> - *Allow the organisation to reward employees for desired results and behaviors*
> - *Help the organisation identify and prioritise training and development needs*

> **SUGGESTED RESOURCES AND TRAINING:**
>
> *For additional guidance, take the courses on **Goal Management Best Practices** and **Conducting Meaningful Review Discussion** on* DisasterReady.org *and download the workbook **Coaching Skills** from the* CHS Alliance website.

3.2 Compensations & Benefits

Sometimes referred to as "Rewards", this encompasses the systems and procedures which determine staff grading, salaries and other benefits which are part of the conditions of service for staff.

Many organisations view pay and benefits within the context of "total reward" which also includes the range of benefits that make up the overall employment proposition (i.e. learning and development, career development, environment and working patterns, etc.).

The effective implementation of a Rewards structure is a critical piece of an overall HR framework. It supports an organisation in attracting the right individuals with the passion, professionalism, experience and skills necessary to further its mission and motivates high-performing employees to feel valued and stay with the organisation.

Please check Module 4-"Compensation and benefits" of the HR Manual.

Quick audit:

➔ Is there a set of reward principles which link back to the organisation's culture, values and mission and against which reward system and decisions can be measured?
➔ Is there a reward philosophy to guide the compensation system design (e.g. market positioning, pay progression mechanism, adaptability to different labor markets)?
➔ Is there a grading and salaries policy?
➔ Is there an objective system of job evaluation to measure internal relativities and support internal equity?
➔ What other non-financial benefits are provided (e.g. flexible working, medical insurance)?
➔ Are salary administration arrangements robust (e.g. new starters, annual salary review implementation, one-off payment, accurate and timely payslips?

> **SUGGESTED RESOURCES AND TRAINING:**
>
> *For additional guidance, read the case studies from **TPO Uganda** and **Church World Services** on the* CHS Alliance website, *and watch **"The Puzzle of Motivation" TED Talk** on* DisasterReady.org.

TIPS: Suggested Practices

It is often the case that in various country offices of a same organisation, employees are hired to support different projects, often funded by different donors.

In such cases, we strongly suggest that you implement and maintain a universal compensation (and benefits) plan that applies to all your employees. It may be tempting to create parallel approaches based on divergent budgets or donor regulations, but a split approach can be highly problematic and in some countries actually illegal.

3.4 Employee Relations

This refers to the formal relations that exist between staff, managers and the organisation. HR should help line managers at all levels avoid and - when it happens - manage specific conflicts between employees.

This support is usually provided through mediation and coaching, following disciplinary and grievance policy processes, providing solutions to concerns, as well as following up on resolutions made by either party.

Most workplace conflicts are resolvable, but there are times when employees will need to be disciplined. When these situations occur, the discipline should be constructive and focused on improving performance or correcting the undesirable conduct.

Effectively and efficiently addressing performance concerns is an important responsibility of HR. It is important that HR seeks to create an environment where concerns related to performance or other behaviors is addressed in an honest and transparent way.

TIPS: Words of wisdom

Document everything! HR is more than the sum of its forms but to mitigate the risk of lengthy disciplinary cases and sour employee relations, the more facts are captured and tracked with consistency, the more efficiently employee relations will be managed.

Quick audit:

➔ Are staff aware of the grievance and disciplinary procedures? Are line managers trained to use them properly?

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➔ Who is accountable for employee relations?
➔ Does your code of conduct clearly indicate what is considered to be unacceptable behaviour and what standards are expected from all staff?
➔ Is there a staff association or union, and if so, what roles does it play?

SUGGESTED RESOURCES AND TRAINING:

Read the case study from **CAFOD Kenya** *on the* CHS Alliance website*, download* **All In Diary "Humanitarian Principles - Code of Conduct"** *and watch* **Save the Children video on "Code of Conduct"** *on* DisasterReady.org*.*

INSPIRE

4.1 Learning and Development

This refers to the process of ensuring that staff have adequate opportunities to:

• Understand and be committed to what the organisation is trying to achieve.
• Take ownership of their own learning and continuous development.
• Work with staff, partners and beneficiaries in ways which promote learning and participation.
• Assess, plan and review work to increase effectiveness and achieve high standards.
• Learn from experience and share the lessons inside and outside the organisation.
• Improve their performance and that of others.

Training and staff development is an important part of ensuring your ability to successfully achieve the organisational mission. Well-designed training sessions contribute to organisational learning through the development of skills that allow individual employees to further upon their own. This is also proven to be a key factor influencing your attraction and retention rates.

Please check Module 3-"Staff Development" of the HR Manual and leverage the free online learning platforms from the CSOD Foundation DisasterReady.org to complete your training offer.

Quick audit:

➔ How are training needs analyses conducted?
➔ Is the training budget adequate and secured?
➔ How equal is access to training and development opportunities?
➔ What evaluation methods are used (both impact on the learner and quality of activities)?
➔ Is there clarity and ownership on what the impact of training should be for both staff and the organization?
➔ What role do line managers play in the training and development of their staff?

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SUGGESTED RESOURCES AND TRAINING:

*Find additional guidance in the **Learning, Training and Development Policy Guide** and **Building an Organisational L&D Framework** from the* CHS Alliance website *and download **All In Diary "Managing People - Professional Development"** from* DisasterReady.org*.*

4.2 Engagement

Tightly linked to job satisfaction, employee engagement is the result of the right conditions for all employees of your organisation to give their best each day, demonstrate commitment to your organisation's goals and values, and be motivated to contribute to organisational success with an enhanced sense of their own well-being.

Your organisation's success depends upon your level of employee engagement. High engagement means that an employee feels fully involved and enthusiastic about the organisation. It therefore matters because engaged employees are proven to be more productive, more creative, and more loyal.

They also can have a positive effect on others, through encouragement and active mentoring.

> *TIPS: The nuances of engagement*
>
> o *Engaged employees work with passion and feel a profound connection to their company. They drive innovation and move the organisation forward.*
> o *Disengaged employees are essentially "checked out." They're sleepwalking through their work day, putting time—not energy or passion—into their work.*
> o *Actively disengaged employees aren't just unhappy at work: they're busy acting out their unhappiness. Every day, these workers undermine what their engaged co-workers accomplish.*

SUGGESTED RESOURCES AND TRAINING:

*Check Agenda Consulting to find out how to **Maximise the Impacts of your People Survey**.*

Quick audit:

➔ What mechanisms exist for measurement of job satisfaction and engagement?
➔ What level of identification or engagement with the organisation is there among staff?
➔ Do you know the current levels of job satisfaction among your staff?
➔ What are the causes of satisfaction or dissatisfaction among staff? Does this differ in different cultures?

TIPS: Ways to maintain and improve engagement

- *Create objective and inclusive performance management systems.*
- *Organise regular all-staff meetings (monthly/quarterly) to provide staff with information pertaining to local activities and organisational initiatives.*
- *Provide key developmental experiences.*
- *Offer mentoring and networking opportunities.*
- *Create an inclusive work environment:*
- *Provide equal opportunities.*
- *Educate the workforce about diversity and inclusion.*
- *Guard against reverse discrimination.*
- *Address work/life balance needs and reduce expectations of very long work hours.*
- *Provide role models.*
- *Rethink career paths.*
- *Support involvement in activities outside of work.*
- *Have an "open door" policy to encourage two-way dialogue.*

4.3 Recognition

Employee recognition is the practice of acknowledging employee contributions, sometimes through rewards or incentives. Numerous studies show that effective recognition can have a major impact on an employee's productivity, loyalty, and stress level.

TIPS: Recognition programmes should

- o *BE FAIR. Recognition should be given for genuine effort or achievement and not based on favorites or internal politics. It should also be suitable and appropriate for local customs and culture.*
- o *NOT be on a fixed schedule. Awards that are given out every month, for example, will begin to seem forced and/or disingenuous because they are driven more by a schedule than by actual employee achievements.*
- o *NOT be designed to be equitable. Recognition should be distributed on merit, which means that some employees may be recognised a lot more than others. This is actually a good thing. If everyone is equally recognised, then the recognition becomes empty in meaning.*

CARE

Safety, security and wellbeing is everybody's responsibility and concern. Organisations have a legal and moral duty of care to provide a healthy workplace, promote healthy work practice and mitigate security risk. Putting it simply, it is a non-negotiable.

Therefore, health and safety management is a core operational area for HR managers, in close collaboration with the security team. It should be embedded into the culture of the organisation. Besides ensuring compliance with health and safety laws, it also enables national and international staff to feel supported in their work, thus enhancing their performance.

Please check Module 5–"Staff Duty of care" of the HR Manual.

5.1 Health, Safety and Security

Organisations must seriously consider having their own health and safety policy including an accident reporting procedure and risk management practice. Employers have a responsibility to ensure, as much as possible, the safety and security of their staff in the performance of their duties.

Employers have both a legal liability and a duty of care to fulfil in ensuring a healthy workplace and workforce. Providing a staff health programme as part of a 'reward' or 'benefit' package is one way to achieve this.

Quick audit:

- ➔ Is there equity between international and local?
- ➔ Are employees' computer practices healthy (e.g. work station, breaks from VDUs)?
- ➔ Who is responsible and accountable for health checks, security training, etc.?
- ➔ Are there any procedures for ensuring staff safety and security (e.g. vehicles, accidents, fire, and earthquake)?
- ➔ Who has accountability for staff safety training and awareness?
- ➔ What is your organisation safety record like?

5.2 Stress at work and staff wellbeing

Working in a multicultural and mixed-gender environment in a different cultural setting, with limited access to private space and leisure activities and within an unusual security situation, may add stress to staff who are already overworked and under pressure.

The HR manager should be mindful of staff's physical and psychological wellbeing. This should be coordinated with the leadership team and the relevant departments. Stress can have a direct impact on the individual, the team and overall organisational effectiveness and security. Hence, this must be taken seriously, and cannot be ignored.
HR managers should remind line managers to ensure their team members are taking adequate rest and recreation breaks.

Quick audit:
- ➔ Are there appropriate health and support programmes for staff (e.g. access to EPA-Employee Program Assistance)?
- ➔ Do you have access to professional psychological support when staff are in need of professional support?
- ➔ Who are the champions and role models for health work practice and work/life balance?

SUGGESTED RESOURCES AND TRAINING:

DisasterReady.org *offer a comprehensive range of free resources and courses to support both individuals and organisations to improve their Safety and Security frameworks, and Staff Wellbeing practices:*
-start with the curriculum "Safety and Security for Staff Learning Pathway"
-check EISF "Security Audit", "Security to Go" and "Security Risk Management: a Basic Guide for Smaller NGOs"
-listen to the WebTalk "Essential Principles of Staff Care"
-explore Staff Care curriculum from the Headington Institute and Building Resiliency curriculum
-download the Essential Principles of Staff Care from the KonTerra Group
-take the courses "Staff Care for Managers" and "Wellness Briefing".

TIPS: Some best practice from the sector include

- o *Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP): this is an employee benefit programme that provides options for help during any work-related or personal problems faced by a staff member. These benefits can range from short-term counselling to financial advice, available to staff and their families.*
- o *Mindfulness and wellness initiatives: these are activities organised to promote and maintain wellbeing within the field offices. Promoting staff wellbeing contributes to their performance and overall effectiveness. Examples of wellness activities include weekly meditation, yoga or sport sessions in the office or within the compound, rest and recreation, time off in lieu policy, annual health check clinics in the office, wellbeing weeks where the emphasis is on promotion and awareness of staff wellbeing and mindfulness, and team away days.*
- o *Psychological briefings (also called counselling sessions) for staff: these are especially relevant for emergency response staff and the HR manager should ensure this is available to all staff when needed. Organisations usually provide this through the EAP scheme (above) as well as through external providers to maintain confidentiality for staff members. These must be adapted to the local culture and customs.*
- o *Coaching or mentoring programmes: to encourage two-way conversations between staff and their managers, and for staff to feel safe asking for help and advice from their managers when needed. Having an open culture has a huge impact on reducing work-related stress.*
- o *Training for managers to identify early signs of burnout or other stress related symptoms.*
- o *Comprehensive briefing for staff prior to field deployment: some organisations include wellbeing and resiliency training in their induction training to make staff aware of the organisation's policy and practices around this issue. Other organisations also provide more comprehensive briefings for emergency response staff prior to deployment or intermittently, as a refresher.*

RETIRE

This is the "natural" final stage in the employee life cycle. Just like welcoming staff members, saying thank you and goodbye to them while acknowledging their contributions are important gestures that must be facilitated by HR.

Sometime referred to as "separation" or "retrenchment practices", it refers to the reduction of staffing by planned termination of employment (e.g. end of contracts/programmes, resignation, termination). Whatever the reasons for separation, some HR processes form the core of this activity.

Please check Module 6-"Separation" of the HR Manual.

Quick audit:

➔ What policies does the organisation have on termination of staff employment?
➔ Is exit part of the planning process?
➔ Are exit interviews conducted? If so, how is the information used?

> *TIPS: Exit checklist*
>
> *When a staff member leaves an organisation, there are many formalities that need to be completed, for the staff member as well as the organisation. These formalities can be finance, IT, administration or HR related.*
>
> *To ensure that there is a consistent process in place for all leavers, we recommend an exit checklist, which details out all the various activities required. There is no prescriptive method in designing this exit checklist, as long as it covers everything you need.*
>
> *The completed checklist should then be filed in the staff members' personnel files to maintain records of completion of service.*
>
> *A practical checklist for outgoing staff:*
>
> o *Administrative issues (phone, accommodation, building pass, etc.)*
> o *Financial clearance with finance department*
> o *IT clearance with technical department (e.g. laptop, email)*
>
> *And if the feedback shared by the exiting employee led to improvement or change in practices, why not sending them a note to let them know their inputs on departure were heard and useful? It will show it was valued and more than a box ticking exercise.*

SUGGESTED RESOURCES AND TRAINING:

*Read the report on **EveryChild** exit process and the study case studies from **World Vision** and **British Red Cross** on the CHS Alliance website and take the UNICEF course **Preparing for a Transition to Retirement** on Disasterready.org. Pick up additional tips in a blog on **Effective Offboarding** on Cornerstone OnDemand website.*

APPENDIX

Other useful resources and links:

- ✓ *CHS Alliance Resources Centre for additional resources and case studies*
- ✓ *DisasterReady.org for the full library of free learning resources*
- ✓ *CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development – UK)*
- ✓ *ACAS (Help and advice for employers and employees - UK)*
- ✓ *RedR (Resource centre)*
- ✓ *MindTools (resources for professional efficiency)*
- ✓ *EISF (European Interagency Security Forum)*
- ✓ *Coordination Sud (France): Guide Synergie Qualité (HR Management Section)*
- ✓ *Duty of Care International (Resource centre)*

Although this toolkit does not provide country-specific information, please check DisasterReady.org for the CultureGrams series from ProQuest: it provides information on a country's customs, traditions, politics, and daily life. Written by in-country experts, this is a useful report to preview when preparing to open a programme in countries throughout Africa, Asia and the Middle East.