



Global HR Standards

*Human Resources and Strategy • Staff Policies and Practice
Managing People • Consultation and Communication
Recruitment and Selection • Learning, Training and Development
Healthy, Safety and Security*

May 2009



Actionaid International GLOBAL HUMAN RESOURCES STANDARDS

February 2009

AAI ORGANISATION-WIDE COMPLIANCE

The following is ActionAid's core HR Standards Framework. The standards are treated as core non- negotiable standards that every part of the organisation must meet, subject to prevailing employment legislation. National Boards should regularly review compliance to these standards.

- All references to CP's in this document are inclusive of affiliates, associates and IS offices.
- All references to CDs or IDs in this document are inclusive of heads of countries, themes and international functions where applicable.

GLOBAL INGO BENCHMARKING WITH PEOPLE IN AID



ActionAid has signed up with People in Aid as a corporate member in February 2009.

People in Aid is a well recognised network of international NGOs and provides a code of practice in people management. Our membership provides accountability within our organisation for good people management practices and a benchmark with our peer organisations.

ActionAid International Global HR Standards are aligned to the People in Aid Code:

People In Aid Code	ACTIONAID's Core HR Global Framework
1. Human resources and strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Staff planning and Job design 1.2 HR & OD capacity 1.3 HR policy and standards compliance
2. Staff policies and practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Remuneration & benefits 2.2 Employee Relations
3. Managing people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Performance Management 3.2 Termination
4. Consultation and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1 Consultation and Communication
5. Recruitment and Selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1 Employment 5.2 Induction and Orientation
6. Learning, training and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.1 Training and development
7. Health, safety and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7.1 Safety and staff security 7.2 Employee Wellbeing and Health

Key Principles of Global HR Standards

1. Human resources strategy

- human resources are an integral part of our strategic and operation plans

2. Staff policies and practice

- our human resources policies aim to be effective, fair and transparent

3. Managing people

- good support, management and leadership of our staff is key to our effectiveness

4. Consultation and Communication

- dialogue with staff on matters likely to affect their employment enhances the quality and effectiveness of our policies and practices

5. Recruitment and selection

- our policies and practices aim to attract and select a diverse workforce with the skills and capabilities to fulfil our requirements

6. Learning, training and development

- learning, training and staff development are promoted throughout the organisation

7. Health, safety and security

- the security, health and safety of our staff are a prime responsibility of our organisation

1. Human resources and strategy

1. 1. Staff Planning and Grading

Planning

- All CPs must develop and update a three-year staff plan including headcount, staff movement and succession information which are aggregated by the International Secretariat (IS) as part of the annual planning and budgeting process.
- All CD's must ensure that their respective HR/OD managers update core data by 5th monthly.
- International HR will coordinate data in a global HR management information system (MIS), which forms the basis of ActionAid reporting and annual planning.

Creation of new positions and Grading

- International positions can only be created by approval of the CEO and/or ID OD&G.
- National positions must be approved by the respective CD and/or relevant ID, in consultation with Boards where appropriate.
- New approved positions must be included in the Annual Plan and Budget cycle clearly indicating contract type and benefits.
- Grading, job evaluations and re-grading must be based on ActionAid's approved International and National grade structure.

1. 2. HR & OD Capacity

- In every location, one individual (or the senior management team as whole) must have clear responsibility for the HR/OD function, as well as the resources available to support that function.
- There must be an established HR/Manager wherever there is an operating Country Strategy Plan

1. 3. HR Policy & Standards Compliance

Compliance auditing

- CDs must periodically monitor and evaluate compliance of HR and OD policies (scorecard).
- Policy compliance will be internally audited with regular reports to IDs.
- National Boards will be required to audit HROD Compliance as described in these standards

Core Policies

- The following are key policies to be audited annually: Anti Sexual harassment policy; Whistle blowing policy; HIV and AIDS at the Workplace; Equal Opportunity policy; Affirmative Action; HROD Standards

2. Staff policies and practice

2.1. Remuneration and Benefits

Annual salary review

- An annually reviewed and approved Salary & Benefits document must be referred to for all pay and benefit decisions (inclusive of updated salary scales).
- Cost of living adjustments will be made annually when the official national cost of living or rate of inflation is announced.
- Where the official cost of living indices are not credible, the figures provided by credible national non-government financial and research institutions will be acceptable.
- To ensure market competitiveness, country and peer salary surveys will be conducted every three years.

Payment of salaries

- All salaries will be paid on a regular basis (monthly or weekly) appropriate to both the needs of staff and AA administration.
- All national salaries shall be denominated and paid in national currencies.
- Appropriate income tax payments must be made inline with the local tax regulations.

Standard benefit package will include

- Provident fund or pension scheme cover for long term retirement savings, the contribution to such schemes will be within the labour requirements of a given country. Employees on short term contract of less than one year will not be entitled to this benefit.
- Unless the national law specifically provides otherwise, the basis for calculation of pension or provident fund calculations will be *basic salary*.
- Membership to a Life Assurance scheme to cover for both natural and accidental causes, 4 times the annual salary
- Personal accident insurance
- A health coverage package – ideally via medical insurance to cover hospitalization, medical consultations and medicines (for in and out patient) for staff and their immediate dependants unless there are significant government funded, or other, healthcare schemes available.
- Travel insurance for work related traveling at national level.

Separation benefits

- Contract end gratuity- defined as compensation for uncertainties for contract based employment will be payable where local laws provide. It is applicable to staff on fixed term contracts of one year or more. Contract end gratuity will be calculated on the basis of basic salary, calculated at the rate of one month's basic salary for each completed year of service. Gratuity will only be payable at the end of a fixed contract.
- Severance pay will apply in cases of redundancy and Phase-out resulting from planned phase out of project or position, program shrinkage, unplanned, unforeseen project termination and economic reasons. Unless the local labour laws provide otherwise severance pay will be calculated at three month's salary.

Staff loans

- Staff loans are not encouraged with the exception of emergency and or urgent personal needs.
- Approval for staff loans will be provided by Country Directors and International Directors. ActionAid International does not give loans for the purchase of major capital items such as houses.

Annual Leave

- All staff are entitled to a minimum of 21 working days in every complete year of service, or as defined by local labour laws.
- ActionAid forbids leave encashment except during the final separation. Up to one-third of the total number of leave days may be carried over to the next year provided it is then used within the first quarter of the following year, or as defined by the local labour laws.

Time off in lieu (TOIL)

- TOIL is provided to staff when work is undertaken outside normal working hours. This is given by arrangement with a line manager, to be claimed for half-/full-day work over recognised holidays, or as defined by local labour laws. TOIL must be claimed within one month. Where members of staff travel over weekends, actual travel time can be claimed as TOIL not exceeding 8 hours per day

Sick Leave

- ActionAid provides for 10 days paid sick leave or as defined by local labour laws. In cases of serious illness requiring hospitalisation, this can be extended inline within defined local laws. The application must be supported by adequate medical records. This leave should be approved by the Head of Country, relevant International Director and Head of Human Resources.

Compassionate Leave

- At times of critical illness and/ or to care for recognised dependants and at the death of such dependants, a maximum of 15 calendar days can be approved by the respective ID or CD.

Maternity Leave

- All pregnant employees will be provided with a minimum of 4 calendar months paid maternity leave. This can be exceeded where national laws provide more.
- Employees on full time contracts who have not completed one full year of service with ActionAid will be provided with an option of 4 months paid maternity leave or alternative unpaid leave based on local legislation.
- An option of full pay will be provided if an employee states that she intends to return to work and agrees (in writing) to repay this amount in full. If she subsequently decides not to return to work for ActionAid or does not return for at least three months from the end of the maternity leave period, the full amount must be recovered.
- CD's are required to make annual leave and financial planning to ensure appropriate maternity cover. Non compliance will result in disciplinary action of the CD.

Paternity Leave

- ActionAid provides a maximum of 15 paid calendar days for paternity leave. This can be exceeded where national laws provide more.

Adoption Leave

- A one-off adoption leave shall be provided to support staff at the time of adoption for children up to 24 months; the adoption leave will be inline with country labour laws.

2.2. Employee Relations

Legal compliance

- ActionAid abides by the laws of the countries we work in. Any situation relating to staff that could result in legal action must be documented at all stages and the HR/OD manager/function must be informed at the earliest opportunity.

Dismissible Offences

- Examples of dismissible offences should be given in local disciplinary procedures to ensure transparency. These include sexual harassment, child abuse, theft, fraud and/or embezzlement of organisational funds and gross misconduct.

Discipline procedures

- Any act of misconduct must be dealt with according to the disciplinary guidelines set out by each country. Appropriate action must be taken if individuals consistently act in ways that contradict ActionAid's values, attitudes and behaviours.
- All disciplinary procedures must be unbiased and should involve fair investigations with the opportunity for discussion, improvement and appeal. Minor and serious misconduct must be clearly outlined in each country manual.

Grievance procedures

- Staff should raise grievances through ActionAid's grievance process.

Enquiry and investigation forums

- It is strongly recommended that standing committee be established to investigate major grievances.
- This committee will address amongst other issues violation of womens rights in the organisation.

3. Managing people

3.1. Performance Management

Performance Agreement

- The Performance Management cycle runs from January to December each year.
- All IDs and CDs must ensure that all respective staff have an agreed Annual Performance Plan and employee development plan by February each year - setting key results areas and key performance indicators with staff members, and informed by Annual Plans and Budgets as well as the development support that is planned for the employee during the year.
- Where employees have multiple accountabilities (matrix relationships), this plan must be jointly agreed by the respective managers.
- Management performance plans for ID's and CD's should include at least one Women's Rights KPA suggested by the Sunnyside Group.

Performance Review

- All IDs and CDs must ensure that all their respective staff members are subject to a six months performance review which is signed off by the member of staff by July each year.
- A Performance Appraisal is an annual review between line manager and employee, with a formal record; this may be supported by a 360 feedback review – conducted no later than January each year.

Poor performance

- Managers must ensure early management action, with documented support, and disciplinary action failing performance improvement.
- Appropriate disciplinary steps to be followed in managing continuous poor performance.

3.2. Termination

Legal compliance

- ActionAid will comply with the laws within countries when handling all termination related matters.

Notice period

- This will be based on country labour laws.
- ActionAid typically gives at least 3 months written notice for senior positions and 4 weeks for other positions.

Clearance and handover

- All staff should submit a hand-over report for the role they vacate before leaving ActionAid, and must return ActionAid assets.
- Prior to recommending final clearance, an exit interview must be conducted by HR, although no member of staff should be compelled to participate. All exit interview reports must be reviewed by respective CD or ID.

4. Consultation and communication

4.1. Policy and Practices

- CDs and IDs to ensure that staff are adequately informed and consulted when HR policies or practices that affect them are developed and reviewed.

5. Recruitment and Selection

5.1. Employment Practices

Interview panel composition

- An interview panel with appropriate gender and diversity representation must be set up for all positions.
- In the case of senior staff selection, an appropriate external panel member (and/or Board member), with acknowledged domain expertise (functional or geographic) must be included.

Conflict of interest

- All ActionAid staff are required to disclose any potential or real conflict with ActionAid prior to/ or shortly after joining.
- Similarly, ActionAid staff who are responsible for recruitment (line managers, HR/OD managers and interview panel) must declare any conflict of interest with potential staff as well as individuals for hire-in non-staff categories.

Approval of appointments

- All appointments must be approved by the recruiting line manager's line manager.
- In the case of multiple accountabilities, there must be consensus between the line manager and the concerned function/theme or region manager in recommending an appointment.
- A selection report must support the recommendation.
- References must be checked prior to an offer of employment using a standard form.

Contracts of Employment

- The respective line manager to ensure that new employees understand their employment contract before signing them.
- New employees should receive a full induction pack which includes ActionAid information, a job description, a performance contract and must sign a Values and Policy Compliance statement
- Employees will also be required to take note of key policies and sign that they acknowledge them. *See key policy section.*

Child Protection

- Any member of staff working with children under the age of 18 or with vulnerable adults, either directly or indirectly must have the necessary checks carried out on them to ensure that there is no known reason why they should not be employed in this area of work.
- Where possible, ActionAid must check legitimate registers (such as police records) in all cases where the individual is likely to come into unsupervised contact with vulnerable groups.

5.2. Induction and Orientation

Induction

- All new employees will receive full induction and orientation to ActionAid and its constituent parts, respective jobs and clarity of performance expectations.
- This will include a formal induction and a mandatory induction pack as detailed in the Induction and Orientation guidelines.
- Induction must be signed off by the respective line manager.

Orientation and Handover

- Handover and orientation plan must accompany the filling of mission-critical posts to ensure effective transition and succession risk.
- All staff working in dual reporting relationships to be oriented to matrix management principles.
- Reorientation for existing staff must be provided every two years by respective line manager.

6. Learning, training and development

6.1. Training and Development

Training and Development Plan

- CDs to ensure at least 1% provision for staff training in their annual budgets.
- Provision in this plan should include the development of core AAI programmes.

Women Development

- Career development for women will be prioritized in line with the achievement of ActionAid's affirmative and/or positive action targets as applicable in different countries, where affirmative action is legal.

7. Health, safety and security

7.1. Staff Safety and Security

Staff Security Policy and Plan

- All CDs are expected to communicate ActionAid's Staff Security Policy to all new staff and existing staff annually.
- All CDs must conduct regular country security risk assessments reported quarterly to International Board.
- All CDs must identify and implement Minimum Security Standards as agreed by the International Board.
- All CDs must have a Security Plan addressing minimum security gaps.

Travel and staff security

- Staff traveling out of country should notify their office to ensure insurance coverage.
- All staff to carry the official international travel insurance card in case of emergency.
- Staff traveling to different countries must ensure that they note any health, safety and security warnings.
- The host country takes responsibility for the health and safety of staff which at least needs to be addressed by a host country/office safety induction.

7.2. Employee Wellbeing and Health

- Access to Employee Assistance programmes and/or Service providers will be made by the respective Country.
- HR Countries and Offices are required to develop appropriate work-life balance plans.