

## **Ethical Codex**

People in Need, NPO

*September 2018*

### **1. Who we are and what values we believe in**

People in Need was founded in 1999 with an aim to effectively help people, who suffer as a consequence of conflicts, natural disasters and non – democratic regimes. Gradually, we have added educational activities and help in segregated communities in Slovakia into our mission. Beliefs that the organisation was founded on, nevertheless, remain the same:

- Professionalism
- Respect for people
- Transparency
- Efficiency
- Addressability
- Partnership
- Tolerant society
- Solidarity

### **2. Validity and obligatory force of the Ethical Codex**

This Ethical Codex is obligatory for all of the employees and associates of People in Need, NPO, including employees, mandataries, consultants, volunteers, interns and external suppliers of the organisation working in the name of People in Need, NPO, (hereinafter referred to as 'employees and associates'). The task of section coordinators and all superior employees is not only to comply with the codex but to lead by example and to create such environment for the employees and associates where behaving in accordance with the Ethical Codex is expected and rewarded.

The Ethical Codex is an internal directive of People in Need, NPO, and any acts contradicting it are considered a violation of working discipline according to the Labour Code or similar

contractual relationships.

### **3. Principals and attitudes**

#### **Non-profitability and voluntariness of our aid**

People in Need, NPO, is a non-profit organisation which provides generally beneficial services for all of the clients, beneficiaries and recipients of our aid (hereinafter referred to as 'clients') under predetermined and equal conditions, and whose profit must not be used for the benefit of founders, members of the bodies, nor their employees but is in all extent used for securing generally beneficial services.

All our clients enter the collaboration with People in Need, NPO, voluntarily and can decide to terminate the collaboration with us anytime. The collaboration with clients may never be conditional on the fulfilment of other requirements, unless the project, within which the collaboration is taking place, literally requires it. Effective and sustainable aid can be best achieved in situations where its beneficiaries are involved in the creation, management, implementation and evaluation of support programmes – hence, we will try to achieve the full engagement of the community into our activities and programmes.

#### **Independence and compliance with the rules**

People in Need, NPO, acts in their activities independently of any government. Employees and associates People in Need, NPO, must not be misused to gather information of a political, military or economic nature for governments or other institutions, which could serve other than strictly humanitarian goals. To protect our independence, we will try to diversify our funding sources.

Furthermore, we will carefully consider the motive of the donations and the origin of the resources we work with, and in case of doubt and risk of damaging the good name of People in Need, NPO, the resources will be rejected and returned back.

People in Need, NPO, will not engage in any activities that would be in contradiction with international norms and rules. People in Need, NPO, commits to adhere to all of the legal obligations arising from the laws of the country in which it has its seat. Moreover, the

organisation promises to respect the culture, structure and traditions of the communities it works with.

Every employee and associate participates in fulfilling the organisation's mission and strategic goals. They are responsible for following all the rules set by the organisation. They are also, to a reasonable extent responsible for the persons to whom the assistance is provided, and that is namely during activities connected with their job performance. They will make every effort and take all necessary precautions to ensure that their activities will not negatively impact or harm the clients they assist.

### **Non-discrimination**

When providing services and aid, employees and associates of People in Need, NPO, must not discriminate clients on the basis of race or skin colour, sex, gender, family status, religion, nationality or ethnicity, language, age, handicap, political affiliation or sexual orientation. This rule does not contradict the possibility of People in Need, NPO, to give priority and provide services to clients from vulnerable population groups if the conditions require it.

The aid of People in Need, NPO, is provided solely on the basis of needs of individuals, families and communities and is based on the consent of recipients with this help.

In like manner, there is a prohibition of any discrimination during the hiring process and during the whole duration of employment of employees and associates of People in Need, NPO. People in Need, NPO, seeks to create diversity in the working environment.

### **Building client capacities**

The aim of our work is to build and support local capacities of the people and communities we work with. Hence, whenever possible, we will try to support these capacities by employing local work force, buying local materials and doing business with local firms. At the same time, we will try to minimize the negative impact of external aid in favour of reducing the dependence of recipients on this external aid.

### **Professionalism**

People in Need, NPO, carries out its activity professionally using specific knowledge and abilities of its employees and associates. Employees and associates of People in Need, NPO,

perform only those activities for which they are professionally and personally competent. They follow their personal and professional limits and develop them, educate themselves and improve their practical capabilities with the aim of achieving the best results. In case of solving complex work challenges in their jobs, the employee/associate of People in Need, NPO, has the possibility to consult their job with the team, superior or supervisor.

### **Transparency and communication People in Need, NPO**

People in Need, NPO, promises to provide the most accurate information regarding the organisation and its activities or individuals to the public. People in Need, NPO, respects the integrity of each individual. When informing the public about our activities, as well as fundraising activities, the organisation binds promises to respect clients and recipients of aid and to seek to preserve their dignity. We portray the individuals to the public with their abilities and ambitions not just as vulnerable persons that are afraid and powerless. Whenever possible, we obtain the consent of the individual to use their image and information about them.

In contact with the media due to the need for increased public response, employees will respect these abovementioned principles and values. They will never compete with other subjects providing aid for media attention in a situation where it may harm the act of providing services and help for the recipients or the safety of employees/persons working for the subjects providing assistance services. Communicating with the media in the name of People in Need, NPO and/or activities of People in Need, NPO is only allowed to employees and associates of People in Need, NPO, who were authorized to do so or it is within their scope of employment.

People in Need, NPO, commits to transparency in relation to state institutions, the public, donors, partners, clients and anyone who shows interest in information regarding the use of resources for the activities of the organisation with the exception of publishing private and personal information or information that could affect the safety and dignity of third parties in accordance with the internal rules of the organisation. People in Need, NPO, regularly publishes basic financial information, management structure, activities and financial resources through its Annual Reports.

## **Corruption**

Corruption is defined as the abuse of power for personal gain. It includes offering, donating, demanding or accepting financial or material gifts, loans, rewards or any other benefits from/for a third party in order to obtain something dishonestly, illegally or violating the framework of legal or contractual relationships. As corruption we consider particularly accepting and giving bribes and other benefits, enforcing or abusing entrusted resources, deals restricting competition, money laundering, provisions from obtained contracts (so-called kickbacks), paying unreasonable prices and fees to a third party for a personal gain and accepting undue donations in order to gain an advantage.

Corruption in any of the mentioned forms is prohibited and employees and associates of People in Need, NPO, are obliged to inform about any alleged corrupt behaviour that they witnessed.

The only case in which corrupt behaviour may be necessary is a serious threat to life, health or safety of employees and associates of People in Need, NPO. However, People in Need, NPO, promises to plan its activities in such manner to minimize the risk in which such behaviour is required under pressure. At the same time, the rule of non-payment of ransom in case of kidnapping is applicable, as stated in the Safety and Protection Directive of the RDD department.

## **Conflict of interest**

Employees and associates of People in Need, NPO, must not use their job position to obtain an unlawful personal advantage or profit and must avoid situations in which a conflict with interests of People in Need, NPO, could be expected.

No employee or associate of People in Need, NPO, is allowed to:

- use the name or activities of People in Need, NPO, as a tool of propaganda when executing public, political or religious activities
- join the activities of member organisations, alliances and associations whose focus is in a profound conflict with activities, values and goals of People in Need, NPO,

- be simultaneously employed or to contribute to work of a legal entity whose activities, values and goals are in conflict with the activities, values and goals of People in Need, NPO,
- accept gifts or any other benefits exceeding the amount of €50,00 from partner organisations or business partners and keep them for personal use
- use confidential information obtained during the duration of employment for People in Need, NPO, for personal benefit or for the benefit of third parties
- use their position in People in Need, NPO, to gain personal benefits
- prefer family members if they are employees of People in Need, NPO.

Employees and associates of People in Need, NPO, are also obliged to without any delay notify and consult with their superiors the suitability of following situations and behaviour:

- being in a position of a supplier of goods or services at the same time
- participating in business activities in the area of operation of People in Need, NPO,
- close personal relationships with the clients of People in Need, NPO, or representatives of organisations with which People in Need, NPO, have business or partner relationship
- membership in organisations, administrative boards or control bodies of donation institutions from which People in Need, NPO, obtains resources
- participation in managing or control bodies of partner organisations
- employing family members
- ownership or co-partnership, own or those of family members or close people in business companies which have a business relationship with People in Need, NPO,
- paid activities (lecturing, training, public presentation) that fall under the scope of employment during the working time of an employee or associate of People in Need, NPO, with revenue exceeding €150,00 per month
- paid activities related to the scope of employment of an employee outside of working hours in accordance with the Labour Code.

### **Abuse of drugs and alcohol**

Employees and associates of People in Need, NPO, do not work under the influence of alcohol or other drugs that impact their ability to perform their job. In countries we operate in,

employees and associates of People in Need, NPO, promise to abide by local laws regarding the possession and use of narcotics.

### **Relationships with clients and employees/associates**

Sexual relationships between employees/associates of People in Need, NPO, and clients of our programmes are prohibited, since they are often based on unbalanced dynamics of power relations. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of People in Need, NPO, and its work.

All employees and associates of People in Need, NPO, should consider engaging in sexual relationships with a local employee and associate of People in Need, NPO, whereas questions of personal safety, achieving goals of the programme, possible conflict of interest and the reputation of organization in the local community should be mainly considered.

Every employee in a managing or supervisory position must take into consideration that a sexual or romantic relationship with their subordinates may be seen as favouritism, abuse of authority and potentially sexual harassment.

Any sexual activity between an employee/associate of People in Need, NPO, and an underage person (under 18 years old) is strictly forbidden and must be without any delay reported to a superior and in case of a criminal offense according to the laws of the given country to the police as well. The incorrect estimate of minor's age is not an acceptable argument.

Any promise or exchange of money, goods, or services for sex is prohibited as well.

### **Harassment and abuse**

Any psychological harassment, bullying, attacks or intimidation, as well as sexual harassment of employees and associates of People in Need, NPO, by a superior or any other employees and associates is prohibited and may be consider a criminal offense. In this matter, the organisation applies a zero-tolerance policy. The management of the organisation, as well as the work team itself must be cautious towards the possible presence of harassment in the workplace and use due measures to prevent such harassment. Employees must not ever act in a harassing manner, nor cause our employees and associates to feel unpleasant in their own work environment. Employees are aware that their actions can fulfil the factual essence of

sexual harassment and other actions in contradiction to this codex, and such actions will be prosecuted.

People in Need, NPO, strictly abides the legislation and principles of employment regarding equal opportunities for everyone and that is without any regard for race, skin colour, sex, gender, family status, religion, nationality or ethnicity, language, age, handicap, political affiliation or sexual orientation. People in Need, NPO, promises to behave politely and with respect towards individuals, our employees and associates. At the same time, we will not be tolerant such behaviour towards employees and associates of People in Need, NPO, from third parties.

In case anyone feels uncomfortable on based on actions caused to them or they were a witness of such actions towards other person, they can address their direct superior or management of the organisation any time.

#### **Property liability, resources and information of People in Need, NPO**

It is expected that every employee and associate of People in Need, NPO, will use the property and financial or other resources of the organisation in a responsible manner in accordance with the rules and guidelines of the organisation.

The property of People in Need, NPO, must not be used for illegal activities including any forms of misconduct. All property, goods and services purchased within the programmes of People in Need, NPO, must be used adequately for the purpose that they were obtained for and in a manner regulated by the organisation's internal rules. The damage of the property by deliberate action or gross negligence results in personal material liability towards a specific employee or an associate of People in Need, NPO.

Any confidential information pertaining to and acquired during the employment period for People in Need, NPO, must not be shared outside the organisation in accordance with the relevant provisions of the employment/other contract and personal data protection laws, and violation of this rule may be financially or otherwise sanctioned.



### **Political involvement of employees and associates People in Need, NPO**

People in Need, NPO, believes in the usefulness and benefit of people's active involvement in decision-making via democratic mechanisms, such as elections and political party competition. The same applies to employees and associates of People in Need, NPO. They have the right to fully use their passive and active right to vote and the right to associate in political parties and movements, as long as their actions do not threaten the independence and good name of People in Need, NPO, and do not abuse the name or activities of the organisation for the purpose of political propaganda. At the same time, the employees and associates of People in Need, NPO, are obliged to inform their direct superior about above mentioned activities (with the exception of passive right to vote).

People in Need, NPO, will consider the involvement of politically active persons in its public activities, whose participation could threaten the independence and good name of the organisation.

### **Safety and protection**

People in Need, NPO, considers the safety and protection of its employees and associates to be extremely important. Employees and associates of People in Need, NPO, are therefore obliged to follow the legal standards, rules and internal guidelines regarding the safety at work.

The organisation cares about the protection of clients and aid recipients. That is why the employees and associates of People in Need, NPO, follow the internal rules regarding the protection of children and vulnerable persons.

### **The environmental protection**

The organisation and all employees and associates are responsible and active in the environmental protection and they try to apply this principle in all their activities and their functioning – both in planning and implementing the projects and programmes, in daily life within the organisation's premises too.

#### **4. Notification obligation and reporting mechanism**

It is a responsibility of every employee and associate of People in Need, NPO, who obtains the information of Ethical Codex violation to report this violation without any delay to their superior or any member of the Management Team of People in Need, NPO, and that will be done in person, via email or letter. In the event of a complaint regarding a violation of the code of ethics by a statutory representative, the announcer may contact the organisation's Administrative Board.

The management team of People in Need, NPO, (in a composition that excludes conflict of interests) is obliged to discuss each initiative and to inform the announcer about its resolution and, in case of seriousness for the entire organisation, also other employees of People in Need, NPO, while strictly keeping any information about the announcer and/or the victim confidential in order to protect them.