



PIN Policy on Ethical Conduct

Introduction

People In Need (PIN) requests its staff and associates to maintain the highest ethical standards in their behaviour towards their team members and colleagues, towards external stakeholders of our programmes and particularly towards our beneficiaries. At the same time, PIN acknowledges that goods and services provided by our programmes can create a power imbalance, favouring those employed or engaged by PIN against programme beneficiaries; and PIN also acknowledges that this situation might be potentially exploited by PIN staff and associates to acquire bribes, payments, gifts, and/or sexual favours.

By clarifying the ethical conduct of PIN staff and associates and setting key thresholds of an unacceptable behaviour, this Policy has two objectives:

- ◆ To ensure maximum protection of our beneficiaries and to prevent their abuse or exploitation
- ◆ To promote team cohesion, a respectful working environment and to prevent unacceptable behaviour within our teams and of our associates

Expected standards of conduct of PIN staff are elaborated in the *PIN Code of Conduct*, which is an inseparable part of this Policy. The *PIN Code of Conduct* is a key tool for the prevention of all forms of unacceptable behaviour by PIN staff. PIN should also assist partner organisations to reinforce their own existing policies, codes or other instruments or if necessary to develop new ones.

Policy statement

All people have the same right to freedom from abuse and exploitation. PIN condemns all forms of similar unacceptable behaviour and considers them to be in direct breach with our belief in the human dignity of all people. PIN staff and associates must never engage in any forms of humiliating, degrading, abusive, exploitative or other forms of unacceptable behaviour under any circumstances.

Towards PIN beneficiaries

In our programmes, PIN is committed to the protection of our beneficiaries. PIN will take all reasonable steps to protect them from any harassment, abuse and exploitation potentially perpetrated by PIN staff or associates. All PIN staff and associates are thus required to respect the rights and dignity of individuals, families and communities with whom we work.

We reject any form of sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse, which we consider as one of the worst manifestations of misconduct and abuse of power. We acknowledge that certain vulnerable groups such as children, women, the elderly, disabled people and others might be particularly at risk and must receive our greatest attention.

In order to be able to address the issues of beneficiaries' protection properly, it is essential that PIN staff and associates be fully aware of and respectful toward local cultural and religious practices. However, these specifics can never be used as an excuse or a motive for inappropriate behaviour. PIN will not accept using respect for local culture as a justification for ignoring or supporting harmful practices.

PIN beneficiaries must be aware of their basic rights and the standards of conduct expected from PIN staff and associates. A Complaint Response Mechanism (CRM) has to be established in order to enable our beneficiaries to raise any potential concerns.

Towards PIN staff

PIN is committed to protecting the rights of the PIN staff and to maintain its dignified working environment free of any potential harassment, abuse and exploitation. Every PIN staff member must be aware of the internal procedures to raise concerns about any unethical or unacceptable behaviour of her/his colleagues. Basic principles and standards of conduct of PIN staff and associates are outlined in the *PIN Code of Conduct*. PIN is aware that substantial breaches of these principles can significantly undermine PIN's core values and vision, and that these would negatively impact on the reputation and ability of PIN to reach its goals.

Preventive measures to reduce potential for unacceptable behaviour

In order to reduce any potential abuse of power and other unacceptable behaviour, PIN country management and ultimately PIN Country Directors are responsible to ensure that the following measures are taken:

- ◆ PIN staff and associates are aware of and understand – to the relevant extent - the content and scope of this Policy and the *PIN Code of Conduct*.
- ◆ Office and field teams are sufficiently gender-balanced.
- ◆ Beneficiaries are selected and benefits are allocated in a transparent way; and no individual PIN staff member can decide (or is perceived to be deciding) on the benefit allocation as a sole authority.
- ◆ All beneficiaries are, in an understandable manner and to the relevant extent, made aware:
 - ▶ Of the scope of the assistance they are entitled to, the beneficiary selection criteria, and other necessary details of the assistance
 - ▶ That PIN's and/or its partner organisations' staff deliver assistance without discrimination
 - ▶ That allocated goods and services cannot be withheld or withdrawn on the arbitrary decision of one individual PIN or PIN partner organization staff member
 - ▶ That the assistance is free of charge (unless beneficiaries are formally required to contribute financially) and that it is unacceptable for PIN or its partner organization staff members to accept bribes, rewards, gifts, or any favours (including sexual) from a beneficiary
 - ▶ Of the standards of conduct expected from PIN and its partner organization staff members
 - ▶ Of the existence, purpose and accessibility of the CRM
- ◆ PIN staff is aware of the appropriate procedures to raise their complaints related to unacceptable behaviour of PIN staff or associates towards other PIN staff or associates or towards PIN beneficiaries.
- ◆ Senior staff members are trained on how to investigate complaints.

Specifics of PIN partner organizations

Adherence to and compliance – to the relevant extent – with this Policy and the *PIN Code of Conduct* must be a condition for every partnership agreement or contract. In case that a PIN partner organisation does not comply with the principles of this Policy, PIN reserves the right to withdraw funding and/or terminate any existing partnership agreements.

As PIN recognizes that partner organizations might have their own existing policies, codes or other instruments, this Policy and the *PIN Code of Conduct* does not seek to replace or nullify them.

Representatives of partner organisations must ensure that:

- ◆ Partner organization staff and associates adhere to the key principles of ethical behaviour and standards of conduct
- ◆ All necessary and relevant procedures within their organization are set up and monitored
- ◆ CRM for beneficiaries is established
- ◆ Appropriate actions be taken when the standards of this Policy are not adhered to