



# **FIRE AID**

AID AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**FIRE AID and International Development: UK charity number 1171935**

## **Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy**

Corruption is a sensitive issue in the NGO world. Humanitarian actors need to understand what corruption is, recognise the forms it can take in humanitarian response determine its true scale and better understand the conditions which lead to it. They also need to identify what mechanisms need to be put in place or strengthened to guard against corruption, even in the most difficult contexts.

Militating against corruption is necessary if NGOs are to achieve both operational efficiency and accountability to their stakeholders. However, it is also important to recognise that adopting a proactive and transparent approach to dealing with corruption may involve short-term risks to an NGO's reputation

Corruption can be defined as **'the abuse of power or position for private gain'**. This covers 'active corruption', such as bribery, and 'passive corruption', or allowing oneself to be bribed, as well as misappropriation. As a complex global phenomenon with significant local consequences, corruption is a critical aspect of humanitarian thinking and action.

***Good governance and transparency are at the heart of NGO legitimacy to this end FIRE AID adopt this policy for the use of all members and their personnel whilst involved in projects or operating in the name of FIRE AID or in receipt of funding in the name of FIRE AID.***

### **1. POLICY STATEMENT**

- 1.1 FIRE AID takes a zero-tolerance approach to bribery and corruption and will uphold all laws relevant to countering bribery and corruption in all the jurisdictions in which we operate. We welcome the international community's efforts to stamp out bribery and corruption and support the implementation of the United Nations Anti-Corruption Convention and the Group of Twenty Anti-Corruption Action Plan. FIRE AID as a forum for a collection of UK Aid Charities remain bound by the laws of the UK, including the Bribery Act 2010 (the "**Act**"), in respect of our activities both at home and abroad. We undertake due diligence on our partners, members, funding recipients, and associates and take reasonable steps to ensure that they apply all applicable anti-bribery and anti-corruption laws.
- 1.2 The purpose of this policy is to:
  - (a) Set out our responsibilities in observing and upholding our policy on bribery and corruption; and
  - (b) Provide information and guidance to our members and partners, funding recipients and their associates on how to recognise and deal with bribery and corruption issues.
- 1.3 Under the Act, bribery and corruption are punishable for individuals by up to ten years' imprisonment and if we are found to have taken part in corruption FIRE AID member charities could face an unlimited fine, be excluded from tendering for public contracts, and face damage

FIREAID Anti Bribery and Corruption Policy-Revised October 2017.

to our reputation. We therefore take our legal responsibilities very seriously.

## **2. WHO IS COVERED BY THE POLICY?**

- 2.1 This policy applies directly to our members and to all individuals working within FIRE AID as members or agents. The policy is provided to our other partners, members, funding recipients and associates, who will be required to take reasonable steps to ensure that in carrying out activities supported by FIRE AID member charities they and their members, directors and associates comply, with all applicable anti-bribery and anti-corruption laws.
- 2.2 In this policy, "third party" means any individual or organisation you come into contact with during the course of your role.

## **3. WHAT IS BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION?**

- 3.1 A bribe is an inducement or reward offered, promised or provided in order to gain any commercial, contractual, regulatory or personal advantage.
- 3.2 Corruption is the misuse of public office or power for private gain or the misuse of private power in relation to business outside the realm of government.
- 3.3 Acts of bribery or corruption are intended to influence an individual in the performance of their work to act dishonestly and/or improperly. The person being bribed is usually someone who can obtain, retain or direct business for example during a tender or contracting process or it may be through the handling of administrative tasks or customs matters.
- 3.4 A bribe can take many forms, for example, a direct or indirect promise or offer of something of value, the offer or receipt of a kickback, fee, reward or other advantage, the giving of aid, donations or voting designed to exert improper influence.
- 3.5 Those engaged in bribery and corruption can include a member, officer, trustee or director, of a charity and any person acting on behalf of FIRE AID member charities i.e. our agents, individuals or organisations who authorise someone else to carry out these acts, Government or public officials whether foreign or domestic.

## **4. GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY**

- 4.1 This policy does not prohibit gifts, entertainment, hospitality or other promotional expenditures (given and received) to or from third parties which are proportionate, transparent, reasonable and for bona fide purposes related to the aims and objectives of FIRE AID member charities.
- 4.2 The giving or receipt of gifts is not prohibited if all the following requirements are met:
- (a) It is not made with the intention of influencing a third party to obtain or retain business or a business advantage, or to reward the provision or retention of business or a business advantage, or in explicit or implicit exchange for favours or benefits;
  - (b) It complies with local law;
  - (c) It is given in our name, not in your name;
  - (d) It does not include cash or a cash equivalent (such as gift certificates or vouchers);

- (e) It is appropriate in the circumstances. For example, it is given as a ceremonial gift on a festival or at another special time (e.g. Christmas);
  - (f) Considering the reason for the gift, it is of an appropriate type and value and given at an appropriate time;
  - (g) It is given openly, not secretly; and
  - (h) Gifts should not be offered to, or accepted from, government officials or representatives, or politicians or political parties, without the prior approval of the FIRE AID Committee.
- 4.3 We appreciate that the practice of giving business gifts varies between countries and regions and what may be normal and acceptable in one region may not be in another. The test to be applied is whether in all the circumstances the gift or hospitality is reasonable and justifiable. The intention behind the gift should always be considered.
- 4.4 Gifts to a value of more than £100 (or of comparable value in a different country)<sup>1</sup> should not be given or offered (to or from a single source on a single occasion) unless they have the written approval of the FIRE AID Committee.
- 4.5 All gifts and hospitality to a value of more than £100 (or of comparable value in a different country) accepted or offered by any employee or trustee should be entered on a register of gifts. Any gift received exceeding this amount should be recorded and auctioned or paid for/given away.
- 4.6 Gifts to a value of more than £50 (or of comparable value in a different country) received or offered by FireAid funding recipients in connection to their FIRE AID project must be recorded on a FIRE AID register of gifts.
- 4.7 A record of all hospitality received or offered e.g. travel and dinners will be kept by the FIRE AID Committee.

## 5. **WHAT IS NOT ACCEPTABLE?**

- 5.1 It is not acceptable for you (or someone on your behalf) to:
- (a) Give, promise to give, or offer, a payment, gift or hospitality with the expectation or hope or that this will influence the decision-making of FIRE AID or that a business advantage will be received, or to reward a business advantage already given; or
  - (b) Give, promise to give, or offer, a payment, gift or hospitality to a government official, agent or representative to "facilitate" or expedite a routine procedure; or
  - (c) Accept payment from a third party that you know or suspect is offered with the expectation that FIRE AID decision making will be influenced in any way and that it will obtain a business advantage for them; or

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<sup>1</sup> In deciding whether a gift is of comparable value, the relevant member should consider all surrounding circumstances including, but not limited to, the average income in the location where the recipient of the gift is based.

- (d) Accept a gift or hospitality from a third party if you know or suspect that it is offered or provided with an expectation that FIRE AID decision making will be influenced in any way and that a business advantage will be provided by us in return; or
- (e) Threaten or retaliate against another member who has refused to commit a bribery offence or who has raised concerns under this policy; or
- (f) Engage in any activity that might lead to a breach of this policy.

## 6. **FACILITATION PAYMENTS**

- 6.1 We do not make, and will not accept, facilitation payments or "kickbacks" of any kind. Facilitation payments are typically small, unofficial payments made to secure or expedite a routine government action by a government official (e.g. processing a visa, customs invoice or other governmental paper). They are not commonly paid in the UK, but are common in some other jurisdictions.
- 6.2 If you are asked to make a payment on our behalf, you should always be mindful of what the payment is for and whether the amount requested is proportionate to the goods or services provided. You should always ask for a receipt which details the reason for the payment. If you have any suspicions, concerns or queries regarding a payment, you should raise these with your project lead.
- 6.3 If such a payment is extorted or forced under duress or because of a threat to personal safety then the payment may be made provided that either the Chairman or their representative is promptly informed, a written report submitted, and the payment recorded in FIRE AID financial records.
- 6.4 Kickbacks are typically payments made in return for a business favour or advantage. All our partners, funding recipients and associates must avoid any activity that might lead to, or suggest, that a facilitation payment or kickback will be made or accepted by us.

## 7. **YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 7.1 All members and agents must ensure they read, understand and comply with this policy.
- 7.2 The prevention, detection and reporting of bribery and other forms of corruption are the responsibility of all those working for FIRE AID or in our name. You are required to avoid any activity that might lead to, or suggest, a breach of this policy.
- 7.3 You must notify the Chairman or their representative as soon as possible if you believe or suspect that a conflict with this policy has occurred, or may occur in the future. For example, if a partner, funding recipient, associate or potential partner offers you something to gain an advantage with us, or indicates to you that a gift or payment is required to secure their co-operation with FIRE AID supported activities.
- 7.4 Any member who breaches this policy will face action, which could result in dismissal from FIRE AID membership for gross misconduct. We reserve our right to terminate our contractual relationship with our partners, funding recipients, and associates if they breach this policy.

## 8. **RECORD-KEEPING**

- 8.1 FIRE AID must keep financial records and have appropriate internal controls in place which will evidence the business reason for making payments to third parties.

- 8.2 You must declare and keep a written record of all hospitality or gifts to a value of more than £100 (or of comparable value in a different country) accepted or offered on a gifts register, which will be subject to managerial review.
- 8.3 You must ensure all expenses claims relating to hospitality, gifts or expenses incurred to third parties are submitted in accordance with our expenses policy and specifically record the reason for the expenditure.
- 8.4 All accounts, invoices, memoranda and other documents and records relating to dealings with third parties, such as clients, suppliers and business contacts, should be prepared and maintained with strict accuracy and completeness. No accounts must be kept "off-book" to facilitate or conceal improper payments.

## 9. **HOW TO RAISE A CONCERN**

- 9.1 You are encouraged to raise concerns about any issue or suspicion of malpractice at the earliest possible stage. If you are unsure whether a particular act constitutes bribery or corruption, or any other queries, these should be raised with the Chairman or their representative. Statutory protection of whistle blowers is afforded under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

## 10. **PROTECTION**

- 10.1 Members who refuse to accept or offer a bribe, or those who raise concerns or report another's wrongdoing, are sometimes worried about possible repercussions. We aim to encourage openness and will support anyone who raises genuine concerns in good faith under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.
- 10.2 We are committed to ensuring no one suffers any detrimental treatment as a result of refusing to take part in bribery or corruption, or because of reporting in good faith their suspicion that an actual or potential bribery or other corruption offence has taken place, or may take place in the future. Detrimental treatment includes dismissal, threats or other unfavourable treatment connected with raising a concern. If you believe that you have suffered any such treatment, you should inform the Chairman or their representative as soon as possible.

## 11. **TRAINING AND COMMUNICATION**

- 11.1 Our zero-tolerance approach to bribery and corruption will be communicated to all partners, funding recipients, associates, suppliers, and contractors at the outset of our relationship with them and as appropriate thereafter.

## 12. **WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE POLICY?**

- 12.1 The FIRE AID Committee Members have overall responsibility for ensuring this policy complies with our legal and ethical obligations, and that all those members taking part in FIRE AID projects comply with it.
- 12.2 FIRE AID Committee Members have primary and day-to-day responsibility for implementing this policy and for monitoring its use and effectiveness and dealing with any queries on its interpretation. Management of all member groups whilst involved in FIRE AID projects or receiving FIRE AID funding are responsible for ensuring those reporting to them are made aware of and understand this policy and are given adequate understanding of it.

13. **RISK ASSESSMENT, MONITORING, AND REVIEW**

- 13.1 As part of its annual risk assessment process the nominated Committee member will monitor the effectiveness and review the implementation of this policy, considering its suitability, adequacy and effectiveness. The nominated Committee member will carry out regular audits of our control systems and procedures to provide assurance that they are effective in countering bribery and corruption.
- 13.2 All members whilst engaged in FIRE AID management, projects or receiving FIRE AID funding are responsible for the success of this policy and should ensure they use it to disclose any suspected danger or wrongdoing.
- 13.3 This policy may be amended at any time.

**NOTES:**