



**Magyar  
Önkéntesküldő  
Alapítvány**

Hungarian Volunteer Sending Foundation

**Hungarian Volunteer Sending Foundation (HVSF)'s Policy on Non-Discrimination**

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## **1. Introduction**

The Hungarian Sending Foundation (HVSF) was always be aware of the non-discrimination and equality issues, as an evidence of that it has a long professional history as a volunteer sending organization that always succeed its official accreditation procedures (EVS, GLEN) and fulfilled its commitments .

As a result of these successes HVSF decided to transfer its experiences and principles into a written form. As an organization which planned and prepared itself to provide humanitarian aid and services more independently, it need that stated, written Non-Discrimination Policy as far as working with developmental projects – by its specifies – could occur additional unexpected, uncomfortable, harmful situations for the actors and beneficiaries of the development projects. To prepare and ensure the understanding of the staff and avoid these situations, HVSF is providing its written Policy on Non-Discrimination to uphold everyone’s rights and ensuring the equality of them.

## **2. Non-discrimination statement**

HVSF values people equally from diverse backgrounds according to that it committed to the principle of equal opportunity and does not discriminate in its employment and volunteering programs and/or other activities on the basis of race, colour, ancestry, religion, gender, age, disability, marital status and sexual orientation with respect to recruitment, hiring, training, employment and other relevant terms and conditions of employment.

HVSF – as an equal opportunity employer – tries to provide an open environment for all employees, volunteers and any other staff members of it by providing an adequate and open working environment by creating an atmosphere of respect, trust and honesty. Related to that, any type of harassment or discrimination is prohibited and cannot be tolerated.

All HVSF employees, volunteers and any other staff members of it are expected to understand respect and uphold the commitments on the policy of non-discrimination and equal rights. Any HVSF member has the right to make a complaint or any comment about discrimination related to this policy without fear of retaliation. Not at least HVSF expects from all of its colleagues and – program, activity related - partners to report any cases when they feel that the policies on non-discrimination and equal rights have been violated. Depending on the situation, they intended to report it to their

line-manager, use incident reports (for more about using incident reports, please check HVSF's Security Policy's concerning parts/chapter on the topic), or use the regular staff meetings to report these violations.

### **3. Defining different types of discriminations – disability, religion, gender, sexual orientation and race (ethnic origin)**

First of all it is important to identify discrimination as an act; discrimination might be formed by any practice which results an unequal treatment of people with certain traits (such as characteristics listed above). This chapter intended to summarise the most important discrimination forms and areas according to the most usual characteristics of each<sup>1</sup>.

Before mentioning the following, optional discrimination areas, it is highly important to see discrimination from an other point of view as well. According to an employment situation; it is highly important to mention that according to the recruitment and later on – during - the employing procedure, the most important thing is to find and later on use the best, the most proper employee for each position regardless its sex, age, religion etc.

So in this situation employer is free to employ particular individuals - or individuals from a defined ethnic group for example - in accordance of the job announcement. Discrimination would occur in a situation when the employer counts with the listed characteristics in a way how they are not adequate according to the job fulfilment and the work-performance, and as a result of this, the individual would face with an unequal treatment in these situation(s).

Now let's see the different – optional – discrimination areas in their own, specific context.

#### **3.1. Disability**

As a regular job situation, it is normal, that some particular jobs have requirements which cannot be fulfilled by a disabled person. On the other hand it is important for HVSF to balance the situation properly, examine the preconceptions towards the disabled person's abilities in accordance of the employment and seek to strive – and/or improve - the appropriate work environment for such situation (to be able to employ disabled employees, if it possible).

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<sup>1</sup> International Finance Corporation (IFC) (World Bank Group): *Good Practice Note - Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity* (2006) (page 10.)  
<http://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/629b648048865944b8aafa6a6515bb18/NonDiscrimination.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>

### **3.2. Religion**

HVSF ensures that neither of the work practices of it discriminates its workers on the basis of the religion. In accordance of that, HVSF is aware of it related to their expectations (dress-code, time-break options) in a way that the limitations of these requirements have to be business-related requirements, have to have appropriate business reasons for that in accordance of the nature of each job-title and work-environment.

### **3.3. Gender**

Related to the gender issues of a work environment it is obvious that the HVSF ensures the rights of every employee, and it is especially more careful with the securement of the same rights and benefits for its women employees. HVSF is aware of equal ways and methods in recruitment, equal remuneration (for the same positions/working hours) and future promotion system and it ensures maternity and other family rights.

### **3.4. Sexual orientation**

As a similar topic to “gender”, at HVSF – as an equal opportunity employer who tries to strive and maintain a merit-based work environment – do not considers its employees differently because of their sexual orientation as far as it is totally irrelevant related to the position that each employed individual has to fulfil.

### **3.5. Race (ethnic origin)**

However HVSF located in Hungary – where the society is very homogenous and the western type of multicultural society not really exists here – as an NGO who has international programs, it is obvious that it has to lay down in its policies that it is aware to strive the equal rights and benefits for its foreign partners – with different ethnic origin – as well. In HVSF’s humanitarian aid providing missions – where it could employ native employees from the host countries – HVSF ensures that they will have the same rights and benefits (employment contracts, mission related documents, right to participate in meetings etc. (for more info please check the Security Policy of HVSF)).

HVSF ensures that none of the listed – and any other forms of – discrimination forms that may arise won’t emerge at HVSF - working environments and HVSF will be aware of monitoring them through the already mentioned reporting methods.

## **4. Binding internal rules of HVSF on discrimination at different stages of the employment**

However in the 14 years old history of HVSF it never had discrimination issues, as a part of its ongoing self-development – preparing itself for the expansion of its future activities and colleagues related to its new areas – HVSF felt that a written collection of its non-discrimination policies would be useful to be available for its staff and as internal rules they have to be as clear as they could be for every HVSF staff members.

According to that the paper called “*Non-discrimination and equal opportunity: guidance for clients*” written by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) helped us to supplement HVSF’s binding rules and policies on discrimination at different stages of the employment.<sup>2</sup>

#### **4.1. Stage: Recruitment**

##### **4.1.1. Responsibilities**

As a smaller NGO, at HVSF the chief executive body – and its constant members - are monitoring – by the suggestions of HVSF Office - and deciding on new employments. Depending on the new needs – new employee, trainee, volunteers – the chief executive body and the leader/representative(s) of the concerned areas - Office manager, EVS/GLEN/VolinHA project managers - decides about the relevant stages of the future employment.

##### **4.1.2. Identify the needs – appropriate job description and advertisement**

After the chief executive body members and the leader of the relevant area decided about the need of the new workforce, need(s) should be summarised properly in the basis of essential and required criteria of the position (including qualifications, experience and any other skills that are required to perform the job).

According to the job-advertisement, HVSF always ensures that the job descriptions of each job announcements are clearly describes the exact position, advertised in the most appropriate media-fields (such as on HVSF Facebook side and webpage, university billboards, more wider range of public mediums, such as newspapers, press releases) and do not contains discriminatory requirements.

##### **4.1.3. Recruiting process, final decision making**

**General:** After making a shortlist of the most appropriate candidates, the chief executive body members, the leader of the area of the announced position, and nominated, qualified, wise and prudent office workers share their thoughts about the candidates. This is a written method (through

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<sup>2</sup> European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD): *Non-discrimination and equal opportunity: guidance for clients* - <http://www.ebrd.com/downloads/about/sustainability/NonDiscrimination.pdf>

a shared document), which helps HVSF team to consider that as a team and it helps also to provide proof of judgement if it would be needed in the future.

After shortlisting, personal interviews are taking place. At least two people – one chief executive body member and the leader of the area of the announced position – have to be there to evaluate the candidates.

The whole selection and recruitment procedure have to be performed on the basis of the clearly determined, objective criteria in accordance of the fulfilment of the announced job. Some questions should be prepared beforehand, but on the other hand every interviewer and evaluator has to be aware of not asking for tests in the topic of health (such as pregnancy, having a child/or not, or about HIV) or do not asking about personal issues such as individual's sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy etc..

Data on the selection process have to be recorded and forwarded to the relevant HVSF office worker to save it properly.

The leader of the chief executive body has the right for the final decision on the future employment by the suggestions of the evaluators.

If the employment coming from a project which contains a third partner then HVSF is ready to discuss, agree and follow a common recruiting method.

#### **4.2. Stage: Employment**

During the employment all the equal treatments and work conditions have to affect every HVSF staff member (and partners) such as wages (with overtime, social security etc.) working hours, leave, safety and health measures regardless the – already mentioned – personal characteristics (gender, religion, sexual orientation etc.).

HVSF ensures that none of its employees will be forced to undergo health or pregnancy testing, except where there is a need for it in accordance of the individual's job – such as HVSF staff members who work in a third world country's HVSF humanitarian deployment.

When a situation occurs, HVSF also examines the chance of the employment of a disabled individual. As it happened before – HVSF sent handicapped volunteers for missions abroad – HVSF puts a lot of efforts to give the best chances to disabled people to help them to fulfil the role that they are able to do, but as a responsible employer – knowing its organisational infrastructural limitations – it has to examine the chance of every special, not regular way of employment more carefully.

**5. Statement on the affected HVSF staff members of HVSF Non-Discrimination Policy**

HVSF's Non-Discrimination Policy intended to cover the topic related rights of ALL HVSF employees (such as home office workers, volunteers, nationally hired staff members, partners etc.). All of them are expected to know, respect and act in accordance of the principles of this document.

**5.1. Monitoring, reporting of the violations of this policy**

According to the monitoring, reporting of the detections of the violations of this policy, HVSF expects from its staff members to report the noted violations in the most adequate way. HVSF is using incident report system to indicate any type of violations which are affecting or violating each of its policies.

Additional ways for reporting could be a personal meeting with the adequate line-manager, or a reporting chance in the regular meetings of each HVSF teams.

Monitoring and the process of the reports are belonging to the adequate staff member of each HVFS team (HVSF office; HVFS humanitarian deployment's Mission Director etc.)

**6. Acknowledgement of the policy: Declaration of Commitment**

By signing this document, staff declares to have read and understood our non-discrimination policy and that they fully commit to follow and implement it to the best of their ability, while employed by HVSF.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Sources**

- European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD): *Non-discrimination and equal opportunity: guidance for clients*  
<http://www.ebrd.com/downloads/about/sustainability/NonDiscrimination.pdf>
- International Finance Corporation (IFC) (World Bank Group): *Good Practice Note - Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity* (2006)  
<http://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/629b648048865944b8aafa6a6515bb18/NonDiscrimination.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>