GSIF POLICIES, STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

Safety and Security

GOOD SHEPHERD INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION ONLUS

ABBREVIATIONS

GSIF: GOOD SHEPHERD INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

MDO: MISSION DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

OLCGS: SISTERS OF OUR LADY OF CHARITY OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

NGO: NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

PM: PROGRAM/PROJECT MANAGER

F&A: FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

M&E: MONITORING AND EVALUATION

CFO: CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Good Shepherd International Foundation (GSIF) in a non-profit organization based in Italy whose mission is to provide humanitarian aid and technical assistance to the programs of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd (GSS) for vulnerable girls, women and children in Africa, Asia and Latin America. To fulfil its mission, the Foundation implements a range of activities, including short- and long-term missions, and long-term deployment of expat staff, for monitoring, planning, evaluation, in at-risk countries.

When deployed in short- or long-term missions, all Good Shepherd team and consultants, work in close collaboration and under the responsibility of the local Good Shepherd sisters, who are GSIF's key implementing partner. The Good Shepherd sisters' work in the countries is organized in Units and communities. The programs supported by GSIF are always connected to the communities of the Good Shepherd sisters. When GSIF staff visits and works with the GSS programs, it is always within the framework of the GSS local organization. In most countries, the sisters and the staff of the programs are fully integrated in the communities and countries of work, nonetheless they may be also affected by specific environmental, political or other risks.

In recent decades, all humanitarian actors, including religious men and women, and their lay partners, have increasingly found themselves operating in **complex and rapidly changing socio-political environments, especially in the most at-risk countries**. As a result, even though religious people generally enjoy the trust of the local communities and have good relations with all partners, they still face numerous **risks** in providing assistance and support to the local beneficiaries.

While the degree of risk varies from country to country, safety and security incidents can occur in all areas, both for the local Good Shepherd sisters and staff, and for GSIF staff and consultants who visit or stay with the sisters for specific projects' assignments.

Safety and Security are the responsibilities of all. Managers, sisters and staff must be equally committed to the process to ensure success. Personal safety, organisational security, and ultimately the safety of the communities we serve, will only be attained where all parties join together in maintaining safe working conditions. Furthermore, our capacity to work with communities we serve, and increasingly to obtain funding from donors, is considerably weakened by poor attention to the issue of security and safety of our staff.

Safety and Security Preparedness contains three aspects:

- **Organisational commitment**. Management must demonstrate organisational willingness to examine security risks and to provide adequate resources for staff to become safe and secure. This will require

planning and financial expenditure. Senior staff will need to demonstrate personal security behaviour in order to model risk-reducing practices.

- **Individual commitment**. Individual staff need to alter their own personal behaviours and practices to maximise the safety of themselves and others. Staff should not rely totally on the organisation to provide security. At the ground level, good security will be dependent on individual behaviour.
- **Risk assessment**. Risk is a product of threats and vulnerability. A threat is a danger to you, your organisation or your property; vulnerability is your level of exposure to a particular threat; the risk is the likelihood and impact of encountering a threat. You may be able to do nothing about the level of threat around you, but you can probably do a great deal to reduce your level of vulnerability in two main ways:
  a) reducing the chances of an incident happening (e.g. by driving slowly, improving locks, or introducing a neighbourhood watch system);
  b) reducing the impact of an incident (e.g. by wearing seatbelts, or limiting the amount of cash held in the safe).

  By reducing your vulnerability, you reduce the risk that the threat will become reality and have a serious impact on you. A major part of good security management is reducing vulnerability in every possible way.

2. REFERENCES

The **UN ECHO Generic Security Guide 2004** (Annex 1) and the present **GSIF Safety and Security Policy**, are the main operational references regarding the management of generic security measures for all staff. In particular, in the two documents staff feeling unprepared in unexpected situations can find useful checklists advising on the best actions to take.

3. COVER, APPLICATION AND TYPE OF THE POLICY

3.1 Cover

This Safety and Security Policy regards **all GSIF staff**: headquarters, local, full-time and casual staff, consultants on short or long-term missions, family members duly authorised to accompany or visit staff during missions, authorised visitors, volunteers in the field, interns and any other person working formally and directly together with GSIF. Cover does not include the following: staff of other NGOs, staff belonging to agencies and governments, partner's managers and employees.

3.2 Application

Cover applies to the **persons, property, resources, documents** (including administrative ones) belonging to GSIF, in all its programmes and under any circumstances.

3.3 Type

Adherence to the Safety and Security Policy is not optional, but **mandatory** and **concomitant** with the start of any form of collaboration with GSIF. The Policy is binding for everyone to whom it is addressed. Any violation of the Safety and Security Policy will be considered as a disciplinary violation.

4. PRINCIPLES

4.1 Priority to Human Life

The security of personnel is of **higher priority** than the protection of assets, including premises, vehicles, office equipment or programme materials. Therefore, no operator should intentionally **endanger his or her life** in performing the activities or in the attempt to protect property, equipment, financial resources, documents or infrastructure.

4.2 Staff have Rights and Responsibilities

GSIF believes that safety and security of personnel depends not only on the effectiveness of the procedures and security measures established by GSIF, but also and above all on the **personal responsibility** and on the prudent and watchful behaviour of the individuals.

Security awareness is an ongoing collective responsibility and each member of staff is obliged to:

- Actively participate in and contribute to the maintenance of security measures;
- Be aware of security risks and team security;
- Understand and adhere to security measures;
- Be responsible for their own security and the security of staff they manage;
- Behave as a positive representative for GSIF and adhere to the General principles and codes of conduct for GSIF staff as prescribed by GSIF Human Resource Manual.

Each member of staff is responsible for reporting to his/her line manager any actions or behaviour that breaches policy or jeopardises team security. Breaching security policy is a disciplinary offence and must be dealt with as such by the appropriate line manager.

4.3 Exceptions

Every exception or waiver to what is specified in the Safety and Security Policy may only be authorised by the GSIF CFO in writing. Should the CFO not be reachable, this responsibility will be taken on by the Director.

5. APPROACHES TO SAFETY AND SECURITY

The **different approaches** used to manage security risks fall into three broad strategies: acceptance, protection and deterrence.

- The **acceptance-based strategy** seeks to reduce or remove threats by developing and maintaining widespread acceptance, among all actors. This is still the favoured approach where possible. If the local population support the work that the humanitarian organisations are doing in their area, they will not threaten them but help them. This approach is often known as the "acceptance approach", since it depends on acceptance by the population.

  To win acceptance, humanitarian staff may need to spend considerable time listening to local people, and explaining their role to local leaders and residents. This may include negotiation of access to areas of need; explanation of the humanitarian principles underlying the work; and response to rumours or accusations when they arise. The acceptance approach is usually not enough on its own. Every society contains some people who resort to crime, and humanitarian staff and property may be targeted by criminals.

- The **protection-based strategy** focuses on reducing your vulnerability or exposure to certain risks through the implementation of procedures or using equipment to secure yourself against these risks. Common protection measures include gates, guards, locks and safes. Other protection measures are decided on according to the threat in each specific context.

  There may be some threats to humanitarian organisations which do not arise from the local community at all. These may include natural hazards such as disease, volcanic eruptions or floods. They may also include attacks from terrorist groups, whose decision-makers may be distant or even in a

different country, orchestrating violence against humanitarian and other organisations for political reasons. If so, protection measures will need to take these threats into account.

- The principal aim of the **deterrence-based strategy** is to attempt to reduce or remove threats by posing a counter-threat that will deter or influence aggressors. Deterrence is a further security approach used by some organisations, notably the police and the military. They deter attack by threatening retaliation against anyone who attacks them. This is not an option available to humanitarian organisations, whose principles forbid them to attack anyone, or to threaten attack. The sole possible exception is when humanitarian organisations use armed guards, in extreme circumstances when there is no other way to protect staff and property. A guard carrying a weapon is a type of deterrent: this is the only method by which humanitarian organisations may legitimately use deterrence.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES

GSIF has appointed the CFO as the person responsible for the compliance to the Safety and Security Policy.

GSIF stipulates insurance policies for its staff.

7. BASIC PERSONAL SECURITY MEASURES

7.1 General measures

In everyday activities, it is vital that you give careful consideration to the following basic personal security measures:

- Be aware of the specific security concerns in your location, and the procedures in place to deal with them.
- Trust your instincts. If you feel uncomfortable about a location or a situation, leave immediately.
- Always communicate your whereabouts and plans, or any changes to those plans, to colleagues.
- Make sure you are able to identify yourself if asked. Carry appropriate personal documents with you at all times. Make sure your passport, ID cards, visas and health certificates are valid.
- Make sure you have a supply of emergency cash with you at all times.
- Take care while using cameras or video equipment as these can raise suspicion. Do not take pictures near military installations, airports, governmental buildings, etc. Always ask permission from your colleagues or from local people before taking photographs.

- Avoid displaying cash or other valuables as this may attract attention from potential robbers.
- Avoid routines as they make your movements easy to predict. Be alert to anyone observing your house, office or travel routes. Vary routes to and from work and the time at which you take them. Many security incidents occur as an individual either leaves or returns home.
- If you are in any danger, try to draw attention to yourself by shouting, screaming or using the horn of your vehicle.

7.2 When travelling

When travelling, consider the following basic precautions:

- Always check the security situation of the location to which you are travelling.
- Before travelling, leave your planned itinerary and contact details with a responsible person.
- Keep people informed of any changes to your travel plans and any delays.
- Be clear about your arrival arrangements and know who is meeting you.
- Check in advance with your local contact what you should do in the event of a problem, or if there is no one there to meet you.
- Register yourself at the Italian Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Ministry. Non Italian staff members are encouraged to register with their respective embassies/consular offices at the destination country where this service is available.
- Carry a list of emergency contact details including names, addresses, and phone numbers.
- Look confident and dress appropriately, with valuables out of sight.
- Keep an eye on your possessions, particularly during security checks, in the baggage collection area and while clearing customs.
- If possible, take only licensed taxis or those recommended by your field office. In some countries, taxi drivers are known to commit crimes or be accomplices. Agree fares before you get in, make sure you have the sole use and the driver will not pick up other passengers.

7.3 In hotels

If you are staying in a hotel or guesthouse, consider the following basic precautions:

- If making your own hotel arrangements, ask advice to your local contact person.
- If possible, avoid rooms on the ground floor, or any rooms that are easily accessible from the outside.
- Take note where the safety exits are in case of fire or any other emergency. Keep a flashlight by the bed.

- Keep a small bag packed and make sure important items are close at hand in case you have to leave quickly.
- Always secure the door when inside your room, using locks and security chains. Keep windows and balcony doors locked and draw the curtains.
- When not in the room consider leaving the light and television or radio on so it appears that the room is still occupied.
- Be careful of opening the door to callers (including hotel staff) unless they can identify themselves in some way.
- Consider the best way to deal with valuables and, if possible, obtain advice from your local contact person. Do not leave valuables in your room: leave them in a hotel safe deposit box, in a locked safe in the room, or carry them with you when you go out.

7.4 When driving

- Always wear seatbelts and do not drive under the influence of alcohol or other intoxicating substances.
- If you are travelling by car, whenever possible avoid travelling at night. If this is not possible, avoid unlit and deserted roads. Never pick up hitchhikers, and think twice about stopping to help what appears to be a stranded motorist, regardless of gender.

7.5 On foot

In insecure or unfamiliar settings where you are required to walk, consider the following precautions:

- Be aware of your surroundings – do not put yourself into a vulnerable position.
- Seek reliable advice on safe areas. Do not take short cuts through isolated areas.
- Avoid walking alone, especially at night.
- Maintain a low profile and avoid any disputes or disturbances. Be wary of groups of people loitering on the streets.
- Make sure your bags are closed and securely carried to avoid them being snatched. Valuables should be concealed under clothing or in a front pocket.
- Cross the street if someone suspicious is walking behind or ahead of you. If you are still being followed, head to a populated area and attract the attention of others.
- Carry only the cash that you need. Keep a small amount of cash in your wallet to hand over in the event of being mugged. The remainder should be divided between your pockets and bags.

- If a driver pulls up to ask for directions, do not approach the vehicle.
- Be cautious when asked to look at a map. If you are offered a lift, politely refuse.

7.6 Using public transport

If you are using public transport, consider the following precautions:

- Travel in pairs whenever possible.
- Wait in well-lit designated areas during off-peak hours.
- Avoid travelling in deserted trains or buses. If possible, sit near the driver or conductor. When travelling by train try to select a lockable compartment.
- Be careful when accepting any food or drink as it may be drugged.
- After getting off, check to ensure you are not being followed.

7.7 In social situations

When in a social situation, consider the following basic precautions:

- Take care when meeting someone you do not know well; choose public places or places where there will be other people present.
- Avoid drinking too much, as this will limit your ability to notice and react to changes in people's behaviour.
- Be careful when accepting any food or drink as it may be drugged.
- Communicate your wishes clearly. Do not let anyone assume unwanted intimacy.
- Assert yourself and insist on being treated with respect.

7.8 Flights

GSIF does not allow its staff to use planes belonging to companies that are on the list of **EU - banned airlines** (EU Black list).

Since checks outside Europe can sometimes be superficial or non-existent, the reliability of any chosen airline must therefore always be verified case by case, and the best choice made based on a set of information helpful in making the decision, by all actors in contact with GSIF.

Airport and customs regulations regarding flight security and goods transport must be scrupulously respected.

7.9 Who is responsible for health?

The simple answer to this question is **yourself**. Knowing what the risks are, and how to avoid them, is the key to staying healthy. You have a responsibility to yourself to ensure that you fully understand the health risks that exist where you are working, and that you take the necessary precautions to avoid illness or injury.

Each country presents its own health risks to individuals. Before travelling, it is essential that you are aware about the key health issues that exist for that location.

With regard to the Italian legislation regarding Health, Safety and Security, GSIF comply with:

- *D. Lgs. 81/2008, "Testo Unico per la Sicurezza del Lavoro*";
- *Accordo Stato Regioni 21/12/2011 per l'organizzazione della formazione alla sicurezza dei Lavoratori, Preposti, Dirigenti e Datori di Lavoro*;
- *Accordo Stato Regioni del 7/7/2016 per la formazione degli RSPP e ASPP;*
- *Decreto Ministeriale del 10 marzo 1998 - Criteri generali di sicurezza antincendio e per la gestione dell'emergenza nei luoghi di lavoro;*
- *Decreto Ministeriale del 15 luglio 2003, n. 388 - Regolamento recante disposizioni sul pronto soccorso aziendale*.

7.10 Equipment for personal security

Personal equipment that may enhance your security will vary depending on the circumstances. The following list gives a number of items that can often be helpful.

- Adaptors for electrical sockets;
- Clothing suitable to the environment you will be working in;
- Documents (carried in a durable document wallet) including:
  - Passport and/or identity card, driving licence and vaccination certificate (keep photocopies of these in a separate place, or carry copies and keep the originals in a separate place);
  - Copies of any important authorisation documents;
  - Emergency contact details;
  - Insurance certificate and emergency insurance phone numbers;
  - Spare passport-size photos.
- E-mail communications – typically a laptop computer and telephone landline, mobile or satellite phone;

- First aid kit, medicines;
- Flashlight/torch;
- Insect repellent;
- Mobile phone and charger;
- Notebook and pens;
- Watch;
- Water bottle;
- Waterproof coat.

8. PLANNING A FIELD VISIT

In preparing a field visit, make sure you have completed the Field Visit Check-List (Annex 2) and you have obtained the authorization from your line manager.

Guidance for planning a flight

- All air travel bookings will be in Economy class. Upgrades to Premium Economy or Business class are allowed only if paid for personally by the individual.
- Where possible ensure you request a missionary fare, as this allows far greater flexibility, for example this is extremely valuable when the planned the trip changes or is cancelled.
- Please do not request to book 100% non-refundable and non-changeable fares; these fares maybe cheaper sometimes but are always very restricted and not suitable for our challenging itineraries, which are subject to last minute changes.
- Staff is responsible for arriving at the airport minimum 2 hours (3 hours if required by airport authority) before scheduled departure time to complete the necessary immigration and check in process. In the event of a no-show for the flight or missed connection, GSIF will cover any airline penalties fees involved only if the reason for the no-show or missing the flight is due to unforeseen circumstances such as: bad weather, airport or airline strike, road traffic or transport delays outside staff control, medical emergency for staff or immediate family members.
- If there is a cost increase due to the personal part of the trip, staff must cover the difference by personal funds.

ANNEX 1 - ECHO Generic Security Guide 2004

Available here: https://reliefweb.int/report/world/generic-security-guide-humanitarian-organisations-enar

ANNEX 2 - FIELD VISIT CHECK-LIST

DESCRIPTION	CHECK
Fill-in the **GSIF Staff Mission Template** and **get the approval** from your line manager.	☐
Share the **Terms of References** of the field visit with the local partners at least 15 days before the visit.	☐
Take some time to study the **security concerns of the specific location** you are planning to travel to. Share it with your line manager.	☐
If necessary, ask to the GSIF Finance Department to have ready some **cash advance** for your field visit at least 15 days before the departure.	☐
Prepare your **equipment** for the visit following the guidelines at paragraph 7.10 of the Safety and Security Policy.	☐
Make sure your **travel insurance** is valid and it covers the location you are going to.	☐
Make sure you have the **mandatory vaccinations** and the proper documentation, if required.	☐
Make sure you have the **ID documents** (ID, driving license, GSIF ID card, etc.) with you and that your **passport** has at least six months of validity and six empty pages.	☐
Verify the **VISA requirements** of the country you are travelling to. If you need a visa before travelling, check how long it takes to issue. Make sure to allow yourself plenty of time.	☐
Book your flight following the guidance for planning a flight at paragraph 8 of the Safety and Security Policy.	☐
Leave your travel itinerary, flight details and the emergency phone numbers to the GSIF CFO.	☐
Plan your accommodation: book the accommodation following the guidelines at paragraph 7.3 of the Safety and Security Policy or get confirmation form GSIF's local partner regarding your accommodation in their facilities.	☐
Make sure you bring with you the **medicines** you might need and a **first aid kit**.	☐
Register yourself at the **Italian Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Ministry** or, if you are not an Italian citizen, at the embassies/consular offices at the destination country where this service is available.	☐
Carry a list of **emergency contact details** including names, addresses, and phone numbers.	☐
Make sure GSIF's **local partners know the date and time of your arrival and departure** so that they can arrange pick-up and drop-off. Keep them updated on any possible delay.	☐
Make sure you **don't carry with you any goods or amount of money not permitted** in Italy or in the country you are visiting, **neither accept to carry items for third parties** unless authorized by your line manager.	☐
Make sure you have picked-up the **Communication** materials you might need.	☐

Please, sign this checklist and send it to the GSIF CFO before your departure.

Name_____ **Travelling to**_____

Date_____ **Signature**_____

Bibliography

- ECHO Generic Security Guide, 2004
- SAVE THE CHILDREN INTERNATIONAL Safety-First Manual, 2010
- PEOPLE IN AID - Policy Guide and Template Safety & Security, rev. 2008
- CONCERN Worldwide's Security Policy, 2003
- CESVI Security Policy, 2018
- FOCSIV Manuale di Sicurezza, 2016