

Security Policy

The Critical Education Association

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Annex – Template Full Incident Report

1. Principles on Safety and Security

The safety and security of our staff and field teams are a key responsibility of our organisation. We accept a duty of care for all staff and field teams. With an increasing number of travels to several (post)conflict countries, we are committed to a clear, relevant and proportional The Critical Education Association security policy, protocols and plans.

Additionally, as an organisation specialised in NGO safety and security, we have to set the example. The aim of the policy is to increase the security awareness of all staff and field teams involved so as to create a culture of security, and ultimately, to enable the travels that our work requires.

The key to effective safety and security management is the creation of a culture of security and The Critical Education Association will work to create such an environment. Each staff and field team member has a responsibility for their own safety and security and that of others. Furthermore, we believe each staff and field team member has a duty to address issues of safety and security – proactively and frankly – at all times.

A definition for safety and security is difficult to pinpoint. As a general definition we apply the following: The state of being protected against (external) threats and the condition of being safe; free from risk or injury.

2. Security strategy

The Critical Education Association is a nongovernmental organisation (NGO). As such it adopts the principals of non-partiality and neutrality that steer the thinking of the majority of organisations in the humanitarian world. These principals are the foundation of a strategy based upon acceptance by the host community. This is a strategy that The Critical Education Association considers most appropriate.

The acceptance strategy can, dependent on the level of risk in a country, be combined with protective measures. We avoid deterrence measures as much as possible. Even though protection measures may be necessary, the centre of gravity rests with an acceptance approach. The Critical Education Association and its representing staff will avoid the use of armed protection.

3. Design and Implementation of the Security Policy and Protocols

The security policy and protocols are developed by the The Critical Education Association Programme Manager, in concurrence with all The Critical Education Association staff. The policy and protocols will be reviewed and updated on a yearly basis and when changes in circumstances affecting The Critical Education Association in any way require it. Feedback and suggestions for changes to the policy should be forwarded to the Programme Manager.

Review and implementation of the policy and protocols lie with the The Critical Education Association Programme Manager, who is held accountable by the The Critical Education Association Director. The authority to enforce implementation of the policy and protocols rests with the The Critical Education Association Programme Manager.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Every individual at every level has specific roles and responsibilities. This chapter outlines at which level certain responsibilities lie and where staff or field team members should look for guidance or action concerning safety and security issues.

4.1. HQ Level

Programme Manager

- Thoroughly reading, accepting and complying with the The Critical Education Association Security Policy and The Critical Education Association Security Policy
- Setting the security policy and protocols for the organisation
- Producing security plans and SOPs for the field missions, which can then be adapted to each different field context
- Insurance
- Training policy
- Providing competent field teams
- Planning of field operations
- Allocating sufficient resources, both financial and human
- Providing support to field teams when necessary
- Monitoring the effectiveness of security management in the field
- Ensuring lessons are learned from experience and that policy and procedures are updated accordingly
- Taking appropriate corrective action to address deficiencies in security procedures

Director

- Thoroughly reading, accepting and complying with the The Critical Education Association Security Policy and The Critical Education Association Security Plan
- Deciding on deployment or evacuation
- Overruling the team leaders' decisions when necessary (except in the case of evacuation). This should only rarely be necessary if the team leader is competent, experienced and well prepared
- Ensuring that designated staff at HQ is well prepared to take timely security related decisions when necessary. This includes the preparedness and implementation of a crisis management team for managing certain serious or high-profile incidents
- Being aware of the extent of legal liability if various contingencies were to occur
- Taking appropriate corrective action to address deficiencies in security procedures

4.2. Field Level

Team member

- Thoroughly reading, accepting and complying with the The Critical Education Association Security Policy, The Critical Education Association Security Plan and SOPs
- Participating actively and proactively in security assessments during the field operation
- Contributing actively to developing the rules for the trip and committing to active participation in the establishment of these
- Taking appropriate corrective action to address deficiencies in security procedures

- Acknowledging the authority of the The Critical Education Association team leader in security and behavioural aspects

Coordinator

- Thoroughly reading, accepting and complying with the The Critical Education Association Security Policy, The Critical Education Association Security Plan and SOPs
- Guiding of and taking responsibility for all The Critical Education Association team members, under delegated authority of The Critical Education Association
- Taking local responsibility for implementation of security measures and behavioural aspects
- Taking responsibility for field operations, including The Critical Education Association money and assets, under delegated authority of The Critical Education Association
- Assessing the security situation during the field operation
- Reviewing and completing the field security plan delivered by The Critical Education Association
- Reviewing and completing the SOPs delivered by The Critical Education Association
- Staying in contact with The Critical Education Association HQ
- Deciding on evacuation
- Taking appropriate corrective action to address deficiencies in security procedures

4.3. Personal Level

Operating with security awareness in order to assure in the best possible way the safety and security of team members, the field team and the organisation at all times, in every level of the organisation.

5. Extent of the Security Policy and Protocols

All The Critical Education Association staff and all individuals contracted by The Critical Education Association on a professional or voluntary basis working on a The Critical Education Association activity are covered under this policy and protocols. The policy does not cover family members of the above individuals and staff under contract with other NGOs or institutions. People are the organisation's highest priority. The policy and protocols cover only people, not material and financial assets.

6. Nature of the Security Policy and Protocols

Adherence to the policy and protocols is a requirement. Only in life threatening situations team leaders have the authority to bypass these to a certain extent. Failure to adhere to the policy and protocols may lead to non-employment by The Critical Education Association in the future.

All staff and field team members covered under the policy and protocols as stipulated in chapter 5. Have the right to decline to enter high risk environments without impacting employment. They also have the right to leave locations where their personal assessment is that their safety and security or that of others is being compromised.

When despite the risk assessment the security situation deteriorates beyond limits of acceptability both The Critical Education Association board as well as The Critical Education Association team leader have the possibility to decide upon evacuation and this decision cannot be overruled. Both scenarios will be under full responsibility of The Critical Education Association as are the costs incurred.

If and when an individual team member within a team does no longer feel comfortable with the security situation, the team member has the right to depart earlier at his own costs and responsibility.

7. Protocols

The Critical Education Association considers the following protocols, part of the security policy, to be binding for all individuals covered under the security policy as stated in paragraph 5.

7.1 Briefing

All The Critical Education Association representatives travelling for The Critical Education Association will be briefed before departure, either by email, in person or both. The briefing will contain logistical, content related and security details. Whenever possible and appropriate, The Critical Education Association will arrange security briefings upon arrival in the country of destination. Upon return, all The Critical Education Association representatives will fill out a mission report and can request a debriefing.

7.2. Travel – Preparation

Training

Before departure, all team members receive an appropriate safety and security training. The training course certificate has to be submitted to the The Critical Education Association office.

Health and Safety

Every The Critical Education Association team member is obliged to make sure they have all necessary vaccinations and other medical precautionary measures.

Emergency Precautionary Measures

Before travelling to a field operation, all The Critical Education Association team members must fill in a personal profile (including proof of life questions and handwriting check) and submit the document to the The Critical Education Association office.

Cancellation

The Critical Education Association makes the decision to cancel or continue planning the mission. However, The Critical Education Association stays responsible for continuous monitoring. If changing security situations require cancellation or evacuation, The Critical Education Association has the obligation to do so. With regard to these decisions, The Critical Education Association acknowledges the importance but non urgent nature of its mission.

7.3. Travel – Execution

Composing SOPs

Staff at all levels should continually monitor significant political, social, economic and military events in the areas where The Critical Education Association works. Often those best able to conduct assessments in a specific country or region are the field teams working within them. Therefore, team and team leader have primary responsibility for composing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Writing the SOPs is not, however, a onetime event. It is a continuous process. Threats and organisational vulnerabilities can change frequently. With each change, the risk to field teams may increase or decrease and safety and security measures should be adjusted accordingly.

7.4. Communication

Before travelling, the The Critical Education Association office and the The Critical Education Association team leader will determine the interval of the communication. In case of loss of communications longer than a certain number of hours (also to be determined beforehand) The Critical Education Association will contact the nearest embassy and report the situation. Depending on the situation, The Critical Education Association will set the crisis plan in motion.

Contact within the team will be preserved at all times. Team members must be aware of the location and communication means of their travel companions. If the team goes separate ways for whichever reason, team leader will ensure that the different parties have means of communication and will determine the interval of the communication.

7.5. Crisis Management

The Critical Education Association defines as a crisis any unstable situation of extreme danger or difficulty, which harmfully affects or can harmfully affect the organisation and/or its representatives.

Evacuation

When during field operations the security situation deteriorates beyond limits of acceptability both The Critical Education Association board as well as The Critical Education Association team leader have the possibility to decide upon evacuation and this decision cannot be overruled. Both scenarios will be under full responsibility of The Critical Education Association.

7.6. Incident Reporting

The Critical Education Association defines as an incident all events, which have caused, are likely to cause or could have caused the low profile of the organisation and/or its representatives to be harmed (e.g. unwanted contacts with or questioning by police, intelligence services or any other authorities).

All incidents involving The Critical Education Association team members must be reported as soon as possible by all means to the The Critical Education Association office. Ultimately, a

full written incident report shall be handed over by the The Critical Education Association team leader with an analysis of the sequence of events, and conclusions and recommendations (see Annex for template full incident report).

Full Incident Report

Date :
Author :
Role of Author (involved or not) :

Full chronological account of the incident
Who was involved?
Reasons for any decisions taken
Identification of any failure of procedures or plans, and recommendations for any actions