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Plan India Volunteering Policy

**[This policy provides a framework for engagement of volunteers
with Plan India]**

[A] SCOPE AND PURPOSE

The purpose of volunteering is to offer an incredible opportunity to individuals to contribute towards the betterment of society. A volunteer can give time and skills and experience personal and professional growth. Volunteers will be at the heart of the Plan India development action future and are vital to our success. We gain enormous value from volunteers, benefitting from a variety of experience and talents to deliver our programs, more effectively. Plan India involves volunteers because they –

- Offer a pool of skills and experience we would not otherwise have access to.
- Bring extra credibility to our work – volunteers choose us and donate their time and talents freely.
- Champion our mission and extend our reach in communities.
- Bring fresh perspective – volunteers are not financially dependent on the organisation so can be better placed than staff to challenge us, guide us, and bring new ideas.
- Enhance the spirit of Plan India with enthusiasm, passion and commitment.

[B] LEGAL STATUS OF PLAN INDIA VOLUNTEERS

Plan India Volunteers are not staff members. They are subject to neither the Plan India Staff Regulations and Staff Rules nor to the pay, benefits, or other conditions contained therein. They are nevertheless personnel engaged with Plan India and are governed by this document, including any amendments that may result from the revision of the COS in the future. The terms of service are defined in the Description of Assignment and Plan India Volunteer Contract issued in each case.

In all assignments, Plan India Volunteers promote volunteerism through their actions and conduct. The Conditions of Service (COS) form the basis of the policies and rules that regulate the Volunteer assignment. The COS is amended periodically by Plan India. This COS is specific to volunteers and any other policies applicable to Plan India staff or any other personnel, is not applicable to volunteers.

[C] PRIVILEGES

Depending on the entities to which the volunteers are assigned, privileges by the arrangements agreed between these entities and Plan India, which are similar to those granted to Plan India staff. But in conditions, the following conditionality may apply –

1. Volunteers serving with Plan India are afforded privileges in accordance with the prevailing basic agreement with Plan India and serving entities. No special arrangement will be granted or prepared for the volunteering purposes. If so, a pre-approved agreement needs to be in place.
2. In case, if the serving entity is a government body or associated government institution, rules and regulations as applicable within that body or associated government institution will be followed.
3. Mostly Plan India provides a decent working environment and safety standards, but in cases like emergency or extremely remote locations, these standards might not be fulfilled. Volunteer should understand these challenges and foresee them, before agreeing for the assignment.

[D] VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT

1. **Age Consideration:** An individual who is above the age of 18 could be a volunteer. An individual who has necessary skills and is qualified to contribute towards the goal. Any person below the age 18, wants to engage with Plan India for the volunteering assignment, should follow the due process and can only be engaged with the written consent of parents/guardians, guaranteeing full responsibility liability and mandatory disclosures.
2. **Recruitment Process:** Properly filled volunteer form on website or through link shared and orientation session. Plan India considers diversity and inclusion in the recruitment process.

[E] OPERATION PROTOCOL

1. **Roles and responsibility:** Volunteers will generally not be engaged for, nor made to perform functions with fiduciary, certifying, approving, supervisory, managerial, representational duty and responsibilities or those normally performed by staff members of the Host Entity. This does not absolutely preclude Volunteers from carrying out task management of capacity development of staff members or hold roles of increased responsibility. The description of the roles and responsibilities will be illustrated in the volunteer engagement contract or sometimes, is assigned on the specific request of the volunteer or requesting institution. Any role assigned to the volunteer will have a workplan and associated outcomes, which will be monitored by the reporting manager.
2. **Time Commitment and Scheduling:** A Volunteer has to commit specific time commitment whether its specific number of hours per week, weekends or a project-based commitment. Every volunteer will have a time-frame commitment and before agreeing to the volunteer action, it has to be agreed and understood. Time management is the responsibility of the volunteer and not Plan India. Though, we will support the volunteer with her/his time
3. **Supervision and Support:** There will be a point of contact or volunteer coordinator who can address volunteer's questions, concerns and provide guidance. Volunteer needs to update about the work-in-progress to the supervisor on a periodic basis.
4. **Recognition and Feedback:** A Volunteer will be recognized and appreciated for its efforts, time commitment by presenting with a certificate, letters of recommendations or organizing appreciation events.
5. **Conflict resolution:** Create a process for conflict resolution between volunteer, team member or beneficiary
6. **Termination and Exit Procedures:** If there's any conflict arising with the volunteer and the team for any action, procedure implemented, then it should be brought to knowledge of program head to resolve mutually. Further escalation could be done within Plan India to resolve the issues, as per institutional conflict resolutions mechanisms.

[F] LEGAL AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. **Safeguarding Code of Conduct:** Volunteer has to sign Plan India Safeguarding Policy to keep children and Program participants safe and protected. He has to perform in accordance with

Program Head. A volunteer is expected to maintain the respect for beneficiaries and other team members, and adherence to the NGOs values and principles.

2. **Program Guidelines:** Plan India has extensive operational guidelines about engagement with the communities, entities and other institutions. Volunteer has to follow these guidelines and practice a professional conduct, while being associated with Plan India.
3. **Plan India Policies:** All policies related to ethical conduct will be applied to all the volunteers and they must inform themselves about it and practice it in letter and spirit. Information related to all the effective policies will be provided by the Human Resource & Organizational Development Department to volunteer and a brief orientation will be made to acquaint you from these policies.

[G] PROPRIETARY RIGHTS

All intellectual property and other proprietary rights including, but not limited to, patents, copyrights, and trademarks, with regard to products, processes, inventions, ideas, know-how, or documents and other materials developed in any work performed by a Volunteer as part of his or her official duties shall be vested in the Host Entity. Volunteer will enjoy a perpetual, royalty-free, non-exclusive, and non-transferable license to use all intellectual property or other proprietary rights arising from the Volunteer assignment. Use by the Volunteer of work-related products, including after the Volunteer assignment, is subject to the pre-approval of the Host Entity or Plan India. Misappropriating or withholding intellectual property of Plan India by volunteers may be grounds for disciplinary action and/or further legal action.

[H] UPDATING THE POLICY

Policy should be regularly reviewed and updated to make sure it remains relevant and effective over time.

[I] COMMUNICATION

Once the policy is finalized, it can be communicated to all existing and prospective volunteers. It should be easily accessible through our website or printed materials.