

ATTACHMENT A

CODE

OF THE ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S ORGANIZATIONS

IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

(ACORM)

The Code of the Association of Children's Organisations in the Republic of Macedonia (ACORM) is a document of principles, values and regulations adopted by a group of non-government organizations involved in the protection of children's rights in the Republic of Macedonia. The Code of ACORM standardises the norms for a joint and co-ordinated action for the implementation of the Children's Rights Convention in the Republic of Macedonia.

The Code provides for better communication among and better implementation of activities by, the NGO's included in the ACORM.

The Code should be refined and amended on a continuous basis in the spirit of the regulations adopted and revised in terms of the professional ethics of its activists.

NGO'S STANDPOINT ON CHILDREN AND THEIR INTERESTS

Progress in the support of children and their rights should be the key objective of the NGO members involved in the ACORM.

All children and their interests are equally worth the engagement of any NGO involved in the ACORM. Every employee or volunteer in the NGO sector should offer any help, support and protection to a child when being approached for it.

NGO'S STANDPOINT ON VOLUNTEERS

The sustainable development of NGO's is facilitated by the voluntary approach in their operations.

Each NGO involved in the ACORM encourages a voluntary approach in its operations as well as an involvement of volunteers in the NGO regardless of sex, nationality, religion or any other type of individual differences.

Volunteers should have insight in all project and program activities of the NGO, and be involved and work on the realisation of those activities in compliance with the NGO mission.

The NGO educates and trains its volunteers for their adequate engagement in activities and projects.

NGO's should provide training for volunteers, including activity description, project review etc.

The NGO recruits an adequately qualified and experienced volunteer to work for the NGO on his/her own request.

The NGO provides good conditions for effective work, a computer, a printer, project materials, files and all that is needed.

NGO's adequately award volunteers involved in activities with appreciation certificates and acknowledgement certificates for their voluntary approach to the operations.

NGO's should try to find a way to keep and award their volunteers who are both professionally and completely, dedicated to their work with children.

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT IN THE NGO

Employees are expected to advance and act in accordance with the mission, vision, values and principles of the organisation. With their conduct, all employees contribute to the organisational development and growth of public trust. They are expected to behave in a manner that answers to the strict observance of the immediate public, with no risk of condemnation.

NGO's should try to find a way to keep and award their volunteers who are both professionally and completely, dedicated to their work with children.

Employees should:

- At all times act with trust in communications with other employees, volunteers and external factors;
- Not take part in, engage in, or allow any dishonesty, fraud or inadequate presentation – representation;
- Not engage in public criticism of the organisation;
- Present any criticisms towards the NGO, to the organisation first;
- Avoid such behaviour that might cause conflict between the best interest of the organisation and personal/private interests.
- Identify, declare and discuss the realistic, possible or identified difficulties in the process of establishing the standards of conduct.

NGO'S AND THE CITIZEN'S AND DEMOCRATIC COMMUNITY

Every NGO involved in the ACORM stands for the Law as a stable governmental system that guarantees human rights, freedom of citizens, national and religious equality.

Every NGO stands for peace and co-habitation of the Macedonian people with the different nationalities living in the Republic of Macedonia and projects program activities for the purpose of providing social justice, economic welfare and progress of individual and community life.

NGO'S AND THE VISION OF THE ORGANISATION

Every NGO member of ACORM should have a formulated vision.

The vision of the NGO is concerned with issues such as: what the organisation should look like in the future, what activities it should be involved in and in what manner should these be realised, as well as whether these activities are needed for the target group for which the NGO was established to begin with.

The vision provides a clear and always positive picture of the future of the NGO.

The vision gives direction to the people involved in the NGO, whereby they are able to recognise that the existing values and moral standards of the existing NGO are contributing to the improvement of its image in the future.

The vision gives the organisation power to overcome all “quakes”, obstacles and crises. It helps in moments of turbulence in the context, with its clear direction and concrete mission that the NGO is aiming for.

The vision provides the flow and direction of all activities and procedures implemented by the board/presidence of the NGO, as well as helping the membership overcome any doubts and uncertainties. It is a good idea to make it clear that the vision is something that should be shared by the NGO volunteers and employees.

NGO'S AND THE MISSION

Every NGO member of ACORM should have a formulated mission.

The mission of a non-government organization is reflected in its standpoint on all objectives projected by its Statute and program assignments, as well as in the main approach explaining the reason for the existence of the organisation, what it was set out to accomplish and by what means.

The mission enables the NGO to define and operationalise its program activities and its strategy for their implementation. A good mission allows for giving directions to the NGO as to what it is not supposed to do. Every member, on joining the NGO, should be introduced to the mission. The program assignments and the Statute of the NGO's where the mission is stated, are prepared for the purpose of informing the members, as well as to create the feeling of a shared ideology and direction, a shared paradigm of values.

NGO'S AND THE DEVELOPMENT CYCLE

NGO's, in accordance with their mission, are aiming for a sustainable organisational development. The dedication to the mission, the enthusiasm, the professional operating approach, as well as the involvement of a large number of volunteers with previous educational training, all ensure that the phase of consolidation and maturing will not be replaced by a phase of bureaucratisation. With their membership, the founders of NGO's make the effort to provide maximum authorities, constancy and success in the NGO's operations, employing fresh ideas and involving a large number of student-volunteers in the operations of the NGO. The sustainable cycle of the NGO represents progress and elimination of external and inter-personal obstacles in the realisation of the mission.

THE NGO STANDPOINT ON A PROFESSIONAL APPROACH TO OPERATIONS

Within the framework of their program activities, NGO's, anticipate a continuous improvement of the human potential with technical and general knowledge about the non-government sector. For this purpose it practices: exchanging experiences and ideas with other NGO's both domestic and abroad, education of its membership through seminars, training, as well as through collaboration with professional and technical organizations in accordance with the activities of the particular NGO.

The NGO activists involved in ACORM are selflessly transferring their knowledge onto other NGO's. NGO activists/volunteers have the virtue of caring for the reputation of the organisation that they represent at any time or place of residing and working. The NGO activist/volunteer nurtures all humane and human values as a top moral standard for every NGO-activist in the framework of the traditional NGO standards.

NGO'S AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITIES

The responsibilities of an NGO should fall on all members who have been assigned a task for the realisation of given activities.

The authorisations of an NGO represent control over the execution of particular tasks.

NGO'S AND CRISIS SITUATIONS

Every NGO in a crisis situation, depending on its mission, human resources and material resources, should act by providing help, support and protection of children struck by war, natural disaster, earthquake...All regular activities are ceased, and all capacities are directed towards the elimination or isolation of the conditions resulting from the crisis situation at hand. Other NGO's should be involved in co-ordination with the government and the business sector for the purpose of overcoming the situation.

Furthermore, every NGO, if it decides to, may:

- Stand aside and observe the situation or become active at the moment it believes it could make a contribution; not undertake any activities
- Act solo without thereby bearing responsibility for mistakes caused by another NGO
- Act in co-ordination with all other NGO's on a local, national, state and regional level, regardless of their power (financial, human and material resources).
- Join any more powerful organisation (financial, human and material resources), that is more experienced in operations in the particular area

NGO'S AND THE MEDIA

In order to successfully establish a contact with the media, a strategy has to be built as to the way of approaching and developing relations with certain media houses. For this reason, every NGO needs to have a person responsible for public relations.

To succeed in its mission, the NGO has to continuously keep the media informed via press-conferences, information, announcements, joint campaigns, descriptive and statistical data, bulletins, publications, tribunals, seminars, symposiums, web-pages etc. The public relations person has to inform the media via contemporary communication systems: e-mails, faxes as well as through personal contact with the press. The public relations person should find journalists who have worked with problems similar to the particular mission of the NGO involved in ACORM.

a) Communication

All contacts with the media regarding issues such as personnel, relations within the Board, the budget, relations with financiers etc., have to be transferred to the Executive Director or to the Board itself.

b) Public information and data

The organisation's annual report and its financial reports are public documents accessible to every member of the organisation. In accordance with leading views, every employee and volunteer should ensure that the information presented to the public is complete, comprehensive and true.

NGO'S AND FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

NGO VOLUNTEERS' AND EMPLOYEES' ATTITUDE TOWARDS MATERIAL PROPERTY AND CONTEMPORARY COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

a) Care responsibility:

Every employee and volunteer is obligated to take care of the property of the organization, including both files and information. Inadequate utilization or neglect of this property could mean:

- Exposure to costs;
- Failure to accomplish or co-ordinate basic financial controls;
- Failure to provide security for the NGO property.

b) Additional utilization of equipment and property

Every NGO member of ACORM should establish its own Bylaw of operations.

Employees must not make any changes to software or hardware without authorisation.

The e-mail, the office computer network and other assets are property of the organisation and should be treated adequately. Using the Internet or e-mail for personal needs during working hours is not acceptable. This includes logging on, downloading, and sending offensive and inappropriate materials from the Internet.

v) Ownership:

All information and materials collected, acquired or identified during operations for the organization are property of the organization, unless decided differently by the Executive Director, the President or the employees.

VOLUNTEERS' AND EMPLOYEES' ATTITUDE TO CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Both employees and volunteers are obligated to keep confidential any events and decisions within the organization. If, while working for the organization, they receive confidential information, they must not spread and transfer this information.

Employees should be careful when electronically transmitting, exhibiting or leaving confidential information where others can see them. Confidential information should be kept under codes or physical locks. The following are considered as confidential information (with no limitations):

- Information for the target groups;
- Situations when a volunteer or staff member is offended, affected by some legal issue or is under investigation;
- Personal files and information, including home telephone numbers;
- Personal information on volunteers;

NGO VOLUNTEERS AND EMPLOYEES AND PERSONAL BUSINESS

Employees and volunteers are expected to give 100% effort and to, limit their personal business during working hours, as far as possible. They also must not use the assets of the organization for personal needs.

NGO'S STANDPOINT AND REGULATIONS IN SITUATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The organization's integrity depends on intelligent, well informed and fair made decisions within the organization. There are times when the decision making process is influenced by others'

interests (personal and professional) or by the individual. One person cannot eliminate the conflicts of interest. They are a common part of the organization's life and of professional life.

The organisation will openly handle any current, possible and projected conflicts of interests. This kind of politics provides protection from and handling of situations that could damage both the integrity of the organisation and the public trust. The focus will be on addressing issues and developing a plan for their adequate resolution. The basic premise in every conflict resolution is a discussion considering all attributes and standards in a humane and non-governmental moral standardised code of communication.

Principles:

Certain principles refer to the process of conflict of interest. Employees and volunteers should:

- identify, address and realistically discuss the possible and predictable conflicts with their supervisor or with the Executive Director or the President;
- avoid situations which involve or could possibly involve conflicts related to another person or organization;
- avoid situations that could involve conflicts between the best interest of the organization and personal interests;
- work with authorized staff on the development of a plan for resolving any possible conflicts of interest, emphasizing that the identification and observance of such identifications could, in and of itself, be sufficient in certain cases.

VOLUNTEERS, EMPLOYEES AND POLITICS

Political activity of employees and volunteers and NGO's

The Code of ACORM includes the basic standard of the non-government sector i.e. no simultaneous functions are allowed. All NGO employees and volunteers that have functions in political parties are required to resign their position in the NGO.

The basic principles of non-party, non-government, non-profit and humanitarian engagement of employees and volunteers in the NGO cannot be connected with a political engagement of these individuals.

NGO'S STANDPOINT ON SELF-FINANCING

Every NGO should aim towards a sustainable development and organisational growth, above all, through various forms of self-financing. For every NGO that acquires assets through self-financing, and invests these assets in current NGO activities, these assets are not considered as profit oriented, but rather as assets intended for self-sustaining purposes.

NGO'S AND FINANCIERS

Every NGO involved in ACORM provides high standard performance and a professional approach to financiers.

Apart from submitting both descriptive and financial reports, every NGO user of program assets from a given foundation, has to file and document its operations by filing press articles, photographs, personal experiences and impressions of volunteers and heads of projects, as well as surveys and interviews of children-users of the services provided by the NGO as an executor of a project cycle.

NGO'S AND GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS

The NGO collaborates and is involved in project and program activities with government institutions only in cases when the basic principles and regulations of the NGO mission as well as the standards established with the signing of this Code are not broken.

NGO'S AND THE BUSINESS SECTOR

The NGO collaborates and is involved in project and program activities with the business sector only in cases when the basic principles and regulations of the NGO mission as well as the standards established with the signing of this Code are not broken.

ATTACHMENT B

WHAT THE ASSOCIATION OFFERS

The Association is no more than a communication and co-operation with non-government organisations dedicated to a number of shared issues. Significant accomplishments are achieved when the non-government organisations are interconnected solely through their shared dedication and decisiveness. The Association is established for the purpose of achieving both temporary and permanent objectives, as defined by the Code, the long-term objective being the implementation of the Children's Rights Convention in Macedonia. The involvement of NGO's in ACORM is decentralised, whereby all member-participants are equal.

This association in ACORM is expected to result in the realisation of such objectives that require individual initiatives, fast reactions, flexibility and risk taking.

The ACORM provides high capacities of critical human resource potentials, organisational structure, mobilisation of institutional resources, visibility and respect.

ACORM contributes to the collection and sharing of critical views in the process of building and development of a citizen's society.

WHY AN ASSOCIATION

By working together, NGO's can act more efficiently, and they can focus their joint energies on influencing changes. When working on an individual basis, without co-ordination, organisations end up duplicating their efforts, sometimes even working against each other.

In the framework of ACORM, every organisation becomes a part of one larger group whose united voice is actually heard. The Association multiplies the assets, professionals, connections, it expands the geographic network and it influences authorities.

In the development of its strategies and tactics, the Association can, based on its united experts, create a lobby team that would be responsible for the media, the government and the business sector. In the Association, apart from the joint investment of human potential, material potential is also invested in the realisation of certain activities.

The more non-government organisations are involved in the Association, the greater their influence becomes, which results in attracting an increasing number of new organisations or groups.

The role of the Association of Children's Organisations of the Republic of Macedonia:

- The Association protects the values, objectives and interests of its members, representing them before the authorities, the public and other forums.
- The Association promotes co-operation and networking between its members and other non-profit organisations, as well as the identification of a way to eliminate any duplication of efforts, programs and activities of its members.
- The Association provides support services, including information (libraries, newspapers, data etc.), training, counselling, professional and technical advice, group discounts...
- The Association promotes and strengthens the high standards among its member-organisations. In the strengthening of these standards, each organisation takes into consideration some of the following methods:
 1. A condition for membership in the Association is the signing of the Code, whereby acceptance of the standards, as adopted by the membership, is required.
 2. An annual written report from each NGO – member of ACORM, showing that this member acts in compliance with the standards.
 3. In its further activities, ACORM does not include any organisation that for a reasonable time and for unacceptable reasons has failed to act in compliance with the standards.
 4. It regularly issues accessible lists to its members and it publicly disclaims itself from any member that is in breach of the standards.
 5. ACORM is open to any NGO that has the same mission and that accepts THE CODE.

I have read, understood and agreed with the Code of Conduct of NGO's in ACORM. By signing the Code, I agree to be a member of ACORM.

Date: _____

Signature: _____

First and Last Name of the NGO Member _____

NGO _____

Seal of the NGO

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