

# **Member and Volunteer Handbook**

**Engineers without Borders  
(Hong Kong) Limited**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 ORGANIZATION

Engineers Without Borders (Hong Kong) Limited (hereinafter referred to as “EWB-HK”) found in 2008 as a Society registered in Hong Kong, and converted to a Limited Company under the Company Ordinance of Hong Kong on 12th August 2015, is an independent and charitable humanitarian organization dedicated to the provision of professional assistance by engineers and professionals, as well as other personnel of technical competence, in humanitarian work. The organization is an approved charitable institution under S.88 of the Island Revenue Ordinance.

### 1.2 VISION:

We envision a world of disadvantaged communities empowered by engineering solutions to achieve sustainable development.

### 1.3 MISSIONS:

- a) To accelerate the betterment in life of disadvantaged communities and to promote sustainable development through the empowerment of engineering means;
- b) To enhance the capacity of the professionals in Hong Kong and their generations to come to contribute to the communities in need.

### 1.4 OBJECTIVES:

- a) To pursue ways in bettering the life of disadvantaged communities by empowering them with engineering solutions;
- b) To work partnership with developing communities both within and outside Hong Kong, assisting them to gain access to the knowledge, resources and appropriate technologies they need to improve their livelihood from poverty and after disaster;
- c) To pursue promotion of sustainable development in daily living in any communities through the empowerment of engineering means;
- d) To provide engineering and technical support to charitable organizations with similar missions;
- e) In the furtherance of the objects of the Organization but not otherwise, to build the capacity and increase the level of preparedness of the Hong Kong engineering and environment professionals in the generations to come;
- f) In the furtherance of the objects of the Organization but not otherwise, to set up and maintain a Register of Humanitarian Engineers and Professionals in Hong Kong.

### 1.5 PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

EWB-HK is an organization of liked-mind people who share a common vision, and embark on a common mission. This group of people has decided to put aside their political differences, religious believes and personal financial interests to come together to pursue the common vision

While the organization respects the individual's rights and freedom on political, religious expression and personal endeavour, those who decided to be associated with EWB-HK voluntarily agree to certain restraints on their behaviours while taking part in EWB-HK activities or making decisions on behalf of EWB-HK. This is to ensure all of the associated personnel can focus their energy on the mission and efficiency and effectiveness would not be compromised.

This document attempts to lay out in specific behaviours to be agreed by all those who volunteer to take part to work in EWB-HK's missions or take part in its activities.

## 1.6 MEMBERS

- a) Membership of the Organization shall be open to any person who is interested in promoting and expediting the objectives of this Organization.
- b) All such persons who:-
  - i) have been elected or admitted to be Members by the Board of Directors in accordance with the Articles of Association;
  - ii) by writing under their respective hands in such form as shall from time to time be approved by the Board of Directors, have applied to be admitted to membership and agreed to be bound by the Articles of Association; and
  - iii) have paid the prescribed fees (if any); and
  - iv) have age 18 or above (include 18) when the membership application form is submitted to the Board of Directors shall become a Member.
- c) Any person who is eligible for Ordinary Membership may apply to the Board of Directors for admission to membership. Such application shall be made in writing, signed by the applicant, and shall be in such form as the Board of Directors shall from time to time prescribe. The Board of Directors shall consider each application and the Board of Directors may reject or approve the same.
- d) The Board of Directors may from time to time determine the terms and conditions on which any further or other person shall be admitted to membership of the Organization.
- e) All Members shall be entitled to the following rights and privileges:-
  - i) to elect and be elected to the Board of Directors;
  - ii) to attend, participate in and vote at General Meetings;
  - iii) to participate in all activities and functions organized by the organization;
  - iv) to be nominated as Committee Head or other office bearing positions in the Committees;
  - v) to be nominated as Person in Charge, or Head of Mission of EWB-HK activities, events or overseas expeditions;

- f) All Members shall fulfil the following obligations: -
  - i) abide by the Articles of Association, this EWB-HK Member and Volunteer Handbook, and resolutions of the Organization;
  - ii) pay Membership Fees, Annual Subscriptions and other fees or monies payable to the Organization.
- g) Membership of the Organization shall be terminated: -
  - i) on receipt by the Secretary of an one month's written notice, or
  - ii) in default in the payment of Membership Fee or Annual Subscription or other fees or monies payable to the Organization pursuant to this Articles for more than six months,
- h) The Board of Directors may issue warning to or at an Extraordinary General Meeting specially convened suspend or expel a Member who
  - i) is convicted by any competent Court on any criminal charge; or
  - ii) infringes the Articles or resolutions of the Organization; or
  - iii) commits corruptive acts by using the name of the Organization and thereby impairing its fair reputation.
- i) No Member shall be entitled to transfer his Membership or his rights in the Organization, but the rights of any individual Member shall cease upon his death or termination of his Membership in accordance with the Articles of Association.
- j) Every Member shall from time to time notify the Secretary a place of business or residence in Hong Kong to be registered as his place of address and the place so registered from time to time, shall for the purposes of all ordinances and these Articles be deemed his registered place of address.

#### 1.7 MEMBERSHIP FEE AND ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Board of Directors may from time to time determine the amount of the Membership Fee to be paid upon admission to membership and the amount of Annual Subscription.

The intention is for EWB-HK Membership to be self-funded. This means Annual Membership Fee collected and donation from members should be sufficient to cover the administration costs of maintaining EWB-HK membership. These costs include membership management; venue; maintenance of website; telephone/fax line; stationery; company registration costs.

External funding and donation from the public would only be used to cover the objects of the organization and fund raising activities. Unless the donor specify, external fund would not be used to subsidize membership management administration costs.

In line with the spirit of the Articles of Association, the Board of Directors decided to withdraw the Life Member option. Those who are Life Members on the Membership List on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2017 would continue to be so as long as they agree to abide to the same Code of Conduct as other Ordinary Members.

## 2. CODE OF CONDUCT

### 2.1 TO WHOM DOES THIS CODE OF CONDUCT APPLIES

Everyone regardless of rank or level, board director, ordinary member, volunteer, part-time or full-time staff is expected to comply with this Code while working for EWB-HK. Where specific policies apply only to specific group, say board directors, staff etc, it would be explicitly mentioned in the document. Otherwise this code of conduct is expected of all who work for EWB-HK, generally refers to as EWB-HK Personnel.

This code is written with the whole EWB Movement in mind. It also incorporates recommendations from local NGO federations. The intention is for all persons who agree to abide the spirit and intent of this Code to also take part in activities jointly organized by EWB-HK and its partners.

### 2.2 WHY CODE OF CONDUCT MATTER

As part of the EWB Movement, EWB-HK embraces the highest global ideals. These include the UN Millennium Development Goals, UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Earth Charter. As EWB-HK builds up partnership with other NGOs both in Hong Kong and overseas, the long-term success of the organization and its missions depends on maintaining the respect and confidence of governments, local authorities, NGOs, donors and the public we serve in all the locations EWB-HK operates. It is fundamental that all of us discharge our duties with independence, honesty, impartiality, and incorruptibility. EWB-HK is judged by the collective behavior of all of us. Thus one becomes obliged to this code when one sign up for any work of EWB-HK.

### 2.3 THE HUMANITARIAN IMPERATIVE COMES FIRST

a) The right to receive humanitarian assistance, and to offer it, is a fundamental humanitarian principle which should be enjoyed by all inhabitants of all countries. As members of the international community, we recognise our obligation to provide humanitarian assistance wherever it is needed. Hence the need for unimpeded access to affected populations is of fundamental importance in exercising that responsibility. The prime motivation of our response to disaster is to alleviate human suffering amongst those least able to withstand the stress caused by disaster. When we give humanitarian aid it is not a partisan or political act and should not be viewed as such.

As EWB-HK Personnel we will ensure we undertake our duties in the interests of EWB-HK. We will uphold and promote the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct as well as values, such as commitment, engagement and solidarity. We shall also uphold the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. The concept of integrity includes, but is not limited to, probity, impartiality, fairness, honesty and truthfulness in all matters affecting our work and status.

We shall not use our function for EWB-HK or knowledge obtained therefrom for private benefit of ourselves or others, or to the detriment of others

- b) EWB-HK board directors, members and volunteers will be guided by the motivation to devote our knowledge and abilities without regard to financial remuneration or other financial interest.

#### 2.4 AID IS GIVEN REGARDLESS OF THE RACE, CREED OR NATIONALITY OF THE RECIPIENTS

- a) Aid is given regardless of the race, creed or nationality of the recipients and without adverse distinction of any kind. Aid priorities are calculated on the basis of need alone.

Wherever possible, we will base the provision of relief aid upon a thorough assessment of the needs of the disaster victims and the local capacities already in place to meet those needs. Within the entirety of our programmes, we will reflect considerations of proportionality. Human suffering must be alleviated whenever it is found; life is as precious in one part of a country as another. Thus, our provision of aid will reflect the degree of suffering it seeks to alleviate. In implementing this approach, we recognise the crucial role played by women in disaster-prone communities and will ensure that this role is supported, not diminished, by our aid programmes. The implementation of such a universal, impartial and independent policy, can only be effective if we and our partners have access to the necessary resources to provide for such equitable relief, and have equal access to all disaster victims.

- b) EWB-HK Personnel will show respect for all person equally and shall not discriminate against any individual or group of individuals.
- c) EWB-HK Personnel must report any breach of the Code of Conduct to the Person-in-Charge (PIC) appointed by the EWB-HK Board of Directors, or the partner hosting NGO to take appropriate action. In particular EWB-HK Personnel must report any form of discrimination, retaliation or harassment, including sexual or gender harassment, and any form of sexual exploitation and abuse. We are obliged to cooperate with any duly authorized audits and investigations.
- d) EWB-HK Personnel understand we must comply with local laws and honor our private legal obligations. In case functional privileges and immunities are granted to EWB-HK Personnel directly or through participation in an event of government or public institution, these privileges and immunities are granted in connection with the work of EWB-HK and not for the personal benefit of the individuals and therefore no excuse for EWB-HK Personnel to fail to comply with local laws and our private obligations.

#### 2.5 AID WILL NOT BE USED TO FURTHER A PARTICULAR POLITICAL OR RELIGIOUS STANDPOINT

- a) Humanitarian aid will be given according to the need of individuals, families and communities. EWB-HK affirms that assistance will not be dependent on the adherence of the recipients to those opinions. We will not tie the promise, delivery or distribution of assistance to the embracing or acceptance of a particular political or religious creed.

- b) EWB-HK shall endeavour not to act as instruments of government foreign policy. EWB-HK formulates our own policies and implementation strategies and do not seek to implement the policy of any government, except in so far as it coincides with its own independent policy. We will never knowingly – or through negligence – allow ourselves, our volunteers or our employees, to be used to gather information of a political, military or economically sensitive nature for governments or other bodies that may serve purposes other than those which are strictly humanitarian, nor will we act as instruments of foreign policy of donor governments. We will use the assistance we receive to respond to needs and this assistance should not be driven by the need to dispose of donor commodity surpluses, nor by the political interest of any particular donor. We value and promote the voluntary giving of labor and finances by concerned individuals to support our work and recognize the independence of action promoted by such voluntary motivation. In order to protect our independence we will seek to avoid dependence upon a single funding source.
- c) EWB-HK Personnel shall declare our source of funding if we receive subsidies from a third party to participate in the activities of the organization.
- d) EWB-HK Personnel shall not use our positions, material or resource in EWB-HK to run for public office, promote a particular political party or religion.

## 2.6 RESPECT CULTURE AND CUSTOM

EWB-HK Personnel will endeavor to respect the culture, structures and customs of the communities and countries in which we are working.

- a) We will respect the local dietary practices and make every effort to deal with any differences.
- b) We will respect the local norm on dress code and avoid to be seen as too sexy or inappropriate.

## 2.7 ATTEMPT TO BUILD HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE ON LOCAL CAPACITIES

All people and communities – even in disaster – possess capacities as well as vulnerabilities. Where possible, we will strengthen these capacities by employing local staff, purchasing local materials and trading with local companies. Where possible, we will work through local partners in planning and implementation, and cooperate with local government structures where appropriate. We will place a high priority on the proper co-ordination of our emergency responses. This is best done within the countries concerned by those most directly involved in the relief operations.

## 2.8 WAYS SHALL BE FOUND TO INVOLVE PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES IN THE MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION OF RELIEF AID

Humanitarian response assistance should never be imposed upon the beneficiaries. Effective relief and lasting rehabilitation can best be achieved where the intended beneficiaries are involved in the design, management and implementation of the assistance program. We will strive to achieve full community participation in our

relief aid programs.

2.9 RELIEF AID MUST BE SUSTAINABLE, REDUCING FUTURE VULNERABILITIES TO DISASTER AS WELL AS MEETING BASIC NEEDS

All relief actions affect the prospects for long-term development, either in a positive or a negative fashion. Recognizing this, EWB-HK will strive to implement relief programs which actively reduce the beneficiaries' vulnerability to future disasters and help create sustainable lifestyles. We will pay particular attention to environmental concerns in the design and management of relief programs. We will also endeavor to minimize the negative impact of humanitarian assistance, seeking to avoid long-term beneficiary dependence upon external aid.

2.10 HOLD OURSELVES ACCOUNTABLE TO BOTH THOSE WE SEEK TO ASSIST AND THOSE FROM WHOM WE ACCEPT RESOURCES

- a) EWB-HK may sometimes act as an institutional link in the partnership between those who wish to assist and those who need assistance during disasters. We therefore hold ourselves accountable to both constituencies. All our dealings with donors and beneficiaries shall reflect an attitude of openness and transparency. We recognize the need to report on our activities, both from a financial perspective and the perspective of effectiveness. We recognize the obligation to ensure appropriate monitoring of aid distributions and to carry out regular assessments of the impact of disaster assistance.

We will also seek to report, in an open fashion, upon the impact of our work, and the factors limiting or enhancing that impact. Our programs will be based upon high standards of professionalism and expertise in order to minimize the wasting of valuable resources.

- b) We meet our legal and compliance obligations in Hong Kong and the locations we are providing services.
- c) We acknowledge that unauthorized possession or use of narcotic or hallucinogenic drugs is illegal in all countries and that possession or use of illegal drugs may result in immediate termination of my volunteer deployment.

EWB-HK Personnel who travels with large amount of prescribed drug/medicine(s) are required to report to the PIC well before they leave Hong Kong. This is because we have to forestall the situation that local customs officials may suspect drug trafficking on our part. The person concerned may have to bring along letters from appropriate discipline(s) of medical doctors(s), and in cases where required, may have to source the required drug(s)/medicine(s) locally so as to cut down the amount he/she has to carry in the trip.

- d) We undertake to build up responsible and independent governance mechanisms and appropriate human resource capacity and capability to deliver our work.

## 2.11 RECOGNIZE DISASTER VICTIMS AS DIGNIFIED HUMANS, NOT HOPELESS OBJECTS

Respect for the disaster victim as an equal partner in action should never be lost. In EWB-HK public information, publicity and advertising activities, we shall portray an objective image of the humanitarian situation where the capacities and aspirations of victims are highlighted, and not just their vulnerabilities and fears. While we will cooperate with the media in order to enhance public response, we will not allow external or internal demands for publicity to take precedence over the principle of maximizing overall relief assistance. We will avoid competing with other disaster response agencies for media coverage in situations where such coverage may be to the detriment of the service provided to the beneficiaries or to the security of our staff or the beneficiaries.

## 2.12 INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

- a) The work produced in the capacity as a EWB-HK Personnel is the property of the Organization. EWB-HK has the right to use all such work in any manner that it deems appropriate. As the official EWB-HK record becomes part of the intellectual property, EWB-HK Personnel should ensure the quality and integrity of all work produced.

Other organizations also protect their intellectual property. We respect their rights. We do not tolerate the unauthorized copying or disclosure of another's intellectual property. EWB-HK Personnel may use other people's information only if their consent has been received or if the information is publicly available without restriction.

Our rules and guidance about information management and intellectual property also extend to the use of electronic media, social networks, and other forms of non-print based communications.

- b) The retention guidelines for the safekeeping and/or disposition of all records and documents are as follow:
  - i) For documents pertaining to the incorporation of EWB-HK, retention is perpetual.
  - ii) For formal agreement with external parties, retention is at least 10 years after the end of the agreement.
  - iii) For financial records, retention complies with the Company Ordinance of Hong Kong.
- c) EWB-HK Personnel shall not place excerpts from EWB-HK contractual documents on their personal websites, blogs or other social media for public access.
- d) EWB-HK letterhead and @ewb.hk email addresses should only be used to conduct official correspondence in connection with EWB-HK.
- e) EWB-HK Personnel acknowledge and accept that the organization is in possession of some of their personal information which are gathered for project and/or other agreed purposes such as traveling or insurance and access is limited the responsible EWB-HK Personnel. EWB-HK will hold the personal information in a safe and secure location. EWB-HK Personnel shall use the personal information for the intended purpose only.

## 2.13 PROHIBITION OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND SEXUAL ABUSE

- a) In the spirit of respect for all persons, EWB-HK Personnel must not engage in any form of harassment as well as all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse. For the protection of all, the following specific standards are promulgated:
  - i) Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse violate universally recognized international legal norms and standards and are unacceptable behavior, constitute acts of serious misconduct and are therefore grounds for summary dismissal;
  - ii) Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defense;
  - iii) Exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior, is prohibited. This includes any exchange of assistance that is due to the beneficiaries;
  - iv) Sexual relationships between EWB-HK Personnel and beneficiaries of assistance undermine the credibility and integrity of the work of the EWB-HK and are strongly discouraged;
  - v) Where a member of EWB-HK Personnel develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual exploitation or sexual abuse by a fellow worker, whether in the same agency or not and whether or not within the EWB-HK framework, he or she must report such concerns via established reporting mechanisms;
  - vi) EWB-HK Personnel are obliged to create and maintain an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. Managers at all levels have a particular responsibility to support and develop systems that maintain this environment.

The standards set out above are not an exhaustive list. Other types of sexually exploitative or sexually abusive behavior may be grounds for administrative action and/or disciplinary measures, including summary dismissal, pursuant to EWB-HK conditions of deployment.

- b) If, after proper investigation, there are credible allegations of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, these cases may, upon consultation with EWB-HK Legal Adviser, be referred to local authorities.

## 2.14 PROHIBITION OF DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, INCLUDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT, AND ABUSE OF AUTHORITY

### a) Definitions

- i) Discrimination is any unfair treatment or arbitrary distinction based on a person's race, sex, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, age, language, social origin or other status. Discrimination may be an isolated event affecting one person or a group of persons similarly situated, or may manifest itself through harassment or abuse of authority.
- ii) Harassment is any improper and unwelcome conduct that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another person. Harassment may take the form of words, gestures or actions which tend to annoy, alarm, abuse, demean, intimidate, belittle, humiliate or embarrass another or which create an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Harassment normally implies a series of incidents. Disagreement on work performance or on other work-related issues is normally not considered harassment and is not dealt with under the provisions of this policy but in the context of performance management.
- iii) Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favour, verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature, or any other behaviour of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another, when such conduct interferes with work, is made a condition of employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. While typically involving a pattern of behaviour, it can take the form of a single incident. Sexual harassment may occur between persons of the opposite or same sex. Both males and females can be either the victims or the offenders.
- iv) Abuse of authority is the improper use of a position of influence, power or authority against another person. This is particularly serious when a person uses his or her influence, power or authority to improperly influence the career or employment conditions of another, including, but not limited to, appointment, assignment, contract renewal, performance evaluation or promotion. Abuse of authority may also include conduct that creates a hostile or offensive work environment which includes, but is not limited to, the use of intimidation, threats, blackmail or coercion. Abuse of authority is particularly serious when accompanied by discrimination or harassment, including sexual harassment.
- v) For the purposes of the present text, discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority shall collectively be referred to as "prohibited conduct".

### b) General Principles

- i) Every member of the EWB-HK Personnel has the right to be treated with dignity and respect and to work in an environment free from prohibited

conduct as described above.

- ii) In their interactions with others, EWB-HK Personnel are expected to act with tolerance, sensitivity and respect for differences. Any form of prohibited conduct in the workplace or in connection with work is a violation of these principles and may lead to disciplinary action, whether the prohibited conduct takes place in the workplace, in the course of official travel or an official mission, or in other settings in which it may have an impact on the workplace.
- c) Duties of EWB-HK Personnel
  - i) All EWB-HK Personnel are obliged to ensure that they do not engage in or condone behaviour which would constitute prohibited conduct with respect to their peers, supervisors, supervisees and other persons performing duties for EWB-HK.
  - ii) EWB-HK Personnel are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the hosting NGO's policy on prohibited conduct and with the various options and internal channels available for addressing such conduct.