

**Report on
World Vision UK's Accreditation Process for
The People In Aid Code of Good Practice**

Richard Evans, *ethics etc...*

CONTENTS

Objective

Method

Conclusions regarding People In Aid Accreditation

Other Findings

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 People In Aid: WVUK Review of Code

Appendix 2 PCG Policy Consolidation and Reviews

Objective

- i. **to provide assurance to managers of WVUK** that the policies, strategies and systems it has in place for the management and support of personnel are consistent with the People In Aid Code Principles, understood throughout WVUK and implemented in practice. This process will assess the performance of WVUK against the People In Aid Code as well as providing assurance that reliable management and information systems are in place.
- ii. **to provide assurance to People In Aid that WVUK's** HR management systems and performance are consistent with the requirements for the award of People In Aid's Second Quality Mark;
- iii. **to facilitate continuous self-evaluation** against the People In Aid Code.

Method

‘Normal’ People In Aid Process for awarding the second quality mark for “compliance with the People In Aid Code”.

The ‘normal’ process is described in the People In Aid Code *Implementation Manual*. Up to this point in time, most member agencies seeking accreditation for the second People In Aid quality mark have submitted a report, the purpose of which is:

*to inform people, who are interested in, employed by or otherwise involved in, or affected by your organisation, about how you manage your staff and the extent to which the organisation complies with the principles of the People In Aid Code of Good Practice.
(People In Aid Implementation Manual)*

The report will include:

- a profile of the organisation, its activities and its current situation;
- a description of how it is governed and managed;
- a statement of the board’s vision for HR management;
- an outline of how the information in the report has been sourced and put together;
- a complete account of relevant performance data, including the results of staff opinion surveys, organised to provide evidence that the organisation complies with each of the People In Aid Code Principles;
- the organisation’s HR department’s assessment of its activity in relation to the People In Aid Code of Good Practice;
- an action plan to address any weaknesses and to provide for continuous improvement;
- a statement by an independent verifier (or auditor)

On the basis of this report and the auditor’s statement that there is sufficient evidence to support the claims made, People In Aid consider awarding the second quality mark.

The accreditation process for WVUK

WVUK is an autonomous 'support office' within the worldwide World Vision Partnership. It currently has a staff of around 220 working in Milton Keynes. Of these a certain proportion (around 40+) are involved in frequent overseas travel to World Vision regional and national offices, and others travel occasionally. It was agreed with People In Aid that World Vision UK would be subject to an alternative method of accreditation that did not involve the production of a 'compliance report' by the organisation. The alternative method would use the same assurance criteria based on the principles set out in AccountAbility's AA1000AS Assurance Standard:

- **Completeness** – has the organisation provided sufficient evidence that it is implementing policies in each of the areas of HR management covered by the seven People In Aid Code Principles and that these are applied consistently to all personnel in all areas where the organisation operates?
- **Materiality** – has the organisation provided sufficient evidence that it understands stakeholders' concerns and interests and is providing relevant (material) information that will help them make informed judgments about the organisation's HR management performance?
- **Responsiveness** – has the organisation provided sufficient evidence that its HR policies and practice are responding to employees' concerns, their needs for information, and the specific commitments it has made to improve its performance?

In addition the assurance process will seek:

- to ascertain the extent to which adherence to the People In Aid Code Principles is **embedded** in operational and management practices throughout the organisation
- to ascertain the **quality and effectiveness of consultation and communication** of its policies and performance with stakeholders.

The framework of this alternative accreditation process was considered appropriate by WVUK for the following reasons.

1. The World Vision Partnership has a highly devolved global management structure.

World Vision UK is a support office for the World Vision Partnership. World Vision functions as a partnership of interdependent national, regional and 'Global Centre' offices, each governed to a greater or lesser degree (dependent on maturity of the office and local capacity) by their own boards or advisory councils. A common mission statement and shared core values bind the Partnership together. By signing the Covenant of Partnership, each national office agrees to abide by common policies and standards. Offices hold each other accountable through an ongoing system of peer review and may be primarily 'support' offices or 'operational' ('National') offices.

WVUK as a 'support office' performs a number of functions: generates funding, engages in advocacy work, raises community, corporate and individual support, communicates the

work of the global partnership in the UK, and provides support, training and expertise to the work of WV partners (i.e. other offices) engaged in sustainable development and humanitarian and disaster relief work.

While WVUK does not employ people who are permanently based in 'operational' situations, a non-report based People In Aid accreditation process was considered an appropriate model for WVUK as part of the complex and highly devolved World Vision Partnership. WVUK is the first World Vision organisation to commit to the People In Aid Code of Good Practice and to seek verified compliance with the Code.

2. WVUK existing structures and standards

WVUK has a well developed 'People and Culture Group', consultative processes for the development and implementation of people policies, and regular (annual and quarterly) surveys of staff opinion on matters that relate to the management and support of people in the organisation. These are aligned with World Vision's Core Values and WVUK is a significant contributor to the development of WVI standards.

What we did

Established WVUK's strategies, standards (policies and practice) and performance in relation to each of the seven Principles of the People In Aid Code through:

- an examination of policy and strategy documents, records of relevant consultations, training initiatives and correspondence (completion of Policy Matrix).
- face-to-face interviews, at Milton Keynes, with managers in the People and Culture Group, and with staff from selected departments (including the International Programmes department) to establish what policies and strategies relevant to the People In Aid Code are in place and the management systems established to ensure consistency of implementation;
- reviewing results and feedback from the October 2008 annual All Staff Survey and 2008 and 2009 quarterly staff Pulse Check surveys.
- investigating governance arrangements for human resource management and support and forming a view about the effectiveness of policy and strategy implementation and on-going development and consultation processes with staff - including the Staff Consultative Committee (SCC).

Interviews list

10.06.09

Bob Chambers, PCG Business Partner for Advocacy and Communications

Richard Marshall, Director People and Culture

27.07.09

Bob Chambers

Nick Wright, Head of Organisational Development, PCG Business Partner for International Programmes

Sarah Trickey, Regional Manager, International Programmes

Betsy Osbourne, Head of HR, PCG Process Improvement Project

Benjamin Downing, Learning and Development Specialist, PCG

28.07.09

Justin Byworth, Acting Chief Executive Officer

Sarah Hinson, HR Specialist, Acting PCG Business Partner for Core Business Connections

Mark Bulpitt, Acting Head of Humanitarian Operations, International Programmes

Jonathan Francis, Chair of Staff Consultative Committee, Church Engagement Manager, Advocacy Department

Andrew Stott, Head of Consumer Marketing, Marketing Department

Conclusions regarding People In Aid Accreditation

Based on the documentary evidence, staff survey feedback and interviews with staff in Milton Keynes, I believe there is good evidence to support the following conclusions.

1. The policies, strategies and systems WVUK has in place for the management and support of personnel are consistent with the People In Aid Code Principles.
2. The policies, strategies and systems are understood throughout WVUK and implemented in practice.
3. Adherence to the People In Aid Code Principles is embedded in operational and management practices throughout the organisation.
4. The quality and effectiveness of consultation and the communication of WVUK HR policies and performance with all staff is consistent and is managed systematically to a high standard through the People and Culture Group, its 'Business Partner' links with other departments, the Executive Leadership Team and the work of the Staff Consultative Committee.
5. Processes and systems are in place and effective for continuous self-evaluation against UK Employment Law, HR best practice, WVI Core Values and the People In Aid Code.
6. WVUK's HR management systems and performance are consistent with the requirements for the award of People In Aid's Second Quality Mark.

Other findings

Business Partnerships

PCG Managers and HR Specialists are individually linked to other departments across the organisation through a 'Business Partner' system. Interviews revealed that this was valued by the departments and was effective in ensuring consultation on new HR policies, revising existing policies and providing training and support in communicating and implementing HR policies.

Staff Consultative Committee

WVUK has no Trades Union representation or Staff Association. Each department nominates members (one committee member to every 12 staff members) to sit on the Staff Consultative Committee which meets regularly bi-monthly. Committee members are encouraged to contribute items of interest and concern on behalf of their departments and colleagues as are the Chair, the People and Culture Director and the Head of Human Resources. Department representatives are encouraged by the Chair to progress issues where appropriate through the relevant line manager, HOD or other Director where there is a clear policy or practice framework for doing so. This has enabled SCC meetings to focus on new HR policy and practice, revisions and other issues relating to staff, including organisational change and development communicated by the Executive Leadership. From my interview with the Chair of SCC it was clear that it was well used and appreciated by staff and management.

The SCC was successful earlier in the year in offering advice to the Board regarding announcements and arrangements for the appointment of the Acting CEO and the recruitment of a permanent appointment to the position.

People and Culture Group Strategy and Action Planning

The People and Culture Group Strategy is integral to WVUK's overall strategy. The organisation is coming to the end of a 5 year strategic plan and work will start in September '09 on the next 5 year plan, based on World Vision International's strategic plan. I have reviewed the priorities for 2010, which include: work with WVI; integration of the Core Capabilities programme (see below); increasing capacity to lead and manage change; establish a management skills programme for line managers; review career development and succession planning and improving staff wellbeing and resilience. The actions have been budgeted in terms of financial and people resources required and I found them consistent with the issues and actions identified by the PCG.

All staff leaving WVUK are offered an exit interview with a good level of uptake. The majority, over the last four years, left for promotions or career moves and for domestic reasons, end of contract or retirement. A wide range of issues were rated positively including: working relationships with colleagues; flexible working arrangements, family friendly policies; spiritual nurture; benefits package; learning and development opportunities; willingness to embrace new ideas and performance appraisal methods. Over 80% of those leaving said they would recommend WVUK as an employer and 85% said they would consider coming back to WVUK.

A small number, 11%, said they had been bullied or discriminated against and 28% claimed to have observed bullying or discrimination against others. There are no specific questions on bullying or discrimination in the staff survey so it is not possible to determine, from staff surveys, whether this response is representative of the current situation. When I raised the issue, I was told that it arose from a specific management

situation that is being actively managed and that these reports in exit interviews of bullying are exceptional.

Exit interview records are analysed by PCG and the results fed through to the Executive Leadership Team.

WVUK has initiated a review of all HR policies, which the Head of HR, Betsy Osbourne will coordinate with stakeholders and the SCC.

Personal Development and Career Planning and Succession Planning

WVUK has a well developed system of personal performance management with formal annual appraisals and goal setting, and six monthly informal reviews. As far as I was able to ascertain these are carried out consistently, documented and reviewed by PCG. Performance and personal development planning start immediately when new staff join the organisation, with clear goals agreed for the standard six month probationary period. The induction process is very comprehensive and includes linking new staff with a 'buddy' from another department at the outset. Considerable effort is invested in ensuring managers of new staff communicate effectively and provide imaginative leadership and creative support for new staff.

As a faith based organisation, WVUK is systematic in encouraging all staff, Christians and others, to discuss the development of their work and beliefs and to participate in regular meetings in small groups weekly and in all-staff meetings every month.

While there are opportunities for staff to make career moves within World Vision International, and evidence among the staff in Milton Keynes that some do take advantage of the opportunities, systems and resources for structured career development and succession planning are relatively under developed. This is in part a consequence of the independence of national WV offices, each of which is responsible for their own recruitment, and the separate governance of WVI which makes international appointments. This weakness has been recognised in WVUK and career development within WVUK will be reviewed during the 2010 plan period.

Core Capability Framework

In 2003 WVI identified the need to develop a Core Capability Framework (CCF) to describe the core skills and knowledge the organisation "wants to see in all WV staff, at all levels, across the world". These are the competencies required, in addition to job-specific technical skills and experience, "that will help to create the organisational culture and environment the organisation is striving for."

The four groups of 'capabilities', Achieving, Thinking, Self-managing and Relational, all relate to the development of individual staff and their relationships with their teams.

WVUK's Director for People and Culture was the project lead in the development of the CCF. The framework was launched across the WV Partnership in 2006 and WVUK has integrated it into recruitment, job descriptions and performance development systems. WVUK should also use the Framework to form the basis for a systematic approach to individual career development and strategic organisational succession planning.

Diversity

WVUK is a Christian organisation. It has established an assessment process to determine whether a specific job within the organisation should carry a Genuine Occupational Requirement (GOR) for an active and committed Christian faith. Currently around 75% of positions carry a GOR.

Terms of reference for a review of GOR criteria and its implementation were agreed in June and will be completed by the end of 2009.

In other respects WVUK practices equality of opportunity in recruitment and has policies to promote inclusiveness and diversity in the workplace. However, while other forms of discrimination are covered there is no specific policy on sexual preference. There is no evidence of discrimination, but given the debate currently in the Christian denominations this is a potentially sensitive issue on which to establish a written policy for the organisation. Policy and practice varies across the different bodies that make up the World Vision Global Partnership. A draft policy briefing was drawn up by WVUK in March '09 and is currently under consultation and review. While the final outcome is subject to due process within the organisation the recommendations made by PCG, if implemented, would be entirely compatible with the People In Aid Code, Principle 5.

WVUK Staff Who Travel – Safety, Security and Health Provisions

About 15% of the staff, mainly in the International Programmes Group, are required to make frequent visits to countries where World Vision has relief or development programmes.

There is a recently revised International Travel Policy covering all staff who travel as part of their job. The policy is comprehensive and meets the requirements of the People In Aid Code, Principle 7.

Interviews with managers from the Regional Programmes (RPT) and Humanitarian and Emergency Affairs (HEA) teams confirmed that safety and security provision is of a very high standard. The HEA team members are more frequently exposed to risk in remote areas and situations of conflict and political and social instability and have initiated additional safety and security procedures to cover situations where the national office may be limited in the information, resources and cover it is able to support.

Staff Surveys and the Climate at WVUK

In the light of earlier observations on diversity and on bullying reported in exit interviews, I recommend that WVUK include in future all-staff surveys questions about equality of treatment and diversity and bullying. To strengthen consistency with the People In Aid Code, questions should also test staff awareness and satisfaction with health and safety and security policies and practice. It may be appropriate, at some point before the next People In Aid accreditation, to review the WVUK staff survey questionnaire against the current People In Aid model.

Over the last two years WVUK has been going through testing times and some critical changes. Like all major humanitarian aid organisations it has faced significant declines in income, mainly due to pressure on institutional donors and individual supporters of the general economic climate and the end of DEC funding for major natural disasters in Asia.

In addition WVUK has had to undertake some critical organisational changes in response to weak performance in some areas and has made changes in senior management including its Chief Executive Officer.

The latest full Staff survey was in October 2008. The percentage of staff responding to this and the quarterly Pulse Check surveys is consistently high. The October survey already showed improvements in staff engagement and confidence in the way the organisation was being managed following low scores in a number of areas in the previous Pulse Checks. Later Pulse Checks in January, April and July 2009 have shown a consistent and dramatic improvement in all measures and most significantly in the confidence of staff in the effectiveness of the Executive Leadership Team in leading WVUK, rising from 48% in July 08 to a record 80% in July '09.

In January 2009 WVUK was awarded 'one star First Class' rating in the Best Companies Survey, missing an 'Outstanding' award by just 0.8%.

In the face of continuing economic uncertainty, the speed of the recovery of confidence in management is testimony to the resilience of staff and their commitment to the WV vision as well as hard work by the Board, the Executive and the People and Culture Group staff.

Richard Evans

ethics etc...

10 August 2009

Appendix 1 People in Aid: WVUK Review of Code

| Principle | Policy – ‘What we say’ | Practice – ‘What we do’ |
|---|---|---|
| 1 – HR Strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have strategy – central to organisation • “We value people” is a Core Value | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making employment in WVUK accessible to disabled people is important to us – we hold ‘two ticks’ • Our strategy does promote inclusiveness and diversity, whilst carrying c.80% GOR • The PCG Business Partner role strengthens monitoring of plans and budgets through addressing implications on staff |
| 2 – Staff Policies and Practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies readily available in Policy Manual and on Compass (intranet), and apply to all staff • Policy manual is updated regularly, with involvement of Staff Consultative Committee, then communicated to staff by email and intranet | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process for regular (planned) review of policies is being revised • Embryonic system for routine training of managers in range of HR policies and their implementation / implications |
| 3 – Managing People | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff are aware of Grievance and Disciplinary procedures • Performance Development System (PDS) is well established, and training is offered to all managers and staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management training is growing in content and profile • Line managers are supported in performance management • Good practice is shared informally – including several Action Learning Sets, Buzz Groups, and a new Management Development Workshop Series • Majority of training is not mandatory |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>4 – Consultation and Communication</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation and communication with staff is a high priority for the Executive Leadership Team and senior management across the organisation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Consultative Committee (SCC) is involved in consultation and review of HR and other policies • Regular All Staff Meetings are valued and respected vehicle • Frequent Internal News by email • Staff notice boards around building |
| <p>5 – Recruitment and Selection</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment policies exist | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive salaries within sector • Fair, transparent and open processes • Range of expertise in PCG and support for line managers • Regular monitoring and evaluation |
| <p>6 – Learning and Development</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Development System is well established. Annual cycle includes Personal Goal Setting, and both formal and informal performance reviews | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devolved budget for staff training, in addition to central resource • Foundations event for all new staff, and Management Foundations for new managers • Mandatory training is provided for all new starters • Talent mapping / management led by Directors with PCG Business Partners • See “Managing People” for info on some management training |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>7 – Health, Safety and Security</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive policies exist, including Health and Safety • Additional policies exist for certain staff / situations e.g. Security and Evacuation policies for overseas travel | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training is provided to all new staff • Process for preparation of staff before travel, including briefings and specialist training • Work is ongoing to improve process for travelling staff, eg. debriefing, working hours, stress management, and general issues around staff travelling to the field |
|---|---|--|

Appendix 2 PCG Policy Consolidation & Reviews

There are 2 objectives of this piece of work.

1. To make the current people policies of WVUK more accessible and easy to understand to all those in the organisation. This will involve some consolidation, rewording, summarising and adding of supplementary information. It will not alter substantively the agreed policy, and all changes will be done in consultation with the SCC.
2. To review several policies in order to evaluate the benefits of making changes. Again, these will be done in consultation with the SCC and will then go forward to ELT for a decision.

| | Current Policy | | New Structure | Significant Review |
|----------|---|--------|--|--------------------|
| 1 | Key Policies | | | |
| 1.1 | Intro to WVUK Policy Manual | 1 | Engagement | |
| 1.2 | Statement of Faith | 1 | Engagement - Core WV Documents | |
| 1.3 | Core Values | 1 | Engagement - Core WV Documents | |
| 1.4 | Origins of WVUK | 1 | Engagement - Core WV Documents | |
| 1.5 | WV Mission, Vision & Operating Principles | 1 | Engagement - Core WV Documents | |
| 1.6 | WVUK Mission Statement, Mission Drivers, & Guiding Principles | 1 | Engagement - Core WV Documents | |
| 1.7 | Leadership | 1 | Governance | |
| 2 | Equality & Diversity | 1 | Equality & Diversity | |
| | (Sections 2.1 – 2.4) | | (All sections) | |
| 3 | Employment | | | |
| 3.0 | WVUK Recruitment Policy | 3 | Resourcing | |
| 3.1 | Standard Terms & Conditions | 3 2 | T&C into 3 (contracts mgt) JD into 2 (org design) | |
| 3.2 | Child Protection Policy | 4 | Employment | Y |
| 3.2.1 | CRB & SAR | 4 | Employment (with ref in Res.) | |
| 3.3 | References | 8 | Change & Transitions (leaving) | |
| 3.4 | Devotions | 1 | Engagement (spiritual nurture) | |
| 3.5 | Probationary Period | 4 | Employment (joining & orientation) | |

| | Current Policy | | New Structure | Significant Review |
|------------|--|----------|---|--------------------|
| 3.5.1 | Conduct during probationary period | 4 | Employment (joining & orientation) | |
| 3.6 | Capability | 5 | Performance | |
| 3.7 | Salary Management | 6 | Reward (Salary) | |
| 3.7.1 | Salary Administration | 6 | Reward (Salary) | |
| 3.8 | Staff Loans & Salary Advances | 6 | Reward (Salary) | |
| 3.9 | Conflict of Interest | 5 | Performance | |
| 3.10 | Trade Unions | 1 | Engagement | |
| 3.11 | SCC | 1 | Engagement | |
| 3.11.1 | SCC Terms of Reference | 1 | Engagement | |
| 4 | Attendance | | | |
| 4.1 – 4.21 | Various time related policies | 4 | Employment (working time) | Y |
| 4.22 | Temporary Workers Policy | 3 | Resourcing (contracts mgt) | |
| 5 | Conduct | 5 | Performance | |
| | (all sections) | | | |
| 6 | Communications | | | |
| 6.1 | Data Protection Policy (Personnel Records & confidentiality statement) | 4 | Employment – data protection | Y |
| 6.2 | Data Security | IT 8 | Mostly IT Change & Transitions - leavers | |
| 6.3 | Computer Equipment | IT | | |
| 6.4 | IT Confidentiality | IT | | |
| 6.5 | IT Confidentiality Agreement | IT | | |
| 6.6 | Internet & Email | IT | | |
| 6.7 | Internet & Email Agreement | IT | (link from 5 – Performance) | |
| 6.8 | Telephones | 4 | 5 – Performance | |
| 6.9 | Mobile telephones | 4 | 5 – Performance | |
| 7.0 | WVUK IT Internal SLA | IT | | |
| 7.1 | Email Signature & WVUK | IT | | |

| | Current Policy | | New Structure | Significant Review |
|-----------|--|----------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| | Disclosure | | | |
| 7 | Health & Safety | 1 | Engagement (Wellbeing) | |
| | (All sections) | | | |
| 8 | Learning & Development | 7 | Development | |
| | (all sections) | | | |
| 9 | Staff Benefits | | | |
| | (9.1 – 9.8 and 9.12) | 6 | Reward | |
| 9.10 | Study Leave | 4 | Employment – working time | |
| 9.11 | Leave of Absence | 4. | Employment – working time | |
| 10 | Expenses | | | |
| | All sections | 4 | Employment | |
| 11 | Other Policies | | | |
| 11.1 | Employment of Relatives | 3 | Resourcing | |
| 11.2 | Office Aesthetics | CS | | |
| 11.3 | Redundancy | 8 | Change & Transitions | |
| 11.4 | Temporary & Agency Workers | 3 | Resourcing | |
| 11.5 | Volunteers | 3 | Resourcing | |
| 11.6 | Appointments | 3 | Resourcing | |
| 11.7 | Retirement | 8 | Change & Transitions | |
| 11.8 | Overseas Travel | 5 | Employment – International Travel | Y |
| 11.8.1 | Overseas Travel – Staff Field Visits – Personal Debriefing | 5 | Employment – International Travel | |
| 11.9 | Overseas Travel – General | 5 | Employment – International Travel | |
| 11.10 | Kidnapping & Hostage Taking | 5 | Employment | |