

## **VOLUNTEER POLICY FOR ENGINEERS WITHOUT BORDERS DENMARK**

### **Background**

The reason for formulating a volunteer policy for Engineers Without Borders (EWB-DK) is that volunteers constitute the core of EWB-DK's work in Denmark and abroad. Therefore, it is important to have a tool that defines the framework for voluntary work and ensures mutual expectations between the volunteer and EWB-DK.

The volunteer policy applies to all volunteers in EWB-DK and has been developed through dialogue with volunteers in local groups and EWB-DK's board based on dialogue and experiences from past practices since the founding of EWB-DK Denmark in 2001.

### **Definition of a Volunteer in EWB-DK**

A volunteer in EWB-DK is a person who provides an unpaid and competent contribution to support EWB-DK's mission and activities. Being a volunteer in EWB-DK means being an active member—membership in the organization is a fundamental requirement for voluntary work in EWB-DK.

Volunteers work based on EWB-DK's vision to support vulnerable groups through technical, sustainable, and local solutions; carry out development and emergency aid work; and create and share knowledge and skills for working in a global development context. Volunteers in EWB-DK are categorized based on different levels of responsibility and commitment:

1. Members who take on political-organizational roles in EWB-DK's working board.
2. Members who commit to professional and organizational responsibilities, e.g., as project managers.
3. Members who contribute on an ad-hoc basis to solving specific technical, organizational, communicative, and practical tasks.

### **EWB-DK's Work and Volunteer Activities**

The tasks performed by volunteers in EWB-DK cannot and should not replace the obligations of states. EWB-DK contributes to solving tasks from a humanitarian perspective as a supplement to state responsibilities in covering basic human and material needs.

EWB-DK is and will remain politically neutral but contributes to the development of local communities by delivering technical-humanitarian solutions and inspiring improvements for people in vulnerable situations.

Volunteers cannot perform tasks that contradict the organization's goals and guidelines. Some volunteers take on roles and unpaid commitments to assume responsibilities and tasks that, elsewhere, are performed by paid employees. These include technical expertise, project management responsibilities, and development-related work, such as serving as project managers and executing technical tasks in development, implementation, and monitoring.

Voluntary work in EWB-DK cannot be assigned or mandated by public authorities. The voluntary efforts of members are the foundation of EWB-DK's operations.

EWB-DK assists and collaborates with local and Danish authorities engaged in development, humanitarian, and emergency response tasks. EWB-DK participates in the execution of development, humanitarian, emergency, and educational activities either alone or in collaboration with local authorities, organizations, or associations in the countries where EWB-DK operates.

EWB-DK always works in respect of human rights, environmental conventions, and principles of transparency and accountability.

### **EWB-DK in Denmark**

EWB-DK's General Assembly and Board determine the priorities and tasks the organization will allocate resources to, in accordance with the organization's strategy. Based on this, agreements may be made with public authorities or other partners for cooperation on projects and specific tasks.

EWB-DK can undertake professional assignments that require paid personnel in addition to delegating responsibilities to volunteers for the development, management, and execution of tasks.

### **Quality Assurance**

The overall framework for volunteer qualifications is determined by the respective competent bodies within EWB-DK's organization, in collaboration with the Project Supervision Group (PSG) and the Secretariat's Director (General Secretary). Active volunteers are organized into thematic networks and project groups.

Board members and other members are also associated with various groups, such as fundraising, communication, finance, IT, membership, and local chapters. It is encouraged that groups and local chapters annually discuss, preferably at the first meeting after the General Assembly, how they will contribute to maintaining motivation and quality in volunteer work and adhering to the content of the volunteer policy.

### **Recruitment Criteria**

EWB-DK adheres to principles of non-discrimination. This also applies to individuals engaged in volunteer work. Therefore, EWB-DK is open to everyone who wishes to contribute voluntarily within the organization's established purposes and frameworks.

EWB-DK is non-discriminatory and strives to be inclusive in its recruitment practices. The organization plans its recruitment and activities to ensure that individuals with diverse skills and experiences can participate in its work.

EWB-DK recruits volunteers in alignment with its mission, with the primary goal of addressing technical humanitarian and development needs for the world's poorest populations.

### **Responsibilities and Expectations for Volunteers and EWB-DK Leadership**

Volunteers in EWB-DK have certain rights, but they also assume responsibilities within the organization. At the same time, EWB-DK's leadership (Board) is responsible for ensuring optimal conditions for volunteer work.

It is a requirement that individuals contributing to EWB-DK's work and participating in thematic groups and project groups be members of EWB-DK. Those contributing on an ad-hoc basis are also encouraged to become members to ensure they receive ongoing information about EWB-DK's work and opportunities to contribute. The Board may, in exceptional cases, decide on participation in voluntary work without membership in EWB-DK.

For long-term assignments and deployments, a "Volunteer Agreement" or, for students, an "Internship Agreement" must be completed and signed by all volunteers as the basis for cooperation. The agreement must at least include a general job description/Terms of Reference as well as personal data on the volunteer. In the case of deployment, information about emergency contacts should be included. Reference is made to the Project Management Manual. Additional details on specific tasks and agreements on the duration and scope of the work may be added as needed.

### **Policy on Documentation and Communication, including Photos and Videos**

To continue developing as an organization and attract volunteers, members, and donors, communication of results through relevant storytelling is essential.

Personal stories from volunteers and partners at home and abroad are crucial components. Volunteers contribute as writers and photographers for stories used in EWB-DK's media and other platforms.

When volunteers conduct interviews, take photos, or record videos, they must ensure a mutual understanding and clear agreements on how the content may be used and on which platforms. Photos and video recordings of daily life in local communities help make EWB-DK's communication more engaging and contextualize projects. Volunteers must always ask for permission before photographing or filming and show respect for local culture and privacy. Written agreements are not required, but EWB-DK retains full and unrestricted rights to use the material.

### **Welcoming and Introducing Volunteers**

When volunteers contact EWB-DK, the following steps apply:

- Volunteers will be warmly welcomed and invited to an information meeting to clarify expectations and possibilities for engagement.
- Volunteers will receive the necessary introduction to tasks and knowledge about what is expected in their respective roles.
- Volunteers will be informed about who is responsible for the specific activity/project and who can provide guidance or resolve issues.
- Volunteering comes with obligations since EWB-DK makes commitments to local communities to improve living conditions, which must be fulfilled with maximum quality and timeliness.

*The Secretariat is responsible for:*

- Responding to inquiries as quickly as possible and inviting new volunteers to an information meeting.
- Offering relevant introductions and explaining the framework for volunteering in EWB-DK.
- Ensuring that each project group or thematic network has someone qualified to involve, instruct, and guide new volunteers.
- Ensuring that volunteers are informed about EWB-DK's strategy, history, principles, structure, and decision-making processes.

## **Division of Responsibilities and Tasks in Relation to Voluntary Work in EWB-DK**

*Volunteers Have the Opportunity To:*

- Develop personally and professionally while experiencing the joy of helping others.
- Receive feedback on task execution to improve future performance.
- Express their opinions, participate in EWB-DK's organization, and contribute to the development of EWB-DK's work.
- Have costs related to their tasks covered in accordance with EWB-DK's regulations.

*EWB-DK's Organization Is Responsible For:*

- Maintaining volunteer engagement through regular dialogue and appreciation of efforts while being mindful of opportunities to delegate tasks that help retain and include other volunteers.
- Creating opportunities for volunteers to develop and enhance their personal and professional qualifications.
- Being open to changes in work methods and adapting tasks to accommodate new volunteers.
- Ensuring that volunteers are informed about the rules, frameworks, and responsibilities associated with their tasks.
- Following up on volunteers' work and ensuring that tasks are carried out according to the board's directives.
- Communicating opportunities and motivating volunteers to participate in meetings.

*EWB-DK's Board Is Responsible For:*

- Ensuring the financial foundation for voluntary work and establishing rules regarding reimbursement of expenses related to volunteer activities (refer to EWB-DK's travel guidelines).
- Ensuring a safe and secure working environment, including efforts to prevent accidents and safety risks during missions.
- Providing insurance coverage for all volunteers and informing them about available assistance in case of accidents or severe incidents related to their work.
- Monitoring the use of grants and intervening if there are signs of irregularities.
- Covering financial costs and insurance related to deployments.
- Obtaining child protection certificates for volunteers involved in projects or activities involving children.

*EWB-DK Groups:*

- Are obligated to seek an amicable resolution to conflicts between volunteers, possibly with the assistance of the Board/Secretariat.
- Must immediately address and handle any misuse of EWB-DK's name, logo, or funds in accordance with the statutes and EWB-DK's anti-corruption policy.

*Volunteers Are Responsible For:*

- Understanding the foundation of EWB-DK's work, vision, and mission, as well as the organization and decision-making processes.
- Positively contributing to EWB-DK's reputation both locally and internationally in relation to partners and local authorities.
- Taking responsibility and independently performing tasks in accordance with EWB-DK's guidelines and following assigned instructions and rules.
- Engaging with local communities with respect for their knowledge, needs, and requests for assistance.
- Contacting the responsible project manager or EWB-DK's General Secretary if problems arise.
- Participating in meetings, events, and training sessions necessary for carrying out their role.
- Managing entrusted funds in accordance with the allocated purpose and ensuring proper documentation and reporting.
- Meeting others with respect and dignity. Volunteers are expected to recognize mutual acknowledgment of knowledge and skills while understanding the framework of their role and their competencies.