Safety & Security

Handbook

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Vision:
Community living in harmony with God, one another and environment

Mission:
We seek to serve, care and work with the poor and the oppressed to promote peace, justice and transformation
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As we are living in an era of uncertainty, strive and terrorism, staff safety and security is a priority for NEICORD. Though, ensuring absolute safety of staff is not simply possible, yet we can develop staff safety and security preparedness plan for staff to reduce risk while on tour and on duty outside the office. This preparedness plan is developed for information and use of all NEICORD staff and its partners who are repeatedly on tour to different locations and highly sensitive areas. As we depend on God for our safety, we would also like to act with forethought and discernment in all our dealings.

Charles Rogers, WVI stated that “we are the stewards of the resources God has made available for our ministry to the poor. And the most valuable of God’s resources are people”. It is therefore, essential that utmost care is taken for the safety of God’s children in our ministry.

Through proper use of this information, I believe that security of NEICORD staff who carry out ministry in difficult and sometimes in dangerous situations would be greatly reduced. It is my prayer that God’s protection and guidance would follow all the users of this information.

The Author
"Security requires more than just insure staff and locking doors properly". Good security starts with proactively shaping a local community’s perception of NEICORD & its staff. A carefully shaped, positive security profile is like having an invisible fortress that wards off harm. A negative security profile can act as a magnet for hostility and violence.

a. NEICORD staff should always maintain neutrality at the micro, macro and meso level. There should not be any leaning towards any political or non-political groups.

b. NEICORD staff should obey local laws at all times. As much as possible, staff should avoid transacting business or carrying on personal relationships with those suspected of violating local laws. Doing so can negatively affect the reputation of NEICORD in the local area and increase the risk for NEICORD staff.

c. If the community or the government agency clearly understands our purpose through our lifestyle and good works, they can actually become part of NEICORD’s security network.
d. In many areas and in some cases, preserving a quiet, low-key presence is the best.

e. Effectively communicating NEICORD impartiality and low profile to the local community and the state and local government

f. Consider using local media to constructively shape the NEICORD profile, by inviting them in some distribution programs. Staff must explain to them carefully what we do, why we do and how we do.

g. Properly networking and maintaining cordial relationship with micro, macro and meso authorities

h. NEICORD staff should be an active member of a church in her/his locality
2 PERSONAL CONDUCT

a. NEICORD staff must not engage in conduct that interferes with operations, discredits NEICORD or is offensive to co-workers, donors, beneficiaries, vendors or visitors. NEICORD staff must avoid conduct that may lead to their becoming a victim of a security incident. Personnel should avoid lack of sleep, poor stress management and drug or alcohol abuse since they can impair judgement and the ability to react appropriately in a potential safety or security incident.

b. Avoid lone working, handling big cash, late-night working at the office, access to commercially sensitive information.

c. NEICORD staff will always adhere to the local laws and sensitive to the local beliefs and culture.
3  SAFETY WHILE TRAVELLING

a. More than half of all security incidents occur during travels. Hence, utmost care should be taken while on tour.

b. If there is any indication of significantly increased risk along your intended route, do not travel.

c. Dress sensibly, with no valuables in sight, and should appear yourself simple and smart

d. Avoid travelling with gold rings and necklaces

e. Avoid travelling with expensive equipment like (laptop, etc) unless extremely essential

f. Carry a list of emergency names, addresses and phone numbers.

g. Do not accept sweets or drinks from strangers or you may wake up several hours later minus all your belongings

h. Take only licensed taxis and discuss the fare before you get in

i. Cash/travel advance should be kept securely

j. Never proceed if there is bandh, hartal or communal tension in your intended route

k. If you are stranded in unknown place due to vehicle breakdown or due to bandh, enquire
for the local pastor or church leaders to assist you. If this happen in a non Christian areas, enquire for village elders, or government employees who are reliable. Ask for assistant and for your stay

l. Always plan to travel light

m. Make sure that travel require documents are available with you

n. Avoid travelling with unnecessary additional personal belongings

o. Always orient yourself about the hotel services, systems and practices after you have check-in

p. Never leave your belongings unattended

q. Never hitchhike or accept a ride from strangers

r. Always travel with your ID card

s. Cash should be kept in a secure pocket separately. Keep only few cash for emergency use in the wallet

t. In case of delayed arrival, inform office and home about your expected time

u. Avoid opening or touching unknown box, parcel, cartoon box, bags and other containers
4 SAFETY IN VEHICLES

a. NEICORD vehicles must be checked and maintained on a daily basis.

b. Ensure availability of complete vehicle document

c. Have all travel documents in order before the travel

d. Observe local driving laws and regulations. Fill out the vehicle log after each use.

e. Avoid night driving as far as possible

f. Always travel with at least one other person

g. Ensure sufficient fuel in the vehicle considering the distance

h. Never carry unauthorised passengers, especially unknown people.

i. Never allow others to drive NEICORD vehicle

j. Never give into army or militants when they approach you for your vehicle. Always negotiate and refuse politely
k. If the vehicle is taken by force, report the matter to the police and to the Head Office immediately.

l. Avoid rash driving. Use vehicles sparingly and caringly.

m. Avoid using mobile while driving, in case of emergency call ask someone who is in the car to receive or park the car and make the call

n. In case of accident, report the details of injury of the passengers and the extent of damage cause to the vehicle

o. Contact the Head office to connect you to with the nearest hospital
5 ASSETS SAFETY

All the assets that we have in NEICORD are the resources God has made available for our ministry to the poor. We should attempt to be a good steward to all the assets.

a. All NEICORD assets should be numbered and locations marked in the inventory records

b. All NEICORD assets should be insured and updated regularly by Administration Manager/department

c. Electrical wiring in all the offices should be checked and certified by a qualified electrician under the direct supervision of the Administration Manager/department

d. Fire extinguisher should be kept in the office for emergency use

e. All electrical equipment should be properly switch off before office closure
   • FIR should be lodged immediately in case of theft.
   • Assets should be properly maintained and managed

f. Regular anti termite treatment should be undertaken for all files and documents

g. Regular cleaning and spraying of anti termite in all the store rooms to be undertaken
6 EVACUATION PLAN

The circumstances that require an evacuation of staff and their dependant can include mounting terrorist activities and threats, insurrections and other civil orders, or sudden crisis such as a collapsed political situation or a natural disaster that poses a serious hazard. This plan will be enforced in any of the field offices or in the head office when such situation arises. An evacuation may also affect the public image of NEICORD. It is therefore, essential to provide a statement for the media, explaining the rationale for the relocation of staff. The following steps should be carefully noted and planned when evacuation of staff is imminent.

a. Identify which documents should be taken and which will be destroyed

b. Identify documents which will be needed to re establish operations once you go back

c. Identify potential locations where staff and dependant to assemble

d. Provide an update list of staff and dependant to Head Office

e. Decide on the easiest and safest mode of transportation.

f. Take inventory of NEICORD office equipment and assets
g. Identify church campus and Christian institutions where assets can be left behind

h. To inform the head office immediately when such situation arises

i. This final decision has to be made by the Executive Director
HOSTAGE & HIJACK SITUATION

As a policy NEICORD cannot pay ransom to any group or organisation but will use all an appropriate means to secure the release of the hostages. The following steps should be taken carefully while initiating dialogue:

a. Inform the concern Manager/Director/ head office immediately

b. Identify the hostage taking party and their demands

c. Identify the hostages taken and their conditions

d. Attempt to communicate with the hostages. If successful, ask them to be calm, composed and not to speak unless ask

e. Establish 24- hour communication with the Manager and the Executive Director, if possible

f. Increase security measures and communications with remaining staff

g. Do not divulge details of the hostage situation to the media. Only field Management/in charge should communicate with the media
h. Identify local influential people and community to mediate on your behalf

i. Do not have any direct talk or dialogue with any militant groups

j. Be calm, composed and co-operative to the party

k. Do not speak unless spoken to

l. Do not allow your mobile phone to be used by your abductors. They may use it for sinister plans

m. Never whisper with a colleague(s)

n. Do not offer suggestions

o. Do not argue. Listen well

p. Do not make sudden movements. Ask first.

q. Be patient and try to rest

r. Do not believe everything you are told
SHOOTING AND CROSSFIRE SITUATION

a. When you hear gunfire while on foot; lay flat, face down immediately

b. Stay calm. Do not panic. Never attempt to run

c. If possible, improve your protection by crawling to a ditch/hole, behind a wall or inside a building

d. Leave the scene only after the firing has ceased

e. If you are inside a house, keep clear of windows and doors

f. Always observe the reaction of the local people.

g. If you are caught inside a house, remained calm and never venture out until the firing has ceased

h. Inform your where about and clear location to your office immediately

i. Do not let your cell phone ring while in such situation
Before an earthquake:

a. Follow and advocate local safe building codes for earthquake resistant construction.

b. Follow and advocate upgrading poorly built structures.

c. Make plan and preparation for emergency relief.

d. Identify the medical centres, fire fighting stations, police posts and organise relief society of your area.

e. Know the electric and water shut off locations in your house.

f. Heavy objects, glasses, cutlery should be kept in lower shelves.

g. Flower pots should not be kept on the parapet.

h. Keep the contact numbers of the state disaster management office.

i. Contact number of volunteers to be kept

j. Basic disaster preparedness and management should be taught to strategically located church and project partners
**During an earthquake:**

a. Keep calm and reassure others.

b. During the event, the safest place is an open space, away from buildings.

c. If you are indoors, take cover under a desk, table, bed or doorways and against inside walls and staircase. Stay away from glass doors, glass panes, windows or outside doors. Do not rush to go out of the building, to avoid stampede.

d. If you are outside, move away from buildings and utility wires.

e. Once in the open, stay there till the vibrations stops.

f. If you are in a moving vehicle, stop as quickly as possible and stay in the vehicle.

g. Free all pets and domestic animals so that they can run outside.

h. Do not use candles, matches or other open flames. Put out all fires.
After an earthquake:

a. Keep stock of drinking water, foodstuff and first-aid equipment in accessible place.

b. Do not spread and believe rumours.

c. Turn on your transistor or television to get the latest information/bulletins and aftershock warnings.

d. Provide help to others and develop confidence.

e. Attend the injured persons and give them aid, whatever is possible and also inform hospital.

f. Be prepared for aftershocks as these may strike.

g. Close the valve of kitchen gas stove, if it is on. If it is closed, do not open. Do not use open flames.

h. Do not operate electric switches or appliances, if gas leaks are suspected.

i. Check water pipes, electric lines and fittings. If damaged, shut off the main valves. Do not touch live wires of electricity.

j. If needed, open doors and cup boards carefully as objects may fall.
Floods are the most common and destructive natural hazards causing extensive damages infrastructure, environment, the economy and devastation to human settlements in low land areas. Flooding need not necessarily become a disaster, if we are well prepared and are aware of how to deal with it on time. Preparedness plan would greatly reduce the loss of life and minimize human suffering.

There are two different ways to mitigate floods- (i) Structural and (ii) non-structural. Structural measures are in the nature of physical measures and help in ‘modifying the floods’, where as the non-structural measures are in the nature of planning and help in ‘modifying the losses due to flooding’

**Structural measures:**

a. Embankments have been extensively used for protection against floods. And embankment is also the best means of communication in the flood prone areas. It is also used for temporary shelter for displace people and livestock

b. Water shed management, including timely cleaning, de-silting and deepening of natural water reservoir and drainage channels must be taken
c. The entire natural water reservoir should be cleaned on a regular basis

d. Construction and protection of all the flood embankments, ring bunds and other bunds should be ensured

e. The buildings in the flood prone areas should be constructed on an elevated areas and if necessary on stilts and platforms

**Non-structure measures:**

a. Flood plain zoning, which places restrictions on the use of land on flood plains can reduce the cost of flood damage

b. Flood forecasting and warning should be release in advance ie 72hrs, 48hrs and 24hrs by the Central Water commission or Meteorological department

c. Flood forecasting and warning systems should be modernize to minimize and reduce the loss of life and properties.
Preparedness before flooding:

a. Know the route to the nearest safe shelter
b. Activate early warning system
c. Raise furniture, appliances on beds and tables
d. Pack clothing, valuables and personal papers, etc in waterproof bags
e. Encourage elevated house structures made of bamboo and wood
f. Prepare volunteers and trained them on evacuation plan
g. Keep First Aid Kit ready with extra medication
h. Umbrella, raincoat and bamboo sticks to protect from rain, sun burn and snakes
i. Stock fresh water, dry fruits, kerosene, candles and matchbox
j. Identify higher ground for livestock safe keeping
k. Country boats, plank boat, banana stem boats should be kept ready for evacuation
l. A radio or portable loudspeakers and spare batteries should be kept ready
During flood:

a. Avoid panic

b. Lock your house and put sandbags in the toilet bowls

c. Do not get into water of unknown depth and current

d. Watch for warning and advice

e. Check your emergency kit

f. Guide and rescue people to higher land for safe shelter

g. Basic and emergency needs to be taken by each family

h. Immediate medical response

i. Use bleaching powder and lime to disinfect the surroundings

j. Keep food and all food materials covered

k. Use Halogen tablet to purify water for drinking

l. Emergency / temporary shelter

m. Avoid direct exposure to the sun of all children

n. Use of temporary boats for floatation and evacuation purpose
After flood:

a. Do not eat food which has been in flood water

b. Be careful of snake bites and poisonous insect bites

c. Immediate assess of loss of lives, properties

d. Type of water borne diseases to identify

e. Control of disease outbreak, conduct of medical camps

f. Immediate relief response

g. Water level assessment and flood scenario

h. Correct and timely information to media

i. Resettlement and rehabilitation