



Anti-Corruption Policy

Version 3

July 25, 2022

I. Policy Statement

The EQMM Anti- Corruption Policy is a living document that reinforces EQMM human rights-based principles and values. This document is a work in progress, bearing in mind EQMM’s practice of consultations, meetings, and one-on-one engagement with the staff from different levels of the organizational structure. This policy has been strongly informed by an interactive process involving staff members participating in defining and discussing corruption, cultural understanding, tolerance, and effective remedies. The purpose of this policy is to outline our three-pronged approach to addressing corruption through awareness, prevention, and solutions, creating a culture of transparency and accountability.

We deal with corruption on a regular basis regardless of whether we want to engage in this practice. Corruption has become widespread and commonplace but is not in line with the core values and principles of our culture. We believe that corruption is an act of dishonesty and is not a good practice for the promotion and protection of human rights. Corruption actively undermines the legitimacy of many components of society necessary to ensure a genuine democracy, such as a fair legal system, accountable armed forces, and a transparent private sector. As a result, corruption contributes to destroying people’s trust, participation, and perception of the social and political arena. At the organizational level, we believe that corruption is unethical because it violates rules and principles of the organization for personal benefit. Bad practices in an organization feed corruption, and as it grows it becomes more difficult to handle and address. We are aware that it can be difficult to classify acts of corruption and believe that having a clear anti-corruption policy is important for the promotion of best practices in the organization.

We EQMM employees adhere to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption. ¹Affirming our commitment to reinforce the EQMM Code of Ethics, “A living document that represents values, which are deeply, rooted in human rights principles...” as follows:

Article 4, “We will be honest and responsible about how we use EQMM resources, being modest in spending EQMM resources bearing in mind that our organizational way of life should adhere to the human rights practices and good governance.”

Article 5, “We will never steal, misuse or misappropriate funds or property, ensuring that financial and other resources are used solely for the intended purposes.”

Article 6, “We strictly prohibit soliciting or accepting bribes, gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary or otherwise value from suppliers, contractors, or parties to sub-agreements.”

Article 7, “We will avoid and disclose any potential conflict of interest that might influence personal action or judgment e.g., abuse of power, favoritism, nepotism, etc.”

Recalling our position to the principles of Accountability in our Code of Ethics:

“EQMM will maintain a strong governance structure that promotes and ensures a high level of

accountability, ensuring transparency and responsibility at all levels of our organization with our financial management and with our donor organizations and rights holders. To ensure accountability to our stakeholders.”

II. Defining Corruption

EQMM, through an inclusive consultative process, has chosen to adopt Transparency International’s definition of corruption, namely that corruption is “the abuse of entrusted power for private gain”.² Corruption occurs in many forms. Our organization has created policies and SOPs designed to prevent and combat the most common forms of corruption including:

- Bribery: When someone provides goods or services against some form of improper compensation, for example facilitation payments*.
- Kickback: A form of bribery, where someone involved in a purchasing process is getting a reward from the supplier for placing an order of goods or services.
- Embezzlement: Theft of resources for one’s own use.
- Evidence destruction: Irregular destruction, removal, or abuse of records.
- Extortion: The act of obtaining something by force, threats, or undue demands.
- Favoritism: The unfair favoring of one person or a group at the expense of others (includes nepotism which is favoritism shown to relatives).
- Knowingly omitting to report corrupt acts: Deliberately omitting or refusing to report or act upon reports of any such irregular or dishonest conduct.
- Maladministration: Maladministration or financial misconduct in handling or reporting of money, financial transactions, or other assets

***Facilitation Payments:**

In the process of collecting input for this Anti-corruption policy, it has come to EQMM’s attention that one issue of particular concern is the use of facilitation payments. For this reason, we feel that it is important to clarify and define this act.

Facilitation Payment Definition: an informal payment made to someone to gain authorization, approval or to speed up a process; the service or action provided in return for a facilitation payment is one that does not officially or legally require payment (i.e., it is the person’s job/ double compensation).

This commonly occurs when trying to secure permission from local authorities to hold events, training, workshops etc. While the size of this problem is not fully understood, EQMM recognizes that this is a common practice in many different sectors which can assist in speeding up the often-lengthy process of securing authorization. EQMM wants to emphasize that this is still a form of corruption that requires greater understanding, and that we will work to mitigate

Facilitation Payment Procedure: After successfully implementing a 9-month pilot procedure regarding facilitation payments, EQMM will now enforce **a zero-tolerance** policy regarding all future facilitation payments, in accordance with the **EQMM’s Complaints and Incidents**

Response Mechanism policy.

III. Prevention and Enforcement

Anti-corruption initiatives undertaken by EQMM that focus on prevention include:

A. Training and Awareness Raising

Including annual in-house anti-corruption trainings and workshops.

B. Policies and Procedures

Equality Myanmar has created a variety of policies and procedures that contain important elements of anti-corruption prevention including transparency, segregation of duties and automation.

Existing Systems, policies and procedure designed to minimize corruption are:

1. Code of Ethics
2. Procurement policy
3. Human Resources policies and procedures manual
4. Cash grant guideline
5. Finance and accounting policies and procedures
6. Guideline for a use of cash providers and hundi
7. Guideline for protection funds support to Human Rights Defenders and Their Dependents
8. Sub Grant Financial Support Guideline
9. Program implementation plans to ensure donor funds are not misappropriated including work plans, reporting guidelines, and M&E plans

C. Alerting, reporting and investigation

Confidentiality: The name and identity of the whistle blower (person bringing the complaint forward) will be kept strictly confidential between the complainant and the person receiving the complaint.

Any employee who feels they have witnessed an act of corruption, or have information related to an act of corruption should report in the accordance with **the EQMM's Complaints and Incidents Response Mechanism policy.**

D. Employee's obligation

All of Equality Myanmar employee must obligate to follow this anti-corruption policy and report breaches of the policy. The staff must sign this policy when the new staff is recruited, or employment contract is renewed.

As an EQMM employee, I am obligated to follow this anti-corruption policy and report breaches of the policy. I will not engage in acts of corruption including, but not limited to bribery, kickbacks, embezzlement, favoritism, failure to report, evidence destruction, maladministration, and extortion. All corruption incidents must be reported through the complaints and incidents response mechanism. The complaint will be handled confidentially and with great respect for the complainant and the persons/ organizations the complaint is directed at. I understand that any breach of the Anti- Corruption Policy is a violation of my obligations and may lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal, legal action, and/or criminal investigation and prosecution.

Signature:	
Date:	
Name:	
Position:	

