

# **RULES OF CONDUCT AND USE OF ELECTRONIC RESOURCES**

**21 July 2011**

## **Introduction**

This document sets out the principles governing access to and use of Village Exchange International/Ghana (referred to in this document as “VEG”) electronic communications, data storage, retrieval equipment; hence referred to in this document as “the equipment”, and software. This includes, but is not limited to:

- a. the telephone equipment and system (including fax machines and mobile telephones);
- b. the VEG document management environment, such as the word processing system;
- c. the VEG e-mail system;
- d. the VEG Intranet (network);
- e. the VEG Internet capability (including e-mails sent via the Internet);
- f. all supporting and backup equipment, such as server, cabling, LAN, and other hardware.

## **Application**

The principles set out in this document add to the principles and rules already established in the Staff Regulations and Conditions of Service.

All staff members, consultants, volunteer and service-providers with access to this equipment, services, and software must observe these principles. They automatically apply to all staff members. All others will be required to acknowledge in writing that they will be bound by these principles before being granted access to this equipment, services, and software.

## **Principles**

### **1. Ownership**

It is important to remember that the equipment and software are the property of VEG, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) or Entrepreneurs du Monde (EdM).

### **2. Access**

VEG has established protocols for access to some types of software, and has assigned access codes to ensure compliance with these protocols, for ex. the LPF or the Access softwares. Your access code, or "User ID", grants specifically approved access and identifies who is using them. If you have been assigned an access code or a "User ID", you may not share it with anyone.

You are presumed to be the only person using your access code or "User ID" and therefore you are accountable for all activities based on use of your access code or "User ID". You may only access the equipment and software you are authorized to access.

### **3. VEG-related Activities Only**

VEG has put in place sufficient equipment and software to ensure the proper conduct of VEG business. The VEG equipment and software does not have unlimited capacity. It is expensive to maintain and the running costs are significant. The VEG equipment and software are to be used for official VEG-related activities only.

#### 4. Limited Personal Use Exception

However, staff members are welcome to make personal use of the Organization's equipment and software as long as this is kept to a minimum and is also within the principles set out below. It is important to note that VEG accepts no responsibility in connection with your personal use of the Organization's equipment and software.

Consultants and volunteers working with VEG are also welcome to make personal use of the Organization's equipment and software, on the same terms below; but because consultants are generally engaged on an hourly basis, anything more than an absolute minimum amount of use will lead to a review of a consultant's terms of engagement.

Service-providers are generally not to make personal use of the Organization's equipment or software without prior permission of the staff member responsible for engaging them.

More particularly:

- a. Personal use must be kept to a minimum. Personal use is not to interfere with getting your job -- or anyone else's -- done properly and in a timely manner.
- b. Personal use simply for entertainment is not permitted. Frequent or extended "Web-surfing" unrelated to VEG's business, for example Facebook or any other social network, is not permitted. The VEG Internet equipment or software is not to be used for streaming audio/video facilities for entertainment purposes, or for participation in Web-based games or competitions.
- c. Personal use is not to include the conduct of personal commercial activities. In particular, stock or other investment trading using VEG's electronic equipment or software is not permitted. Selling or trading merchandise is not permitted. Participation in online auctions, such as Ebay, is also prohibited. Limited use for personal matters such as the payment of bills when on duty travel is authorized.
- d. Use of VEG-assigned ID to register with or join online groups, services or memberships unrelated to VEG's work, is not permitted. Participation in chat rooms or discussions groups unrelated to VEG business is also not permitted.
- e. Personal use must not be incompatible with the Staff Regulations and Conditions of Service. Thus, activities that are inappropriate or offensive or would bring the organization into disrepute are strictly prohibited. This applies to all VEG equipment and software, including in particular the Internet. Users are not permitted to use the VEG equipment and software to post messages on any Internet site relating in any way to VEG and its activities. It should not be necessary to spell out detailed examples of such prohibited activities, as all staff, consultants and volunteers should share the Organization's commitment to high moral standards. However, the following are set out simply as a non-exhaustive list of examples:

- sexually explicit messages, or similarly objectionable images, cartoons or jokes;
- unwelcome or harassing propositions;
- obscenity, slander or label;
- ethnic, religious, gender, sexual orientation, or racial slurs;
- promoting particular political or religious beliefs or commentary;
- downloading, without authorization, of any software, including music and video files, such as MP3s;
- using another person's user ID.

f. Personal data, letters, information, etc. are not to be stored on the VEG equipment and software other than in very limited amounts and only for a short time.

However, staff members must exercise good judgment in limiting to a minimum the use of VEG equipment and software to store personal data, letters, information etc. The VEG equipment and software are not to be used to forward broadcast or any chain e-mails of a private nature.

g. The Organization accepts no responsibility or liability arising out of or in any way connected with any use referred to in section 4, including connection with any losses or penalties incurred in connection with such use. Persons making use of the VEG equipment and software for such purposes are deemed to have acknowledged this provision.

#### 5. No Changes to VEG Equipment or Software

Users are not permitted to augment, change, or modify in any way the VEG equipment and software, or attach additional programmes or equipment. Personal equipment may not be connected to VEG equipment. Non-VEG software may not be loaded onto the VEG equipment.

In exceptional situations, the Executive Director or the Financial Manager may approve these practices. Individuals are also prohibited from creating personal sites on the Internet with VEG systems and or resources.

a. Automatic re-routing from a personal e-mail account to a VEG mail account is prohibited. Automatic re-routing of a non-VEG telephone number to a VEG telephone number is prohibited.

b. Prior written approval of the Executive Director or the Financial Manager is required for the installation of any modem equipment. Use of modem equipment is limited to outgoing calls only. Under no circumstances may modems or modem like equipment be utilized to receive incoming calls.

c. Only authorized individuals may access, modify, interconnect with and/or troubleshoot VEG's voice communication systems and/or other devices, which may be connected to or used in the support of the telecommunications environment.

#### 6. Privacy

VEG monitors the use of this equipment and software for management purposes, and to ensure that these principles are being observed. In addition, VEG may examine any and all stored information resident on its systems and networks.

Systems owned and/or controlled by VEG can be accessed at all times through VEG's maintenance, upgrades or any other business. In the course of their duties, system operators, managers and auditors may monitor or review the contents of stored, accessed or transmitted data. Information derived from monitoring may be used to further the course of an official investigation or as the basis for disciplinary proceeding in accordance with the Staff Regulations and Conditions of Service, or under contractual arrangements with consultants or volunteers. Accordingly, staff members, consultants and volunteers should have no expectation of privacy or confidentiality for their individual use of, or for content processed through, this equipment or software. In this connection, it is noted that staff members are expected to respond fully to requests for information required by the Organization.

#### 7. Speaking on behalf of VEG

As everyone is aware, only certain designated staff members are authorized to speak on behalf of VEG. In relation to the use of VEG's Internet capabilities:

- a. Only users who are previously authorized to speak on behalf of VEG may express opinions that explicitly or implicitly represent VEG in publicly-accessible electronic fora.
- b. Users may not use VEG-provided facilities to participate in transactions, discussion groups, chat rooms or bulletin boards that are not related to official business. Participation in these activities for official use requires the prior approval of the supervisor.
- c. Users may not attach text and/or signatures to Internet postings that purport to take personal responsibility (as opposed to organizational) for the content of the message or posting (i.e., disclaimers).

#### 8. Confidentiality

Except for documents designated "for public use", documents and data belonging to VEG should be labeled as either "confidential" or "for internal use only", and may not be circulated or made available through the Internet without prior authorization from the Executive Director or the Financial Manager.