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Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation & Development

MRRD

Human Resource Policy Handbook (International Contracted Employees)

Effective 1st January, 2008

Approved

MRRD HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY HANDBOOK FOR INTERNATIONAL CONTRACTED STAFF

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Human Resource Policy Handbook

A. ABOUT MRRD

1.0 History

MRRD (Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development) first began as Rural Department Commission under the authority of Ministry of Commerce in 1333 (1954). In 1335 (1956) the Commission became an independent office under the Prime Minister's Office. Later, the name of the commission was changed to "Rural (Dehkada) Directorate" and it came under the authority of Ministry of Interior/Home Affairs in 1345 (1966). The commission was dissolved in 1348 (1969), and its property and personnel was dispersed into different ministries, such as Ministries of Education, Health, and Agriculture. The office was re-established under the name of Rural (Mahal) Development Office in 1349 (1970). After changing its name several times under different authorities, the office was dissolved again in 1363 (1984).

Finally, the Rural Management Office became an independent ministry known as MRRD on 21 Sour (the second month of Afghan year) 1367 (1984). The first office of MRRD was located in Dural Aman Area, District 6 in Kabul City.

When the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan was established in 2002, MRRD was reborn with its new mandate, policies and strategies to promote poverty reduction and social protection in rural Afghanistan. Since then, MRRD has embarked on a vigorous agenda of institutional reform and restructuring to serve the needs of the people of Afghanistan.

2.0 Mission

To ensure the social, economic and political well-being of rural society, especially poor and vulnerable people, through the provision of basic services, strengthening local governance and promoting sustainable livelihoods free from a dependency on illicit poppy cultivation.

3.0 The Core Values

The following core values are guideline principles for the ministry spanning the six strategic themes addresses in this document. In particular, individual freedom and rights, as enshrined in the constitution, are emphasized and understood as the fundamental right of all people, rather than a benefit entitled by the state.

Other overriding principles spanning beyond MRRD include the right to a long and healthy life, to enjoy a decent standard of living, freedom, dignity self-esteem and the respect of others.

MRRD is people focused, upholding the interests of all vulnerable and socially excluded groups within society.

MRRD favors participatory community led approaches

MRRD believes in equitable development

MRRD believes gender equity and equal opportunity

MRRD conduct all activities with honesty, integrity, transparency and accountability

MRRD promotes innovations and creativity

MRRD promotes cooperation, coordination and collaboration with relevant stakeholders

MRRD believes in sustainability and self – reliance

B. INTRODUCTION

1.0 Purpose:

The purpose of the MRRD Human Resources Policy Handbook for international employees is to ensure that:

- All international staff members receive fair and equitable treatment in accordance with the Code of Conduct stated in this policy handbook;
- MRRD is able to continue to attract, motivate and retain high caliber individuals;
- The work environment recognizes the dignity and worth of each international staff member, and creates a climate of mutual respect and understanding.

This document establishes guidelines for the wise management of human resources and the work environment for MRRD in accordance with the Code of Conduct and Personal code policies as stated in Section C below.

2.0 Applicability

The policies and procedures in this document apply to all full-time and part-time international employees of MRRD. Full-time and part-time employment is defined in Section D, 2.0 Employment.

Some policies of this handbook such as Code of Conduct and Personal Code of Conduct as defined in Section C below will also apply to full and part-time international employees who are based in MRRD but are not originally recruited by it as well as short term consultants. Such international employees will be required to sign the Code of Conduct and the Personal Code of Conduct Policy Agreement Notes before starting their work in MRRD.

3.0 Compliance with Afghanistan Laws

This policy handbook has been formulated in the light of relevant current Afghan Laws which have application to it. It is MRRD's policy not to state or maintain any policy that is not in compliance with Labor Law of the Government of Afghanistan in areas where applicable. This Policy Handbook is governed by the current Laws of Government of Afghanistan.

4.0 Administration

The MRRD Human Resources Contracted Staff Department is responsible for the administration of this Human Resources Policy Handbook. Not all situations will be covered by this document. Any unclear statements or subject matter not covered in this policy should be addressed with the Director of the Human Resources Contracted Staff Department.

All MRRD international employees will receive a hard copy of this Human Resource Policy Handbook and training on these policies as part of their orientation to MRRD. International employees are expected to be familiar with and follow the policies and procedures contained in this Handbook. This Handbook will be translated into Pashto and Dari if required for the use of government entities, but the English version will be taken as the final interpretation relating to all matters.

4.1 Revisions

This handbook is effective on 01 July, 2007. This is an evolving document that will be revised and updated periodically. All revisions to this document will be provided to each MRRD international employee in hard copy indicating the new effective date and any policy changes. On an annual basis, MRRD Human Resource Contracted Staff Department may review the HR policies and procedures and recommend changes for consideration and approval by the MRRD Leadership.

4.2 Exceptions

In exceptional or urgent circumstances, an exception to these policies may be considered. The request should be brought to the Director of Human Resources Contracted Staff Department (MRRD) who will forward the issue to the Minister or the relevant Deputy Minister for final decision.

C. ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

1.0 Code of Conduct

Every international employee of MRRD occupies a position of trust. In varying measure, each international employee represents the ministry in his or her relations with others, whether clients, suppliers, other colleagues, governments, or the general public. Whatever the area of activity and whatever the degree of responsibility, MRRD expects each international employee to act in a manner that will enhance its reputation for honesty, integrity and the faithful performance of its undertakings and obligations.

With this in mind, the Leadership of MRRD has adopted the following rules constituting a Code that sets forth the minimum standards of behavior required.

The provisions of this Code, as set forth in Sections 1. 1 to 1.8 below is mandatory and full compliance is expected under all circumstances. The Code affirms the MRRD's commitment to uphold high moral and ethical standards and specifies the basic norms of behavior for all the international employees.

Failure to comply with the Code can have severe consequences for the international employee. MRRD will impose appropriate discipline in accordance to the disciplinary policy as described in Section 12.0 of this handbook including but no limited to termination for violations of the Code.

1.1 MRRD and its international employees shall comply fully with all lawful requirements, domestic and foreign, applicable to the work of the international employee or MRRD

Note: Whenever an international employee is in doubt about the application or interpretation of any legal requirement, he/she should refer the matter to his or her superior who, if necessary, should seek clarification from Human Resources Contracted Staff Department.

1.2 international employees shall not furnish or accept, directly or indirectly, on behalf of MRRD, expensive gifts or provide excessive entertainment or benefit to other persons.

Note: Sometimes international employees may furnish or accept modest gifts, favors and entertainment other than public officials, if all of the following conditions are met:

1. They are not in cash or other negotiable instruments;
2. They cannot reasonably be interpreted as a bribe, payoff or other improper payment and are of nominal value;
3. They are made as a matter of general and accepted business practice;
4. They do not contravene any law and are made in accordance with generally accepted ethical practices;
5. If proper accounting is made; and
6. If subsequently disclosed to the public, their provision would not in any way embarrass the ministry or their recipients.

1.3 All dealings between international employees of MRRD and public officials in Afghanistan or overseas are to be conducted in a manner that will not compromise the integrity or impugn the reputation of any public official or MRRD or its affiliates.

Note: Even the appearance of impropriety in dealing with public officials is improper and unacceptable. Any participation, whether directly or indirectly, in any bribes, kickbacks, illegal gratuities, indirect contributions or similar payments is expressly forbidden. Maintenance of a high standard of integrity is of the utmost importance to MRRD.

1.4 international employees shall not use their employment status to obtain personal gain from those doing or seeking to do business with MRRD.

Note: Except as hereinafter provided, international employees should neither seek nor accept for themselves gifts, payments, services, fees, special advantage, special valuable privileges, pleasure or vacation trips or accommodations or loans from any person (except, in the case of loans, from persons in the business of lending and then only on conventional terms) or from any ministry or group that does, or is seeking to do business with MRRD or any of its affiliates. However, international employees may accept modest gifts, favors or entertainment provided that in so doing, standards consistent with the tests relating to the furnishing of gifts set forth in Section 1.2 above are met.

1.5 international employees must avoid all situations in which their personal interests conflict or might conflict with their duties to MRRD.

Note: international employees should seek to avoid acquiring any interests or participating in any activities that would tend to:

(a) Consume international employee's time required by the contract or this policy to perform his/her duties properly; or

(b) Create an obligation or distraction that would affect their judgment or ability to act solely in the ministry's best interest. In certain instances, ownership or other participation in a competing or complementary enterprise might create or appear to create such a conflict. international employees are required to disclose in writing to their supervisors all business, commercial financial interests or activities that might reasonably be regarded as creating an actual or potential conflict with their duties of employment.

Every international employee of MRRD is required to see that actions taken and decisions made within his or her jurisdiction are free from the influence of any interests that might reasonably be regarded as conflicting with those of MRRD. international employees must act in such a manner that their conduct will bear the closest scrutiny should circumstances demand that it be examined. Not only actual conflicts of interest but also the very appearance of conflict should be avoided.

(c) Every international employee is required to disclose in writing their family relations with other national or international employees working in MRRD in case they (the current international employees) are members of his / her immediate family described in Section D, 1.3. international employees are required to disclose such information as mentioned above upon their hiring. However, if he/she does not disclose this information upon their hiring and Human Resources Department finds out about it during his/her employment with MRRD, it will take appropriate disciplinary actions including verbal warning.

1.6 MRRD considers all its records, reports, papers, plans or proposals as being strictly confidential in nature and international employees are forbidden to reveal this information to individuals or groups apart from the ministry without receiving proper authorization.

Note: MRRD is a part of the government of Afghanistan. It is the practice and belief of the ministry that international employees, private donors and outside funding institutions should have access to normal information concerning the ministry's operations, both programmatic and financial. As a result, it has developed comprehensive and responsible methods of disclosure. However, the ministry maintains as strictly confidential, information that may impair its ability to operate effectively, or which might infringe upon the private rights of individuals, enterprises or institutions. international employees are therefore prohibited from divulging confidential information to anyone, except as required in the performance of their duties, without receiving prior authorization. Whenever an international employee is in doubt as to whether certain information is confidential, or whether such information should be divulged, no disclosure should be made without first consulting Human Resources Contracted Staff Department.

1.7 MRRD's books and records must reflect, in an accurate, fair and timely manner, the transactions and disposition of assets of the ministry.

Note: All transactions must be authorized and executed in accordance with the instructions of MRRD Leadership and must be recorded so as to permit the accurate preparation of financial statements and to maintain accountability for assets. Access to assets is permitted only in accordance with the authorization of Management. All assets and funds are to be recorded and disclosed. The use of the ministry's funds or assets for any unlawful or improper purpose is strictly prohibited and those responsible for the accounting and record-keeping functions are expected to be vigilant in ensuring enforcement of this prohibition.

1.8 Protection For Reporting of Gross Misconduct

Note: Any national or international employee who becomes aware of a violation of the Code must report that information immediately to the Human Resources Department. It is a violation of this Code to discriminate or retaliate against a national or international employee for reporting such information.

2.0 Personal Code of Conduct

Every international employee of MRRD occupies a position of trust. In varying measure, each international employee represents the ministry in his or her relations with others, whether sub-contractors, other (national or international Contracted) employees, government agencies, or the general public. Whatever the area of activity and whatever the degree of responsibility, the ministry expects each international employee to act in a manner that will enhance MRRD's reputation for honesty and integrity.

MRRD expects all international employees to maintain a level of personal conduct that will not reflect negatively on themselves or on the credentials of MRRD. International employees whose conduct is contrary to the ethical standards of any profession and/or involves dishonesty and compromises the integrity of MRRD may be subject to disciplinary measures and/or dismissal.

While it is understood for many factors that personnel working and living in a high risk environment are under more stress than those working in a non risk environment, all international employees are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible manner at all times.

MRRD requires that all international employees must avoid the occurrence of the any of the following at their personal levels:

- No use of such substances as specified above at workplace;
- The use of abusive or culturally sensitive language or behavior;
- A consistently promiscuous lifestyle that proves to be directly and negatively affecting other employees and the reputation of MRRD as a whole.

Furthermore, international employees understand that it is not appropriate to and accordingly shall not engage in personal relationships with local staff members and beneficiaries of MRRD to a degree that would create a distraction, obligation or dependency on the part of either party in the relationship.

D. GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1.0 Recruitment

MRRD is committed to recruiting the most suitably qualified candidate for a position through a fair, transparent and systematic process in order to ensure that MRRD meets its strategic objectives.

1.1 Equal Employment Opportunity

MRRD is committed to a policy of non-discrimination. As an Equal Opportunity Employer, MRRD evaluates candidates and international employees on the basis of merit, competence and qualifications. Applicants and international employees have the right to equal treatment without discrimination, on the basis of race, place of origin, color, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, gender, sexual orientation, economic status, education, training, job level and responsibilities, culture, age, and record of offences, marital status, handicap or any other such characteristics.

1.2 Age

MRRD reserves the right not to recruit applicants less than 25 and above 60 years of age. The age below and above this limit may result in unsatisfactory performance or the staff member may not have the required experience and expertise in the relevant area to perform the responsibilities properly.

1.3 Employment of Family Members

This policy is implemented to minimize the negative impact of hiring family members and to help ensure objectivity in all matters involving staff, operations and finance. Family members include immediate family. For the purpose of this policy, immediate family includes parent, sister, brother, son, daughter and spouse. An immediate family member will not be recruited if the following conditions apply:

- a) Family members may not report directly or indirectly to each other.
- b) Family members may not report directly or indirectly to the same manager.
- c) Staff may not directly participate in the hiring or promotion of a family member.

1.4 Recruitment Procedure

The Human Resources Department is responsible for co-ordinating the recruitment and selections process with the related stakeholders i.e. the hiring department. The following procedures outline the process to be followed for any recruitment. However, the following procedures may be adjusted as required for the recruitment of part time positions.

1.4.1 Approval of Position and ToR

Head of the hiring department will prepare the ToR, determine and justify the need for a position. The recruitment request form along with the terms of reference form will be completed and sent to the Human Resources Contracted Staff Department. Human Resources Contracted Staff Department will review the recruitment request and ToR and propose the necessary changes prior to its approval by the relevant authorities (Minister and relevant Deputy Minister).

No position can be announced, unless and until the Human Resources Contracted Staff Department is sure that it needs to be filled and that there is a budget for it.

In order to ensure fairness to applicants/candidates, the deadlines set for short-listing and interviews must be strictly followed. (The recruitment request and ToR forms are available from Human Resources Contracted Staff Department).

1.4.2 Interview Panel

The Interview Panel will be head of the hiring department, a representative of the Human Resources Contracted Staff Department and additional member(s) who will be determined by Human Resources Contracted Staff Department with approval of the relevant deputy minister of the pillar. It is important to note that Human Resources Contracted Staff Department must be involved in all steps of the recruitment process.

1.4.3 Advertising

All positions will be advertised through appropriate media in order to ensure transparency. Only Human Resources Contracted Staff Department will advertise the vacant positions. Vacant positions will be advertised in Kabul and base duty station of the position if not located in Kabul. All candidates identified through personal contacts must go through the same recruitment process to prevent perceptions of discrimination, favoritism or bias.

The Job advertisement will include job responsibilities, job requirements and guidelines for submission of application.

1.4.4 Resume/Application

All applications will be registered in the application bank and each individual application will receive a specific code number. Applications without a specific code number will not be considered. The Human Resources Contracted Staff Department will conduct a preliminary pre-screening of all resumes and categorize candidates according to the requirements defined in the job description. This Department will share results of the pre-screening with the interview panel.

1.4.5 Short List

Human Resources Contracted Staff Department together with the hiring department and the additional representative(s) as discussed above in Interview Panel (Section 1.4.2) will short-list the candidates after the pre-screening of applications.

1.4.6 Written Test

If the nature and scope of the position requires a written examination or specific competency test, the interview panel will prepare the test.

1.4.7 Interview

The interview process will be determined by the type of position and number of candidates. The interview form will be filled in by each interview panel members individually. After the screening interview, report will be prepared and sent to the Minister or Deputy Minister for Pillar.

In case Human Resources Contracted Staff Department is not able to participate in the interview, it will introduce its representative to participate in the interview.

1.4.8 Final Decision

Minister/ Relevant Deputy Minister for Pillar will conduct a final interview based on the report of interview panel in order to make the final decision. After this interview, Minister/Relevant Deputy minister will make a final decision regarding the selection of the candidate.

1.4.9 Reference Check

Prior to issuing the offer letter, the Human Resources Department will conduct at least two reference checks on the final candidate. This gives MRRD the opportunity to verify the information provided by the candidate. In case of internal candidates there is no need of reference check, the recommendation and agreement of the existing line manager would be considered as reference check.

Reference check will be conducted through completing the reference check form by the Human Resources Contracted Staff Department.

1.4.10 Negotiation Interview

After the reference - check is completed, Human Resources Contracted Staff Department will hold a negotiation interview with the selected candidate to discuss and negotiate issues relating to the employment terms and determination of remunerations including salary and benefits. In this interview, both, MRRD and the selected candidate will come to an agreement on the employment terms and amount of salary and benefits which will be paid to the international employee during his/her employment with MRRD. All the issues on which both the sides will agree will be in accordance with this policy handbook.

1.4.11 Offer of Employment

Once the recruitment process for a position is completed, Human Resources Contracted Staff Department will issue an offer letter which must be signed by Minister or relevant Deputy Minister.

2.0 Employment

2.1 Full Time Employment

Employees of full-time employment status work full work-weeks and full work-days as described in Section 2.9 below.

2.2 Part Time Employment

Employees of part-time employment status work 18 hours per working week as described in Section 2.10 below. The working hours required of the part-time international employee will be determined by the contract. Part-time employees will not automatically be entitled to all the benefits stated in the policy handbook. Their benefits including leaves and use of equipments will be determined through negotiation.

2.3 Temporary Duty Posting

MRRD may occasionally require temporary personnel assistance to handle increased workload, employee absences and/or specific technical or programming requirements. MRRD international employees may be called upon to take a Temporary Duty Posting (TDY) with another duty station. TDY assignments may cover periods from one week to three months

depending on varying durations of the contract. MRRD supports the utilization of TDY assignments as an effective field operational tool and recognizes the cooperative spirit that must prevail in order to make these assignments possible. MRRD also recognizes the valued importance of the varied work experience acquired on a TDY assignment for its international employees.

2.4 Procedure

MRRD will assist the requesting department in identifying an appropriate international employee for a TDY. When a department anticipates the need for a TDY, it should complete, sign and submit to Human Resources Contracted Staff Department the TDY Form, available from the Human Resources Contracted Staff Department.

Human Resources Contracted Staff Department will contact the contributing department to recommend appropriate candidate(s) to the requesting department. Human Resources Contracted Staff Department will liaise with both the requesting department and contributing department director or his/ her designates in order to facilitate a successful match with a minimum of disruption to the employee's current work responsibilities.

Human Resources Department will forward a copy of the signed document to both the departments (the requesting and the contributing) and the employee. The request must be approved by Minister, Deputy Minister for Pillar, Program Manager or their designates of the requesting and contributing departments.

2.5 Employment Contract

An employment Contract is developed for each international employee working for MRRD. The Human Resources Contracted Staff Department is responsible to ensure that all international employees receive an Employment Contract, a job description and a hard copy of this Handbook. An original signed copy of the Contract and job description for all international employees will be kept in the employee's personnel file. Another original signed copy will also be issued to the employee for his/her personal records. The maximum duration of all MRRD contracted staff contracts is one year. However, there might be contracts of shorter duration depending on the type of position as described in Section D, 3.5 MRRD Positions. The contract shall specify the following information:

1. The date when employment starts and ends.
2. Annual and/or monthly salary
3. The employee's title and duty station
4. Reference to the MRRD HR Policy Handbook as well as specific requirements and benefits for the employee as described in this Policy Handbook.
5. Signature on the agreement indicating the employee acceptance of this policy and terms of the agreement.

2.6 Contract Extension

Contract extension in MRRD depends on the availability of funds, and employee's performance. For international employees whose contracts are being extended, the same general conditions of employment will remain in effect unless otherwise stated. However, in all cases, contract extension for international employees is completely in MRRD's discretion. If MRRD wishes or does not wish to extend an international employee's contract, it will inform him/her prior to the expiration date of the contract according to following table:

Contract Duration	Prior notice
6 – 12 months	One month notice
Less than 6 months	One month notice

2.7 Probationary Period

All new international employees with six months or above six months of contract will be given at least three-month probationary period during which their performance will be evaluated. International employees will receive regular pay during this time. There is no probationary period for consultants.

International Employees serving in their probationary period will be treated as if other international employees.

2.8 Attendance

Every employee in MRRD is a part of a team no matter what his/her job is with MRRD. An employee's reputation for dependability is important to him/her and MRRD itself, and regular attendance is an essential function of his/her job at MRRD.

Absence from work places a burden on other employees. Excessive absenteeism, late comings regardless of the cause, cannot be tolerated and may result in disciplinary actions.

Absenteeism from work without notifying the supervisor for even one day may result in disciplinary actions if the employee has used all possible efforts in notifying his/her supervisor.

All international employees are required to use timesheets to track their attendance and must complete and approve them by their relevant supervisors and submit them to Human Resources Contracted Staff Department by no later than 22nd of each month. Please refer to ***Annex F for MRRD Timesheet Policy***.

2.9 Hours of Work

MRRD's working week is from Saturday to Thursday. Normal working hours required of all full-time international employees in MRRD vary depending on seasons as described below:

2.9.1 Summer:

From: April to September Saturday to Thursday from 8:00 to 5:00.

2.9.2 Winter:

From: October to March Saturday to Thursday from 8:30 to 4:00.

2.9.3 Ramadan:

Working hours may be adjusted during the month of Ramadan.

2.9.4 Lunch Break

MRRD does not provide lunch to any of its international employees. The salary paid to the international employee includes lunch expenses. Lunch and pray time is from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM Saturday through Thursday.

2.10 Personnel Files

MRRD will maintain a file for each international staff member, which will contain:

1. Personal Information form (including address, and copy of ID);
2. Employment Contract and amendments attached to it;
3. Job description;
4. Updated Curriculum Vitae;
5. Salary history;
6. Leave records;
7. Performance evaluation records;

8. Credentials and testimonials; and
9. Correspondence and letters issued by MRRD to the employee.

An international employee will have the opportunity, in the presence of staff from the Human Resources Department to examine his/her individual personnel file. A copy of the information contained in the file will be provided upon the request of an international employee. In the event a staff member believes the information on file is inaccurate, he/she may add a statement to the file to document that opinion.

3.0 Salary

Salary for all international employees is determined based on negotiation upon their selection in the salary negotiation interview. All the salaries will be determined according to MRRD's salary scale for international staff. Please refer to the annex D, MRRD Salary Scale.

3.1 Salary Adjustment

During a contract term, there will be no salary adjustment, i.e. salary increment, for an international employee. However, in case position of an international employee during a specific term is changed permanently with changes in responsibilities, his/her salary will be adjusted according to MRRD's salary scale for the international contracted employees.

3.2 Salary Report

Human Resources Contracted Staff Department is responsible to submit the salary report to Finance Section by 25th of each month to ensure a timely payment of salaries to the international employees. All international employees are required to submit their timesheets to Human Resources Contracted Staff Department by 20th of each month.

3.3 Salary Payment

Salary is payable in equal monthly installments. All salaries will be paid in US Dollars.

3.4 Taxes

Income Tax applies to all salaries and allowances paid by MRRD in accordance to Afghanistan income tax law. On behalf of each international employee, MRRD will remit the income tax deductions according to the Afghan Income Tax Law on all taxable salary and allowances.

3.5 MRRD Positions

All positions in MRRD are categorized to the following positions:

3.5.1 Advisor

The objective of this position is to provide advice to MRRD and its programs to help it meet its strategic objectives. Advisors do not have the right to approve documents or other relevant matters. Contract duration of this position ranges six to twelve months.

3.5.2 Consultant

This position is created to provide short-term consulting services in various areas of operations of MRRD. Consultants do not have the right to approve documents or other relevant matters whatsoever. Contract duration for this position ranges one to three months. Consultants are not regular employees of MRRD. Their job is output-objective which means they will be required to perform a particular task and produce a specific output during their contract. The benefits and remunerations, transportation and equipments portion of this policy handbook will not apply to consultants. A specific all-inclusive package will be provided to a consultant determined through negotiations at the time of selection.

3.5.3 Manager/ Coordinator

This position provides support to MRRD mechanisms or operations. Managers/coordinators will be involved in day to day operations of the ministry rather than advisory. This position has the authority to and responsibility of signing documents or other relevant matters. Contract term for this position ranges 6-12 months.

3.5.4 Officer

This position also provides support to MRRD operations. It reports to manager/coordinator. Officers, too, are involved in daily operations of the ministry and have the approval right. Contract duration for this position ranges 6-12 months.

4.0 Benefits

MRRD will not be responsible for all financial problems of an international employee. However, at all the times, it will remain dedicated to making serious efforts to address its international employees' financial problems or concerns. MRRD encourages its international employees to develop and adopt sound financial plans so that they are able to be financially successful at their personal levels and avoid potential bankruptcy which might have negative impact on their job performance.

To be able to address its international employees' financial concerns at its highest level of commitment, MRRD will provide the following benefits, in addition to the salary, to its international staff to motivate them to work effectively and efficiently:

4.1 Travel

An international employee requested or requesting to travel will contact Human Resources Contracted Staff Department to complete the travel authorization form. The international employee will get the travel request approved by his/her direct supervisor or the relevant Deputy Minister / Minister before submitting it to the Human Resources Contracted Staff Department. All the travel request form must be approved by Security office at MRRD/Programs for security clearance purposes prior to the submission of form to the HRCSD. After Human Resources Contracted Department receives the approved travel request form, it will also sign it and submit it to the finance section for issuing travel advance to the employee. A copy of this request will be kept in employee's personnel file for his/her records.

4.2 Per Diems

The per diem rate paid for overnight travel inside Afghanistan will be USD 60.

Per Diem rates for travels outside Afghanistan are based on %35 of the standard UN rates published and available monthly. Per Diem includes food, accommodation and any other expenses incurred by an international employee while on travel. All work-related transportation costs from the work station to the place of destination (inside or outside Afghanistan) or other work-related transportation costs incurred within the place of destination will be reimbursed against the invoices or bills to be provided by the international employee to Finance Section. It is important to mention that in case of travels outside of Afghanistan, no hazard allowance will be paid to the international employee.

Prior to traveling, international employees must complete the travel request form available from HR Contracted Staff Department. The number of days paid will be based on the number of nights away on official business.

In the event lodging and/or food costs are pre-paid or otherwise part of an all-inclusive price, the international employee will be reimbursed for actual travel. After return from the travel, international employees are required to submit expense reports to the Finance Department for clearance of the travel advance no later than 7 work days after return from travel.

4.3 Mobile Phones

Many MRRD staff requires the use of a mobile phone for official MRRD business. For international employees requiring a mobile phone, MRRD will provide a phone.

To cover the cost of MRRD calls made on a mobile phone, MRRD will provide phone cards to international employees monthly according to the communication policy. Please refer to annex C for communication policy.

4.4 Visa and Work Permit Expenses

MRRD will pay for all expenses relating to the issuance and/or extension of visas and or work permits required of all international employees by the Government of Afghanistan

5.0 Leaves

5.1 Public Holidays

MRRD will observe all national public holidays as posted by the Government of Afghanistan. At the beginning of the year, the Human Resources Department will circulate to all staff a list of dates for all public holidays that will be observed by MRRD for that year.

5.2 Remoteness Leave

International employees are entitled to 7 days of paid leave per each three months to meet their families. A total amount of USD 500 will be paid to all international employees to cover their travel costs. This payment will be made against the actual travel documents such as original copies of Boarding Pass and Ticket Stub to be provided by the employee to the Finance Section no later than three days after return from leave. Request for this leave must be made one week in advance according to the Leave Approval Procedure described in 5.7 below.

5.3 Annual Leave Vacation

The purpose of annual leave is to experience rest and renewal of body, mind and soul. Staff well-being and job performance benefit from vacation leave and MRRD strongly encourages staff to fully use the provisions of this policy.

- All MRRD international employees are entitled to paid annual vacation leave of 2. days per month from the first day of employment with MRRD.
- Annual vacation leave will be used on accrual basis;
- Annual Vacation leave will not be taken during the probationary period of employment.
- At termination or the duly ending of the contract, no payment will be made to the international employee for or against the unused annual vacation leaves.
- All annual vacation leaves must be scheduled and approved by the minister or relevant deputy minister.

5.4 Sick Leave

Sick leave is intended for international employees' illness and is not to be used for other purposes.

- All MRRD international employees may take up to one working day of paid sick leave per month from the first day of employment with MRRD.
- Sick leave will be used on accrual basis;
- If an international employee misses more than two days continuously for reason of illness, a doctor's certificate must be provided to the Human Resources Department.
- At termination, unused sick days will not be paid out to the international employee.

5.5 Unpaid Leave

Employees with twelve months contract are entitled to use a total number of 10 work days as unpaid leave. Unpaid leave entitlements for international employees with contracts less than 12 months are described below:

- Employees with contracts of 8-12 months are entitled to eight (8) work days of unpaid leave;
- Employees with contracts of 6-7 months are entitled to six (6) work days of unpaid leave.

If the number of unpaid leave of an international employee exceeds the specified number of days, appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken against the international employee by the Human Resources Contracted Staff Department in coordination with the international employee's supervisor including termination.

Unpaid leave will not be taken during the probationary period.

5.6 Leave Approval Procedure

A request for approval of any kind of leave must be submitted and approved in advance of the time off. To allow for adequate coverage of program/department/operations, an international employee must make an effort to submit an annual leave request to his/her supervisor at least two weeks in advance of the proposed time off.

The request for any kind of leave must be submitted in leave form to Human Resources Contracted Staff for verification prior to the approval by the Minister/ Relevant Deputy Minister/ Chief Coordinator.

After verification of leave by Human Resources Contracted Staff Department, the leave form will be forwarded to The Minister/ Relevant Deputy Minister/ Chief Coordinator for approval. The approved leave form will be submitted back to Human Resources Contracted Staff Department for filing and recording in the attendance sheet.

6.0 Force Majeure

Force Majeure refers to an event or circumstance which is beyond the reasonable control of either MRRD or the international employee which makes performance of obligations by either of them impossible or so impractical as to be considered impossible.

The failure of either MRRD or the international employee to perform their obligations under such events or circumstances will not be considered as inability of either of the parties if (a) either of the parties has taken all reasonable precautions, due care and reasonable

alternative measures in order to carry out the terms and conditions of this policy handbook and (b) either of the parties has informed the other party as soon as possible about the occurrence of such an event or circumstance.

7.0 Health Certification

Employee is required to provide a certificate from a licensed doctor of medicine (Doctor's Certification) to the Human Resources Contracted Department certifying that international employee is in good health, able to travel to and work in Afghanistan and is physically qualified to engage in the type of activity for which the international employee is retained and to reside at the job site. The Health Certification document will be kept in the international employee's personnel file.

8.0 Performance Management Process

The purpose of the Performance Management Process is to manage and assess the performance of each international employee. It assists both the international employee and MRRD to achieve clearly defined goals. This process helps staff and supervisors to have a clear understanding of the job requirements and determine mutually acceptable performance objectives. With these objectives, supervisors use ongoing feedback and coaching to help staff reach their goals.

8.1 Goal of MRRD's Performance Management Process

- Align individual performance with MRRD's organizational objectives
- Encourage supervisors to provide balanced feedback and regular coaching
- Recognize individual achievements.

8.2 Employee Responsibility

Performance management is a partnership. To get the most value from this process, international employees need to:

- Focus on organizational results and their own contribution
- Actively participate in setting performance objectives, and follow through on their individual commitments ask for and listen openly to feedback from their supervisor and others
- Initiate professional development discussions, and
- Stay focused on their individual goals

8.3 Supervisor Responsibility

Supervisors are responsible for creating and sustaining an environment that supports our goals for performance by:

- Setting clear, measurable, and attainable Performance Objectives with input from international employees
- Providing honest and timely feedback to international employees, recognizing achievements, and tracking progress towards goals
- providing on job-training to the staff
- Initiating and conducting mid-term and final performance reviews
- Ensuring Human Resources receives completed and signed Performance Management Process Forms for each of their international employees

A guide for supervisors on setting objectives, providing feedback, and conducting the Performance Appraisal is available from Human Resources.

8.4 Performance Management Process

The Performance Management Process consists of the following steps:

1. Setting Performance Objectives
2. Mid-term Performance Reviews — "On-Going Feedback"
3. Final Performance Appraisal

Step 1: Setting Performance Objectives

The first step in this process is to clearly define Performance Objectives (what the employee will be held accountable for). As with every step in the process, this is a joint effort between supervisor and employee. Normally a set of 5 to 8 Performance Objectives are sufficient to describe the most critical outcomes of a position. Objectives should be measurable, and indicate how performance of the job task will be assessed. In most cases performance objectives may be fewer than 5, and the final performance appraisal may focus on Section 2 of the PMP Form: General Standards of Performance.

This step should take place at the beginning of employment term of an international employee upon his or her hiring. It is important to specify that performance objectives for an employee should be set within the first week his/he employment with MRRD.

During this process the supervisor and international employee should also review General Standards of Performance (Section 2 of the Performance Management Process Form). These standards apply to all international employees, regardless of position. It assesses qualities, interpersonal skills, and standards of performance that are common to all MRRD international employees. It is important that the employee understand prior to the appraisal period that these are standards upon which they will be assessed.

Step 2: Mid-term Performance Reviews: "On-Going Feedback"

It is critical that supervisors provide regular informal feedback sessions with international employees throughout their contract terms. Depending upon the position, this may be weekly, monthly or quarterly. If an employee is not meeting their Performance Objectives, the supervisor should address the issue in a timely manner, and not delay it until the final Performance Appraisal. A plan of action should be put in place to address the performance problem. Throughout the year, Performance Objectives can be reviewed and revised if changing conditions necessitate a modification.

Step 3: Final Performance Appraisal

The first phase of the final Performance Appraisal is the evaluation of the employee's progress. The appraisal is based on the employee's:

- Performance relative to their Performance Objectives
- Standard of performance relative to overall MRRD General Standards of Performance
- Additional achievements

The second phase of the Performance Appraisal is to create a development plan for the international employee. The goal of the development plan may be to improve on an area of performance, and/or to prepare the employee for advancement or job enrichment.

Performance Appraisals will be completed near the end of the fiscal year and conducted in a "face to face" meeting between the supervisor and the employee. The Performance Management Process Form is completed by the supervisor. The supervisor may also choose to review the appraisal with his or her manager for comments and ratings prior to meeting with the employee.

After the Performance Appraisal meeting, the supervisor will give a copy of the completed Performance Management Process Form to the international employee to review, make comments, sign, and return to the supervisor. The supervisor will then review any international employee comments, sign the form and send the original to Human Resources for the international employee's personnel file.

8.5 The Performance Management Process Form

The Performance Management Process Form is available from Human Resources. The form

is comprised of the following four sections:

Section 1: Performance Objectives (Job Tasks and Standards)

List of 5 to 8 Performance Objectives to be completed in the fiscal year, including statements of how performance will be measured.

Section 2: General Standards of Performance

Qualities, interpersonal skills, and standards of performance that are common to all MRRDD international employees.

Section 3: Development Plans and Career Plans

Action plans to address areas of weakness identified in the evaluation process, (for example: training programs, one-on-one coaching, participation in workshops, courses, etc.) These may also include the international employee's career interests and areas of professional growth.

Section 4: international employee Comments

Provides a space for international employee's comments and a signature.

9.0 Confidentiality

The international employee should not, either during the contract term or within two (2) years after the expiration of the Contract, disclose any proprietary or confidential information relating to the Project, the Services, the Contract, or the MRRD's business or operations without the prior written consent of the MRRD.

10.0 Use of MRRD Property

MRRD international employees should be aware that all MRRD equipment and resources, including but not limited to, office machines, computer hardware/software, vehicles and Internet and e-mail communications are the property of MRRD, to be used only for MRRD related work.

10.1 Materials and Documents

All plans, drawings, specifications, designs, reports, and other documents and software submitted by the international employee shall become and remain the property of MRRD, and the international employee should not later than upon termination or expiration of this Contract, deliver all such documents and software to the MRRD together with a detailed inventory thereof. The international employee may retain a copy of such documents and software after receiving a written permission from MRRD. Restrictions about the future use of these documents, is specified in Section 1.3 Confidentiality

10.2 Information Technology Equipments

The use of MRRD IT related resources and equipments is governed by MRRD Information Technology Policy developed and implemented by the Information Technology and Communication Department of MRRD.

10.3 MRRD Vehicles

MRRD provides vehicles to its international employees for all kind of use. This includes use of vehicles for the purpose of taking international employees to the office, dropping them back at their lodgings and any other use during working or non-working hours. However, in case a personal need for the use of an MRRD vehicle arises, priority will always be given to the official use of the vehicle. However, MRRD discourages the personal use of vehicle by an international employee.

Restrictions on personal use of vehicles as to much distance a vehicle can be used and other relevant issues are governed by MRRD transportation policy.

11.0 Grievances

A grievance arises when an international employee has a concern of complaint against a fellow employee (including direct or indirect supervisor) , an MRRD policy or its application which he/she believes is unfair, inequitable or a hindrance to his/her effective job performance. An employee having grievance should follow these steps in order to address his/her grievance:

Step I: Every possible effort should be made by the international employee and his/her immediate supervisor to resolve the situation. If this is unsuccessful, the grievance should be discussed with the next highest manager to address the grievance. If this also fails, the international employee will be required to take the next step described below:

Step II: . After the first step does not address employee's concern, he/she should discuss the issue with Human Resources Contracted Staff Department. For this, employee is required to

obtain the Grievance Form available from Human Resources Contracted Staff Department, complete and sign it before submitting to this department. Human Resources Contracted Staff Department will deal with each matter confidentially and will make serious efforts to address employee's concerns.

12.0 Discipline

When work performance is unsatisfactory and/or MRRD Human Resources Policies are violated, the international employee's supervisor, in coordination with the Human Resources Department will enforce the following progression of disciplinary actions:

- a) Verbal warning
- b) Written warning
- c) Disciplinary probation period
- d) Termination

In case of written warnings, the Human Resources Contracted Staff Director together with employee's supervisor will sign the written warning before issuing it to the international employee.

However, as an exception to the following under certain conditions the direct supervisor of the international employee and the Human Resources Manager will recommend immediate dismissal. These conditions are elaborated on in Section 13.1 below.

13.0 Employment Termination

It is MRRD's goal that no international employee be unfairly dismissed. Each international employee will receive objective performance appraisals, counseling and training. Continued employment with MRRD will depend on: the international employee's performance; general conduct on the job; and availability of funding.

The reason for termination is based on just cause according to Afghanistan's Labor Law. These conditions may include:

- Continued poor performance after the disciplinary probation period as provided for in Section 1.3 above.
- Violation of the Code of Conduct specified in Section XXX after all the necessary disciplinary actions are taken.

13.1 Termination by the Employer

The Employer may terminate the international employee by no less than thirty (30) days' prior written notice to be given after the occurrence of any events specified in Employment Termination, Section 1.4 above.

As an exception to the above-noted prior written notice, the employer may terminate the employment under the following conditions:

- A. If the international employee, in the judgment of the Employer has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for or in executing the contract.

For the purpose of this clause:

"Corrupt Practices" means the offering, giving, receiving or soliciting of anything of value to influence the action of a public official in the selection process or in contract execution.

"Fraudulent Practices" means a misrepresentation of facts in order to influence a selection process or the execution of a contract to the detriment of the employer, and includes collusive practices among international employees (prior to or after

submission of proposals) designed to establish prices at artificial non-competitive levels and to deprive the employer of the benefits of free and open competition.

- B. If the international employee violates any domestic or foreign law, applicable to the work of the ministry as specified in Section C (Code of Conduct 1.1)
- C. If the international employee furnishes or accepts, directly or indirectly, on behalf of MRRD, expensive gifts or provide excessive entertainment or benefit to other persons as specified in Section C (Code of Conduct 1.2)
- D. If the international employee participates, whether directly or indirectly, in any bribes, kickbacks, illegal gratuities, indirect contributions or similar payments as specified in Section C Code of Conduct 1.3.
- E. If the international employee uses his/her employment status to obtain personal gain from those doing or seeking to do business with MRRD as specified in Section C (Code of Conduct 1.4);
- F. If the international employee alters any of the financial documents for his/her personal interests;
- G. If the international employee uses drugs or mind altering substances in even very small amount at workplace; and
- H. If the international employee uses culturally insensitive language or behavior towards other international employees or the public at workplace or outside the ministry;
- I. Violation of Sexual-Harassment policy as specified in Section 14.1 below.

In all above-noted conditions the minister or the relevant deputy minister will approve the final termination.

13.2 Termination by the international employee:

An international employee may terminate the employment, by no less than thirty (30) days' prior written notice to the Employer. There could be different reasons for the termination of employment by the international employee.

If the Employer fails to pay any monies due to the international employee within forty five (45) days after receiving written notice from the international employee that such payment is overdue;

13.3 Payments upon Termination

Upon termination of the employment by either of the parties, the employer will make the following payments:

- Salary: Salary will be provided up to the date of termination.
- Ticket Expenses: All ticket expenses for flight back home from Afghanistan. MRRD requires that departing international employees take economical class direct route flights from Afghanistan back to home

In addition, the international employee has to clear all outstanding dues or expenses before getting the final pay. The international employee will be required to pay for the loss or damage of any assets submitted to him/her at the beginning of employment. In order to clear all outstanding dues or expenses, the international employee will be required to fill out the Exit Form including signing and getting it signed by all other relevant departments and submit it to Human Resources Contracted Staff Department for further actions.

14.0 Anti-Harassment.

MRRD strictly prohibits all forms of harassment directed to any of its international employees

by anyone, including any supervisor, co-worker, donor or public. Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical or visual, that is based on a person's protected status, including sex, color, race, ancestry, religion, national origin, disability, health status, sexual orientation, or other protected conduct that effects employment conditions, that interfere unreasonably with any individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Any international employee who believes he or she has been subjected to, or has witnessed harassment is encouraged and requested to report the offence to the Human Resources Department on a confidential basis, providing such details as the name of the suspected harasser, date of the offence, location, and type of harassment committed.

The Human Resources Department will investigate the complaint on a confidential basis to determine whether MRRD's harassment policy has been violated and, if so, appropriate disciplinary procedures will be taken, including immediate dismissal.

14.1 Sexual Harassment

In addition to the Anti-Harassment policy, MRRD believes that sexual harassment should receive special recognition. MRRD promotes the right of every international employee to work in an environment free of sexual harassment. To this end, sexual harassment by and of international employees is prohibited and this policy applies to all MRRD international employees.

Sexual harassment is defined as any unsolicited and unwelcome sexually oriented behavior, which may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. An implied or expressed threat of punishment for refusal to comply with a sexually oriented request,
- b. A demand for sexual favors in return for (continued) employment or more favorable employment treatment,
- c. Demeaning and unwelcome remarks, jokes or verbal abuse of a sexual nature, about a person's attire, body or sexual orientation,
- d. Displaying of pornographic or sexist pictures or materials,
- e. Unwelcome physical contact or offensive gestures.

Employees encountering sexual harassment shall report the incident(s) (including dates, time and nature of the behavior and any witnesses) to their direct supervisor or the Human Resources Department.

Human resources department shall ensure that all complaints regarding sexual harassment are investigated promptly and take whatever steps are necessary to have the harassment stopped. If deemed appropriate, disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including termination. In all cases, the manager of human resources department must be notified of the harassment.

15.0 Orientation

All international employees are provided with internal orientation and training during their probationary period as appropriate for their position. This will be coordinated with the direct supervisor and Human Resource Department. Orientation topics will include:

- Introduction to staff and facilities at MRRD;
- MRRD's history, philosophy and organizational structure;
- HR Policy Handbook and other administrative procedures;
- Job content and responsibilities;
- MRRD's programs and donors; and
- Other information as necessary.

16.0 HIV/AIDS

The purpose of this policy is to state that MRRD does not discriminate against international employees with HIV/AIDS. It is also to ensure the appropriate management of international employees exposed to or infected with the disease. MRRD recognizes that, because of the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS, it can create challenges in the workplace. HIV/AIDS is not transmitted through casual contact, so there is no risk of transmission in the workplace. In order to safeguard the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS and relieve concerns that other international employees may have, we have developed the following policy guidelines for handling situations related to HIV/AIDS.

MRRD is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy work place for all international employees. MRRD respects international employees' right to confidentiality in the workplace. An international employee is not obliged to inform MRRD of his or her physical condition, such as HIV/AIDS. If the international employee chooses to disclose this information, it is to be kept private and confidential. In most cases, at the international employee's consent, only managers directly involved in providing assistance or arranging benefits may need to know an international employee's health status, and they are required to keep the information confidential. Anyone else, who acquires such information, even if told directly by the international employee, should keep the information confidential and not discuss it or share it with others.

MRRD recognizes that, as a result of their illness, international employees with HIV/AIDS may have special needs that should be accommodated in the workplace. MRRD will treat HIV/AIDS like other illnesses in terms of international employee policies and benefits, health and life insurance, disability benefits, and leaves of absence. International employees living with HIV/AIDS will be treated like international employees with other disabling conditions: with compassion and understanding.

Employees may continue to work or return to work after a period of disability as long as they are able to perform their duties safely and in accordance with performance standards. Disabled international employees are responsible for asking for assistance, if required. MRRD will respond to international employees' changing health status by providing reasonable accommodations.

Recognizing the need for all international employees to be informed about health and safety issues in the workplace, MRRD will provide education to international employees about HIV/AIDS.

Co-workers are expected to continue to maintain effective working relationships with any international employee with HIV/AIDS.

MRRD maintains an "open door" policy on all international employee concerns. International employees living with HIV/AIDS and international employees concerned about working with someone with the disease or have other concerns are encouraged to contact their supervisor or the Human Resources Department to discuss their concerns. The Human Resources will take reasonable steps to address any concerns, including providing education, counseling and reasonable accommodation, and referring them to community-based HIV/AIDS organizations for more information and support.

Co-workers who refuse to work with, withhold services from, harass or otherwise discriminate against an international employee with HIV/AIDS will be subject to the same disciplinary procedures that apply to other policy violations.

Every situation is different; therefore, each will be handled on a case-by-case basis to correspond the needs of the international employee and the organization.

17.0 Crisis and Security

MRRD is committed to giving prompt and appropriate attention to crisis or emergency situations that may include, but are not limited to robbery, embezzlement, kidnapping, accidental deaths, political violence, medical emergencies and disasters. MRRD Security

Department is responsible to develop, maintain and implement comprehensive security policies and procedures that include all possible security situations and prudent measures to be taken by MRRD in such situations.

MRRD Security Department is responsible to ensure every international employee has received the required training and understands security policies and measures and apply prudent measures in all security situations. Please refer to Annex B for MRRD Security Policy Manual.

E. Annexes