



GROWTH NETWORKS UGANDA LIMITED (GRONET)

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Foreword

All GRONET employees, Volunteers, Board Members, consultants, all stakeholders and our development partners must maintain confidentiality to ensure the integrity of the management and programming, financial aspects, Human resource systems and procurement and prevent any misconduct that would arise out of lack of confidentiality.

It is important to understand that the disclosure of confidential or classified information any how within and outside the organization is not allowed.

For this to happen, the response must be safely anchored in a powerful and sound confidentiality policy. This policy manual is therefore the foundation upon which the organization will follow the best practices in adhering to the content of this document.

It is my sincere appeal that all GRONET staff, volunteers, consultants, stakeholders and development partners, must support this policy and implement it, with the seriousness as it deserves.

I therefore, recommend that this manual should be adopted and used as a guide in response to maintaining confidentiality within and outside the organization.

I also wish to pledge my commitment on behalf of GRONET in seeing to its immediate and effective implementation. Thank you.

Acknowledgement

The formulation of the confidentiality policy is an example of GRONET's commitment in maintaining confidentiality in all oral and written communications, as well as in the handling of information within and outside the organization.

The integrity and good image of the organization shall depend upon, how confidentiality is maintained both internally and externally.

We wish to acknowledge with deep gratitude the contributions of the Founder Members, the Board members and Staff. We appreciate the time, funds and efforts utilized in coming up with this comprehensive confidential policy.

Given the support that, we have received from all our stakeholders in the development of this policy, Growth Networks Uganda Limited (GRONET) would wish to pledge commitment to abiding by the highest standards of demonstrating commitment to maintain confidentiality.

Dedication

The policy is dedicated to all members of GRONET, the Board members, Staff and Volunteers. It is also dedicated to our entire development partners and stakeholders who have made concerted efforts in supporting GRONET in any aspect.

1.0 Introduction.

1.1. Profile and Introduction of Growth Networks Uganda Limited (GRONET)

Growth Networks Uganda Limited (GRONET) is a private not for profit development and advocacy organization, with the aim to mobilize, inform and engage private and public leadership in promoting equitable and transformative social change for sustainable development and improved quality of life of the poor marginalized communities in Uganda. The organization among others responds to community health issues and especially wide spread HIV/AIDS in particular.

GRONET was established to participate in the uplifting the living standards of the rural and urban poor through the alleviation of mass poverty, ensure food security and incessant to access to social/supportive services at household level and thereby offering a meaningful contribution to sustainable national development. The matters concerning Orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) and their households economic strengthening, Youth/Adolescents Empowerment, Skills development, SRH, HIV/AIDS prevention/awareness and other health related programs, natural resource management and climate change adaptation and mitigation, advocacy for young people's rights among others.

2.2. GRONET Vision

A Harmonious and Vibrant Society with Capacity to Advocate for their Rights and to Engage Policy-Makers for the Implementation of socio-economic policies that encourage transformation and promotion of sustainable livelihoods for the citizens of Uganda.

2.3. GRONET Mission

To open up sustainable avenues with a view to empower the people with skills, knowledge, best practices/experiences, and create opportunities for formation of networks that will enable them to demand for efficient service delivery and equip them with sustainable capacity to participate effectively in the socio-economic development of the country.

2.4. GRONET Core Values:

- Respect to Humanity and Rights of Peoples.
- Serve/Service with honesty and Integrity.
- Transparency, good leadership and Accountability.
- Team work, Pay heed, Value and Focus to Mission Statement.
- We build for the Present and future generations with God's support.
- Networking with all peoples of similar beliefs and principles.
- Personal development for ensuring expertise and professionalism.

2.0. Introduction of Confidentiality Policy

The following are some guidelines that will assist individuals involved in the GRONET work in dealing with confidential information while working on several programs.

The overall objective of maintaining confidentiality is to ensure the integrity of the management and programming, financial aspects, Human resource systems and procurement and prevent any misconduct that would arise out of lack of confidentiality.

It is important to understand that the disclosure of certain confidential or procurement-sensitive information could jeopardize the status of the organization.

Individuals involved in the Project must be careful to avoid breach of confidentiality both inside and outside of the workplace. Each individual is personally responsible for maintaining confidentiality in all oral and written communications, as well as in the handling of information through electronic means. The disclosure of any sensitive information that may jeopardize the Project may result in civil or criminal penalties and/or disciplinary action.

2.1. Who should sign confidentiality statements?

GRONET is required to sign a confidentiality statement prior to entering into partnership with any development partner / Donor. Also employees shall be required to swear an oath of secrecy and sign before the management on commencement of employment.

The discussions related to project agreement shall be kept very confidential. Also Individuals /employees to work on any GRONET project shall be required to sign a confidential statement conducted by the President.

All GRONET staff will be required to handle confidential information and the employee should be instructed on how to handle confidential information.

2.2. What information is confidential?

- Any information related to the procurement or planning which may affect the procurement.
- Any information related to the recruitment and selection of the employees.
- Any information related to employee details/personnel data or any human resource details including wages and other benefits.
- Any document (hard copy or soft copies) marked "Confidential".
- Any procurement documents (Request for Information), Request for Proposal which have not been released to the supplier community. Procurement documents that have already been released to the supplier, community are no longer confidential.
- Any supplier responses or proposal evaluation materials related to request for proposal.
- Any information related to correspondences.
- Any information related to GRONET clients.
- Any information related to organizational assets and equipment.

3.0. Precautions for individuals working with confidential information:

- All confidential documents should be marked "Confidential".
- Keep all confidential documents out of view and locked away from your desk.
- Confidential information on your personal computer should always be password protected and should never be left open when stepping away from your desk. Screen savers should also be used and should be password protected. Confidential documents should be filed in your personal drive. If documents must be shared, they can be stored in a shared drive, but should also be password protected with a shared password.

- Monitor the printer when printing a confidential document. Do not leave confidential print jobs unattended.
- Remove all confidential documents from the photocopy machine when jobs have been completed. In the event of a machine jam, make sure all confidential papers are removed and shredded.
- Close doors when confidential discussions occur during meetings. Erase and/or remove all white boards, flip charts, and papers once the meeting has concluded.
- Be discrete in communications with potential bidders/proposers to ensure that unauthorized disclosure of confidential information does not occur. Be cautious of what you say. This is extremely important in situations where supplier staff is co-located with state staff.
- Confidential mail can be sent via regular mail courier envelopes, but should be sent in a sealed envelope within the messenger envelope and marked appropriately “Confidential” The staff that will receive incoming mail marked "**Confidential**" should be delivered unopened to the recipient immediately.
- Confidential papers (including notes and working papers) should not be discarded in wastebaskets or recycle bins. Confidential papers should be shredded.
- Using the fax machine or Securicor for transmitting confidential information like organization’s account details is not recommended. However if necessary, arrangements should be made at both ends of the transmission to monitor the fax machine until the entire fax has been sent and received. Do not leave a fax machine unattended when sending or receiving a confidential document.

4.0. Confidentiality notice:

- Individuals should be cautious of their surroundings when leaving voice mail messages or SMS that may contain confidential information.
- Electronic mail messages should not be used to share confidential information since they can be accessed fairly easily by many users.
- Kept secret to protect the image of the Organization.

- Staff should ensure during the course of the work that any information is strictly kept confidential.
- No document of any kind whether classified, secret, confidential or otherwise shall be taken for use outside GRONET neither shall the contents be divulged to outside parties.
- Any employee who divulges information shall attract disciplinary action.
- Employees shall be required to swear an oath of secrecy and sign before the management on commencement of employment.

5.0. Communication to the public

In matter of official communication to the general public, any GRONET staff shall communicate and disseminate effective messages and will be expected to be discreet in matters connected with official. This must have gotten authorization from the immediate supervisor or the President.