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Contact
Peter Maas, founder

1 Personal Message

Hi there,

we are pleased to present to You the fourth Newsletter, mainly concentrating on how we intend to prevent and handle misuse of our "services" and "diversion" of resources.

I hope You all got a better understanding about the basic working methods after reading the last Newsletter. Of course, time will tell us how these working methods will work out in "real life", but I realized that we need to have a basic set to begin with. In the meantime, the development of the Network's website is ongoing and the organizations letter head and "business" cards have been designed and will be printed shortly.

In the next Newsletter we will emphasize on the handling of the language issue as well as the Network's way of handling the inavailability of the Internet as a communication means.

Thanks & Bye for now! Have a good time!

Kind Regards,

Peter Maas

PS: feel free to forward our Newsletters to Your Friends and Family. When forwarding the Email message, please include subscribe-newsletter@helping-people.net in the CC-field of the message, so that we can add the Emailaddress(es) to our Mailinglist.

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2 Preventing and Handling of Misuse

2.1 Principle Rules

Helping People Network is a non-profit organization, a worldwide group of people, with the intention to help the needing people to find the help they need and to mediate between the needing and helping people.

First of all, Rule Number 1 is:

We don't ask for donations and we do not give any money away.

Second, Rule Number 2:

Rule Number 1 cannot and will not be changed.

2.2 A few facts

Of course, like everywhere, misuse may also arise in our work. We may be asked to help someone who will try to use our "service" to find help for their own advantage.

Numerous examples are known where donations end up in the "pockets" of influential "officials", or even worse, "disappear" into the bureaucratic procedures. And this is still happening on a daily basis.

Many donators have been disappointed and resent giving any more money, **unless** they are getting some "prove" of how the money will be spent by the aid organization.

Therefor it is essential to think about how to prevent misuse and, if it occurs after all, how to handle and, when possible, how to "undo" it.

2.3 Prevention

As already said before, Network Representatives are not allowed to collect donations for their activities for the Network. Of course, Network Representatives are part of normal society and will have to take care of themselves, which means they have to have money to live of. However, when acting as a Network Representative, it is one of the principle rules they have to officially sign for to refrain from accepting whatever compensation for their help activities.

If someone wants to donate money to help a needing person, then it goes directly from the donator to the intended needing person.

Network Representatives will only be active by finding help or, in urgent cases, helping themselves with their hands, attention, knowledge, experience and information.

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(continued 2.3 Prevention)

Network Representatives should always be attentive to misuse and act immediately, when a Help Requestor somehow behaves suspicious. When discussing a help request, exact information about the circumstances/ cause has to be asked for, what persons are in the neighborhood that could help immediately and what is being done by the needing person him-/herself to solve the problem (if possible). Someone with false intentions will most probably have difficulties answering all those questions.

Unfortunately, a great deal of misuse incidents is caused by (local) "officials" and before starting aid activities, information about those people is to be evaluated to avoid running into problems during aid activities. Therefore Helping People Network will be locally represented by someone who knows the area, the influential people and possible danger and that information is already acquired before starting help to future Help Requestors. We also urge anybody to minimize the use of aid goods.

Network Representatives will be trained in interviewing techniques to be able to "detect" false intentions and find out the authenticity of the help request. We will ask aid workers/organizations to be trained as well.

Bad as well as good experiences/techniques are documented for all Network Representatives and involved Aid Workers to learn and teach the others, which will be a never ending process.

2.4 Handling and/or "undoing" misuse

Even experienced aid workers tell us several stories about misuse and the way they were misled. Even unbelievable stories! So, it happens anyway and we have to deal with it effectively and learn from the experience.

Of course, the best moment to halt a case of misuse is immediately, halt all activities. In case of simple help activities this will be feasible, but in aid projects, with possibly multiple aid workers/organizations involved, this may not be that simple. So we must categorize the types of misuse:

1. **Misuse by help requestor(s).** In this case the aid worker(s) has/have to be informed that all activities have to be halted and aid goods/tools to be recovered immediately. The involved Network Representative must (try) to contact the Help Requestor to learn about the situation and the reason of the misuse and to explain that the Helping People Network as well as the aid workers do not accept misuse and that the help will be discontinued. Apart from that, aid workers on location are urged and supported to be aware of misuse and report any suspicious aspects directly to the involved Network Representative.

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(continued 2.4 Handling and/or "undoing" misuse)

2. **Misuse by the people around the help requestor(s).** Jealousy, envy and greed are our opponents in this case. Unfortunately, some people around the Help Requestor may want to have "a piece of the pie", especially when money and other "goods" are involved in the project. The local Network Representative, and if necessary, the regional Network Coordinators will mediate (diplomacy!) in recovering the aid goods. If all those efforts are fruitless, all activities are halted. In any case, an official complaint is filed with the regional authorities and the national government and, when necessary, members of parliament will be informed of the case. Of course, if work can somehow be continued, improvising without the aid goods, it will be done so, because that's the main objective.
3. **Misuse by aid workers/organizations or Network Representative.** We hate to write about this, but this kind of misuse has to be dealt with as well. Whoever discovers the misuse should report it to the regional Network Coordinator, who has to replace the involved aid worker or Network Representative soonest possible. If the aid worker is part of an aid organization, it will be reported to them. In any case, Helping People Network will demand an official apology and will evaluate, if this aid worker/organization can be contacted for future Help Requests. If a Network Participant is involved in misuse, s/he is to discontinue his/her representation for the Network.

As You can see Helping People Network will have to be aware and act immediately upon misuse. We have to be consequent and clear about what happens in case of misuse. Every case is documented for all to learn from. We call upon all people involved to help in this matter. Any related comments, information and experiences are more than welcome!

Many Thanks in advance!

_____ End of Newsletter _____