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1. Introduction

1.1. Approval

This version of the Standard was approved by the Technical Development and Innovation Committee of the Institute for the Quality of NGOs – ICONG on 19 December 2013 and by the Institute's Governing Board on 29 April 2014, and cancels and replaces Version 4 of the NGO with Quality Standard of 4 November 2011.

1.2. Changes in the fifth version of the NGO Quality standard

The changes in this 5th version have been made in order to define and specify the contents in the sections on principles and requirements with the aim of improving how the criteria for their implementation and assessment are interpreted by organisations and their stakeholders. This revision has been performed in keeping with the spirit of the Standard, and making the text more specific, more understandable and better structured. The aim is to avoid wording that is vague and to facilitate both its interpretation for proper implementation and the corresponding audit work. The main changes are described below.

1.2.1. Changes in the structure

No changes have been made to the general structure of the document with regard to version 4, but changes have been made to Sections 2 (Principles) and 3 (Management system), which are explained below.

1.2.2. Changes in the principles

The changes with regard to version 4 basically relate to the wording of the description of the principles in order to make them more understandable in interpreting the requirements of Section 3

(Management system). There is also a small change to the internal structure of the section, with the principle of Solidarity being moved from sub-section 2.1 to 2.3, as well as changes in the name of some principles so as to fine-tune their definition.

1.2.3. Changes in the scope

The scope has been changed in comparison with version 4 by including a new phrase and revising the third paragraph of this section. The aim of this change was to define the scope in relation to the exercise of rights by end customers.

1.2.4. Changes in the Requirements

The structure of this section has been changed in order to improve understanding and avoid repetition when interpreting the requirements. The description of the requirements set out in Section 3 (Management System) has also been revised in order to clarify what are considered to be requirements, indicated by the term “must”; and what the Standard considers to be recommendable, indicated by the term “should” (see Note 7). Another change is that the new version aims to make reference to other sub-sections through a parenthesis in the text in order to highlight the relationship between both requirements. In particular, Sections 3.1.3 (Documentation requirements) and 3.1.5 (Record control) have been referenced in order to indicate the documentation and records required by the Standard.

Last but not least, an explanatory note has been included before the contents of Section 3 (Management system) of the Standard. This note explains that before each sub-section reference is made to one of the principles (Section 2), so that the interpretation of the requirements is in line with the definition of these principles. It is also worth noting that although all the principles apply and must be considered when interpreting the requirements, it was decided that in order to aid the usefulness of the document only some references would be included in each subsection as examples and not as a complete list. It should also be noted that this list should not be limiting or interpreted as the only principles that must inspire compliance with the requirements described in this section and that the order is simply numerical and does not indicate any type of priority.

1.2.5. Changes in the annexes

Both annexes (1 and 2) have been revised in order to update them and adjust them to the contents of this revision of the Standard. In Annex 1 (Reference and consultation standards and documents),

the list of documents has been revised to bring it into line with the current vision of the Standard and the recommended reading references have been revised so as to better match the principles and requirements of the Standard. In Annex 2 (Definitions and terminology), the terms have been revised, with new terms added and existing terms revised, so that the definitions facilitate interpretation of both the principles and the requirements set out in this version of the Standard

1.3. Scope of the standard

This document establishes technical requirements for a quality management system in non-governmental social intervention organisations in a broad sense¹ that is integrated into their integrated management system.

All the requirements set out in the Standard are intended to be added to the integrated management system, although the extent to which they are established may depend on the particular features of the organisation or its projects, services and products.

In this regard, the organisation must ensure that the scope of application of the Standard, where it is not applied to the integrated management system, includes all the aspect thereof that have a significant impact on the quality of the project, product or service and on the quality of life and the exercise of the rights of end customers. The level of relevance must be considered on the basis of how the management system is aligned with the entity's mission, meeting the expectations and needs of end customers and its other stakeholders.

The Standard also allows the integration of minimum essential requirements of other management systems, such as: environmental, risk prevention, equality plans, social responsibility, or others. It is a basic-level standard as it is devised to establish requirements and principles that are valid for any NGO and which may be compatible with other complementary standards and models that the organisation considers appropriate to improve its effectiveness in fulfilling its mission.

¹ Non-governmental social intervention organisations are defined as those which seek to have an impact on improving the quality of life of people and access to their rights, including social action, development cooperation, humanitarian, environmental and human rights organisations.

1.4. Structure and revision of the standard

The Standard is structured as follows:

1. Introduction

1.1. Approval

Reference is made to the body and the date on which the 5th version of the NGO with Quality Standard was approved.

1.2. Changes in the fifth version of the standard

The changes made to the different parts of the document are described, particularly as regards principles and requirements, as well as the reason for these changes.

1.3. Scope

The scope and limitations thereof in the drafting of the contents of this document are defined. This may guide organisations in their strategy for implementing the Standard.

1.4. Structure and revision of the standard

The structure of the different sections of this document is described, as well as the system for revising the Standard.

2. Principles

This section describes the rationale and approach of the Standard in terms of the principles that must inspire interpretation of the requirements. These principles are also defined so as to facilitate their interpretation as the cornerstone of the Standard itself.

3. Quality management system

The section on the management system defines the quality management requirements with regard to the following basic elements:

A. General system requirements

3.1. System Requirements

B. Institutional commitment

3.2 Responsibility of the management

C. Processes

3.3 Process-based planning and management

3.4 Development of key processes

3.5 Development of other processes

D. Measurement and improvement

3.6 Measurement, analysis and evaluation

3.7 Improvement

Annex 1. Reference and consultation standards and documents

The standards and technical documents that have inspired this Standard are listed.

Anexo 2. Definitions and terminology

A glossary of significant terms and concepts that facilitate understanding of the Standard.

Revision of the Standard

This standard or technical requirements document will be subject to revisions depending on the adjustments needed for it to be correctly implemented in NGOs and depending on new developments in order to adapt to, and anticipate, social changes. It will be reviewed and updated by the Technical Development and Innovation Committee, with representation from the various stakeholders, which reports to the Institute for the Quality of NGOs (ICONG). The composition of the Committee and the revision and decision procedure are defined in the technical regulation of said Committee.

Suggestions for improving this document should be sent:

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by sending an email to info@icong.org or using the specific form which can be found at www.icong.org

2. Principles

The idea that non-governmental organisations from the third sector should have a quality management standard as a basis for their operation lies in the need to offer them a benchmark conceived by the sector itself that will significantly contribute towards the ongoing improvement of their effectiveness and efficiency and, consequently, to their move towards excellence when developing their projects and achieving their goals.

This Quality Management Standard contributes to NGOs increasingly:

1. Orienting their activities towards satisfying the end recipients of their mission, by offering them quality support, activities, projects, service and products.
2. Increasing their ability to learn.
3. Increasing job safety, health and satisfaction, as well as environmental sustainability.
4. Achieving greater social legitimacy through ethical and transparent management.
5. Permanently innovating and improving.

This Standard is built on the conviction that every NGO acting with quality must be governed by certain values and principles beyond those it sets for itself. In this regard, the NGO with Quality Standard is a unique quality management standard as it incorporates principles based on values shared by organisations working in the Third Sector in the interpretation of management requirements.

These principles, together with the methodological guidelines, are the basic benchmark when preparing different quality requirements.

It is essentially different to devise a standard based around values than not to do so. Any NGO that applies the Standard and wants to be audited and certified according to it will be demonstrating that it shares and is guided by a series of basic values that are common to all NGOs. Such essential NGO values thus become a prerequisite for quality to set the foundations for developing the standard itself. In this regard, the values and principles that are set out below permeate the requirements of the Standard and their application needs to be demonstrated through compliance with such requirements.

For this reason, the requirements of the Standard (Section 3) make reference to one of the principles (Section 2) so that the requirements are interpreted in line with the definitions of the principles. Although all the principles are applicable and must be considered when interpreting the requirements, only one reference is included in each subsection for illustrative purposes, which should not be restrictive or interpreted as the only principle that must inspire compliance with the requirement.

In short, this Standard should not only be used to adopt a technique or set of techniques for improvement. The Standard must be used, firstly, to ensure that NGOs focus their activity around core values (Principles-Section 2) and, secondly, to highlight that those which do not share them would not be complying with the basic requirements of the Standard. Values-based quality will be a practice that aims to ensure the management of NGOs that exercise it in ethical areas. Specifically, what distinguishes this NGO Quality Management Standard from others is that it is built around the following principles and values:

2.1. People-oriented principles

2.1.1. Human Dignity

Every person, as a human being and irrespective of his or her situation or condition, has value in and of himself or herself, with his or her own unrepeatable characteristics, interests and ends, with his or her own dignity and value, comparable to that of other people. For this reason, the dignity of people is put before any other criterion, no matter how utilitarian it may be, in all the organisation's activities. In this regard, every organisation acting with quality must undertake to respect the dignity of people, end customers and other stakeholders, demonstrating that it fulfils this commitment, both strategically and operationally, with its decisions and actions.

2.1.2. Defence of rights

Every organisation that operates with quality, whatever its activity, is committed to defending the fundamental rights of the recipients of its mission. The organisation must take a rights-focused approach, stating unequivocally that the intended result of its actions is to increase people's ability to fully and effectively exercise their rights. The organisation must promote the right of people to be the protagonists of their own development. The organisation must ensure that both in its management and its

actions, it respects the rights of all its stakeholders, and especially those recognised by national and international law.

2.1.3. Orientation to each person

The organisation must prioritise people and plan by focusing its activity on the search for significant results for the life of each person, with their participation and consent. An organisation working with quality will therefore ensure that all its objectives, processes, resources and structure will be aimed at promoting and protecting the rights of end customers (see Note 3), meeting their needs and involving them throughout the different stages of the intervention with the aim of establishing priorities. The result of the organisation's intervention must be to provide clear value to people's quality of life, and this must be set out in its mission².

2.2. Organisation-focused principles

2.2.1. Orientation to stakeholders

An organisation working with quality must orient its management system towards meeting the needs and respecting the rights of its stakeholders. For this purpose, it must systematise their identification, prioritization, commitment, evaluation and accountability in its management and relationship with them. For all this to be possible, it is necessary to promote the participation of end customers and of all stakeholders, as well as the necessary mechanisms for evaluation, observation and active listening. The aim of the organisation must be that when defining its activities, processes or resources used, the priority objective will be to improve the exercise of rights by the recipients of the mission (end customers³).

2.2.2. Value of volunteering

Voluntary action, understood as an expression of solidarity, is one of the basic tools for civil society action in the social field. NGOs must facilitate such participation through their organisations, promoting and encouraging the participation of volunteers in their activities to

2 This means that, in no case may it be argued that if, for example, the main activity of the organisation is to provide services, this excuses it from the responsibility to defend rights

3 The term "end customer" connotes a commercial relationship that is commonly used in the private sector. However, a choice was made to use it in this standard in order to highlight the right of each person to receive excellent treatment and a professional intervention that meets the requirements resulting from their expectations and needs, particularly relating to improving the exercise of their rights.

carry out the organisation's mission and meet the needs of the end customers.

2.2.3. Participation

There can be no quality in NGOs without participation⁴. The importance of participation is twofold. Firstly, because this is the most effective way to promote everybody's right to be the protagonist in their own development, strengthening their personal autonomy, particularly in the case of end customers. But also because a stakeholder-oriented management system needs to operate on the principle that all stakeholders need to participate in order to be effective. This means that an organisation operating under this principle must analyse, define, adapt and implement its commitment to stakeholder participation in its management system with the aim of improving its efficiency and consistency with its mission.

2.2.4. Professionalism

Organisations that operate with quality understand that they achieve their objectives through the people who work in their organisation. They therefore promote, on an intentional, planned and ongoing basis, the qualifications and involvement of all people: both remunerated and voluntary. In this regard, the organisation must analyse, define and promote people's professional development in order to improve their training and performance of technical, ethical and personal skills, oriented towards meeting the objectives of its mission.

2.2.5. Effectiveness and efficiency

An organisation that works with quality must define its management system, orienting it towards achieving results and impacts⁵ in order to obtain the key objectives of its intervention. The effectiveness must be considered on the basis of the extent to which the results and impacts contribute towards fulfilling the entity's mission and improving the quality of life of the end customer. In order to achieve this, the entity must have resources which are by nature limited. This means that the entity must prioritise and organise these resources with objective

4 Participation and teamwork are understood to potentially include any stakeholder in the organisation.

5 All the effects that the organisation's activities cause. Social, economic and environmental changes promoted by the organisation, both those that are sought and intended (achievement of overall objective/outcomes) and desired and undesired unintended effects. The impact analysis covers all the effects or consequences of the entity's intervention.

efficiency criteria in relation to meeting the needs of end customers and stakeholders, as well as the intended impacts.

2.2.6. Continuous improvement

Continuous improvement must be a value that is intrinsic to the management of every organisation and this must be oriented towards the highest level of fulfilment of the objectives of its mission. An organisation that works with quality must systematise its process of improvement, basing it on planning, measurement, analysis, evaluation and decision-making through its management system. The idea of always wanting to improve will help the organisation to face the ongoing challenges of the environment and of its mission and to properly manage change and to be continually oriented towards innovation. This requires a self-critical review approach in order to identify areas for improvement, both in the management system and in the interventions.

2.2.7. Mission-oriented management

Any organisation is a system, which means that there is interdependence between its parts or subsystems, as well as between all processes. This influences both the results and their management. In short, what happens in each of the parts has a more or less decisive influence on the rest. For this reason, the organisation must consider quality management as a comprehensive system, which means understanding and managing its interrelations and seeking to improve all its processes, results and impacts in order to comply and be consistent with its mission.

2.3. Society-oriented principles

2.3.1. Solidarity

Recognising an interdependent environment and as a value that is inherent to them, organisations that manage with quality must encourage solidarity with all people, end users and stakeholders, as well as its solidarity with other organisations and groups. This solidarity is based on an openness to aid, cooperation and co-responsibility, accepting that in order to achieve its mission, it requires the mutual support of its stakeholders and other agents in society. Solidarity must be a criterion that influences and conditions its management system and intervention.

2.3.2. Trust

Society places in organisations that work with quality trust that legitimises the establishment of the mission, vision and values of the organisations to the extent that these meet socially demanded and accepted needs. Trust is neither unlimited nor permanent. Organisations must maintain an attitude of continuous monitoring of how well they meet the needs demanded by their stakeholders and society, as well as the consistency of their actions with regard to their mission, vision and values. Transparency, accountability and participation are necessary principles for building trust in the management and governance of the organisation.

2.3.3. Transparency

Organisations must establish transparency with regard to their governance and management systems, their internal organisation, their processes and the impact of their activity on their end customers and other stakeholders as a core element of their mission. This transparency is implemented through the processes for providing stakeholders and society with accurate, complete and relevant information on their activities, as well as accessible ways in which such information can be consulted and assessed. Transparency is based on people's right to know, and must be considered a prerequisite for quality participation, both in the organisation's management and in its interventions.

2.3.4. Accountability

In line with the principles of Trust and Transparency established in this Standard, organisations that act with quality perform systematic, periodic and documented activities so as to provide their customers, stakeholders and society with information that makes it possible to evaluate the level of compliance with the commitments assumed by the organisation on the basis of the needs detected in all stakeholders, current legislation and the organisation's mission.

2.3.5. Democratic commitment

An organisation that acts within the quality framework defined in this Standard is aware that ongoing dialogue aimed at seeking an agreement and commitment with its customers and other stakeholders is essential for satisfying the identified needs. It also demonstrates, through its quality management system, that it has set up channels of communication in which not only are the interests of the organisation taken into account, but also those of all current or

potential customers and other stakeholders. The organisation thus contributes to the democratic structuring of society.

2.3.6. Openness and social involvement

The organisation must work towards improving the full exercise of people's rights and to analysing the causes of social problems⁶ in order to influence and propose solutions, together with other agents in society. It therefore includes processes in its aims and in its management that seek out cooperation and an ongoing relationship with other agents in society (economic, political and social agents and other organisations) with the aim of participating in social reflection and debate. The organisation will seek to make and agree proposals that will solve the causes of the problems, while at the same time demonstrating its support and solidarity with the groups with the greatest needs (particularly with its end customers) in a manner that is consistent with its mission and its values.

⁶ These problems might manifest themselves violations of rights, social injustice and the form of violation of rights, social injustice and dynamics of exclusion of persons or social groups.

3. Management systems

The quality management system is based on continuous improvement through ongoing adaptation to the identified needs and expectations of end customers and other stakeholders.

These identified needs and expectations must be translated into project or service process planning which, with the participation of volunteers and paid staff, achieves a high level of satisfaction of end customers and all stakeholders. This must be done with the firm and explicit commitment of the organisation's management.

This commitment must be expressed in a quality policy that is in line with its mission and vision and which takes into account the context and the values of non-profit organisations.

A. General system requirements

Note: the subsections on requirements in the Standard (Section 3) make reference to one of the principles (Section 2) so that the interpretation of the requirement is in line with the definition of these principles. All principles are applicable and must be considered in the interpretation of the requirements. However, it was decided that in order to aid the usefulness of the document only some references would be included in each subsection as examples and not as a complete list. This list should not be limiting or interpreted as the only principles that must inspire compliance with the requirements described in this section. In addition, the order does not indicate any type of priority, but is merely numerical.

3.1. System requirements

3.1.1. Needs of customers and other stakeholders

Some reference principles:

2.1.2 Defence of rights

2.1.3 Orientation to each person

2.2.1 Orientation to stakeholders

The customers on which the quality system must focus are the end recipients of the project, service or product, who, for the purposes of this Standard, will be referred to as end customers. These end customers are the people or groups that are identified as the beneficiaries or target of the organisation's mission. In addition to the end customers, there are other stakeholders who directly or indirectly participate in the benefits of the organisation's activity, which include: voluntary and paid staff, governing bodies, partner organisations and entities, local community, suppliers, public administration, members of the entities, funders and donors.

The organisation must document and record (3.1.5) the needs and expectations of its stakeholders, appropriately interpreting, inter alia, the resulting requirements relating to:

- The quality of the project, service and/or product, and how it affects the promotion and exercise of the rights of its end customers.
- Respect for the rights of its stakeholders.
- Respect for legislation and regulations.
- The impact of projects, services or products on the quality of life of end customers.
- Occupational health and safety.
- Its impact on the environment.
- Expectations of stakeholder participation.
- Information expectations for reporting.

Priority will be given in the above to identifying the needs of end customers, in line with the organisation's mission.

The management system must have documented procedures (3.1.3) that identify the mechanisms needed to ensure that such needs are taken into account, interpreting and incorporating them as requirements, particularly when defining and assessing the quality characteristics of the projects, services or products.

3.1.2. Legal requirements

Some reference principles:

2.1.2.2 Defence of rights

2.2.5 Effectiveness and efficiency

The organisation must define the documented systems that it uses to identify, update and make available to the appropriate staff the legal requirements affecting its activities, projects, services and products. The organisation will determine how often it must review said legal requirements.

The system for managing this documentation (3.1.4) must include the necessary mechanisms to ensure that the measures for complying with the legal requirements applicable to the organisation due to its activity, projects, services and products are known and taken.

3.1.3. Documentation requirements

Some reference principles:

2.2.5 Effectiveness and efficiency

2.2.6 Continuous Improvement

2.2.7 Mission-oriented management

The documentation of the quality management system must include:

- The definition of the organisation's mission, vision, values and quality policy:

The mission must set out, at least, the foundational objectives, particularly making reference to the people and groups with which it intends to work, support or promote in order to improve the exercise of their rights and their quality of life, or the creation of opportunities.

The organisation's values must be identified and defined, and must be consistent with those of this Standard and with the objectives set out in the mission.

The quality policy must be consistent with the values of the organisation and the Standard, and must set out the organisation's commitment and general objectives in relation to quality. The quality policy must be public, with the organisation promoting knowledge of said policy among its stakeholders.

- Quality manual: This manual must clearly define the scope that the quality management system will have and the processes affected by its application. It should also include a description of the system, with references to the documentation as a whole, the organisational structure and a definition of the general criteria of the system and the key processes of the organisation, with their interaction with other quality management system processes.
- The procedures, records and other documents resulting from requirements established as mandatory by this Standard⁷ and those requirements that the organisation deems necessary for the effectiveness of its quality management system.

3.1.4. Documentation control

Some reference principles:

2.2.5 Effectiveness and efficiency

2.2.6 Continuous Improvement

The organisation must define and document (3.1.3) how it performs the control of the management system documents, describing the systems for approving, revising and updating the documents. The documentation control procedure must ensure the use of updated versions, their proper distribution, and access for the people within the organisation who are affected by their scope of application, and that such documents are understandable. The documentation control must also ensure proper distribution of the external documents that are necessary for the organisation's management and processes.

⁷ This Standard uses the terms "must" and "should" to determine, respectively, whether the requirement is mandatory or a recommendation. Therefore, the term "must document" establishes mandatory documentation requirements. Similarly, future verb tenses also indicate the mandatory nature of the requirement.

3.1.5. Record control

Some reference principles:

2.1.2 Defence of rights

2.2.5 Effectiveness and efficiency

2.2.6 Continuous Improvement

The organisation must define and document (3.1.3) how it performs record control. Records demonstrating that its activities fulfil the planned policies, objectives and provisions, as well as the requirements of this Standard, must be stored in a legible and accessible manner for a defined period⁸. The records may be in different formats and media (paper, database or computer media, etc.). The records must ensure traceability of the project, service or product where this is specified. The controls must ensure that the data protection requirements applicable to the records in each case are fulfilled.

⁸ This period must be defined by the organisation, ensuring that it complies with the applicable legislation.

B. Institutional commitment

3.2. Responsibility of the management⁹

3.2.1. Commitment and leadership

Some reference principles:

2.1.1 Human dignity

2.1.2 Defence of rights

2.1.3 Orientation to each person

2.2.5 Effectiveness and efficiency

2.2.6 Continuous Improvement

2.2.7 Mission-oriented management

The organisation's management must undertake ongoing public leadership and commitment for achieving the mission and vision, defining and implementing effective management systems aimed at improving the exercise of rights and the quality of life of end customers.

The management must take the necessary decisions and actions for effective and proper implementation of the organisation's quality system in order to meet the objectives.

This leadership must be demonstrated by promoting and ensuring that criteria and guidelines are set in planning, management and provision that ensure that the organisation's activity is in line with the values of the organisation and the values of this Standard. In periods of change and in strategic decision making, management is the guarantor of consistency with the organisation's mission and values, for which purpose it must involve the stakeholders.

⁹ This period must be defined by the organisation, ensuring that it complies with the applicable legislation..

3.2.2. Policy and objectives

Some reference principles:

2.2.1 Orientation to stakeholders

2.2.5 Effectiveness and efficiency

2.2.6 Continuous Improvement

2.2.7 Mission-oriented management

The organisation's management must define and document (3.1.3) its mission, vision, values, policies and objectives for the organisation as a whole. It must also define and document objectives for each management and operational area covered by this Standard.

Management must define objectives (3.3.4) that are consistent with the organisation's values and in line with the principles set out in this Standard. These objectives must be people-oriented and focused on the organisation and on society.

The objectives must be defined by taking into account the identified expectations and needs of stakeholders, particularly those of end customers.

3.2.3. Resources for quality

Some reference principles:

2.2.3 Participation

2.2.5 Effectiveness and efficiency

2.2.6 Continuous Improvement

2.2.7 Mission-oriented management

Management must ensure and verify that appropriate resources have been provided to implement the policies and achieve the objectives set in each area included in the quality management system. Resources may be human, economic and/or material.

Management must also promote, seek and facilitate the participation and consultation of volunteer and paid staff, as well as that of end users or their representatives, both when designing and when performing the activities so as to obtain a commitment to implement the policy with the aim of meeting the objectives defined by the organisation.

3.2.4. Review and oversight of the quality management system

Some reference principles:

2.2.6 Continuous Improvement

2.2.7 Mission-oriented management

Management must review, whenever there are significant changes in the system and at least once a year, the effectiveness of the different parts of the quality management system in achieving the established policies and objectives. This review will take into account any changes identified in the needs of end customers and stakeholders and will make the necessary adjustments to meet them.

The following information must be taken into account when reviewing the system:

- The results of internal and external audits.
- Measures of the satisfaction of customers and other relevant stakeholders, such as surveys and the complaints and claims system.
- Analysis of changes in the environment that might affect the organisation.
- The performance of processes and conformity of projects, services and products, including non-conformities or incidents.
- Level of achievement of the defined objectives.
- The follow-up of actions resulting from previous reviews.
- Corrective and preventive actions.
- Other information that the organisation considers relevant¹⁰.

This review should include an analysis of the consistency of the activities and results with the organisation's values and mission.

The review will make it possible to identify the need for changes in the quality management system or in any of its components.

¹⁰ The organisation should also use any other information it considers relevant, such as that relating to social, environmental and economic performance

Records of these reviews (3.1.5) will be kept and will include a schedule of activities to be carried out as a result of the review, specifying responsibilities, deadlines and resources assigned to each action.

3.2.5. Acceptance of commitments and approval of projects and services

Some reference principles:

2.1.3 Orientation to each person

2.2.5 Effectiveness and efficiency

2.2.7 Mission-oriented management

The management is responsible for accepting commitments with the Public Administration, end customers, funders or with regard to society.

Before accepting an agreement or commitment¹¹ to perform projects or provide services, the management must:

- Check consistency with the organisation's mission, vision and values.
- Clearly identify the requirements.
- Review and document the internal capacity to properly fulfil the commitment.
- Document the agreements reached with the funder or donor.
- Analyse the risks to the organisation's viability of entering into the agreement or commitment, considering, inter alia, the funder's ability to fulfil its obligations.

The organisation must record the review of these aspects before the agreement (3.1.5) and take into account the commitments made to end customers (3.4.1).

¹¹ The agreement or commitment with the funder might take the form of a contract, agreement, grant, concession etc.

3.2.6. Management Representative

Some reference principles:

2.1.1 Orientation to stakeholders

2.2.5 Effectiveness and efficiency

2.2.7 Mission-oriented management

The management will appoint a person from the management team with sufficient authority to:

- Ensure proper implementation and operation of the quality management system.
- Adapt said system in order to fulfil the organisation's objectives and mission.
- Ensure effectiveness in meeting requirements relating to the needs of customers and other stakeholders.
- Report to the management.

The entity's organisational chart (3.1.3) will identify the management representative, and stakeholders will be publicly informed of the appointment (3.5.4), with it being a priority to inform the members of the entity, whether volunteer or paid staff.

C. Processes

3.3. Process-based planning and management

The entity must organise its management by processes and plan in line with its mission, vision and values.

3.3.1. Continuous improvement cycle

Some reference principles:
2.2.5 Effectiveness and efficiency
2.2.6 Continuous Improvement

The entity must organise its management by processes, with a continuous improvement cycle approach, which will allow it to permanently adapt to the identified needs and expectations of end customers and other stakeholders (3.1.1 and 3.3.7), so that at least for each of the key processes (see Note 13), a sequence of activities is defined, following the continuous improvement cycle, in order to:

- Plan: defining the objectives for the period and actions to achieve them. Planning activities involves their scheduling and the allocation of responsibilities and resources.
- Execute: describing the activities necessary, and their interrelationship, for performing the projects, services or products.
- Measure: establishing systems that will make it possible to know the results based on quantitative or qualitative data, which are necessary to evaluate the process.
- Evaluate: analysing the results obtained, the reasons for deviations from the objectives and actions for improvement to be taken into account in the planning of the next cycle.

The organisation will define, in line with the other processes, the period of time covering an improvement cycle on the basis of the nature and objectives of the process.

3.3.2. Planning changes

The organisation must periodically analyse its internal functioning and the environment in which it is immersed in order to take a proactive stance in the event of any possible changes that might influence the quality with which it provides projects, services and products to its end customers. This analysis must be applied both to the management system as a whole¹² (3.2.4) and to the processes of evaluating and improving key processes.

From the analysis performed, the organisation must draw and document the corresponding conclusions, planning, as established in this section, any modification that must be made.

3.3.3. Defining and Planning processes

Some reference principles:

2.2.5 Effectiveness and efficiency

2.2.7 Mission-oriented management

The organisation must document all its processes in a map, defining those that are key¹³, and identifying their interrelationships and interdependencies with the others (3.1.3).

The key processes must be planned systematically, defining and documenting the set of activities (3.1.3) that guarantee the continuous improvement cycle in each of them. Precise guidelines will be established to ensure internal coordination, defining the interrelationship between the processes and assigning the persons in charge.

¹² This change planning could be done in the quality system review (3.2.4).

¹³ Key processes are those that are directly linked to fulfilment of the mission, especially those involved in providing the services and managing the projects aimed at meeting the identified needs of the end customers.

3.3.4. Setting quality objectives

Some reference principles:

2.1.1 Human dignity

2.1.2 Defence of rights

2.1.3 Orientation to each person

2.2.5 Effectiveness and efficiency

2.2.6 Continuous Improvement

2.2.7 Mission-oriented management

It is necessary to establish objectives both for the organisation's overall performance (3.2.2), as well as for the quality of the projects, services and products. The organisation must have quality objectives that are directly related to fulfilling its mission, seeking to contribute towards improving the exercise of rights and the quality of life of end customers. Objectives must be consistent with the quality policy, achievable, measurable and periodically assessable through indicators that the organisation must define (3.6).

The following aspects, among others, will be taken into account when setting the objectives:

- Mission, vision, values, strategy and quality policy (3.2.2).
- Current needs and expectations of customers and stakeholders (3.1.1).
- Quality characteristics of projects, services or products (3.4.1).
- The results obtained in the previous period (3.6).
- Available human, material and financial resources (3.2.3).
- The organisation's previous experiences and results, as well as those of other organisations or the sector as a whole (3.3.1).
- Changes in the environment that affect, or may affect in the future, the needs of customers or the organisation itself (3.3.2).

The assignment of responsibilities in meeting quality objectives will be in line with people's functions and level in the organisation. On the basis of the quality objectives, decisions will be made and actions planned that will lead to improvements in projects, services and products. (3.3.1 and 3.7).

Objectives must be periodically reviewed and adjusted on the basis of the results obtained from the performance of projects, services and products (3.6).

3.3.5. Defining roles and responsibilities

Some reference principles:

2.2.4 Professionalism

2.2.5 Effectiveness and efficiency

The functions, required profiles, responsibility, authority, availability and necessary interrelations between the volunteer and the paid staff involved in the activity, whether it is a project, service or product, must be defined, documented and communicated.

The organisation must define, document (3.1.3) and communicate (3.5.4) the entity's structure and the name of the offices and positions of which it is comprised, establishing for each position: the corresponding functions and responsibilities, the necessary requirements (studies, experience, skills, values, availability) to discharge such functions and the hierarchical relationship between the different offices.

3.3.6. Participation of volunteer staff, paid staff and end customers

Some reference principles:

2.1.2 Defence of rights

2.2.2 Value of the volunteers

2.2.3 Participation

The organisation's quality management system must reflect the manner in which voluntary staff and paid staff participate at all levels of management and define their impact on everything that affects application of the organisation's policies and objectives. Similarly, the organisation must promote and facilitate the participation of end customers in all aspects affecting them, particularly the processes that identify their needs and define the requirements of the project, service or product in order to meet them, with a record made of this process (3.1.3).

Participation processes must be identified and their scope and the resources necessary for them to operate must be defined.

3.3.7. Relations with stakeholders

Some reference principles:

2.2.1 Orientation to stakeholders

2.3.1 Solidarity

2.3.5 Democratic commitment

2.3.6 Openness and social involvement

The organisation must define and document (3.1.3) the management of its relationship with stakeholders with the aim of better adapting the performance of its activity to the expectations and needs of these stakeholders.

The organisation will identify its stakeholders and implement systems for identifying and prioritising their expectations and needs, measuring their perception of the organisation's action (3.1.1). The organisation must establish a system of continuous relationship, particularly with the stakeholders that are deemed to be a priority for it to fulfil its mission.

It may also define, providing this is appropriate for the entity's objectives and mission, formulas of network cooperation, joint learning, cooperation in joint projects and other possible alliances between different stakeholders. In this case, the requirements set out in Section 3.2.5 Acceptance of commitments and approval of projects and services will apply.

3.4. Development of key processes

3.4.1. Defining quality characteristics of projects, services and products

Some reference principles:

2.1.2 Defence of rights

2.1.3 Orientation to each person

2.2.1 Orientation to stakeholders

2.2.5 Effectiveness and efficiency

The organisation must define and document the quality characteristics of projects, services or products. For this purpose, it will take into account the identification of the needs and expectations of its end customers and other stakeholders (3.1.1), as well as legal and regulatory requirements (3.1.2) and any other requirements that are deemed necessary.

The quality characteristics establish the requirements of the projects, services or products that the organisation undertakes to fulfil with its end customers and other stakeholders. These requirements must be consistent with the organisation's values and the principles of this Standard, incorporating them into the quality characteristics of the project, service or product. This information will be made available to end customers and other stakeholders (3.5.4).

3.4.2. Implementing projects, services and products

Some reference principles:

2.1.2 Defence of rights

2.1.3 Orientation to each person

2.2.1 Orientation to stakeholders

2.2.5 Effectiveness and efficiency

The performance of projects, the provision of services, the manufacture of products, the handling of equipment and necessary environments –wherever the Standard is applied– will be carried out under controlled conditions (3.3.3). In order to ensure the quality of the projects, services or products provided, these controlled conditions, where necessary, will include:

- Description of the quality characteristics and requirements of the project, service or product.
- Availability of work procedures or instructions.
- Use of appropriate equipment.
- Definition of monitoring and evaluation indicators (3.6.1).

For the performance of activities, projects, services or products, the organisation will take into account, in addition to the end customers' expectations and needs, the requirements applying to them relating to human rights, occupational health and safety, the environment, applicable legislation and regulations, as well as other requirements resulting from the entity's commitments (3.1.1).

The Organisation will define, for the activities subject to the Standard, the commitments taken on by the provider and receiver of the project, service or product, including, as the case may be, other stakeholders.

3.4.3. Rights and duties of end customers

Some reference principles:

2.1.2 Defence of rights

2.1.3 Orientation to each person

2.2.1 Orientation to stakeholders

The organisation will define, document (3.1.3) and communicate¹⁴ (3.5.4) the rights and duties that it acknowledges to end customers, and which it undertakes to respect and promote.

These rights will include: the right of end customers to receive the activities of a project, a service or product that meet the defined quality requirements (3.1.1), the right to lodge a complaint (3.6.5), the right to obtain redress in the event of injury and all other rights recognised by applicable legislation.

Material goods and data owned by the end customer or by other stakeholders that are used in the performance of the project, service or product must be properly protected.

¹⁴ These rights must be known by everybody in the entity and particularly by those persons that have a direct impact on the fulfilment of such rights.

3.5. Development of the other processes¹⁵

3.5.1. People management

Some reference principles:

2.1.2 Defence of rights

2.1.3 Orientation to each person

2.2.1 Orientation to stakeholders

2.2.2 Value of the volunteers

2.2.3 Participation

2.2.4 Professionalism

Management must establish people management systems which are focused on fulfilling the requirements defined in projects, services and products, based on the principles of the Standard and which encourage the organisation's people to participate. Organisations with voluntary staff will draw up an internal regulation (3.1.3) setting out their rights and duties.

The entity must define position profiles (3.1.3) in accordance with the needs of each process, establishing minimum requirements to be met in terms of qualifications and experience and technical, ethical¹⁶ and personal¹⁷ competences.

Organisations that believe that they require the participation of volunteer staff to fulfil their mission and objectives must define (3.1.3) what profile is required for each of the activities¹⁸.

Staff will be selected according to the established profiles by means of a documented procedure (3.1.3) which guarantees the principle

15 The differentiation between "key processes" and "other processes" must not be interpreted as the Standard placing greater importance on the former as they are all essential for achieving the mission. The processes included in this section are common to all organisations. The Standard therefore sets out minimum requirements irrespective of the activities performed by the organisation. However, some of these processes might also be considered as key by the organisation depending on its mission and the activities that it performs. They would therefore also be subject to the requirements that the Standard establishes for key processes..

16 Ethical competence is defined as that which seeks to ensure the values of the organisation and the principles of this Standard.

17 The management will ensure that its leaders have appropriate values, training and experience to fulfil the organisation's mission and their leadership responsibilities.

18 This standard does not establish having voluntary staff or having paid staff as a mandatory requirement in the scope of activity.

of non-discrimination and professional competence in the functions that need to be performed.

The organisation's management should establish recognition systems for both its volunteer and its paid staff. These recognition systems must be based on criteria related to their contribution towards improving fulfilment of the mission and objectives.

When defining its positions and performing its staff selection processes, the organisation should consider practices of integrating end customers or other people in vulnerable situations. At any event, the organisation must demonstrate that, through its staff policy, it complies with legislation on practices of employment integration of these groups, where applicable (3.1.2).

The organisation should define a procedure for hiring people for the organisation, as well as career plans that are consistent with its mission, vision, values, objectives and resources. Where appropriate, career plans must take into account the position profiles, as well as the technical, ethical and personal capacities, setting out the objectives and actions to be performed. These plans must, where appropriate, be documented and agreed with the people before approval.

The organisation must identify and plan its staff's training needs so that they receive the training necessary to develop and enhance their skills in the activities entrusted to them in the project or service in which they work. This needs assessment must be documented in a training plan¹⁹ for all its staff (3.1.3). A record must be kept both of what training actions have been planned and eventually carried out and of the evaluation of their effectiveness according to the expected results (3.1.5).

Periodic evaluations will be performed of the results of staff management with regard to the policy and objectives defined in the performance of the processes, as well as compliance with applicable legislation and regulations.

¹⁹ It is recommendable for this plan to take into account, inter alia, training in quality management, training for the job itself, general functioning of the organisation, values of the organisation and teamwork.

3.5.2. Purchasing management

Some reference principles:

2.2.5 Effectiveness and efficiency

2.2.7 Mission-oriented management

Purchased materials and outsourced services, which are part of the organisation's services and products, have an impact on their features, result and impacts, as well as on the perception of them. The organisation must therefore define its purchasing management when such purchases directly affect the satisfaction of stakeholders, particularly end customers, but also the work environment and the natural environment.

All purchasing management must include identifying needs and must be planned and controlled so as to ensure that the quality requirements or objectives established by the organisation for its projects, services or products are achieved. The type, degree and scope of control applied to the supplier, and to the purchased product or service, will be proportional to the impact that these have on the quality of the project, service or product that the organisation provides to its end customers.

When selecting suppliers, the organisation must define and document the requirements demanded of the supplier with regard to the hired service or product, as well as with regard to other aspects of supplier management that are relevant for the organisation's mission and values²⁰.

The organisation must establish which suppliers are considered to be key to the quality of the project, service or product. For this purpose, it must define systems for inspecting and evaluating the services and products received that ensure compliance with the demanded requirements. Records will be kept of orders and quality inspections and evaluations (3.1.5).

All stored products that need to be used in performance of the project or provision of the service to ensure its quality must be controlled and minimum available stock levels will be set. Storage sites, management systems and resources must guarantee the conservation, control, traceability, accessibility and management of

²⁰ For example, those aspects relating to the supplier's responsibility for its impacts on society.

the stored products. The organisation must guarantee appropriate conditions of cleanliness and maintenance, in accordance with the requirements of the project, service or product and applicable legislation.

3.5.3. Economic Management

Some reference principles:

2.2.5 Effectiveness and efficiency

2.2.7 Mission-oriented management

2.3.3 Transparency

2.3.4 Accountability

The organisation must be funded in a manner that is consistent with its mission and values. It must also properly apply the economic resources, seeking maximum efficiency, with transparency, and without undermining compliance with the established requirements of its projects, services and products. For this purpose, the organisation must have a system of management and budgetary control, both of the entity as a whole and of the projects, services and products it performs, which allows it to evaluate the results, as well as a process of accountability and reporting to stakeholders.

In order to ensure efficient use of resources and the sustainability of the projects and services, and of the organisation, the following activities, *inter alia*, should be carried out:

- Analysis of efficiency in performance of projects, provision of services and manufacture of products.
- Study of the sources of funding and its distribution.
- Budget and fundraising forecast.
- Forecast of the organisation's direct and indirect costs.
- Temporary investment policy.

The organisation must apply the standardised criteria in the applicable accounting standards and it must perform economic/financial audits in accordance with legal regulations and the commitments assumed by the organisation itself (3.1.2).

3.5.4. Internal and external communication

Some reference principles:

2.2.1 Orientation to stakeholders

2.3.2 Trust

2.3.3 Transparency

2.3.4 Accountability

The organisation must plan and document (3.1.5) internal communication actions aimed at informing and facilitating the participation of the people who make up the organisation, in an effective manner.

Similarly, the organisation must plan and document (3.1.5) external communication actions aimed at establishing a smooth and effective relationship with all stakeholders, particularly with end customers and funders.

The organisation must perform actions to identify the information needs of its stakeholders, particularly the priority stakeholders. On the basis of these needs, the organisation will provide the means and resources to meet the communication requirements and needs, particularly with regard to participation, justification, transparency and accountability.

The organisation must draw up and publish an annual report (3.1.5) which will include the results (economic, operating, of perception and satisfaction²¹) obtained in the year for the various projects, services and products. The report must include an analysis of said results in relation to the approved objectives, schedule and budget. The annual report must include, among other information, an analysis of the source and use of the funds raised in the year.

All information published by the organisation relating to its management, positioning, results and activities must be verified and approved by the people in charge appointed by the organisation.

The organisation must set out in its communication policy, or another document, a catalogue of ethical communication commitments (3.1.3) that are consistent with its values and with those of this Standard.

²¹ Satisfaction results refer to end customers, while those of perception refer to any stakeholder.

D. Measurement and improvement

3.6. Measurement, analysis and evaluation

3.6.1. Process performance

Some reference principles:

2.2.1 Orientation to stakeholders

2.2.5 Effectiveness and efficiency

2.3.4 Accountability

The organisation must measure the results of key processes. The results of the other processes will also be measured according to their level of influence on the quality of the projects, services and products included in the scope of the management system.

For these processes, the following must be measured:

- The results obtained.
- The degree of achievement of the processes according to the established requirements.

This measurement must demonstrate the capacity and suitability of the processes to achieve the planned results. Indicators relating to quality aspects and characteristics (3.4.1) associated with projects, services and products will be used and oriented towards the requirements resulting from the expectations of end customers and other stakeholders, and in line with the organisation's policy and objectives. The satisfaction of end customers and the perception of other stakeholders must also be measured (3.6.2).

The evaluation method for processes and the frequency of such evaluations will depend on their importance, the requirements to be met and the organisation's resources.

As a minimum, the defined key processes will be evaluated on the basis of the information collected that enables the organisation to know the level of contribution to the achievement of objectives, requirements and expectations.

3.6.2. Customer satisfaction

Some reference principles:

2.2.1 Orientation to stakeholders

2.2.6 Continuous Improvement

The organisation must establish mechanisms to periodically collect the perception of its end customers, the level of satisfaction of their needs and fulfilment of their expectations with regard to the project, service or product received, as a manner of measuring its performance. The methods for obtaining and using such information must be identified and documented. The results of these satisfaction measurement activities must be considered as records (3.1.5).

3.6.3. Internal audits

Some reference principles:

2.2.5 Effectiveness and efficiency

2.2.6 Continuous Improvement

2.2.7 Mission-oriented management

The organisation must perform periodic internal audits of its quality management system. For this purpose, it must develop an internal audit plan to assess the effective functioning of the management system as a regular part of the oversight of its operations, in such a way that the plan is oriented towards:

- Evaluating the implementation, effectiveness and suitability of the operating policies and objectives.
- Complying with applicable legal requirements.
- Identifying areas for improvement that lead to progressive improvement in meeting the expectations of end customers and in the organisation's performance and management.

The internal audit plan must be prepared taking into account the importance of the processes and their impact on the quality of the organisation's projects, services or products, their objectives, and the result of previous audits. The audit criteria, scope, frequency methodology must be defined. The organisation will also establish the qualification requirements for auditors so as to ensure their technical capacity and the objectivity and impartiality of the audit

process. The organisation must establish a documented procedure (3.1.3) that defines the responsibilities for planning and performing audits, and which sets out the records generated and how and to whom they should be reported.

The results of the audits will be documented and records will be kept (3.1.5), with criteria established for distributing the results that make it possible to initiate actions as soon as possible to remove any non-conformities detected and their causes. The audit results must be analysed and taken into consideration in the system review (3.2.4).

3.6.4. Data analysis

Some reference principles:

2.2.5 Effectiveness and efficiency

2.2.6 Continuous Improvement

2.2.7 Mission-oriented management

The organisation must identify, collect and analyse the data needed to assess the suitability and effectiveness of the quality management system in relation to its objectives (3.3.3). This analysis should seek continuous improvement in the effectiveness of the organisation's management system with regard to the objectives of its mission (3.3.1 and 3.3.3). The data analysis must consider at least information relating to:

- Evolution of the results of key processes (3.6.1).
- Trends in indicators.
- The results of stakeholder satisfaction (3.6.2).
- Identified non-conformities (3.6.4.)
- Complaints or claims (3.6.5).

The organisation should also consider any other trend in variables that are deemed relevant for assessing the effectiveness of the management and the level of consistency with the organisation's mission.

The organisation should perform data analysis with appropriate disaggregation according to the characteristics of its end customers or stakeholders to whom such data refer.

3.6.5. Non-conformities

Some reference principles:

2.2.5 Effectiveness and efficiency

2.2.6 Continuous Improvement

Non-conformities must be taken into consideration as an important source of learning for the continuous improvement of the management system. The organisation must ensure that non-conformities of projects, services and products are identified in order to manage them appropriately. A documented procedure (3.1.3) must be defined in order to identify and correct non-conformities with respect to the requirements of this Standard, the requirements of quality characteristics associated with the projects, services and products, and the organisation's management requirements.

3.6.6. Complaints, suggestions and claims system

Some reference principles:

2.2.1 Orientation to stakeholders

2.2.5 Effectiveness and efficiency

2.2.6 Continuous Improvement

The organisation must establish and publicise an effective system for collecting, recording (3.1.5), analysing and responding to complaints and claims from end customers and other stakeholders, as well as for remedying the effects, where possible, and acting on the causes. The complaints management system must be documented (3.1.3), accessible and appropriate to the characteristics and specific features of each stakeholder, ensuring confidentiality in the process.

The organisation must establish a system for collecting, recording and processing suggestions for improvement appropriate to each stakeholder.

3.7. Improvement

3.7.1. Corrective and preventive actions

Some reference principles:
2.2.5 Effectiveness and efficiency
2.2.6 Continuous Improvement

The organisation must define and document (3.1.3) the process for reviewing and analysing causes of non-conformities, assessing the need for planned actions so that they are not repeated, the approval and implementation of such actions and the evaluation of their effectiveness.

Both non-conformities and potential problems will be taken into consideration, resulting in, as appropriate, corrective actions and preventive actions, respectively. Corrective and preventive actions must be consistent and in line with the effects of the non-conformities or the causes of the potential problems identified. The actions implemented and their results must be recorded (3.1.5). The record of the corrective or preventive action must include information on the non-conformity or potential non-conformity that gave rise to it, the result of the analysis of the causes, the action(s) approved to resolve the cause of the non-conformity, the persons responsible and the deadlines in the planning, as well as evidence of the person that approved it. It may also include information on the treatment given to the non-conformities.

The responsibility and authority to initiate the investigation and to take the required corrective and preventive actions must be documented.

3.7.2. Improvement Groups

Some reference principles:

2.2.3 Participation

2.2.5 Effectiveness and efficiency

2.2.6 Continuous Improvement

Improvement actions must be part of the organisation's regular activity. In this regard, the entity must document its continuous improvement system (3.1.3).

In the event that this system includes working groups for improvement, the organisation should define the terms under which they are created and operated. The organisation must also promote the participation in such improvement groups or teams of the people involved and, where appropriate, representatives of other stakeholders.

With the aim of improving on the previously achieved quality levels, the improvement actions must be based on information and data from the results of the continuous evaluation of the activities, projects, services and products, as well as experience resulting from execution and/or evaluation of the processes (3.6.4).

Annex 1.

Reference and consultation standards and documents

In addition to the basic legislation applicable to Social Services and NGOs, this Standard has considered other international and national standards, as well as other documents recognised in the field of quality. Among these, for version 5 of the Standard, the following should be highlighted:

- UNE-EN ISO 9000:2005 Standard.
- UNE-EN ISO 9001:2008 Standard.
- UNE-EN ISO 9004:2009 Standard.
- UNE-EN ISO 14001:2004 Standard. Environmental Management System. Requirements with guide for use.
- ISO 10006:2003 Standard. UNE 66916:2003 Guidelines for quality management in projects.
- UNE-EN ISO 19011:2012 Guidelines for auditing management systems.
- The European Excellence Model (EFQM), applied to public services and NGOs, and the 2013 excellence model.
- Global Reporting Initiative: GRIG3.1 Non-Governmental Organization Sector Supplement.
- ISO 26000:2010 Social Responsibility.
- Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP) Accountability and Quality Management Standards 2010.
- Code of Good Practice in the Management and Support of Aid Personnel. People in Aid 2003.

- Code of conduct of Non-Governmental Development Organisations - Spanish Development NGO Coordinator - CONGDE. 2008.
- AccountAbility's AA1000 Series of Standards (AA1000 APS, AA1000 AS, AA1000 SES).
- International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGO) Accountability Charter.
- Manual for the Implementation of the NGO Quality Standard. Institute for the Quality of NGOs - ICONG. 2011.
- Application of principles in management systems based on the NGO Quality Standard. Institute for the Quality of NGOs - ICONG. 2011.

Annex 2.

Definitions and terminology

Accountability

A communication exercise conducted by an organisation in which it regularly provides relevant, appropriate and reliable information on its strategy, management, decisions, actions, results, commitments and impacts. This information allows stakeholders to evaluate, generate opinion and criteria on the organisation's actions over a specific period. All of this is aimed at facilitating understanding of the extent to which the organisation's legal or voluntary commitments and its objectives have been met.

Alliances

Working relationships between two or more parties that seek to create value and increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation and/or its interventions, particularly those aimed at improving the exercise of rights and access to opportunities for the end customer.

Audit or evaluation criteria

Policies, procedures, standards, system requirements, reference regulation or sectoral legislation, or contractual requirements to be met. This is used as the benchmark against which the evidence is compared.

Audit team

One or more auditors who perform an audit, assisted by technical experts, where necessary.

Audit

"Objective, systematic, independent and documented process or examination with the aim of verifying and obtaining audit evidence" and evaluating it objectively in order to determine the extent to which the "audit criteria" are met. The audit can be of different types according to its objective: internal or external (depending on whether the aim is to inform the organisation or a third party); and first, second or third party (depending on whether it is demanded by the organisation itself, a customer or stakeholder, or a system of certification or recognition by third parties).

Career plan

Tool for the mobility and management of human resources that is framed in a dynamic that combines individual and organisational objectives. A person's career plan must be consistent with the organisation's objectives and mission as well as with the needs and expectations of the person.

Characteristic of quality

A differentiating feature of a service, project or product, or a process related to one of their requirements, which the organisation undertakes to fulfil with its end customers and other stakeholders.

Collaborative network

Set of people or organisations that contribute intellectual and/or operational work to a project with a common objective. Collaborative networks aim to increase their impact or effectiveness through the cooperation of agents or innovative ideas. They choose to change the traditional operational or research method by seeking out skills and talent beyond the boundaries of each organisation. This type of collaborative network understands innovation as open, democratic, distributed and led by network communities.

Continuous improvement

Recurring activity to increase the ability to fulfil the requirements or objectives in the management of an organisation.

Controlled conditions

In the performance of projects, the provision of services, the manufacture of products and the handling of equipment, there is information available that describes the quality characteristics and requirements of the product or service, as well as the work procedures and instructions, the appropriate equipment and the necessary monitoring and evaluation systems.

Corrective action

Action taken to eliminate the cause of one or several detected non-conformities or other undesirable situations.

Customer

A natural or legal person that receives a service or product from the organisation.

Effectiveness

Measurement of the degree of achievement of the results obtained and planned. It can also be understood as the achieved level of a specific objective of an intervention in a beneficiary population, within a given period of time, without considering the costs incurred to obtain them.

Efficiency

Relationship between results achieved and resources used.

End customer

User or group at which the products, services and projects are aimed, and which justifies the existence, activities and mission of the organisation. According to this standard, the concept of end customer does not always require a commercial relationship between the customer and the organisation, and in some cases it does not require a direct operational relationship, but it does require them to be the people for which the organisation's activity aims to improve the exercise of their rights.

Ethical principles

Universal moral laws adopted by the organisation and by which it is guided.

Evidence

Records, statements of facts and any other information that is pertinent for the audit criteria and that is verifiable.

Fundamental rights

Fundamental rights are those human rights that are found in specific legislation, thus leading to a defined jurisdiction in space and time. These are infeasible, inalienable, non-waivable and universal rights.

ICONG

Institute for the Quality of NGOs, a non-profit organisation whose fundamental mission is to disseminate and promote the culture of Quality among third-sector organisations. The development of the NGO Quality Standard and the certification of quality management systems based on it are the Institute's core activity.

Independence

Acting exclusively under the authority of the organisation's governing bodies, and in a way that is aligned and consistent with its objectives, values and mission.

Indicator

This is a unit of measurement that allows an organisation's key variables to be monitored and periodically reviewed in order to improve.

Information

Data that has meaning.

Key process

Process directly linked to fulfilment of the mission, especially those involved in providing the services and managing the projects aimed at meeting the identified needs of the end customers.

Leaders

People who drive and ensure that the organisation is consistent with its mission and values, proposing an effective strategy and objectives, and coordinating the deployment of said strategy according to the expectations and needs of stakeholders.

Management system

A system for establishing policy and objectives, as well as for achieving those objectives. A management system may integrate other systems, such as quality, financial, environmental and other systems.

Mission

A statement describing the purpose or *raison d'être* of an organisation. The entity can include in the Mission aspects that make it different and that provide social value.

Non-conformity

Failure to meet requirements.

Non-profit organisation

An organisation whose profits from the value created from its activities revert to its purposes and activities.

Objective

A goal, in terms of performance, that an organisation sets for itself to achieve and which, as far as possible, must be quantifiable.

Organisation

A group of people and facilities with a certain deployment of responsibilities, authorities, relations and activities of transformation of some goods into others of greater value.

Participation

Principle that encourages the autonomy of people through the integration of such people in the decision making of a group or organisation.

People's quality of life

Extent to which individuals are able to exercise their rights and meet their material, intellectual, emotional and affective needs.

Performance

A measure of what an individual, team, organisation, or process has achieved.

Performance

Level of achievement of assigned objectives or tasks. Progress of an organisation in the fulfilment of its mission, in terms of effectiveness.

Political advocacy

A process performed by an organisation, individual or group which normally aims to influence public policies and resource allocation decisions within political, economic and social systems and institutions. It may be motivated by moral, ethical or faith principles or simply to protect an asset of interest (private or social).

Preventive action

Action taken to eliminate the cause of a potential non-conformity or other potentially undesirable situation.

Procedure

A standardised way of performing an activity or process. Procedures may or may not be documented.

Process

A set of related activities that interact in order to transform inputs into outputs.

Product

Material object, the result of a process, that seeks to meet the needs of customers.

Project

Planning of a set of interrelated and coherent activities aimed at achieving one or more objectives following a defined methodology, with suitable staff and material resources, and which seeks the achievement of certain quality results with limited time and resources.

Quality management system

Management system for directing and controlling an organisation with respect to quality. This management system includes components such as the organisation's structure, responsibilities, procedures, processes and resources that are established to perform an entity's quality management.

Quality management

Aspect of an organisation's general management that determines and applies the quality policy through a work system in order to achieve planned objectives.

Quality manual

Document that describes the organisation's management system, setting out how to comply with its requirements.

Quality objective

Determination of desired results related to the quality policy. These are generally specified for the relevant levels and functions of the organisation.

Quality policy

General guidelines and objectives of an organisation relating to the quality of the service and commitments to stakeholders.

Quality

Extent to which a set of characteristics inherent to a product and service meets previously set requirements, with these being consistent with the identified needs and expectations of its end customers and other stakeholders.

Record

Document that provides information on actions and results achieved through the activities performed that generates evidence.

Requirement

Established need or expectation which determines the criteria to be fulfilled by the organisation when performing its activities in order to comply with its institutional commitments.

Resources

A set of elements available to meet a need or perform a process. Resources can be classified, inter alia, as natural, economic, technological and human.

Rights approach

Orientation of a person or organisation that unequivocally states that the intended result of their actions is to increase people's capacities for the full and effective exercise of their rights - being protagonists of their own development - in the framework of conformity with international standards.

Risk

An uncertain event or condition that, should it occur, has an effect on the achievement of the objectives of the organisation, project or service.

Service

Manner in which the products are developed or direct activities performed for the customer.

Social intervention organisations

Organisations that seek to have an impact on improving the quality of life of people and access to their rights, including social action, development cooperation, humanitarian, environmental and human rights organisations.

Social legitimacy

Concept that generates the idea, with consensus in society, that an action, person or organisation, is considered authentic, fair, equitable and appropriate for it. Social legitimacy and legal legitimacy can and should match, but this is not always the case. There may be differences between what is established by the law (de jure) and what society perceives and therefore recognises (de facto).

Stakeholder

A person or group of people that is affected by and/or has an interest in the management or success of the organisation.

Strategic process

A process that serves to strategically guide the organisation's activity.

Support process

A process that guarantees good conditions and resources so that other types of processes are performed optimally.

TDIC

Technical Development and Innovation Committee, part of the structure of the Institute for NGO Quality (ICONG). It is the technical body that proposes technical documents to the governing bodies of ICONG for approval and publication.

Traceability

An organisation's ability to track the history, application or location of everything under consideration, particularly services, projects and products. This term may also be used to reconstruct the history of economic resources, human resources, materials, results of processes or any other object that may be relevant for understanding the organisation.

Training plan

Coherent and planned set of training actions that are aimed at providing and perfecting the skills needed to achieve the organisation's strategic objectives.

Transparency

Quality of an organisation related to the extent to which its stakeholders have real access to relevant information related to its governance, organisation, processes, activities, results and impacts.

Access to such information may be proactive or promoted by the organisation when requested or demanded by a stakeholder.

User satisfaction

User perception of the extent to which their needs and expectations have been met.

User

A person or group that receives a service. See end customer.

Validation

Confirmation through examination and provision of objective evidence that particular requirements in relation to the identified expectations and needs of end customers and other stakeholders are met.

Values

Concepts and expectations that describe the behaviour of the people in the organisation and determine all their relationships.

Vision

A statement describing what the organisation wants to be like in the future. In its vision, the entity can identify the problems and needs it intends to address.

Volunteering

Organised voluntary action performed within a non-profit organisation by individuals who, with altruism and solidarity, intervene in situations of violation, removal or lack of rights or opportunities for achieving a better quality of life and greater social cohesion and justice as an expression of organised active citizenship.

Vulnerable groups

Population groups that face specific conditions of accumulated inequality, precariousness or disadvantage due to their exposure to the risk or impact of losing their lives, assets and livelihoods

