

**RESCUE & SUPPORT THE HELPLESS
FOUNDATION
(RESH)**



**HIBERNATION, RELOCATION AND EVACUATION
PLAN 2025**

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Hibernation, Relocation and Evacuation Plan

Standard Operating Procedures (SOP):

1.0 Motivation

Resh Foundation (RESH) is committed to executing its programs and projects while prioritizing the safety and security of its staff, beneficiaries, and assets. Operating in diverse and often challenging environments, RESH faces various risks and challenges. Nevertheless, the organization takes all necessary precautions to ensure that the safety of its personnel and beneficiaries remains a non-negotiable priority. To address situations where the security environment no longer allows safe and effective operations, RESH recognizes the critical need for clear Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). In such scenarios, the organization may consider relocating staff, either domestically or internationally. This SOP has therefore been developed to guide decision-making and action in such circumstances.

The relocation or evacuation of humanitarian organizations can sometimes worsen the security landscape, as it may signal to local communities that the situation has become more dangerous. Such actions can also be perceived as the removal of a protective presence that humanitarian actors often represent. Withdrawing personnel is a highly visible move that can significantly impact an organization's reputation within the host community or country. If not managed carefully, it may be challenging to rebuild trust and relationships with local authorities, beneficiaries, and the broader community upon return. For this reason, the decision to initiate relocation is reserved solely for the most senior official in the country office (the Country Director).

2.0 Criteria for Eligibility

RESH is committed to relocating staff to safer locations within the country whenever security conditions demand such action. However, this process is guided by specific eligibility criteria. The primary standard is that all expatriates and national staff working in a location different from their registered place of residence are considered for relocation. Accordingly:

- i. If RESH employs a national staff member residing in Location X but assigns them to work in Location Y, RESH assumes the responsibility of returning them to their home base (Location X) during a relocation.
- ii. In the event of a full evacuation, expatriate staff may be required to leave the country entirely.

2.1 Destination

The decision on where to relocate staff depends entirely on the prevailing security conditions in the affected area. Two potential scenarios may arise:

- i. If the security situation worsens to an intolerable level and all access routes to designated assembly points are either blocked or deemed unsafe or if RESH opts to stay in the area programming will be suspended. In this case, RESH will adopt a low-profile posture (hibernation) until it is safe to either relocate staff or resume operations as conditions improve.
- ii. If the security situation deteriorates to a critical point but relocation routes remain accessible, RESH will suspend its activities and move staff to a pre-identified assembly area or relocation site. During this period, RESH's security team will closely monitor the situation and provide daily updates to senior management.

For hibernation within the country (scenario one), a secure location must be agreed upon in advance. The logistics team, in coordination with the security unit, will make necessary preparations ensuring communication systems, shelter, transport, and essential equipment are available at the hibernation site.

For in-country relocation (scenario two), a safe destination must also be identified. Similarly, the logistics and security teams will handle all arrangements for communication, accommodation, transportation, and equipment at the relocation point.

All external relocations will take place either through Abuja International Airport or Lagos International Airport depending on the obtained residency permit.

3.0 Responsibilities

During any relocation, whether domestic or international, the following responsibilities are designated to specific units and personnel:

Duties	Responsible Unit/ Personnel
Overall Leadership and Decision Making	The Country Director holds ultimate responsibility for staff safety and security. All decisions regarding relocation, hibernation, or evacuation fall exclusively under the authority

<p>Communication with Security Unit and country office</p>	<p>of the Country Director or an officially designated representative.</p> <p>It is the duty of the Field Manager or the Coordinator in their absence to notify both the Security Unit and the Country Office of any emergency arising in the field.</p>
<p>Coordination with the national authorities</p>	<p>Engaging with national authorities is primarily the responsibility of the Country Director. However, in urgent situations where immediate action is required, the Field Manager may independently contact relevant authorities. In such cases, the Country Director and Security Manager must be informed as soon as communication becomes possible.</p>
<p>Communication with Field Staff</p>	<p>Informing field personnel about RESH's decision to hibernate, relocate, or evacuate is the responsibility of the Field Manager.</p>
<p>Staff movement coordination</p>	<p>The Field Manager oversees the overall coordination of staff movements. However, organizing transportation falls under the purview of the Logistics Team, with support from the Security Unit.</p>
<p>Information gathering and Risk Assessment</p>	<p>Both the Security Unit and Field Manager are responsible for collecting information on the security context and risk levels. However, analyzing and interpreting this information is the sole responsibility of the Security Unit.</p>
<p>Logistics and Operational Support</p>	<p>The Logistics Team is tasked with managing communication systems, accommodation, transport, and equipment for relocated staff. They are also expected to consult with the Security Unit regarding travel documentation, route conditions, and accessibility.</p>

4.0 Management of Assets/Documents

During preparations for Hibernation, Relocation, or Evacuation (HRE), certain critical documents must be secured. These include:

- i. Check books settled bills from the latest financial period, and invoices
- ii. Most recent financial records, such as payroll, financial reports, and bank statements
- iii. Staff data files and personnel lists
- iv. Electronic files stored on computers
- v. Insurance documents and policies
- vi. Original versions of key contracts, agreements, and lease documents
- vii. Project proposals and grant applications
- viii. Inventory lists for equipment, vehicles, and other organizational assets

A separate checklist is required for portable and high-value assets that must be evacuated, this includes the following:

- i. Communications radio and handsets.
- ii. satellite or mobile telephones.
- iii. laptop computers.
- iv. desktop computer hard drives, data back-ups, or drives.
- v. any convertible currency on hand.

RESH must also develop a contingency plan for handling non-evacuated assets. Options include securing them in safe storage, relocating them to a more secure site, or disposing of them appropriately (including destruction, if necessary).

5.0 Procedures for after-relocation

After any relocation or evacuation, RESH must prepare a comprehensive summary outlining the anticipated effects of its withdrawal or temporary closure. This should include a clear plan detailing the remaining actions required to close out or suspend ongoing projects or programs in the affected area. If deemed appropriate, RESH may also establish guidelines for maintaining limited operations through the continued involvement of local staff.

Key areas to address include:

- i. The main responsibilities and leadership roles.
- ii. Maintaining of communication with the country office.
- iii. Liaising with the local authority and other agencies in the area.
- iv. Protecting assets, valuables, and infrastructure.
- v. Financial authority for payment disbursement.
- vi. Payments of salaries, incentives, and benefits.
- vii. Contract signing and termination with service providers.

5.1 Information Required to Facilitate Implementation

To support the continuation or closure of operations post-relocation, RESH must collect and prepare the following information:

- i. A list of staff members contacts information.
- ii. Inventories of emergency food, water, and supplies stored in staff residences, assembly points, or safe shelters
- iii. Clear procedures for self-evacuation in emergencies
- iv. Quick Evacuation Guides such as:

A. Personal “travel” bag (PTB): All field staff must keep a ready-to-go travel bag equipped for immediate evacuation. The PTB should include:

- i. Valid passport and travel documents.
- ii. RESH’s ID Card.
- iii. Extra Cash – convertible currency.
- iv. Copy of the Evacuation Plan.
- v. Emergency contact information.
- vi. Radio or mobile phone with extra batteries.
- vii. Flashlight with batteries.
- viii. Clothing including good walking shoes.
- ix. Personal medicines.
- x. First Aid Kit.
- xi. Maps if necessary.
- xii. Laptop and/or project backup information.

B. Field Survival kit (FSK): In high-risk or remote environments, staff must carry a Field Survival Kit to ensure basic survival in case of isolation or unexpected overnight stays. Items should include:

- i. Flashlight with batteries.
- ii. Map and a Compass.
- iii. Bottled Water.
- iv. High Energy Bars.
- v. Extra Socks.
- vi. First Aid Kit.
- vii. Multi-tool (Swiss knife).
- viii. Lighter.
- ix. Survival Blanket.
- x. Lightweight sleeping bag.
- xi. Candles.

C. Hibernation Stocks: In the event of hibernation, safe houses will need to be pre-stocked with essential items. (For quantities, determine likely numbers of personnel to hibernate and multiply by 15 days). During hibernation, all staff should have their PTB with them, containing all the items they would need if required to evacuate without any prior notice from the area.

The list of items included in the Hibernation Stocks is comprised of:

- i. Water: Drinking, Cooking, and bathing.
- ii. Non-perishable food items.
- iii. Hygiene items.
- iv. Sleeping area items.
- v. Cooking items.

- vi. Fuel for generators.
- vii. Lamps/oil lamps.
- viii. Flashlights with extra-batteries.
- ix. Matches.
- x. First Aid Kits.

6.0 Evacuation and Relocation Checklist

To ensure a smooth evacuation or relocation process, Rest must complete the following steps:

- i. Confirm evacuation or relocation plans in coordination with the Country Office
- ii. Conduct staff briefings to explain the procedures and expectations
- iii. Secure all required travel and exit documentation for personnel involved
- iv. Reserve an emergency stockpile of fuel for both vehicles and generators
- v. Gather and secure essential documents to be taken during evacuation
- vi. Back up critical computer files on storage devices or transmit them electronically to the Country Office
- vii. Complete an inventory of all office assets and equipment
- viii. Assign responsibility for carrying portable assets and important project materials to designated staff
- ix. Prepare and secure non-portable assets; confirm that vehicles are functional and safe for travel
- x. Draft termination letters for local lease agreements and service contracts
- xi. Prepare final salary payments and termination letters for national staff, where applicable
- xii. Provide a handover briefing to national staff regarding continuation or closure of operations, as appropriate
- xiii. For each evacuating staff member:
- xiv. Always Maintain open lines of communication with the Country Office
- xv. Store at least a two-week supply of food, clean water, and essential items (including first aid kits, hygiene products, candles, flashlights, kerosene, and batteries) at their place of residence
- xvi. Pack a ready-to-go evacuation bag for immediate departure
- xvii. Keep all personal identification and always travel documents accessible

7.0 Decision to Return

In the event of an evacuation of RESH's national or international staff, the authority to approve their return to the affected area rests solely with the Country Director. This decision will be made after a joint consultation involving the Country Director, Field Manager, and Security Manager—based on a thorough security assessment confirming that conditions have improved and the location is deemed safe for re-entry.