

# EPHA RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

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The European Public Health Alliance

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# EPHA Risk Management

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## Risk Management

Risk management in an NGO involves identifying, assessing, and prioritising risks that could potentially impact the organisation's operations, assets, reputation, and ability to achieve its mission. It encompasses the development and implementation of strategies to minimize, monitor, and control the probability or impact of adverse events.

Effective risk management in an NGO not only helps in safeguarding the organisation's assets and reputation but also enhances its resilience and ability to achieve its mission in an ever-changing environment.

## Areas of Risk Identification

- **Operational Risks:** These include risks related to day-to-day activities, such as project delays, resource shortages, or logistical issues.
- **Financial Risks:** These involve risks related to funding, budgeting, financial mismanagement, and fraud.
- **Strategic Risks:** These are risks that affect the NGO's long-term goals and mission, such as changes in donor priorities, political changes, or shifts in public policy.
- **Compliance Risks:** These are associated with legal and regulatory requirements, including adherence to local laws, donor requirements, and international standards.
- **Reputational Risks:** Risks that could damage the NGO's reputation, such as negative publicity, stakeholder dissatisfaction, or ethical breaches.
- **Environmental and Social Risks:** These include natural disasters, health crises, or community relations issues.

## Structural Organisation of Risk Management in EPHA

Risk management is part of the organisational development team at EPHA. It is overseen by the Head of Organisational Development, who receives reports from the EPHA Project Manager. Project risks are assessed by the project managers of the individual projects and reported to the organisational development team. In 2023, training was held for employees to raise awareness of risk management principles and practices. Risk management is an integral part of the organisation's workflows and decision-making processes.

With EPHA's Director General overseeing the work, weekly meetings of the Executive Team aim to ensure a continuous flow of information and consistency, to build synergies between each pillar of work, and to monitor the progression as well as assess potential emerging risks. In addition, the work is top-line overseen and progress against objectives assessed by EPHA Management Board that meets (at least) quarterly, with input and support from EPHA.



## EPHA Critical Risks and Risk Management Strategy 2024

Risk No	Description	Proposed risk-mitigation measures
1	<p>HR: changes of staff, lack of sufficient staff to carry out the described activities, especially if a critical number of submitted proposals (e.g., action grants, Horizon Europe projects) are successful</p> <p>Medium risk; high impact</p>	<p>EPHA's consolidated HR, recruitment, traineeship, and talent development strategy addresses this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timely recruitment of new team members when needed and financially possible, counting on the contribution of EPHA's wide networks for the hiring of personnel at all levels of seniority</li> <li>• Making use of EPHA's traineeship program connecting recent graduates/recent EPHA interns with knowledge and expertise as a basis for hiring junior members of the team</li> <li>• Standardised internship recruitment programme taking place twice a year</li> <li>• Providing in house training to increase team capacity and effectiveness</li> </ul>
2	<p>Operational risks coming with new team members joining the team in Q4 2023 and Q1 2024</p> <p>Medium risk; high impact</p>	<p>EPHA's approach to mitigating these risks includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing a thorough induction process to bring new team members up to speed with EPHA's structure, workplan and processes</li> <li>• Offering increased mentorship at early stages of employment to increase the understanding</li> <li>• Carrying out checks and monitoring to compare the workplan vs achievements</li> <li>• Providing active oversight by the Director General and EPHA Board members</li> </ul>
3	<p>Unforeseen major events, including pandemics, terrorist attacks, floods</p> <p>Low risk; high impact</p>	<p>EPHA's experience during the COVID-19 pandemic showed its resilience to shift and adapt priorities in agreement with CHAFEA/HaDEA within previous operating grants. Currently, the staff, leadership, and members are better equipped to respond to major external unforeseen events.</p>
4	<p>Cancellation or changing circumstances in the organisation of in-presence meetings</p> <p>High risk; low impact</p>	<p>EPHA established the use of professional IT support for the organisation of meetings, and the use of a mix of in-presence, online and hybrid events to facilitate participation of members, experts and other key contributors with lower risks of cancellations and environmental impact.</p>
5	<p>Reduction of membership</p> <p>Low risk; medium impact</p>	<p>EPHA's membership strategy aims at addressing and preventing this risk, with a dedicated senior member of the staff responsible for the development, implementation and improvement of the membership strategy with the support of the Management Board. Membership services and engagement are continuously improved by providing the tools for continuous dialogue, feedback, and opportunities for members. The EPHA team is engaged with members across different clusters/policy areas.</p>



		EPHA's wide network and its increased emphasis on networks, alliances and coalitions facilitate the incorporation of new members, with particular emphasis on members representing traditionally under-represented voices/groups.
6	Reduction of co-financing from external sources Low risk; medium impact	For most of the co-financing for the activities foreseen EPHA has secured co-financing in advance. The diversity of independent funding sources that EPHA has secured over the years, and its new long-term funding strategy that focuses on funding diversification, guarantees the continuity of the co-funding required for this project.
7	Low engagement by citizens, civil society and other groups represented in EPHA membership Low risk; high impact	EPHA works closely with members, involving them and providing opportunities for them to engage further with their own communities, with other EPHA members and partners. This broad set of interactions is supported by EPHA's wide network of partner organisations, including other public health NGOs, representatives of healthcare professionals, patients, consumers, and other groups. EPHA's role as coordinator of several alliances and coalitions provides further opportunities to engage key target groups across all policy activities, even when specific parts of these activities are not directly covered by EPHA or its current members.
8	Reliance on social media in reaching out to general public Medium risk; low impact	While ethical and methodological challenges of social media engagement remain, EPHA uses its social media channels in a tried and tested way, in combination with other vehicles for communication, and building its social media engagement with information available through its website, newsletter and other information and engagement channels. The variability of the social media landscape also requires monitoring and assessment, particularly the various platforms EPHA uses so as to ensure the most appropriate and impactful channels are used.
9	Limitations in assessing the impact of activities Low risk; medium impact	EPHA has outlined a rigorous monitoring and evaluation process that includes measuring its activities against SMART impact Indicators, with either publicly available information or input from key stakeholders. To ensure that members and partners provide feedback and evaluate its activities, EPHA uses simple processes, including short online forms, cluster meetings, member satisfaction surveys, and surveys on EPHA's impact.
10	IT risks/loss of data or access to servers Low risk; high impact	EPHA has a secure and up to date data storage system, to ensure both a continuous back-up of data, and easier collaboration among EPHA staff during distance working conditions imposed by COVID-19 pandemic and now enabling further remote collaborations. EPHA's website data are supported by an external provider, with maintenance and security support as well as continuous back-up and storage in the cloud and mitigation measures in cases of risks such as cyberattacks.
11	Reputation risk through breaching the Code of Conduct related to conflicts of interest, or	EPHA has an established review process and checks all its publications against the current evidence. While the content



	using a non-evidence-based approach to Public Health  Low risk; high impact	produced by EPHA's members and partners does not necessarily reflect EPHA's opinion, EPHA team always analyses and fact-checks any external content before publishing. Furthermore, with the introduction of the new Statutes (which came into force in 2023), EPHA has a process in place to prevent the potential damage caused by breaching the Code of Conduct related to conflicts of interest, negatively impacting on EPHA's reputation, or hindering its prospects for funding or partnerships and thereby hampering its sustainability. Such breaches lead to a discontinuation of the collaborations that are not in line with EPHA's values.
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## Responsibility for the policy

Overall accountability for upholding the terms of the Policy lies with the Director General. The entire EPHA Team is bound by the terms of this Policy and responsible for its implementation.

This policy is permanently featured on the EPHA website, in the Induction Package, and the EPHA Processes and Templates Overview Document for easy reference, and formally endorsed by top management, ensuring transparency and reinforcing our leadership's commitment to its implementation.

Finally, all EPHA employees are responsible for treating others with dignity and respect.