

Non-development Activities Policy AC02

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Introduction

This Life is committed to ensuring that we accurately represent our activities to the people we work with, our donors, and the public.

Additional Authority: Law and related organisational documents

- Reporting Policy
- Partner and Affiliated Organisations Policy
- Program Management Manual
- Guide to Grants and Donor Reporting

Background

This Life is a non-political, non-religious organisation and does not engage in or support any activities to promote any political party or alignment, or any activities that promote a particular religious adherence or are undertaken with the intention of converting individuals or groups to any faith or denomination, including but not limited to dawah and evangelisation. This Life may partner with organisations that undertake religious activities, but only on the basis that the activities undertaken on behalf of This Life will not promote religious adherence. This Life may also partner with advocacy organisations from time to time on the basis that their activities are not in support of a political party or candidate.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to guide This Life and our partners to make a clear separation between development and humanitarian and non-development objectives and activities. Additionally, this policy addresses our ACFID compliance obligations when communicating with or soliciting donations from private donors and the public, including fundraising for restricted and unrestricted purposes from aid agencies, sponsors and supporters, and fundraising from the general public.

Scope

This Policy is intended to apply to all This Life activities. The policy is applicable to all This Life employees, consultants, interns and volunteers. Additionally, it is required that if organisations entering into a formal partnership with This Life do not possess a similar policy holding them to equal or higher standards, they commit to adhere to this policy. In accordance with This Life's Partner and Affiliated Organisations Policy, and in compliance with the ACFID Code of Conduct, this requirement shall form part of all Memoranda of Understanding between This Life and partner organisations.

Responsible Party

It is the responsibility of the Executive Director and the Deputy Director to ensure that this policy is understood and followed by everyone working for or with This Life.

Definitions

Development and humanitarian initiatives refer to the activities undertaken in order to reduce poverty and address global justice issues. In the non-government organisation sector, this may occur through a range of engagements that include community projects, humanitarian response and emergency management, community education, advocacy, volunteer sending, provision of technical and professional services and resources, environmental protection and restoration, and promotion and protection of human rights.

Aid and development activities are characterised by the following principles:

- Strengths based approaches which encourage people and communities to create solutions for themselves.
- Processes that seek to address the causes of poverty.
- Processes that seek to empower rights holders to claim their rights and ensure that duty bearers exercise their duties.
- Supporting systems and structures which enable people to move out of poverty.
- Humanitarian response and emergency relief, disaster recovery and meeting the immediate needs of refugees and internally displaced people.
- sustainability

Non-development activities include activity undertaken to promote a particular religious adherence or to support a particular party, candidate or organisation affiliated to a political party. It also includes “welfare” activities – see discussion below under the sub-heading ‘Welfare.’

Partisan political activities are those that are associated with facilitating or supporting a specific political party, or candidate to gain power or to support organisation affiliated with a political party. This does not include advocacy which is aimed at persuading and influencing decision makers and opinion leaders, and is not aimed at promoting partisan political objectives.

Welfare

As per the explanatory notes for the Australian Non-Government Cooperation Program (ANCP):

“Funds disbursed overseas for welfare, religious or political activities [...] are inconsistent with Australia’s aid policy. NGOs must clearly document the assessment of inclusion or exclusion of disbursements in RDE calculations.

Welfare activities are defined as care and maintenance, other than in refugee and emergency situations, which aims to maintain people in a particular condition on a longer-term basis. Substantial and broad impact on social and economic conditions in the community is not normally expected from welfare programs. Welfare may be provided to an individual or family basis including home-based and institutional care programs, such as those provided by orphanages, homes for the elderly, hospices and the provision of food for those who are destitute. Welfare activities are typically:

- implemented independently of other sustainable community development activities;
- include no strategy for integration into broader community development programs;
- provided on an individual or family basis, rather than on a community basis, and are unconnected to emergency needs; and
- implemented on a long-term basis with no clear exit strategy.”

Therefore This Life is unable to use any ANCP funds for welfare activities and the schools programs is cognizant of this and funds are not used for school maintenance or ongoing education programs.

Policy and Procedure

This Life supports and is committed to abiding by the following principles:

- Ensuring accurate representation of our activities to the people we work with, donors and the public.
- Ensuring that funds raised for aid and development purposes are not used to exploit people and communities who are vulnerable and do not place any conditions or obligations on recipients in terms of non-development, religious or political outcomes that would affect their access to services being offered.

To that end, the following procedures will be observed.

Separation of development and/or humanitarian and non-development in programs and projects:

- All project proposals will be appraised to determine whether they include non-aid and development components.
- Appraisers will record any issues, which must then be followed up to ensure that the policy requirements are satisfied before the project is approved.
- Appraisers record any aspects of the project that should be closely monitored over the life of the project to ensure compliance with this policy .
- Partner capacity assessment processes require the signatory to identify whether the partner is engaged in non-development activities, and if so, how it is able to manage and account for them separately to aid and development activity.
- Components of projects that represent non-development activity, such as expenditure, will be managed, reported on and accounted for separately to aid and development components.
- In-country project monitoring will include monitoring of the separation of non- development activities from development and/or humanitarian activities as part of project monitoring, learning and evaluation processes.

Separation of development and/or humanitarian and non-development in communications (including advocacy materials):

- Guidelines are in place that address appropriate reporting in organisational promotional materials.
- All articles written by overseas project partners or photos supplied by partners for reporting materials are reviewed for differentiation between development and/or humanitarian and non-development activities.
- Communications materials are reviewed prior to publication to ensure separation of reporting and fundraising for development and/or humanitarian and non- development activities.

Separation of development and/or humanitarian and non-development in fundraising and provision of choice for donors:

- Any fundraising materials will be reviewed prior to publication to ensure that solicitations make a clear distinction between aid and development and non- development activities.
- Where fundraising solicitations include references to both development and/or humanitarian and non-development activities, they will be reviewed to ensure that donors are provided with the choice of contributing to aid and development activity only.
- Funds raised non-development activity will be tracked, managed, reported and accounted for separately to those raised for development and/or humanitarian components.

Extending the separation of development and/or humanitarian and non-development activities to partners:

- Communication with new partners will state This Life's position on non-development activity.

- Existing partners of This Life will receive a copy of this policy at the time of its implementation.
- All partner agreements, Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or equivalent, will include clear definitions of development and/or humanitarian activity and non- development activity.
- All partner agreements (MoU or equivalent) will require the partner to agree that This Life's funds designated for development and/or humanitarian purposes will not be used to fund any non-development activity.