

AUSTRALIAN HIMALAYAN FOUNDATION



DEVELOPMENT AND NON-DEVELOPMENT (EVANGELISM, PARTISAN POLITICS AND WELFARE) POLICY

Reviewed: November 2013

Reviewed: January 2015

Reviewed: May 2016

Board Approval: July 2016

Next Review: 2018

The Australian Himalayan Foundation (AHF) is a non-faith based organisation with no political affiliations. AHF's vision is to help the people of the Himalaya achieve their goals through sustainable development in the education, health and environmental sectors. Development is AHF's over-riding focus.

1. Purpose of the Policy

AHF aims to help its stakeholders make a clear separation between development and non-development development objectives and activities. This Policy addresses AHF's ACFID compliance obligations when communicating with or soliciting donations from private donors and the public. This includes fundraising for development and non-development purposes from aid agencies, sponsors and supporters and fundraising from the general public.

2. Scope of Policy

The Policy is intended to apply to all AHF activities including all employees, consultants and volunteers as well as partners and associated implementing organisations.

3. Definition of development activities

AHF is committed to ensuring that funds and other resources designed for the purpose of development are used only for those purposes. In doing so AHF applies the following principles to development activities:

Participation: The needs and priorities of local communities will drive program development and delivery. Participatory community development: helps delivery organisations better understand the needs and aims of the people whom they are assisting; increases the sense of ownership of projects by local stakeholders; and, thereby, enhances sustainability.

Fair distribution: Development activities will seek to improve the wellbeing of those in need without discrimination by gender, race, religion, cultural or political persuasion. This means that, although a project may target a particular location or community, it seeks to bring about positive changes for the benefit of all members of the community. Development activities will not seek to change the religious or political persuasions of stakeholders. The acceptance of specific religious beliefs or membership is not a condition for communities participating in AHF programs. It is essential that development project benefits flow fairly, without discrimination.

Sustainability: Development activities aim to produce benefits that will continue after development assistance has ceased. Activities that build on local initiative and capacity have much better prospects for sustainability as they are more likely to have local support both during implementation and beyond. Activities that provide scope for local stakeholders to participate meaningfully throughout the project cycle are also more likely to produce benefits that are sustainable as this leads to local stakeholder ownership and commitment. The concept of sustainability does not necessarily mean the discontinuation of development activities, but rather that the benefits are appropriate, owned by the stakeholders and supported on an ongoing basis with locally available resources.

4. Definition of non-development activities

The following definitions of non-development activities include:

Welfare Activities: are those that provide direct assistance to individuals because of a need. They generally seek to address immediate needs rather than address broader development needs.

Evangelism: is the practice of attempting to convert people to another religion or faith.

Partisan political activities: include political, lobbying and advocacy activities, that are carried out for the sake of, or in aid of, a particular political party.

5. Guiding Principles

AHF supports and is committed to the following principles to ensure:

- Accurate representation of its activities to the communities it works with, donors and the public.
- Fundraising for development purposes: is not used to exploit people or communities who are vulnerable; and does not place any conditions or obligations on beneficiaries in terms of non-development, religious or political outcomes that would affect their access to the services being offered.

6. Compliance Procedures

AHF compliance with ACFID Code of Conduct principles includes the observance of the following obligations. *In addition, these obligations extend to AHF also having 'approved organisation status' under the Overseas Aid Gift Deductibility Scheme (OAGDS) (granted status January 2005) as well as under the terms of DFAT accreditation (ratified June 2011).* AHF ensures that its partners recognise the difference between development and non-development activities and communicate this appropriately to stakeholders, donors and the public.

Obligation 1: Signatories have a clear separation between development and non-development activities (as defined above).

Procedures

1. AHF will appraise all project proposals to determine whether they include non-aid and development component.
2. Appraisers will record any issues, which must then be followed up to ensure the policy requirements are satisfied before the project is approved.
3. Appraisers will record any aspects of the project that should be closely monitored over the life of the project to ensure its compliance with this Policy.
4. Partner capacity assessment processes will require AHF to identify whether the partner is engaged in non-development activities, and if so, how is it to manage and account for them separately to development activities.

5. Components of projects that represent non-development activities will be reported and accounted for separately to development components.

6. In-country project monitoring will include, where relevant, monitoring of the separation of non-development activities from development activities.

Obligation 2: This separation will be clear in all fundraising, programs and other activities, in public communications and in all reporting including Annual Reports.

Procedures

1. Guidelines are in place that address appropriate reporting in organisational promotional materials.

2. All articles written by overseas project partners, or photographs supplied by the partners for reporting materials, will be reviewed for differentiation between development and non-development activities.

3. Communication materials will be reviewed prior to the publication to ensure separation of reporting and fundraising for aid and development and non-development activities.

Obligation 3: Any fundraising initiatives that include reference to both development and non-development activities will provide donors with the choice of contributing to development activities only.

Procedures:

1. Fundraising materials will be reviewed prior to publication to ensure that solicitations make a clear distinction between development and non-development activities.

2. Where fundraising solicitations include reference to both development and non-development activities, they will be reviewed to ensure that the donors are provided with the choice of contributing to development activities only.

Obligation 4: Signatory organisations will ensure that any such separation in fundraising, programs or other activities, in public communications and in reporting, extends to partner and implementing organisations and is documented.

Procedures:

1. Communications with new partners will state AHFs position on support for non-development activity.

2. AHF's partners will receive a copy of this Policy.

3. *Partnership Agreements* will include clear definition of development activity and non-development activity.

4. *Partner Agreements* will require the partner to agree that AHF funds designated for development purposes will not be used to fund any non-development activities.

5. Ongoing dialogue between AHF and its partners will reinforce the definitions of development and non-development activities and the need for a separation between development and non-development activities.

7. Policy Implementation and Review

Procedures

1. AHF will review this Policy on a regular basis, at least every two years.
2. Introduction of the Policy will be included in the induction process for all new staff and Board members.

Related Documentation

AHF Strategic Plan
AHF Communications Policy (including Fundraising Strategy)
AHF Human Resources Procedures Manual
AHF Program Management Procedures Manual
AHF Board Manual