



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

Document Control

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*When relevant, this policy and associated documents should be translated into the local language to ensure access to all personnel.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Australian Himalayan Foundation (AHF) is a non-faith based organisation with no political affiliations. AHF works in partnership with the people of the Himalaya to help the most disadvantaged meet their priority needs through integrated improvements in education, health and the environment. Development is AHF's overriding focus.

Development activities will seek to improve the wellbeing of those in need without discrimination of gender, race, religion, cultural or political persuasion. 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 and their needs and priorities will drive program development and delivery. The aim of development activities is to produce benefits that will continue after development assistance has ceased. Activities that build on local initiative and capacity and are designed so that they can continue to be delivered by communities have much better prospects for sustainability. They are indeed more likely to have local support during both implementation and beyond.

The development activities supported by AHF will not seek to change the religious or political persuasions of stakeholders. The acceptance of specific religious beliefs or membership or a particular political affiliation are not conditions that are required, or will be used as reasons for exclusions from participation, in AHF programs. Development project benefits will be provided fairly and without discrimination.

## **2. PURPOSE**

AHF aims to help its stakeholders make a clear separation between development and non-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. 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 (since 2011).

## **3. SCOPE**

The Policy is intended to apply to all AHF activities and to all employees and other personnel, as well as partners and associated implementing organisations, involved in designing and managing AHF activities. AHF will ensure that all stakeholders recognise the difference between development and non-development activities and communicate this appropriately to other stakeholders, donors and the public.

## 4. PRINCIPLES

### 4.1 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:

**Strong partnerships** – we take a participatory approach with communities to understand issues from their perspective and, in partnership with them, work to deliver the outcomes they need most.

**Empowerment** – we aim to engage and empower people in the communities where we work so any change is sustained.

**Alignment and harmonisation**– we strive to work closely with national governments to align our focus with their policies and priorities and we strive to harmonise our approaches with Australian development programs and those of other development partners.

**A long-term view** – we are committed to building long-term capacity in the communities in which we operate.

**Respect** – we are cognisant of cultural and social sensitivities and are inclusive and respectful of all the people we work with.

**Value for money** – we monitor our projects to ensure they are evidence- based and relevant, delivered efficiently and are cost-effective.

**Excellent governance** – we have robust internal processes and governance and work diligently with partners and governments to safeguard monies entrusted to us.

**Independence** – we are a secular NGO with no political or religious affiliations, goals or policies.

The AHF strives to assist, protect and strengthen the self-sustainability of the people it serves. Underpinning AHF's work is respect for international humanitarian and human rights laws and norms.

### 4.2 Non-development activities

The following definitions of non-development activities include:

- **Welfare Activities:** defined as care and maintenance, 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.

- **Religious activities:** defined as supporting or promoting a particular religion, including activities undertaken with the intention of converting individuals or groups from one faith and/or denomination to another. Activities that build up religious structures (including infrastructure, training or organisational activities) are also considered under this category for DFAT and will be ineligible for government funding, unless those structures are specifically designed to provide non-denominational development outcomes.
- **Political activities:** defined as supporting a political party, candidate or organisation affiliated to a political party. Examples include: NGO staff being involved in party political activities; using funds or resources to facilitate or support a specific political party, candidate, or party political organisation in a local, regional or general / national election; using funds or resources to facilitate or support independence or separatist movements; using funds or resources to facilitate or support a particular politician or faction to gain power within a government or within a political party. structure.

## 5. GUIDELINES

### 5.1 Organisation-wide

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

- Accurate representation of its activities to the communities it works with, donors and the public.
- Program activities do not seek to promote or place any conditions or impose obligations on project participants in terms of non-development, religious or political outcomes that would limit or preclude their participation in AHF-supported development activities.

### 5.2. Human Resources

At induction, all employees and other personnel will be made aware of AHF's Development and Non-Development Policy. The induction process is detailed in the AHF Employee Handbook.

### 5.3 Partner and program management

AHF is committed to ensuring a clear separation between development and non-development activities is embedded in its program and partnership development. AHF'S Development and Non-Development policy will be promoted and related actions undertaken throughout its work with project partners when:

- conducting due diligence assessment, undertaken prior to partnering with an organisation and regularly during the partnership;
- developing project design;
- appraising the project;

- signing project agreements;
- monitoring of project, partner and risks;
- reporting of project;
- developing partner capacity building plans where relevant;
- evaluating projects.

Should a project include non development components, the appraisers will record any issues identified that may breach this policy, which will then be reviewed to ensure the policy requirements are satisfied before the project is approved. Appraisers will identify any aspects of the project that should be closely monitored over the life of the project and record the actions that must be undertaken to ensure its compliance with this Policy.

AHF will require the partner, in the project agreements, to agree that AHF funds designated for development purposes will not be used to fund any non-development activities. AHF will ensure that project signatories will maintain a clear separation between development and non-development activities, both for program activities but also in public communications and in reporting about the project.

#### **5.4 Australian Engagement Activities**

AHF conducts education, fundraising and marketing activities to raise awareness, funds and engagement in our work. AHF representatives, personnel and partners will at all times differentiate between development and non-development activities.

This separation will be clear in all fundraising, program and other activities, in public communications and in all reporting including Annual Reports. AHF will review fundraising materials prior to publication to ensure that solicitation makes a clear distinction between development and non-development activities. AHF will also ensure that any fundraising initiatives that include reference to both development and non-development activities will provide donors with the choice of contributing to development activities.

## **6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

All AHF stakeholders, including partners, have a responsibility to recognise and differentiate between development and non-development activities at AHF and within our partner organisations.

### **6.1 Board and CEO**

The Board and CEO will commit to maintaining a separation between development and non-development activities and ensure clear understanding from all AHF stakeholders.

It is the responsibility of the Board and CEO to ensure effective separation between development and non development activities across all AHF areas of operations. This includes partner organisations.

## **6.2 Managers**

Managers are responsible for ensuring that AHF's Development and Non-Development Policy is understood and implemented by the employees, other personnel under their supervision and responsibility, and the partner organisations with whom they work.

## **6.3 Employees and other personnel**

All employees and other personnel have the responsibility to ensure compliance with AHF's Development and Non-Development Policy. Employees in charge of a particular project will ensure partners are aware of the policy and will assist the partner in implementing the policy.

## **6.4 Consultants and other representatives**

Consultants and other representatives will be expected to comply with AHF's Development and Non-Development Policy.

## **6.5 In-country partners**

If in-country partners do not have a Development and Non-Development policy or if the policy does not reflect the same principles as AHF's policy, they will be expected to show their agreement to adhere to AHF's Development and Non-Development policy. AHF will also support partners to develop their own and provide training and mentoring.

## **7. REVIEW OF POLICY**

AHF's Development and Non-Development Policy will be formally reviewed every five years to assess its relevance and effectiveness and ensure it meets current standards. Introduction of the Policy will be included in the induction process for all new staff and Board members.

## **8. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK AND GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS**

- DFAT OAGDS Guidelines
- Code of Conduct, ACFID, 2016
- ANCP Manual, DFAT, March 2020
- Australian NGO Accreditation Guidance Manual, DFAT, June 2018