

NON-DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES POLICY

November 2015

INTRODUCTION

Opportunity International Australia (Opportunity) supports aid and development activities in order to reduce poverty by addressing its causes. Opportunity is committed to ensuring that funds and other resources designated for the purpose of aid and development are used only for those purposes. Opportunity is committed to providing opportunities for people in poverty to transform their lives without regard to religious or political affiliation.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Non-Development Activities Policy (Policy) is to guide Opportunity and our partners to make a clear separation between aid and development and non-aid and development objectives and activities. This policy addresses Opportunity's obligations to accurately represent our activities to people we work with, and 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 OF POLICY

This Policy applies to all Opportunity activities. The Policy is applicable to all Opportunity's employees and volunteers. Opportunity must ensure that this Policy is applied by Opportunity's implementing partners.

BACKGROUND

Opportunity is a faith-based development organisation that supports local microfinance institutions (MFIs) and that provide innovative financial solutions to empower people, create small businesses and build vibrant communities. It also supports organisations that provide community development services. Motivated by Jesus Christ's call to serve the poor without regard to ethnicity, gender or religious or political affiliation, we seek to emulate the Good Samaritan, whose compassion and action crossed ethnic groups and religions. Opportunity does not provide funding or other resources for evangelical purposes nor does it believe it is appropriate to link evangelism with the provision of programs. Opportunity is not linked to any political party. Opportunity is committed to ensure that funds and other resources designated for the purpose of aid and development will be used only for those purposes and will not be used to promote a particular religious adherence or to support a political party, or to promote a candidate or organisation affiliated to a political party.

DEFINITION OF AID AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Aid and Development is defined in ACFID's Code of Conduct section F (Definitions, page 40), as 'activities undertaken in order to reduce poverty and address global justice issues via direct engagement through community projects, 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.’

Opportunity’s activities seek to address the causes of poverty, supporting systems and structures which enable people to move out of poverty. For example, through the provision of financial and non-financial services to people living in poverty they can transform their lives, their children’s futures and their communities.

DEFINITION OF NON-DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Non-development activities include welfare, evangelism, and partisan politics. From the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAT) Accreditation Guidance Manual (pgs 43-44), Opportunity accepts the following definitions relevant to non-development activities:

Evangelical purposes

Evangelical purposes are those with the intention of promoting a particular religious adherence or converting individuals or groups from one faith and/or denominational affiliation to another.

Welfare

Welfare is assistance to maintain individuals in a particular condition on a long-term basis, such as institutionalised care programs provided by orphanages, child sponsorship (that is, funds given directly to children or their families, and not funds drawn from child sponsorship and used for development purposes), hospital care programs, hospices, and costs for the maintenance of structures for institutionalised care programs (for example, schools or orphanages). Other features of welfare include:

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

Partisan political purposes

Partisan political purposes are those with the intention of facilitating or supporting a specific political party, candidate or party political organisation in a local, regional or general/national election; or facilitating or supporting a particular politician or faction to gain power within a government or political party structure.

COMPLIANCE

This policy provides the framework for Opportunity’s compliance with principle B.1.5 of the ACFID Code of Conduct. This principle outlines four obligations for signatories to the ACFID Code of Conduct:

1. Signatory organisations will have a clear separation between aid and development and non-aid and development objectives and activities based on the definitions of aid and development and non-aid and development in section F (Definitions) of the Code.

2. This separation will be clear in all fundraising, programs and other activities, in public communications and in all reporting including annual reports.
3. Any fundraising solicitations that include references to both aid and development and non-development activities will provide donors with the choice of contributing to aid and development activities only.
4. Signatory organisations will ensure that any such separation in fundraising, programs and other activities, in public communications and in reporting, extends to partner and implementing organisations and is documented.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Opportunity is committed to ensuring that:

- funds and other resources designated for the purpose of aid and development are used only for those purposes and not for non-development activities, such as welfare, evangelism or partisan politics;
- access to services and programs is not conditional on religious or political affiliations of the beneficiaries;
- in the event that components of partner programs involve evangelical, welfare or partisan political activities, these will be promoted and accounted for separately.

CONTROL PROCEDURES

Opportunity ensures that we and our partners can differentiate between development and non-development activities and communicate this appropriately to stakeholders, donors and the public.

As signatory to ACFID's Code of Conduct, Opportunity will meet each obligation of principle B.1.5 of the Code through the following procedures:

Obligation 1: Signatory organisations will have a clear separation between aid and development and non-aid and development objectives and activities based on the definitions of aid and development and non-aid and development contained in section F (Definitions) of ACFID's Code of Conduct.

Procedures:

1. Opportunity will appraise all projects proposals to determine whether they include non-aid and non-development components, as an integral part of our current due diligence activities.
2. Partner systems assessment processes will include identifying 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 activities.
3. Components of projects that represent non-development activities will be managed, reported and accounted for separately to aid and development components.
4. In-country project monitoring will include ongoing, regular monitoring and reporting of the separation of non-development activities from aid and 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 photos supplied by partners for reporting materials are reviewed for differentiation between development and non-development activities.
3. Communications materials are reviewed prior to publication to ensure separation of reporting and fundraising for aid and development and non-development activities.

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

Procedures:

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

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

Procedures:

1. Communication with new partners will state the signatory's position on support for non-development activities.
2. Signatory partners will receive a copy of this policy.
3. Relationship Agreements (MoU or equivalent) will include clear definitions of aid and development activities and non-development activities.
4. The Relationship Agreements (MoU or equivalent) will require the partner to agree that Opportunity funds designated for aid and development purposes will not be used to fund any non-development activities.

Policy Implementation and Review

Procedures:

1. Opportunity will review this policy on a regular basis, at least every five years.
2. Training on the policy will be provided to staff as part of Opportunity's regular staff training program.

RESOURCES

- ACFID Code of Conduct Principle B.1.5
- ACFID Code of Conduct Implementation Guidance: Definitions
- DFAT Accreditation Guidance Manual
- Opportunity Communications Manual
- Opportunity Communications approval process
- Opportunity Communications checklist