

**HOPE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (HOPE)
CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT
JULY 1, 2017**

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The following document outlines the Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct by which HOPE governs itself in the fulfilment of its mission to extend compassion to the neglected poor. HOPE's goal through the creation of this document is to ensure that all organizational activities, both internally and externally, are consistent and follow the internationally accepted standards for ethics and conduct in development programming. In articulating these commitments, HOPE aims to strengthen its mission and impact worldwide.

This policy is adapted, in part, from the Canadian Council for International Co-operation's (CCIC) Code of Ethics and Operational Standards (2009). The full text version of this document can be found online at: http://www.ccic.ca/about/ethics_e.php. The Canadian Council for Christian Charities' Ethic Policy has also been adapted in this policy. The full text version of that document can be found online at: http://www.cccc.org/members_sample_documents_view/html/12

SECTION 1: HOPE CODE OF ETHICS

1. Preamble

The Code of Ethics sets out the basic ethical principles that HOPE and its overseas partners must accept and promote.

For HOPE, development is a social, cultural, economic and political process that leads to the fulfillment of fundamental human rights. These rights have been enshrined in the *United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and subsequent core treaties and instruments including the *United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development* and the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*.

Development must give primacy to fulfilling the rights, needs and aspirations of the world's poorest and most marginalized peoples; it must promote the peaceful management of conflict; and it must safeguard the health, diversity and resilience of the natural environment.

While recognizing that the primary responsibility for the protection and promotion of human rights rests with governments, HOPE and its overseas partners support the fulfillment of these rights through their development and advocacy activities.

As part of Canadian civil society, HOPE promotes and supports the advancement of a flourishing civil society in Canada and abroad. The strengthening of people's organizations, voluntary agencies and other socially beneficial institutions is integral to the practice of development.

Based on HOPE's experience, establishing and strengthening relations with civil society organizations on the basis of partnership is key to achieving development outcomes.

Since HOPE has the potential of influencing public perception of the international co-operation community, it bears a significant responsibility to act in ways that enhance public trust in its activities.

2. General Principles

The following principles guide HOPE's Code of Ethics:

Human Rights – In all of its activities, HOPE should respect and promote the human rights and dignity of all people.

Accountability – HOPE should be accountable to their international partners, to their staff, to their donors, to the Canadian public and to each other for their contributions to international development and their stewardship of resources.

Transparency – HOPE should communicate freely and accurately with their partners, donors, the public and each other.

Fairness – HOPE should practice and promote equity and justice in all their activities.

Co-operation – HOPE should endeavour to promote Canadian involvement and co-operation in international development.

Sustainability – In all of its activities, HOPE should take appropriate measures to promote environmental sustainability.

HOPE should ensure that these General Principles are incorporated into its structure, governance and operations.

3. Development Principles

Development should foster and promote the full realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms. To reach this goal, development should:

- a) Satisfy basic human needs;
- b) Be people-centred in both its purposes and the distribution of its benefits;
- c) Address the root causes, and not merely the symptoms, of global inequality;
- d) Promote social justice through the equitable distribution of power, wealth and access to resources;
- e) Enable poor, oppressed and marginalized people to organize and improve their situation;
- f) Reflect the concerns, perspectives and experience of women and enable women to realize their full rights;
- g) Respect indigenous peoples and their rights to self-determination and to sovereignty over their own territories;
- h) Respect the cultural and spiritual integrity of all peoples;
- i) Ensure the full participation of marginalized individuals and groups;
- j) Be environmentally, socially and economically sustainable, and should protect the well-being of future generations;
- k) Recognize the hazards of militarism and promote peaceful solutions to international, national or local conflict; and
- l) Promote a global movement that links shared interests and issues.

4. Partnership Principles

For the purpose of this section, “partnership” refers to relations between HOPE and its development partners around the world where a mutual agreement has been established committing each Organization to a set of agreed principles and actions over an extended period of time.

Building on the Development Principles in Section 3, HOPE and its partners are committed to the

following additional principles applying to partnerships:

- a) Partnerships should be vehicles for long-term accompaniment that support the right of peoples to determine and carry out activities that further their own development options, through their civil society organizations;
- b) Partnerships should advance and exemplify the full realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms, social justice, equitable distribution of global wealth and environmental sustainability;
- c) Partnerships should be built on shared visions and goals for society which imply mutual support and solidarity beyond the implementation of specific programs and projects;
- d) Partnerships should be formed in a spirit of inclusiveness that respects and promotes the value of diversity;
- e) Partnerships should embody equity. Acknowledging that inequalities often exist as a result of power dynamics, especially in funding relations, partners should strive for equitable partnerships;
- f) Partnerships should be dynamic relationships built on respect and honesty, in which partners strive for better understanding and appreciation of one another;
- g) Partners should be transparent and accountable to one another;
- h) Partners should respect one another's autonomy and constraints and strive to foster a climate of mutual trust in all their partnership activities; and
- i) Partners should endeavour to learn from one another and facilitate the sharing of knowledge.

SECTION 2: OPERATIONAL STANDARDS

1. Preamble

In order to provide guidance to HOPE and its partners on implementing the principles of the HOPE Code of Ethics and Conduct, this document outlines standards of practice and compliance procedures.

2. Partnerships

For the purpose of this section, "partnership" refers to relations between HOPE and its overseas partners where a mutual agreement has been established committing each Organization to a set of agreed principles and actions over an extended period of time.

Partnerships with overseas partner organizations should be established based on the HOPE Code of Ethics and Conduct and may be enriched by additional development principles proposed and agreed upon by common accord.

2.1. Initiating a partnership

- a) Partnerships shall be based on a sense of common cause built on an understanding of each Organization's values, beliefs, goals, objectives and constraints.
- b) Partnerships shall be backed by mutually acceptable signed agreements, demonstrating that

all parties have negotiated objectives, expectations, roles, responsibilities, and contributions to the partnership.

- c) Agreements between partners shall ensure shared responsibility for attaining the negotiated goals, objectives and stated outcomes.

2.2. Maintaining and strengthening a partnership

- a) Strong partnerships include action to address inequalities due to power imbalances. Partners shall identify and attempt to adopt concrete measures to enhance equitable relations.
- b) Partners shall strive to deepen their understanding of one another through transparent sharing of information. The activities relating to the partnership shall be open and accessible to the other parties, while respecting the right of individuals to privacy.
- c) Respect for differences – including cultural, religious, socio-economic and political differences – shall be a hallmark of every partnership.
- d) Partners shall engage in regular and open communications for the general health of the partnership and to ensure that all partners are properly represented and that no Organization unilaterally speaks on another's behalf.
- e) Organizations shall give credit to their partners' contributions, respect their intellectual property rights and acknowledge appropriate ownership of products and results arising from partnership initiatives.
- f) Healthy partnerships are strengthened by prompt and constructive responses to differences of opinion that may arise between Organizations. Partners shall proactively agree how conflicts shall be handled.
- g) Partnership agreements shall specify timelines for evaluating whether and how the partnership shall continue.
- h) When a transfer of funds occurs within a partnership, there shall be a negotiated and jointly signed contract within which there are mutually agreed upon reporting requirements to ensure that all parties use development funds as agreed.
- i) In the event of catastrophic circumstances, such as a major shortfall in funds available within a funding partnership, all parties shall promptly implement a mutually negotiated and agreed upon contingency plan.

2.3. Ending a partnership

- a) Terms, conditions and appropriate procedures for ending the partnership shall be included in the partnership agreement.
- b) In the event of unforeseen circumstances, all partners shall endeavour to maintain the same standards of conduct when winding down the partnership as were agreed upon for the operations of the partnership.

3. Governance

HOPE shall be governed fairly and responsibly by an independent, active, and informed governing body (e.g. Board of Directors).

All voting members of the governing body shall serve without compensation, except for reasonable expenses incurred to fulfill their organizational duties.

HOPE shall establish and periodically review a governance framework suitable for fulfilling its mandate. The structure shall enable the HOPE to make timely decisions and to meet its responsibilities. The framework shall include an appropriate governance structure and operations; relationship of senior staff and the governing body; and decision-making processes.

HOPE's governing body shall review and approve the HOPE's annual budget, significant policies, key financial transactions, compensation practices, plans and programs and hold officers, committees and staff accountable for actions taken and results achieved under delegated authority.

HOPE shall adopt a policy preventing and effectively managing conflict of interest situations.

HOPE shall have policies prohibiting discrimination and promoting gender equality and participation of disadvantaged groups at all levels of the Organization. This does not supersede the right of the HOPE to self-define when it is done in compliance with the law.

The governing body shall periodically reassess HOPE's governing documents and objects, vision, mission, goals, priorities, alignment of resources and effectiveness through consultation and collaborative planning.

4. Organizational Integrity

The affairs of HOPE shall be conducted with integrity and transparency. HOPE shall make full, open, and accurate disclosure to the public of relevant information concerning its goals, programs, finances, activities, results, effectiveness and governance. Exceptions are personnel matters, legal matters, proprietary information and ethical and legal requirements of personal privacy.

HOPE shall ensure that complaints are dealt with in a timely manner and impartially, respecting the rights of involved parties for confidentiality and disclosure.

HOPE shall comply with all applicable federal laws and regulations as well as laws and regulations of provinces or municipalities in which it is based or operates. When partnering with organizations based outside of Canada, HOPE shall be aware of foreign laws and regulations governing these activities.

HOPE shall oppose and shall not be a participant to any wrongdoing or financial impropriety. It shall take prompt and firm corrective action whenever and wherever wrong-doing of any kind has been committed by any member of its governing body, employee, or volunteer.

5. Finances

HOPE shall conduct its finances in such a way as to ensure appropriate use of funds and accountability to donors. It shall operate according to a budget approved by its governing body and have sound internal controls and documented financial policies and procedures.

HOPE shall ensure that there are sufficient resources for effective administration and appropriate fundraising.

HOPE shall have annual audited financial statements and shall make them easily accessible to the public.

HOPE shall ensure that it (and, if applicable, its affiliates) manage its funds prudently. If applicable, HOPE and its partners shall have and follow an investment policy regarding any available assets for investment.

HOPE shall file its Registered Charity Information Return within six (6) months of its fiscal year end and such returns shall be complete and accurate.

6. Fundraising and Communications to the Public

Fundraising solicitations shall be truthful, shall accurately describe HOPE's identity, purpose, programs and need, shall only make claims which the HOPE can fulfill, and shall treat donors and potential donors with respect. There shall be no misleading information or images (including material omissions or exaggerations of fact), nor any other communication which would tend to create a false impression or misunderstanding, and no use of high-pressure tactics in soliciting donations.

HOPE shall ensure that:

- a) the public is informed of the way HOPE intends to use donated resources;
- b) when members of the public are invited to support a specific project or purpose, they are informed if donations may be reassigned and they are given an explanation of these planned alternative uses;
- c) the public is informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, employees or hired solicitors of HOPE;
- d) its donors are encouraged to ask questions when making a donation and they are given prompt, truthful and forthright answers; and
- e) its donors receive appropriate acknowledgment but are not publicly identified without their consent.

HOPE shall have policies and procedures to ensure that it accepts only those donations which will not compromise its ethics, program focus or other interests.

HOPE shall ensure that images and text included in all communications to the public:

- a) respect the dignity and rights of the individuals portrayed and their way of life;
- b) are accurate, balanced, truthful and representative of reality and do not generalize and mask the diversity of situations;
- c) portray local communities as active agents in their own development process and do not fuel prejudice or foster a sense of Northern superiority; and
- d) encourage a sense of interconnectedness and interdependence between the Canadian public and the people shown in the image or discussed in the text.

HOPE shall control all fundraising activities conducted on its behalf. It shall not, directly or indirectly, pay finder's fees, commission or percentage compensation based on contributions. When external fundraisers are used, HOPE shall have a written fundraising contract and shall avoid disproportionate private gain by those external fundraisers.

HOPE shall seek the participation of its partners, where applicable, in the formulation of communications to the public.

HOPE shall consider the cumulative impact on the public's perception arising from its own communication messages (through images and text) and those of others. HOPE shall ensure that its messages do not undermine the goal of building support for long-term sustainable development.

When HOPE carries out an activity that involves both fundraising and programming there shall be

appropriate allocation of fundraising and program expenses.

HOPE shall make its most recent financial statements, annual report, and a current list of members of its governing body easily accessible to the public (e.g. in a visible and public section of their website).

7. Management Practices and Human Resources

HOPE shall:

- a) Endeavour to follow sound management and operational practices appropriate to its mission, operations and governance structure;
- b) Provide employees and volunteers with job descriptions or duties that detail the HOPE's expectations;
- c) Have clear, well-defined, written policies and procedures relating to its employees and volunteers (including host country nationals and expatriates) and a process for communicating these policies and procedures; and ensure that the policies clearly define and protect the rights of these individuals;
- d) Clearly describe and communicate compensation and benefits to each employee, and make financial arrangements to honour its financial commitments;
- e) Respect the right of employees to organize into unions or associations and bargain collective agreements; and
- f) Educate employees and volunteers on the Code of Ethics and Operational Standards.

SECTION 3: ADDITIONAL GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Code of Conduct

It is the policy of HOPE that its employees and board members uphold the highest standards of ethical, professional behaviour. To that end, employees, volunteers and board members shall dedicate themselves to carrying out the mission of this organization and shall:

1. Hold paramount the safety, health and welfare of the public in the performance of professional duties.
2. Act in such a manner as to uphold and enhance personal and professional honour, integrity and the dignity of the ministry.
3. Treat with respect and consideration all persons, regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, maternity, marital or family status, disability, age or national origin.
4. Engage in carrying out HOPE's mission in a professional manner.
5. Collaborate with and support fellow workers in carrying out HOPE's mission.
6. Build professional reputations on the merit of services and refrain from competing unfairly with others.
7. Recognize that the chief function of HOPE at all times is to serve the best interests of its beneficiaries.
8. Accept as a personal duty the responsibility to keep up to date on emerging issues and to conduct themselves with professional competence, fairness, impartiality, efficiency, and effectiveness.

9. Respect the structure and responsibilities of the board of directors, provide them with facts and advice as a basis for their making policy decisions, and uphold and implement policies adopted by the board of directors.
10. Keep the community informed about issues affecting it.
11. Conduct organizational and operational duties with positive leadership exemplified by open communication, creativity, dedication, and compassion.
12. Exercise whatever discretionary authority they have under the law to carry out the mission of the organization.
13. Serve with respect, concern, courtesy, and responsiveness in carrying out the organization's mission.
14. Demonstrate the highest standards of personal integrity, truthfulness, honesty, and fortitude in all activities in order to inspire confidence and trust in such activities.
15. Avoid any interest or activity that is in conflict with the conduct of their official duties.
16. Respect and protect privileged information to which they have access in the course of their official duties.
17. Strive for personal and professional excellence and encourage the professional developments of others.

In addition, HOPE will operate with an 'open door' policy (meaning that employees and others will be able to meet with senior staff within a reasonable time period). Employees and others may share their questions, concerns, suggestions or complaints with someone who can address them properly. Ordinarily, that person would be the employee's supervisor. If the employee is not comfortable meeting with the supervisor, another person may be approached.

2. Ten Core Principles of the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief

HOPE is a signatory of the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief. The Code of Conduct lays down ten points of principle, which HOPE adheres to in our disaster response work.

1. The humanitarian imperative comes first.
2. Aid is given regardless of the race, creed or nationality of the recipients and without adverse distinction of any kind. Aid priorities are calculated on the basis of need alone.
3. Aid will not be used to further a particular political or religious standpoint.
4. We shall endeavour not to act as instruments of government foreign policy.
5. We shall respect culture and custom.
6. We shall attempt to build disaster response on local capacities.
7. Ways shall be found to involve programme beneficiaries in the management of relief aid.
8. Relief aid must strive to reduce future vulnerabilities to disaster as well as meeting basic needs.
9. We hold ourselves accountable to both those we seek to assist and those from whom we accept resources.

3. Six Core Principles Relating to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises

HOPE also commits to adopting the principles as laid out by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises¹. The Six Core Principles Relating to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse are:

1. Sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian workers constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment.
2. Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defence.
3. Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour is prohibited. This includes exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries.
4. Sexual relationships between humanitarian workers and beneficiaries are strongly discouraged since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of humanitarian aid work.
5. Where a humanitarian worker develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation by a fellow worker, whether in the same agency or not, he or she must report such concerns via established agency reporting mechanisms.
6. Humanitarian workers are obliged to create and maintain an environment which prevents sexual exploitation and abuse and promotes the implementation of their code of conduct. Managers at all levels have particular responsibilities to support and develop systems which maintain this environment.