



Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct dated 03/02/2012 supersedes our 2003 Code of Conduct. Our Code of Conduct will continue to adapt over time to meet the changing environment, the needs of stakeholders and emerging good practice from within the sector.

The Pacific Aid Australia Code of Conduct sets out standards and requirements to which Pacific Aid Australia binds it and against which complaints and compliance can be assessed. It is modelled on the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct and as such complies with ACFID requirements.

A. Preamble

Pacific Aid Australia is an Australian not for profit non-government environmental organisation. Our mission is to develop and implement practical environmental management initiatives, economic, cultural, health and education programs and projects that promote ecologically sustainable development and self reliance for Pacific Island communities.

Activities of PAA are undertaken in collaboration with local, regional and national governments, civil society organisations, businesses, universities and non-government organisations in the context of protecting and enhancing Pacific Island ecosystems, cultures and economic wellbeing.

Pacific Aid Australia aims to observe the highest ethical standards in all our activities, including strict observance of the ACFID Code of Conduct ('the Code') of which we are a signatory.

Our Code is modelled of the ACFID Code of Conduct which is a voluntary, self-regulatory sector code of good practice that aims to improve international development outcomes and increase stakeholder trust by enhancing the transparency and accountability of signatory organisations.

All ACFID members are signatories to the Code, however not all signatories are ACFID members. Pacific Aid Australia is both a member and a signatory.

Development of Pacific Aid Australia policies and procedures to comply with the ACFID Code will be appropriate to our size and complexity, and the extent of our operations. As we

grow, our policies and procedures will be modified to observe continual improvement and ongoing compliance

Vision

We value ecologically based sustainable development, cooperation between government, business, international and regional bodies and the community, practical responsiveness, cultural integrity, empowerment of the individual and community access to quality education and health services.

Specifically we value:

1. Sustainable, fair and equitable solutions that address the root causes and symptoms of poverty and disadvantage;
2. Accountability to all our stakeholders for our performance and integrity;
3. Building creative and trusting relationships with the communities in which we work:
 - a. based on an understanding of their history and culture
 - b. giving priority to their interests
 - c. involving them to the maximum extent possible in the design, implementation and evaluation of projects and programs, encouraging self-reliance, and
 - d. valuing men and women, boys and girls in ways that respect the dignity, uniqueness and intrinsic worth of every person.
4. Active learning, innovating and continuously improving our aid and development work;
5. Honesty and transparency in all our dealings;
6. Respecting, protecting and promoting internationally recognised human rights including civil and political, economic, social and cultural rights and with particular emphasis on gender equality, the protection of children, people with a disability and the rights of minorities and vulnerable and marginalised groups;
7. Environmental sustainability is key to our aid and development and domestic operations; and
8. Strengthening civil society in Australia and the countries where we work.

Structure

Like the ACFID Code of Conduct, Pacific Aid Australia's Code sets out standards in the three areas of accountability:

1. Program Principles – including a commitment to effectiveness in aid and development activities, human rights and working with partner agencies.

2. 2. Public engagement – including a commitment to be ethical and transparent in marketing, fundraising and reporting.
3. 3. Organisation – including a commitment to governance, management, financial controls, treatment of staff and volunteers, complaints handling processes and compliance with legal requirements.

Each Principle is a statement of intent that links to the values framed in the Preamble. The specific requirements of Pacific Aid Australia are set out in the numbered obligations.

B. Program Principles

B.1 Effective aid and development

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will ensure that their purpose and processes are shaped by stakeholders and that their work is open to review and comment by partners and participants alike. In all instances those directly affected by aid and development activities are considered the primary stakeholders and their views afforded the highest priority.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will prioritise accountability to local people and those directly affected by aid and development activities, prioritising their needs and rights with specific reference to gender, age, disability and other identified vulnerabilities.
2. Pacific Aid Australia will seek the genuine, informed, consensual participation of local people and their representatives in aid and development activities, ensuring that they have the opportunity to authentically contribute to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of these activities.
3. Pacific Aid Australia will analyse the needs and expectations of key stakeholders in all aid and development activities, pursuing informed and balanced accountability to each.

B.1.2 Quality Approach

ACFID Code of Conduct Guidelines

Aid and development refers to 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 includes 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. Not all of these aid and development activities are undertaken by signatories however these Principles form the basis of effective work in all of these areas

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will apply a quality approach to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of aid and development activity that emphasises relationships, learning, adaptation and impact.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will focus on building and maintaining strong, honest and robust relationships with our partners in development, the local people and organisations with which we work.
2. Pacific Aid Australia will focus on the impact of our activity and will use the information gained in monitoring and evaluation to improve aid and development processes and outcomes over time.
3. Pacific Aid Australia will ensure that we have analysed and understood the context in which planned activities will occur and will continue to review our understanding as the context changes.
4. Pacific Aid Australia will set out a clear purpose and objectives for all aid and development activity including consideration of the timeframe, sustainability of the activity and its impacts beyond our involvement.

B.1.3 Consistency with vision, purpose and values**ACFID Principle:**

Signatory organisations will ensure that their aid and development activities are clearly aligned with their vision, purpose and values and that these are clearly communicated in signatory organisations' relationships with all stakeholders.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will ensure that our aid and development activities are consistent with our vision, purpose and values.
2. Pacific Aid Australia will communicate our core and shared values in our relationships with all stakeholders

B.1.4 Addressing Gender

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations are committed to addressing the effect of gender inequalities and inequities as being fundamental to attainment of human rights for all and the effectiveness of their aid and development activity.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will ensure that an appropriate focus is given to understanding and addressing gender issues in our aid and development program design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation cycles.
2. Pacific Aid Australia will also work to assist partners to become aware and supportive of Pacific Aid Australia's commitment to deal with gender issues in our aid and development activity.

B.1.5 Non Development Activity**ACFID Principle:**

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 particular party.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia does not have non-aid and development objectives and activities. We are a purely a non-sectarian non political development aid NGO.

B.1.6 Environmental Sustainability**ACFID Principle:**

The aid and development activity of signatory organisations will aim to be informed by and implemented with an understanding of the environmental impact, if any, of their activities.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. All Pacific Aid Australia activities will undergo environmental impact assessments at the project charter stage
2. Pacific Aid Australia will endeavour to build sustainability into all its aid projects
3. Pacific Aid Australia will minimise its environmental and carbon footprint in its offices

B.2 Relationship with Partners

B.2.1 Mutual Respect and Support

ACFID Principle:

The relationship between signatory organisations and their program partners will be characterised by mutual respect and by a commitment and openness to two-way learning and support.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. The relationship between Pacific Aid Australia and our program partners will be based on honest and transparent communication and on two-way learning which leads to continuous improvement in the development practice of both.
2. Pacific Aid Australia will demonstrate a willingness to invest in our partner organisations to enable partners to:
 - a. be more effective in fulfilling their own development objectives and priorities; and
 - b. enhance their ability to help Pacific Aid Australia meet its obligations under this Code in the areas of accountability to primary stakeholders, child protection, gender equity and control of funds and resources.

B.2.2 Clarity in Roles and Responsibilities

ACFID Principle:

In work undertaken with our partner organisations, signatory organisations will ensure mutual clarity and agreement about the objectives of the partnership and the respective roles, responsibilities and mutual accountability mechanisms.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will have a written agreement with each of our partners which sets out the agreed objectives of the collaborative aid and development activity and the roles, responsibilities and obligations of each party.
2. In our communications with stakeholders, Pacific Aid Australia will appropriately reference the role of our partners in delivering aid and development activities.

B.2.3 Control of Funds and Resources

ACFID Code of Conduct Guidelines

Partners: Partners are individuals, groups of people or organisations that collaborate with signatory organisations to achieve mutually agreed objectives in aid and development activities. This may include affiliates.

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will make every reasonable effort to ensure that funds or resources disbursed to partners or third parties are applied lawfully, in accordance with the promise to the donor, for a proper purpose and with proper controls and risk management in place. (Australian Government legislative requirement).

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will only disburse donated funds or resources to a third party (including affiliates or partner agencies) for aid and development activities where we are satisfied that:
 - a. The activity is consistent with the explicit or implicit promise to the donor;
 - b. The activity is consistent with the Pacific Aid Australia's strategy, objects, purpose and values;
 - c. The third party has the capacity to apply the funds or resources in accordance with the promise to the donor, with this Code, with Pacific Aid Australia's strategy, objects and purpose and with the specific instructions of Pacific Aid Australia;
 - d. The funds or resources will be disbursed in accordance with relevant laws including taxation, counter terrorism financing and anti-money laundering legislation; and
 - e. Appropriate control and risk management mechanisms are in place to mitigate the risk of misappropriation or improper use of the funds or resources once disbursed.

B.3 Human Rights**B.3.1 Human Rights in Aid and Development****ACFID Principle:**

Signatory organisations' aid and development activity will be informed by and implemented with an understanding of the human rights dimensions of the activity

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will ensure that we provide a commitment to internationally recognised human rights principles.
2. Pacific Aid Australia will ensure that our aid and development activities are consistent with respecting and protecting internationally recognised human rights including civil and political, economic, social and cultural rights

B.3.2 Rights of Vulnerable and Marginalised People

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations are committed to including and addressing the needs and rights of vulnerable and marginalised people and their representatives in all aspects of their aid and development activity. These groups may include women, children, people with a disability, Indigenous Peoples, minorities, refugees and displaced people, and those most at risk of HIV and HIV positive people

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will ensure that we respect and protect the human rights of people from vulnerable and marginalised groups and an appropriate focus is given to promoting these in their aid and development activities.

B.3.3 Working with people with a disability

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations are committed to including and addressing the rights of people with disabilities and their representatives in their aid and development activity.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will ensure that an appropriate focus is given to understanding the rights of people with a disability and addressing these in our aid and development activities.

B.3.4 Protection of children

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations are committed to the safety and best interests of all children accessing their services and programs or involved in campaigns, voluntary support, fundraising, work experience or employment and, in particular, to minimising the risk of abuse.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Appropriate to our circumstances and the extent of our contact with children, Pacific Aid Australia will have a documented Child Protection Policy and procedures for dealing with children which are regularly reviewed. The Policy will be based on a considered risk assessment and as appropriate to the risk, address:
 - a. Development program planning and implementation;

- b. Use of images and personal information for fundraising and promotion purposes;
 - c. Personnel recruitment including staff, volunteers, consultants and suppliers – in both Australia and overseas;
 - d. All applicable legal obligations including mandatory police checks where available and appropriate for all personnel who have regular contact with children;
 - e. Behaviour protocols or codes;
 - f. Education and training of personnel and communication of the policy to all stakeholders; and
 - g. Reporting procedures.
2. When/if we work with children we will seek ways to incorporate the voices of children in shaping the development programs that affect them.
 3. If we work with children we will ensure that their complaints handling processes are child friendly.

B.4 Advocacy

B.4.1 Speaking from Evidence

ACFID Principle:

Where a signatory organisation takes on an advocacy role in Australia or globally, either alone or in partnership with others, this will be done from evidence based position and will include the perspectives of those affected.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will be transparent about the basis of the claims that underpin our advocacy.
2. Pacific Aid Australia will disclose any conflicts of interest.
3. Pacific Aid Australia will only claim to be representative when that authority has been clearly established.
4. Pacific Aid Australia will take all reasonable steps to protect the safety and rights of affected local people during or following an advocacy campaign.
5. Pacific Aid Australia will aim to empower those most affected by the issue in local communities to advocate for themselves.
6. Pacific Aid Australia will seek to work with organisations representing people most affected by the issue, where possible and appropriate

ACFID Code of Conduct Guidelines

Advocacy consists of activities undertaken to change the systemic and structural causes of poverty and disadvantage which may include popular campaigning, lobbying, research, policy positions, alliances and use of the media. It may occur both in Australia and globally. It includes the application of a set of strategies 'conducted as part of an agency's overall predominant purpose' (ATO).

B.5 Emergency management

B.5.1 International standards

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations commit to providing humanitarian assistance in times of disaster, armed conflict, internal displacement and protracted crisis according to internationally agreed standards and principles of ethical practice.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will incorporate the principles of the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief into our work.
2. Pacific Aid Australia will adhere to the Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response.
3. When involved in the distribution of pharmaceuticals and other donations in kind, Pacific Aid Australia will endorse the Australian Guidelines for Drug Donations to Developing Countries and will strive to reflect the principles in our practices and advocacy.
4. Pacific Aid Australia will comply with International Humanitarian Law, Human Rights law and Refugee law and other relevant International Conventions.
5. Pacific Aid Australia will consider the principles of the IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings

ACFID Code of Conduct Guidelines

Emergency management involves plans, structures and arrangements established to engage the normal endeavours of government, voluntary and private agencies in a comprehensive and coordinated way to respond to the whole spectrum of emergency needs. This includes preparedness, mitigation, response, rehabilitation, reconstruction, development and prevention activities.

B.5.2 Coordination with other actors

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will coordinate their activities and work collaboratively with other actors to the greatest extent possible throughout the emergency management cycle of providing humanitarian relief.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will aim to be active participants in existing communication and planning networks and clusters.

2. Pacific Aid Australia will utilise the information gained from participation in networks to improve their disaster response.

C. Public engagement

C.1 Integrity in marketing and reporting

C.1.1 Transparency

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations are committed to accurate and transparent communication with their stakeholders

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will proactively make available information to stakeholders which is accurate, accessible and timely.
2. Signatories will be clear about what information they will and will not provide to stakeholders.

C. 1.2 Reflecting values

ACFID Principle:

Marketing materials will reflect Signatory organisations' missions and values and the values of this Code.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will ensure our marketing materials clearly reflect our organisational values and the values of this code.

C.1.3 Portrayal of local people

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will ensure that the use of images and messages portraying women and men, boys and girls in their communications respects the dignity, values, history, religion and culture of the people portrayed.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Images and messages of women and men, boys and girls will present them in a dignified, respectful manner, portraying them as equal partners in the development process.
2. Images and messages will honestly portray the diversity of local people including age, disability and other marginalised groups.
3. Images and messages will honestly convey the context and complexity of the situations in which local people live.
4. Key figures in images will be informed of what the image is being used for and if possible, their permission obtained.
5. Origins of any images used will be known and any necessary permissions, including copyright releases, be held.
6. Care will be taken to ensure that the identification of or use of images of local people will not endanger the people they portray.

C.2 Annual reporting

C.2.1 Transparency

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will use their annual report as a key part of our accountability to all stakeholders.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. A written annual report will be produced and be made available to our stakeholders including our members, staff, volunteers, supporters, partner agencies, and members of the public.
2. The annual report will provide stakeholders with:
 - a. A description of our purpose, objectives/aims and values;
 - b. A plain language summary of our income and expenditure and overall financial health;
 - c. A description of the most significant aid and development activities undertaken during the reporting period and their impact; and
 - d. Information about evaluations into the effectiveness of and the learning from our aid and development activity.
3. The annual report will also specifically include:
 - a. A report by our governing body;
 - b. Financial statements prepared in accordance with the requirements of this Code;
 - c. A statement of commitment to full adherence to the Code;
 - d. Identification of the ability to lodge a complaint against the Pacific Aid Australia and a point of contact; and
 - e. Identification of the ability to lodge a complaint for breach of the Code with the ACFID Code of Conduct Committee and a point of contact.

C.2.2 Financial statements

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will publish financial statements in their annual report.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will publish an annual report which will contain:
 - a. Financial statements prepared in accordance with the Implementation Guidance to this Principle and the Financial Definitions at Section G of the Implementation Guidance. This requirement is not withstanding any other legal or parent body requirements.
 - b. A reference to the availability of the full financial report (if the full financial report has not been included in the annual report).

An audit report on the Code of Conduct Summary Financial Report or, if the full financial report has been included in the annual report, on the full financial report.

C.2.3 Access to full financial reports

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will ensure that in any references to financial performance, stakeholders are made aware of their right to access the full financial reports.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Where an organisation publishes only the Code of Conduct Summary Financial Report in their annual report the annual report will make it clear that the full financial report is available on request.
2. Any other publications that refer to financial performance, in summary, in an extract of detail or in commentary, will make it clear that the full financial report is available on request.

C.3 Fundraising

C.3.1 Legal obligations and ethical principles

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will abide by applicable fundraising legislation and will be aware of best practice standards in fundraising.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will have processes and procedures in place to ensure that all legislative requirements are met in their fundraising activities.
2. Pacific Aid Australia will ensure that all staff are aware of and comply with the Fundraising Institute of Australia's Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct and their standards for the type of fundraising undertaken (eg telemarketing, direct mail, electronic, events, face-to-face, grants and workplace giving).

C.3.2 Truthfulness

ACFID Principle:

Fundraising solicitations by or on behalf of signatory organisations will be truthful, will accurately describe the organisation's identity, purpose, programs, and needs and will only make claims which the organisation can fulfil.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will ensure that staff, volunteers and contractors are aware of the requirement that fundraising solicitations must be truthful.
2. Fundraising materials and solicitations will accurately identify Pacific Aid Australia's name, address, Australian Business Number and purposes.
3. Fundraising solicitations will clearly state if there is a specific purpose for the donations
4. Fundraising materials and solicitations will, in particular, avoid material omissions, exaggerations of fact, misleading visual portrayals and overstating either the need or what a donor's response may achieve.
5. Solicitations should accurately portray intended recipients, their situations and the potential solutions.

C.3.2 Responsibility

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will be responsible for all fundraising activities outsourced to a third party and will put all such contracts and agreements in writing.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will ensure that all contracts for fundraising meet the applicable legislative and regulatory requirements.
2. Pacific Aid Australia will have written contracts with third-party fundraisers that specify the expectations, responsibilities and obligations of each party.

3. Pacific Aid Australia will ensure that any form of fundraising undertaken by a third party clearly identifies Pacific Aid Australia as the beneficiary of the funds.

C.3.4 Protection for Donors

ACFID Principle:

In all fundraising activities conducted by or authorised by Signatory organisations, there will be policies and procedures in place to protect the rights of donors.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will have policies and procedures in place to ensure that the privacy of donors or potential donors is protected (consistent with the Privacy Act 1988), including the right to:
 - a. Have their names deleted or suppressed from mailing lists, including those that the organisation intends to share;
 - b. Identify collectors, see documentation confirming their bona fides and know whether they are volunteers, paid staff or agents of the organisation; and
 - c. Be informed about the purposes for which funds are being raised and be able to access information on programs supported by their donation.

C.3.5 Acceptance of donations

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will ensure that decisions to accept or reject donations supports their purpose.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. The governing body of the Pacific Aid Australia will have a position on acceptance and refusal of funds.

C.3.6 Application of donated funds

ACFID Principle:

In public fundraising for a specific purpose, Signatory organisations will have a plan for handling any excess and for substantiating the application of donors' funds

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will ensure that when fundraising for specific purposes we will have a plan for use of any excess funding and make this known at the commencement of the fundraising appeal.
2. Pacific Aid Australia will maintain financial records that enable substantiation of application of donor funds and will provide this on request.

C.3.7 Disclosure of fundraising and administration costs

ACFID Principle:

Any use by Signatory organisations of expenditure ratios (e.g. percentage of funds spent on administration and fundraising costs) will truthfully and transparently disclose all costs incurred in the donation program.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will not give the impression that fundraising has no costs nor that aid and development programs have no administrative component.
2. If using financial ratios, Pacific Aid Australia will comply with the Financial Reporting Implementation Guidance at C.2.2 and the Financial Definitions at Section G of ACFID's Implementation Guidance of the ACFID Code of Conduct
3. Pacific Aid Australia will fully and accurately disclose to the public our fundraising and any administration costs incurred, and will reflect this in financial ratios, if used, in publications and marketing material.
4. Pacific Aid Australia will accompany any use of ratios with a note explaining how these have been determined.

D. Organisation

D.1 Structure

D.1.1 Public benefit

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations are not-for-profit and formed voluntarily by a group of interested people for a common purpose that serves a public benefit and is not carried on for the profit or gain of individual members.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia's governing instrument(s) will clearly indicate our not for profit purpose and character and the public benefit to which we are dedicated.

2. Pacific Aid Australia may make and retain or invest a surplus, provided that surplus is directed to carrying out Pacific Aid Australia's purposes.
3. Pacific Aid Australia's governance instruments will prevent Pacific Aid Australia from distributing profits or assets for the benefit of members or other private persons, both during operation and on winding up.

D.2 Integrity and ethics

D.2.1 Legal requirements

ACFID Principle:

It is the responsibility of each signatory organisation to ensure that they are meeting the range of legal obligations that are applicable to them in each jurisdiction in which they work.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia's governing body will ensure that we have in place compliance systems and processes to ensure that our legal obligations are being met in each jurisdiction where work is carried out.

D2.1 Respect for other NGOs

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will ensure that their public communication is respectful of other NGOs. They will not denigrate other agencies, or make inaccurate or misleading public statements regarding other agencies.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will ensure that any communication regarding another NGO will be factually accurate and will not intentionally or otherwise mislead.
2. Pacific Aid Australia will not make statements about other NGOs with the intention of creating a reputational or other advantage for themselves.

D.2.3 Anti-fraud and anti-corruption

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will minimise any risk of wrongdoing, corruption, fraud, bribery or other financial impropriety among its governing body, paid staff, contractors, volunteers and partner organisations.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

Pacific Aid Australia's governing body will ensure that we

1. Articulate our stance against any wrongdoing, ensure that our ways of working actively minimise the risk of operational wrongdoing and monitor for evidence of wrongdoing.
2. Have internal and external processes for safe reporting of wrongdoing that include:
 - a. Publicised points of confidential contact (including at least one member of the governing body);
 - b. A process for investigation and escalation; and
 - c. Prescribed timeframes for investigation and response.
 - d. Take prompt, firm corrective action where wrongdoing is identified.

D.2.4 Conflicts of interest

ACFID Principle:

The governing body of signatory organisations will ensure that their organisations manage any real or perceived conflicts of interest for their governing body, paid staff, volunteers and partners.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will have a clear conflict of interest process that:
 - a. Requires members of the governing body, paid staff, and volunteers to disclose any real or perceived conflict of interest or any affiliation they have with an actual or potential supplier of goods and services, recipient of grant funds or organisation with competing or conflicting objectives.
 - b. Requires members of the governing body and paid staff to absent themselves from discussion, as appropriate, and abstain from voting or otherwise participating in the decision making on any issue in which they have a conflict of interest.
 - c. Requires members of the governing body, paid staff, and volunteers to disclose any material gifts or offers of gifts for their personal use and prohibits them from accepting valuable or otherwise inappropriate gifts.

D.2.5 Environmental impact of operations

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will aim to operate their domestic operations in an environmentally sustainable way.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will aim to reduce the environmental impact of our domestic operations.

D.3 Governance

D.3.1 Governing instrument

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will have written documentation (called a governing instrument in the Code) that sets out the goals and purpose of the organisation and defines how it operates.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment

1. Pacific Aid Australia's governing instrument will set out:
 - a. Our basic goals and purposes;
 - b. Our members and members' rights and obligations;
 - c. Our governance structure and processes;
 - d. The frequency and processes for meetings of members (at least annually);
 - e. The method of appointment/election of governors, their terms of office, any provisions for termination and, where applicable, the basis for their remuneration (details may be specified in a separate policy);
 - f. The rules for meetings of our governing body, including the frequency of meetings (at least two a year) and the size of a quorum;
 - g. The powers and responsibilities of our governing body including a statement of the overall responsibility of our governing body;
 - h. The strategic control (e.g. approving business plan, appointing the CEO) of our governing body;
 - i. The financial control (eg. approving budgets, receiving audited financial accounts and appointing the auditor) of our governing body;
 - j. The power of the governing body to delegate authority to officers, staff and others.
2. The governing instrument will be readily accessible to members and supporters.
 - a. The governing instrument will comply with the relevant Australian (Commonwealth and State/Territory) legislative requirements.

D.3.2 Governing body

ACFID Principle:

Each signatory organisation will have a governing body that has ultimate responsibility for all aspects of the organisation and to whom the organisation is accountable.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia's governing body will be elected or appointed by members from within our body of membership and/or supporters and will be accountable to them.
2. Our governing body must have a majority of non-staff (non executive) members.
3. Our governing body may delegate authority to staff or others, but may not delegate its overall responsibility.
4. Where authority is delegated to management or others, there will be clearly defined lines of authority between the governing body and those granted the authority.
5. The respective roles and responsibilities of the governing body, staff and management will be clearly set out and communicated to all

D.3.3 Annual general meeting

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will hold an annual general meeting (AGM) of their members as defined in the governing instrument.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. The AGM of Pacific Aid Australia will:
 - a. Deal with substantive matters including reports from the governors and managers, receiving the annual audited financial statements and appointing an independent auditor for the subsequent year/s;
 - b. In accordance with its governing instrument, provide members with every reasonable opportunity to attend and engage with the governors and managers of the organisation;
 - c. This will include providing advance notice of the meeting to all members and providing reasonable access to any relevant information.

D.3.4 Governing body policies

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will have written policies covering appointment, induction, termination and, where applicable, remuneration of members of the governing body for their work as governors, including reimbursement for expenses and any loans.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. To the extent that appointment and termination of members of the governing body are not covered by the governing instrument(s), a written policy will set out the processes for selection, appointment and induction.

2. There will be documented governing body policy setting out Pacific Aid Australia's approach to reimbursement of expenses by members of the governing body.
3. Where applicable, there will be a documented policy with respect to any remuneration by Pacific Aid Australia of members of the governing body. This policy must be approved by the Annual General Meeting of the members of the organisation.

D.4 Financial management

D.4.1 Internal financial controls

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will maintain internal financial control procedures that minimise the risk of misuse of funds.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will maintain detailed accounting records.
2. Pacific Aid Australia will have policies and procedures in place to ensure appropriate segregation of duties, taking into consideration size and capacity of the organisation.
3. Pacific Aid Australia will have adequate procedures for the review and monitoring of income and expenditure by management and the governing body.
4. Pacific Aid Australia will have a governing body approved policy for internal loans and transactions to staff and governing body members. This policy will include disclosure and reporting about such loans and transactions.
5. The nature of the relationship and the amount of any loans or payments to the members of the governing body or related parties must be fully disclosed in the annual financial report and subject to audit.
6. Pacific Aid Australia will ensure that funds and resources entrusted to them are controlled and properly invested and managed prior to their disbursement to any third party.

D.4.2 Auditing of financial statements

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will demonstrate their commitment to transparency and integrity of their financial reporting by having their financial reports independently audited by a qualified accountant.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia's full financial reports and Code of Conduct Summary Financial Reports will be independently audited and in accordance with the relevant Australian Auditing Standards.
2. The auditor will be at a minimum a qualified accountant who is a member of the Australian Society of Certified Practising Accountants, the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia or the National Institute of Accountants, or be a registered company auditor.
3. An audit report that specifically relates to the Code of Conduct Summary Financial Report will be included in the Annual Report and must be signed by the auditor and include their identity, qualifications and contact details.
4. An audit report that specifically relates to the full financial report must accompany the full financial report and must be signed by the auditor and include their identity, qualifications and contact details.

D.4.3 Effective use of resources

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will strive to be effective in their use of resources and will minimise financial wastage in the planning and implementation of development and aid activities.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will ensure that our aid and development activities are structured to enable measurement of costs.
2. Pacific Aid Australia will be diligent in reviewing the costs of our engagement, seeking cost savings and efficiencies where appropriate to the context and nature of our aid and development activity.

D. 5 Staff and Volunteers

D.5.1 Human Resources

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will protect the human rights and safety of personnel, including paid and volunteer staff, working in Australia or overseas.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will meet all minimum legal and regulatory requirements relating to personnel, and will document and maintain policies and procedures that relate to personnel.
2. Pacific Aid Australia will include in our human resources policies and procedures a statement of unacceptable behaviours expressly including reference to any sexual exploitation or abuse.
3. Pacific Aid Australia will ensure that all personnel are provided with the relevant induction information pertaining to their rights and safety and that there is ready access to personnel and Occupational Health and Safety policies and procedures.
4. Policies and procedures relating to staff and volunteers based both inside and outside Australia will be informed by the People in Aid Code of Good Practice in the Management and Support of Aid Personnel.

D.5.2 Professional conduct

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will clearly communicate their expectations that professional conduct of staff, volunteers and members of the governing body will be consistent with the requirements of this Code.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia is committed to increasing staff and volunteer awareness and understanding of all the Principles and Obligations of the ACFID Code of Conduct and Pacific Aid Australia's Code of Conduct and how it applies to their role and responsibilities within their organisation.
2. Staff and volunteers of Pacific Aid Australia are expected to comply with this Code, and this expectation will be clearly communicated at induction and in ongoing training.

D.5.3 Training and development

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations recognise the importance of professional training and development for staff and volunteers and aim to instil a culture of learning into their organisation.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia's personnel policy and procedures will clearly set out our commitment to training and development.
2. Pacific Aid Australia will ensure our staff and volunteers are aware of the rights of people with a disability and those from vulnerable and marginalised groups and are provided with training on these issues, as appropriate and desirable.

D.5.4 Human rights and anti-discrimination

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will apply human rights principles to their own organisations.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will make our commitment to human rights and anti-discrimination in employment and advancement clear in our organisation's key documents.
2. Pacific Aid Australia will engage staff and volunteers within a framework that actively promotes human rights and avoids discrimination, in a way that supports our identity, philosophy and values and meets the statutory obligations of any anti discrimination legislation.
3. Pacific Aid Australia will have comprehensive gender equity policies and disability guidelines in place that aim to produce equitable outcomes between women and men, and people with a disability, in all activities of the organisation, including:
 - a. Engagement of volunteers and staff;
 - b. Engagement of partner agencies;
 - c. Senior management and governance.

D.6 Complaint-handling within signatory organisations

D.6.1 Value of complaints

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations recognise the importance and value of listening and responding to concerns and complaints.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will equip staff and volunteers with an understanding of our approach to complaints response and assist them to effectively implement the policies.
2. Pacific Aid Australia will have in place a process for reviewing and analysing information available from concerns and complaints raised with Pacific Aid Australia

D.6.2 Accessibility and awareness

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will seek to ensure that their feedback and complaints handling processes about their aid and development activities conducted in Australia and overseas, are effective, safe, confidential and accessible to all stakeholders, irrespective of their gender, status or background and without prejudice to their future participation.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will have a documented complaints handling policy and procedure that:
 - a. Provides an accessible, safe and discreet point of contact for stakeholders in Australia and countries where work is carried out to raise concerns or complaints about the organisation;
 - b. Is responsive and fair;
 - c. Provides information to all stakeholders about the reporting and complaints procedure;
 - d. Provides information in a clear and easily understandable manner in appropriate forms and through appropriate media;
 - e. Ensures requirements for filing a complaint take into consideration the needs of the most vulnerable and considers minority and disadvantaged stakeholders;
 - f. Advises a complainant of the ability to make a complaint regarding an alleged breach of the Code to the ACFID Code of Conduct Committee.

E. Compliance to the ACFID Code of Conduct

Pacific Aid Australia is a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct. As such we have modelled our own code of conduct to the ACFID Code of Conduct. To comply to the ACFID Code of Conduct, Pacific Aid Australia commits to the following ACFID principles and obligations:

E.1 Compliance

E.1.1 Compliance with the ACFID Code of Conduct

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will be compliant with all applicable aspects of this Code and will not engage in activities which bring the sector into disrepute.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will monitor ourselves to ensure we are compliant with the Code.
2. Pacific Aid Australia will promote our commitment to the Code and Code complaints handling process on our website.

3. If Pacific Aid Australia becomes aware of major transgressions against this Code in our own or other signatory organisations we are encouraged to notify or make a complaint to the Code of Conduct Committee.

E.2 Assessment of compliance

E.2.1 Application to become a signatory

ACFID Principle:

Organisations wanting to become a signatory to the Code of Conduct must complete the application process as determined by the Code of Conduct and must be fully compliant with the Code before being granted Code signatory status.

Organisations that are only partially compliant with all of the Code's Principles and Obligations will be given Provisional Code Signatory Status.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. As a signatory, Pacific Aid Australia will complete the Compliance Self Assessment Process, which details organisational documentation that supports compliance with the Code Principles and Obligations.
2. As a signatory, Pacific Aid Australia will provide the Code of Conduct Committee with copies of the relevant documents that demonstrate compliance with the Principles and Obligations in the Code.

E.2.2 Annual assessment

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will provide information on an annual basis demonstrating their continued compliance with the Code.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. On an annual basis, Pacific Aid Australia will complete the Compliance Self Assessment process, which requires us to report on compliance with the Principles and Obligations in the Code and advise if any of our key supporting policies and documents have changed materially.
2. The Compliance Self Assessment process must be completed within 5 months of the conclusion of our financial year.
3. Pacific Aid Australia will promptly provide the Code of Conduct Committee with any reasonable requests for clarification or additional information.
4. Pacific Aid Australia will comply with any remedial actions recommended by the Code of Conduct Committee.

E.2.3 Annual reporting

ACFID Principle:

Signatory organisations will provide copies of their annual reports and financial statements to the Code of Conduct Committee.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Within 5 months of the end of our financial reporting period, Pacific Aid Australia will lodge with the Code of Conduct Committee: a copy of our annual report; a copy of our annual full financial statements (if not included in the annual report); and the prescribed ACFID lodgement form.
2. Pacific Aid Australia will promptly provide the Committee with any reasonable requests for clarification or additional information.
3. Pacific Aid Australia will comply with any remedial actions or disciplinary action recommended by the Code of Conduct Committee.

E.2.4 Promotional material

ACFID Principle

Signatory organisations will respond promptly to rectify any Code of Conduct breaches identified in random promotional material checks conducted during an emergency appeal.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Where Pacific Aid Australia is advised by the Code of Conduct Committee of a breach in the Code, Pacific Aid Australia will rectify the breach within a time frame nominated by the Committee and put in place systems to ensure that the breach does not recur.

E.3 ACFID Code of Conduct complaints handling

E.3.1 Agreement to the process

ACFID Principle

Signatory organisations agree to be bound by the independent, accessible, fair and confidential ACFID Code complaints handling process.

Pacific Aid Australia Commitment:

1. Pacific Aid Australia will comply with the complaints handling process as set out in the ACFID Guidance. This forms part of the binding obligations of this Code.

2. Pacific Aid Australia will comply with Code of Conduct Committee requests for information within all reasonable time limits set.
3. If there is a breach of the Code, Pacific Aid Australia will comply with the corrective or disciplinary action agreed with the Code of Conduct Committee, as described in the ACFID Guidance and which forms a binding part of the Obligations of this Code.
4. If a breach has occurred, Pacific Aid Australia will comply with the Code of Conduct Committee requirements that it will put in place measures to minimise the risk of the breach recurring.

F. Definitions

Financial definitions used in this code are contained in Section G.

- **Accountability:** 'The processes through which an organisation makes a commitment to respond to and balance the needs of stakeholders in its decision making processes and activities, and delivers against the commitment' (Pathways to Accountability, the GAP Framework One World Trust, 2005)
- **Actors:** An organisation, government department or individual with a role or influence. (Safety with Dignity, Action Aid, 2009)
- **Affiliate:** An organisation to which the signatory organisation has some form of membership, formal association or alliance.
- **Aid and development:** Aid and development refers to 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 includes 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.
- **Advocacy:** Activities undertaken to change the systemic and structural causes of poverty and disadvantage which may include popular campaigning, lobbying, research, policy positions, alliances and use of the media. It may occur both in Australia and globally. Includes the application of a set of strategies 'conducted as part of an agency's overall predominant purpose' (Australian Tax Office).
- **Civil society organisation (CSO):** Includes non-government organisations (NGOs), not-for-profit organisations (NPOs), charities and community based organisations (CBOs). Can also include religious organisations, trade unions, foundations and any institutions outside of the corporate and government sectors. (Pathways to Accountability, the GAP Framework, One World Trust, 2005).
- **Collaborate:** A process in which two parties contribute core competencies and share the risks and decision making to achieve mutual objectives.
- **Communities:** Locally organised or informal groups or networks. (Safety with Dignity, Action Aid, 2009).
- **Complaint:** An 'expression of dissatisfaction'. (International Standards Organisation standard on complaints handling).
- **Development:** Seeks to improve the conditions of communities in a sustainable way. It is based on working with communities, rather than for or on behalf of communities.(Ausaid).
- **Dignity:** 'The feeling of having decision making power, freedom and autonomy over life choices, together with the feeling of self worth and self-confidence, and feeling one has the respect of others'. (Safety with dignity, ActionAid 2009 based on Protection: an ALNAP Guide for Humanitarian Agencies, Slim and Bronwick 2005.)
- **Disability:** Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others (United National Convention on the Rights of People with a Disability).

- **Emergency management:** 'Involves plans, structures and arrangements established to engage the normal endeavours of government, voluntary and private agencies in a comprehensive and coordinated way to respond to the whole spectrum of emergency needs'. (The United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN ISDR) 2004). This includes preparedness, mitigation, response, rehabilitation, reconstruction, development and prevention activities.
- **Effectiveness:** Promoting sustainable change that addresses the causes as well as the symptoms of poverty and marginalisation. (ACFID NGO Effectiveness Framework 2004).
- **Emergency:** A threatening condition that requires urgent action. (The United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN ISDR 2004).
- **Gender:** Socially constructed roles and relationships between men and women which affects their ability and incentive to participate in development activities and leads to different project impacts for women and men. (Guide to Gender and development, AusAID, 2007).
- **Gender analysis:** The process of considering the impact that a development program or project may have on women and men, boys and girls and the economic and social relationships between them. (Guide to Gender and development, AusAID, 2007.)
- **Gender equality:** Equal opportunities and outcomes for women and men, girls and boys. (Guide to Gender and development, AusAID, 2007)
- **Gender equity:** 'Fairness in access to resources and in the distribution of benefits from development, according to the different needs of women, men, girls and boys'. (Australian Government, 2007)
- **Human Rights:** Legal statements by the international community that assert the equality and dignity of all human beings. Includes civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights. The core international human rights treaties and their optional protocols are located on the ACFID website.
- **Humanitarian relief:** Fulfilling 'the most basic requirements for sustaining the lives and dignity of those affected by calamity or conflict'. (Sphere Project, 2004)
- **Local people:** The women and men, boys and girls who are participants in, and directly affected by, aid and development activities in the geographical area in which the activity is undertaken. May also be known as beneficiaries or primary stakeholders.
- **Non government organisations:** Voluntary, not-for-profit, organisations formally registered with government that are run by a governing board that is accountable to its members.
- **Non-food items:** Includes clothing and bedding, personal hygiene items, cooking and eating utensils, stoves, fuel and lighting, tools and equipment. (Sphere 2004)
- **Other resources:** Includes (but is not limited to) funds raised, gifts in kind, property, assets, staff and volunteers of signatory and partner organisations.
- **Partner:** Partners are individuals, groups of people or organisations that collaborate with signatory organisations to achieve mutually agreed objectives in aid and development activities. This may include affiliates.
- **Primary stakeholders:** (see local people).
- **Promoting a particular religious adherence:** Activities undertaken with the intention of converting individuals or groups from one faith and/or denominational affiliation to another.

- **Psycho social support:** Any type of local or outside support that aims to promote psychological and social wellbeing and/or to prevent or treat mental disorder.
- **Signatory:** An organisation which the Code of Conduct Committee has accepted as a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct and which has not resigned or been removed and has paid all its fees.
- **Stakeholders:** Individuals and groups that can affect or are affected by an organisation's policies and/or actions (Pathways to Accountability, the GAP Framework One World Trust, 2005).
- **Supporting a particular party, candidate or organisation affiliated to a political party:** Agency personnel or their representatives (when using the agency name or resources in paid time) 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 a particular politician or faction to gain power within a government or within a party political structure.
- **Sustainable development:** 'Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987).
- **Transparency:** 'An organisation's openness about its activities, providing information on what it is doing, where and how this takes place and how it is performing'. (Pathways to Accountability, the GAP Framework, One World Trust, 2005).
- **Third parties:** May be a contractor, partner or an affiliate of the non-government organisation.

