

World Vision Australia Non-Development Activity Statement

World Vision Australia (WVA) is committed to ensuring that it accurately represents its activities to the people it works with, its donors, and the public.

1. Purpose and Scope of Statement

The purpose of this Statement is to guide WVA and its partners to make a clear separation between development and humanitarian and non- development objectives and activities.

This Statement addresses our ACFID compliance obligations 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. It also addresses WVA's commitment to accountability to our stakeholders in the ACFID Code of Conduct, in particular in regards to the separation of development activities from non-development activities.

This Statement is intended to cover all WVA employees, volunteers and activities, and extends to WVA partners and associated implementing organisations.

2. Background

WVA is a Christian overseas aid and humanitarian organisation that engages people to eliminate poverty and its causes.

As part of its compliance with the ACFID Code of Conduct, WVA has 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.

3. Definition of Aid and Development Activities

WVA is committed to ensuring that funds and other resources designated for the purpose of aid and development are used only for those purposes. The concept of aid and development activities can be distinguished by the following principles:

- a. Strengths based approaches which encourage people and communities to create solutions for themselves
- b. Processes that seek to address the causes of poverty
- c. Processes that seek to empower rights holders to claim their rights and ensure that duty bearers exercise their duties
- d. Supporting systems and structures which enable people to move out of poverty
- e. Humanitarian response and emergency relief, disaster recovery and meeting the immediate needs of refugees and internally displaced people.

4. Definition of Non-Development Activities

WVA does not provide support for evangelical or partisan political activities or for activities that keep beneficiaries and the communities we work with in a state of dependence on welfare.

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

Partisan political activities are those that are associated with facilitating or supporting specific political individuals to gain power. This does not include advocacy which is aimed at persuading and influencing decision-makers and opinion leaders, and is not aimed at promoting partisan political objectives

Welfare is assistance to maintain people in a particular condition on a long term basis. Usually it is provided on an individual basis **and is unconnected to humanitarian emergency needs**. In the main, beneficiaries of welfare are not engaged in activities which may lead to more sustainable development goals.

The communities in which we work are often very vulnerable, not only through the impact of poverty and natural disasters, but because of this power disparity. This is why clear guidelines have been established so that such power and the trust a community invests in such an organisation is never misused. These guidelines ensure that this power is never used to promote a particular religious adherence and that the vulnerable are treated with the utmost dignity and their freedom is at all times valued and respected.

It is important to note the 'intersection' of WVA's own policies with those of the World Vision Partnership on the broader level:

- The World Vision Partnership has developed (with input from WVA and other WV offices) policies and guidelines on many aspects of our work.
- Each World Vision office, as part of their commitment to the Covenant of Partnership, undertakes to work within policies and decisions established by the World Vision International Board consultative processes.
- There is recognition, however, that local regulatory and other requirements need to be taken into account.

5. Guiding principles

WVA supports and is committed to abiding by the following principles:

- to ensure accurate representation of our activities to the people we work with, donors and the public
- to ensure that funds raised for aid and development purposes are not used to exploit people and communities who are vulnerable and do not place any conditions or obligations on recipients in terms of non-development, religious or political outcomes that would affect their access to services being offered.

No component of partner programs involve evangelical or partisan political activities.

6. Compliance

Notwithstanding that WVA does not engage in non-development activities, if WVA were to engage in non-development activities it commits to:

1. Making a clear separation between aid and development and non-aid and development objectives and activities;
2. This separation being clear in all WVA fundraising, programs and other activities, in public communications and in all reporting including annual reports;

3. Any fundraising that includes references to both aid and development and non-development activities will provide donors with the choice of contributing to aid and development activity only;
4. Ensuring 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.

7. Control Procedures

WVA has developed clear guidelines with its partners for the appropriate handling of power, freedom and vulnerability, especially when these relate to questions of belief. A foundation of our approach is the prohibition of proselytism set out in several World Vision Partnership policies. WVA understands it is in a powerful position in communities, having access to needed capital, resources and expertise.

These guidelines ensure that this power is never used to promote a particular religious adherence and that the vulnerable are treated with the utmost dignity and their freedom is at all times valued and respected.

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WVA’s Board Policy Manual states that:

“In accordance with the Covenant of Partnership, WVA complies with all WVI Partnership Policies insofar as it is appropriate to do so within the Australian regulatory environment.”

In relation to development, welfare, evangelism and politics, the key policy is the World Vision Partnership’s Transformational Development Policy (which establishes principles for transformational development that is community-based and sustainable). While this is a key policy relating to development, welfare, evangelism and politics, it is “supported” and to be read and applied together with the following other policies:

- International Instruments Promoting and Protecting Child Rights Policy
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights Policy
- Ministry Policy on Interfaith Relations
- Promotion of Justice Policy.

Transformational development is a key pillar of the WV Partnership’s Mission Statement. Principles which apply in relation to transformational development include:

- Community ownership:
- Well-being of children
- Sustainability and holism
- Mutual transformation, transformed relationships, interdependent communities, transformed systems and structures, transformed

We are committed to the poor because we are Christian but we are sensitive to the diverse contexts in which we express that identity and we work with people of all cultures, faiths and genders to achieve transformation. Our policies require that we do not proselytise (nor support the work of people who do) and that we support the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights including article 18 on religious freedom. See also description of “Our mission, motivation and values” on our website at <http://www.worldvision.com.au/AboutUs/OurMissionMotivationValues.aspx>.

Our programmes increase awareness of human rights and international conventions and promote just practices for all, regardless of gender, ethnicity, caste, disability, religion or age.

At a practical level WVA continues to ensure alignment to development (and no funding of non-development activities) at Field Allocation Committee (FAC) level guided by the FAC Charter (i.e. all projects to comply with ACFID guidelines and all funds allocated to comply with all regulatory compliance requirements, including no engagement in non-development activities in the field.)

Related Policies and Procedures

This Statement should be read in conjunction with the following:

- World Vision Transformational Development Policy
- WVA Sustainability Policy
- World Vision Promotion of Justice Policy
- World Vision Australia Image Guidelines
- World Vision Partnership Human Rights Policy
- WVA Field Allocation Committee Terms of Reference
- World Vision Ministry Policy on Interfaith Relations
- WVA Theology of Accountability

External References

- ACFID Code of Conduct
- DFAT Accreditation Manual
- Overseas Aid Gift Deductions Scheme