

Appendix 1 - Contents List ACFID Staff Terms and Conditions

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Appendix 2 **ACFID Staff Code of Conduct** [Adopted by ACFID Executive 6 December 2002]

ACFID seeks to provide a work environment that is fair, safe, free of any form of harassment and to meet the obligations and responsibilities that are contained in the ACFID Terms and Conditions of Employment including the procedures to resolve any grievances.

As a member of the ACFID staff I agree:

1. To be familiar with and to uphold the ethical principles and requirements of the ACFID Code of Conduct including the following:
 - In all activities and particularly in communications to the public, to accord due respect to the dignity, values, history, religion, and culture of the people with whom we work consistent with principles of basic human rights;
 - To oppose and not be a willing party to wrongdoing, corruption, bribery, or other financial impropriety in any activity;
 - To not make misleading or false public statements regarding other agencies nor to conduct activities in ways that may denigrate other agencies;
2. To contribute to a work environment that is fair, equitable and free of any form of harassment and to act with honesty and good faith, treating all members of staff and volunteers with respect and dignity;
3. To work in a professional and cooperative manner with other staff and volunteers;
4. To be familiar with my responsibilities under the ACFID Terms and Conditions of Employment and of other ACFID policies guiding the work of staff and volunteers;
5. To comply with Occupational Health and Safety requirements in the workplace;
6. To abide by the expectations and requirements of personnel representing ACFID overseas as detailed in the Guidelines for ACFID Delegations Overseas;
7. To contribute to, and take ownership of, decisions that contribute toward the achievement of the mission and objectives of ACFID;
8. To respect the role and decisions of the ACFID Council, Executive Committee and ACFID management in guiding the work of ACFID;
9. To acknowledge and provide constructive feedback as appropriate on the contribution of peers and managers;
10. To maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality as necessary to the performance of duties.

Signed: _____ **Date** _____

Name: _____

This Code is to be signed by all staff at the commencement of their service with ACFID and its interpretation and application will be discussed at least annually in an appropriate staff forum.

Appendix 3 **ACFID Commitment to Gender Equity, Diversity and Flexibility**

ACFID acknowledges the positive contribution of a diverse workforce and is committed to promoting and supporting the principles of gender equity, diversity and flexibility in the workplace.

ACFID strives to create a work environment sensitive to gender equity and diversity and working conditions that enable both women and men to achieve a balance between work and other aspects of life.

Equity is generally regarded as a state of fairness and justice. It requires that the specific needs of particular groups are considered separately and acted upon accordingly. The concept of gender equity recognises that women and men have different life experiences, different needs, different levels of power and access to decision making in our society and differing expectations by others. Gender equity strategies recognise that gender leads to different social, economic and political opportunities for women and men.

The principle of equity or fairness holds that each individual has a basic right to compete for employment as one of the opportunities and rewards of our society, subject only to the limits of his or her ability. Gender equity approaches recognise that there are historical and social disadvantages which prevent one sex, often women, from benefiting fully from society's resources including employment.

The concept recognises that women and men have different needs and power structures and that these differences should be identified and addressed by employers in a manner that rectifies imbalance between the sexes. Gender equity strategies seek to achieve fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between women and men, and recognise that different approaches may be required to produce equitable outcomes.

There are continuing traditions of stereotypes and conceptions of what it means to be a woman or a man which are embedded in systems and practices. Discriminatory practices have resulted in the systematic devaluation of attitudes, activities and abilities ascribed to women. For men, this discrimination has contributed to devaluation of feminised characteristics in males and reinforced the prevalent male stereotype. The equity approach attempts to recognise these differences and address the underlying reasons for these differences.

Equal Employment Opportunity principles remain a legislative requirement ensuring the elimination of discrimination against women, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders, people from non-english speaking backgrounds and people with disabilities. Workplace diversity extends beyond EEO taking on a broader focus where the differences inherent in every employee are valued. Workplace Diversity focuses on the positive contributions all staff can make to a high performing workplace.

Diversity in the workplace has many dimensions. It encompasses age, gender, physical and mental abilities, educational level, working style, socio-economic background, family and personal responsibilities, language, ethnicity, religion, cultural background and sexual orientation. It is a recognition that people bring to the workplace a variety of personal attributes and experiences that can add value to the work of an organisation.

ACFID recognises that people – with their diverse abilities, skills, languages, cultures and backgrounds - are our greatest asset. A focus on diversity encourages us to tap into this resource so that we can best meet ACFID's objectives.

The need for people to rest, to engage in cultural and recreational activities, to take time

with their families and to undertake personal development is considered to be an intrinsic part of the employment relationship. Additionally it must be acknowledged that employees have a variety of personal responsibilities beyond the workplace which in turn impact upon their lives at work. Changing workforce dynamics, together with the transforming nature of work and technology now mean that issues such as family responsibilities and further study can no longer be ignored.

It is well recognised that flexibility and responsiveness are fundamental to an organisation's longer term success. A crucial element in this success lies in recognising the valuable contribution employees make toward its achievement.

ACFID believes that the advantages and cost benefits in providing flexible work practices include improved retention of skilled employees, reductions in recruitment and training costs through lower employee turnover, a decrease in absenteeism, improved employee morale and reduced stress. These all lead to greater productivity.

In keeping with our commitment to workplace diversity, ACFID aims to promote a workplace culture that:

- values and supports individual differences and perspectives;
- incorporates diversity principles across all of our people policies and services – from recruitment and selection through to performance appraisal and career development;
- promotes flexible and responsive work practices;
- is free from discrimination and harassment; and provides all staff with the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Gender Equity and Diversity

Key points

- Responsibility for the development of a gender equity and diversity culture in the ACFID rests with all staff
- The diverse backgrounds, skills, talents and views of staff are recognised, encouraged and valued by supervisors and managers.
- Staff are encouraged to recognise and use their life skills and experiences to maximise their individual effectiveness in the workplace and to enhance the quality of their decision making.
- Staff are not subject to direct or indirect discrimination, unfair treatment in the workplace, or to workplace harassment.
- ACFID aims to ensure that workplace practices provide flexibility for staff to balance their work and personal commitments.
- ACFID is committed to remedying any employment related disadvantage of current and potential employees in designated groups.
- Staff and those seeking employment with ACFID receive fair and equitable treatment in staff selection processes and career development opportunities. Employment decisions are based on merit.
- Supervisors are encouraged to focus on the diverse backgrounds and skills of their staff and to draw on and develop these qualities in the workplace.
- Staff are encouraged to acknowledge and draw on their diverse backgrounds, skills and talents.

It is hoped that through ACFID's workplace policies delivered through a process of consultation and cooperation, these arrangements will extensively assist in the career development of employees and provide a model that will assist in the promotion of similar positive working arrangements in the NGO sector.

Appendix 4 **The Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief.**

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS IN DISASTER RELIEF

www.ifrc.org

The Code of Conduct

Principles of Conduct for The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Response Programmes.

1 The Humanitarian imperative comes first

The right to receive humanitarian assistance, and to offer it, is a fundamental humanitarian principle which should be enjoyed by all citizens of all countries. As members of the international community, we recognise our obligation to provide humanitarian assistance wherever it is needed. Hence the need for unimpeded access to affected populations, is of fundamental importance in exercising that responsibility. The prime motivation of our response to disaster is to alleviate human suffering amongst those least able to withstand the stress caused by disaster. When we give humanitarian aid it is not a partisan or political act and should not be viewed as such.

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.

Wherever possible, we will base the provision of relief aid upon a thorough assessment of the needs of the disaster victims and the local capacities already in place to meet those needs. Within the entirety of our programmes, we will reflect considerations of proportionality. Human suffering must be alleviated whenever it is found; life is as precious in one part of a country as another. Thus, our provision of aid will reflect the degree of suffering it seeks to alleviate. In implementing this approach, we recognise the crucial role played by women in disaster prone communities and will ensure that this role is supported, not diminished, by our aid programmes. The implementation of such a universal, impartial and independent policy, can only be effective if we and our partners have access to the necessary resources to provide for such equitable relief, and have equal access to all disaster victims.

3 Aid will not be used to further a particular political or religious standpoint

Humanitarian aid will be given according to the need of individuals, families and communities. Notwithstanding the right of NGOs to espouse particular political or

religious opinions, we affirm that assistance will not be dependent on the adherence of the recipients to those opinions. We will not tie the promise, delivery or distribution of assistance to the embracing or acceptance of a particular political or religious creed.

4 We shall endeavour not to act as instruments of government foreign policy

NGHAs are agencies which act independently from governments. We therefore formulate our own policies and implementation strategies and do not seek to implement the policy of any government, except in so far as it coincides with our own independent policy. We will never knowingly - or through negligence - allow ourselves, or our employees, to be used to gather information of a political, military or economically sensitive nature for governments or other bodies that may serve purposes other than those which are strictly humanitarian, nor will we act as instruments of foreign policy of donor governments. We will use the assistance we receive to respond to needs and this assistance should not be driven by the need to dispose of donor commodity surpluses, nor by the political interest of any particular donor. We value and promote the voluntary giving of labour and finances by concerned individuals to support our work and recognise the independence of action promoted by such voluntary motivation. In order to protect our independence we will seek to avoid dependence upon a single funding source.

5 We shall respect culture and custom

We will endeavour to respect the culture, structures and customs of the communities and countries we are working in.

6 We shall attempt to build disaster response on local capacities

All people and communities - even in disaster - possess capacities as well as vulnerabilities. Where possible, we will strengthen these capacities by employing local staff, purchasing local materials and trading with local companies. Where possible, we will work through local NGHAs as partners in planning and implementation, and co-operate with local government structures where appropriate. We will place a high priority on the proper co-ordination of our emergency responses. This is best done within the countries concerned by those most directly involved in the relief operations, and should include representatives of the relevant UN bodies.

7 Ways shall be found to involve programme beneficiaries in the management of relief aid

Disaster response assistance should never be imposed upon the beneficiaries. Effective relief and lasting rehabilitation can best be achieved where the intended beneficiaries are involved in the design, management and implementation of the assistance programme. We will strive to achieve full community participation in our relief and rehabilitation programmes.

8 Relief aid must strive to reduce future vulnerabilities to disaster as well as meeting basic needs

All relief actions affect the prospects for long term development, either in a positive or a negative fashion. Recognising this, we will strive to implement relief programmes which actively reduce the beneficiaries' vulnerability to future disasters and help create sustainable lifestyles. We will pay particular attention to environmental concerns in the design and management of relief programmes. We will also endeavour to minimise the negative impact of humanitarian assistance, seeking to avoid long term beneficiary dependence upon external aid.

9 We hold ourselves accountable to both those we seek to assist and those from whom we accept resources

We often act as an institutional link in the partnership between those who wish to assist and those who need assistance during disasters. We therefore hold ourselves accountable to both constituencies. All our dealings with donors and beneficiaries shall reflect an attitude of openness and transparency. We recognise the need to report on our activities, both from a financial perspective and the perspective of effectiveness. We recognise the obligation to ensure appropriate monitoring of aid distributions and to carry out regular assessments of the impact of disaster assistance. We will also seek to report, in an open fashion, upon the impact of our work, and the factors limiting or enhancing that impact. Our programmes will be based upon high standards of professionalism and expertise in order to minimise the wasting of valuable resources.

10 In our information, publicity and advertising activities, we shall recognise disaster victims as dignified humans, not hopeless objects

Respect for the disaster victim as an equal partner in action should never be lost. In our public information we shall portray an objective image of the disaster situation where the capacities and aspirations of disaster victims are highlighted, and not just their vulnerabilities and fears. While we will co-operate with the media in order to enhance public response, we will not allow external or internal demands for publicity to take precedence over the principle of maximising overall relief assistance. We will avoid competing with other disaster response agencies for media coverage in situations where such coverage may be to the detriment of the service provided to the beneficiaries or to the security of our staff or the beneficiaries.

The Working Environment

Having agreed unilaterally to strive to abide by the Code laid out above, we present below some indicative guidelines which describe the working environment we would like to see created by donor governments, host governments and the inter-governmental organisations - principally the agencies of the United Nations - in order to facilitate the effective participation of NGHAs in disaster response.

These guidelines are presented for guidance. They are not legally binding, nor do we expect governments and IGOs to indicate their acceptance of the guidelines through the signature of any document, although this may be a goal to work to in the future. They are presented in a spirit of openness and co-operation so that our partners will become aware of the ideal relationship we would seek with them.

Annex I

Recommendations to the governments of disaster affected countries

1: Governments should recognise and respect the independent, humanitarian and impartial actions of NGHAs

NGHAs are independent, bodies. This independence and impartiality should be respected by host governments.

2: Host governments should facilitate rapid access to disaster victims for NGHAs

If NGHAs are to act in full compliance with their humanitarian principles, they should be granted rapid and impartial access to disaster victims, for the purpose of delivering humanitarian assistance. It is the duty of the host government, as part of the exercising of sovereign responsibility, not to block such assistance, and to accept the impartial and apolitical action of NGHAs. Host governments should facilitate the rapid entry of relief staff, particularly by waiving requirements for transit, entry and exit visas, or arranging that these are rapidly granted. Governments should grant over-flight permission and landing rights for aircraft transporting international relief supplies and personnel, for the duration of the emergency relief phase.

3: Governments should facilitate the timely flow of relief goods and information during disasters

Relief supplies and equipment are brought into a country solely for the purpose of alleviating human suffering, not for commercial benefit or gain. Such supplies should normally be allowed free and unrestricted passage and should not be subject to requirements for consular certificates of origin or invoices, import and/or export licences or other restrictions, or to importation taxation, landing fees or port charges.

The temporary importation of necessary relief equipment, including vehicles, light aircraft and telecommunications equipment, should be facilitated by the receiving host government through the temporary waving of license or registration restrictions. Equally, governments should not restrict the re-exportation of relief equipment at the end of a relief operation.

To facilitate disaster communications, host governments are encouraged to designate certain radio frequencies, which relief organisations may use in-country and for international communications for the purpose of disaster communications, and to make such frequencies known to the disaster response community prior to the disaster. They should authorise relief personnel to utilise all means of communication required for their relief operations.

4: Governments should seek to provide a co-ordinated disaster information and planning service

The overall planning and co-ordination of relief efforts is ultimately the responsibility of the host government. Planning and co-ordination can be greatly enhanced if NGHAs are provided with information on relief needs and government systems for planning and implementing relief efforts as well as information on potential security risks they may encounter. Governments are urged to provide such information to NGHAs.

To facilitate effective co-ordination and the efficient utilisation of relief efforts, host governments are urged to designate, prior to disaster, a single point-of-contact for incoming NGHAs to liaise with the national authorities.

5: Disaster relief in the event of armed conflict

In the event of armed conflict, relief actions are governed by the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law.

Annex II

Recommendations to donor governments

1: Donor governments should recognise and respect the independent, humanitarian and impartial actions of NGHAs

NGHAs are independent bodies whose independence and impartiality should be respected by donor governments. Donor governments should not use NGHAs to further any political or ideological aim.

2: Donor governments should provide funding with a guarantee of operational independence NGHAs accept funding and material assistance from donor governments in the same spirit as they render it to disaster victims; one of humanity and independence of action. The implementation of relief actions is ultimately the responsibility of the NGHA and will be carried out according to the policies of that NGHA.

3: Donor governments should use their good offices to assist NGHAs in obtaining access to disaster victims

Donor governments should recognise the importance of accepting a level of responsibility for the security and freedom of access of NGHA staff to disaster sites. They should be prepared to exercise diplomacy with host governments on such issues if necessary.

Annex III

Recommendations to intergovernmental organisations

1: IGOs should recognise NGHAs, local and foreign, as valuable partners

NGHAs are willing to work with UN and other intergovernmental agencies to effect better disaster response. They do so in a spirit of partnership which respects the integrity and independence of all partners. Intergovernmental agencies must respect the independence and impartiality of the NGHAs. NGHAs should be consulted by UN agencies in the preparation of relief plans.

2: IGOs should assist host governments in providing an overall co-ordinating framework for international and local disaster relief

NGHAs do not usually have the mandate to provide the overall co-ordinating framework for disasters which require an international response. This responsibility falls to the host government and the relevant United Nations authorities. They are urged to provide this service in a timely and effective manner to serve the affected state and the national and international disaster response community. In any case, NGHAs should make all efforts to ensure the effective co-ordination of their own services.

In the event of armed conflict, relief actions are governed by the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law.

3: IGOs should extend security protection provided for UN organisations, to NGHAs

Where security services are provided for intergovernmental organisations, this service should be extended to their operational NGHAs partners where it is so requested.

4: IGOs should provide NGHAs with the same access to relevant information as is granted to UN organisations

IGOs are urged to share all information, pertinent to the implementation of effective disaster response, with their operational NGHAs partners.

Appendix 5 Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response

THE SPHERE PROJECT

Humanitarian Charter and Minimum standards in Disaster Response

www.sphereproject.org

Background

The Sphere Project was launched in 1997 by NGOs to develop a set of universal minimum standards in core areas of humanitarian assistance. It is managed by the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response which is a coordinating body representing various international NGO networks. The aim of the project is to improve the quality of assistance provided to people affected by disasters and to enhance the accountability of the humanitarian system in disaster response.

Introduction

“Meeting essential needs and restoring life with dignity are the core principles that should inform all humanitarian action.”

The purpose of the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards is to increase the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance and to make humanitarian agencies more accountable. It is based on two core beliefs:

- That all possible steps should be taken to alleviate human suffering that arises out of conflict and calamity.
- That those affected by a disaster have a right to life with dignity and therefore a right to assistance.

Humanitarian Charter

“Humanitarian agencies committed to this Charter and to the Minimum Standards will aim to achieve defined levels of service for people affected by calamity or armed conflict, and to promote the observance of fundamental humanitarian principles.”

The cornerstone of the Sphere Project is the Humanitarian Charter. Based on the principles and provisions of international humanitarian law, international human rights law, refugee law, and the *Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and (NGOs) in Disaster Relief*, the Charter describes the core principles that govern humanitarian action and asserts the right of populations to protection and assistance.

The Charter defines the legal responsibilities of states and parties to guarantee the right to assistance and protection. When States are unable to respond, they are obliged to allow the intervention of humanitarian organisations.

The Minimum Standards

The Minimum Standards cover disaster assistance in five sectors:

- Water supply and sanitation
- Nutrition
- Food aid
- Shelter and site planning
- Health services

Most of the standards, and the indicators that accompany them, consolidate and adapt existing knowledge and practice. They represent a remarkable consensus across a broad spectrum of agencies and mark a new determination to ensure that humanitarian principles are realised in practice.

Scope and Limitations of the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards

The ability of NGOs to achieve the Minimum Standards will depend on a range of factors, some of which are within their control, while others such as political and security factors, lie outside their control. Of particular importance will be the extent to which agencies have access to the affected population, whether they have the consent and cooperation of the authorities in charge, and whether they can operate in conditions of reasonable security. The availability of sufficient financial, human and material resources is also essential.

The Minimum Standards do not attempt to deal with the whole spectrum of humanitarian concerns of actions. They do not cover all the possible forms of appropriate humanitarian assistance, and more importantly, they do not deal with the larger issues of humanitarian protection.

Humanitarian agencies are frequently faced with situations where human acts or obstruction threaten the fundamental well-being or security of whole communities or sectors of a population – such as to constitute violations of international law. This may take the form of direct threats to people's well being, to their means of survival or to their safety. In the context of armed conflict, the paramount humanitarian concern will be to protect people against such threats.

It is important to stress that the form of relief assistance and the way in which it is provided can have a significant impact (positive or negative) on the affected populations security. The Humanitarian Charter recognises that the attempt to provide assistance in situations of conflict 'may potentially render civilians more vulnerable to attack, or bring unintended advantage to one or more of the warring parties', and it commits agencies to minimising such adverse effects of their interventions as far as possible.

The Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards offer a tool for humanitarian agencies to enhance the effectiveness and quality of their assistance and thus to make a significant difference to the lives of people affected by disaster.

Further Information

The Sphere Manual including the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards (322 pages) is available on the Sphere website at: <http://www.sphereproject.org> and from the Australian Council for International Development Ph: 02 6285 1816.

**Appendix 6 People In Aid Code of Good Practice
in the management and support of aid personnel**

<http://www.peopleinaid.org/code/default.aspx>

Appendix 7 NGO Effectiveness Framework — June 2004

Defining the Sector

According to the ACFID Code of Conduct, Australian NGOs are non government development organisations that are formed voluntarily and operate on a not-for-profit basis. Australian NGOs chose to specifically define themselves as values-based organisations that are part of Australian civil society.

In addition to being part of a sector within the aid industry, each Australian NGO is an autonomous organisation, with a philosophy and values that are unique to that organisation. While many of these values overlap or are shared with other organisations, each Australian NGO can point to its own unique contribution to development based upon its philosophy and values and the manner in which it operationalises that philosophy.

NGO Effectiveness

Effectiveness is defined prompting sustainable change that addresses the causes as well as the symptoms of poverty and marginalisation – i.e. reduces poverty and builds capacity within communities, civil society and government to address their own development priorities.

Principles

All Australian NGOs have principles that flow from their values and philosophy. Some of these are unique to each organisation.

The sector also has shared principles, as detailed in the ACFID Code of Conduct:

Organisations which are signatories to this Code aim to build creative and trusting relationships with the people of the developing countries and to meet program standards which:

- *Give priority to the needs and interests of the people they serve;*
- *Encourage self help and self-reliance among beneficiaries and thus avoid creating dependency;*
- *Involve beneficiary groups to the maximum extent possible in the design, implementation and evaluation of projects and programs;*
- *Respect and foster internationally recognised human rights, both socio-economic and civil-political;*
- *Seek to enhance gender equity; and*
- *Are based on an understanding of the history and culture of the people served.*

(taken from ACFID Code of Conduct)

Australian NGOs particularly endorsed the principles related to human rights and gender analysis. In addition, Australian NGOs have identified a further common principle:

Australian NGOs shall identify their values, communicate them to all key stakeholders and reflect them in their work.

Policies

Each Australian NGO has its own set of organisational policies that govern the work and approach of the agency. Some of these are sector wide, as reflected in the ACFID Code of Conduct. Some of these are peculiar to each organisation and will reflect the different management practices, resources and internal processes of each NGO.

Program Strategies

Every Australian NGO has a program strategy to operationalise their philosophy, values and principles. In other words, each organisation has its own way of 'doing things' to contribute to development. This diversity within the industry is valued, as it allows a wide range of possible responses to the complex issues of development.

At the same time Australian NGO programs are characterised by certain common qualities that contribute to effectiveness. These include:

- ***High quality relationships***

One of the critical features of Australian NGO work is that apart from humanitarian response, most Australian NGOs do not implement directly. Instead, reflecting a commitment to building local capacity and self-reliance, most Australian NGOs choose to work through local implementing organisations. For this process to work effectively, Australian NGOs place a high value on the quality of the relationship between themselves and their implementing partner.

Good relationships evolve over time, based upon trust, mutual learning, accountability and acceptance of difference. The purpose of good relationships is to build capacity of implementing partners and increase the process of self-reliance and/or local ownership.

- ***Long term engagement***

Development situations are usually complex and most often require engagement that go beyond short-term project and program cycles. Australian NGOs seek to work in ways that allow for long term engagement in locations, in sectors and with people, for the purpose of more effective and sustainable solutions to development problems.

- ***Learning***

Given the dynamic nature of development, Australian NGOs and their implementing partners seek to undertake ongoing reflection about their work and the context of that work, for the purpose of improvement.

- ***Adaptation***

As above, Australian NGOs work in situations of change and new information. They seek to adapt to information and try to be responsive to changing circumstances.

- ***Working together***

In many situations Australian NGOs are able to bring about increased impact and effectiveness by working together, either in the field or in coalitions within Australia.

Through the ongoing work on quality and effectiveness the NGO community is focusing and placing greater emphasis on the value and importance of working collaboratively and in cooperation.

Working in difficult contexts is by definition harder and more complex than working in less complex contexts. Working together with other NGOs can only be of benefit.

- ***Risk taking***

Australian NGOs will often choose to work in situations where outcomes are less certain, in order to meet the needs of people otherwise poorly served by other aid delivery mechanisms.

- ***Quality of staff and volunteers***

It appears that the quality of people employed by Australian NGOs is one element of their effectiveness.

While program strategies will be unique to organisations, they will be coherent within the agency philosophy and will reflect the shared principles and the above characteristics of the Australian NGO sector. In addition, it is important that the activities or areas of engagement of the NGO are coherent with the stated agency program strategy.

Standards of engagement

Most Australian NGOs have established standards that guide the development and implementation of their activities. In addition to these the NGO Effectiveness Conference, participants proposed the following sector wide standards to be reflected within all Australian NGO engagement;

- *Australian NGO activities aim to provide appropriate solutions to the root causes of poverty and marginalisation, addressing specific protection needs of the most vulnerable (including women, children, disabled, elderly, indigenous) and respecting all peoples' dignity;*
- *Australian NGO activities reflect high quality gender practice. That is, engagement reflects an understanding of different male and female roles within communities and should work to bring about greater equality of opportunity, taking into account the cultural and other contextual features of the situation;*
- *Australian NGO activities are based upon and are coherent with an analysis and understanding of situation and context. This includes attention to diversity in communities and groups and to the links between micro and macro conditions;*
- *Australian NGO activities have an appropriate design that identifies people-centred outcomes, and the means and processes required to achieve these. The designs are flexible, to enable adaptation to the dynamic situation of implementation;*
- *Australian NGO engagement aims for wider impact through various means, including empowerment and capacity building of partners and communities, and by taking a programmatic approach to activities;*
- *Australian NGOs, together with their implementing partners, undertake monitoring and evaluation of their work, in order to identify areas of success, areas requiring improvement and in order to implement timely and appropriate change;*
- *Australian NGOs are able to demonstrate that costs associated with their engagement are appropriate to the context and the nature of the intervention and reasonable in relation to the proposed outcomes and benefits;*
- *Australian NGO activities have sustainability strategies that take into account the wider context and give attention to long-term impact;*
- *Australian NGOs assess and manage risk during their activities;*
- *Australian NGOs work in ways that include clear and transparent accountability mechanisms to all key stakeholders;*
- *Australian NGOs provide appropriate quality technical input, as necessary, in their engagement with others. This input is cost effective, maximises local input and capacity and utilises appropriate technology;*
- *Australian NGO activities are implemented with an informed understanding of the environmental impact of the activity; and*
- *Australian NGOs work towards the participation and increased control by people of their development situation. This includes genuine participation of people at all stages of the program cycle and is reflected in the way engagement is undertaken.*

Working in Emergencies

Being able to respond to an emergency is an important element of development. There is a growing need for development agencies to respond to increasing vulnerabilities and protection needs of specific groups (women, children, disabled, elderly) and to promote the human security concerns of the people in communities that they are working in.

The 'unique' aspect of working in emergencies is that the protection needs, the time frames, the demands on staff and partners, the need for good relationships and coordination, the scrutiny by media, the public and donors and the need to understand what laws and rights govern the local rule of law all become more 'intense'. In other words, the demands that are required for good emergency response practice are the same as for good development practice but far more 'intense' pressures come into force.

Advocacy work

Program work is about effective engagement that changes people's lives but is also about building constituencies to do effective advocacy. If policy change is to lead to practice change that effects people's lives there needs to be a strengthening of constituency and their capacity, plus an increase in political space for local organisations to take policy change and make it real. Therefore, the program and advocacy link is very important. This is not just work for large agencies but something that could be divided amongst agencies. Small agencies also play a key role especially in building capacity of local organisations.

In addition to the elements described above, a key feature of effective advocacy is legitimacy. This includes the following:

- Information arising from strong field relationships and practice
- High quality research;
- Enabling partners to speak for themselves; and
- Independence from Government or others

Meeting the standards

Participating NGOs agreed that not all the work of their organisations necessarily reflected all of these standards. Indeed in some situations there might be some need to prioritise some standards over others, or to significantly improve areas of engagement in order to reflect these standards. To this extent the standards are aspirational. In addition, people noted that these standards required further definition and examples, in order to work towards meaningful assessment of how any particular area of engagement reflected a particular standard.

However there has been agreement about these standards should be reflected in Australian NGO work. There is further agreement that Australian NGOs should embark on the process of improving their work according to these standards.

Appendix 8 Code Guidelines on Producing a Child Protection Policy

<http://www.acfid.asn.au/code-of-conduct/signatory-tools/>