



PARTNERSHIP ENGAGEMENT POLICY

APPLICABILITY: ACCI Relief Staff, Volunteers, Field Workers, Associates, Strategic Partners & Board Members (See Scope)

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PREAMBLE

ACCIR form partnerships with likeminded community development and child rights-based organisations that are working to achieve the common goal, which is our mission *to transform communities and nations by developing holistic sustainable solutions to combat injustice, poverty and reinstate the value of life.*

ACCIR acknowledge that collaborative partnerships are essential to our mission and in responding to complex global issues in development that are very challenging to combat alone. We place a high value in working with local implementing partners to engage with and empower communities to be active participants in their own development.

Rather than acting simply as a funding body, ACCIR is committed to fostering effective partnerships and using the unique perspective and strengths that we each bring to the partnership. We recognise our partners are the experts in their own complex communities, who should be the ones driving programming decisions. At ACCIR, we seek to offer partners with our technical expertise in formal development knowledge and capacity support throughout the partnership. Together, by combining this expertise and by working collaboratively, we can contribute to fostering effective outcomes and impacts in the communities we support.

SCOPE

Those who fall within the scope below are required to read and adhere to the **ACCIR Partnership Engagement Policy**.

This policy applies to following ACCIR Stakeholders.

- All ACCIR Staff.
- All ACCIR Strategic Partner Organisations (SPO) including any organisation receiving ACCIR funding in Australia or abroad to implement activities including but not limited to community development, disaster response or non-development activities.

PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLES & VALUES

ACCIR is committed to fostering and maintaining a positive culture that creates a safe, caring and productive environment for all our stakeholder, including our partners.

To enable this, we focus on 7 shared values:

1. **Purpose** - we are focused on a common purpose with a shared Christian faith, values and beliefs. We share a positive outlook and common vision and goals.
2. **Respect** - we practice respect for each other. We are respectful of every partner, their contribution and their equality. We value different perspectives, engage in respectful conversations by listening and asking questions and we aim to create a respectful environment by providing a safe place to learn / fail / excel / express / submit / request help and exercise personal responsibility.
3. **Integrity** - we promote integrity in all aspects of our relationships. We will demonstrate integrity through open and honest communication, confidentiality and character development.
4. **Encouragement** - we believe in developing an encouraging environment that is relational, friendly, considerate and seeks understanding.
5. **Empowerment** - we seek to empower partners through being interdependent and supportive. With our partners, we are a team of competent individuals who achieve more by working together, not independently. We will be collaborative, provide coaching and two-way opportunities for growth and will encourage innovation.
6. **Responsibility** - we encourage responsibility through self-learning, reflection, self-awareness and personal development. By encouraging intrinsic motivation, growth and accountability, we recognise that we are responsible to others for the activities we do and our conduct as individuals, partners and as an organisation. We each take responsibility for our own personal conduct, activities and interactions with others. We believe that self-accountability is holding ourselves accountable, so that others don't have to.
7. **Excellence** - we value excellence as seeking the best results with the available resources. We will seek to promote professionalism whilst being grounded and flexible/adaptive. Feedback loops will be implemented to monitor and maintain our high standards that will be effectively communicated through the free flow of information, aiming to always provide clarity in uncertainty. We aim to make the best decisions, in a timely manner, with the limited information in our uncertain environment.

STANDARDS & GUIDANCE

ACCIR and our partners are committed to complying with the guidelines set out by the Overseas Aid Gift Deductible Scheme (OAGDS).

As a member of ACFID, ACCIR is committed towards upholding ACFID's Code of Conduct and minimum standards of governance, management and accountability of development for non-government organisations (NGOs). Therefore, all ACCIR partners must comply with these standards set by the ACFID Code of Conduct.

PARTNERSHIP ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Clear roles and responsibilities are vital to healthy partnerships and are thoroughly discussed and agreed to during onboarding processes in a mutually accountable and respectful manner. The below table is used as a framework for these discussions.

	ACCIR	SPO
ORGANISATIONAL ASSESSMENT		
Submitting ACCIR Organisational Assessment Form		✓
Reviewing ACCIR Organisational Assessment Form	✓	
PROJECT PROPOSAL		
Initial project concept, community consultation and project design		✓
Available to help in planning and project design including community consultation and other research methods	✓	
Drafting the "Project Proposal" and "Project Framework" documents and providing additional information as requested by ACCIR		✓
Completing the formal "Project Proposal" and "Project Framework" documents	✓	✓
Recording changes or addendums to the "Project Proposal" and "Project Framework" document	✓	✓
PROJECT ACTIVITIES		
Project activities implementation and management		✓
Implementing and maintaining an appropriate project financial and administration systems		✓
COMPLIANCE		
Primary responsibility for compliance with overseas legal requirements, including registration with appropriate Government ministries and adherence to international law		✓
Primary responsibility to maintaining strong Child Protection policies and procedures and responding appropriately to any reports or suspicion of abuse/harm		✓
Primary responsibility for compliance with Australian TD requirements	✓	
Available to advise on compliance issues and systems	✓	
FINANCES		
Responsibility for fundraising		✓
Issuing tax-deductible receipts for donations sent directly to ACCIR	✓	
Providing monthly statement and sending remittance to the field	✓	
PROGRESS REPORTS		
Preparation of 6 monthly progress reports or completion reports		✓
Preparation of 6 monthly financial reports		✓
Providing feedback and facilitating open discussions regarding 6-month progress reports or other partnership discussions	✓	
MONITORING		
Monitoring and review of project	✓	✓
Field visit minimum of every 2 years	✓	
GENERAL PROMOTION & DONOR REPORTING		
Primary responsibility for promotion and donor reporting		✓
COACHING & SUPPORT		
Project coaching and support as required or when requested	✓	

PARTNERSHIP APPROVAL & REVIEWS

Partnership Onboarding:

Partnerships are approved after undergoing an onboarding process in close collaboration between ACCIR staff and members of partner organisations. Onboarding processes include the following:

- Relationship building
 - From the very beginning, ACCIR prioritises building relationship and communicating directly with local implementing partners who are on the ground. Intentional conversations are built into the onboarding process to foster relationships and build rapport.
 - We also begin to discuss different ways the partnership could be established. We have processes in place to ensure that required standards are met, however, many of the forms and structures of our partnerships can be adjusted as we work together to ensure the partnership is as mutually beneficial and effective as possible.
- Organisational Assessment -This includes assessing:
 - Governance structures
 - Legal registration
 - Staffing structures and management
 - Safeguarding policies, procedures and risk management (including Child Safeguarding and Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse)
 - Risk management
 - Finances and internal controls
 - Financial management and review
- Partner Capacity Assessment – This includes assessing:
 - Mission and Vision alignment
 - Key development principles
 - Cross cutting issues
 - Fundraising strategies
 - Exit strategies
 - Monitoring and evaluation
- Development of Program Frameworks - ACCIR staff work collaboratively with partners to develop program frameworks and plans. These project concepts are developed by local practitioners or community members.

Partnership Approval:

ACCIR's Project Review Committee assesses the above information and meets to approve all new partnerships. Staff who have worked closely with partners during the onboarding process share their insights, recommendations, along with the perspectives and feedback from partners.

A final decision is made whether forming a partnership is suitable, especially taking into consideration the likelihood of the partnership developing into one that is strong, mutually beneficial and transparent.

The ACCI Board will be consulted as part of this assessment prior to the partnership being formalized.

Partnerships are then formalised by signing an MOU. The MOU template is to be sent to the partner in the early stages of onboarding to allow time for in-depth discussions, amendments and other changes.

Partnership Review:

Each partnership is reviewed on a 3-year cycle. Partners and ACCIR discuss the effectiveness of the partnership and decisions are made regarding renewal.

ACCIR COMMUNICATIONS

ACCIR is committed to ensuring we highlight and profile the work of our partners, providing acknowledgements when we are reporting on their work, stories, images and resources.

PARTNER ACTIVITY CATEGORIES

ACCIR use a multifaceted approach to achieving our mission, which includes development projects that incorporate holistic sustainable solutions, promote equal access and opportunities for vulnerable members of society, and advocate for the rights of the poor.

A traffic light system has been developed as a framework for assessing which partnership and partner activities ACCIR will approve. For more information concerning partnership criteria and standards, please also refer to Appendix 1.

Green Light Category:

Areas that are considered a focus for ACCIR.

- Education projects including vocational training, skills training and community education
- Community development programs and capacity building projects
- Income generation activities
- Health, sanitation and medical projects
- Human rights advocacy and prevention work
- Rehabilitation (addiction or trauma- requires specialised training)
- Disaster prevention and response
- Child sponsorship programs (community based)
- Community strengthening and family strengthening initiatives
- Caring for orphans and vulnerable children in a community context

Orange Light

Areas where further discussion is required, and partners are encouraged to re-assess these activities to ensure suitability

- English teaching (acceptable if it is linked with a broader strategy)
- Working with existing residential care facilities (depending on the role and nature of the residential care facility) including volunteer work in existing children's residential facilities
- Shelters, boarding homes and transitional homes
- Trafficking and prostitution intervention and rehab programs (require specialised skills)
- Academic and research funding (requires specialised skills)

Red Light

Areas which ACCIR does not endorse.

- Establishment of new residential care facilities and orphanages
- ACCIR projects with residential care facilities and orphanages (except Kinected Projects)

- Involvement in politics
- Inappropriate use of welfare or relief strategies that create community dependence on external support.
- Inappropriate use of power as a donor or perceived patron which undermines the community's ability to participate in their own development, or exercise their rights, free will or civil liberties;
- Projects which are in conflict with the host governments protocols or laws OR are operating illegally or are not registered in the right manner with the appropriate ministerial body within the country
- Donor driven project designs that propose inappropriate responses to community issues that are not in the best interest of the community.

GRIEVANCES

ACCIR recognises that listening to and responding to feedback, concerns and complaints is integral to our commitment to achieving the high standards and ensures accountability to all stakeholders, including our partners.

ACCI's commitments and processes for responding to grievances are outlined in:

- ACCI Complaints Handling Policy
- ACCI Whistle-blower Policy

The details for lodging a complaint with either ACCIR or directly to ACFID are also outline on our website.

REVIEWING THE POLICY

ACCI Relief's Partnership Engagement Policy will be reviewed every three years. ACCI General Managers and members of the field team will manage the review and stakeholders will be consulted during this process.

APPENDICES

PARTNER CRITERIA & STANDARDS

Organisations seeking to partner with ACCIR are required to meet the following criteria and standards. Our projects team can provide guidance and support to those who don't meet all the standards to help get your organisation to a place where a partnership is possible.

1. ALIGNED VISION AND MISSION	<i>Corresponding Docs</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Alignment with ACCIR's vision, mission, values and culture.</i>	<i>ACCI Values and Culture</i>
2. GOOD DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE	
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Alignment to ACCIR's Aid and Development Policy.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Evidence of a clear separation– through policy or guidelines – between aid and development and non-aid and development objectives and activities in all fundraising, programs and reporting.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Demonstration of key development principles including:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Participation;</i> ○ <i>Fair distribution; and</i> ○ <i>Sustainability.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Commitment to ensuring that all programs respect and protect human rights and foster inclusiveness of all individuals with special regard for those experiencing systemic exclusion on the basis of gender, disability or ethnicity.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Commitment towards contributing towards sustainable change through programs which seek to empower local actors and work towards contributing to systemic change.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Commitment to quality and effectiveness demonstrated through well-articulated strategic goals and programs which are informed by evidence, planning, assessment and learning.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Commitment to ensuring that through all communication the rights, safety and protection of all adults and children portrayed is protected and upheld.</i>	<i>ACCIR Aid and Development Policy</i> <i>ACCI Women's Rights and Gender Equality Policy</i> <i>ACCI Disability Inclusion Policy</i> <i>ACFID Code of Conduct</i> <i>ACCI Communications Policy</i>
3. ADEQUATE ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate staff capacity and capabilities to deliver the project activities and achieve project goals. <input type="checkbox"/> Recognition that some activities require specialist skills, knowledge or experience beyond the capacity of the organisation, and willingness to employ or engage in such expertise as required. 	
4. ADEQUATE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Establishment of governance structures that ensure the organisation is a place where integrity is honoured, accountability is practised, unacceptable behaviour is not concealed and where appropriate corrective action is taken. <input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledgement of the CMA Principles of Ministry Governance as a basis for continued organisational improvement. <input type="checkbox"/> Agreement with ACCI's policies in regards to organisational governance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Transparency Policy; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Including that any budgets, claims or reports made to any stakeholder in respect of the ministry or development activities, finances or fundraising/administration costs are realistic, accurate and achievable. ○ Complaints Handling; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Including receptivity to complaints with an attitude that recognises the necessity for continual learning and development, striving for excellence and valuing and learning from the perspectives of others; and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Privacy Policy. 	<p>CMA Essential Standards for Ministry Governance</p> <p>ACCI Transparency Policy</p> <p>ACCI Complaints Handling Policy</p> <p>ACCI Privacy Policy</p>
5. LEGALLY REGISTERED TO UNDERTAKE ACTIVITIES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Established as a not-for-profit, non-government, legally registered organisation, foundation or social enterprise. <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriately licensed by the government to conduct activities. <input type="checkbox"/> Adherence to laws and internationally recognized guidelines governing the area of their project activities. <input type="checkbox"/> The entity or its staff are not listed on the National Security Australia website's 'Listing of Terrorist Organisations' nor the 'consolidated list' issued by DFAT. The organisation must use its best endeavours to ensure that their funding is not directly or indirectly going to people associated with terrorism. 	<p>ACCI Counter Terrorism Policy</p>
6. APPROPRIATE FINANCIAL SYSTEMS IN PLACE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate financial and accounting systems in place to manage project funds responsibly. <input type="checkbox"/> Budgets that accurately reflect the costs associated with the proposed activities and have realistically achievable fundraising estimates. <input type="checkbox"/> Minimum budget of AUD \$100,000 over 3 years or AUD \$40,000 for a 12-month pilot project. 	
7. COMMITMENT TO BEING A CHILD SAFE ORGANISATION	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Demonstration that the organisation is committed to being a 'Child Safe Organisation'.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Adherence to ACCI's Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Willing to complete the mandatory ACCIR online child protection training appropriate to the organisation's level of risk.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Development of the organisation's own Child Protection Policy that is adequate with respect to the specific project activities and incorporates local child protection laws.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Adherence to ACCIR's policy on visiting and volunteering in residential care</i> 	<p><i>ACCI Child Protection Policy</i></p> <p><i>ACCI Policy on Visiting and Volunteering in Residential Care</i></p>
8. COMMITMENT TO FAMILY-BASED SOLUTIONS FOR THE CARE OF ORPHANED OR VULNERABLE CHILDREN	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Agreement that any programs working with orphaned or vulnerable children will facilitate initiatives that strengthen families and communities and enable children to achieve their right to be raised in a family.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Understanding that we do not endorse the establishment of new children's residential care facilities or orphanages.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Understanding that ACCI only partner with existing children's residential care facilities and orphanages that commit to the Kinected goals and practices and are part of the Kinected program.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Commitment to not facilitating or promoting orphanage tourism and follow ACCIR's Protecting Children in Short-Term Missions Manual.</i> 	<p><i>Kinected Information Booklet</i></p> <p><i>Protecting Children in Short-Term Missions Manual</i></p>
9. COMMITMENT TO A STRONG PARTNERSHIP WITH ACCIR	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Receptivity to feedback, assistance, and where appropriate, collaborating and sharing knowledge and resources with other organisations.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Willingness to regularly communicate with the ACCIR project team, sharing highlights and being transparent about challenges that may arise.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Compliance with project reporting by submitting 6 monthly progress reports in a timely manner.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Receptivity to field visits (minimum every 2 years).</i> 	<p><i>MOU</i></p> <p><i>Partnership Engagement Policy</i></p>