

*Code of Ethics & Conduct for NGOs*

*Compliance Manual*

**An Initiative of the:**

**World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations  
(WANGO)**

## Preface

The *Compliance Manual* is designed as a tool to help NGOs assess whether their policies and practices are currently in alignment with the *Code of Ethics & Conduct for NGOs*.

The *Code of Ethics and Conduct for NGOs* is a set of fundamental principles, operational principles, and standards to guide the actions and management of non-governmental organizations. Developed under the auspices of the World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (WANGO), the *Code* was formulated by an international committee representing the wide spectrum of the non-governmental community and included input from NGO leaders from all regions of the world. Numerous standards and codes of conduct and ethics from NGOs and NGO associations worldwide were consulted in formulating this code.

The *Code of Ethics and Conduct for NGOs* is designed to be broadly applicable to the worldwide NGO community. It applies whether the organization is a mutual benefit NGO, involving an association concerned with improving the situation of its membership, or a public benefit NGO, which is working for the improvement of conditions of society as a whole or of a segment of society. The *Code* is applicable for organizations focused on international agendas as well as those seeking to improve local community affairs, and both “Northern” and “Southern” NGOs. The *Code*’s standards are applicable regardless of an NGO’s focus, whether it be humanitarian relief, advocacy, conflict prevention, research, education, human rights monitoring, health care, environmental action, and so forth.

All NGOs, even the most sincere and selfless, can benefit from a code of ethics and conduct that systematically identifies ethical practices and acceptable standards. The adoption and internal enforcement of a suitable code not only provides an ethical check for an NGO, it also serves as a statement to beneficiaries, donors and the public that the NGO takes seriously the importance of maintaining high standards. Such a code can assist stakeholders in identifying and avoiding “pretenders” and irresponsible NGOs.

The *Compliance Manual* is designed to be used as both a checklist and a catalyst for discussion for NGO staff to review, reflect, and discuss core principles, standards and ways of conducting services and activities. It also forms the basis for self-certification of the NGO.

## **I. Guiding Principles**

*Every actor operates on the basis of fundamental principles, whether plainly stated or implicitly understood. Further, an examination of organizations that are held in universal esteem reveals a great commonality in these principles. In other words, to a great extent, good NGOs from throughout the world tend to share the same fundamental assumptions or beliefs that make their successful operation possible. The following is an articulation of the more important of these shared fundamental principles.*

## A. Responsibility, Service, and Public Mindedness

Sustainable progress, peace, and justice require that all organizations contribute to the common good. Thus, an NGO should integrate self-development and service to others, balancing individual and public concerns, focusing on higher, broader, and more public levels of service.

### Standards

- Responsibly maintaining itself, an NGO should conduct its activities for the sake of others, whether for the public at large or a particular segment of the public.
- Public money must not be misused for selfish purposes and all public assets are to be treated with utmost seriousness, as a public trust.
- An NGO should recognize that its conduct and activities impact on the public's perception of NGOs and that it shares responsibility for the public's trust of NGOs.
- An NGO should exhibit a responsible and caring attitude toward the environment in all of its activities.

### Evaluation

1. Does the organization conduct activities for the purpose of serving others, either the public at large or a particular segment of the public?  Yes  No

What are some examples of how you serve others? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Are public monies and public assets treated with utmost serious and not misused for selfish purposes?  Yes  No

3. Does the organization recognize that the way it conducts itself and its activities reflect on the public's perception of NGOs and that it shares responsibility for the public's trust of NGOs?  
 Yes  No

4. Does the organization exhibit a responsible attitude toward the environment in all activities?  Yes  No

How does your organization demonstrate a responsible attitude toward the environment? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If you answered no to any question, please explain why? \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

## **B. Cooperation Beyond Boundaries**

Significant progress toward world peace and global well-being can be fostered through inter-religious, intercultural, and interracial work, and across artificial barriers of politics and ethnicity that tend to separate people and their institutions. NGOs should maintain ethical, cooperative relationships with other NGOs, and should partner where possible and appropriate for the sake of the greater public good.

### **Standards**

- An NGO should be willing to work beyond borders of politics, religion, culture, race and ethnicity, within the limits of the organizing documents and with organizations and individuals that share common values and objectives.

### **Evaluation**

1. Does the organization work beyond borders of politics, religion, culture, race and ethnicity, within the limits of the organizing documents and with organizations and individuals that share common values and objectives?  Yes  No

If you answered no, please explain why: \_\_\_\_\_

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## C. Human Rights and Dignity

As the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* states, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, are endowed with reason and conscience, and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood." (*Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, Article 1) The family is the fundamental natural group unit of society promoting human rights and human dignity. (*Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, Article 16)

### Standards

- An NGO should not violate any person's fundamental human rights, with which each person is endowed.
- An NGO should recognize that all people are born free and equal in dignity.
- An NGO should be sensitive to the moral values, religion, customs, traditions, and culture of the communities they serve.
- An NGO should respect the integrity of families and support family-based life.

### Evaluation

1. Does the organization respect each person's fundamental human rights?  Yes  No
2. Does the organization recognize that all people are born free and equal in dignity?  Yes  No
3. Is the organization sensitive to the moral values, religion, customs, traditions, and culture of the communities served?  Yes  No
4. Does the NGO recognize, and is it respectful of, the integrity of the family unit?  Yes  No

If you answered no to any question, please explain why? \_\_\_\_\_

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## D. Religious Freedom

"Everyone has the right of freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance." (*Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, Article 18)

### Standards

- An NGO should respect religious freedom.

### Evaluation

1. Does the organization respect the religious freedom of others?  Yes  No

If you answered no, please explain why: \_\_\_\_\_

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## E. Transparency and Accountability

NGOs should strive for openness and honesty internally and toward donors and members of the public. Periodic accountings should be made.

### Standards

- An NGO should be transparent in all of its dealings with the government, the public, donors, partners, beneficiaries, and other interested parties, except for personnel matters and proprietary information.
- An NGO's basic financial information, governance structure, activities, and listing of officers and partnerships shall be open and accessible to public scrutiny and the NGO is to make effort to inform the public about its work and the origin and use of its resources.
- An NGO should be accountable for its actions and decisions, not only to its funding agencies and the government, but also to the people it serves, its staff and members, partner organizations, and the public at large.

### Evaluation

1. Is the organization transparent in all dealings with the government, the public, donors, partners, beneficiaries, and other interested parties, except for personnel matters and proprietary information?  Yes  No
2. Is the organization's financial information, governance structure, activities, and listing of officers and partnerships open and accessible to public scrutiny?  Yes  No
3. Does the organization make an effort to inform the public about its work and the origin and use of resources?  Yes  No
4. Does the organization have measures in place to demonstrate accountability not only to funding organizations and government but also to the people served, staff, members, partner organizations and the public at-large?  Yes  No

If you answered no to any question, please explain why? \_\_\_\_\_

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## F. Truthfulness and Legality

An NGO should be honest and truthful in its dealings with its donors, project beneficiaries, staff, membership, partner organizations, government, and the public in general, and should respect the laws of any jurisdiction in which it is active.

### Standards

- An NGO should give out accurate information, whether regarding itself and its projects, or regarding any individual, organization, project, or legislation it opposes or is discussing.
- An NGO should not engage in any activities that are unlawful under the laws of the nation in which it is organized or works, and must be strongly opposed to, and not be a willing partner to, corruption, bribery, and other financial improprieties or illegalities.
- An NGO should have a policy for staff and volunteers to confidentially bring evidence to the governing body of misconduct of anyone associated with the organization.
- An NGO should meet all of the legal obligations in the countries in which it is organized or works. Such obligations may include laws of incorporation, fundraising legislation, equal employment opportunity principles, health and safety standards, privacy rules, trademark and copyright legislation, and so forth.
- An NGO should take prompt corrective action whenever wrongdoing is discovered among its staff, governing body, volunteers, contractors, and partners.

### Evaluation

1. Does the organization give out accurate information regarding itself and its projects?  
 Yes  No
2. Does the organization give out accurate information regarding any individual, organization, project, or legislation it opposes or is discussing?  Yes  No
3. Is the organization careful not to engage in any activities that are unlawful under the laws of the nation in which it is organized or works?  Yes  No
4. Is the organization strongly opposed to and not a willing partner to corruption, bribery, and other financial improprieties or illegalities?  Yes  No
5. Does the organization have a policy for staff and volunteers to confidentially bring evidence to the governing body of misconduct of anyone associated with the organization?  Yes  No
6. Does the organization meet all the legal obligations in the country in which it is organized or conducts work?  Yes  No
7. Does the organization have measures in place to take prompt corrective action whenever wrongdoing is discovered among staff, governing body, volunteers, contractors and partners?  
 Yes  No

If you answered no to any question, please explain why? \_\_\_\_\_

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## **II. NGO Integrity**

*Fundamental to the very character of each NGO is that it be not-for-profit, nongovernmental, organized, independent, self-governing, and voluntary. While these general criteria may appear self-evident, particularly for those NGOs whose national law codifies and requires such standards, they remain basic for the integrity and conduct of an NGO.*

# A. Nonprofit

## Standards

1. **Not-for-profit.** The NGO is to be organized and operated as a not-for-profit organization. Any surplus that is generated through its operations is to be utilized solely to help the organization fulfill its mission and objectives. No part of the net earnings of the NGO is to inure to the benefit of the directors, officers, members or employees of the organization, or to any other private persons, except that the NGO may provide reasonable compensation for services provided to the organization.
2. **Trade or business.** The organization is not to be operated for the primary purpose of carrying on a trade or business, unrelated to its mission and stated objectives.
3. **Governing instrument.** The NGO's governing instrument shall prevent the organization from distributing profits or assets for the benefit of individuals both during operation and when winding up.

## Evaluation

1. Is the organization organized and operating as a not-for-profit organization, with any surplus generated through operations utilized solely to help the organization fulfill its mission and objectives (rather than inuring to the benefit of the directors, officers, members or employees of the organization, or to any other private persons, other than reasonable compensation for services)?  
 Yes  No
2. Is the organization structured such that it is not operated for the primary purpose of carrying on a trade or business, unrelated to its mission and stated objectives?  Yes  No
3. Does the organization's governing instrument prevent the organization from distributing profits or assets for the benefit of individuals both during operation and when shutting down?  Yes  No

If you answered no to any question, please explain why? \_\_\_\_\_

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## B. Non-governmental

### Standards

1. **Non-governmental.** The organization is not to be part of, or controlled by, government or an intergovernmental agency.
2. **Politically independent.** The organization shall maintain independence and not be rigidly aligned or affiliated with any political party, although it may share a common political or legislative cause within the limit of its mission, stated objectives and legal structure. By itself, being non-governmental does not mean that an NGO is prohibited from political activity, although certain types of NGOs may be proscribed by their nations from political and legislative activity, such as tax-exempt organizations in the United States, which are prohibited from participating or intervening to any substantial extent in attempts to influence legislation or participating in political campaigns to support or oppose any candidate(s) for political office. However, an NGO that is permitted to do political and legislative activity shall only engage within the limit of its mission and stated objectives.
3. **Foreign policy.** The organization shall not act as an instrument of government foreign policy, but act independently of governments. The NGO shall not seek to implement the policy of any government, unless it coincides with the mission of the organization and the organization's own independent policy.

### Evaluation

1. Is the organization structured as a non-governmental organization that is not controlled by or a part of a government or intergovernmental agency?  
 Yes  No
2. Is the organization politically independent?  
 Yes  No
3. Is the organization structured so as to act independently of government, rather than as an instrument of government foreign policy – not seeking to implement the policy of any government, unless it coincides with the mission of the organization and the organization's own independent policy?  
 Yes  No

If you answered no to any question, please explain why? \_\_\_\_\_

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# C. Organized

## Standards

1. **Organizing features.** The NGO shall have an organizing document, an executive board, officers, and regular meetings and activities.
2. **Organizing documents.** The organizing documents (such as bylaws, a written constitution, or memorandum of association) shall clearly define the mission, objectives, governance structure, membership rights and obligations, if any, and rules of procedure.
3. **Legal recognition.** These organizing principles apply whether or not the NGO is legally recognized by any government.

## Evaluation

1. Does the organization have an organizing document?  Yes  No

What type of organizing documents does the NGO have? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Does the organization have an executive board and officers?  Yes  No

How many members are on the executive board? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Does the organization have regular meetings and activities?  Yes  No

How often does the executive board meet? \_\_\_\_\_

If there is an executive committee that convenes between meetings of the executive board, how often does it meet? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do the organizing documents clearly define the mission, objectives, governance structure, membership rights and obligations, if any, and rules of procedure?  Yes  No

5. Is the organization registered in its nation?  Yes  No

If you answered no to any question, please explain why? \_\_\_\_\_

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## D. Independent and Self-Governing

### Standards

1. **Independent.** The organization shall be independent. Its policies, vision, and activities shall not be determined by any for-profit corporation, donor, government, government official, political party, or other NGO.
2. **Self-governing.** The organization shall govern itself autonomously, according to whatever governance structure it selects for itself. It shall be equipped to control its own activities.

### Evaluation

1. Is the organization independent – with policies, vision and activities not determined by any for-profit corporation, donor, government, government official, political party, or other NGO?  
 Yes  No
2. Is the NGO structured to govern itself autonomously and equipped to control its own activities?  
 Yes  No

If you answered no to any question, please explain why? \_\_\_\_\_

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## E. Voluntary

### Standards

1. **Voluntary values and principles.** Rather than being required to exist by law, NGOs are formed by private initiative, resulting from the voluntary actions of individuals who have chosen to pursue a shared interest or concern. The retaining of voluntary values and principles shall remain a primary force in the way of working of the NGO.
2. **Contributions from volunteers.** In order to achieve its mission and objectives, the organization is to have meaningful contributions from volunteers. These may include both the target group and supporters.
3. **Volunteerism of governing board.** Those who are part of the NGO's governing body (generally the board of directors) are to serve in a voluntary capacity, for no pay.

### Evaluation

1. Did the organization originate from voluntary action?  Yes  No
2. Did the organization retain voluntary values and principles?  Yes  No
3. Does the organization have mechanisms in place for volunteers to contribute meaningful to the NGO?  Yes  No
4. Does the organization's governing body serve the organization voluntarily, for no pay (in role as board members, discounting reimbursement for expenses)?  Yes  No

If you answered no to any question, please explain why? \_\_\_\_\_

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### **III. Mission & Activities**

*An NGO's mission is its raison d'être — the reason or purpose why the NGO exists and what it hopes to accomplish. NGOs have an obligation to clearly identify and articulate their mission. This well-defined mission should serve as the foundation and frame of reference for all activities and organizational planning of the NGO. An NGO has an obligation to utilize its resources in an effective and efficient manner toward accomplishment of its stated purpose.*

# A. Mission

## Standards

1. **Formal statement.** The organization shall formally and succinctly state its mission in a written statement approved by the governing body of the NGO. This statement shall clearly set forth why the NGO exists and what it hopes to accomplish.
2. **Board of directors.** Each member of the board of directors shall fully understand and support the mission of the organization.
3. **Public availability.** The mission statement of the NGO shall be made available to all officers, members, staff, partners, donors, program beneficiaries, and the public in general.
4. **Evaluation.** The mission of the NGO shall be reviewed periodically (every two or three years) to determine if it is still relevant. Among issues to evaluate: (a) whether the mission has been fulfilled, either by the organization or another entity, and thus whether there is a need for the organization as currently constituted to continue to exist; (b) whether the mission should be revised to reflect societal changes; or (c) whether there is a desire for the organization to address new needs which might require a new mission statement.

## Evaluation

1. What is the mission statement for your organization?

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2. Does each member of the board of directors understand and support the mission of the organization?

Yes  No

3. Is the mission statement available to the public?  Yes  No

Is it printed in literature of the NGO?  Yes  No Is it on the organization website?  Yes  No

4. Is the mission of the NGO reviewed periodically?  Yes  No

When was the last time the mission was reviewed by the governing body? \_\_\_\_\_

## B. Activities

### Standards

1. **Consistent with mission.** Activities shall be consistent with the organization's mission. The NGO's mission is to serve as the foundation for strategic planning and as the blueprint for the organization's activities. The NGO's focus shall be directed toward making sure that its goals are met.
2. **Effective and Efficient.** The programs of the organization shall effectively and efficiently work toward achieving its stated mission.
3. **Feedback.** The organization shall regularly seek feedback on its activities from project beneficiaries, as well as other stakeholders.
4. **Evaluation.** The activities of the organization shall be critically examined periodically to determine their relevancy to the mission, their efficiency and effectiveness, the value of continuing the programs or revising them, and the need for new programs. Among issues to evaluate: (1) whether the activities are consistent with the current mission of the organization or whether they need to be revised or discontinued in light of changes in the mission; (2) the efficiency and effectiveness of the programs in achieving the NGO's objectives; (3) the outcomes for the program beneficiaries; (4) the cost of the program relative to its outcomes; and (5) whether new services should be offered. Evaluations shall be open and honest and include input from stakeholders.
5. **Professionalism.** The organization shall carry out its activities with professionalism and centered on the concept of serving others.
6. **Percentage of expenditures.** The organization shall spend at least 65% of its total expenditures (including fundraising costs) on program activities, and ideally more than 80%. If the organization does not meet this 65% standard, it should provide reasons why its higher overhead and fundraising expenditures are reasonable. Possible explanations for not meeting this standard could be the higher administrative and fundraising costs of a new organization and exceptions related to donor restrictions or unusual political and social factors.

### Evaluation

1. List main activities/projects of the organization and their consistency with the mission statement. Offer a ranking of each activity (rough estimate) in terms of how effective it is towards achieving the mission.

Activity	Consistent with mission?	Effectiveness toward achieving mission? (1= poor; 5 = excellent)
a. _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes/ <input type="checkbox"/> No	1 2 3 4 5
b. _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes/ <input type="checkbox"/> No	1 2 3 4 5
c. _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes/ <input type="checkbox"/> No	1 2 3 4 5
d. _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes/ <input type="checkbox"/> No	1 2 3 4 5
e. _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes/ <input type="checkbox"/> No	1 2 3 4 5
f. _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes/ <input type="checkbox"/> No	1 2 3 4 5
g. _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes/ <input type="checkbox"/> No	1 2 3 4 5

(Additional activities can be presented on the back of this page)

2. Does the organization regularly seek feedback on activities from beneficiaries and stakeholders?  
 Yes  No

If yes, how? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Is evaluation an integral component of the planning process and figure in the strategic plan as performance measures or its equivalent?  Yes  No

4. Does the organization regularly evaluate activities for relevancy to mission, efficiency and effectiveness, value for continuing or need to revise, and need for new programs?  Yes  No

If yes, how? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Does the staff carry out activities with professionalism centered on serving others?  Yes  No

6. What percentage of total expenditures (including fundraising costs) is spent on program activities?

a. Formula for Standard III.B.6:

$$\frac{\text{Total Program Service Expenses}}{\text{Total Expenses}} \times 100 = \frac{\$ \underline{\hspace{2cm}}}{\$ \underline{\hspace{2cm}}} \times 100 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \%$$

- b. Is this percentage at least 65%?  Yes  No

If it is less than 65%, please provide reasons why its higher overhead and fundraising expenditures are reasonable:

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## **IV. Governance**

*An effective governance structure and a strong, active, and committed governing body is crucial to the soundness of an organization and its ability to achieve its mission and objectives. The plan of governance of an NGO should reflect the core values, mission, and cultural standards of the organization. Democratic principles should be used where applicable. The governing body of an NGO (generally a board of directors or trustees) holds ultimate responsibility for all activities and resources of the organization. This includes establishing the direction of the organization, beginning with its mission statement, and assuring that the mission statement is appropriate and relevant as times change. The governing body also determines the organization's activities and monitors their compliance with the mission. The governing body exercises responsibility for obtaining and appropriately employing the human and financial resources to carry out the organization's mission and sustain the organization, and oversee fiduciary and legal requirements.*

# A. Governance Structure

## Standards

1. **Plan of governance.** The NGO shall establish a plan of governance that best allows it to fulfill its mission, and reflects the core values and cultural standards of the organization. Democratic principles are to be used where appropriate and applicable.
2. **Organizing documents.** The organization's governance structure — including rules relating to the conducting of business by the governing body and, if applicable, an executive committee that acts between board meetings, and the procedure for electing and appointing officers and their roles — is to be clearly specified in the organizing documents (bylaws, etc.) and available to all interested parties.

## Evaluation

1. Describe the governance structure of your organization (governing body, executive committee, chief executive officer, procedures for electing or appointing officers, etc.).

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2. Does this plan of governance allow fulfillment of the mission, reflecting the core values and cultural standards of the organization?  Yes  No

3. What type of organizing documents (Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, Bylaws, etc.) does your organization have?

Articles of Incorporation?  Yes  No Constitution?  Yes  No Bylaws?  Yes  No  
Other? \_\_\_\_\_

## B. Structure of the Governing Body

### Standards

1. **Director resources.** The NGO's governing body shall consist of individuals who are dedicated to the mission of the organization, willing to volunteer their time and energies toward achievement of the mission, and able to offer substantial contributions to the organization. Among resources they may bring to the governing body are experience and wisdom; prestige; the ability to raise money for the organization; and professional skills, such as legal, accounting, management, fundraising and marketing.
2. **Unrelated directors.** The governing body is to have at least three unrelated members and should have at least five unrelated members. Family relationships are accepted between two members at most, but then the board should have seven or more members.
3. **Policies on paid staff.** The organization shall have a policy restricting the number of paid staff who are voting members of the governing body, ideally to no more than one person or 10% of the governing body. An indirectly or directly compensated person should not serve as the governing body's chairman or treasurer.
4. **Term limits.** Term limits are to be established for membership on the governing body. Ideally, individual terms should be set at a maximum of three years, no more than three consecutive terms should be allowed, and at least one year should be required before a member becomes eligible for re-election after completing the maximum number of consecutive terms.
5. **Nominating committee.** The procedure for nominating individuals to serve on the governing body shall be known to members and other relevant parties.
6. **Diversity.** The governing body should have broad representation, reflecting the diversity of the NGO's constituencies. The NGO may enhance participation of members from diverse geographical distances if the organization's bylaws, and the local or national law, allow meetings via such technologies as teleconferencing.
7. **Bylaws.** Each member of the governing body is to be presented with the bylaws of the organization and be familiar with these bylaws.
8. **Compensation.** Members of the governing body are not to receive compensation for their board service. They may receive reimbursement for expenses directly related to their board duties.

### Evaluation

1. List the members of your governing body.

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2. Are these directors committed to the mission of the organization?  Yes  No

Are these directors willing to volunteer their time?  Yes  No

Are these directors able to offer substantial contributions to the organization?  Yes  No

If the answer to any of these questions is no, is there a plan to rectify this?  Yes  No

3. How many unrelated members are on this governing body? \_\_\_\_\_

4. How many members of this governing body are related? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Does your organization have a policy restricting the number of paid staff who are voting members of the governing body?  Yes  No

If yes, how many staff are allowed as voting members on the governing body? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Does your organization have a policy establishing term limits for membership on the governing body?  Yes  No

If yes, what is the number of years for individual terms? \_\_\_\_\_

Is there a restriction on the number of consecutive terms?  Yes  No

If yes, what is the number of consecutive terms allowed? \_\_\_\_\_

7. What is the procedure for nominating individuals to serve on the governing body?

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Is this procedure known to the relevant parties, such as members of an association?  Yes  No

8. Does the governing body reflect the diversity of the constituency?  Yes  No

9. Has each member of the governing body been presented with a copy of the organization's Bylaws?  
 Yes  No

10. Other than reimbursement for expenses directly related to board service, is there a policy prohibiting governing members from receiving compensation for their board service?  Yes  No

## C. Responsibilities of the Governing Body

### Standards

1. **Mission statement.** The governing body shall establish the direction of the NGO, by creating or adopting the mission statement, reviewing it periodically for accuracy and validity, and revising it as necessary or desirable.
2. **Programs and compliance.** The governing body shall determine the NGO's programs and services, and monitor their compliance with the mission and their effectiveness and efficiency.
3. **Resources.** The governing body shall ensure the organization has the proper resources to fulfill the mission.
4. **Annual budget and fundraising.** The governing board shall approve the annual budget and actively participate in the fundraising process. In approving the annual budget, the governing body is to ascertain the percentage of the resources spent on administration and fundraising, versus program expenses, and strive for a goal of at least 65% of revenue being used for programs, and ideally greater than 80%.
5. **Resource management.** The governing body shall manage the resources effectively, and provide oversight regarding fiduciary and legal requirements.
6. **Chief executive officer hiring and evaluation.** The governing body shall hire the chief executive officer, undertaking a careful search process to find the most qualified individual. The governing body also shall set the chief executive officer's compensation, ensure that he or she has the moral and professional support needed to advance the goals of the NGO, and periodically evaluate his or her performance.
7. **Strategic planning.** The governing body shall actively participate with the staff in long-term and short-term strategic planning processes, including defining goals and objectives and the success of the NGO toward achieving its mission.
8. **Code of ethics and conduct.** The governing board shall approve a code of ethics and/or conduct for the NGO, and assure that the organization is in compliance with this code.
9. **Ambassadors for the NGO.** Members of the governing board shall serve as ambassadors for the organization, articulating its mission, accomplishments and goals to the public, and garnering support for the organization.

### Evaluation

1. Does the governing body establish the direction of the organization, adopting the mission statement and periodically reviewing it for accuracy and validity and revising when necessary?  Yes  No
2. Does the governing body determine the organization's programs and services as well as monitor their compliance with the mission and their effectiveness and efficiency?  Yes  No
3. Does the governing body ensure the organization has the proper resources to fulfill the mission?

Yes  No

4. Does the governing body approve the annual budget?  Yes  No
5. Does the governing body actively participate in the fundraising process?  Yes  No
6. Does the governing body ascertain the percent of resources spent on administration and fundraising versus program expenses and strive for a goal of at least 65% of revenue being used for programs?  
 Yes  No
7. Does the governing body manage resources effectively and provide oversight regarding fiduciary and legal requirements?  Yes  No
8. Does the governing body hire and evaluate the organization's chief executive officer, set the chief executive officer's compensation, and make sure that he or she has the moral and professional support needed to advance the goals of the NGO?  Yes  No
9. Does the governing body actively participate with the staff in long-term and short-term strategic planning processes, including defining goals and objectives as well as the success of the NGO toward achieving its mission?  Yes  No
10. Has the governing board approved a code of ethics and conduct for the organization?  Yes  No
11. Do members of the governing board serve as ambassadors for the organization, articulate its mission, accomplishments and goals to the public and garner support for the organization?  
 Yes  No

## D. Conduct of the Governing Body

### Standards

1. **Meetings of the governing body.** The governing body, and any subset of the governing body (executive committee) which is authorized to conduct the affairs of the organization between meetings of the governing body, are to meet as frequently as is necessary to fully and adequately conduct the business of the organization. At a minimum, there should be a least 4 meetings annually of the governing body, or the governing body and the executive committee combined. If face-to-face meetings are not required by local or national law and the organizing documents, then communication technologies can aid in conducting frequent meetings.
2. **Minutes.** Minutes of each meeting of the governing body and executive committee, and reports of each committee when acting in the place of the governing body, are to be produced, distributed to each member of the governing board, and archived for future reference. The minutes also are to be available to an association's membership, officers, staff, and the general public, with the exception of discussions related to personnel evaluation and other such confidential information.
3. **Responsibility for conduct.** The governing body shall be responsible for its own conduct. The governing body is to establish written expectations for board members (including expectations related to service on committees, attendance at meetings, and participation in fundraising and program activities), and annually evaluate its own performance. If not already established in the organizing document, the governing body is to establish job descriptions for its officers (chair, treasurer, secretary, etc.).

### Evaluation

1. Does the governing body of the organization, and any subset of the governing body (executive committee) that is authorized to conduct the affairs of the organization between meetings of the governing body, have regularly scheduled meetings?  Yes  No
2. How many meetings annually are there of the governing body, or the governing body and the executive committee combined? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Are minutes of each meeting of the governing body and executive committee produced, distributed to each member of the governing body, and archived?  Yes  No
4. Are minutes of each meeting of the governing body and executive committee available to the association's membership, officers, staff, and the general public, with the exception of discussions related to personnel evaluation and other such confidential information?  Yes  No
5. Does the governing body take responsibility for its own conduct, monitoring and evaluating itself accordingly?  Yes  No
6. Has the governing body established written expectations for board members?  Yes  No

7. Has the governing body established job descriptions for its board officers (chair, treasurer, secretary, etc.)?  Yes  No

## E. Conflict of Interest

### Standards

- 1. Best Interest of the NGO.** In serving on the governing body, directors shall put organizational goals before personal goals, and put the best interests of the organization ahead of individual desires.
- 2. Matters impacting a director.** No director shall participate in deciding a matter directly impacting that individual (such as re-election to the governing body, personal remuneration, etc.)
- 3. Disclosure.** Each director shall disclose all potential and actual conflicts of interest, including each institutional affiliation he or she has that might possibly involve a conflict of interest (such as sitting on a board of another NGO with overlapping goals and missions). Such disclosure does not preclude or imply ethical impropriety.
- 4. Written conflict of interest policy.** The governing body shall develop a written conflict of interest policy, which is applicable to the directors and to any staff and volunteers who have significant decision-making authority regarding the organization's activities or resources, as well as relevant organizational partners.
- 5. Signature.** The governing body shall provide its members with the written conflict of interest statement, which should be signed by the individual at the outset of each term of service.
- 6. Loans to members of the governing body.** If an NGO has provision for making loans to members of the governing body, there shall be a policy describing how the loans operate. All loans or transactions with members of the governing body are to be included in the NGO's full financial reports and publicly disclosed.

### Evaluation

1. Do the organization's governing members place the best interests of the organization ahead of individual desires?  Yes  No
2. Does the organization have policies to ensure that directors do not participate in matters that immediately impact them as an individual (i.e. re-election to the governing body, remuneration, etc.)?  Yes  No
3. Is there a policy to ensure directors disclose all potential and actual conflicts of interest, including each institutional affiliation that might possibly involve a conflict of interest, noting, of course, that disclosures do not preclude or imply ethical impropriety?  Yes  No
4. Does the organization have a written conflict of interest policy, which is applicable to the directors and any staff or volunteers who have significant decision-making authority regarding the organization's activities or resources, as well as relevant organizational partners?  Yes  No
5. Does the governing body provide to the members of the governing body the written conflict of interest statement at the outset of each term of service?  Yes  No
6. Do each of the members of the governing body sign this conflict of interest statement?  Yes  No

7. If loans are made to members of the governing body, is there a policy describing how the loans operate and are they publicly disclosed and in the organization's full financial reports?  Yes  No

## **V. Human Resources**

*A committed, capable and responsible staff is vital for the success of an NGO. The foundation for this is effective human resource policies. For most NGOs, these should address both paid employees and unpaid volunteers, given the use of volunteers in many roles, including in management and as individuals rendering program and support services. An NGO should seek qualified staff, offer them proper training and supervision, treat them with fairness and equity, and provide them with avenues for individual growth and development. On the other hand, the NGO should expect employees and volunteers to maintain the highest standards of professional and personal conduct, use information and resources responsibly, and avoid conflicts of interest.*

# A. Responsibilities of the NGO

## Standards

1. **Capable and responsible staff.** The organization shall seek capable and responsible employees and volunteers (collectively, “staff”), who are committed to the mission of the organization.
2. **Training and working conditions.** The organization shall provide proper training and orientation for new staff, and provide them with suitable working conditions.
3. **Written human resource policies.** If the organization has ten or more staff, it is to have written human resource policies (or an employment manual) for its staff, including basic aspects of employment (benefits, vacation days, sick leave, etc.), and other fundamental policies such as confidentiality of information, computer policies (use of computer resources for personal work, ownership of computer resources), drug and alcohol policy, conflict of interest, and grievance procedures. If the organization has fewer than ten staff, it is encouraged to have written human resource policies for its staff.
4. **Staff growth and development.** The organization shall provide opportunities for individual growth and staff development, and foster an atmosphere whereby supervisors encourage personal growth of staff.
5. **Fairness and rights.** All staff shall be treated with fairness and equity, and as individuals with rights to be honored and defended. Their rights to freedom of association, conscience and expression must be respected and protected.
6. **Code of ethics and conduct.** Each staff member shall be provided with the NGO’s code of ethics and/or conduct and any written human resource policies.
7. **Communication of serious concerns.** Key staff shall be enabled to communicate serious concerns to a member of the governing board or officer.
8. **Standards and responsibility.** Staff shall be encouraged and guided in maintaining the highest standards of professional and personal conduct, and in taking personal and professional responsibility for their actions and decisions.
9. **Confidentiality.** Guidance shall be provided staff with access to official documentation or information regarding maintenance of the integrity, confidentiality, and privacy of such information to protect any individual concerned.

## Evaluation

1. How many staff (employees and volunteers) does the organization have? \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of paid staff? \_\_\_\_\_ Number of volunteers? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Does the staff consist of capable and responsible people?  Yes  No  
Does the staff consist of people committed to the mission of the organization?  Yes  No
3. Does the organization provide an orientation and training for new staff and provide them with suitable working conditions?  Yes  No
4. Does the organization have written human resource policies or an employment manual?  
 Yes  No  
Is it provided to each staff member?  Yes  No

5. Does the organization foster an atmosphere for individual growth and staff development?  
 Yes  No
6. Are staff members treated with fairness, equity and as individuals with rights?  Yes  No
7. If the organization has a code of ethics and/or conduct, is it provided to each staff member?  
 Yes  No
8. Are key staff members able to communicate serious concerns directly to a member of the governing board or officer of the organization?  Yes  No
9. Are staff members encouraged and guided in maintaining the highest standards of professional and personal conduct, and in taking personal and professional responsibility for their actions and decisions?  Yes  No
10. Is guidance provided to those staff with access to official documentation or information regarding the maintenance of the integrity, confidentiality, and privacy of such information to protect any individual concerned?  Yes  No

## B. Conflicts of Interest

### Standards

1. **Written policy.** The governing body shall provide staff who have decision-making power a written statement of how they shall handle potential conflicts of interest. Ideally, this statement will be signed by each individual at the time of their beginning service with the NGO and periodically thereafter.
2. **Disclosure.** Each officer shall disclose each institutional affiliation that he or she has that might possibly involve a conflict of interest.
3. **Gifts.** The NGO shall establish a policy regarding gifts to staff members, such as requiring that staff refuse all significant gifts connected with their position, or turn them over to the organization.
4. **Using position for personal benefit.** Staff members shall refrain from using their official position, either regular or volunteer, to secure special privilege, gain or benefit for themselves.
5. **Loans.** If the organization has provision for making loans to staff, there is to be a policy describing how the loans operate and all loans shall be disclosed to the governing body.
6. **Best interests of the NGO.** Employees and staff should put organizational goals before personal goals, putting the best interests of the entire program ahead of individual desires.

### Evaluation

1. Does the organization have a written statement on conflicts of interest for staff with decision-making power and how those staff shall handle potential conflicts of interest?  Yes  No  
  
Is this statement provided to the relevant staff?  Yes  No  
Is this statement signed by each individual at the time of their beginning service with the organization?  Yes  No  
Is this statement periodically reviewed and signed by relevant staff?  Yes  No
2. Has each officer been requested to disclose institutional affiliations that may possibly involve a conflict of interest?  Yes  No
3. Does the organization have a policy for handling gifts to staff members that may be received as a result of their work?  Yes  No
4. Does the organization have a policy prohibiting staff from using their position to secure special privilege, gain or benefit for themselves?  Yes  No
5. If loans are made to staff, is there a policy for how loans operate and are all loans to staff disclosed to the governing body?  Yes  No

If you answered no to a question, please explain why:

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## **VI. Public Trust**

*Trust is the lifeblood of an NGO — trust by the public, trust by the media, trust by the government, trust by corporations, trust by donors, trust by other NGOs, trust by beneficiaries, and trust by its employees and those who volunteer their time. To develop and maintain trust, each NGO should exhibit genuine public accountability and transparency, and should be honest in the information that it makes available to the public.*

# A. Public Information on the NGO

## Standards

1. **Accuracy and timeliness.** Information provided about the organization to donors, members, clients, staff, and the general public shall be accurate and timely.
2. **Annual report.** At least annually, the organization shall prepare and make available to the public information on its programs and services, and provide public access to appropriate records of those programs and services.
3. **Financial information.** The NGO annually shall prepare and make available to the public basic financial information on the organization, including the source of its funding; the use of those funds; the percentage of the funds used for service and programs, administration activities, and fundraising; and any compensation provided to the governing body. The NGO shall also provide public access to appropriate financial records.
4. **Listing of governing body and officers.** The organization shall make available the names of its governing body and management staff, publicize any changes in its governing board, and provide access to appropriate minutes of meetings of its governing board.
5. **Partnerships.** The organization shall make available, in a timely and accurate manner, information on any partnerships or other joint ventures into which it has entered.
6. **Confidentiality.** The organization shall maintain the confidentiality of personal information on staff, clients and others, unless the individuals waive this right, or disclosure is required by law.
7. **Comparison.** The organization shall describe itself in terms of its own merits, not in depreciation of other NGOs. Communications regarding another NGO shall not be made with the purpose of creating a self-benefit at the expense of the other.
8. **Communications channel.** The organization shall provide a communication channel for the public should they wish to make inquiries regarding the NGO and its activities.
9. **Disclosure.** The NGO shall assign at least one person to assure that the organization is complying with national and local laws regarding disclosure of information to the public.

## Evaluation

1. Is the information provided by the organization to donors, members, clients, staff, and the general public accurate and timely?  Yes  No
2. Does the organization annually prepare and make publicly available information on its programs and services?  Yes  No  
  
Does the organization allow public access to appropriate records of those programs and services?  Yes  No
3. Does the organization produce and make publicly available basic financial information on the organization?  Yes  No  
Does this include source of funding?  Yes  No  
Does this include use of the funds?  Yes  No  
Does this include percentage of the funds used for service and programs, administration activities, fundraising, and any compensation to the governing body?  Yes  No

4. Are the names of the organization's governing body and management staff made available to the public, and are changes in the governing board publicized by the organization?  Yes  No

Is access to appropriate minutes of the governing board publicly available?  Yes  No

5. Is information about any organizational partnerships or joint ventures made available to the public?  Yes  No

6. Is personal information on staff, clients and others maintained confidentially, unless the individual waives this right or disclosure is legally required?  Yes  No

7. Does the organization describe itself on its own merits versus in depreciation of other NGOs?  Yes  No

8. Does the public have a method to communicate with the organization?  Yes  No

9. Is there someone assigned by the organization to assure the organization is complying with national and local laws regarding disclosure of information to the public?  Yes  No

If you answered no to a question, please explain why:

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## B. Public Advocacy

### Standards

- 1. Accuracy and in context.** Information that the organization chooses to disseminate to the media, policy makers or the public must be accurate and presented with proper context. This includes information presented by the NGO with respect to any legislation, policy, individual, organization, or projects it opposes, supports, or is discussing. Forward-looking projections are to be presented clearly as such, and not as fact.
- 2. Verbal and written statements.** The organization shall have clear guidelines and approval processes for the issuing of verbal and written statements.
- 3. Disclosure of bias.** The organization shall present information in a fair and unbiased manner. Where a possible bias is unavoidable or inherent, it is to be disclosed.
- 4. Authority for statements.** An NGO's statements must reflect its actual authority. A membership NGO may be able to represent its membership, if such a role is provided in its organizing document and the views of the membership are determined by proper means. A public benefit NGO shall not improperly assume the authority of the community it serves.

### Evaluation

1. Is information that is disseminated by the organization to the media, policy makers or the public accurate and presented in the proper context, including information about any legislation, policy, individual, organization, or project it opposes, supports, or is discussing?  Yes  No
2. Are there clear guidelines and approval processes for the issuing of verbal and written statements?  Yes  No
3. Is the information presented by the organization offered in a fair and unbiased manner, or if a possible bias is unavoidable or inherent, is it disclosed?  Yes  No
4. Do the statements of the organization reflect its actual authority?  Yes  No

If you answered no to a question, please explain why:

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## **VII. Financial and Legal**

*NGOs should have proper financial and legal procedures and safeguards in place, not only to stay within the law, but also as a measure of the organization's health and to assure donors, members, and the general public that investments in the organization are safe and being correctly used. NGOs should employ sound internal financial procedures, maintain financial records carefully, and make financial statements available to the public. They should also have their financial records reviewed periodically by a qualified examiner who can certify that the organization is operating legally and according to generally accepted accounting practices. NGOs must be diligent that they are complying with applicable federal, state and local laws.*

# A. Financial Transparency and Accountability

## Standards

1. **Fiscal responsibility.** Members of the governing body hold ultimate fiscal responsibility for their organization and are to understand the organization's financial statements and reporting requirements.
2. **Annual budget.** The organization's annual budget is to be approved by the governing body, and is to outline projected expenses for program activities, fundraising, and administration. The NGO is to operate in accordance with that budget.
3. **Internal financial statements.** Internal financial statements shall be prepared regularly and provided to the governing body. Any and all significant variations between budgeted expenses and actual expenditures, and between budgeted revenues and actual revenues, are to be identified and explained to the governing body.
4. **Financial policies.** The NGO shall have established financial policies, suitable for the size of the organization, regarding the receiving and disbursement of financial resources, investment of assets, purchasing practices, internal control procedures (such as policies for signing checks), and so forth.
5. **Internal control procedures.** The organization's internal control procedures shall have a safeguard against a person having the power to issue a check to himself or herself, such as requiring an additional signature. The organization's internal control procedures shall have a safeguard against one person being able to issue a check over a certain amount (such as two signatures being needed over \$5,000) and shall have restrictions on checks made out to cash.
6. **Audit.** If the organization has substantial annual revenue, the accuracy of the financial reports shall be subject to audit by an independent, qualified accountant. NGOs with small gross incomes are to have a review by a qualified accountant. For NGOs with very small revenues, an internally produced, complete financial statement may suffice.
7. **Professional standards.** The organization shall adhere to professional standards of accountancy and audit procedures as stipulated by the law in its nation, and fulfill all financial and reporting requirements.

## Evaluation

1. Do members of the governing body recognize they hold ultimate fiscal responsibility for the organization?  Yes  No
2. Are members of the governing body able to understand the organization's financial statements and reporting documents?  Yes  No
3. Does the governing body approve the organization's annual budget?  Yes  No  
On what date was this year's budget approved by the governing body? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Does the organization operate in accordance with the budget?  Yes  No
5. Are internal financial statements regularly prepared and provided to the organization's governing body?  Yes  No
6. Are discrepancies between budgeted expenses and actual expenses, and budgeted revenues and actual revenues identified and explained to the governing body?  Yes  No

7. Does the organization have financial policies in place to handle the receiving and disbursement of financial resources ?  Yes  No
8. Does the organization have internal control procedures to safeguard the financial resources, such as procedures regarding a person signing checks to himself or herself or issuing a check over a certain amount without additional signatures, or checks made out to cash?  Yes  No
9. Does the organization have an audit done by an independent, qualified accountant?  Yes  No  
How often is the audit done?  Annually  Periodically  
When was the last audit done? \_\_\_\_\_  
If revenues are small, is there an internally produced, complete financial statement done annually?  
 Yes  No
10. Does the organization adhere to professional standards of accountancy and audit procedures as stipulated by the law in your nation and fulfill all financial and reporting requirements?  
 Yes  No

If you answered no to a question, please explain why:

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## B. Legal Compliance

### Standards

1. **Laws and regulations.** The organization's activities, governance, and other matters shall conform to the laws and regulations of its nation and locality. (An NGO may seek to change those laws and regulations, if such activity is consistent with its mission.)
2. **Attorney review.** The organization shall obtain attorney review of the organizing documents of the NGO to make sure that they are in compliance with existing laws and regulations, and shall make recourse to attorney services as appropriate to ensure continued legal compliance.
3. **Liability insurance.** The organization should consider having liability insurance, if available and applicable.
4. **Internal review.** The organization periodically shall conduct an internal review regarding compliance of the organization with current laws and regulations and summaries of this review should be presented to members of the governing body.

### Evaluation

1. Do the organization's activities, governance and other matters conform to the laws and regulations of your nation and locality?  Yes  No
2. Has an attorney reviewed the organization's organizing documents to make sure they are in compliance with existing laws and regulations?  Yes  No
3. If applicable, does the organization carry liability insurance?  Yes  No
4. Does the organization periodically conduct an internal review regarding the compliance of the organization with current laws and regulations with summaries given to the governing body?  
 Yes  No

If you answered no to a question, please explain why:

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## **VIII. Fundraising**

*In order to fund their operational and program costs and reach their objectives, most NGOs raise funds from outside their organization, via seeking voluntary financial support from foundations, corporations, individual donors, and government agencies. However, such financial support is not simply the movement of money from these sources to the NGO. It is a two-way street, involving value for and obligations to the donor. As a recipient of such funds, it is important that the NGO be open and transparent, be accountable to the donor, use the funds responsibly and according to the intent of the donor, and allow the funding individuals and organizations to be able to have insight into the project at all times. It is important that the fundraising activity also be consistent with the mission of the NGO.*

# A. General Fundraising Principles

## Standards

1. **Governing body.** The governing body should be very active in the fundraising effort, including being active in solicitations and in making individual contributions.
2. **Consistency with mission.** The organization shall only accept funding that is consistent with its mission, does not compromise its core principles, and does not restrict its ability to address relevant issues freely, thoroughly, and objectively.
3. **Truthful.** The organization must be truthful in all matters relating to the raising of funds and their use.
4. **Mission priority.** Programs shall be designed to meet the mission of the NGO and never designed simply to meet the needs of a funding source.
5. **Unethical actions.** The organization must not tolerate any unethical activities such as double funding for one project, diversion of dedicated funds to uses other than the project for which funds were approved, or overstatement of achievements.

## Evaluation

1. Is your governing body actively engaged in the organization's fundraising efforts?  Yes  No
2. What percentage of the governing body makes individual contributions? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What percentage of the governing body helps to bring in money to the organization beyond individual contributions? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Does the organization only accept funding consistent with its mission and core principles?  Yes  No
5. Does the funding an organization accepts still allow the organization the freedom to address relevant issues freely, thoroughly, and objectively?  Yes  No
6. Is the organization truthful in all matters relating to raising funds and their use?  Yes  No
7. Are programs designed in accordance with mission of the organization and not simply to meet the needs of the funding source?  Yes  No
8. Does the organization have a monitoring system in place to ensure improper or unethical use of funds does not occur, such as protection against double funding for one project or diversion of dedicated funds to uses other than for which funds were received or approved?  Yes  No

If you answered no to a question, please explain why:

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## B. Solicitations

### Standards

1. **Solicitation materials.** The organization shall be careful to ensure that all solicitation and promotional materials are accurate, and that they clearly and truthfully present the NGO, its mission, and its programs. All solicitations are to correctly reflect the NGO's planned use of the solicited funds, and fundraising solicitations shall only make claims that the organization can fulfill. There shall not be any exaggerations of fact or material omissions, nor any communication or images that would create a false or misleading impression.
2. **Tax benefits.** The organization shall ensure that donors receive informed, accurate, and ethical information regarding the tax implications of potential gifts.
3. **Fundraising principles.** Fundraising shall be for the purpose of the NGO's mission, and free of coercion, improper motive, inappropriate conduct, unreasonable reward, or personal inurement.
4. **Excess funds.** When funding for a particular purpose is invited from the public, there shall be a plan for handling any excess funds, and, where appropriate, the appeal should include information on how any excess funds will be used.
5. **Compensation to fundraisers.** The organization shall not provide compensation to fundraisers that is based on a percentage of charitable contributions raised or expected to be raised, nor should it provide a finder's fee. Percentage-based compensation can be an impediment to keeping the donor's and NGO's best interests primary, and may foster unethical behavior or inappropriate conduct on the part of the fundraiser. It likewise can be a hindrance toward maintaining a volunteer spirit and keeping the mission of the NGO at the forefront, and may offer reward without merit in the case of a large donation that may be the product of many individuals. The organization may provide compensation based on skill, effort and time expended, and performance-based compensation, such as bonuses, provided such bonuses are in accordance with prevailing practices of the NGO and not based on a percentage of charitable contributions raised.
6. **Sales promotions.** Fundraising promotions involving the sale of products or services shall indicate the duration of the campaign, and the actual or anticipated portion of the purchase price that will benefit the NGO or program.
7. **Percentage of fundraising costs.** The costs involved in fundraising shall be reasonable relative to the revenue generated. Over the course of a number of years, the NGO's average expenditure on fundraising activities should be one-third or less of the amount of revenue generated from these activities, and ideally fundraising costs should be less than 25% of fundraising income. An organization that does not meet this ceiling of 33 1/3% (fundraising costs/fundraising revenue) over a five-year period should demonstrate that it is progressing toward this goal or explain why its fundraising costs are reasonable (such as the higher fundraising costs of a newly-created organization, or unique donor, social or political factors).
8. **Information on solicitors.** The NGO shall have policies in place to protect the donor's right to be informed whether the solicitors are paid staff, volunteers, or agents of the NGO.

### Evaluation

1. Are solicitations and promotional materials accurate and do they clearly and truthfully present the NGO, its mission, and its programs?  Yes  No
2. Do all solicitations correctly state the NGO's planned use of the solicited funds?  Yes  No
3. Do solicitations only make claims the organization can fulfill?  Yes  No

4. Do solicitations avoid exaggerations of fact or material omissions and do they avoid creating, via images or text, a deliberately false or misleading impression?  Yes  No
5. Do donors receive informed, accurate and ethical information regarding the tax implications of potential gifts?  Yes  No
6. Is fundraising focused on the mission of the organization?  Yes  No
7. Is fundraising free of coercion?  Yes  No
8. Is fundraising free of improper motive, inappropriate conduct, unreasonable reward, or personal inurement?  Yes  No
9. Is there a plan for handling excess funds, should the situation arise?  Yes  No
10. Do fundraising appeals include, where appropriate, information on how any excess funds will be used?  Yes  No
11. If fundraisers are hired to raise money for the organization, how are the fundraisers compensated?
  - Percentage of charitable contributions raised or expected to be raised
  - Finder's fee
  - Compensation based on skill, effort, or time expended
  - Performance-based (such as bonuses) but not based on a percentage of charitable contributions raised and in accordance with prevailing practices of the organization
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_

If fundraisers are compensated based on either or both of the first two options above, please explain why this procedure is used and if there are any plans to change the procedure?

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12. Are promotions involving the sales of products or services specified in terms of the duration of the campaign?  Yes  No
13. Are promotions involving the sales of products or services specified in terms of the actual or anticipated portion of the purchase price that will benefit the program or NGO?  Yes  No
14. Does the organization ensure that the costs involved in fundraising are reasonable in relation to the revenue generated?  Yes  No

On average, over the past five years (if relevant), what percentage of revenue generated from fundraising activities is the fundraising expenditures? \_\_\_\_\_

If an organization's costs for fundraising activities are not one-third or less of the amount of revenue raised, please explain why this ceiling of 33 1/3% is not being met, or if progress is being shown toward this goal.

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15. Does the organization have policies in place to protect the donor's right to be informed whether the solicitors are paid staff, volunteers or agents of the organization?  Yes  No

If you answered no to a question, please explain why:

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## C. Use of Funds

### Standards

1. **Use of contributions.** The organization shall ensure that contributions are used as promised or implied in fundraising appeals or for the purposes intended by the donors.
2. **Grant commitment.** When the organization accepts a grant, it is entering into a contract to carry out the program activities in an agreed-upon manner, and has an ethical and legal responsibility to honor that commitment.
3. **Donor consent for changes.** The organization may alter the conditions of a gift or grant only by obtaining explicit consent by the donor.
4. **Efficient and effective use.** The organization shall ensure efficient and effective use of grants and charitable contributions.

### Evaluation

1. Are contributions received used as promised or implied in fundraising appeals or for the purposes intended by the donors?  Yes  No
2. Does the organization recognize that when it accepts a grant that it is entering into a contract to carry out the program activities in an agreed-upon manner, and has an ethical and legal responsibility to honor that commitment?  Yes  No
3. Does the organization obtain consent from the donor before making changes to the use of a donation or gift from its original intention?  Yes  No
4. Does the organization have methods in place to ensure the efficient and effective use of grants and charitable contributions?  Yes  No

If you answered no to a question, please explain why:

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## D. Accountability

### Standards

1. **Tracking expenditures.** The organization shall set up an organized system to track grant expenditures.
2. **Timely reports.** The organization shall produce timely reports on the use and management of funds.
3. **Financial statements.** Financial statements regarding donations shall be available upon request by the donor and interested parties.

### Evaluation

1. Does the organization have a system in place to track expenditures?  Yes  No
2. Does the organization produce timely reports on the use and management of funds?  Yes  No
3. Are financial statements regarding donations available upon request by the donor and interested parties?  Yes  No

If you answered no to a question, please explain why:

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## E. Relationship with Donor

### Standards

1. **Donor relationship.** The directors, management, staff and volunteers of the organization shall not exploit any relationship with a donor or prospective donor for personal benefit or the benefit of any relative, friends, associates, colleagues, and so forth.
2. **Confidentiality.** Privileged or confidential information regarding the donor or donation must not be disclosed to unauthorized parties.
3. **Donor privacy.** A donor's privacy shall be respected and an NGO must safeguard any confidential information regarding the donor or the gift. Donors are to have the opportunity to remain anonymous, and to not have their names added to any lists that are sold, rented or given to others, unless the donor has had an opportunity to approve such lists or have their names removed.
4. **Privacy policy.** The organization shall have a clear and easily accessible privacy policy that informs the public what information is being collected on individuals and donors and how that information will be used, how to contact the organization to review personal information collected and to request corrections, how to inform the NGO that the individual does not wish his or her personal information to be shared outside the NGO, and what security measures are in place to protect personal information.
5. **Unethical solicitations.** The NGO or its agents must not use excessive pressure, coercion, undue influence or other unethical means in their solicitations.

### Evaluation

1. Are donor relationships honored and not exploited for personal reasons by any members of the organization?  Yes  No
2. Are methods in place to ensure that confidential information regarding the donation is not disclosed to unauthorized parties?  Yes  No
3. Are donors' privacy respected and any confidential information regarding the donor safeguarded?  Yes  No
4. Do donors have the opportunity to remain anonymous, and to not have their names added to any lists that are sold, rented or given to others, unless the donor has had an opportunity to approve such lists or have their names removed?  Yes  No
5. Does the organization have a clear and easily accessible privacy policy that informs the public what information is being collected on individuals and donors and how that information will be used?  Yes  No
6. Does the organization have a clear and easily accessible privacy policy that informs the public how to contact the organization to review personal information collected and to request corrections?  Yes  No

7. Does the organization have a clear and easily accessible privacy policy that informs the public how to inform the NGO that the individual does not wish his or her personal information to be shared outside the NGO?  Yes  No
8. Does the organization have a clear and easily accessible privacy policy that informs the public what security measures are in place to protect personal information?  Yes  No
9. Does the organization guarantee that the organization does not use unethical means in its solicitations, such as excessive pressure, coercion, or undue influence ?  Yes  No

If you answered no to a question, please explain why:

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## **IX. Partnerships, Collaboration and Networking**

*When appropriate, NGOs may find that cooperation with other civil society organizations, government and intergovernmental agencies, and for-profit corporations may be beneficial in advancing their mission-related objectives. Such collaboration for common good may reduce duplication of services and eliminate using resources for competitive purposes rather than serving constituencies. Collaboration may allow pairing diverse strengths and resources and promote effectiveness in tackling priorities. However, an NGO may enter into such a relationship only if it is consistent with its mission.*

# A. General Principles of Partnerships and Collaboration

## Standards

1. **Mission consistency.** The organization shall collaborate with other entities only if the relationship is consistent with the mission of the NGO.
2. **Shared values.** The organization shall collaborate on the basis of shared values, common ground, and for the good of society.
3. **Mutual benefit.** The NGO shall collaborate on the basis of equitable and genuine mutual benefit to each organization.
4. **Transparency.** NGO collaboration shall allow financial transparency and a two-way flow of information, ideas, and experiences.
5. **Adaptive to change.** Collaborations are to be adaptive to change. Changes in the relationship are to be developed through cooperation, and not forced by one or the other organization.

## Evaluation

1. Are all of the organization's current partnerships and collaborations consistent with its mission?  
 Yes  No
2. Are the organization's current partnerships and collaborations formed on the basis of shared values, common ground, and the good of society?  Yes  No
3. Are the organization's current partnerships and collaborations formed on the basis of equitable and genuine mutual benefit to all organizations involved?  Yes  No
4. Are the organization's partnerships and collaborations financially transparent?  Yes  No
5. In the organization's partnerships and collaborations, is there a two-way flow of information, ideas, and experiences?  Yes  No
6. Are the organization's partnerships and collaborations adaptive to change, through cooperation and not forced by one or the other organization?  Yes  No

If you answered no to a question, please explain why:

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## B. Relations with other NGOs and Civil Society Organizations

### Standards

1. **Common objectives.** When appropriate, NGOs with overlapping missions, values, and target groups should partner with each other and civil society organizations, when it would be beneficial for the common target groups and for the achievement of common objectives.
2. **Competition and service duplication.** NGOs with overlapping missions, values, and target groups should refrain from competing with each other and with other civil society organizations, and should refrain from unnecessary duplication of services and disruption of each other's projects.
3. **Information sharing.** NGOs with overlapping missions, values and target groups should share relevant project information with other NGOs and civil society organizations, and mutually support each other.
4. **Support for other NGOs.** The NGO shall express solidarity with campaigns and actions of other NGOs, and promote the effectiveness and success of other NGOs, when it does not compromise the integrity or values of the NGO.
5. **Networking.** The organization shall network with other ethical NGOs as a means for promoting the growth, effectiveness and efficiency of the NGO sector and the ability to advance the public good.

### Evaluation

1. When it is appropriate, does the organization partner with other NGOs and civil society organizations who share similar missions and values to support the achievement of common objectives?  Yes  No
2. Does the organization refrain from unnecessary duplication of services and disruption of projects of NGOs and civil society organizations with overlapping missions, values, and target groups?  
 Yes  No
3. Is the organization committed to sharing relevant project information and supporting other NGOs and civil society organizations with overlapping missions, values and target groups?  Yes  No
4. Is the organization committed to expressing solidarity with campaigns and actions of other NGOs and promote the effectiveness and success of other NGOs, when it does not compromise the integrity or values of the organization?  Yes  No
5. Is the organization committed to networking with other ethical NGOs as a means for promoting the growth, effectiveness and efficiency of the NGO sector and the ability to advance the public good?  
 Yes  No

If you answered no to a question, please explain why:

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## C. Relations with Government Agencies and Intergovernmental Bodies

### Standards

1. **NGO objectives and independence.** The organization shall enter into a partnership agreement with a government or intergovernmental body only when it is beneficial to achievement of the NGO's objectives and does not compromise the independence or self-control of the organization.
2. **Appropriate and mutually beneficial.** The organization shall seek to dialogue and cooperate with government and intergovernmental agencies when such cooperation would be both appropriate and mutually beneficial and could increase the NGO's effectiveness in dealing with issues and priorities in its agenda.
3. **Mission-led.** The organization shall not enter into a partnership with a governmental or intergovernmental body solely to promote the sustainability or competitive advantage of the NGO independent of achieving its mission objectives.
4. **Political favor.** The organization shall not change its policies or non-partisan nature in order to curry political favor.

### Evaluation

1. Is the organization committed to entering into partnerships with government or intergovernmental bodies only when it is beneficial to achieve its objectives and does not compromise the independence or self-control of the organization?  Yes  No
2. Is the organization committed to dialogue and cooperation with government and intergovernmental agencies when such cooperation would be both appropriate and beneficial and could increase the organization's effectiveness in dealing with issues and priorities in its agenda?  Yes  No
3. Is the organization committed to refraining from entering into a government or intergovernmental agency partnership solely to promote the sustainability or competitive advantage of the NGO if such partnership is not in alignment with its mission objectives?  Yes  No
4. Is the organization committed to refraining from changing its organizational policies or non-partisan nature in order to curry political favor?  Yes  No

If you answered no to a question, please explain why:

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## D. Relations with For-Profit Corporations

### Standards

1. **NGO objectives and independence.** The organization shall enter into collaboration with a for-profit corporation only when it is beneficial to achievement of the NGO's objectives and does not compromise the independence or self-control of the organization.
2. **Mission-led.** The organization shall not enter into collaboration with a for-profit corporation if motivated by financial reasons versus achieving its mission objectives.
3. **Market advantage.** The organization shall not enter into collaboration with a for-profit corporation if the main motivation of the corporation is to gain a market advantage over competitors.

### Evaluation

1. Is the organization committed to developing collaborations or partnerships with for-profit corporations only when it is beneficial to achieving its organizational objectives and does not compromise the independence or self-control of the organization?  Yes  No
2. Is the organization committed to refraining from entering into a partnership with a for-profit corporation for financial reasons that are independent of achieving its mission and objectives?  Yes  No
3. Is the organization committed to refraining from entering into a partnership with a for-profit corporation if the main motivation of the corporation is to gain a market advantage over competitors?  Yes  No

If you answered no to a question, please explain why:

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