



Change for Children Association (CFCA)

Code of Ethics and Operational Standards

CFCA CODE OF ETHICS

PREAMBLE

1. The Code of Ethics sets out the basic ethical principles that Change for Children (CFCA) must accept and promote. This code of ethics is based on the *Code of Ethics and Operational Standards created by the Canadian Council for International Cooperation - CCIC (2009)*.
2. For CFCA, development is a social, cultural, economic and political process that leads to the fulfillment of fundamental human rights. These rights have been enshrined in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent core treaties and instruments including the United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
3. Development must give primacy to fulfilling the rights, needs and aspirations of the world's poorest and most marginalized peoples; it must promote the peaceful management of conflict; and it must safeguard the health, diversity and resilience of the natural environment.
4. While recognizing that the primary responsibility for the protection and promotion of human rights rests with governments, CFCA supports the fulfillment of these rights through their development and advocacy activities.
5. As part of Canadian civil society, CFCA promotes and supports the advancement of a flourishing civil society in Canada and abroad. The strengthening of people's organizations, voluntary agencies and other socially beneficial institutions is integral to the practice of development.
6. Based on CFCA's experience, establishing and strengthening relations with civil society organizations on the basis of partnership is key to achieving development outcomes.
7. Since CFCA influences the public perception of the international cooperation community, it shares a significant responsibility to act in ways that enhance public trust in its activities.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. Human Rights – In all of its activities, CFCA respects and promotes the human rights and dignity of all people.
 2. Accountability – CFCA should be accountable to its international partners, to its staff, to its donors, and to the Canadian public for its contributions to international development and its stewardship of resources.
 3. Transparency – CFCA should communicate freely and accurately with its partners, donors, the public and each other.
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4. Fairness – CFCA should practice and promote equity and justice in all its activities.
5. Co-operation – CFCA should co-operate with other organizations in order to promote Canadian involvement in international development.
6. Sustainability – In all of its activities, CFCA should take appropriate measures to promote environmental sustainability.

ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLES

CFCA should ensure that these General Principles are incorporated into its structure, governance and operations.

DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

Development should foster and promote the full realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms. To reach this goal, development should:

1. Satisfy basic human needs;
2. Be people-centered in both its purposes and the distribution of its benefits;
3. Address the root causes, and not merely the symptoms, of global inequality;
4. Promote social justice through the equitable distribution of power, wealth and access to resources;
5. Enable poor, oppressed and marginalized people to organize and improve their situation;
6. Reflect the concerns, perspectives and experience of women and enable women to realize their full rights;
7. Respect indigenous peoples and their rights to self-determination and to sovereignty over their own territories;
8. Respect the cultural and spiritual integrity of all peoples;
9. Ensure the full participation of marginalized individuals and groups;
10. Be environmentally, socially and economically sustainable, and should protect the well-being of future generations;
11. Recognize the hazards of militarism and promote peaceful solutions to international, national or local conflict; and
12. Promote a global movement that links shared interests and issues.

In November 2017, the Change for Children Board of Directors adopted the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) and as such all of our development projects must now contribute to the attainment of these goals.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLES

For the purpose of this section, “partnership” refers to relations between CFCA and civil society organizations – not individuals or governments – where a mutual agreement has been established committing each organization to a set of agreed principles and actions over an extended period of time.

Building on the Development Principles in Section C4, CFCA is committed to the following additional principles applying to partnerships:

1. Partnerships should be vehicles for long-term accompaniment that support the right of peoples to determine and carry out activities that further their own development options, through their civil society organizations;
2. Partnerships should advance and exemplify the full realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms, social justice, equitable distribution of global wealth and environmental sustainability;
3. Partnerships should be built on shared visions and goals for society which imply mutual support and solidarity beyond the implementation of specific programs and projects;
4. Partnerships should be formed in a spirit of inclusiveness that respects and promotes the value of diversity;
5. Partnerships should embody equity. Acknowledging that inequalities often exist as a result of power dynamics, especially in funding relations, partners should strive for equitable partnerships;
6. Partnerships should be dynamic relationships built on respect and honesty, in which partners strive for better understanding and appreciation of one another;
7. Partners should be transparent and accountable to one another;
8. Partners should respect one another’s autonomy and constraints and strive to foster a climate of mutual trust in all their partnership activities; and
9. Partners should endeavor to learn from one another and facilitate the sharing of knowledge.

Our Approach

Our Approach

Our Projects

Current Projects

Past Projects

Our Priorities

Water

Food Sovereignty

Health

Indigenous Peoples

Climate Change

Education

Where We Work

Central America & the Caribbean

South America

Africa

Our Approach

Justice is our vision, Partnership is our action

40 years of international partnerships rooted in respect and solidarity

EQUALITY

Our projects are based on partnership and mutual exchange of ideas.

We do not have offices or employees in the South, we partner with local organizations who implement projects in their home country.

SELF DETERMINATION

Our development projects, their cost and priority, are determined by our southern partners according to the current needs of their communities.

LOCAL OWNERSHIP

Our development projects increase the capacity of local people and local community-based organizations to have local control in poverty reduction.



DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS WELL CONSIDERED.

PREAMBLE

In order to provide guidance to CFCA on implementing the principles of the CFCA Code of Ethics, this document outlines standards of practice and compliance procedures for partnerships, organizational governance, organizational integrity, finances, fundraising and communications to the public, Management practices and human resources.

PARTNERSHIPS

For the purpose of this section, “partnership” refers to relations between CFCA and civil society organizations – not individuals or governments – where a mutual agreement has been established committing each organization to a set of agreed principles and actions over an extended period of time.

Partnerships with civil society organizations should be established based on the CFCA Code of Ethics and may be enriched by additional development principles proposed and agreed upon by common accord.

Initiating a partnership

1. Partnerships shall be based on a sense of common cause built on an understanding of each organization’s values, beliefs, goals, objectives and constraints.
2. Partnerships shall be backed by mutually acceptable signed agreements, demonstrating that all parties have negotiated objectives, expectations, roles, responsibilities, and contributions to the partnership.
3. Agreements between partners shall ensure shared responsibility for attaining the negotiated goals, objectives and stated outcomes.

Maintaining and strengthening a partnership

1. Strong partnerships include action to address inequalities due to power imbalances. Partners shall identify and attempt to adopt concrete measures to enhance equitable relations.
2. Partners shall strive to deepen their understanding of one another through transparent sharing of information. The activities relating to the partnership shall be open and accessible to the other parties, while respecting the right of individuals to privacy.
3. Respect for differences – including cultural, religious, socio-economic and political differences – shall be a hallmark of every partnership.
4. Partners shall engage in regular and open communications for the health of the partnership and to ensure that all partners are properly represented and that no Organization unilaterally speaks on another’s behalf.
5. Organizations shall give credit to their partners’ contributions, respect their intellectual property rights and acknowledge appropriate ownership of products and results arising from partnership initiatives.
6. Healthy partnerships are strengthened by prompt and constructive responses to differences of opinion that may arise between Organizations. Partners shall proactively agree how conflict shall be handled.
7. Partnership agreements shall specify timelines for evaluating whether and how the partnership shall continue.
8. When a transfer of funds occurs within a partnership, there shall be a negotiated and jointly signed contract within which there are mutually agreed upon reporting requirements to ensure that all parties use development funds as agreed.
9. In the event of catastrophic circumstances, such as a major shortfall in funds available within a funding partnership, all parties shall promptly implement a mutually negotiated and agreed upon contingency plan.

Ending a partnership

1. Terms, conditions and appropriate procedures for ending the partnership shall be included in the partnership agreement.
 2. In the event of unforeseen circumstances, all partners shall endeavor to maintain the same standards of conduct when winding down the partnership as were agreed upon for the operations of the partnership.
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GOVERNANCE

1. CFCA shall be governed fairly and responsibly by an independent, active, and informed governing body (Board of Directors).
2. All voting members of the governing body shall serve without compensation, except for reasonable expenses incurred to fulfill their organizational duties.
3. CFCA shall establish and periodically review a governance framework suitable for fulfilling its mandate. The structure shall enable CFCA to make timely decisions and to meet its responsibilities. The framework shall include an appropriate governance structure and operations; relationship of senior staff and the governing body; and decision-making processes.
4. CFCA's governing body shall review and approve the Organization's annual budget, significant policies, key financial transactions, compensation practices, plans and programs and hold officers, committees and staff accountable for actions taken and results achieved under delegated authority.
5. CFCA shall adopt a policy preventing and effectively managing conflict of interest situations.
6. CFCA shall have policies prohibiting discrimination and promoting gender equality and participation of disadvantaged groups at all levels of the Organization. This does not supersede the right of the Organization to self-define when it is done in compliance with the law.
7. The governing body shall periodically reassess CFCA's governing documents and objects, vision, mission, goals, priorities, alignment of resources and effectiveness through consultation and collaborative planning.

ORGANIZATIONAL INTEGRITY

1. The affairs of CFCA shall be conducted with integrity and transparency. CFCA shall make full, open, and accurate disclosure to the public of relevant information concerning its goals, programs, finances, activities, results, effectiveness and governance. Exceptions are personnel matters, legal matters, proprietary information and ethical and legal requirements of personal privacy.
2. CFCA shall ensure that complaints are dealt with in a timely manner and impartially, respecting the rights of involved parties for confidentiality and disclosure.
3. CFCA shall comply with all applicable federal laws and regulations as well as laws and regulations of provinces or municipalities in which it is based or operates. CFCA, when conducting activities outside of Canada, shall be aware of foreign laws and regulations governing its activities.
4. CFCA shall oppose and shall not be a participant to any wrongdoing or financial impropriety. It shall take prompt and firm corrective action whenever and wherever wrong-doing of any kind has been committed by any member of its governing body, employee, or volunteer.

FINANCES

1. CFCA shall conduct its finances in such a way as to ensure appropriate use of funds and accountability to donors. It shall operate according to a budget approved by its governing body and have sound internal controls and documented financial policies and procedures.
 2. CFCA shall ensure that there are sufficient resources for effective administration and appropriate fundraising.
 3. CFCA shall have annual audited financial statements and shall make them easily accessible to the public.
 4. CFCA shall ensure that it (and, if applicable, its affiliates) manage its funds prudently.
 5. CFCA shall file its Registered Charity Information Return within six (6) months of its fiscal year end and such returns shall be complete and accurate.
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FUNDRAISING AND COMMUNICATIONS TO THE PUBLIC

1. Fundraising solicitations shall be truthful, shall accurately describe CFCA's identity, purpose, programs and need, shall only make claims which CFCA can fulfill, and shall treat donors and potential donors with respect. There shall be no misleading information or images (including material omissions or exaggerations of fact), nor any other communication which would tend to create a false impression or misunderstanding, and no use of high-pressure tactics in soliciting donations.
 2. CFCA shall ensure that:
 - a. the public is informed of the way CFCA intends to use donated resources;
 - b. when members of the public are invited to support a specific project or purpose, they are informed if donations may be reassigned and they are given an explanation of these planned alternative uses;
 - c. the public is informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, employees or hired solicitors of the Organization;
 - d. its donors are encouraged to ask questions when making a donation and they are given prompt, truthful and forthright answers; and
 - e. its donors receive appropriate acknowledgment but are not publicly identified without their consent.
 3. CFCA shall have policies and procedures to ensure that it accepts only those donations which will not compromise its ethics, program focus or other interests.
 4. CFCA shall ensure that images and text included in all communications to the public:
 - a. respect the dignity and rights of the individuals portrayed and their way of life;
 - b. are accurate, balanced, truthful and representative of reality and do not generalize and mask the diversity of situations;
 - c. portray local communities as active agents in their own development process and do not fuel prejudice or foster a sense of Northern superiority; and
 - d. encourage a sense of interconnectedness and interdependence between the Canadian public and the people shown in the image or discussed in the text.
 5. CFCA shall control all fundraising activities conducted on its behalf. It shall not, directly or indirectly, pay finder's fees, commission or percentage compensation based on contributions. When external fundraisers are used, the Organization shall have a written fundraising contract and shall avoid disproportionate private gain by those external fundraisers.
 6. CFCA shall seek the participation of its partners in the formulation of communications to the public.
 7. CFCA shall consider the cumulative impact on the public's perception arising from its own communication messages (through images and text) and those of others. CFCA shall ensure that its messages do not undermine the goal of building support for long-term sustainable development.
 8. When CFCA carries out an activity that involves both fundraising and programming, there shall be appropriate allocation of fundraising and program expenses.
 9. CFCA shall make its most recent financial statements, annual report, and a current list of members of its governing body easily accessible to the public (e.g. in a visible and public section of their website).
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MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND HUMAN RESOURCES

CFCA shall:

1. Endeavour to follow sound management and operational practices appropriate to its mission, operations and governance structure;
2. Provide employees and volunteers with job descriptions or duties that detail CFCA expectations;
3. Have clear, well-defined, written policies and procedures relating to its employees and volunteers and a process for communicating these policies and procedures; and ensure that the policies clearly define and protect the rights of these individuals;
4. Clearly describe and communicate compensation and benefits to each employee, and make financial arrangements to honour its financial commitments;
5. Respect the right of employees to organize into unions or associations and bargain collective agreements; and
6. Educate employees and volunteers on the Code of Ethics and Operational Standards.

ACHIEVING COMPLIANCE

Change for Children's governing board shall ensure a self-assessment is performed regarding its adherence to the Code of Ethics and Operational Standards every three years.

Ratified by the CFCA Board of Directors: February 2018

Date for Review: February 2021
