



Development and Evangelism, Partisan Politics and Welfare Policy

Approved by the Board: 29 May 2021

Managed on behalf of the Executive Director and Board by: Head of Programs

1. Purpose of this Policy

This policy provides a framework to ensure that ActionAid Australia ensures that all development designated funds (as opposed to emergency relief funds) are utilised for activities that contribute towards development outcomes and will not be used for the purposes of promoting or supporting:

- welfare activities;
- religious teaching and proselytization; nor
- partisan politics.

This policy guides ActionAid Australia and its partners to clearly separate aid and development from non-development objectives and activities. In line with ACFID Code of Conduct and DFAT accreditation, it sets out obligations when communicating with or soliciting donations from private donors, aid agencies, sponsors, supporters and the general public, including fundraising for restricted and unrestricted purposes.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the following people:

- ActionAid Australia staff members, contractors and consultants;
- ActionAid Australia volunteers and interns;
- ActionAid Australia Board of Directors; and
- partner organisations.

3. Definitions

ActionAid Australia defines non-development activity, evangelism, partisan policies and welfare as follows:

Non-Development Activity: Activity undertaken to promote a particular religious adherence or to support a particular party, candidate or organisation affiliated to a political party. Welfare (defined below) is also classified as a non-development activity.

Evangelism: Activities undertaken with the intention of converting individuals or groups from one religion or faith to another.

Partisan Politics: Activities that align with a political party and are undertaken with the intention of persuading people to support a particular political party or doctrine.

Welfare: Activities that involve care and maintenance, other than in refugee and emergency situations, which aim to maintain people in a particular condition on a longer-term basis. Welfare activities typically have a focus on providing direct assistance in the form of goods or services to individual and community people in non-emergency situations to address their immediate needs, and can lead to a dependence on the assistance provided. There is no requirement that the recipients participate in the activity, nor a requirement that the improvement in conditions resulting from the goods and services be sustained. Welfare is essentially a one-way transfer and once the organisation providing the welfare is gone there may be no system in place to continue support, nor any improved capacity on the part of the community members to manage their own long-term development. **ActionAid Australia makes a distinction between welfare and relief.**

Relief: the provision of basic support to people in emergency situations who are directly affected by humanitarian crises. In these emergency situations direct support may be provided as part of a short-term relief response. Within ActionAid Australia's human rights-based approach, relief activities can be undertaken to improve local rights holders' material conditions so that they have the strength and wellbeing to mobilise for other rights to be realised.

4. Policy Statement

In line with ActionAid Australia's vision, purpose, human rights based approach:

- *ActionAid Australia's adheres to its values of independence from any religious or party political affiliation, mutual respect, and equity and justice.* ActionAid is a secular organisation. It respects the religious and political views of the people that it works with and does not discriminate against people on the basis of these beliefs. It formulates its own policies independent of the Australian and foreign governments;

- *ActionAid Australia uses funds intended for aid and development only for the purposes for which they are intended:* It does not use aid and development funds to promote a particular religious adherence or to support a political party, or to promote a candidate or organisation affiliated to a particular party;
- *ActionAid Australia does not engage in any non-development activity, nor does it solicit funds for these purposes:* It recognises the need for transparent separation between aid and development and non-development objectives and activities in program designs, fundraising, advocacy, choice for donors and in public communications and expenditure reporting;
- *ActionAid Australia requires its partner to ensure that ActionAid Australia funds designated for aid and development purposes are not used to fund any non-development activity.* Ongoing dialogue between ActionAid Australia and its partners reinforces the definitions of development and non-development activity and the need for separation between development and non-development activities. *ActionAid Australia is committed to supporting the achievement of sustained social change and justice.* It avoids creating relationships of dependency with communities it supports and therefore does not provide welfare support. ActionAid Australia may support programs that include welfare activities on a temporary basis, where the State is unwilling or unable to do so, and as part of a broader process of engagement, that is phased out over time. ActionAid Australia recognises that welfare activities are a necessary feature of any functioning community, but believes that these goods and services should be provided by designated duty bearers, which may include government, private sector and local civil society, and therefore supports communities to advocate on their own behalf for their rights to be upheld and governments to provide necessary services. ActionAid Australia believes that the delivery of welfare programs is not consistent with its HRBA with its strong focus on consciousness-raising, empowerment and the development of personal and collective agency and self-reliance;
- *ActionAid Australia does not discriminate against employees nor Board Directors on the basis of their political or religious beliefs.* People shall benefit from, and participate in ActionAid Australia's work, regardless of their religious beliefs, in line with the principles of anti-discrimination and ActionAid Australia's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Workplace Behaviour Policy (part of the Human Resources Manual).

5. Policy in Practice

1. ActionAid Australia checks to ensure that proposed projects do not include, non-development components including evangelist, partisan politics or welfare activities through its project pre-appraisal process.
2. ActionAid Australia checks that all prospective partners do not evangelise, promote welfare approaches, nor engage in partisan politics in the course of their work with communities supported by ActionAid Australia, through its partnership appraisal processes conducted with all prospective partners.
3. ActionAid Australia ensures that a non-evangelism, partisan politics and welfare clause is written into all its Memoranda of Understanding and Project Agreements with partners and ActionAid Australia ensures that partners understand the requirements of this clause.
4. ActionAid Australia will monitor partner's awareness of and compliance with this policy, through its program monitoring and evaluation assessments. This monitoring will also check on the systems for ensuring the compliance of other local partners and organisations that work with ActionAid Australia's partners to deliver programs.
5. ActionAid Australia is committed to non-partisanship. It ensures that symbols and language used in communications, campaigning and fundraising materials do not promote any religious or political affiliation and make a distinction between relief and welfare activities.
6. ActionAid Australia will not discriminate against prospective and existing staff and Board Directors on the basis of their religious and political views and affiliations, in line with its commitment to ActionAid Australia's EEO and Workplace Behaviour Policy (embedded in the Human Resources Manual).
7. ActionAid Australia will ensure that where a staff member or Board Director's political involvement or affiliation with a political party or organisation may affect their work with ActionAid Australia and/or create a potential conflict of interest, they understand that it is their individual responsibility to raise this matter promptly with ActionAid Australia management for discussion (in the case of staff) or with the Board (in the case of a Director) for discussion and decision. All employees agree to abide by the ActionAid Australia Conflict of Interest Policy by signing their agreement to abide by all policies contained in the Human Resource Manual. For Directors, they sign a Conflict of Interest form, in line with the processes outlined in the Governance Manual. ActionAid Australia expects

all staff and Directors to conduct themselves in a non-partisan manner when publicly representing ActionAid Australia.

6. Monitoring and Review of Policy

The Head of Programs is accountable to the Executive Director and Board for managing and maintaining this policy. All members of the Leadership Team are accountable for ensuring that their teams understand and adhere to this policy in their day-to-day work. Where compliance issues are surfaced, Leadership Team members will work with staff to address these issues promptly.

Any updates/revisions to the policy must be endorsed by the Executive Director and Leadership Team before being submitted to the ActionAid Australia Board for approval.

Changes to Policy

Nature of Change	Date of Approval by Board
First developed as three separate policies: Development and Evangelism; Development and Partisan Politics, and Development and Welfare	25 August, 2011
<p><u>Changes to Development and Evangelism Policy included:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extending coverage of policy to include staff, not just partners; • ActionAid Australia ensuring that symbols and language used in communications, campaigning and fundraising materials do not promote any religious affiliation or messages; • Updating job titles, to reflect new organisational structure <p><u>Changes to Development and Welfare Policy included:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • broadening definition of duty bearers beyond government; • ActionAid Australia ensuring that communications materials make a distinction between relief and welfare activities. 	22 November 2012
<p>Three policies consolidated into one policy in order to remove overlap/duplication and make the policy more concise and user-friendly. Key changes included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adding a purpose, scope and standards section for policy; • explicitly including reference to monitoring the systems in place to ensure the compliance of ActionAid Australia's partners, other in-country local partners and organisations that are involved in supporting and implementing programs; • combining and shortening all sections so more focussed; and • updating job titles, to reflect new organisational structure. 	7 April 2017
Job titles updated to reflect new organisational structure	26 Sep 2018
Add definition of "non-development activity" and policy statements on clear separation of development and non-development activities to comply with ACFID Code of Conduct	29 May 2021

and DFAT accreditation	
Job titles updated to reflect current organisational structure	2 nd Feb 2024