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Working with Partners Guidelines

Document History

Version	Date	Description	Next Review
1	4/6/2024	Created and updated as per ACFID requirements	Before annual board meeting

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Purpose

The purpose of the Working with Partners Guidelines is to establish a clear framework for Fairaction International's engagement with partner organizations, including our subsidiary Fairaction Nigeria and other global partners. These guidelines are designed to ensure that all collaborations are conducted ethically, transparently, and effectively, aligning with our mission to advance sustainable water solutions and contributing to the achievement of United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 6.1.

This document aims to facilitate a consistent approach to selecting, managing, and evaluating partnerships to maximize the impact of our collective efforts. By setting out these guidelines, Fairaction International seeks to foster strong, cooperative relationships with all entities involved in our programs, ensuring that our interventions are sustainable and aligned with the needs and priorities of the communities we serve.

Scope

These guidelines apply to all forms of cooperation between Fairaction International and its partners, including:

- Subsidiary operations, particularly with Fairaction Nigeria.
- Collaborations with local and international NGOs, government agencies, private sector partners, and community-based organizations.
- Any agreements or projects involving external stakeholders across different regions where Fairaction International operates.

The guidelines cover all stages of partnership management, from due diligence and partner selection through to project implementation and post-evaluation. They are intended to ensure that all partnerships operate within the legal and ethical frameworks appropriate to their specific contexts and maintain the high standards of accountability and effectiveness expected by Fairaction International and its stakeholders.

Context

Fairaction International is dedicated to advancing its mission of providing sustainable access to clean drinking water in alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 6.1. To maximize our impact, it is crucial that we collaborate effectively with various partners who share our commitment to this cause.

Partners are defined as any entities with whom Fairaction International has a formal contract or agreement for the implementation of programs. This includes organizations involved in any part of activities funded by partners, such as:

- Local and international NGOs
- Government agencies
- Private sector entities
- Community-based organizations
- Subsidiaries, such as Fairaction Nigeria

These partnerships are integral to broadening the scope of our projects and enhancing our operational capabilities. By ensuring that our partners adhere to the same high standards and outcomes as Fairaction International, we maintain the integrity and effectiveness of our collaborative efforts towards achieving our strategic objectives.

Partner Standards

To uphold our commitment to sustainability and ethical practices in all collaborations, Fairaction International implements the following standards when working with partners, including our subsidiary Fairaction Nigeria and other global partners:

1. **Policy Review and Alignment:**

- Partners must review and align with Fairaction International's policies, including this guideline and any other relevant policies.
- We conduct a thorough follow-up to ensure all policy requirements are met before approving any project.

2. **Project Monitoring:**

- Identify specific aspects of each project that require close monitoring throughout its lifecycle to ensure ongoing compliance with our standards.

3. **Separation of Activities:**

- Evaluate whether the partner engages in non-development activities.
- Ensure that non-development activities are managed and accounted for separately from aid and development efforts.

4. **Financial and Activity Reporting:**

- Require that the partner organization can distinctly manage, report, and account for non-development components separately from development activities.

5. **In-Country Project Monitoring:**

- Ensure that in-country project monitoring conducted by the partner includes robust measures to maintain the separation of non-development activities from development and humanitarian activities.
- This separation must be reflected in the project's monitoring, learning, and evaluation processes to ensure transparency and adherence to our mission.

These standards are designed to ensure that all partnerships are conducted transparently and ethically, aligning with Fairaction International's overarching goals and compliance requirements.

Assessing Potential Partner's Capacity to Protect Children

While Fairaction International primarily engages in activities that do not directly involve children—such as partnering with donor organizations, construction companies for water projects, and implementing water treatment plants—we recognize the importance of child protection across all sectors.

Key Considerations:

1. Contextual Awareness:

- Recognize that in the majority of our operations, the direct involvement of children is unlikely. Our typical partnerships involve sectors where interaction with children is minimal.
- However, understanding the broader impact of our projects, including indirect interactions, is crucial.

2. Preventative Measures:

- Despite the low likelihood of direct engagement with children, Fairaction International commits to ensuring that all partners maintain high standards of child protection.

- Assess potential partners for their commitment to protecting children, even if their primary operations do not involve direct contact with minors.

3. Policy Review and Safeguarding Controls:

- For partners potentially engaging in activities that might involve children, we evaluate their child protection policies and their capacity to implement these measures effectively.
- Ensure that these policies are robust, actively enforced, and integrated into their operational practices.

4. Partner Appraisal Tools:

- Utilize assessment tools, such as the 'Partner Appraisal - Child Protection Policy Checklist,' to evaluate the adequacy of child protection measures, even if only peripherally necessary.
- This tool provides a systematic approach to ensure that even the unlikely scenarios involving children are covered by stringent safeguards.

This section of our guidelines underscores Fairaction International's commitment to universal child protection standards, ensuring that all partners, regardless of their direct interaction with children, have the necessary policies and capabilities to safeguard children in all scenarios.

Agreed Additional Measures for Child Protection

When engaging with partners in activities that could indirectly involve children, Fairaction International assesses additional safeguarding measures on a case-by-case basis. These measures are tailored based on the nature of the program and the level of potential indirect contact with children. Agreed upon additional measures may include:

1. Joint Reporting and Case Management Arrangements:

- Establish joint reporting protocols to detail how concerns about child protection will be reported and managed between Fairaction International and the partner organization.

- Designate specific individuals responsible for contacting and liaising with their counterparts to ensure there is a clear structure for decision-making and management of any actions related to child protection issues.

2. Adherence to Child Protection Codes of Conduct:

- Require partners to commit to specific clauses of the Working with Children Code of Conduct, especially if these are not already included in the partner's own Code of Conduct.
- This commitment helps standardize the approach to child protection across all involved entities.

3. Child Protection-Focused Risk Assessments and Monitoring:

- Conduct targeted risk assessments focused on child protection aspects within partner-implemented activities.
- Regularly monitor the effectiveness of risk mitigation measures to ensure they are adequate and functioning as intended.

4. Staff Training on Child Protection:

- Ensure that all staff involved in partner-implemented activities are up-to-date with child protection training.
- This training equips them with the necessary knowledge and skills to identify and address potential risks effectively.

5. Specialist Skills Requirement:

- Verify that all staff working on activities potentially involving children possess the specialist skills required for such engagements.
- This includes training in child psychology, child rights, and appropriate interaction and intervention strategies.