

TEAR Australia (TEAR) is a non-government development organisation that is accredited with DFAT and a member of the Australian Council for International Development. TEAR operates in partnership with Christian non-government organisations and civil society organisations in South and South East Asia, the Pacific Region and East and Southern Africa to support community initiatives in development, advocacy and relief. These guidelines are intended to give a broad outline of the types of work and working arrangements that TEAR is involved with and where our resources are allocated.

## **1. UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES**

### ***Motivation***

TEAR Australia is motivated by its understanding of God, the words and actions of Jesus, and the mission that he passed on to the Church. We believe that God loves all people and offers them new life in Christ. The Bible shows us the values and characteristics of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom has not yet been revealed in all its fullness and, until it is, we believe that God seeks to involve us in the work of bringing about his Kingdom here on earth.

This involves working for justice and hope with and alongside people living with poverty, and advocating for just social and political structures that promote the dignity and security of all people. We are aware of the interconnectedness of human society with the whole of creation and acknowledge our responsibility to respect and care for it.

### ***Purpose***

TEAR Australia works to enable opportunities for people living with poverty to engage in processes to change their lives and their circumstances. These include development, relief and advocacy projects that give precedence to the rights, interests, self-determined priorities and capacities of the poorest and most marginalised people. We seek to address both the symptoms and the causes of poverty through projects that produce tangible, lasting changes. We hope to strengthen individuals and communities in their efforts to address their own development priorities into the future.

### ***Partnership***

TEAR Australia reflects this purpose through working in partnership with like-minded organisations including local, national and international development agencies, churches and community-based groups.

TEAR seeks to build partnerships characterised by:

- shared Christian identity and values;
- a common vision for human rights and poverty-focused, community-based development work;
- the practice of trust, respect, fairness, and responsibility in organisational relationships;
- mutually accountable relationships;
- a mutual desire to learn and develop as organisations;
- a shared commitment to improve the effectiveness of work and, ultimately, its impact in poor and marginalised communities.

TEAR supports the efforts of partners to strengthen and grow their organisations, build their technical and management skills and increase the effectiveness and sustainability of their work. TEAR is committed to working with partners we classify as emerging and evolving community organisations, recognising that they may benefit from more intensive partnership relationships than more established organisations usually require.

TEAR sees good governance as an essential component of organisational life. Partner organisations must operate under accountable governance structures such as legally constituted Boards of Management. Where legal registration is not possible, partners will still operate under recognised and accountable governance structures. An organisation's governing body is finally

responsible for the organisation and its program and should be actively engaged in the key roles of mission and value setting, policy formulation and financial oversight.

TEAR will normally commit to a long-term relationship with its partners, recognising that the development of both communities and organisations takes time. It is our common desire to share our lives with people living and struggling with poverty and to work with them to bring about long-term positive change in their lives through project activities that provide the practical purpose behind the partnership. In usual circumstances, TEAR's partnership will be linked with the implementation of development projects which will vary in time commitment. It is also important to TEAR that its partners become sustainable organisations with a range of funding sources and not over-reliant on TEAR's support. For these reasons TEAR expects that most of its partnerships will end at some stage and that this is best for both the partner and for TEAR. In usual circumstances, TEAR will seek to ensure that current project cycles are able to be concluded before the partnership and funding support is ended.

TEAR and its partners are committed to work in accordance with the Micah Global Guidelines on Partnership <http://www.micahnetwork.org/resources/guidelines/micah-network-partnership-guidelines>

TEAR also works in accordance with the Australian Council for International Development Code of Conduct ([www.acfid.asn.au/code-of-conduct](http://www.acfid.asn.au/code-of-conduct)).

### ***Faith and Political Affiliations***

TEAR Australia partners in relief, development and advocacy activities with organisations who are motivated by their faith in Christ and their desire to demonstrate God's love and commitment to create communities of justice and mercy with and through the poor. While we rejoice when people's lives are enriched by faith in Christ, we will not allow the use of relief and development funds for evangelism in order to achieve this end. Project activities cannot be undertaken with the intention of converting individuals or groups from one faith or denominational affiliation to another.

TEAR also does not support its own or partner staff, or contracted representatives (when using their agency name or resources in paid time) being involved in party political activities or facilitating the support of a specific political party, candidate or party political organisation in a local, regional or national election. In addition, funds or resources cannot be used to support a particular politician or faction to gain power within a government or within a government or party political structure.

## ***2. PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT THEMES***

TEAR seeks to build strong partners and partnerships that lead to effective development outcomes. TEAR will work with partners to develop their ability to work in ways that enable communities to build skills, take initiatives and make linkages with other development actors to improve their well-being.

### ***Poverty***

TEAR prioritises supporting partners who are working with the poorest and most marginalised people in their areas. We focus on projects that work with such communities to create conditions under which people living in poverty can come to understand and realise their rights and improve their well-being.

### ***Sustainability***

TEAR Australia directs the majority of its resources to long-term development projects and processes intended to achieve lasting improvements in people's circumstances and capacities. Such projects incorporate strategies and time-lines for encouraging communities towards self-reliance. Communities should be equipped to sustain the benefits they have achieved, to access resources independently, and plan and manage their own development processes into the future. TEAR strongly encourages active community engagement with government services and other development opportunities that project participants are entitled to access.

Projects supported by TEAR are designed to be sustainable within their physical environment. They incorporate sound environmental and ecological practices and, where applicable, serve to maintain and/or restore natural resources.

Technology introduced through projects to complement local/community efforts should be appropriate to local conditions, including cultural and traditional practices, build on indigenous knowledge and technologies, and, as far as possible, maximise the use of local materials. Ongoing operation and maintenance by local people must be ensured.

### ***Participation and Inclusion***

TEAR Australia supports projects that draw people together in cooperative efforts for common benefit, and which facilitate communities in taking authority and responsibility for their own development. Priority is given to projects in which communities fully participate through identifying existing strengths and problems, aspirations and resources; defining goals and strategies; planning, implementing and managing project activities; and in contributing to the costs involved (including contributions in kind).

Not all members of a community share the same concerns. Neither are they all able to be directly involved. While recognising this, projects should use strategies that are inclusive, and ensure a broad participation of community members. TEAR is committed to the inclusion and representation of those who are vulnerable and those who are affected by the intersecting drivers of marginalisation and exclusion, including but not restricted to race, religion, ethnicity, indigeneity, disability, age, displacement, caste, gender, gender identity, sexuality, sexual orientation, poverty, class, socio-economic status and political persuasion.

Special emphasis must be given to including those often excluded from decision-making processes, notably children. TEAR recognises that people living with disabilities are especially vulnerable to poverty. We will therefore work with partners to ensure that people with disabilities are included in project activities in ways that are accessible and empowering. Projects directly focusing on people with disabilities will engage them in the development process in ways that encourage and enable them to enjoy improved social inclusion and participation.

TEAR Australia supports projects in which the implementing partner works with project participants in the development, implementation and monitoring of projects, including opportunities to provide feedback and complaints, so that communities have ownership of the development work.

### ***Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning***

TEAR Australia and its partners are committed to reflect and learn from the work we do together and improve its effectiveness. TEAR encourages its partners to work closely with participants to understand not only what is being done (project activities), but also how people's lives and situations are changing as a result (project outcomes). The value of the work does not lie in project activities themselves, but in the changes that occur in people's lives and situations.

Projects are regularly and systematically monitored to track progress toward their objectives, to identify associated outcomes and to indicate when planning and budgetary adjustments are required. TEAR understands that contexts are dynamic and expects project plans are responsive to changes in context and emerging opportunities. Project monitoring and evaluation frameworks should be designed with the involvement of the community as central, and provide real time feedback to how projects are designed and delivered.

Periodic reports to TEAR document both project activities and quantitative and qualitative outcomes. Usually an external evaluation of project effectiveness is conducted within a project cycle. Mid cycle reviews are also encouraged. Where a project is to continue, evaluation learnings and recommendations should be incorporated into the design of the next phase.

### ***Gender Equality & Justice***

TEAR Australia recognises that women and girl children are over-represented amongst poor and marginalised people and as victims/survivors of many forms of violence and abuse. Addressing this inequality and injustice is a priority for TEAR. We also recognise that these situations will not be addressed successfully unless the attitudes and behaviours of both women and men change. Consequently, we seek to support work that addresses gender inequalities and the contributing attitudes and behaviours, appropriately engages both women and men in the development process and promotes gender equality, justice and empowerment throughout the development cycle.

Priority is given to projects that:

- endorse and promote the rights of women and girl children;
- actively and equitably involve women in determining development objectives, planning activities and assessing results;
- expand women's social and economic opportunities, resulting in improved livelihood security, health outcomes, access to higher education and improved well-being;
- address violence and abuse towards women;
- increase women's roles as decision-makers in family, community, society and organisational governance;
- promote culturally appropriate community-driven responses that challenge cultural values and practices that oppress women (or any other marginalised group); and,
- do not marginalise men and boys, but seek their appropriate participation in projects intended to address the situation of women and girls.

### **3. FUNDING DECISIONS**

All projects pass through several stages of appraisal prior to approval by TEAR Australia. Partners can request funding for a design phase to assist in the preparation and research stages of a project, leading to the development of a project proposal.

All funding decisions are reviewed annually.

After being reviewed by TEAR's Program Staff, proposals are submitted to one of several decision-making groups. Details about these group processes may be obtained on request.

### **4. TYPES OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES**

TEAR Australia supports projects that fall within the following broad sectors:

1. Livelihoods, economic development and food security
2. Basic health, emphasising maternal and child health
3. Basic education for children and adults
4. Water and sanitation
5. Environmental sustainability, including disaster risk reduction
6. Strengthening civil society, including governance, advocacy and women's empowerment
7. Humanitarian response and recovery

Often several or all of these activities are incorporated into a project proposal. The first six sectors can be broadly categorised as Community Development, which is where most of TEAR's funding is allocated. Some funding is also available for Advocacy, Humanitarian Response and Organisational Development. Each of these categories is described below:

#### **Community Development**

TEAR Australia allocates most of its resources to projects with a community development approach. Such projects will:

- recognise and build on the existing strengths and coping capacities of communities, recognising that people are experts within their own economic and social environment;
- promote an environment where people in the community can discuss their hopes for the future, analyse strengths, identify problems and become aware of their rights and how to achieve them;
- enable people to express and review relevant beliefs, knowledge, resources, constraints and costs prior to planning solutions;
- strengthen communities' ability to plan appropriate responses, access resources, implement action plans, manage and monitor progress and evaluate the entire process;
- encourage and enable all sections of the community, including the most marginalised people, to participate in their own development processes; and
- recognise and engage with existing power structures to promote fully inclusive development.

The community-based projects that TEAR supports represent feasible responses to people's fundamental needs and rights. They take up problems and opportunities that are critical to people's daily existence such as food security, agriculture and reforestation, water supply, sanitation and health, education and childcare, housing and village infrastructure, employment, security, peace and human rights, advocacy around local justice issues, governance, access to services and participation in civil society. TEAR considers projects in all these areas, and especially projects that enable an integrated response to a range of interconnected problems.

TEAR is generally not able to support activities involving major capital outlays, large-scale infrastructure works, high levels of technology or ongoing institutional costs.

However, TEAR does support investments in small-scale community infrastructure where these are essential to and embedded in community development approaches that invest in people, and where ongoing maintenance is the responsibility of these groups or will be assumed by local government. These may include housing improvements, drinking water and sanitation systems, small-scale irrigation and land care schemes, upgrading education and health facilities, community buildings and small village access roads.

TEAR has separate guidelines for the purchase of vehicles and a separate funding application is required for vehicles and construction work.

TEAR understands that community development is a complex and uncertain process that requires time. Some of the variables likely to affect projects include the diverse beliefs and ideas held within a community, the extent to which people have interests and power to protect, the degree to which other people experience discouragement and powerlessness, the willingness or freedom to embrace change and invest in future gains while struggling with daily survival, and the tensions between traditional and emerging community leadership. Community development processes always present challenges and opportunities.

Consequently, TEAR encourages its partners to set realistic objectives and time frames. For its part, TEAR seeks to remain flexible and responsive as projects unfold.

### ***Care, Recovery & Rehabilitation***

TEAR also supports projects that assist street children, people living with HIV and AIDS, women in prostitution and people recovering from substance abuse. These projects should be built on appropriate harm reduction and rehabilitation strategies. Such projects fall under TEAR's Care, Recovery and Rehabilitation Projects Policy and are limited to five years' funding.

### ***Advocacy***

TEAR Australia encourages its partners to incorporate advocacy activities into development projects. Advocacy is intended to influence the behaviour and decisions of individuals, groups, companies and governments whose actions affect poor and marginalised communities. Priority is given to strategies that strengthen communities to conduct their own advocacy. TEAR also supports partners in specific research and campaigning activities intended to influence government and corporate policies and resource allocations in favour of the poorest and most marginalised people.

TEAR recognises that advocacy can be a long process requiring patience and perseverance and that change resulting from advocacy projects can be more complex to understand than from community development projects. Even so, advocacy projects need clearly defined goals and indicators to allow partners to assess the impact of their activities over specified time frames.

TEAR's advocacy activities within Australia may involve working together with and educating Christians in Australia about how their life choices affect poor and marginalised communities elsewhere, encouraging them to change their own behaviour and persuade others to do the same, while also lobbying for appropriate changes to government policy and/or corporate conduct. TEAR will also advocate for justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Where possible, advocacy issues will reflect the needs and issues expressed by TEAR's international partners or others directly impacted. It is acknowledged advocating around some issues can present a risk to our partners, so TEAR will duly consider the risk while planning advocacy activities.

## ***Emergency Preparedness, Mitigation and Humanitarian Response***

TEAR is committed to the humanitarian assistance principles of humanity, impartiality, independence and neutrality as defined in the Core Humanitarian Standards. TEAR is also committed to recognising and working towards applying the Core Humanitarian Standards, the Integral Quality Standards, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Code of Conduct for NGOs in Disaster Relief ([www.ifrc.org/publicat/conduct](http://www.ifrc.org/publicat/conduct)) and Sphere Standards ([www.sphereproject.org](http://www.sphereproject.org)).

While TEAR Australia allocates the majority of its resources to long-term development work, it also supports responses its partner organisations make to humanitarian emergencies. Apart from the immense and immediate suffering they cause, disasters deepen poverty and create obstacles to development and sometimes reverse development gains. TEAR supports both short-term emergency relief projects that enable disaster-affected people to survive, as well as medium-term recovery and rehabilitation projects.

Under usual circumstances, TEAR caps funding for relief and recovery activities to 10% of total International Program funding. It is recognised that in complex operating areas projects that are assisting communities recover from emergencies and transition to longer-term development initiatives may be expensive. Ordinarily TEAR will coordinate its response to large-scale international disasters and emergencies with member agencies of the Integral Alliance.

TEAR will give priority to proposals likely to prepare communities to engage in longer-term development initiatives: such as those that prepare at-risk communities for disaster mitigation and preparedness, or where ongoing development work that TEAR is supporting is directly affected by an emergency. Care is taken to minimise the risk of relief inputs undermining local markets and communities' other self-help capacities.

TEAR encourages its partners to integrate disaster mitigation and preparedness into their mainstream development programming. It also supports specific disaster mitigation and preparedness activities in disaster-prone regions and in regions threatened by changing climatic, environmental and economic conditions. Such projects equip communities to assess probable hazards, undertake work to lessen the impact of disasters on their physical infrastructure and livelihoods, and respond rapidly and effectively when emergencies occur.

### ***Capacity Building and Organisational Development***

TEAR Australia supports training, technology and consultancy inputs to our partner organisations that will strengthen project implementation and management. TEAR expects project plans and budgets to include in-service and short-course training that add to the skills of project staff and community volunteers, equipping them to do their work more effectively.

TEAR supports initiatives by partners to develop their core organisational capacities in areas such as strategic planning, professional development, governance, financial management and documentation. Special emphasis is given to efforts to increase institutional sustainability, build local supporting constituencies, mobilise local resources, strengthen networks with support organisations, and forge in-country linkages with government and other relevant agencies.

TEAR Australia also supports more intensive organisational development processes for some partners through specific capacity building programs.

TEAR sometimes assists partner organisations by recruiting Australian fieldworkers to provide technical assistance and training for limited periods of time. This applies only in cases where the position in question is strategically important, can not be filled by a local person, and where the respective partner has sufficient resources and experience to provide direction and support.

## ***5. EFFICIENCY AND RISK***

TEAR Australia is committed to allocating its resources in order to produce the greatest possible benefit for people living with poverty and recognises that cost benefit and efficiency vary greatly across and between our portfolio of projects. TEAR examines administration, salaries, capital

expenditure and other support costs closely to ensure that they are appropriate to the operating context. Normally, TEAR will not fund expatriate salaries. Proposals need to indicate why particular technical approaches and cost structures have been selected. For its part, TEAR works hard to keep its own operations as efficient and cost effective as possible.

TEAR is willing to support work in complex areas of high risk and difficulty. Factors such as remoteness and inaccessibility, the likelihood of natural disaster, conflict or political instability and long-term systemic injustice add significantly to the complexity, cost and danger of project work. Yet these high-risk places are often the places with great needs and few opportunities. TEAR works with partner organisations to identify, manage risks and operate as effectively as possible within high-risk environments.