

1. Introduction

The Leprosy Mission Australia (TLMA) is an organisation which, as part of The Leprosy Mission Global Fellowship, focuses on the needs of people who have been affected by leprosy. In adopting a whole person approach to people affected by leprosy, TLMA has moved from a medical model of care to a more inclusive, holistic program of rehabilitation and community development; recognising that it is also essential to address the causes and consequences of leprosy. These consequences include the social implications of the disease and the participatory barriers faced by an individual with a disability.

TLMA's status as fully accredited by DFAT and a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct informs how we define development activity. According to the ACFID Code of Conduct, non-development activity includes activity undertaken to promote a particular religious adherence or to support a particular party, candidate or organisation affiliated to a political party. Non-development includes welfare approaches that reduce a person's or organisation's agency and do not change long-term outcomes for a community or institution.

2. Development and Welfare

As defined in the ANCP 2023 Manual:

Welfare activities are defined as care and maintenance, which aims to maintain people in a particular condition on a longer-term basis, and are not eligible for ANCP funding. Substantial and broad impact on social and economic conditions in the community is not normally expected from welfare programs. Welfare may be provided to an individual or family basis including home-based and institutional care programs, such as those provided by orphanages, homes for the elderly, hospices and the provision of food for those who are destitute. Welfare activities are typically:

- *implemented independently of other sustainable community development activities;*
- *include no strategy for integration into broader community development programs;*
- *provided on an individual or family basis, rather than on a community basis, and are unconnected to emergency needs; and*
- *implemented on a long term basis with no clear exit strategy¹*

Through its International Program, TLMA seeks to meet the needs of people affected by leprosy, disability or otherwise marginalised groups through integrated and sustainable development programs, focusing on healthcare, rehabilitation and community development which address the physical, attitudinal, environmental, and social needs of those with whom we work. Because of the barriers faced by people affected by leprosy and disabilities, it is recognised that direct assistance may in some circumstances be required, such as scholarships for school children, seed money to start up Self Help Groups, or nutritional support for leprosy reaction patients. The rehabilitation of people affected by leprosy and disabilities may also require providing mobility aids to overcome

¹ ANCP Manual 2023, p. 19

environmental barriers, enabling the person to lead a more fulfilled, inclusive life in their community. Where development funds are used for these activities, they are always in the context of an ongoing, sustainable development program that seeks to overcome these barriers with objectives to reach outcomes. These direct assistance activities are not considered “welfare,” as they ensure participation and commitment of communities to longer term, integrated sustainable community development and the protection of the rights and interests for people affected by leprosy and disabilities, and marginalised groups.

Projects are appraised for any specific welfare activities, as defined by the ANCP Manual. In the event of projects, activities, and budget line items identified as welfare, these are supported by TLMA funds only and are not included in RDE calculations.

3. Development and Religion

As defined in the ANCP 2023 Manual:

Religious activities are defined as supporting or promoting a particular religion, including activities undertaken with the intention of converting individuals or groups from one faith and/or denomination to another. Activities that build up religious structures (including infrastructure, training or organisational activities) are also ineligible for ANCP funding, unless those structures are specifically designed to provide non-denominational development outcomes.²

TLMA is a faith-based organisation whose work and actions are underpinned by a Bible-based belief system. As such, we seek to live out our Christian beliefs through our compassion and care, seeking to facilitate health, healing, and spiritual wholeness for people affected by leprosy and disability, irrespective of ethnicity, gender, age, sexuality, religion, political or other opinion, or other status. TLMA values all people as created in the image of God, with a God-given right to dignity and a fulfilled life.

TLMA (like DFAT and other institutional donors) recognises the value of partnering with faith-based organisations within developing communities, where a faith-based worldview is often predominant and impacts many aspects of community life. TLMA recognises that working with faith-based organisations provides opportunities to engage with existing grassroots institutions at the heart of community life, as well as opportunity to have a large geographical reach, and significant influence among community leadership, families and individuals.

TLMA may work with religious organisations, irrespective of their beliefs to raise awareness and educate the community about leprosy and disability. This will be done as part of a wider community development program with a focus on providing outcomes for people affected by leprosy and disability.

While some Christian activities – such as devotions for staff, retreat days, pastoral care for those in our hospitals, and counselling – are undertaken in our project work, they are done as an integral part of a faith-based organisation. Staff are under no compulsion to attend such activities. Appraisal of project activities is undertaken, and where specific relevant activities are outlined in project budgets (such as retreat days for staff), these items are funded by TLMA funds and not included in RDE calculations.

² ANCP Manual 2023, p. 19

4. Development and Partisan Politics

As defined in the ANCP 2023 Manual:

Political activities are defined as supporting a political party, candidate or organisation affiliated to a political party. Examples include:

- *NGO staff being involved in party political activities;*
- *using funds or resources to facilitate or support a specific political party, candidate, or party political organisation in a local, regional or general / national election;*
- *using funds or resources to facilitate or support independence or separatist movements;*
- *using funds or resources to facilitate or support a particular politician or faction to gain power within a government or within a political party structure.*

TLMA does not become involved in or fund any partisan political activities in its projects.

However, TLMA recognises that political processes are an important aspect of the development process. Therefore, TLMA seeks, where possible, to work with government bodies and agencies, irrespective of any political affiliation, to promote the cause of people affected by leprosy, disability and those who are marginalised. In many projects, TLMA works in participation with government staff, undertaking training programs and supervising the leprosy and disability work undertaken by them. However, this does not amount to or involve support for or promotion of a particular party or candidate.

In addition, TLMA upholds the rights of individuals to participate in political activities. TLMA also recognises that staff and volunteers can participate fully and constructively in political activities provided they are able to maintain a clear distinction between participating in such an activity and their association with TLMA. This participation cannot be deemed to threaten the security and reputation of the staff member/volunteer involved or TLMA.

5. Compliance

Partners implementing DFAT-funded projects sign a Funding Agreement, and included in this agreement is an agreement to:

...ensure that any government (DFAT) funds are not used for evangelistic, partisan political or welfare activities, in keeping with TLMA's obligation to the Australian Government.

Partners are also required to have a policy which reflects the obligations outlined in this TLMA Policy. Partners' policies and their implementation are reviewed during in-country visits as part of the Quality Assurance Review process.

In Australia, where TLMA fundraising programs are designed to benefit development and non-development activities, TLMA provides a choice where donors may contribute to either activity. This is as per TLMA's Public Engagement Policy.

As a signatory to ACFID, TLMA will comply with ACFID's Code of Conduct (revised June 2024), which stipulates that development initiatives will consistently show evidence of the separation of development and non-development activities. This will occur in programming, expenditure reporting, fundraising, advocacy campaigns and communications where donors can choose to contribute to either activity, and partners are aware of and comply with standards for non-development activity.

6. Policy Review

This Policy will be reviewed in 3 years.

Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Summary
5.0	10/12/2019	N Collard	New Draft created for next revision
5.1	30/10/2024	A Newmarch	Updated to align with ANCP Manual

Document Approval History

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1.0	11/08/2008	TLMA Board
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