CODE OF CONDUCT

# Susila Dharma International Association

A. PREAMBLE

The Susila Dharma International Association (SDIA) is an association made up of members, which are national Susila Dharma organizations and Susila Dharma projects around the world. In this document, “SDIA” refers to: SDIA as a legal organisation, its Board and executive office, and each individual member organization.

SDIA’s aims are to promote conditions of sustainable human development in which people are able to enjoy a full range of human rights, fulfil their needs free from poverty, and live in dignity.

A key purpose of SDIA is to become a respected international association of NGOs and encourage all members of the Association to observe the highest ethical standards in all their activities, including NGO good practices and observance of the SDIA Code of Conduct (‘the Code’).

The Code is a voluntary, self-regulatory code of good practice that aims to improve international development outcomes and increase stakeholder trust by enhancing the transparency and accountability of SDIA.

**Structure of this Code of Conduct**

The Code sets out standards in the three areas of accountability:

1. Programme Principles – related to the effectiveness in aid and development activities, human rights and working with partners.

2. Public engagement – related to ethical practices and transparency in marketing, fundraising and reporting.

3. Organisation – related to members’ governance, management, and financial controls.

SDIA (the legal entity) will provide assistance and guidance to members to support their compliance.

The Code of Conduct will adapt over time to meet the changing environment, the needs of SDIA members, stakeholders and emerging good practice from within the sector.

1. PROGRAMME PRINCIPLES

1.1 Accountability to primary stakeholders

SDIA is open to review and comment by partners and participants alike. In all instances those directly affected by aid and development activities are considered the primary stakeholders and their views afforded the highest priority.

1.2 Addressing gender inequalities

SDIA is committed to addressing the effect of gender inequalities and inequities as being fundamental to the attainment of human rights for all and the effectiveness of aid and development activity.

1.3 Non-development activity

Funds and other resources designated for the purpose of aid and development will be used only for those purposes and will not be used to promote a particular religious adherence, spiritual practice or to support a political party, or to promote a candidate or organization affiliated to a particular party.

1.4 Environmental sustainability

The aid and development activity of SDIA will aim to be informed by and implemented with an understanding of the environmental impact, if any, of their activities.

1.5 Mutual respect and support

The relationship between all constituent parts of SDIA and their programme partners will be characterised by mutual respect and by a commitment and openness to two-way learning and support.

1.6 Control of funds and resources

SDIA will make every reasonable effort to ensure that funds or resources disbursed to partners or third parties are applied lawfully, in accordance with the promise to the donor, for a proper purpose and with proper controls and risk management in place.

1.7 Human rights in aid and development

SDIA's aid and development activity will be informed by and implemented with an understanding of the human rights dimensions of the activity.

1.8 Rights of vulnerable and marginalised people

SDIA is committed to including and addressing the needs and rights of vulnerable and marginalised people in their aid and development activity. These groups may include women, children, people with a disability, Indigenous Peoples, minorities, refugees and displaced people, and others.

1.9 Protection of children

SDIA is committed to the safety and best interests of all children accessing their services and programmes or involved in campaigns, voluntary support, fundraising, work experience or employment and, in particular, to minimising the risk of abuse.

1.10 Speaking from evidence

Where SDIA takes on an advocacy role, either alone or in partnership with others, this will be done, to the largest extent possible, from an evidence-based position.

2. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

2.1 Transparency

The constituent parts of SDIA will use their annual reports as a key part of their accountability to all stakeholders.

2.2 Financial statements

The constituent parts of SDIA will publish financial statements in their annual reports.

2.3 Access to financial reports

SDIA will ensure that in any references to financial performance, stakeholders are made aware of their right to access financial reports.

2.4 Legal obligations in fundraising

SDIA will abide by applicable fundraising legislation.

2.5 Truthfulness

Fundraising solicitations by or on behalf of SDIA will be truthful, will accurately describe the organisations’ identity, purpose, programmes, and needs and will only make claims which the organisations can fulfil.

3. ORGANISATION

3.1 Public benefit

SDIA members and SDIA as a legal entity are not-for-profits formed voluntarily by a group of interested people for a common purpose that serves a public benefit and is not carried on for the profit or gain of individual members.

3.2 Legal requirements

It is the responsibility of the constituent parts of SDIA to ensure that they are meeting the range of legal obligations that are applicable to them in each jurisdiction in which they work.

3.3 Anti-fraud and anti-corruption

SDIA will address and minimise any risk of wrongdoing, corruption, fraud, bribery or other financial impropriety among its governing bodies, paid staff, contractors, and volunteers.

3.4 Conflicts of interest

The governing bodies of SDIA will ensure that their organisations manage any real or perceived conflicts of interest for their governing bodies, paid staff, and volunteers.

3.5 Governing instrument

The constituent parts of SDIA will have written documentation (called a governing instrument in the Code) that sets out the goals and purpose of each organization and defines how it operates (example, Constitution, By-Laws or other written documents).

3.6 Governing body

SDIA will have governing bodies that bear ultimate responsibility for all aspects of the organisation and are accountable to donors and to the communities served.

3.7 Internal financial controls

SDIA will maintain internal financial control procedures that minimise the risk of misuse of funds.

3.8 Compliance with this Code

SDIA will be compliant with this Code and will not engage in activities, which bring the Association into disrepute. Members will signal to the SDIA legal entity where they believe they or SDIA are not in compliance with the Code. The SDIA legal entity will seek to advise them on how they may become compliant and/or correct its own state of non-compliance.