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## 1.0 Background

Marie Stopes International Australia (“MSIA”), its entities and affiliates, are specialist sexual and reproductive health, non-governmental organisations (NGO) working in Australia, Asia and the Pacific to improve the sexual and reproductive health (SRH) of all people.

Our mission is **children by choice, not chance**.

When a woman is able to control when, or whether she has children, her opportunities for education, to work, or to spend time with the children she already has increases. There are more than 225 million women around the world who want to control their fertility, but don't have access to modern contraception. This policy defines the principles and objectives of MSIA's approach to support the development of women, men and children, through the provision of sexual and reproductive health, and family planning services.

## 2.0 Principles

MSIA and its entities are not-for-profit development NGO, with no political or religious affiliations. We work for the improvement of the health and quality of life of women, men and their families, helping them to exercise their right to enjoy reproductive health, and have children by choice, not by chance. MSIA and its entities are committed to saving lives through reproductive health care and do this through:

- Providing quality, confidential, client-centred reproductive and family planning health services
- Sustainable service provision
- Advocacy

We will not allow any of our funds to be used for partisan political or evangelical purposes.

MSIA provides women and men with reproductive choice, and are dedicated to delivering high-impact services that meet the need of the individual. To ensure that services remain client focused we will:

- Listen to what clients want, and fully understand their unique needs and challenges
- Shape our country programmes according to what our clients need
- Meet the needs of clients in the most convenient way possible
- Recognise that our clients come first
- Ensure equity, affordability, respect and non-judgemental service

## 3.0 Objectives

To ensure that MSIA, its entities and partners' development work complies with:

1. International Conference on Population and Development principles and commitments
2. Marie Stopes International development philosophies

## 3. DFAT and ACFID requirements

## 4.0 Definitions

<b>ACFID</b>	Australian Council for International Development (an independent association of non-government overseas aid and development agencies).
<b>DFAT</b>	Australian Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade.
<b>Evangelism</b>	The winning or revival of personal commitments to Christ; militant or crusading zeal (Webster Dictionary)
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation.
<b>Partisan</b>	A strong, often uncritical, supporter of a party, cause, or person (Oxford Dictionary).
<b>Sustainable development</b>	Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (ACFID Code of Conduct definition).
<b>Welfare</b>	<p>Welfare activities are care and maintenance activities, that aim to maintain people in a particular condition on a longer-term basis. Substantial and broad impact on social and economic conditions in the community is not normally expected from welfare programs. Welfare may be provided on 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• implemented independently of other sustainable community development activities;</li> <li>• include no strategy for integration into broader community development programs;</li> <li>• provided on an individual or family basis, rather than on a community basis, and are unconnected to emergency needs; and</li> <li>• implemented on a long-term basis with no clear exit strategy.</li> </ul>
<b>Aid and development</b>	Aid and development refers to activities undertaken in order to reduce poverty and address global justice issues. In the non-government organisation sector, this may occur through a range of engagements that includes community projects, emergency management, community education, advocacy, volunteer sending, provision of technical and professional services and resources, environmental protection and restoration, and promotion and protection of human rights.
<b>Non-aid and development policy</b>	Non-aid and development activity includes activities undertaken to promote a particular religious adherence or to support a particular party, candidate or organisation affiliated to a political party.

## 5.0 Policy

### 5.1 **MSIA, its entities and partners commit to respecting the sexual and reproductive health rights of local people, and those directly affected by development activities.**

MSIA, its entities and partners are committed to upholding internationally recognised human rights principles in all development activities. MSIA supports and advocates for the right to reproductive and sexual health for all, regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, indigeneity, disability, age, displacement, caste, gender, gender identity, sexuality, sexual orientation, poverty, class or socio-economic status.

Emphasis is placed on ensuring an appropriate focus on the rights and needs of vulnerable and marginalised people, including children and people with a disability. By designing and implementing projects for marginalised and vulnerable groups such as sex workers, unmarried youth, people with a disability, and men who have sex with men, who are often discriminated against in their own communities and country, MSIA and its entities take a proactive approach to this development policy to help ensure that the needs and rights of the communities in which we work are respected and upheld.

In recognition of the importance of protecting the safety and best interest of children, who are in contact with our development activities, MSIA has developed the MSIA Child Protection Safeguarding policy and procedures to address risk.

### 5.2 **MSIA, its entities and partners recognise the importance of non-discrimination and the incorporation of gender into development activities.**

Due to the often sensitive nature of reproductive health projects in many countries, it is critical that MSIA does not, and is in no way perceived to discriminate on any grounds.

Improving women's lives and opportunities through increased access to a range of family planning choices and sexual and reproductive health is implicit in our work. To achieve this, programs must incorporate gender issues, including engaging with men, and discussing the role of men in sexual and reproductive health. As an organisation, we expect this commitment to equity to underpin our own internal operations (as is reflected in our recruitment and team development policies). Further, our commitment to equity is reflected in project activities, which we design and implement directly and with our partners.

### 5.3 **MSIA, its entities and partners commit to pursuing sustainable development of our activities.**

Reproductive health and family planning are effective and efficient interventions that support sustainable development and are shown to impact the health and well-being of clients and their children.

MSIA endeavours to work in a sustainable way to ensure continuity of access to services, by building financially and operationally sustainable implementation partners, providing a mixture of fee and free service delivery that is appropriate to the context, and developing partnerships with governments and other health providers, to build local capacity in the countries in which we work.

We endeavour to engage clients and beneficiaries in the planning, implementation and evaluation stages of our development programs. We seek to work in partnerships with NGOs, governments and other relevant stakeholders to deliver programs that are both effective and efficient.

**5.4 MSIA, its entities and partners commit to promote environmental stewardship and sustainability.**

MSIA considers the environmental sustainability of our actions and seeks to ensure that our development activities are informed by, and implemented with, an understanding of their environmental impact.

MSIA and its entities are committed to improved environmental sustainability, by committing to continuously reducing direct and indirect environmental impacts, using the following principles: do no harm; access and manage environmental risks; transparency; and work with partners and local teams to harmonise environmental safeguards and improve environmental outcomes.

**5.5 MSIA, its entities and partners commit to applying a quality approach to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of our activities.**

MSIA values evidence-based decision making to improve programs. We strive to deliver and expand high-quality services and programs to millions of people through innovative and sustainable health service delivery models, so that we can improve access to equitable and efficient family planning, and safe abortion services (where appropriate).

Using evidence-informed decision making and transparent practices, we are committed to regular monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and research, to promote and further our mission, and document our public health impact. Our clients are at the centre of our work, and as such are integral to our metrics system. Their rights are addressed throughout the MSI results-based framework, which measures four key pillars: access, equity, quality and efficiency in reproductive health service delivery.

MSIA also maintains a focus on maintaining strong relationships with our partners, local nationals and organisations in the countries in which we work.

**5.6 MSIA, its entities and partners commit to building the capacity of local teams, and ensuring that local people, and those directly affected by our activities, are appropriately considered.**

MSIA and its entities believe that the best people to design and implement programs are nationals of the country concerned, and that our purposes and processes must consider and be shaped by the needs and rights of local people and those who are directly affected by our activities.

Consequently, as an organisation, we are strongly committed to the development of national capacity, working with national teams, and minimising expatriate inputs. We also emphasize institutional strengthening and capacity building in our projects and operations.

**5.7 MSIA, its entities and partners will not participate in or conduct welfare services or activities.**

MSIA does not participate in, nor use any funds to conduct welfare services or activities. MSI provides SRH education, information and services including contraception and safe abortion services (where legal). The nature of these services, their impact and approaches to service delivery contribute to long-term and broad social and economic change in the communities that we work. SRH education and demand generation activities produce long-term change

in the knowledge of individuals and their communities. Services provided directly by MSI are voluntary, preventative health services. MSI activity works to ensure that a suitable range of contraceptive methods are available including long-term and permanent methods which continue to provide benefits to individuals long after the service is received. MSI uses various approaches to service delivery in response to the context in which we operate and to ensure sustainability of service availability. Such approaches include fee for service, integration with government health services and health systems strengthening with private and public sector providers.

**5.8 MSIA, its entities and partners commit to undertaking activities without religious or political affiliations.**

MSIA, its entities and its partners have no religious affiliations and do not participate in, nor use any funds to support or conduct evangelistic activities.

MSIA and its partners have no political affiliations. MSIA has not in the past, nor will seek to be, engaged in or fund partisan political activities.

**6.0 Procedures**

The MSIA Program Support Team is in place to provide support to country program partners, and ensure that our programs comply with the above standards throughout all phases in the development program cycle.

Internal mechanisms, including appropriate checks and reviews, are in place to ensure development programs are delivered as agreed. These are documented in the Monitoring and Evaluation Policy. Team members, particularly those involved in supporting the development of proposals and funding decision-making, should be made aware of the above policies during their induction process, and should endeavour to apply these philosophies in their roles.

**7.0 Related Policies**

MSIA Gender Policy  
MSIA Disability Inclusion Policy  
MSIA Monitoring and Evaluation Policy