

VIDEA – Orphan and Vulnerable Children Education Policy

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines to ensure that the implementation of the VIDEA Orphan and Vulnerable Children Education Programme is in alignment with the VIDEA's values and our rights-based approach to development.

Intention:

This policy is partly intended to assist the Executive Director in making an appropriate judgment about whether or not any proposed programme is suited for support under the Orphan and Vulnerable Children Education Programme, and is partly intended to guide the operations of those programmes that exist under the umbrella of the Orphan and Vulnerable Children Education Programme.

Strategic Framework:

All work undertaken as part of the Orphan and Vulnerable Children Education programme must be consistent with VIDEA's rights-based approach to development, to VIDEA Values, must be compliant with VIDEA's gender policy, and the Canadian Council for International Development Code of Ethics, under which VIDEA operates.

Our Values

We Believe:

- a human rights framework should be central to development.
- men and women must be equal partners in development.
- our overseas partners are our equal partners in development.
- youth are critical agents of change.
- in the value of diversity and rights for all.
- the pursuance of peace and environmental stewardship are central constructs of development.
- in every person's equal right to food, clean water, shelter, healthcare, sustainable livelihood and education.
- global trade should be fair and sustainable.

A rights-based approach:

VIDEA defines a rights-based approach to development in the following way:

A rights-based approach to development (RBA) is a framework that integrates the norms, principles, standards and goals of the international human rights system into the plans and processes of development. It makes central to organisational operations, the link between access to human rights and the notions of history, power, and struggle that fundamentally

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impact a people's ability to access basic human rights. It seeks to analyse the inequalities that lie at the heart of development problems and redress discriminatory practices and unjust distributions of power that impede development progress. We believe that by helping people to identify duty bearers (usually local, national, regional or multi-lateral government bodies), and equipping people with the information and tools necessary to both understand, and to claim their human rights, that you empower people themselves, especially the most marginalised, to participate in policy formulation and hold accountable those who have a duty to act.

VIDEA recognises that poverty is about more than economic needs, and sustainable development has to address the more complex and fundamental causes of poverty and inequality such as discrimination, exploitation and the unequal distribution of power. In order to implement a right's based approach to development VIDEA recognizes the need to:

- Ensure that VIDEA programmes respond to the needs of local communities, are sensitive to local agreed cultures, and are guided by overseas partners;
- Ensure that participants in VIDEA programmes are recognized as the masters of their own development with whom we walk in solidarity;
- Create an understanding among donors and supporters to the role that human rights play in poverty and development, helping them to understand the complexity of the causes of, and solutions to, poverty by making a shift away from a simple needs-based approach in development thinking;
- Create an understanding that for VIDEA, international development is about the realization of universal rights that are owed, and not about the delivery of help or charity;

Education of Canadians:

The Orphan and Vulnerable Children Education Programme provides an opportunity for Canadians to grow in their awareness of global issues and understand how the denial of human rights impacts the poor in terms of access to services we often take for granted such as education, healthcare and clean water. In addition, it provides an opportunity for Canadians to develop a better understanding of how global inequities of power disproportionately affect those living in the global south, empowering Canadians to become stronger and more active citizens in the fight against poverty and injustice.

Sound Governance:

The Orphan and Education Programme must comply with CRA regulations that stipulate that the VIDEA Board of Directors, through the Executive Director, shall exercise "direction and control" over all programming, and that sponsorship programmes shall have clear criteria that demonstrate that sponsorship opportunities are awarded on a transparent and equitable basis. As a result decisions to sponsor shall:

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- Be guided by the overseas partner organization with decisions made by a gender-equal committee of local people;
- Be made on secular grounds;

Responsibility of children receiving support:

Children receiving support under the Orphan and Vulnerable Children Education Programme shall bear the following responsibilities:

Kindergarten to grade 12:

- To attend school regularly, or to identify to the overseas organization why they are unable to attend school, and work with them to identify and implement solutions;
- To do their best in school;

Tertiary and college/university level:

- To attend classes regularly, or to identify to the overseas organization why they are unable to attend classes, and work with them to identify and implement solutions;
- To do their best in their studies;
- To commit to help at least one other vulnerable child, in their home or other community, to gain access to education and realize the similar benefits to those that they have enjoyed;

Programme Values:

Operations carried out under the Orphan and Vulnerable Children programme shall:

- Take a rights-based approach to development;
- Not be presented as charity;
- Respond to needs as identified by the local community;
- Discourage feelings of dependency and indebtedness on the part of the OVC;
- Place an emphasis on helping donors to understand the complex root causes of poverty;
- Provide wider support to the community at large in the form of social and economic empowerment that will help people to advocate for government support for education;
- Work with vulnerable children as well as with orphans;
- Be secular;
- Aim to support college as well as primary/high school education;