



From choice, a world of possibilities

# Code of Good Governance

# Who we are

The International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) is a global service provider and a leading advocate of sexual and reproductive health and rights for all. We are a worldwide movement of national organizations working with and for communities and individuals.

IPPF works towards a world where women, men and young people everywhere have control over their own bodies, and therefore their destinies. A world where they are free to choose parenthood or not; free to decide how many children they will have and when; free to pursue healthy sexual lives without fear of unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. A world where gender or sexuality are no longer a source of inequality or stigma.

We will not retreat from doing everything we can to safeguard these important choices and rights for current and future generations.

# Foreword

As a global sexual and reproductive health and rights movement, IPPF is proud to have its roots in the local communities it strives to serve. In IPPF, it is the volunteers elected to the Federation's governing bodies that ensure this close link to reality on the ground.

This Code of Good Governance was developed by a Task Force set up to strengthen volunteering and governance in IPPF. The seven principles included in the Code represent good practice in governance and should be upheld and promoted by all individuals serving on IPPF's governing bodies. Good governance is not an end in itself, but is central to ensuring that we are in a position to pursue our mission not only today but also in the future and this requires strategic thinking, leadership, courage and care.

We are convinced that by fully applying these principles in practice, we will make our movement stronger and more effective. To govern well is not something you learn once and remember for always, it is an ongoing effort requiring constant attention. Adherence to the principles in the Code will help to strengthen the communities in which we work, and contribute to a stronger and more accountable civil society.

We do not believe we should be proud of this Code but proud of what we can achieve by using it well.

Jacqueline Sharpe  
IPPF President

Gill Greer  
IPPF Director General

# 1 The Governing Body ensures member integrity and collective responsibility

- It promotes and protects the organization's mission, values and reputation and works to enhance its public standing through all activities carried out by members on behalf of the organization.
- It acts and makes decisions in the collective interest of the organization it governs and shares group responsibility for these decisions. Its members do not act or make decisions according to their own individual interests, or in the interests of any other organization or cause they may be involved in or have an interest in.
- It has a code of conduct that enables its members to identify and declare actual or potential conflicts of interest and provides an agreed process for dealing with such conflicts.
- It does not allow members to derive benefit from their position beyond what is allowed by the law and the rules of the organization.
- It ensures that members when elected by a particular constituency (for example, by a Member Association to Regional Council, or by young people) act for the collective benefit of the whole not just for that individual constituency.

## 2 The Governing Body determines the organization's strategic direction and policies

- It sets out the organization's strategic direction so as to deliver its mission, goals and objectives. With the Executive Director, it makes certain that the organization's programmes, activities and services reflect its strategic priorities.
- It concentrates on strategic thinking and does not involve itself with day to day operational and management matters.
- It creates policies and monitors the organization's activities in all areas.

### 3 The Governing Body appoints and supports the Executive Director

- It is responsible for the recruitment, support, professional development, appraisal and remuneration of the Executive Director.
- It ensures, primarily through the Chair/President, that the duties and responsibilities of the Executive Director (which includes the right to appoint the organization's staff) are clearly set down, agreed and carried out.
- It acts in partnership with the Executive Director to achieve the organization's mission.

## 4 The Governing Body monitors and reviews the organization's performance

- It monitors and reviews implementation of the annual programme and budget by receiving timely and objective performance reports that concentrate on the strategic implications of programme and budget outcomes.
- It ensures that authority delegated to volunteers and staff is sufficient for purpose and subject to appropriate budgetary and other limits; and that the use of such delegated authority is monitored and reviewed.
- It periodically reviews the organization's governance structure and its costs to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness.
- It takes whatever steps are necessary to maintain the organization as an effective sexual and reproductive health and rights volunteer movement.

## 5 The Governing Body provides effective oversight of the organization's financial health

- It ensures that the organization is solvent and that its finances are managed ethically and according to the letter of the law.
- It identifies and regularly reviews the risks faced by the organization: it creates policies and takes action to manage the risks identified.
- It ensures that adequate insurance is provided to protect the organization against potential liabilities.
- It establishes the organization's system of internal control and regularly reviews its operation.
- It approves the budget, monitors spending and ensures that the organization's finances are managed in its best interests. It is responsible for the appointment of auditors and approves the audited annual accounts and financial statement.

## 6 The Governing Body is open, responsive and accountable

- It is open and accountable for its governance of the organization.
- It encourages and enables the engagement of service users and beneficiaries in the organization's planning and decision-making.
- It is accountable for the performance of the organization; for ensuring that financial obligations are met; for operating ethically and within the law and other legal requirements. Accountability for these cannot be delegated by Governing Body members but authority to achieve them can be delegated.
- It is able to show clearly how the organization contributes to the greater good of the society it serves.

## 7 The Governing Body ensures its own review and renewal

- It organizes its work to make the most effective and efficient use of the time, skills and knowledge of its members, and ensures that their capabilities are enhanced through development and training activities.
- It engages in regular self-assessment of its own performance and that of individual Governing Body members.
- It identifies and develops potential members in order to maintain and increase the diverse range of skills, experience and knowledge required.

The IPPF Code of Good Governance was developed by the IPPF Governance Task Force and builds on good practice from various sources including:

*"Good Governance: Code for the Voluntary and Community Sector", Governance Hub (an independent partnership of seven prominent organizations working to improve the quality of governance in the UK voluntary sector);*

*"The Good Governance Action Plan for Voluntary Organizations" and "Developing Trustee Boards", National Council for Voluntary Organizations (NCVO); and*

*"The Complete Guide to Good Governance in Organizations and Companies", Doug Matheson, Profile Books, 2004, Auckland, New Zealand.*

This Code was approved and adopted by IPPF Governing Council in November 2007

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