



Transparency and Accountability Policy

Policy Name:	Transparency and Accountability Policy
Source:	Oxfam Canada
Frequency of Revision	Every 3 years
Date of Last Revision	February 2019
Responsible for Revision:	Governance Committee
Date Document approved	October 25, 2015, February 24, 2019, amended
Approved By	Board of Directors

Purpose

The Transparency and Accountability Policy provides transparency about governance, decision making and accountability within Oxfam Canada. The policy outlines the division of responsibilities between the Board and the Executive Director, and establishes a framework that includes any thresholds of authority for decision-making roles, responsibilities and accountability within the organization.

This policy is a part of a suite of internal accountability policies¹ and external codes² that frame OCA commitment to accountability and good governance, financial management, program delivery, fundraising, communications, volunteer engagement and human resources.

Scope

This policy applies primarily to Oxfam Canada's Board of Directors, Executive Director and Management Team, given the authority of their decision-making and impact of their actions on the organization.

Principles

- Oxfam Canada is committed to assuring transparency and accountability in relation to governance and decision making.
- We strive to be accountable to all our stakeholders including our partners, funders, members, supporters and allies.
- We act as part of the Oxfam confederation and are accountable to the Constitution, Rules and Procedures and Code of Conduct for the Oxfam Confederation as a whole.

Policy Statement

¹ Annex 1 – Internal Accountability Policies

² Annex 2 – External Codes of Conduct

The Board of Directors is accountable to the mission and to members, and operates under procedures that reflect good practice and specific duties of care, loyalty and obedience to the law. The Board is responsible for:

- approval and oversight of the strategic plan,
- approval of annual operational plans and oversight of financial health and management
- oversight of risk management
- oversight of the Executive Director and succession planning

The Executive Director is accountable to the Board for the management and direction of the organization and its staff. The Executive Director attends Board meetings, but does not have a vote.

As part of the Executive Directors Report at every face-to-face Board meeting, an Integrity Report will be presented. This report will list all allegations of financial and sexual misconduct in countries where Oxfam Canada works. This report will include country, date, risk, status and summary of outcome.

Oxfam Canada maintains a Responsibility Framework (See Appendix) that specifies which entity within the organization has responsibility for each activity conducted, including any thresholds of or limits to that entity's authority.

Oxfam Canada further strengthens transparency and accountability by the following means:

a) Transparency of board members and management staff

Oxfam Canada will publish the names and responsibilities of the Board and the management team on its web site and in the Annual Report. Personal contact details will not be published. Communication from the public or stakeholders will be channelled as appropriate by staff.

b) Accountability of Board to members

The Board is elected by Oxfam Canada members through elections held every three years. Members are invited to participate in the Annual General Meeting and Special General Meetings.

Amendments to the by-law require ratification by two-thirds of members voting at a General Meeting and the Rules and Procedures provide that members will be consulted about changes that relate to members' rights and responsibilities.

A member may attend a meeting of the Board and may request that an item be considered by the Board.

c) Board decision making (See also By-law, Rules and Procedures, Oxfam International Code of Conduct and Oxfam International Governance Standards)

The Board is structured to assure accountability to the mission and to members and operates under procedures that reflect good practice. No member of the Board may be related to the Executive Director and no member of the Board may be related to other members of the Board.

Board Officers including the Chair are elected by the Board. The Board meets face-to-face twice annually and more often by teleconference, the internet or email as required.

Normal decisions of the Board require the approval of a majority of those voting. Changes to the By-law require the support of two-thirds of Board members voting, after due notice, and ratification by two-thirds of members voting at a General Meeting.

Responsibility for the Transparency and Accountability Policy

The Board is responsible for developing, approving, monitoring, and revising the Transparency and Accountability Policy. The Board holds the Executive Director accountable for compliance.

Annex 1

Internal Accountability Policies

Disclosure of Public Information (2013)
Complaints Policy (2013)
Whistle-Blower Protection (2013)
Prohibition of Bribery and Corruption (2013)
Conflict of Interest (2016)
Codes of Conduct for Board (2013)
Codes of Conduct for Members (2013)
Privacy Policy

Annex 2

External Codes of Conduct

Oxfam International Code of Conduct

Oxfam International Governance Standards

CCIC Code of Ethics

Imagine Canada Standards Program

Association for Fundraising Professionals Code of Ethics

Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement

Red Cross Red Crescent and NGO Movement Code of Conduct

Sphere Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response

INGO Accountability Charter