

NEPAL

Code of Conduct for Partnerships in Education

I. Preamble

1. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to provide a framework of shared objectives and both guiding and operational principles for the management of partnerships between His Majesty's Government of Nepal (HMG/N) and International Development Partners - bilaterals, multilaterals and International Non Government Organizations - in Nepal's education sector. The Code is inclusive, recognizing the variety of modalities through which different Partners support the HMG/N's goals, objectives, policies and programs, and management and administrative procedures. The Code is guided by HMG/N's Foreign Aid Policy 2002 and informed by the Rome Declaration on Donor Harmonization

II. Participation

2. While participation is voluntary and open, HMG/N encourages prospective external partners to accept and adhere to the Code of Conduct. This implies that they will all a) share Nepal's goals and objectives for education, b) contribute financial, technical or service delivery support to those goals and objectives, and c) have the status of external Partners. For all Partners, the National Plan of Action for Education For All (EFA) 2001-2015, the EFA Core Document 2004/09, will constitute the main vision, objectives and strategies to which they subscribe. It is understood that while the Code of Conduct is neither legally binding nor enforceable, Partners will subscribe to both guiding and operational principles in good faith

III. Shared goals and objectives

3. HMG/N and Partners are mutually committed to improving the equity, quality and efficiency of education in Nepal. As contributors to the Government program and priorities, partners also share responsibility for achieving results in education development under the ownership and leadership of the HMG/N. Specifically, they share Nepal's EFA objectives, which are consonant with those of the Dakar Framework for Action, and also Nepal's strategies to achieve the Millenium Development Goals for education. Government also recognizes and endorses, through multilateral and bilateral agreements, the goals and objectives that guide the work of Partners.

IV. Guiding Principles

4. Partners to the Code agree to the following guiding principles:
- a) To ensure the highest possible degree of consistency in harmonization of financial management, implementation, monitoring and evaluation procedures with Government and each other, to increase efficiency and knowledge sharing among all partners.
 - b) To make every effort to use, and to strengthen, HMG/N policy, planning, financing, management and monitoring and evaluation procedures in developing and providing support.
 - c) To participate, to the extent possible, in joint missions and reviews, including those for monitoring and supervision, in order to minimise the need for separate missions and to increase efficiency and knowledge sharing among Partners and

with Government, and to reduce the burden of transactions at the central, district and community levels.

- d) To collaborate among themselves and with HMG/N to ensure that the particular competencies of each Partner are identified and used to the best extent, with the possibility that, at the request of Government, principal responsibility for a given technical area may be delegated to a given Partner.
 - e) To plan jointly with development partners to the extent possible all technical inputs with HMG/N, at national and local levels, to ensure direct linkages to Government policies, programmes, plans and institutions.
5. To ensure the effectiveness of the Code of Conduct, the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) agrees to further strengthen leadership of partnerships by:
- a) Leading the development partner group on education, and chairing meetings and reviews according to the agreed schedule of the group.
 - b) Ensuring timely and transparent sharing of information with Development Partners on implementation effectiveness, including any special circumstances that may affect the pace or quality of implementation of education programs.
 - c) Strengthening the staffing and funding of the Foreign Aid Coordination Section (FACS) of the MOES to facilitate enhanced policy dialogue with Partners as well as to achieve timely and efficient coordination of Partners' contributions to Government programs
 - d) In consultation with Development Partners, preparing and making publicly available general principles and procedures for domestic development partners entering into partnership with Government agencies at all levels.
 - e) Maximising the coverage and efficiency of the education program, it is recommended that a robust process to review, assess and scale up best practises - other stakeholders will play an important role in this process.
 - f) Identifying the key policy and program documents of HMG/N that guide Government's work in any part of education, or in any geographic area of Nepal, and providing these documents to Partners.

IV. Operational Principles

6. **Coordination.** All Development Partners will be members of the Development Partner Working Group on Education (Working Group for short) through their local representation. The Working Group will be the forum for all partners to discuss education policies, strategies and implementation issues to be taken up with the HMG/N/MOES. The MOES will lead in the facilitation, coordination and harmonization of the development partners and, in this respect, will chair the meetings.

7. Terms of Reference for joint missions will be developed between MOES and Partners, and mission briefings for the Working Group will be held at the request of MOES whenever feasible.

8. The Working Group will appoint a Donor Contact Point on a rotational basis (timing to be agreed), usually a Kathmandu based staff member of a Development Partner. The initial contact point will be chosen and the rotation established by consensus once this Code of Conduct has been endorsed by all Partners. The contact points will liaise between the development partners

and the HMG/N/MOES. The main entry point to the MOES for the Donor Contact Point will be the Foreign Aid Coordination Section (FACS).

9. **Harmonization of monitoring and other procedures.** Partners are fully committed to harmonization with Government's objectives, strategies and programmes for education in Nepal, and national efforts to improve harmonization. As a priority, Partners commit to work closely with MOES, DOE, MOF, NPC and other appropriate Ministries and agencies to strengthen the common use of monitoring indicators for further integrating and coordinating the wide variety of resources and services that Partners provide.

10. **Mission planning and scheduling.** FACS and the Working Group will prepare a preliminary schedule of missions for the financial year. It is recognized that deviations from the schedule may occur. Whenever possible and feasible missions will have joint participation of all partners

11. **Review meetings.** MOES will organize annual program and progress review meetings in April of each year with a smaller technical consultation in December. A general meeting focused on overall progress in education programs will involve all Partners. Other meetings on issues and themes will require a more selective participation of Partners. The composition and purpose of such meetings will be decided at the discretion of MOES and the Working Group. Annual Progress Reports will be the basis for the general meeting. . Relevant documentation will be made available to the Partners, and publicly available on the MOES website as appropriate. The minutes and records of both general and specialized meetings will be made available to all Partners.

12. **Technical assistance and direct support.** Technical assistance for programme support through both long and short-term provisions, and direct financial and technical support for the implementation of education development activities, will be coordinated with all development partners, to the extent possible, under the leadership of the MOES to link directly to national programs and activities at all levels. Technical assistance will be governed by MOES' TA coordination guidelines and framework, based on the principles of decentralization. This framework will be informed by the strategic priorities of the HMG/N as well as the HRD plan for capacity development.

13. **Review of Code of Conduct:** The code of conduct will be reviewed based on implementation experiences in the education sector.