



April 2020

Covid-19 Response and Rebuilding Principles

Chapeau

In these unprecedented times, governments are called to act rapidly to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic. Given that a quick response is urgently required to “flatten the curve” (slow the spread of the disease), policy-makers find themselves moving swiftly to make decisions that will have long-term implications across the globe. To ensure their choices and decisions respect and support human rights and national accountability systems designed to have participatory processes, it is critical that the policymakers are guided by a common set of principles.

This set of Principles, agreed by a wide sector of civil society, lay out the key areas policy-makers and decision-makers, at all levels of government, in corporations, and in multilateral organisations must consider at all stages of their response to COVID-19.

We, the undersigned, call on governments, authorities and all those making critical decisions everywhere, to heed these 8 principles:

Principles

- 1) **People First** – People’s safety and well-being comes first and must be at the core of any response to the crisis.
- 2) **Protect Human Rights** – Protect, safeguard, respect and promote the human rights of all affected directly or indirectly by the pandemic, paying particular attention to women and girls and the most vulnerable without discrimination. Enforcement of new laws should not involve violence or repression.
- 3) **Universal** – All people must be able to access medical, material and financial support during the crisis. Equal access to testing, medical care, research and economic support, without costs, must be freely available to every level of society across the globe, based on need.
- 4) **Proportionate** – Ensure that all measures enacted are taken to deal with the crisis and its effects – they must not evolve or target objectives not related to the virus. All measures must be time-bound and reviewed at set intervals, to determine their continuing validity, in the light of human rights.

- 5) **Accountable** –Provide people at all levels of society with safe and dedicated accountability mechanisms, and to monitor and verify all stages of the COVID-19 response and implementation plan. Where possible, consult broadly to ensure the views of all are heard and decisions are shared in a transparent manner and to keep all sectors of society well informed.
- 6) **Global** – While domestic priorities are prominent, COVID-19 is a global crisis and support must be given to all countries in need. Global solidarity, cooperation, and resource-sharing is a priority for defeating the pandemic and minimizing its effects.
- 7) **Future-focused** – Short, medium and long-term measures, taken now, should contribute to building a more just, resilient and sustainable economy, health systems and society and not worsen the climate crisis nor should they divert funds from other critical programmes. Policies must look to the future and ensure the measures taken fundamentally transform the structural inequalities, including gender inequality, that caused these disproportionate impacts on women, girls, marginalized and vulnerable people.
- 8) **Do No Harm** – all policy-makers and decision-makers must be aware and attentive to the impact of their measures on all of society, and must seek consistently to do no harm, whether by acts of commission or omission, and be observant to both direct and indirect consequences of actions taken or proposed.

In addition to these Principles, the COVID-19 Advocacy Coordination Hub will be producing a Covid-19 Response Toolkit setting out detailed recommendations for policymakers and decision makers to draw on when implementing their overall response to the virus, domestically and internationally, in the short-term and the long-term.

We are all partners in this extraordinary response to a devastating disease and we will work in partnership with all stakeholders and collaborate to ensure we overcome this threat.

These Principles have been endorsed by the following 71 organisations and 6 individuals:

Organisation

- Action against AIDS Germany
- ACTION Global Health Advocacy Partnership
- ADRA Deutschland e.V.
- Africa Japan Forum
- AIDE ET ACTION
- Alliance for Development and Population Services [ADEPS]
- AMERICAS TB COALITION
- Amnesty International
- APPUI SOLIDAIRE POUR LE RENFORCEMENT DE L AIDE AU DEVELOPPEMENT (NGO ASRAD)
- Asia-Pacific Human Rights Information Center
- Association des Femmes de l'Europe Méridionale (AFEM)

- Association of German Development and Humanitarian Aid Non-Governmental Organisations (VENRO)
- Austrian Institute for Health Technology Assessment (AIHTA)
- Bread for the World
- CARE International
- Caribbean Vulnerable Communities
- Center for Democratic Education
- Center for Human Rights and Environment
- Centre for Adolescents and Women's Health Initiative (CAWHI), Ghana
- Children Believe
- CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation
- Coalition Education
- Coalition of African Lesbians
- Community Working Group on Health (CWGH) - Zimbabwe
- Fondation Joseph The Worker/ Structure Lazarienne
- Global Campaign for Education
- Global Citizen
- Global Fund Advocates Network (GFAN)
- Global Health Advocates France
- Global Health Council
- Global Network of Sex Work Projects (NSWP)
- Greenpeace
- Health Reform Foundation of Nigeria (HERFON)
- HelpAge Deutschland
- International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN)
- Japan Civil Society Network on SDGs
- Japanese Organization for International Cooperation in Family Planning (JOICFP)
- Jubilee USA Network
- Karapatan Alliance Philippines
- Kenya AIDS NGOs Consortium (KANCO)
- Kindernothilfe e.V., Germany
- Kindernothilfe e.V., Germany
- Malala Fund
- Mercy Corps
- Mesoamerican Initiative for Women Human Rights Defenders (IM-Defensoras)
- MPact Global Action for Gay Men's Health & Rights
- ONE
- Pakistan Coalition for Education
- Plan International
- Results Canada
- RESULTS International Australia

- RESULTS UK
- SeeChange Initiative
- Send My Friend to School (GCE UK)
- Sense International
- Solidarité Laïque
- Soroptimist International Great Britain & Ireland
- STOPAIDS
- Success Capital Organisation
- TERRAM PACIS
- Treatment Action Group
- Uhuru Community Development Project (UCDP)
- Union of Palestinian Women's Committees
- Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights
- What World Strategies
- Women at the Table
- Women Deliver
- World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)
- World Vision Deutschland e.V.
- Yolse, Santé Publique et Innovation
- Youth Engage

Individual

- Robyn Christine Waite
- Wim Vandavelde
- Tasnia Ahmed
- Rachel Kiddell-Monroe
- Dumiso Gatsha
- Romina Picolotti, President

For more information on the Principles, please contact Kel Currah info@whatworldstrategies.com or go to www.thesherpatimes.com/principles