
The C.O.R.E. Foundation

Policies and Procedures Manual

April 2010



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

The C.O.R.E. Foundation

Our mission is:

To compassionately and efficiently respond to humanitarian needs;

To engage and empower communities worldwide;

To create opportunities for sustainable futures, while promoting equality, respect, unity and peace throughout Canada and around the world.

I. PROJECTS

A potential project can be submitted to the board with a project proposal. The proposal shall include:

1. Background of community where project will take place
2. Objectives and benefits of proposed project (education, infrastructure, environmental impact assessment)
3. Target group (community, cooperative, group of women, etc)
4. Dates (for fundraising, developing and implementing project)
5. Budget (including travel, materials, trainers, etc)
6. Location
7. Human resources (volunteers in Canada, abroad and members of the community involved). C.O.R.E. requires that the target group/local community be involved, engaged and active participants in projects, to the best of their abilities (whether by donating time, resources, efforts or support to C.O.R.E. workers while on-site). The contribution of the target group/local community must be included in the project proposal.
8. It is important to know if the proposal is based on previous work in the community and also to specify how it can help to develop other projects in the future.
9. It must also include the name and contact information of the proposed project coordinator, who will be responsible for planning, budgeting, fundraising and implementing the project.
10. Project classification

Project classification:

1. **Short term projects**
 - i. Specific activities
 - ii. Limited time frame (has a beginning and end but continuous monitoring)
 - iii. Group of people or community
 - iv. Has a defined budget
2. **Permanent programs**
 - i. Can include more than one short-term project
 - ii. There is a permanent presence of C.O.R.E. in the community or country
 - iii. Works with different groups or communities
 - iv. Has an administration budget

Activities that can be considered for projects:

Inter alia: education, health, gender, management, production, economic development, micro lending and infrastructure; however, all projects must be within the scope of C.O.R.E.'s objectives, which are:

1. To improve the quality of drinking water in developing nations and in Canada by conducting water filtration programs.
2. To relieve poverty in developing nations and in Canada by providing basic amenities to the poor.
3. To provide necessities of life to victims of disasters.
4. To advance education by providing scholarships, bursaries and prizes for scholastic achievement.
5. To advance education by providing computer equipment and corresponding computer training courses to students and the general public in developing nations.
6. To advance education by providing books, equipment and educational aids to public schools in developing nations and in Canada.
7. To provide eye exams and eye glasses for persons with visual impairment.

It is important to consider an educational training component or capacity building in each project when planning a second phase.

II. PROJECT COORDINATORS

Each project is lead by a Project Coordinator (see **Appendix A** for volunteer description of Project Coordinator), who does not need to be a C.O.R.E. board member. If the project coordinator is not a board member, a board sub-committee will provide training, support and supervision to the project coordinator. The project coordinator will be given a clear mandate to manage all parts of the project; however, must respect the structure and responsibilities of the board of directors; provide the board with informed assessments as a basis for policy decision making; and, uphold and implement policies adopted by the board of directors.

Relationship between C.O.R.E. and the project coordinators:

- The project coordinator is considered a volunteer, and will not be remunerated for services. The project coordinator will receive acknowledgement on the website, as well as a reference letter and reference support, if requested.
- One project can have a group of volunteers running it, but it is required to have a designated volunteer to liaise with the C.O.R.E. board.
- The project coordinator organizes and manages activities for fundraising and implementing his/her project.
- C.O.R.E. board members may be a part of the on-site teams that implement the projects.

Supervision & support

C.O.R.E. board members will provide support to project coordinators in the following areas:

- Activities, dates, budgets
- Marketing and fundraising
- Project updates and information will be posted on the website
- Tax receipts will be available for all donations received over \$20
- Project updates and information will be published in the newsletter
- Contacts and assistance as available and required

III. FUNDRAISING

The project budget is to be met with fundraising activities and donations. The board will advise and support the project coordinator in fundraising initiatives. The board must authorize all fundraising activities in advance. The fundraising budget can include travel expenses for volunteers, but the travel expenses must adhere to the travel and expense policies.

IV. VOLUNTEERS

Project coordinators may recruit volunteers as required. The project coordinator is responsible for the volunteers, and their adherence to the ethics, travel, expense and communications policies. Anyone who wishes to volunteer for C.O.R.E. internationally must complete an application form (see **Appendix B** for volunteer application form), be interviewed by the board and be authorized by the board to travel for C.O.R.E. business. Volunteers will not be remunerated for their services. Volunteers must agree to the ethics, travel, expenses and communication policies.

V. DONATIONS

Donations earmarked for a particular project will be given to that project; however, when more contributions than needed are received for a given project, C.O.R.E. will apply these funds towards similar pressing needs.

C.O.R.E.'s online donations are currently handled via the non-profit organization CanadaHelps. Canadahelps.org deducts 3.9% of every donation for their administration costs. C.O.R.E. will deduct an additional 1.1% of every donation made via canadahelps.org for our administration costs, or to a total maximum of 5% from each donation.

For all donations via cash, cheque or money order, C.O.R.E. will deduct 5% for administration purposes.

All bank statements are available upon request for transparency purposes, and C.O.R.E.'s financial audits are conducted by external third party firms.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS

The purpose of the communications policy is to provide clear guidelines on C.O.R.E.'s internal and external communications.

1. All external communications, whether to the media, online, newsletters, etc. must be handled by the board, or a person authorized by the board.
2. The project coordinator and the board (or a board sub-committee) must maintain regular, formal contact; ideally they should meet for discussions (or phone, email, or video conference) every two weeks. More regular contact is encouraged, especially when in the planning phases of fundraising events or project implementation.
3. Formal communication between the project coordinator and the board must include an agenda for meetings, minutes of meetings, and a list of action items for the project coordinator and board.

VII. ETHICS

The C.O.R.E. Foundation's purpose for this ethics policy is to establish a culture of openness, trust and integrity in all of its practices. Effective ethics is a team effort involving the participation and support of every C.O.R.E. board member and volunteer. All board members and volunteers should familiarize themselves with the following ethics guidelines.

1. C.O.R.E. board members must set a prime example of honesty and integrity, and the board has an open door policy to welcome suggestions and concerns from all involved in C.O.R.E. projects or programs.
2. C.O.R.E. expects of its board members and volunteers:
 - a. To demonstrate the highest standards of personal integrity, truthfulness, honesty, and fortitude in all C.O.R.E. related activities in order to inspire confidence and trust in such activities.
 - b. To strive for personal and professional excellence and encourage the professional developments of others.
 - c. To accept as a personal duty the responsibility to keep up to date on emerging issues and to conduct themselves with professional competence, fairness, impartiality, efficiency, and effectiveness.
 - d. To conduct organizational and operational duties with positive leadership exemplified by open communication, creativity, dedication, and compassion.
 - e. To serve with respect, concern, courtesy, and responsiveness in carrying out C.O.R.E.'s mission.
3. C.O.R.E. will not tolerate harassment or discrimination, whether based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, religion, marital or family status, disability or size. C.O.R.E. takes sexual harassment seriously, and will take quick action to investigate the situation, and take disciplinary action as necessary.
4. At all times, the intent and appearance of unethical or practices must be avoided, as well as any act that may compromise the reputation of C.O.R.E. or of any of its representatives.

5. C.O.R.E. will not permit impropriety at any time and will act ethically and responsibly in accordance with laws.

Any infractions of this code of ethics will not be tolerated and C.O.R.E. will act quickly in correcting the issue if the ethical code is broken. Anyone found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action.

VIII. REMUNERATION

Neither board members or volunteers receive remuneration for any work done.

IX. TRAVEL AND EXPENSES

In order to fulfill C.O.R.E.'s mission, board members and volunteers may be required to travel or incur other expenses. The purpose of this travel and expense policy is to ensure that (a) adequate cost controls are in place, (b) travel and other expenditures are appropriate, and (c) to provide a uniform and consistent approach for the timely reimbursement of authorized expenses incurred. It is the policy of C.O.R.E. to reimburse only reasonable and necessary expenses actually incurred while conducting C.O.R.E. business.

When incurring business expenses, C.O.R.E. expects board members and volunteers:

- a. To exercise discretion and good business judgment with respect to those expenses.
- b. To be cost conscious and spend funds carefully and judiciously.
- c. To report expenses, supported by receipts, as they were actually spent.

Expense Report

Expenses will not be reimbursed unless the individual requesting reimbursement submits a written Expense Report. The Expense Report shall be submitted monthly or within two weeks of the completion of travel. If travel expense reimbursement is requested, it must include:

- The individual's name
- The date, origin, destination and purpose of the trip, including a description of each organization-related activity during the trip.
- The name and affiliation of all people for whom expenses are claimed (i.e., people on whom money is spent (e.g., gifts, meals) in order to conduct C.O.R.E.'s business).
- An itemized list of all expenses with supporting receipts.

Receipts

Receipts are required for all expenditures billed directly to C.O.R.E. such as airfare. No expense will be reimbursed unless the individual requesting reimbursement submits with the Expense Report written receipts from each vendor showing the vendor's name, a description of the services provided (if not otherwise obvious), the date, and the total expenses, including tips (if applicable). A credit card receipt or statement may be used to document the vendor and date of an expense, provided other required details of the expenditure are fully documented.

General Travel Requirements

Necessity of Travel. In determining the reasonableness and necessity of travel expenses, the board shall consider the ways in which C.O.R.E. will benefit from the travel and weigh those benefits against the anticipated costs of the travel. The same considerations shall be taken into account in deciding whether the benefits to C.O.R.E. outweigh the costs. Less expensive alternatives, such as participation by telephone or video conferencing, or the availability of local programs or training opportunities, shall be considered.

Personal and Spousal Travel Expenses. With advance approval from the board, individuals traveling on behalf of C.O.R.E. may incorporate personal travel or business with their trips; however, the board and volunteers shall not arrange C.O.R.E. travel at a time that is less advantageous to C.O.R.E. or involving greater expenses to C.O.R.E. in order to accommodate personal travel plans. Any additional expenses incurred as a result of personal travel, including but not limited to extra hotel nights, additional stopovers, meals or transportation, are the sole responsibility of the individual and will not be reimbursed by C.O.R.E.. Expenses associated with travel of an individual's spouse, family or friends will not be reimbursed by C.O.R.E..

Insurance. Everyone travelling outside of Canada on C.O.R.E. business must obtain adequate travel insurance. The cost of travel insurance is the responsibility of the person travelling.

Air Travel

General. Air travel reservations should be made as far in advance as possible in order to take advantage of reduced fares. Charter airlines and budget airlines also provide options for finding the most economical tickets.

Frequent Flyer Miles and Compensation for Denied Boarding. While traveling on behalf of C.O.R.E., board and volunteers may accept and retain frequent flyer miles and compensation for denied boarding for their personal use. Individuals may not deliberately patronize a single airline to accumulate frequent flyer miles, if less expensive comparable tickets are available on another airline.

Lodging, meals and ground transportation

While working on a project, we endeavor to support and learn from the local communities in which we work. In an effort to build relationships with these communities, we encourage those working on a C.O.R.E. project to seek lodging and meals within the community. Furthermore, we encourage C.O.R.E. board and volunteers to use local transportation, as the community members do, although judgments based on expenses and safety shall be considered. Board members and volunteers can fundraise to cover lodging and meals. A maximum per diem will be decided by the board, based on in-country costs.

Parking/Tolls

Parking and toll expenses incurred while traveling on C.O.R.E. business will be reimbursed. The costs of parking tickets, fines, car washes, etc. will not be reimbursed. On-airport parking is permitted for short business trips. For extended trips, off-airport facilities should be used.

Non-reimbursable Expenditures

C.O.R.E. maintains a strict policy that expenses in any category that could be perceived as lavish or excessive will not be reimbursed. Expenses that are not reimbursable include, but are not limited to:

- Travel insurance (required)
- First class tickets or upgrades
- Movies, liquor, or bar costs
- Clothing purchases
- Business conferences and entertainment which are not approved by C.O.R.E. board members
- Toiletry articles
- Expenses for spouses, friends, or relatives. If a spouse, friend or relative accompanies a board member or volunteer, they are responsible for determining any added cost for double occupancy and related expenses and to make the appropriate adjustment in the reimbursement request.

X. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Board members and volunteers are obligated to always act in the best interest of C.O.R.E.. This obligation requires that any volunteer or board member, in the performance of C.O.R.E. duties, seek only the furtherance of C.O.R.E.'s mission. At all times, board members and volunteers are prohibited from using their job title, the foundation's name or property, for private profit or benefit.

Board members and volunteers are required to disclose any personal connection or family ties they may have with other board members, volunteers or individuals in the communities in which we either work or a project or program is being proposed.

Board members and volunteers of C.O.R.E. should neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors/vendors. This is not intended to preclude bona-fide Agency fundraising activities.

No board member or volunteer shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a purchase or contract with a vendor where, to his/her knowledge, any of the following has a financial or personal interest in the purchase or contract:

- a. The board member or volunteer;
- b. Any member of their immediate family;
- c. His/her partner, friend or acquaintance;
- d. An organization in which any of the above is an officer, director, or employee;
- e. A person or organization with whom any of the above individuals is negotiating or has any arrangement concerning prospective employment.

Disclosure. Any possible conflict of interest shall be disclosed by the person or persons concerned.

Board action. When a conflict of interest is relevant to a matter requiring action by the Board of Directors, the interested person(s) shall call it to the attention of the Board and said person(s) shall not vote on the matter. In addition, the person(s) shall not participate in the final deliberation or decision regarding the matter under consideration and shall retire from the room during the vote by the Board. When there is a doubt as to whether a conflict exists, the matter shall be resolved by vote of the Board, excluding the person(s) concerning whose situation the doubt has arisen.

Record of conflict. The official minutes of the Board of Directors shall reflect that the conflict of interest was disclosed and the interested person(s) was (were) not present during the final discussion or vote and did not vote on the matter.

PROJECT COORDINATOR

Responsibilities:

- Coordinate all aspects of the project including administration, planning, development and implementation.
- Conduct project evaluations and continuous monitoring.
- Oversee project goals and objectives are being met.
- Lead and support an action team of volunteers to implement the project.
- Strengthen partnerships with community leaders, associations and governmental institutions.
- Lead funding initiatives as approved by the Board.
- Write project proposals and reports as required.
- Ensure project is carried out according to requirements.
- Adhere to all relevant Policies, Procedures and Standards of Practice.
- Report directly to the Chair of Project & Programs Committee on a regular basis.
- Other duties as may be required.

Requirements:

- Enthusiasm for community and sustainable development work.
- Excellent interpersonal, leadership and organizational skills.
- Highly motivated and team oriented.
- Cross cultural sensitivity.

APPENDIX B

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with C.O.R.E.! Volunteerism is the basis of the C.O.R.E. Foundation and your contribution is highly valued.

Our mission statement is:

To compassionately and efficiently respond to humanitarian needs;

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As a volunteer with the C.O.R.E. Foundation, I understand that compliance with all of the requirements below are mandatory. Sending this form indicates your understanding and agreement with the following terms:

- The references I listed may be contacted by telephone or email.
- I understand that C.O.R.E. has my permission to use my name and photographs of me to promote the organization.
- I will inform a C.O.R.E. Project Coordinator of any previous injuries that may affect my ability to safely complete volunteer tasks, including lifting.
- I understand I may not initiate or engage in any media/public event pertaining to C.O.R.E. without the approval of the C.O.R.E. board of directors.
- I understand that I have the right to submit a grievance to the C.O.R.E. board of directors should I have concerns with the impact of the project on the target communities or if I have concerns regarding any part of the project and Project Coordinator.
- I will not abuse, neglect, exploit, coerce, manipulate, or retaliate against any member of the target community.
- I understand that I am expected to report any incident, action or circumstance, which I may become aware of, that presents a threat, endangerment, or poses a current or future impact to the target community, to a board member, or a Project Coordinator. I understand that it is especially important to inform the Project Coordinator in the case of a medical emergency.
- I understand that a police check may be required before I can volunteer internationally, or volunteer within Canada working with vulnerable populations such as children or the elderly.
- I understand that everyone, both involved with C.O.R.E. and in the target communities, are to be treated with dignity, respect and consideration and are not to be discriminated against based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, religion, marital or family status, disability or size.
- I understand that the terms listed above are not all-inclusive and may be updated, as needed.

All personal information will be held in strict confidentiality.

Name:

Volunteer position being applied for:

Email:

Telephone:

Mailing Address:

Permanent Address:

Emergency contact (name, relationship to you, phone number and email):

Languages spoken (conversational, advanced, fluent):

Have you ever been convicted of a crime for which you have not been pardoned in Canada or abroad? If yes, explain (Declaring a conviction will not necessarily prevent you from being considered for a volunteer role).

Please complete with as much detail as possible, and use extra paper as required:

Why are you interested in volunteering with C.O.R.E.?

What relevant skills and experiences do you bring to C.O.R.E.?

Outline your international experience and any experience you have working in cross-cultural situations.

Please give the name, title, contact information, relationship to you and amount of time you have known each other for **THREE references.**

Please send your completed form to Cristina Amaro Benzaquen at cristina.amaro@corefoundation.com

C.O.R.E. thanks you for your interest and support!