



FAFEN Manual

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Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) is a network of Pakistani civil society organizations, governed by the Trust for Democratic Education and Accountability (TDEA).

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The Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) is governed by the Trust for Democratic Education and Accountability:

1. Mission:

TDEA-FAFEN strives to strengthen public accountabilities by enhancing capability of citizens' associations to work for civil liberties, improved governance, democracy and peace in Pakistan.

2. Values:

TDEA/FAFEN upholds the following Principles and Values in the performance of its work, public interactions and organizational procedures and process:

Inclusion: TDEA/FAFEN believes in inclusion as the basis for strengthening democratization, and therefore, encourages greater participation of all stakeholders particularly the marginalized in its work.

- **Integration:** TDEA/FAFEN believes in partnerships and networks as critical in integrating and strengthening voices of citizens and their associations for civil liberties, improved governance, democracy and peace in Pakistan.
- **Neutrality:** TDEA/FAFEN does not support any political party.
- **Transparency:** TDEA/FAFEN procedures and processes maximize organizational transparency.
- **Accountability:** TDEA/FAFEN is open to public accountability of its governance, work, performance and conduct.
- **Objectivity:** TDEA/FAFEN gives primacy to robust methodologies and information based on facts and/or credible research and evidence as a cornerstone to its processes, programming, public positions and advocacy.
- **Rule of Law:** TDEA/FAFEN adheres to the all provisions in the constitution, law, rules and regulations in vogue in the country that are not in violation of civil and political liberties.
- **Non-Discrimination:** TDEA/FAFEN does not discriminate and condone discrimination on the basis of caste, color, ethnicity, creed, gender, religion, political, geographical or linguistic background, marital status, sexual orientation, age or physical disability, etc.
- **Best Practices:** TDEA/FAFEN enhances its organizational competence by incorporating best program and management practices and standards.
- **Commitment to Democracy:** TDEA/FAFEN practices democratic decision-making processes in its management and programs.

3. Membership Policy

The membership of the Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) shall be governed by the Trust for Democratic Education and Accountability (TDEA) Board of Trustees (BoT) under process as defined in this policy.

3.1. Criteria for Membership

Not-for-profit organization working in Pakistan that meets the following criteria will be eligible to apply for FAFEN membership:

- Registration under Societies Registration Act 1860; the Trust Act 1882; The Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies Ordinance 1961; or Section 42 of the Companies Ordinance 1984.
- Demonstrated experience of more than five years in any governance and democratization related fields;
- It must have been registered and operational for at least five years at the time it applies for the membership;
- Conduct their external audit by ICAP-registered companies as attached in Annex 7-B
- Willing to complete documentation requirements and due diligence process as admissible under this process;
- Willing to abide by the Code of Ethics as prescribed by the Trust;
- Willingness by Executive Directors to disclose details of their assets and Annual Income and Wealth Tax Returns at the time of submitting their application as well as for its possible display on the Trust website;
- Willing to pay an annual membership as admissible under this policy that may be reviewed from time under the approval of the TDEA Board of Trustees.

3.2. Ineligibilities for Membership

Organizations shall not be eligible to apply for membership in case they:

- Distribute profit among their Directors;
- Are convicted in criminal case(s) or black listed by any donor agency for financial or other irregularities;

3.3. Process of Membership

3.3.1. Membership Request

The Secretariat shall publish the call for FAFEN Membership as and when required and directed by the Board of Trustees (BoT). The decision about opening membership shall be taken keeping in view the programs and project requirements. The Board of Trustees (BoT) shall decide the number of new members to be taken, from different province/area, and the requisite areas of expertise.

Membership applications shall be invited preferably three months before the scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees (BoT). The call for membership to potential members is to be made in a timely and cost efficient manner. Any or all of the following methods may be used as decided by the secretariat:

- Nation-wide advertisements via (major) newspapers;
- Website;
- E-mail circulations through other NGOs; and
- E-mail groups/lists etc.

The call for applications must clearly mention the objectives of FAFEN, eligibility criteria, areas from where members are required, area of expertise, last date for sending application (giving at-least a period of one month), required supporting documents, contact for submission of applications, contact for further inquiries, statement clearly mentioning that the FAFEN membership does not ensure funding to any organization.

The membership requests received prior to or after the published deadline for applications shall be kept on files by the Secretariat. Such applications shall be responded to by the Secretariat informing the applicants about the next opening of memberships. When the FAFEN Membership is open, the Secretariat shall inform the applicants. If already received application(s) are complete in all aspects, new applications shall not be required and the application shall be presented to the Board along with new applications.

Membership applications shall be received on a Prescribed Form (Annex 7-A). The form may be amended by the Board of Trustees as and when required. The (updated) application form shall be made available at the Secretariat, and on the FAFEN Website.

Each applying organization shall designate a person (preferably head of the organization) as the 'first contact person' to represent the organization in the General Council and attend matters related with the FAFEN. A second nomination as the 'second contact person' shall also be made who may attend to the FAFEN matters and represent the organization in the absence of the first nominee.

3.3.2. First Shortlisting

The membership forms along with the required documents shall be received in hard copy or as signed soft copies of the original forms and required documents, to ensure that the authorized official(s) has signed the documents. The membership applications shall be examined by the Secretariat for:

- Completion of the application;
- Minimum requirements; and
- Necessary documents

Incomplete applications or applications without required documents shall not be considered. Using the criteria for awarding membership set by the Board of Trustees (BoT) for each membership call, the Secretariat shall short-list applications that are complete in all respects. The short listed applications will move to the Stage-2 of scrutiny – Due Diligence.

3.3.3. Due Diligence

The members will be gauged with the help of a due diligence framework. This framework will serve as a tool for FAFEN in organization's management capacity. The Due Diligence Framework is inclusive of the following categories:

- Financial Standards
- Human Resource Management Standards
- Governance Standards

A due diligence form (Annex 4-A) will be filled by the member organizations. The form lists the standards and verifies the extent to which standards are being met under every category. For this specific purpose, every standard is supported by Means of Verification i.e. quantifiable indicators that verify that these standards are being complied with. Through these indicators, it will become easier for the member organizations to monitor and measure their management capacity.

Moreover, a Ranking of these indicators has been added to differentiate the core requirements from the augmented ones. These are categorized as follows:

- E = Essential;

- R = Recommended;

The purpose of adding ratings to the indicators to the check-list is two-fold. One, it marks where the organization stands in terms of management and performance and pinpoints the areas that need improvement and two, it differentiates levels of criteria for the member organizations as follows:

- E: Essential = The standards that organizations must meet (for membership)
- R: Recommended = The standards that organizations may meet to improve their own productivity and the overall synergy of the FAFEN Network.

The following is the list of standards:

| Sr. No. | Standard | Means of Verification | Ranking |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|---------|
| Financial Management Standards | | | |
| 1. | The Member Organization maintains updated organizational information. | Detailed organizational chart | E |
| | | List of members of governing body and officers | E |
| | | Biographies of senior management and directors | R |
| | | List and description of current programs/projects/activities | E |
| | | Address details of Head office and sub-offices | E |
| | | List of sources of funds/donors | E |
| 2. | The Member Organization maintains updated corporate and legal documentation as required by their type of registration. | Original certificate of incorporation | E |
| | | By-Laws on governance, finance and human resource management of the organization | E |
| | | NTN Certificate | E |
| | | Listing and description of key supply contracts | R |
| 3. | The Member Organization meets highest financial standards in vogue through effective internal controls. | Double Entry System | E |
| | | Joint [multiple signatories] Operation of Accounts | E |
| | | Chart of Accounts | E |
| | | Payment Approval Policy | E |
| | | Cash Management Policy | E |
| | | Expense Management Policy | E |
| | | Procurement Policy | E |
| | | Inventory Management Policy | E |
| Management Reporting Policy | E | | |
| 4. | The Member Organization maintains updated financial records to comply with statutory and contractual requirements. | Accounting Software | E |
| | | Audit reports of last three fiscal years | E |
| | | Consolidated financial statements for last five years | E |
| | | Monthly income statements for last 12 months | E |
| | | Internal financial (Income and Expenditure Statements/profit and loss, capital expenditures, etc.) projections, and all supporting information | R |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Schedule of current notes payable/receivable, intercompany advances and description | R |
| | | Income tax returns and tax statements | E |
| | | List of operating banks | E |
| | | List of current inventory | E |
| Human Resource Management Standards | | | |
| 1. | The Member Organization has written human resource management policies that are in compliance with internationally recognized best practices. | Recruitment, Resignation & Termination policy | E |
| | | Compensation Policy and Salary Structure | E |
| | | Contract Policy | E |
| | | Staff Rules of Discipline | E |
| | | Grievance and Dispute Settlement Policy | E |
| | | Health and Safety Policy | E |
| | | Sexual Harassment Policy | E |
| | | Equal Employment Opportunity | E |
| | | Leave Policy | E |
| | | Medical Policy | E |
| | | Provident Fund | R |
| | | Gratuity | R |
| | | Group Insurance | R |
| | | Social Security | R |
| | | EOBI Registration | R |
| Disabilities Policies | E | | |
| 360 ⁰ Staff Performance Appraisal Policy | | | |
| 2. | The Member Organization maintains effective human resource management system to maximize organizational output. | Personnel Staff Files | E |
| | | Periodic Appraisals | E |
| | | Leave Records | E |
| | | Daily Worksheets | R |
| | | Hours of Work | E |
| | | Staff Training Need Assessment | R |
| 3. | The Member Organization provides conducive working environment and opportunities for staff growth. | No Smoking | E |
| | | Staff Notice Boards | E |
| | | Office Maintenance | E |
| | | Staff Retreats | R |
| | | Employee Satisfaction Surveys | R |
| | | Complaint Box | E |
| | | Staff Trainings | E |
| | | Opportunities for Domestic and International travel | R |
| Performance-based Incentives | R | | |
| Governance Standards | | | |
| 1. | The Member Organization has Governance Policy defining roles and responsibilities of directors and secretariat. | Gender Balance | E |
| | | Roles of Governing Body | E |
| | | Responsibilities of Directors | E |
| | | No-Remuneration Policy | E |
| | | Periodic Elections | E |
| | | Conflict Resolution Policy | E |

| | | | |
|----|---|----------------------------------|---|
| | | Decision-making and Quorum Rules | E |
| 2. | The Governing Body of Member Organization conducts periodic meetings to oversee the organizational performance and approve/amend program/policies/procedures. | Schedule of Meetings | E |
| | | Minutes of Meetings | E |
| | | Resolutions Approved | |
| 4. | The Governing Body of Member Organization works in a voluntary capacity and is not remunerated for its services. | Declaration | |
| 5. | The members of Governing Body and the Head of the Member Organization are not blood relatives (immediate relationships). | Declaration or Disclosure | |
| 6. | The Member Organization has a policy not to recruit immediate relations among staff. | Declaration or Disclosure | E |
| 7. | The Head of Member organizations are not Managers of FAFEN Projects. | Membership Form | E |
| 8. | All corporate, legal and financial information of member organizations is available to public (and/or as and when requested). | Website | E |
| 9. | The Member Organization has Sustainability Policy and maintains an Endowment Fund. | Sustainability Policy | E |

3.4. Acceptance of Membership

Applicants passing the Stage-1 and Stage-2 scrutiny will be presented to the scheduled Board meeting for decision about their membership. The Board shall carefully review the cases and may decide to reference check before granting membership. The decision of the Board shall be final and cannot be challenged in any court.

The decision of the Board about each application shall be communicated to the applicant in writing. The organization whose membership application is accepted shall be asked in writing to deposit membership fee as per the fee structure. The membership shall start from the date

of submission of membership fee following the acceptance of membership decision by the Board.

3.5. Rights and responsibilities of members

- All members organizations hold elections for five rotating Trustees every two years;
- All member organizations shall pay annual fee as determined by the Board;
- All member organizations shall form the General Council of FAFEN (for details see Section 8);
- All member organizations are entitled to attend meetings of the General Council. In case no funds are available with the Secretariat, members shall pay their own traveling, boarding and lodging costs;
- FAFEN Membership does not guarantee funding to any member organization;
- All member organizations shall be considered for funding as and when the FAFEN obtains such opportunity/ funds, or assumes a grant management role;
- All member organizations shall be entitled to FAFEN's published materials;
- Member organization's name shall appear on the FAFEN website;
- The Board of Trustees may request members organizations to serve on specific technical committees/sub-committees; and

3.6. Membership Fee

All members shall pay annual membership fee as per the fee structure determined by the Board. The membership fee shall be paid through cross cheque or demand draft deposited in the TDEA bank account.

To keep the same tenure of membership for all the members, and make the renewal procedure simple, the annual Membership period shall start from July 1 to June 30 of subsequent year.

The Membership fee is non-refundable. Before expiry of the membership (fee) period, the Secretariat will issue 30 days advance notice for the renewal to all members. If Membership fee is not paid by the due date, a second notice of 15 days to deposit the fee will be given. If dues are not cleared by the date given in the second notice, the membership shall be considered suspended until the outstanding dues are cleared.

3.7. Suspension and Termination

3.7.1. Grounds for Suspension/Termination

The Membership of any Member Organization may be suspended and/or terminated by the Board on any of the following grounds:

- **For non-payment of annual membership fee:** Membership of the Member Organization who fails to pay annual membership fee, within 45 days of expiry of membership, shall be suspended automatically.
- **Absence from meetings:** Any Member Organization who fails to attend two consecutive General Council meetings, without prior written intimation or justification, shall cease to be the Member of FAFEN;
- **Conduct being Detrimental:** If the conduct of any Member Organization is deemed by the Board to be prejudicial to the interest of the Network, defame, or cause disrepute

to the Network, its membership may be suspended/cancelled following the inquiry procedure given below;

- **Financial Irregularities:** If any of the member organization(s) is found engaged in financial impropriety, its membership may be suspended/ cancelled following the inquiry procedure given below.
- **Withdrawal:** Any member organization may on its own accord, withdraw its membership by sending a “withdrawal of membership” request in writing to the Secretariat. The Secretariat shall present such requests in the next scheduled Board of Trustees meeting. The membership shall remain suspended from the date when such withdrawal request is received at the Secretariat. The withdrawal request shall be presented in the next meeting of the Board of Trustees for approving withdrawal or otherwise. In case of withdrawal of membership, the membership fee shall not be refunded.

3.7.2. Inquiry Procedure for Suspension/Termination

Any of the matters mentioned above (except due to non-payment of membership fee) shall be brought to the attention of the Chairperson of TDEA by the Secretariat. If deemed appropriate the Chairperson shall appoint a committee of no more than three Trustees to be assisted by the Secretariat to investigate. The committee shall frame charges and issue a 15-day show cause notice to the Member Organization concerned.

If the explanation is found unsatisfactory, the committee shall recommend to the Chairperson to suspend membership of the organization concerned. The Chairperson may issue suspension notice to the organization concerned through the Secretariat or may decide to refer the matter to the Board of Trustees. In either case, the Chairperson shall raise the matter to the Board of Trustees at its subsequent meeting for confirmation of the suspension leading to termination or restoration of membership depending on the proved charges, as the case may be.

If membership of any organization is suspended by the Board of Trustees the organization shall be informed in writing by the Secretariat, clearly mentioning the date of suspension, reasons for suspension, and the date of the Board of Trustees meeting in which the decision was taken. The suspended organization shall also be informed about the next course of action as decided by the Board of Trustees.

In the state of Suspension, Member Organization shall be barred from attending the meetings of the General Council/Board of Trustees of the Network and may also be stopped from conducting programs, projects and other activities on behalf of FAFEN.

In the event of the restoration of membership status, the restoration date shall be decided by the Board of Trustees and shall be communicated by the Secretariat in writing. Any withheld funds or other program related inputs shall also be released as decided by the Board of Trustees. Once the restoration has taken effect, the Board of Trustees may also decide to release funds and other inputs, if any, to cover the FAFEN related costs that might have been incurred during the period of suspension.

In case termination is due to non-payment of membership fee, the membership may be restored after payment of outstanding dues along with a fine, which may not be higher than double of outstanding dues, as determined by the Board of Trustees.

The Board, if satisfied with the explanation of a suspended member, may restore the membership at its annual meeting (or any other meeting having quorum). However, the member being restored shall give a written assurance that it shall not work against the interests of the FAFEN. A second-time restoration shall not be granted.

4. General Council

4.1. Composition

The General Council (GC) of the Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) shall comprise of Member Organizations (legal entities, not legal persons) through their designated representatives who are preferably directly engaged in the implementation of the FAFEN-related programming, Executive Directors, Chief Operating Officers or any other legal head.

4.2. Powers and Functions of the General Council

The General Council (GC) shall determine the implementation policy, implementation strategy, programmatic choices, and other details of the FAFEN work to achieve the objectives, targets, and strategic choices set by the Board of Trustees.

- The General Council (GC) may review and make recommendations to improve programmatic, administrative and financial aspects of the Network.
- The General Council (GC) may advise on advocacy positions as well as positions on the other relevant programmatic matters of the Network.
- Whenever a vacancy in the Board is announced by the Board of Trustees (BoT), it shall be offered to representatives of the non-Board of Trustees members of the General Council. The process of recruitment shall be decided by Board of Trustees.

4.3. Meetings

The Secretariat, with approval of the Board of Trustees (BoT), shall send invitations for the General Council (GC) meeting mentioning date, venue, time, and agenda to the members, at least 15 days before the meeting.

Each member organization is expected to confirm its participation in the General Council meeting; confirmation should reach the Secretariat at least seven days before the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

The General Council (GC) meetings shall be chaired by the Chair of the Board of Trustees (BoT). In their absence, the Chief Executive Officer may be assigned to facilitate the meeting. To address/attend to matters of urgent nature, the Board of Trustees (BoT) may decide to call a special General Council (GC) meeting. For the special meeting at least 7 days advance notice to all members shall be required.

4.4. Minutes of the Meeting

The Chief Executive Officer (member-secretary of the General Council) is responsible for taking minutes of the General Council (GC) meetings by making appropriate arrangements. Only major decisions shall be recorded in the minutes. However, where asked by the Chair or Secretary, full transcription of the discussion shall be documented. Minutes of the meeting must include the following items:

- Title of the meeting (Meeting of the Governing Body)
- Venue
- Date
- Time
- List of persons attending the meeting
- List of persons who did not attend the meeting
- Agenda
- Major decisions taken by the General Council (GC)
- Minutes drafted by
- Minutes reviewed by

After reviewing, the Secretary shall forward the minutes/draft to the Board of Trustees (BoT) for comments. After receipt and incorporation of comments from the Board of Trustees (BoT), the Secretariat shall circulate the minutes to all members of the General Council (GC) within 2 weeks of its meeting. Members are expected to send their comments to the Secretariat within 1 week. The Secretary shall review the comments and update the minutes accordingly. Minutes of the meetings shall be approved by the General Council (GC) in its next meeting. A complete record of minutes shall be kept on file at the Secretariat.

4.5. Tenure

The General Council shall meet once a year on dates and at venues notified by the Secretariat in consultation with the Board of Trustees. If no funds are available, Member Organizations shall bear their own expenses for attending the General Council (GC) Meetings. Upon request, the Board of Trustees may approve partial funding (from the membership funds) for those Member Organizations who cannot afford to bear their own expenses.

4.6. Quorum

The General Council (GC) shall form a quorum of not less than three-fourth of its total strength in order to exercise its powers and for performing its designated functions. In case the required number of members fail to confirm their participation (to the Secretariat) in the stipulated time, the Secretariat in consultation with the Board of Trustees (BoT), shall reschedule the General Council (GC) meeting to a time when required quorum can be achieved.

4.7. Decision Making:

All decision-making at the General Council (GC) shall preferably be through consensus. In cases where consensus cannot be reached, the matter shall be decided by two-third majority of the present members.

4.8. Code of Ethics

The Code of Conduct is meant for the Trustees to ensure high standards and makes it clear how potential conflicts of interests are dealt with. Each Trustee shall sign the Code at the first meeting of each year.

4.8.1. Selflessness

Trustees of Trust for Democratic Education and Accountability (TDEA) have a general duty to act in the best interests of TDEA as a whole. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, their friends or the organization they come from or represent.

4.8.2. Integrity

TDEA's trustees:

- should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organizations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their role;
- as well as avoiding actual impropriety, should avoid any appearance of improper behavior;
- should avoid accepting gifts and hospitality that might reasonably be thought to influence their judgment.

4.8.3. Objectivity

In carrying out their role, including making appointments (including trustee appointments), awarding contracts, recommending individuals for rewards and benefits or transacting other business, TDEA's trustees should ensure that decisions are made solely on merit.

4.8.4. Accountability

TDEA's trustees

- have a duty to comply with the law on all occasions in accordance with the trust placed in them and in such a way as to preserve public confidence in TDEA.
- are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public, funders and service users. They must submit themselves to what scrutiny is appropriate to their role.

4.8.5. Openness

TDEA's trustees:

- should ensure that confidential material, including material about individuals, is handled in accordance with due care;
- should be as open as possible about their decisions and action that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider interest clearly demands.

4.8.6. Honesty

TDEA's trustees:

- have a duty to declare any interests relating to their trustee role and to take steps to resolve any conflicts that may arise. Where private interests of a trustee conflicts with their trustee duties, he / she must resolve this conflict in favor of the trustee role;
- must make relevant declarations of interest in the different circumstances and roles they play both within and outside TDEA.

4.8.7. Leadership

TDEA's trustees:

- should promote and support the principles of leadership by example;
- be able to respect boundaries between executive and governance functions. There will be circumstances under which trustees will be working directly with [name of organization] staff. Guidelines for such working relationships must be clear to staff and trustees and, when these occasions arise, the chief executive / Chair should be informed in advance.

4.8.8. Confidentiality

Confidential Information shall mean any and all information obtained by or disclosed to a Trustee in the course of serving on the Board, including but not limited to, TDEA employee salaries and benefits, donor identities and contributions, TDEA's negotiations and plans, performance of member organization of the Free and Fair Election Network, etc. As of part of the Trustee's consideration of membership on the Board, the Trustee agrees to the following regarding use and disclosure of Confidential Information.

- The Trustee acknowledges that the work of the TDEA is undertaken in strict confidence and with an understanding of privacy. Disclosure of Confidential Information will cause the TDEA irreparable harm, which may result in a loss of TDEA credibility, personnel or a loss of contributions, donations, plans, and progress or other serious harm.
- The Trustee agrees that he/she shall not use any Confidential Information except to perform his/her duties on the Board.
- The Trustee agrees that he/she shall not disclose, discuss, divulge, or distribute (or assist any third-party) to or with any party outside the Board any Confidential Information.

5. Media Policy

In pursuance of objectives of the FAFEN, the media plays an important role. Thus it needs to be carefully and responsibly handled. Effective use of media may help the Network in:

- **Advocacy:** Informing public and policy makers about the FAFEN positions on various issues, information generated, problems identified etc.;
- **Education/awareness:** Public awareness and developing public opinion on issues related with democracy and the elections; and
- **Visibility:** Promoting the FAFEN achievements, activities and events of significance.

Media includes both print and electronic media including: newspapers, TV, radio, journals, public notices, the FAFEN publications and awareness materials, website, e-mail circulations etc.

5.1. Content-Authority Matrix

The Secretariat shall manage media as per the matrix given below:

| Content | Mode | Source | Authorization Required |
|--|---|--|------------------------|
| Advocacy (New issues) | Press release, press briefing, interview, seminar, participation in talk shows, response to media queries | Research, position on regulations, reports on violations of law etc. | Yes |
| Advocacy (issues on positions which have been already formulated) | As above | Position papers, research reports etc. | No |
| Visibility | Newspapers, TV, radio appearances, publication and dissemination of project/ research reports, website | Project outputs, future plans, research-based information etc. | No |
| Education | Posters, leaflets, public meetings, brochures etc. | The FAFEN publications, awareness materials etc. | No |

5.2. Authority to Represent

The Chair of the Board of Trustees (BoT) is an authorized media spokesperson of the FAFEN entrusted to convey official position(s). No representative of any other Member Organization or the FAFEN Secretariat shall speak on behalf of the Network unless authorized by the Board of Trustees (BoT). Official statements of the FAFEN must be authorized by the Board of Trustees (BoT).

The Secretariat shall facilitate development of the FAFEN media position and may develop draft for discussion among the Board of Trustees (BoT) members. On matters of critical significance or controversial issues, the Secretariat shall consult/work with other members of the Board of Trustees (BoT) by providing details of the situation; summarize the FAFEN draft position, and recommendations. Such positions shall be released and explained to the media by the Chair of the Board of Trustees (BoT) or any other person authorized by the Board of Trustees (BoT). For such matters, the person authorized to speak to the media shall be referred to answer all the media queries. In such instances, only the person authorized by the Board of Trustees (BoT) shall speak to the media and answer the calls/queries.

On non-controversial matters, generally the matters on which common position has already been developed, the Secretariat may issue media reports/releases. On such issues, the Secretariat may also issue press items, based on the research compiled by the Secretariat.

All media liaison shall be coordinated through the Secretariat. The Secretariat shall also assist in arranging press conferences, developing awareness materials, preparing and distributing press releases etc. In case a Board of Trustees (BoT) Member or the Chair is contacted by the media (or s/he interacts with media without involvement of the Secretariat), the member shall report the media interaction to the Secretariat for documentation before or after the interaction.

5.3. Members' Media Appearance in Private Capacity

Members may express their opinion in media in their private capacity as a citizen and/or on behalf of their parent organization, however, statements made in this context should not mention positions which are not been finalized by the FAFEN. Any Member making such statement shall take full responsibility of their actions so as not to affect the reputé of the Network. Members are expected to be careful in this regard as at times it is difficult to control the final matter carried in the media. No Member shall act as representative of the FAFEN unless authorized by the Board of Trustees.

5.4. Acknowledging Member Organizations in Media

Names of member organizations in press releases/conference shall be mentioned as per their role in the specific work mentioned in the press release, for example research work, advocacy campaigns, election monitoring of specific constituencies etc. In case of the common position of the FAFEN on a collective matter, names of all Member Organizations shall be mentioned where possible; however, names and logos of Member Organizations shall be displayed on the FAFEN website, and it shall be appropriately mentioned by the spokesperson as well as in press release. Wherever it is possible to mention the names of Member Organizations, these shall appear in alphabetical order; names of the Board of Trustees (BoT) shall appear before other members.

In case press briefings or press releases are issued for specific districts, or province, names of the Organizations who participated in the work being reported shall be mentioned. It shall be responsibility of the designated spokesperson that s/he duly acknowledges the names of the participating organizations to give due credit.

5.5. Media Center

Keeping in view the nature of work, workload and observation during elections, etc. the Chairperson may decide (or the Secretariat may request the Chairperson) to establish media center at the Secretariat to facilitate media liaison. The media center shall be established and managed by the Secretariat (under supervision of the Chief Executive Officer) keeping in view the availability of funds.

5.6. Guidelines for Release of Information to Media

Below are guidelines to effectively interact with print and electronic media:

- Instead of theoretical debates, credible research information, information from constituencies, and clear positions of the Network shall be issued to the media.
- As a best practice, in all press conferences/briefings, written press releases must also be provided to journalists along with contact details for further information.
- All official positions of the FAFEN on critical matters must be issued on FAFEN letter-head and signed by the Chair of the Board of Trustees, the Chief Executive Officer, or other designated person.
- The press releases must be posted on the FAFEN website, and forwarded by e-mail to all Members Organizations for information.
- The best approach with the media is to be prompt, helpful and honest. Ensure that all queries from the media are understood and appropriately responded.

- Issues that should not be released in media include: 1) legal issues, 2) personnel/organizational issues, 3) internal affairs of the Network (including disputes within or among members, secretariat, donors) or 4) critical matters on which the FAFEN positions have not been finalized. Refer all such inquiries from media to the Secretariat.

5.6.1. Performance Management

Quality assurance and performance evaluation aim to promote efficient use of time, financial and other resources, professional growth and development and to get quality supplies and services to further the objectives of the FAFEN.

The quality assurance shall be emphasized for work performance of the Secretariat staff, various committees and sub-committees, research and other activities undertaken by Member Organizations, and for supplies and services procured for the FAFEN.

5.6.2. Efficiency of Committees of Members

The Board of Trustees operates through its committees and the General Council (GC). For stipulated forums/committees and sub-committees of Members procedures have been proposed for output efficiency. It is suggested that improvements in these procedures and systems be made as and when required. Responsibility for quality assurance of work performance of each committee lies with chair/head of the committee/forum. It is suggested that delegation of work for any specific task to a member or sub-committee within a committee, will require advance discussions to clarify expectations and quality standards. The committee, sub-committee, or Members are expected to perform the assigned task(s) to the highest standards & expectations.

5.6.3. Members Performance

Most of the FAFEN programs are carried out through Member Organizations in the relevant field and areas. Quality assurance of the field-work is vital to maintain overall high quality standards of the FAFEN outputs. Since most of the activities or projects are assigned to Member Organizations through work proposals and contracts, it is suggested that these documents include input, output and process indicators mentioning quality, quantity and a time-frame to assess and assure quality. It is also suggested that the process for quality monitoring and/or advising on quality matters (e.g. EC, Secretariat, third party etc.) is mentioned in the project documents.

Quality assurance of the project/activity is basic responsibility of the executing Member Organization; however, the Secretariat (if it has technical capacity on the subject) may also point out quality issues in good faith to ensure that overall quality of the FAFEN output is of the highest standard.

To ensure quality output, the existing capacity of the relevant Member Organization(s) may be assessed at the time of commissioning of any project. The Secretariat or any other relevant body shall also take into account the capacity building needs, if any, of the Member Organization and shall make appropriate arrangements for the same.

5.6.4. Performance and Management Standards for Member Organizations

FAFEN has compiled a comprehensive list of Financial, Human Resource and Governance Standards for its member organizations. The purpose of developing this model is three-fold:

- To monitor and enhance performance
- To facilitate development of management structures that can inculcate institutional efficiencies and maximize organizational output
- To enhance donor confidence

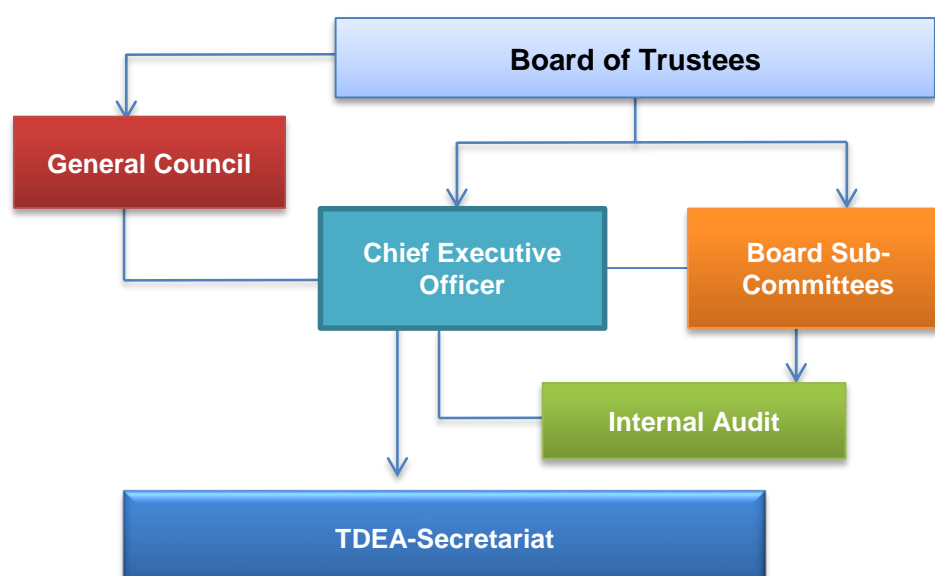
Through the implementation of this Model, FAFEN aims to add value to every active member in its network. While the existing member will be expected to opt for meeting these standards with an active financial and technical support to be provided by Free and Fair Election Network, all new members will be expected to fulfill the essential criteria as described in 2(c)(iii).

6. WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

As a moderate forward-looking organization, the Trust organizes itself to maximize efficiency. As accountability is one of the guiding principles of the Trust/FAFEN, all staff, Members of the Board of Trustees, Member Organizations, and other associates are accountable for the assigned responsibilities and delegated authority. While remaining an organization that supports informal but productive internal structure a certain level of formality shall be maintained. Roles and responsibilities of various bodies, procedures for meetings, internal financial, administrative, and other operations, etc. have been documented and must be followed.

6.1. Overall Structure

An organogram to clarify the relationships between the Board of Trustees (BoT), Members, Board Sub-Committees, the General Council, and other member bodies is given below. The Board of Trustees is a voluntary body and is the ultimate decision making forum that has the authority to dissolve the Trust. The Board of Trustees entrusts operational level authority to the TDEA Secretariat headed by Chief Executive Officer for day-to-day running of the Trust. The Board of Trustees may nominate sub-committees for specific purpose(s) as they deem fit. The sub-committee(s) shall report to the body that formed it.



6.2. Member Organizations

Member organizations are expected to maintain their own reporting lines and internal accountability mechanisms. However, any working relation between the staff of Member Organizations and the Secretariat shall be clearly mentioned in the project document. In cases where Member Organization(s) hire staff specifically for the Trust/FAFEN related projects, employment contract of concerned staff shall also mention nature of relationship with the Trust/FAFEN and its staff. It is suggested that the reporting lines/working relationship are kept as simple as possible. However, where dual reporting lines are necessary (staff hired by Member Organization report work-output to the Secretariat), management supervisor (hiring authority) and the technical supervisor (recipient of work product) will be expected to clearly identify the work flow and necessary approvals required for the release of any payments.

6.3. Secretariat Staff

The Secretariat staff shall have clear reporting lines according to the seniority of the positions as per the level of responsibility. The Chief Executive Officer heads the Secretariat. Reporting line(s) of other Secretariat staff shall be mentioned in the employment contract. The Secretariat shall maintain an updated organogram of all staff indicating their reporting lines. Any consultants appointed by the Secretariat will normally report to the Chief Executive Officer, unless any other arrangement is mentioned in the contract.

Since working relationships between Member Organizations and the Secretariat shall vary according to nature of project, and depend on nature of agreement between donor agency and Member Organization(s), the Secretariat is expected to maintain organograms/work flow chart indicating relations between different actors.

6.4. Working Relations with Other Partners

To pursue its objectives the Trust/FAFEN shall develop working relationships with other external partners while observing its Code of Ethics, values and principles through appropriate forum (BoT, sub-committees, Secretariat, etc.). The Trust/FAFEN shall develop working relationships with other actors in such a manner that does not compromise independence of the Trust or its Members. Such other actors may include relevant government agencies, media, legislators, political parties, voters, opinion leaders, other NGOs, donors etc.

7. Network Communication

The Trust/FAFEN encourages and promotes open communication among its Members, bodies of Members, between Secretariat and Members, and with other relevant actors, including target audience, government, media, donors etc. Communication must be given due importance to develop confidence among Members, between Members, Secretariat, and Members' bodies.

The communication flow through the Network must be relevant to the Trust/FAFEN objectives, meetings, programs, projects, activities, management etc. A certain degree of care is necessary to check the flow of unnecessary information and communication for efficiency.

7.1. Modes of Communication

All modes of communication including, but not limited to: e-mail, letter, fax, phone, SMS, face to face meetings etc., are recognized and used as appropriate. Appropriate communication mode should be selected by the persons involved keeping in view the subject at hand and expected recipient(s). For communicating matters of urgent nature it may be necessary to use the phone, whereas, for routine official matters, e-mail, letter, and fax may be used, however, as for the matters of personal nature, inquiries, handling matters related to conflict of interest, face to face communication is suggested. For sharing project reports, position on a certain matter, e-mail medium may be used, whereas, for discussions on new projects, developing strategies, discussing plans or policies, meetings may be preferred. In cases where action, decision, or position on a certain matter is taken through verbal communication, the Secretariat or other relevant person shall prepare a note for the file so that it may be documented appropriately. The note shall briefly mention background, discussion, process of decision, final decision/position, and follow-up actions, if any. The note must be circulated to all concerned members for information and follow up, as required.

7.2. Internal Communication

Written communication among the Trust/FAFEN Members about: meetings, joint programs/projects, media reports, progress reports, working of committees etc. may be copied to the Secretariat for information and record. The Secretariat is expected to maintain an orderly record of such communication in computer and/or paper files. The Secretariat may nominate a staff member as the focal person for correspondence with Members. The Secretariat shall frequently communicate with members for programmatic, governance; financial, administrative etc. matters to run the affairs of the Network. All communication related with any Member Organization must be carefully forwarded to the designated person in that organization. Any response required or expected, must be clearly mentioned in the communication. The Secretariat shall send invitations, agenda and minutes, decisions taken by the Executive Council, the General Council, and the Board of Trustees to concerned members. Any comments, suggestions, queries from the members shall be appropriately responded or forwarded to the concerned person by the Secretariat. The Secretariat shall act as communication hub for Members, the Executive Council, the Board of Trustees, and any other committees formed for specific tasks. The Secretariat shall keep members informed about members' activities, initiatives, positions being developed, meetings held internally or outside, press notes issued, capacity building activities, new projects, completed projects, etc. through website and/or e-mails. This shall help in keeping members informed about the Trust/FAFEN activities. The Secretariat shall also communicate with concerned members regarding joint project/program activities for timely completion of work. Any matter/issue forwarded to the Secretariat by any Member must be responded to or forwarded to the concerned person/body within 7 days. If full response from the Secretariat is not possible, an interim response must be sent informing the member about the next course of action and a possible time frame required to deliver a full response.

Since the Secretariat communicates frequently with BoT or sub-committee, prompt response from the BoT or sub-committee is expected, in particular for the matters of urgent nature. Communication where a response is required, the secretariat shall categorize matters in three categories; normal, urgent and most urgent. The matters categorized as 'normal' must be responded within one week, 'urgent' not later than 48 hours, and the 'most urgent' within 4

hours. In case response, comments or objection from any or all Members are not received within the indicated time frame, the matter shall be considered endorsed by the non-responding members. Communication under funding contracts between Members and donors of the Trust/FAFEN related projects shall be handled by the respective Member(s); however, it is advisable that the communication is copied to the Trust/FAFEN Secretariat. In particular, those projects and activities in which the Secretariat has a role to play, the communication including updates and progress must be copied to the Secretariat.

Communication regarding violation(s) of the Code of Conduct, other irregularities, confidential matters, grievances among Members, or other matters of personal nature may be restricted for communicating it to the public, other members, or outside the Trust/FAFEN. Such matters may be communicated to the Chairperson or the Chief Executive Officer at the Secretariat for appropriate handling. Members are expected to carefully treat such matters to avoid any possible disrepute to the Trust or member(s) involved.

The Board of Trustees, Sub-committees the General Council, and Members are expected to communicate with the Secretariat through the Chief Executive Officer or the person designated for members' affairs. In case the Chief Executive Officer is not available, a staff member shall be nominated for communication with Members. The internal communication among the Secretariat staff shall be facilitated and overseen by the Chief Executive Officer in such a manner that brings about trust and confidence among the staff in its management so as to perform to the best of their abilities. Staff meetings, informal gatherings, planning review meetings, e-mails, intranet, memos, and office notes etc. are various modes which can be used for communication among the staff.

7.3. External Communications

The Secretariat shall engage in all correspondence with external partners, actors, or stakeholders on behalf of the Trust/FAFEN to maintain record and continuity in their stance or position. The Board of Trustees or the sub-committees may advise the Secretariat for communicating with external stakeholders. All communications with media on behalf of the Trust/FAFEN shall be executed by the BoT or the Secretariat. Copies of all external communication shall be documented in files in the Secretariat.

No Member, except the Chairperson, the Chief Executive Officer, or other designated person shall represent the Trust/FAFEN in media, or communicate on behalf of the Trust/FAFEN with the government, other NGOs, political parties etc.

All materials on the Trust/FAFEN website shall be uploaded with the approval of the Chief Executive Officer.

Public awareness messages/campaigns must be carefully developed to communicate the desired message. For such campaigns, appropriate medium of communication, language, presentation must be selected to reach the identified target audience.

8. REPRESENTATION & CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

The Trust/FAFEN receives invitations for representation at various national and international forums, initiatives, activities, workshops, meetings, seminars, trainings etc. Such representations are recognition of the Trust/FAFEN work and its credibility. In addition it helps the Trust/FAFEN in getting further recognition at various levels and capacity building of the

Board of Trustees, the staff of Member Organizations, and the Secretariat staff. The Trust/FAFEN welcomes such opportunities which are beneficial for the Network.

All such invitations shall be received at the Secretariat for nomination(s) from the Trust/FAFEN. Nominations shall be made keeping in view the nature of the opportunity. Three different groups (BoT, staff of Member Organizations, and Secretariat staff) may be considered for representation and/or capacity building opportunities in the country or abroad. Only those opportunities shall be considered for nominations from the Trust/FAFEN which are fully paid or well-funded to cover costs. The Trust/FAFEN does not allocate budgets for such opportunities.

The Chief Executive Officer is authorized to decide which group(s) may be invited for nominations against a particular opportunity. Keeping in view the nature of opportunity, the Chief Executive Officer shall forward the invitation received to the relevant Members Organizations, the Board of Trustees, and/or the Secretariat staff by providing necessary information for nominations.

The opportunities for representational purposes (non-technical) shall be open to the Board of Trustees and/or the Secretariat staff keeping in view the nature of representation required. The opportunities of technical nature (for specific programmatic areas or capacities) shall be considered for the relevant staff of Member Organization and/or the Secretariat staff. In case of self-nomination, the Chief Executive Officer shall obtain approval from the Chairperson.

This Section details the procedure for nominations from the Board of Trustees and the relevant full-time staff of Member Organizations. Nominations from the Secretariat staff shall be made in accordance with the procedure given in Section 19 (Staff Capacity Building and Career Growth) of the TDEA Human Resources Manual.

If a relevant Member of the Board of Trustees or staff member of a Member Organization have already availed a similar opportunity, the opportunity shall be offered to the next relevant person. However, relevant persons should not be barred to attend similar successive opportunities.

All training and other capacity building invitations received shall be forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer. After deciding the nature of the opportunity, the invitation shall be circulated to the relevant Members of the Board of Trustees or Member Organizations for nominations. The number of nominations shall be decided as per the availability of funds or as invited by the host organization. In case more than one nomination is available the Chief Executive Officer may distribute the available positions between the Board of Trustees, the staff of Member Organizations, and the Secretariat staff as per the nature of opportunity.

For opportunities relevant to Members of the Board of Trustees, necessary information, invitation received, skills and background required shall be forwarded to the relevant Members along with nomination. The nomination forms must be received at the Secretariat within the time frame indicated by the Secretariat for registration and necessary arrangements. For international events, passport details (with necessary validity) are must for consideration of nominations. Approval for nomination of Members of the Board of Trustees shall be given by Chairperson.

For opportunities considered relevant to the staff of Member Organizations, invitation for nominations shall be forwarded to the concerned staff and/or the head of the organization. Only full-time staff of Member Organizations shall be considered for external capacity building

opportunities, whether in country or abroad. Staff shall be provided with all the necessary information for nomination including: invitation from organizer, required experience, skills and background. Nominations shall be received on form. The nomination forms must be received at the Secretariat within the time frame indicated by the Secretariat for registration and necessary arrangements. For international events, passport details (with necessary validity) are must for consideration of nominations. Such nominations must be approved by head of the organization. The Trust/FAFEN shall assess all nominations keeping in view the nature of the opportunity and the basic requirements for participation.

Specific criteria for assessing nominations for an opportunity shall be developed by the Secretariat as per the requirements indicated for participants. Broad guidelines are given below:

- **Relevance:** The available opportunity is directly relevant to present work of nominee and availing the opportunity is expected to maximize benefits for the Trust/FAFEN.
- **Fulfilling minimum requirements:** The person(s) applying fulfill minimum requirements of education, skills, area of work, experience in relevant field, language etc. as specified by the organizer(s) and/or the Trust/FAFEN Secretariat.
- **Hindrance to FAFEN work:** The opportunity does not affect any of the Trust/FAFEN programs/activities with regard to time or other factors.
- **Positive Action:** Preference will be given to field staff, women staff and ethnic minorities, who do not get such opportunities otherwise, to help them prepare for senior positions. It is expected that the head of the organizations and other senior staff (who have already availed such opportunities) give chance of exposure to junior/field staff.

All delegates who participate in any external event, whether in-country or abroad, on behalf of the Trust/FAFEN shall submit a report of the event to the Secretariat for documentation. The report may include the following:

- Title of the event;
- Date and place of the event;
- Major activities in brief ;
- Role of the Trust/FAFEN representative
- Usefulness for the Trust/FAFEN and personal development; and
- Any other noteworthy aspect.

9. DRAWING PUBLIC POSITION

9.1. Need

The nature of the Trust/FAFEN work requires rigorous monitoring of matters related to its objectives at the grass-root as well as at the national policy level. Similarly any positive or negative development/change may require a response from the Trust/FAFEN as a vibrant coalition of civil society organizations concerned with matters of its interest.

9.2. Identification

In order to make sure that no such development(s) remains unnoticed, it is expected from all members to remain vigilant about developments on matters of concern to the Network. Any development considered important must be noted, and forwarded to the Secretariat. The Secretariat having technical capacity, information sources, and necessary infrastructure to

notice such developments, shall take the lead responsibility of monitoring any developments at the policy level.

Any development considered important and worth responding to shall be noted by the Secretariat. In case of it being identified by any Member, it is expected to be notified to the Secretariat. The Secretariat shall bring all such matters to the notice of the Chairperson at the earliest.

9.3. Response

If the matter is considered obvious for response by the Secretariat, and the Trust/FAFEN position has already been developed on it (or on a similar issue) the Secretariat shall prepare and release the response appropriately. It is expected that the Secretariat shall get consent from the Chairperson before release of the response.

In cases where Network's position on a matter has not been already decided, secretariat shall coordinate and facilitate development of the Trust/FAFEN position. Any Member notifying a matter to the Secretariat for response, shall also forward notes about its importance and guidance for developing a position. The Secretariat shall seek approval from the Chairperson (by phone or e mail, as per urgency of the matter) for developing and releasing the Trust/FAFEN position. In case more than half of BoT members object to take up the matter, the matter shall be dropped. If the Chairperson decides to respond to the matter, the Secretariat shall draft response/position in consultation with the relevant Chairperson and Member who notified the matter, and/or relevant sub-committee, as and when required.

The draft position shall be shared with the BoT for comments. In most cases such matters may require a quick response; the BoT and other Members (who receive the draft response from the Secretariat) are expected to respond within the time frame indicated by the Secretariat. To facilitate timely response the Secretariat shall categorize matters in three categories; normal, urgent and most urgent. The matters categorized as 'normal' must be responded within one week, 'urgent' not later than 48 hours, and the 'most urgent' within 4 hours. The comments received shall be appropriately incorporated. No comments or objection shall be considered as endorsement by the non-responding members.

For matters of the 'most urgent' nature, Secretariat may seek advice/opinion from the relevant Sub-committees on phone to prepare response and release as advised by the members of the Sub-Committee. Such cases must be documented later for record keeping. The documented record must include the nature of the matter, the process of getting responses, and the permission granted by the Chairperson. The Trust/FAFEN positions shall be released to target audience either by the Secretariat, the Chairperson or by the individual authorized by the Chairperson and or Chief Executive Officer.

All responses/positions finalized and released by the Secretariat shall be documented in files at the Secretariat, posted on the Trust/FAFEN website, and copied to all BoT and General Council by e-mail for information.

9.4. Basis of Drawing Public Position

The public positions of the Trust/FAFEN on various matters shall be based on the ethical principles and values it has adopted. Prime importance shall be given to the interests of the Trust/FAFEN. Public positions shall be developed with consensus; however, where

consensus cannot be reached, the decision shall be taken as per the decision making criteria of the forum where such matter is being discussed. Members are expected to take neutral stance and remain above their own party orientation, if any, in making contributions for developing public positions.

The Secretariat shall be careful in developing public position, keeping in view the following aspects:

- Ensure that the matter being considered has relevance to the Trust/FAFEN;
- Basis of response is in line with the code of ethics and the agreed principles;
- Response is based on authenticated data and facts;
- The position is as objective as possible;
- The position taken does not unnecessarily promote or defame any natural person or legal entity;
- Maximum possible documentary evidence about the matter and response is obtained;
- The Trust/FAFEN' position presents clear stance on the issue under consideration and advance objectives of the Network;
- The Trust/FAFEN position is not based on ideological debate alone; rather it is based on research and existing regulations; and
- The response is substantial, and does not merely promote any individual, Member Organization, or the point of view of any individual etc.