



# INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES

June 2011

**alianzaregional**  
Por la Libre Expresión e Información

**INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES**  
**ALIANZA REGIONAL POR LA LIBRE EXPRESIÓN E INFORMACIÓN**

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**PRIOR CONSIDERATIONS**

This document was developed at the request of the **Executive Secretariat of “Alianza Regional por la Libre Expresión e Información”** in response to a mandate issued by its Board of Directors in its October 2010 meeting in Buenos Aires. We were asked to submit a proposal for a tool to support the network’s process of institutionalization and growth, a set of methodical and consistent procedures to guide the conduct of Alianza Regional.

In order to learn about and respond to the concerns of Alianza Regional members, we worked with products from two previous studies: *“Memorias de la Alianza Regional para la Libertad de Expresión e Información,”*<sup>1</sup> compiled by Natalia Torres; and *“La Alianza Regional para la Libertad de Expresión e Información ante el desafío de su institucionalización,”*<sup>2</sup> by Inés Pousadela and Anabel Cruz. We also conducted interviews with the Executive Secretariat to learn about the Alianza Regional’s experience of coordinating its work during its five years of existence. Finally, in order to assess the organizational histories of other international networks, we conducted a web-based survey and used the Open Society Institute’s *“Estudio comparativo de redes internacionales de la sociedad civil latinoamericana.”*<sup>3</sup>

The creation of a body of policies is a priority now in the process of formalizing and strengthening Alianza Regional. It is necessary to move beyond the early developmental stages of the network, which were characterized by a lack of clear, standardized, and explicit rules and decision-making mechanisms. The task is, therefore, to establish in writing what are commonly agreed to be the values and principles shared by all members and the basic rules for working together, as well as management and decision-making processes that will permit a clear, transparent, and orderly execution of the work. This will facilitate good governance and a collective management that is orderly and predictable, both for the members of the network and for its beneficiaries, donors, and the public in general.

Responding to these objectives, member opinions, and the experience accumulated during the Alianza Regional’s years of collective work, our goal is to offer a light governance structure that can be effectively grasped by the members; a dynamic and flexible management model; a membership policy consistent with the current state of the network and the work profiles of its members; some rules of conduct that will ensure healthy coordination between the various organizations and help to resolve possible conflicts; a statement of shared objectives, principles, and values that safeguards the

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<sup>1</sup> *“Reports of “Alianza Regional por la Libre Expresión e Información””*

<sup>2</sup> *“Alianza Regional por la Libre Expresión e Información” and the challenge of its Institutionalization”*

<sup>3</sup> *“Comparative Study of the International Networks of Latin American Civil Society”*

common spirit guiding all of the members of Alianza Regional; and a simple code of ethics describing the conduct expected of the members and the management team.

It must be emphasized that the organizational chart and rules for decision-making are meant to be part of a “light” structure of governance, one that invites organizations to participate in various governance bodies, without requiring a high burden of meetings and work, even from those who take on leadership functions. This model also assumes linear and simple processes that do not require double controls or authorizations that could slow the nimble and efficient work that has been shown to be necessary in Alianza Regional, but it does include mechanisms for accountability.

The model permits a large number of member organizations to participate through various working committees, and it invites them to take ownership of the space that is Alianza Regional by participating in the decision-making.

The counterpart of this light structure is an Executive Secretariat that works full-time to identify relevant advocacy spaces for the network and to complete the administrative and communications tasks of Alianza Regional. The geographic autonomy of the Executive Secretariat is guaranteed in that it has no fixed offices and is not housed in the facilities of any of the member organizations. This prevents the risk of interference and allows the office simply to rotate between various countries when there is a change in leadership.

The legal entity, on the other hand, is anchored locally; Alianza Regional will be registered in Uruguay under the laws regulating international civil associations there. Finally, while the rules establish that decisions in the Plenary are made by a simple majority, this proposal establishes the need for a special two-thirds majority to modify the Institutional Policies of Alianza Regional, so that any changes in the rules that regulate joint activity will have sufficient legitimacy.

In summary, these Institutional Policies of Alianza Regional seek to strengthen the network, and the current composition of the policies is meant to change over time supporting Alianza Regional’s gradual consolidation as an increasingly relevant actor in the region.

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**ANNEX II.** Advocacy Strategies and Intervention Actions

## 1. OBJECTIVES OF ALIANZA REGIONAL

### 1.1 General Objective:

To strengthen the capacities and knowledge of Alianza Regional member organizations in order to undertake actions aimed at improving conditions of access to information and freedom of expression in their countries and in the region of the Americas.

### 1.2 Specific Objectives:

- 1.2.1 Facilitate the presence and participation of member organizations in regional and international arenas.
- 1.2.2 Foster cooperation and exchanges of experiences and information among member organizations in order to strengthen their local and/or regional leadership in matters of freedom of expression and access to information.

## 2 STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

“Alianza Regional por la Libre Expresión e Información” is a network of independent, non-partisan, and non-profit non-governmental organizations that aspires to strengthen the capacity of its member organizations to promote better practices and legislation on access to information and freedom of expression in their countries and in the region.

We work from the perspective of the defense of democracy and human rights, the latter understood in the terms set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Inter-American Convention on Human Rights, and the norms and conventions associated with these instruments; reaffirming the conviction that freedoms of expression and information are essential for democratic societies and for the practice of respect for human rights, which must be recognized and protected by states.

We are governed by principles of horizontal cooperation, internal democracy, equity, solidarity, pluralism, tolerance, respect, and mutual trust in order to strengthen ties between members, with respect for each organization’s autonomous right to form its own agenda as well as a commitment to fulfill our collective objectives.

Alianza Regional, as such, and its member organizations administer our network transparently, responsibly, and with a commitment to accountability. To that effect, we agree to continue to review and develop our rules of procedure, policies, and internal codes in order to advance towards the gradual application of the “International Non-Governmental Organizations Accountability Charter” (included as Annex I) with the objective of signing on to it as short a term as possible.

Signed in \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ of 2011



**3.1. Structure.** The governance structure of Alianza Regional is composed of five bodies:

3.1.1. **Plenary:** Made up of all of the member organizations.

3.1.2. **Executive Committee:** Composed of 5 people who belong to organizations located in different countries, striving for the best balance possible in geographic representation. Its members are elected by a simple majority of the Plenary, from among self-nominated candidates. Their mandate is for 2 years, with a partial renewal of 2 members each year. Each organization can be reelected to the committee only once in consecutive periods.

3.1.3. **Ethics Committee:** Composed of 5 people belonging to organizations located in different countries, striving for the best balance possible in geographic representation. Its members are elected by a simple majority of the Plenary, from among self-nominated candidates. Their mandate is for 4 years, with the partial renewal of 2 members every 2 years. Each organization can be reelected to the committee only once in consecutive periods.

3.1.4. **Membership and Hiring Committee:** Composed of 3 people belonging to organizations located in different countries, striving for the best balance possible in geographic representation. Their members are elected by a simple majority of the Plenary from among self-nominated candidates. The mandate is for 4 years with partial renewal of 2 members every 2 years. Each organization can be reelected to serve on the committee only once in consecutive periods.

3.1.5. **Committee on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information:** Composed of 6 people divided into 2 thematic subcommittees of 3 members each. All of its members must belong to member organizations located in different countries, striving for the best balance possible in geographic representation. They are elected by a simple majority of the Plenary from among self-nominated candidates. Their mandate is for 4 years, renewing 4 members (2 from each sub-committee) every 2 years. Each organization can be reelected to the committee only once in consecutive periods.

*Transition Clause:* When the first committee is formed, each committee will draw names to see which of its members will be up for renewal first.

## **3.2. Responsibilities**

**3.2.1. Plenary.** It is the responsibility of the Plenary to:

- 3.2.1.1. Approve the financial balance sheet and the annual report drafted by the Executive Secretariat;
- 3.2.1.2. Elect the leader of the Executive Secretariat and committee members from among self-nominated candidates;
- 3.2.1.3. Vote in new members of Alianza Regional;
- 3.2.1.4. Approve changes to the internal rules of procedure of Alianza Regional
- 3.2.1.5. Hold regular and special meetings as required;
- 3.2.1.6. Assume all functions as required by its legal articles of incorporation;
- 3.2.1.7. Approve strategic guidelines for Alianza Regional's work on freedom of expression and access to information;
- 3.2.1.8. Dismiss the director of the Executive Secretariat in case of failure to fulfill his or her obligations or conduct conflicting with the provisions of the Institutional Policies of Alianza Regional, after report from the Executive Committee or the Ethics Committee.

**3.2.2. Executive Committee.** It is the responsibility of the Executive Committee to:

- 3.2.2.1. Approve the annual budget drafted by the Executive Committee;
- 3.2.2.2. Ensure the sustainability of Alianza Regional and the fulfillment of its objectives;
- 3.2.2.3. Ensure compliance with the Institutional Policies of Alianza Regional and suggest to the Plenary the modifications it considers necessary;
- 3.2.2.4. Thoroughly review the Institutional Policies every 5 years, with attention to their internal consistency and need for updating;
- 3.2.2.5. Monitor and request reports and accountability from the Executive Secretariat and the Technical Committee;
- 3.2.2.6. Provide ongoing support to the work of the Executive Secretariat and respond to its questions;
- 3.2.2.7. Approve the work agenda proposed by the Executive Secretariat if the Secretariat has not received action areas for the year from the Committees for Freedom of Expression and Access to Information;
- 3.2.2.8. Upon request of the thematic committees, provide advice and guidance on topics that are part of Alianza Regional's work agenda;
- 3.2.2.9. Upon request of a member and the Executive Secretariat, approve a reduction in the annual membership dues to be paid by the organizations;

**3.2.3. Ethics Committee.** It is the responsibility of the Ethics Committee to:

- 3.2.3.1. Intervene in and resolve all situations of non-compliance with the Code of Ethics and any serious non-compliance with the principles or objectives of Alianza Regional.
- 3.2.3.2. Comply with the deadlines, procedures, and notices established in the Code of Ethics;
- 3.2.3.3. Establish its internal rules of procedure for operation and notify the Executive Secretariat so that these may be disseminated among the members;

3.2.3.4. Respond to question from the Executive Secretariat.

**3.2.4. Membership and Hiring Committee.** It is the responsibility of the Membership and Hiring Committee to:

3.2.4.1. Establish the criteria and mechanisms for nominating and selecting the head of the Executive Secretariat;

3.2.4.2. Verify that organizations that aspire to become members of Alianza Regional have fulfilled the requirements established in the membership policy, after these prerequisites have been checked by the Executive Secretariat;

3.2.4.3. Respond to questions from the Executive Secretariat.

**3.2.5. Committee on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information.** It is the responsibility of the Committee on Freedom of Expression and Access of Information to:

3.2.5.1. Determine the major substantive work areas and the primary topics to be addressed in the upcoming period, according to guidelines approved by the Plenary, and send that work proposal to the Executive Secretariat;

3.2.5.2. Respond to and provide answers to the questions of the Executive Secretariat.

**3.3. Operation.** Committee meetings of Alianza Regional can be held virtually. Alianza Regional will strive to provide funding for all member organizations that are up to date on their membership dues payments to be present at the regular annual meeting of the Plenary.

**3.3.1. Plenary.** The Plenary meets annually and makes decisions by simple majority. It holds special sessions when requested by any of the committees or by 10 percent of the member organizations. Based on suggestions of the Executive Committee, the Institutional Policies of Alianza Regional can be modified by a two-thirds majority of those who attend a Plenary convened for that purpose, as long as there is a quorum of one-half plus one of the member organizations.

**3.3.2. Executive Committee.** The Executive Committee meets each semester and its decisions are made by a simple majority. It has the obligation to be accountable to the Plenary through an annual report.

**3.3.3. Ethics Committee.** The Ethics Committee meets at the proposal of the Executive Secretariat, or to deal with complaints, presentations, or questions received. Its decisions must be made unanimously. It has the obligation to be accountable to the Plenary through a written annual report. When necessary, it will convene an external tribunal to resolve conflicts presented to them, and that tribunal must be made up of people not part of Alianza Regional who are recognized for their work in defense of human rights and transparency. A tribunal of this nature must be convened when a complaint is lodged that involves the organizations that are serving on the Ethics Committee.

3.3.4. **Membership and Hiring Committee.** The Membership and Hiring Committee meets annually to vote in “observer organizations” from among the candidate organizations that have already been evaluated by the Executive Secretariat. It agrees on and activates the mechanisms and procedures to select any new director of the Executive Secretariat and, in exceptional cases, meets if there is any vacancy in that position. Its decisions must be made unanimously, and it must be accountable to the Plenary through a written annual report.

3.3.5. **Committee on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information.** The Committee on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information meets annually and makes decisions by a simple majority. It is accountable to the Plenary through a written annual report. During the first two months of a fixed calendar year, the Committees on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information will send to the Executive Secretary a proposal for the substantive areas of work and intervention so that an agenda of activities can be developed for the period that is about to begin. If this does not occur in the period of time stipulated, the Executive Secretariat will be able to draft an agenda of activities and submit it for approval to the Executive Committee.

## 4. ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

**4.1 Management body.** The Executive Secretariat is the only ongoing management body of Alianza Regional. It does not have a physical location. Its director is the Executive Secretary and he or she may live in any country of the region.

**4.2. Election of the Executive Secretary.** The Executive Secretary is elected by the Plenary through the mechanisms and procedures decided upon by the Membership and Hiring Committee.

**4.3. Duration of Mandate.** The Executive Secretary has a four year term and he or she can only be reelected for one additional term. He or she may be dismissed from his or her responsibilities by the Ethics Committee in case of serious non-compliance with his or her obligations or in case of conduct that conflicts with the provisions of the Institutional Policies of Alianza Regional.

**4.4. Accountability.** The Executive Secretary is accountable for the performance of the Executive Secretariat and for the use of funds received:

- 4.4.1. To the Plenary, through the annual management report and the financial report.
- 4.4.2. To the Executive Committee, through responses to their questions and observations;
- 4.4.3. To cooperation and funding agencies that contribute resources and/or funds for its work, through the mechanisms established by each agency.

**4.5. Functions.** The Executive Secretary is responsible for:

- 4.5.1. Officially representing Alianza Regional;
- 4.5.2. Ensuring the proper functioning of Alianza Regional and compliance with its Institutional Policies, administering those means and mechanisms necessary for their implementation, and proposing any reforms to the Policies to the Executive Committee.
- 4.5.3. Evaluating candidate organizations for membership in Alianza Regional to make sure they meet the requirements established in the membership policy;
- 4.5.4. Administration of the Secretariat:
  - A) Drafting the annual report of the Secretariat;
  - B) Selecting and designating his/her work team;
  - C) Establishing internal operating procedures and routines and providing information about these procedures to members, beneficiaries, or donors who may be interested in them;
  - D) Designing and administering a mechanism to ensure the proper electronic storage of the reports and resolutions of the committees, the Plenary, and any other relevant institutional document. Guaranteeing general members, and the Executive Committee in particular, access to these documents;

E) Consulting with the committees as necessary and as established within the timelines and mechanisms of the Institutional Policies, and including in the correspondence a deadline for receiving a reply. If no response is received within the established period of time, and if this limits Alianza Regional's ability to act, the Executive Secretary must once again request response to his/her questions. If response is still not forthcoming, the Executive Secretary will be free to move on the proposal at hand, after notifying the Ethics Committee of the situation;

4.5.5. Coordinating the meetings of the committees and the Plenary:

- A) Convening meetings with the periodicity established in the Institutional Policies, or at a time unanimously requested by the members;
- B) Sending out the call for a special session within one week after receiving such a request, as indicated by the Plenary, and setting a date for that session within 30 days after receiving the request.
- C) Sending the agenda for each meeting to all of the members of the committee or to the responsible executive of each member organization, depending on whether it is a meeting of a committee or of the Plenary, with sufficient time before each meeting;
- D) Keeping on file the reports from all of the meetings and writing that report if he or she has been invited to participate in the meeting.
- E) Recording the nominations of organizations to fill vacancies in the committees and informing the Ethics Committee if this obligation is not met, after first notifying the corresponding organization so that it can correct its mistakes.

4.5.6. Working to achieve the goals of Alianza Regional

- A) Drafting the agenda of activities and the annual action plan, according to the guidelines provided by the thematic sub-committees;
- B) Designing work proposals and seeking sources of cooperation and funding to fund the activities of the institution; joint activities of its members; and/or those of the Executive Secretariat;
- C) Identifying key moments that merit the intervention of Alianza Regional; proposing strategies for intervention; and calling member organizations to participate;
- D) Following up on whether member organizations have fulfilled commitments they made in the context of Alianza Regional activities so as to issue early warnings and prevent the occurrence of serious offenses;
- E) Writing substantive reports on topics of interest;
- F) Managing internal and external communications;
- G) Disseminating any information that may be of interest to members of the network.

4.5.7. Drafting and coordinating proper procedures for the participation of one, several, or all of the members of Alianza Regional in a particular intervention action.

4.6. **Residence.** The Executive Secretariat functions virtually, without a physical residence pre-established by any of the members. The legal and administrative registration of Alianza Regional will be in Uruguay, under the legal classification deemed most convenient.

4.7. **Human Resources Policy.** The Human Resources Policy regulating the hiring of the Executive Secretary and the management team will be established by the Executive Secretary. Internal Rules and Regulations must be established in full conformance with international and national labor regulations, and best practices of the non-profit sector will be applied in terms of the rights of employees and volunteers. These rules and regulations must be available to the members of Alianza Regional and must include, as a minimum, the provisions established in Annex III (“Personnel Policy/Internal Rules and Regulations of the Executive Secretariat”)

4.8. **Remunerations.** The scale of remunerations for members of the Executive Secretariat must be public and transparent. The salaries of the Executive Secretary and his or her assistants will be established according to a comparative analysis of similar positions in other international networks or in the region at the time of hiring. Every year, the salaries will be updated, keeping in mind the index of inflation in the country of residence of each member of the work team, as long as this does not compromise the financial sustainability of the institution.

4.9. **Process for Hiring Secretariat Employees and External Consultants.** The Executive Secretary is responsible for: i) drawing up the job description or terms of reference; ii) determining the kind of knowledge required to do the job; iii) identifying potential candidates for the position; iv) selecting and hiring the employee or consultant.

## 5. RULES OF CONDUCT

- 5.1. Commitment to Comply and Obligation to Report.** Member organizations pledge to:
- 5.1.1. Comply with the Institutional Policies of Alianza Regional;
  - 5.1.2. Report any actions or failure to comply with these regulations that threaten the proper functioning of the network.
- 5.2. Informal Conflict Resolution.** The principles and regulations contained in the Institutional Policies of Alianza Regional represent the agreements its members have made with respect to the limits of their conduct and that of their management body. Failure to comply with minor matters related to these policies will be resolved primarily through respectful exchange of ideas, dialogue, fluid communication, and mediation. Offenses that are considered very serious, in that they conflict with the objectives or principles of Alianza Regional, must be reported to the Ethics Committee.
- 5.3. Modifications to the Institutional Policies.** Any member of Alianza Regional may make suggestions to the Executive Committee and/or the Executive Secretariat regarding modifications he or she believes should be made to the Institutional Policies. The Executive Committee/Executive Secretariat will, in turn, report on these suggestions to the Plenary.
- 5.4. Representation at Alianza Regional.** In the framework of Alianza Regional, each member organization must be represented by its highest political or executive authority or by someone that person designates as a delegate. Delegates must work closely with the organization's highest authorities and must have the ability to make decisions in the moment, when necessary. The name and contact information of the delegate must be provided to the Executive Secretary.
- 5.5. Use of Information.** No person or organization that is part of Alianza Regional may disseminate any working documents that are in the process of being drafted or any confidential information of Alianza Regional or any of its member organizations.
- 5.6. Participation in meetings.** Each member organization must participate in at least 75% of the Plenary meetings and other joint activities convened by the Executive Secretariat.
- 5.7. Annual Plenary Meeting.** The Annual Plenary Meeting of Alianza Regional will be held the day before the OAS General Assembly and in the same country as that meeting. The Executive Secretariat will be responsible for finding the funds necessary to cover the costs of the meeting. The local partners in the country where the meeting is held commit to functioning as hosts and can collaborate with the Executive Secretariat to organize the meeting.



## 6. INTERNAL OPERATIONS

**6.1. Spheres of Intervention.** Alianza Regional carries out its advocacy strategies and actions in four different spheres: (i) horizontal cooperation, (ii) advocacy aimed at government, (iii) advocacy with international and regional agencies, and (iv) advocacy in other spheres and with other actors (such as organizations that are not members of Alianza Regional, other networks, and journalists.)

**6.2. Types of Intervention.** Alianza Regional engages in five basic kinds of activities aimed at supporting better practices and legislation on the topic of access to information and freedom of expression in the countries of the region. They include: (i) strategic litigation; (ii) training and technical assistance; (iii) communication for advocacy; (iv) lobbying and meetings with key actors; and (v) applied research. The interventions occur at the initiative or proposal of a member organization or the Executive Secretariat, and the executive body participates in all activities.

The following table shows the intersection between the spheres of intervention and types of intervention.

Type of Intervention	Spheres of Intervention			
	Horizontal Cooperation	State	International and Regional Bodies	Other Key Actors
<b>Strategic Litigation</b>				
<b>Training and Technical Assistance</b>				
<b>Communication for Advocacy</b>				
<b>Lobbying and Meetings with Key Actors</b>				
<b>Applied Research</b>				

The section below shows the way each kind of intervention may play out in the various spheres: (Annex II brings together this information in a matrix):

**6.2.1. Strategic Litigation:** Strategic litigation actions are legal interventions selected and executed strategically to defend access to information and freedom of expression rights. They can happen in four different arenas:

**6.2.1.1. Horizontal Cooperation.** When strategic litigation occurs in the framework of horizontal cooperation, two or more member organizations of Alianza Regional participate in the litigation.

**6.2.1.2. The State.** A case litigated in this sphere would be part of a legal strategy to advocate for a legal decision that could, in some cases, eventually have a bearing on public policies and laws.

- 6.2.1.3. **International and Regional Bodies.** Strategic litigation advocacy aimed at decisions made in international and regional organizations occurs when Alianza Regional members participate personally or send documents at the express request of the international/regional bodies; or through efforts made by the Executive Secretary to ensure that member organizations of Alianza Regional are heard.
- 6.2.1.4. **Other Arenas and Actors.** In these cases, Alianza Regional provides its support when requests are made to the Executive Secretariat on concrete cases related to other organizations or sectors.
- 6.2.2. **Training and Technical Assistance.** Training and technical assistance activities are aimed at helping organizations acquire the knowledge and capacity necessary to promote freedom of expression and access to information. These activities can take place in four different spheres:
- 6.2.2.1. **Horizontal Cooperation.** When trainings or technical assistance activities take place in the context of horizontal cooperation, two or more member organizations participate as receivers and givers of this assistance.
- 6.2.2.2. **The State.** This may involve receiving training from public agencies or providing training to public agencies.
- 6.2.2.3. **International and Regional Bodies.** This is training aimed at international or regional bodies or their members, or it may be training that these organizations provide for members of Alianza Regional.
- 6.2.2.4. **Other Actors.** Local members in each country may decide to train other relevant local actors. Here, at least one member organization of Alianza Regional provides the training, and those who receive the trainings may be non-member organizations, other networks, journalists, or other relevant actors.
- 6.2.3. **Communications for Advocacy.** This involves communications as a tool for achieving the substantive objectives of Alianza Regional and its member organizations. (It does not refer to the internal communications of Alianza Regional and/or its administration.) This type of communications activity can take place in four different spheres.
- 6.2.3.1. **Horizontal Cooperation.** Alianza Regional members publicize and disseminate the collective positions of the network in order to exert influence on public policies and laws.
- 6.2.3.2. **The State.** These communications are aimed at promoting, implementing, or defending freedom of expression or access to information as related to decisions made by national or local government bodies.
- 6.2.3.3. **International or Regional Bodies.** This involves communications aimed at influencing decisions made, or about to be made, in international/regional bodies.
- 6.2.3.4. **Other Arenas and Actors.** Communications in these cases may be a kind of accompaniment or active participation in actions promoted by other networks and organizations.

- 6.2.4. **Lobbying and Meetings with Key Actors.** Lobbying and meetings or gatherings with key actors are actions aimed at generating or exerting influence on public agenda topics related to access to information or freedom of expression. These actions can take place in four spheres:
- 6.2.4.1. **Horizontal Cooperation.** When the Executive Secretary or a member organization from another country visits a particular country, the local organization that receives cooperation takes advantage of their presence to promote meetings between these visitors and actors who are key to advancing their advocacy strategies. The visitors may also suggest meetings with other actors they consider relevant in the country.
- 6.2.4.2. **The State.** This involves meetings with relevant state actors in order to exert influence on their past or future decisions.
- 6.2.4.3. **International and Regional Bodies.** Formal and informal meetings and gatherings may be held with members of international or regional organizations, or people close to those groups. These meetings might be requested by the international/regional organizations themselves or by an Alianza Regional member organization or the Executive Secretary.
- 6.2.4.4. **Other Arenas and Actors.** Alianza Regional member organizations may organize or suggest these meetings; or other networks or non-member NGOs may request a meeting with the Executive Secretariat.
- 6.2.5. **Applied Research.** These are studies and research applied to advocacy on topics of common interest in Alianza Regional. They contribute to local and regional discussions on the situation of freedom of expression and access to information. These studies will be conducted when there is a demand from member organizations or as a result of a proposal by the Executive Secretary. It is possible to use these studies to have an influence in four areas:
- 6.2.5.1. **Horizontal Cooperation.** Research could inform collective discussions on local/regional issues in order to help improve the standards of existing policies, the interventions of the organizations, etc.
- 6.2.5.2. **The State.** Materials developed can be used to exert influence on national and local governments.
- 6.2.5.3. **International and Regional Bodies.** The results of these studies could be used to exert influence on the decisions of international/regional bodies; or studies could be conducted at the request of the international/regional bodies.
- 6.2.5.4. **Other Arenas and Actors.** The studies could be used to influence the actions and positions of key actors (journalists, lawyers, media associations, or others.)
- 6.3. **Interventions on a Local Matter.** When Alianza Regional seeks to intervene or express an opinion about a local matter, it must have the unanimous agreement of the member organizations from that country. To that effect:
- 6.3.1. If the proposal for intervention comes from [all] the local member organization(s), it will be assumed that it has the agreement necessary. If it came from only one of them, the Executive Secretariat must obtain the agreement of the rest of the local member organizations.

6.3.2. If the proposal for intervention comes from a member organization from outside the country or by initiative of the Executive Secretariat, the latter must consult the local organizations and will only be able to carry out the intervention if there is agreement from organizations in the country.

6.4. **Visibility of Alianza Regional Interventions.** All actions described in the section of the Institutional Policies titled “Types of Interventions” must be publicized and made visible in the following way:

6.4.1. All of the documents and materials for dissemination must include the following words: “This project/program/action is being carried out in the framework of Alianza Regional for Freedom of Expression and Information,” along with Alianza Regional logo.

6.4.2. The support documents and communications arenas in which the aforementioned reference to Alianza Regional must be made include: press releases; press conferences; pamphlets, reports, and bulletins; posters, flags, and announcements; blogs and web pages; panels; vehicles; supplies and equipment; audiovisual productions; public events and visits; information campaigns, and others.

6.5. **Bilateral Activities among Member Organizations.** All actions carried out jointly by two or more member organizations, when they are related to issues of access to information and freedom of expression, will be considered to be of interest to Alianza Regional, even when they do not involve the participation of the Executive Secretariat.

6.5.1. **Information.** Participating organizations must inform the Executive Secretariat of these actions and report on the results once the activity is over so the activities can be included and publicized in the institutional report of Alianza Regional under “bilateral activities among members.”

6.5.2. **Visibility.** If these activities have been carried out with the support (financial, logistical, publicity, or other) of the Executive Secretariat, they must follow the criteria established in the section of the Institutional Policies titled “Visibility of Alianza Regional Interventions.”

6.6. **Visibility of Network Membership.** All member organizations must publicize their membership in the Alianza Regional on their web page. The mention must be made visibly and include the logo of the Alianza Regional along with a link to Alianza Regional web page. Access to this link should be quick and easy from the home page of each organization.

6.7. **Other Activities of Member Organizations.** When members of Alianza Regional wish to have the support (financial, logistical, publicity, or other) of the network, they must request it through the Executive Secretariat and follow the criteria established in the section of the Institutional Policies titled “Visibility of Alianza Regional Interventions.”

## 7. FUNDING

7.1 Alianza Regional's main source of funding is international cooperation.

7.2. When there are fluctuations in funding from international cooperation, the Reserve Fund (made up of accumulated annual membership dues) may be used to ensure the sustainability of the network during critical periods and guarantee the structural funding of the organization. Alianza Regional may not generate debts that exceed 70 percent of the amount of money available in the Reserve Fund, because all outstanding obligations must be paid from this fund.

7.3. Alianza Regional can only receive funding from the public coffers of a country in the region if all of the members of that country agree to it.

7.4. As the Executive Secretariat raises funds for its work, it must preserve and strengthen the institutional integrity and operations of Alianza Regional in cooperation with its members and strive not to compete with them.

7.5. Priority will be given to raising funds that will benefit more than one organization of the network and support coordination between member organizations.

## 8. CODE OF ETHICS

8.1. **General Criteria.** Beyond the internal regulations of each member organization, a failure to abide by the following rules will be considered a serious offense by Alianza Regional and will be dealt with by the Ethics Committee.

*Persons subject to the Code of Ethics include the highest executive authority of the member organization or the delegate designated to represent that authority.*

8.1.1 **Conflicts of Interest.** Alianza Regional organizations must avoid any situation in which their actions or interests conflict with their membership in the network. In particular, they must avoid making decisions for reasons other than those related to the principles of Alianza Regional and the promotion of its objectives. If such a situation presents itself, the organization must abstain from participating in Alianza Regional decision-making processes related to that situation.

8.1.2. **Restricted Information.** Members of Alianza Regional and all of its administrative bodies must keep confidential all information and documents from the Alianza Regional's internal work unless disclosure has been duly authorized by the Executive Secretariat or the Ethics Committee, as appropriate.

8.1.3. **Participation in Other Organizations or Networks.** All members may participate in any organization or network of organizations that respects human rights and transparency. The principles and actions of those organizations must be in line with the values of freedom of expression and access to information and with the Alianza Regional's Statement of Principles.

8.1.4. **Discrimination.** Members of Alianza Regional will refrain from making statements or acting in any way that could be considered discriminatory with respect to cultural, ethnic, or religious diversity; sexual preference; gender identity; or any other choice or physical trait of persons or organizations.

8.1.5. **Gifts.** During the time in which they are exercising their duties, the head of the Executive Secretariat (Executive Secretary) and members of the committees must refrain from accepting gifts from any member of an organization—public or private—if it could be interpreted as a gift made to influence the decisions of Alianza Regional or to compromise the integrity of its work or public image.

8.1.6. **Other Forms of Non-compliance.** All other failures to observe the provisions established in the Institutional Policies which are considered to be a serious offense, violating the principles and/or objectives of Alianza Regional, must be sent to the Ethics Committee for its consideration and judgment.

## **8.2. Procedures**

**8.2.1. Transparency in Decision-Making.** The Ethics Committee will function with transparency and will publish its decisions. It will facilitate spaces for the person charged with an offense to respond to the complaint.

**8.2.2. Obligation to Report.** Any failure to observe the ethical commitments set forth in this Code, or the objectives/principles of Alianza Regional, will be reported to the Ethics Committee by the person or organization in potential conflict, by the Executive Secretariat, or by the members of Alianza Regional.

**8.2.3. Complaints Procedure.** All reports or complaints will be sent by email to the electronic address established for that purpose. That email address must be visible on the webpage of Alianza Regional and will be administered by the members of the Ethics Committee.

**8.2.4. Consideration of Complaints.** When a complaint comes from member(s) of Alianza Regional, the complaint must be dealt with and resolved by the Ethics Tribunal. When the complaint is made by non-members or anonymously, the Ethics Committee can decide to consider it or to reject it *in limine* if it believes it is lacking in substance. Once accepted, the complaint must be resolved within a period of 20 days after it was received. Once that deadline has passed, the committee must give notice of the resolution to the person who is the subject of the complaint and/or inform that person that a tribunal will be formed to resolve the matter.

**8.2.5. Creation of an Ethics Tribunal.** The tribunal will be made up of 3 members who are usually elected from among the members of the Ethics Committee. If these members disqualify themselves for reasons of friendship or enmity with the person who is the subject of the complaint, an external tribunal can be convened.

**8.2.6. Obligation to Notify.** The person or organization that is the subject of the complaint must receive notification and be able to view the complaint. These notifications will be made by the Ethics Committee immediately after the complaint has been formally accepted. The subject of the complaint must also be informed of the period of time in which he or she must make his written response.

**8.2.7. Opportunity to Consult.** Once the complaint is accepted, and the Ethics Tribunal has been established, the tribunal may consult with others to obtain the information it deems necessary to understand and resolve the matter.

**8.2.8. Resolution of the Case.** The Ethics Tribunal that rules on the case must decide whether an ethical conflict does or does not exist and what the consequences will be. It must do so within three months of the time in which the complaint was accepted.

**8.2.9. Case where Conflict is Found.** Tribunal decisions that declare the existence of an ethical conflict must be well-founded and reported to the person named in the complaint. The most serious sanction that can be applied is permanent expulsion from the organization as a member of Alianza Regional. A copy of the background information and the decision on the case will be sent to the Executive Secretariat to be kept in its records and to be distributed among all of the member organizations of Alianza Regional.

**8.2.10. Case where No Conflict is Found.** Cases in which the Tribunal decides there has been no ethical conflict must be well founded and will be reported to the Executive Secretariat only for purposes of record keeping. Neither the matter nor the resolution of the matter will be reported to the organizations unless there is a specific request to do so.

**8.2.11. Constitution of an External Tribunal.** All external tribunals will be made up of three persons who do not belong to any of the organizations of Alianza Regional and who are recognized for their work in defending human rights and transparency in NGOs. Such tribunals will be convened in two types of situations: (i) when it is not possible to find three members for the tribunal who are members of the Ethics Committee because the committee members have disqualified themselves from hearing the case; or (ii) when the accused party is a member of the Ethics Committee. In this latter situation, that committee member must disqualify him or herself from the process of selecting members for the Tribunal.

**8.2.12. Constitution and Operation of the External Tribunal.** The members of the Ethics Committee will identify the people required for the External Tribunal and request their participation; to do so, they may ask the Executive Secretariat and the Executive Committee for assistance. Once the makeup of the tribunal has been decided, the Executive Secretariat will be notified, and the Secretariat will work with the committee and the Tribunal to facilitate the process.



## 9. MEMBERSHIP POLICY

The membership policy of Alianza Regional includes both qualitative and quantitative criteria and is organized around substantive matters as well as formal ones. Procedures for nomination, evaluation, continuance, and termination of members are detailed here.

### 9.1. Consideration of Both Qualitative and Quantitative Criteria

There will be times when Alianza Regional is open to new members and times when it is closed to new membership. Alianza Regional is in a period of expansion and growth and it seeks to have high level of diversity and representation from the region. At the same time, it must also ensure proper administration and coordination.

Within this context, the criteria for receiving new members doesn't have as much to do with time as it does with the number of new organizations Alianza Regional decides to receive during each period of growth. For optimal implementation, up to five organizations may be allowed into the admissions process at the same time.

In the current context of expansion and growth—that is, the 3-year period of consolidation between now and 2014—up to two organizations per country will be admitted into Alianza Regional.

The total number of active members should be determined based on a balance of the following variables:

- increased representation/diversity
- having more dues-paying members
- the ability to maintain simple operational processes for decision making
- the ability to ensure the proper coordination and administration of the network

### 9.2. Substantive and Formal Aspects

To be a member of Alianza Regional, an organization must establish its leadership credentials in the area of freedom of expression and access to information (on the ground credentials). It must also be able to demonstrate the equivalence of at least three years of work on some of the issues that Alianza Regional covers.

Only non-governmental organizations with duly constituted legal status in their country may be part of Alianza Regional.

All members must comply with the standards of accountability, transparency, and best practices, as established in Alianza Regional's Declaration of Principles.

### 9.3. Annual Membership Dues

Each member organization must pay annual membership dues into the Reserve Fund of Alianza Regional, which is aimed at ensuring the sustainability of the network and making sure that basic operating expenses will be covered (salaries, meeting costs, etc.) during critical times.

The Executive Secretariat will be accountable for the use of these contributions and will make public the balance of the Reserve Fund, the minutes of meetings, and annual budgets indicating staff salaries and financial projections for the period.

Annual dues will be US\$1,000 per organization, an amount that will be reviewed by the Executive Committee every two years. Organizations with an annual budget below US\$100,000 (or another agreed-upon amount) that cannot take on the commitment of paying the amount specified here may request a reduction in their annual dues amount, and the percentage of the reduction will be decided by the Executive Committee.

### 9.4. Rights and Obligations of the Members

9.4.1. **Rights.** The main rights of members include:

- The right to participate in decision-making as active members in the Plenary
- The right to nominate oneself to one of the governing bodies
- The right to have access to information, benefits, and opportunities
- The right to participate in all activities

9.4.2. **Obligations.** The main obligations of members include:

- The obligation to attend the annual Plenary assembly of members. Those who must attend these Plenary meetings are the executive officers (or others designated by the executive officers who have decision-making power)
- The obligation to adjust their organization policies to be in agreement with the Institutional Policies of Alianza Regional
- The obligation to participate in governance bodies and in decision-making
- The obligation to pay membership dues
- The obligation to gradually adapt their organization and its operations to what is established in the “International Non-Governmental Organizations Accountability Charter”

### 9.5. Procedure for Bringing New Members into Alianza Regional.

There is a 3-stage process for an organization to become a full member of Alianza Regional:

9.5.1. **First stage: Presentation of Prerequisites.** All organizations that wish to become a member of Alianza Regional must send to the Executive Secretariat the following:

- **Letter of Intent:** The letter should specify the reasons for which the organization would like to join Alianza Regional and any prior work it has done in the area of freedom of expression

and/or access to information. The letter must also indicate that the candidate organization understands the principles and values promoted by Alianza Regional and that it is committed to respecting those principles and values and to meeting the standards and complying with the regulations established in the Institutional Policies.

- **Letters of Recommendation.** Candidate organizations must present three letters of recommendation. Two should be signed by the highest executive or political authority of member organizations belonging to Alianza Regional. The third can come from a member organization of Alianza Regional or from an external organization that is a leader on matters of access to information and freedom of expression.

9.5.2. **Second stage: Incorporation as an Observer Organization.** Prior to any organization's incorporation as a full member of Alianza Regional, it must first go through a period of being an observer organization. Conditions for becoming an observer organization are the following:

- **Background Verification.** The Executive Secretariat will verify the organization's compliance with the formal requirements of the organization.
- **Period for Challenges.** The Executive Secretariat will inform all of its members that a 30-day period for challenges has begun. Challenges must be duly justified and based on matters that conflict with the institutional mission and objectives of Alianza Regional or which may be interpreted as contrary to human rights and democratic values.
- **Approval of Background Information and Review of Challenges.** The Executive Secretariat will send background information and any challenges that may have been filed to the Membership and Hiring Committee so that the committee can evaluate the organization's history and review the Executive Secretariat's report within a 30-day period. If the nomination is rejected, the Executive Secretariat must inform the candidate organization of the reasons for the rejection.
- **Observer Category.** When the review of an organization's background is approved, the Membership and Hiring Committee will take the necessary steps to incorporate the organization as an observer member for a period of time. This period is meant to be a time when the candidate organization can see how Alianza Regional works and decide whether or not it is definitely interested in joining. Likewise, Alianza Regional can evaluate whether the organization is a good fit for the network. The observer period must last at least four months.

9.5.3. **Third Stage: Incorporation as a Full Member.** When the observation period is over, the candidate organization may be voted in as a full member. The process is the following:

- **Plenary Meeting and Approval as Full Member.** An organization is approved for full membership in Alianza Regional during a Plenary session in which any member of the Plenary may ask the Executive Secretariat questions about the performance of the candidate organization.
- **Orientation.** Once the organization has been voted in, the Executive Secretariat will begin a process of orienting the new member organization to help it learn more about the principles, values, and rules of transparency and accountability that guide the actions of the network.

- **When Full Membership is not Approved.** If the Plenary decides not to approve the organization for full membership, the Executive Secretariat will inform the candidate organization of the reasons given for the decision.

9.5.4. **Fourth Stage: Re-nomination.** If an organization is not approved for full membership in Alianza Regional, it may present its nomination dossier again two years after the rejection of its candidacy.

9.6. **Conditions of Continued Membership and Causes for Separation.** Member organizations must comply with the Institutional Policies of Alianza Regional, and they can and/or must be removed from the organization when a situation arises that specifically mandates their removal.

9.6.1. **Work on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information.** The member organization must have priority work areas or specific activities related to the issues of access to information or freedom of expression. If these topics have become minor issues on their work agenda, the organization may be separated from the network. When this situation occurs, it is the member organization's responsibility to inform the network and step down as a member.

9.6.2. **Organizational Commitment to Alianza Regional.** Member organizations must maintain a certain level of commitment to recognizing their membership in the network and making it visible. They do this by participating in institutional activities, by publicizing the technical or financial support they obtain through Alianza Regional, and through other actions that demonstrate their membership in the network.

9.6.3. **Participation in Governance Bodies.** Member organizations should nominate themselves to serve on committees of Alianza Regional at least every two years.

9.6.4. **Failure to Pay Annual Membership Dues.** If the membership dues—or a percentage of those dues—are not paid, the member organization cannot receive funding to participate in the annual Plenary meeting. If the organization wishes to participate in the Plenary, it must do so with its own money. The appropriate dues must be paid in full within two years.

*Saving Clause:* If an organization cannot pay its annual membership dues for two consecutive years because of a difficult financial situation, the Plenary may reconsider the membership conditions of that organization.

9.6.5. **Transparency and Disclosure of Funding Sources.** Member organizations must be bound by the principles of disclosure and transparency mentioned in the Statement of Principles. If a member receives funding from the state, it must disclose this funding on its websites.

9.7. **Transitory Clause.** Within 18 months after the approval of Institutional Policies or after its incorporation as a new member of Alianza Regional, every organization must move towards the gradual application of the "International Non-Governmental Organizations Accountability

Charter” (included as Annex 1) as agreed in the “Statement of Principles of Alianza Regional.”

This includes:

- 1) Having a clear mission, organizational structure, and decision-making processes.
- 2) Acting in accordance with stated values and agreed-upon procedures.
- 3) Complying with governmental requirements for financial accounting and accountability.
- 4) Developing and publicizing annual reports on activities and outcomes.
- 5) Developing effective accountability tools for donors and beneficiaries.
- 6) Having a governing body that oversees and evaluates the management of program and budget, with written procedures covering the appointment, responsibilities, and terms of members of the governing body, and preventing and managing conflicts of interest;
- 7) Developing a quality control system that ensures users and stakeholders that their contributions, opinions, suggestions, and priorities will be heard and taken into account.

**ANNEX 1**  
**INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS ACCOUNTABILITY CHARTER**

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**Who we are**

We, international non-government organizations (INGOs) signatory to this Charter, are independent non-profit organizations that work globally to advance human rights, sustainable development, environmental protection, humanitarian response and other public goods.

Our organizations are proud and privileged to work across a wide range of countries and cultures, with a diverse range of peoples and in varied eco- and social and political systems.

Our right to act is based on universally-recognized freedoms of speech, assembly and association, on our contribution to democratic processes, and on the values we seek to promote.

Our legitimacy is also derived from the quality of our work, and the recognition and support of the people with and for whom we work and our members, our donors, the wider public, and governmental and other organizations around the world.

We seek to uphold our legitimacy by responding to inter-generational considerations, public and scientific concerns, and through accountability for our work and achievements.

By signing this Charter we seek to promote further the values of transparency and accountability that we stand for, and commit our INGO to respecting its provisions.

**How we work**

NGOs can complement but not replace the over-arching role and primary responsibility of governments to promote equitable human development and wellbeing, to uphold human rights and to protect ecosystems.

We also seek to promote the role and responsibilities of the private sector to advance human rights and sustainable development, and protect the environment.

We can often address problems and issues that governments and others are unable or unwilling to address on their own. Through constructive challenge, we seek to promote good governance and foster progress towards our goals.

We seek to advance our mission through research, advocacy and programs. It is common for our work to be at the international, national, regional and local levels, either directly or with partners.

We work with other organizations where this is the best way to advance our individual missions.

## **The Charter's purpose**

This Charter outlines our common commitment to excellence, transparency and accountability. To demonstrate and build on these commitments, we seek to:

- identify and define shared principles, policies and practices;
- enhance transparency and accountability, both internally and externally;
- encourage communication with stakeholders; and
- improve our performance and effectiveness as organizations.

We recognize that transparency and accountability are essential to good governance, whether by governments, businesses or non-profit organizations.

Wherever we operate, we seek to ensure that the high standards which we demand of others are also respected in our own organizations.

The Charter complements and supplements existing laws. It is a voluntary charter, and draws on a range of existing codes, norms, standards and guidelines.

We agree to apply the Charter progressively to all our policies, activities and operations. The Charter does not replace existing codes or practices to which signatories may also be party, except as specified by them. Its adoption does not prevent signatories from supporting or using other tools to promote transparency and accountability.

We will refine the Charter through experience, taking into account future developments, particularly those that improve accountability and transparency.

## **Our stakeholders**

Our first responsibility is to achieve our stated mission effectively and transparently, consistent with our values. In this, we are accountable to our stakeholders.

Our stakeholders include:

- Peoples, including future generations, whose rights we seek to protect and advance;
- Ecosystems, which cannot speak for or defend themselves;
- Our members and supporters;
- Our staff and volunteers;
- Organizations and individuals that contribute finance, goods or services;
- Partner organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, with whom we work;
- Regulatory bodies whose agreement is required for our establishment and operations;
- Those whose policies, programs or behavior we wish to influence;
- The media; and
- The general public.

In balancing the different views of our stakeholders, we will be guided by our mission and the

principles of this Charter.

## **Principles**

### ***Respect for Universal Principles***

INGOs are founded on the rights to freedom of speech, assembly and association in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We seek to advance international and national laws that promote human rights, ecosystem protection, sustainable development and other public goods.

Where such laws do not exist, are not fully implemented, or abused, we will highlight these issues for public debate and advocate appropriate remedial action. In so doing, we will respect the equal rights and dignity of all human beings.

### ***Independence***

We aim to be both politically and financially independent. Our governance, programs and policies will be non-partisan, independent of specific governments, political parties and the business sector.

### ***Responsible advocacy***

We will ensure that our advocacy is consistent with our mission, grounded in our work and advances defined public interests.

We will have clear processes for adopting public policy positions, (including for partners where appropriate,) explicit ethical policies that guide our choices of advocacy strategy, and ways of identifying and managing potential conflicts of interest among various stakeholders.

### ***Effective Programs***

We seek to work in genuine partnership with local communities, NGOs and other organizations aiming at sustainable development responding to local needs.

### ***Non-Discrimination***

We value, respect and seek to encourage diversity, and seek to be impartial and nondiscriminatory in all our activities. To this end, each organization will have policies that promote diversity, gender equity and balance, impartiality and non-discrimination in all our activities, both internal and external.

### ***Transparency***

We are committed to openness, transparency and honesty about our structures, mission, policies and activities. We will communicate actively to stakeholders about ourselves, and make information publicly available.



## **Reporting**

We seek to comply with relevant governance, financial accounting and reporting requirements in the countries where we are based and operate.

We report at least once a year on our activities and achievements. Reports will describe each organization's:

- Mission and values;
- Objectives and outcomes achieved in program and advocacy;
- Environmental impact;
- Governance structure and processes, and main office bearers;
- Main sources of funding from corporations, foundations, governments, and individuals;
- Financial performance;
- Compliance with this Charter; and
- Contact details.

## **Audit**

The annual financial report will conform to relevant laws and practices and be audited by a qualified independent public accountant whose statement will accompany the report.

## **Accuracy of information**

We will adhere to generally-accepted standards of technical accuracy and honesty in presenting and interpreting data and research, using and referencing independent research.

## ***Good Governance***

We should be held responsible for our actions and achievements. We will do this by: having a clear mission, organizational structure and decision-making processes; by acting in accordance with stated values and agreed procedures; by ensuring that our programs achieve outcomes that are consistent with our mission; and by reporting on these outcomes in an open and accurate manner.

The governance structure of each organization will conform to relevant laws and be transparent. We seek to follow principles of best practice in governance. Each organization will have at least:

- A governing body which supervises and evaluates the chief executive, and oversee program and budgetary matters. It will define overall strategy, consistent with the organizational mission, ensure that resources are used efficiently and appropriately, that performance is measured, that financial integrity is assured and that public trust is maintained;
- Written procedures covering the appointment, responsibilities and terms of members of the governing body, and preventing and managing conflicts of interest;

- A regular general meeting with authority to appoint and replace members of the governing body.

We will listen to stakeholders' suggestions on how we can improve our work and will encourage inputs by people whose interests may be directly affected. We will also make it easy for the public to comment on our programs and policies.

### ***Ethical Fundraising***

#### **Donors**

We respect the rights of donors: to be informed about causes for which we are fundraising; to be informed about how their donation is being used; to have their names deleted from mailing lists; to be informed of the status and authority of fundraisers; and to anonymity except in cases where the size of their donation is such that it might be relevant to our independence.

#### **Use of Donations**

In raising funds, we will accurately describe our activities and needs. Our policies and practices will ensure that donations further our organization's mission. Where donations are made for a specific purpose, the donor's request is honored. If we invite the general public to donate to a specific cause, each organization will have a plan for handling any shortfall or excess, and will make this known as part of its appeal.

#### **Gifts in kind**

Some donations may be given as goods or services. To retain our effectiveness and independence, we will: record and publish details of all major institutional gifts and gifts-in kind;

clearly describe the valuation and auditing methods used; and ensure that these gifts contribute towards our mission.

#### **Agents**

We seek to ensure that donations sought indirectly, such as through third parties, are solicited and received in full conformity with our own practices. This will normally be the subject of written agreement between the parties.

### ***Professional Management***

We manage our organizations in a professional and effective manner. Our policies and procedures seek to promote excellence in all respects.

#### **Financial controls**

Internal financial control procedures will ensure that all funds are effectively used and minimize the risk of funds being misused. We will follow principles of best practice in financial management.

#### **Evaluation**

We seek continuously to improve our effectiveness. We will have defined evaluation procedures for our boards, staff, programs and projects on the basis of mutual accountability.

### **Public Criticism**

We will be responsible in our public criticisms of individuals and organizations, ensuring such criticism amounts to fair public comment.

### **Partners**

We recognize our that organizational integrity extends to ensuring that our partners also meet the highest standards of probity and accountability, and will take all possible steps to ensure that there are no links with organizations, or persons involved in illegal or unethical practices.

### **Human Resources**

We recognize that our performance and success reflect the quality of our staff and volunteers and management practices, and are committed to investing in human resource development. Remuneration and benefits should strike a balance between public expectations of voluntary-based, not-for-profit organizations and the need to attract and retain the staff we need to fulfill our mission. Our human resources policies seek to conform fully with relevant international and national labor regulations and apply the best voluntary sector practices in terms of employee and volunteer rights and health and safety at work. Human resources policies will include procedures for evaluating the performance of all staff on a regular basis.

### **Bribery and Corruption**

Human resources policies will specifically prohibit acts of bribery or corruption by staff or other persons working for, or on behalf of, the organization.

### **Respect for Sexual Integrity**

We condemn sexual exploitation, abuse and discrimination in all its forms. Our policies will respect sexual integrity in all our programs and activities, and prohibit gender harassment, sexual exploitation and discrimination.

### **Whistle-blowers**

Staff will be enabled and encouraged to draw management's attention to activities that may not comply with the law or our mission and commitments, including the provisions in this Code.

**ANNEX II  
ADVOCACY STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES**

AREAS OF ADVOCACY				
	Horizontal Cooperation	Advocacy directed at the State	International and Regional Bodies	Others (non-member organizations, other networks, journalists, etc.)
<p><b>Strategic Litigation</b></p> <p>The development of strategically selected and executed legal interventions to defend rights related to freedom of information and access to information</p>	<p><u>Dynamic:</u> These activities may be proposed by members or by the Executive Secretariat (ES) as long as the latter is coordinating the implementation</p> <p><u>Actors:</u> Two or more member organizations</p> <p><u>Types of possible strategies:</u> Presentation of <i>amicus curiae</i>; collective litigation of public interest cases, etc.</p>	<p><u>Dynamic:</u> It is assumed that influence can be exerted in a judicial decision through a court case and its legal strategy. Particular cases and strategies to pursue can be proposed by members or by the ES as long as the latter is involved in coordinating the implementation</p> <p><u>Actors:</u> Judicial branch</p> <p><u>Types of possible strategies:</u> Litigation of cases related to freedom of expression and/or access to information</p>	<p><u>Dynamic:</u> Advocacy on decisions made in international and regional bodies will take place through in-person or documentary participation of Alianza Regional members, as a result of the express request of the international/regional bodies; or after steps taken by the Executive Secretariat to make sure Alianza Regional members are heard.</p> <p><u>Actors:</u> Multilateral state agencies and organizations linked to court processes</p> <p><u>Type of possible strategies:</u> Participation in IACHR and IAHR Court meetings aimed at</p>	<p><u>Dynamic:</u> Support of Alianza Regional in requests made to the ES regarding specific cases of other organizations or sectors, as long as the ES is involved in coordinating the implementation.</p> <p><u>Actors:</u> NGOs that are not members of SI NGOs that are not members of Alianza Regional, journalists, social sectors, etc.</p> <p><u>Types of possible strategies:</u> Support in <i>amicus curiae</i>; support statements in collective cases of freedom of expression and/or access to information.</p>

			hearing the opinion of Alianza Regional or of some of its members on cases/situations.	
<p><b>Training and Technical Assistance</b></p> <p>These are activities aimed at acquiring knowledge and capacity to better promote freedom of expression and access to information</p>	<p><u>Dynamic:</u> These activities are implemented at the proposal of the ES or of an organization</p> <p><u>Actors:</u> Two or more member organizations participate as receivers or providers of the cooperation.</p> <p><u>Types of possible strategies:</u> Work meetings, workshops, exchanges of experiences, technical assistance for writing presentations (amicus, legislative etc.); assistance in the design and review of legal bills, follow-up on implementation of laws on access to information; workshops on access to information.</p>	<p><u>Dynamic:</u> This is training aimed at or received from public sectors. These activities can be proposed by the members or by the ES, as long as the ES is coordinating the implementation.</p> <p><u>Actors:</u> Executive, Judicial and/or Legislative branch.</p> <p><u>Types of possible strategies:</u> Presentation of international standards for the promotion/ implementation of laws.</p>	<p><u>Dynamic:</u> This may be the training of agencies, members, or participants in regional/international bodies; or trainings provided by these groups to members of Alianza Regional. Participation in these trainings occurs at the request of the international/regional organizations; or as a result of a proposal made by member organizations and steps taken by the ES.</p> <p><u>Actors:</u> Multilateral state organizations and agencies</p> <p><u>Types of possible strategies:</u> Participation in group of experts who are drafting of the Model Inter-American Law on Access to Information; Technical opinion on IDB disclosure and transparency policies; Observations or opinion documents on matters of</p>	<p><u>Dynamic:</u> These training activities are held when local members in each country suggest them and organize them.</p> <p><u>Actors:</u> At least one member organization functions as the provider of the training. Those receiving the training may be non-member organizations, other networks, or journalists.</p> <p><u>Types of possible strategies:</u> trainings in pro-bono legal clinics; strategic litigation; workshops on access to information; training of journalists, lawyers, etc.</p>

			freedom of expression, access to information, and similar issues.	
<p><b>Communications for Advocacy</b></p> <p>Communications here is understood as a tool for reaching the substantive objectives of Alianza Regional and its member organizations (not the institutional communication of Alianza Regional and/or its administration)</p>	<p><u>Dynamic:</u> These Alianza Regional communications are efforts to disseminate the network's collective position in order to exert an influence on how laws or public policies are handled. They may arise out of specific local demands from members or because the ES has identified a particularly critical moment in time for such communications.</p> <p><u>Actors:</u> Member organizations, the ES at the request of a local member or a group of member organizations (depending on the topic)</p> <p><u>Types of possible strategies:</u> Dissemination of Alianza Regional statements; press releases; open letters, etc. on</p>	<p><u>Dynamic:</u> These communications are aimed at promoting, implementing, or defending the freedom of expression and access to information in decisions being made by national or local public agencies. They may arise out of specific demands from local members or because the ES has identified a critical moment in time for such communications.</p> <p><u>Actors:</u> Executive, legislative, and judicial branches</p> <p><u>Types of possible strategies:</u> Dissemination of statements of Alianza Regional, press releases, open letters, opinion pieces, etc. on institutional positions on freedom of</p>	<p><u>Dynamic:</u> These are communications aimed at influencing decisions made, or about to be made, in international organizations. Actions occur at the proposal of a member organization or the ES.</p> <p><u>Actors:</u> Multilateral state organizations and agencies</p> <p><u>Types of possible strategies:</u> Statements in the context of the GA/OAS; Summits; multi-lateral meetings; IAHR Court; IACHR, European Court. Statements on access to information; communiqués to multi-lateral organizations on policies of information disclosure, transparency, and freedom of expression</p>	<p><u>Dynamic:</u> Communications in these cases may be a way to accompany or participate in actions promoted by other networks or organizations. When international requests are made for access to information, Alianza Regional, through its ES and some of its member organizations, can join with other networks in a more global petition.</p> <p><u>Actors:</u> Other networks that partner with Alianza Regional</p> <p><u>Types of possible strategies:</u> International petition for access to information</p>

	institutional positions on the freedom of expression and access to information	expression and access to information.		
<p><b>Lobbying and meetings with key actors</b></p> <p>Lobbying activities or meetings or events with key actors to generate interest or influence on public agenda issues related to access to information and freedom of expression</p>	<p><u>Dynamic:</u> When the ES or representatives of another member organization are present in its country, a member organization that receives cooperation can set up meetings between the visiting organizations/SE and key local actors as part of its advocacy strategy. The visitors may also suggest to the local organization meetings with actors they consider relevant.</p> <p><u>Actors:</u> the local organization; members from other countries or the ES; and key actors on the subject matter being advocated on.</p> <p><u>Types of possible strategies:</u></p>	<p><u>Dynamic:</u> This refers to holding meetings with relevant state actors in order to exert influence on its past or future decisions. These actions may be organized or suggested by the members or take place through the intervention of the ES when he or she identifies critical moments.</p> <p><u>Actors:</u> Executive, legislative, and judicial branches</p> <p><u>Types of possible strategies:</u> Meetings with officials/legislators; presenting opinions on bills/ cases under discussion/ requests related to access to public information and the freedom of expression. Requests related to policies of active</p>	<p><u>Dynamic:</u> Holding formal or informal meetings and gatherings at the request of international/ regional organizations; or as a result of a proposal made by member organizations or by the ES</p> <p><u>Actors:</u> Multilateral state organizations and agencies</p> <p><u>Types of possible strategies:</u> Advocacy in meetings of the OAS General Assembly; meetings with the IACHR commissioners; advocacy because of the rejection of a bill to regulate the participation of NGOs in OAS activities; strategic advocacy with the IACHR Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression and the local and international level;</p>	<p><u>Dynamic:</u> These activities may be organized or suggested by members; requested of the ES, other networks, non-member NGOs; or carried out through the intervention of the ES when he/she identifies critical moments for action.</p> <p><u>Actors:</u> Journalists, academics, and non-member NGOs</p> <p><u>Types of possible strategies:</u> Meetings with academics, journalists, non-governmental groups, etc.</p>

	Meetings with local or international officials; journalists; academics; members of international organizations etc.	transparency or information disclosure. Positions on regulations in the area of freedom of expression.	advocacy in the European Parliament about articles that restrict access to information; participation in meetings with the World Bank and the promotion of relationships between local officials and the social world. Requests for information disclosure or active transparency policies.	
<p><b>Applied Research</b></p> <p>This is research applied to advocacy on matters of common interest in Alianza Regional— studies that contribute to regional discussions about the situation of freedom of expression and information rights.</p>	<p><u>Dynamic:</u> This applied research can support collective discussion about local/ regional issues with a goal of improving the standards of existing policies, interventions of organizations etc. The studies are generated at the demand of the member organizations or at the proposal of the ES.</p> <p><u>Actors:</u> Two or more member organizations.</p> <p><u>Types of possible</u></p>	<p><u>Dynamic:</u> The materials developed may be used to advocate in various local/ regional state bodies. They are generated at the demand of member organizations or by proposal of the ES.</p> <p><u>Actors:</u> Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches</p> <p><u>Types of possible strategies:</u> Monitoring laws and practices of access to information; research on government disclosure of</p>	<p><u>Dynamic:</u> Studies are done at the request of international / regional organizations; at the proposal of member organizations or of the ES in order to advocate about the decisions of the international/ regional organizations or agencies.</p> <p><u>Actors:</u> multilateral state organizations and agencies</p> <p><u>Types of possible strategies:</u> regional reports on access to information and freedom of expression; advocacy</p>	<p><u>Dynamic:</u> These studies may be used to advocate around the actions/ positions of key actors (journalists, lawyers, media associations, or others). They are produced at the request of member organizations or by proposal of the ES.</p> <p><u>Actors:</u> Journalists, non-member NGOs, lawyers, etc.</p> <p><u>Types of possible strategies:</u> indicators about high-quality journalism and access to</p>



	<u>strategies:</u> Producing documents that systematize the regional situation on topics of interest for Alianza Regional; minimum standards; barometer; assessments; situation reports, study documents; etc.	information; The SABER MAS Report; Monitoring Guide; Report on Freedom of Expression; others.	with the report SABER MAS in IDB disclosure policies; presentation of the CIPA/OAS Best Practices Report; Comments on official documents of multilateral organizations, etc.	information; systematization and comparison of regulations at the regional level.
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