

# **Solidarity Network Civil Society for Transformative Change Organisational Values Statement**

**This Values Statement is presented as a working  
document**

# Preamble

The Solidarity Network developed a reflection and discussion paper entitled 'Towards a Civil Society for Transformative Change', which identified anchor values that motivate such civil society organisations. It convened a broad civil society deliberation to explore the ideas in this paper, which included a significant focus on the shared values that motivate us. This values statement emerges from and is reflective of these initiatives.

This values statement has been developed in a context that is challenging for civil society and for our wider democracy, and its preparation underpins the centrality of civil society organisations to a healthy and participative democracy.

This values statement seeks to capture the ideal for civil society organisations and has been developed to serve as a tool for internal reflection by organisations, and as a guide for movement building within a civil society for transformative change.

Within organisations, this values statement could be used to explore the values that are lived in the work we do as an organisation and the way we go about our work, and to review them for their alignment with this values statement. This would allow for reflection on the reasons for the alignment achieved and the barriers faced in achieving alignment, and would offer a benchmark for our organisation in how we might seek to be and function in the future.

In movement building, this values statement could be used to establish these values as a starting point for establishing the shared foundations across organisations and people for movement building. It could be further used in providing a vision and offering a touchstone for the activity of such a movement, reminding us as to what we are about as a movement for transformative change.

This values statement and the reflection it might stimulate should serve to build and shape the collective voice of civil society that forms around these shared values.

# Our Shared Values

Five shared anchor values that motivate civil society organisations for transformative change are:

**Radical Hope**  
**Equality**  
**Ecological Sustainability**  
**Solidarity**  
**Community**

This values statement sets out a definition for each of these values and establishes the implications of these values for our organisations in a:

**Statement of Priority:** the implications of the value for what we seek to achieve as an organisation.

**Statement of Process:** the implications of the value for the way the organisation works in pursuing its priorities.

These two statements provide benchmarks for reviewing and deliberating on the alignment of our organisation with these values.

## Values Statement

### **Radical Hope**

Belief that change is possible and what we do matters; embracing uncertainty; and pursuing a passionate engagement in the demand for and action on change, with attention trained on an equal, ecologically sustainable, and socially-just future.

- **Statement of Priority:** We strive to imagine and articulate an agenda for an equal, ecologically sustainable and socially-just future; assert and promote civil society as a core part of our democracy in advancing this future; and promote this better society for all, across society, social groups and communities.
- **Statement of Process:** We work in a manner that aligns our day-to-day work to fit with our vision of the future we seek; lives out the values for a civil society for transformative change; serves as a source of new ideas; and is brave and takes risks in building this new future.

## Equality

Equality of outcome for all involving: redistribution of resources; recognition of and welcome for diversity; representation for and empowerment of the diversity of groups and communities; and respect for and solidarity with this diversity across society.

- **Statement of Priority:** We strive to advocate and progress concrete demands for equality of outcome across the social, political, economic, cultural and environmental domains, such that all groups and communities have: equal access to and enjoyment of resources wealth and income, addressing class inequality and economic disadvantage; recognition for their diversity with the needs arising from that diversity addressed to secure inclusion; representation and influence in decision-making processes and democratic institutions; and respect, care and solidarity in their relationships with wider society and their interactions with institutions.
- **Statement of Process:** We work in a manner that brings a focus on equality of outcome into all strands of our work; ensures our work recognises and addresses specific needs arising from diversity; engages in ongoing learning to support this focus; and innovates and enables imagination in developing and pursuing new responses to achieving the goal of equality of outcome.

## Ecological Sustainability

A climate-friendly world, care for the planet and nature, and a sufficiency for all while ensuring lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources, through: a just transition and climate justice, restoration of biodiversity, mitigation of climate change, and an end to the drivers of climate disruption.

- **Statement of Priority:** We strive to advocate for and pursue concrete demands for ecological sustainability across the social, political, economic, cultural and environmental domains, such that: a just transition to a sustainable development model is achieved; and the perspective of our ecosystems is acknowledged and addressed.
- **Statement of Process:** We work in a manner that brings a focus on ecological sustainability into all strands of our work; ensure our ongoing operations are ecologically sustainable; brings forward the perspective of our ecosystems and engages in ongoing learning to support this; and innovates and enables imagination in developing and pursuing new responses to achieving the goal of ecological sustainability.

## Solidarity

Connecting and organising to address issues through collaboration, coordination and mutual support, overcoming siloed approaches and recognising that issues of equality, ecological sustainability and social justice have the same root causes.

- **Statement of Priority:** We strive to create collective spaces of connection, coordination and collaboration, based on shared values, that are intersectoral across organisations and intersectional across communities; and to build collective empowerment across the diversity of civil society.
- **Statement of Process:** We work in a manner that invests time and resources in collective spaces; uses these collective spaces to co-create and align agendas, build mutual support and work together towards shared goals; and ensures these collective spaces are inclusive and accessible, and involve democratic deliberation, learning and reflection.

## Community

Communal, collective, inclusive and cooperative perspectives and engagement, acknowledging interdependence and shared concerns to achieve change in communities and wider society.

- **Statement of Priority:** We strive to pursue collective action for change, enable and support the emergence of a diversity of community leaders, enable people to exercise influence and hold power to account; and build community knowledge, solidarity, power and strength, enabling people to realise their own power.
- **Statement of Process:** We work in a manner that enables imagination and analysis within communities; mobilises within communities to build advocacy for change; builds capacity to move from an individual to a collective focus; and engages in ongoing learning to pursue these approaches effectively.

## Using the Values Statement

In our organisation we seek to live the values of radical hope, equality, ecological sustainability, solidarity, and community. In this, we:

- Give time and create spaces within our organisation to reflect on and have discussions about civil society and what it needs to be and do, and, within that, our organisation and what it needs to be and do in being motivated by these values.
- Review our priorities and practices and assess our decisions for their alignment with these values and their implications.
- Espouse hope and resilience and lean in to find our contribution to the priorities and processes that flow from these values, and to break the boundaries that constrain us.

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