

## Afaal Standard Operating Procedures

**Scope:** The rules, processes and procedures for a good governance of the platform for change

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# Afaal Standard Operating Procedures

## Governance Rules & Processes

### Definitions:

**SOP=Standard Operating Procedures, MoM=Minutes of Meeting, SOW= Statement of Work, CRM= Customer Relation Management System, SF= Snowflake, NB=National Bloc, Afaal= Afaal Snowflake Platform for Change, toolbox = Webpage including all resources needed by Afaal members to do their work such as templates, procedures, etc. Lead Coordinator = One or more staff employed to manage Afaal ARNGO= Afaal Registered NGO**

## 1. Introduction

The “Afaal Snowflake Platform for Change” (Afaal) is an open, inclusive, decentralized, democratic, and collaborative community engagement tool. It is open to all who aim to create the Lebanon of the future or make a difference in the present situation. This platform is a non-profit one, it is neither made for products or services selling nor made for any other commercial activity and it will not be permitted to do so.

Originally an initiative of the “National Bloc” (NB) party, Afaal is now a spin-off that abides by its own rules enunciated in this Standard Operating Procedures document (SOP). Afaal will become totally independent with its own moral identity, executive board, and bylaws, expected in December 2021 (**Called Afaal Registered NGO – ARNGO – in this SOP**), once all administrative and governance issues have been completed and submitted to the Ministry of Interior. Until then, the NB will serve as its patron legal entity, providing required resources

Members of Afaal shall find in this document the standard operating procedures that will guide them to efficiently achieve their aims. Members are requested to abide by the rules and regulations mentioned here below, they are also requested to respect the non-reversible principles and ethos mentioned in point 2.2 and the 20 codes of conduct mentioned in point 2.3. The rest of this document gives the details of the rules, and the method of work of Afaal.

## 2. General Rules for all blocs and bloc members

### 2.1. Rules for joining a bloc

Afaal is an open platform where anyone can join by signing in online to the desired bloc. Upon receiving a welcome email, the person can also join the “WhatsApp” group of that bloc by clicking on the link provided in the email. The use of the WhatsApp groups are for coordinating activities only.

### 2.2. Immutable Principles and Ethos

All members of Afaal should agree to act according to the 5 following principles. These principles are the ethos of Afaal and cannot be changed or updated.

- a. Citizenship: Members should always think and act in the optics of a civil state where all Lebanese citizens are equal and within the spirit of a new social contract between the citizen and the state.
- b. Integrity: Members of Afaal will not practice passive nor active corruption.
- c. Democracy: Democratic methods will rule Afaal. There will be no favoritism, nepotism, feudal inheritance, or anything of the kind, in the hope to reach meritocracy.
- d. Rule of Law: Members are law abiding citizens that will change the law if it is not a good one but will not break it.
- e. Sovereignty: Decisions made by members should be for the best interest of Lebanon. Moreover, members will not favor or apply interests of other nations.

### **2.3. Code of conduct**

The 20 [Code of conduct](#) codes of conduct govern all ethical and behavioral conduct of members. The basic principle of integrity, inclusiveness, transparency, and respect of others are the core values of all members of the blocs.

### **2.4. Transparency of information**

The Snowflake is an open platform where transparency is the de facto mode of operation. At a minimum: the Statement of Work (SOW) of every bloc; its Minutes of Meetings (MOM); the name of the coordinator; the name of the members of every bloc are made available to the public. For the sake of protection of privacy, members and coordinators may opt to publish only their initials.

Blocs are strongly encouraged to publish additional information about their work on their own webpage (every bloc has its own webpage).

### **2.5. Expulsion of a member**

- a. A member can be expelled for breaching the code of conduct.
- b. Any member can file a violation complaint to the Appeals Committee.
- c. The internal rules of the Appeals Committee can be summarized as:
  - i- Decisions should be taken by unanimity
  - ii- Critical violations can lead to expulsion
  - iii- Mild violations lead to a warning
  - iv- 3 warnings lead to expulsion
  - v- Decisions must be documented but not made public
  - vi- Expulsions decisions must be communicated to the colleagues of the expelled member in the same bloc
  - vii- Confidentiality is of essence, dignity and privacy of the accused must be respected throughout the investigations

## **3. Bloc formation & dissolution**

### **3.1. Rules for bloc formation**

- a. A bloc can only be formed by spurring from an existing bloc
- b. Five (5) members are needed at least to form a new bloc

- i. Approval process from the IT for the new bloc formation
- ii. Members of an existing bloc can decide to form a new bloc in the next layer of the SF. They must appoint among themselves an interim coordinator for the new bloc from the start
- iii. Upon joining the new bloc, members leave the old bloc
- iv. Coordinator of the new bloc stays in the existing bloc

### **3.2. Rules for bloc closing**

A bloc closes when all its members leave it

## **4. Bloc Operations**

### **4.1. Statement of Work**

Every bloc must have its statement of work describing its mission and the scope of work it intends to do. The SOW must be published on the bloc's microsite. The SOW is a short statement including what the bloc wants to achieve (objective), how to achieve it (strategy), and the main activities that this will entail (tactics / scope of work) including deliverables and timeline whenever possible / available.

The bloc decides by loose consensus or by majority of votes to change its SOW. The coordinator must make sure that there is no serious contest to changing the SOW.

### **4.2. Meetings**

- a. Meetings are the main vehicle for conducting work within a bloc and informing other blocs and new members about the bloc's activities
- b. Coordinators must publish their MOMs on the bloc microsite within 72hrs (preferred) and the next meeting as default
- c. Meetings can be held anywhere
  - i. Recommendation to meet in public spaces
  - ii. Meetings can take place at NB facilities whenever capacity is available
  - iii. Members can meet online to accommodate everyone's availabilities and below are the standard procedures:  
The topic of discussion and the rules of deliberation are stated by a member of the Bloc or a host moderator of the session, or the coordinator of the bloc. This same person appoints a timekeeper who in turn checks that everyone in the meeting knows the rules of discussion, and he restates them:
    - 1- Requesting the floor takes place through a raise of hand
    - 2- The moderator gives the floor to those who want to address the group according to the sequence of their show of hands. In case written questions are posed through the 'chat' option, the moderator reads them to the audience using the same sequence, while mentioning the name of the questioner who is given 30 seconds for a verbal communication in case he requests it.
    - 3- Those who request the floor are given two minutes, and are allowed as well to address the audience for another 30 seconds as a feedback on some comments or questions regarding their speech.

- 4- The timekeeper reminds the speaker 15 seconds prior to the end of his allotted time, and stops his talk once his two minutes are exhausted. He also puts an end to any ensuing verbal communication once it exceeds 30 seconds.
  - 5- The moderator puts an end to any talk by the speaker that goes beyond the subject matter being discussed.
  - 6- A member of any bloc can send a written note using the website of Afaal, or the WhatsApp, to request discussing an emerging topic; accordingly, the coordinator would set up a meeting to discuss the issue.
- d. MOMs should be detailed (date and duration, attendees, decisions taken, assigned tasks. Template for MOMs can be found on the toolbox)
  - e. Decisions are taken by loose consensus during the meeting and dates of next meeting are determined at the end of every meeting.
  - f. Any member can propose a meeting using the WhatsApp bloc group

### **4.3. Congress**

All members of AFAAL shall meet at least once a year during Afaal Congress

### **4.4. Election of bloc coordinators**

- a. Bloc elects its own coordinator after the third meeting
- b. Coordinator needs to be Lebanese citizen or resident
- c. Every February, all blocs elect a new coordinator for a mandate of one year
- d. Since coordinators elections happen yearly in February, interim, or exceptional elections can happen when a new bloc is opened, or when the coordinator voluntarily resigns, or when the coordinator is forced to step down. In this case, the term of the elected coordinator is the time remaining until the date of the next regular elections in February
- e. Same coordinator can cumulate only 2 consecutive terms

### **4.5. Elections Logistics**

- a. E-voting is the way coordinators elections are conducted
- b. The call for the elections must be communicated at least one month in advance by the appointed lead coordinator to all the bloc members electronically.
- c. All elections (First and second round - if any) have to be conducted between the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 25<sup>th</sup> of February. The coordinator-elect mandate starts March 1<sup>st</sup>.
- d. The period of voting must also be disclosed in the announcement and must not exceed 48 hours.
- e. Candidates must declare their candidacy electronically (By e-mail sent to all the members of the bloc copying the appointed lead coordinator) within 7 days after the call for elections.
- f. The appointed lead coordinator sends to all members a mail that includes all the candidates' names and the date of the first round of elections (With a link to the e-ballot). Lead coordinator must also send a note to the WhatsApp group to check their mails for good order's sake.
- g. Candidates to the elections must submit their programs (Views, new projects, etc...) 10 days after their filing for their candidacy (By e-mail to all members of the bloc copying the appointed lead coordinator)

- h. Above 50% of the bloc members that have cast their ballots is needed to win the elections
- i. If there is no quorum during the first round (2/3 of the members of the bloc) then a second elections round shall be scheduled 3 days after the first round. Coordinator will be elected without quorum in the second round.
- j. Results of the e-voting will be sent automatically by e-mails to all concerned in the elections
- k. Once elected, coordinator automatically joins the bloc on the upper level

#### **4.6. Demoting a coordinator**

- a. Exceptionally, the decision to replace a coordinator before his/her term has expired can take place by request of 2/3 of the bloc
- b. In this case, interim exceptional elections should take place as per 4.4 above

#### **4.7. Job description of a bloc coordinator**

##### 4.7.A - Members management

- a. Coordinators should follow up with new members and make sure new members are real people and motivated to be part of the snowflake
- b. Should enter all data pertaining to the members in CRM
- c. Keep an updated list of active members of the bloc on mailing list and WhatsApp group
- d. Coordinators are the first line of support to the members and follow up with members individually
- e. Their job is to:
  - i. Know the member activity
  - ii. Facilitate discussion between different members
  - iii. Understand members frustration and try to keep them retained
  - iv. Keep the team spirit up
  - v. Lead the members into achieving the SOW in the most efficient way
  - vi. Moderate the online meetings and WhatsApp group of the bloc
  - vii. Call for meetings, issue or make issue the MOM after each meeting

##### 4.7.B - Collaboration with other teams and with other coordinators

- a. Attend the monthly coordinators meeting where they report about their bloc's activity
- b. Biweekly/weekly meetings with their sub-blocs' coordinators as needed
- c. Submit request for help to other blocs and process request for help coming from other blocs through the platform

##### 4.7.C - Preferable Skills of a coordinator

- a. Project management skills and well organized
- b. Technical skills and knowledge in relation with the bloc SOW
- c. Facilitation/human skills

##### 4.7.D - Coordinators assign roles to bloc members based on the recommendations found here below:

- a. Secretary (minutes, correspondence)
- b. Treasurer (if applicable)
- c. Public relations / Spokesperson (if applicable)

#### **4.8. Bloc members responsibilities**

- a. Abide by the 20 codes of conduct (See point 2.3), and this SOP
- b. Members should be serious and efficient
- c. Members can belong to as many blocs as they want. However, we recommend, as best practice, to limit membership to two blocs as the workload and the time commitment might be heavy.

#### **4.9. Intellectual Property**

All works, including but not limited to, items, projects, ideas, materials, papers, studies, concepts, present or future, developed or created by bloc members jointly, or one or more members shall be made available to the public under the [Creative Common License](#)

#### **4.10. Projects General Policy**

Every bloc can start a project that is in line with its scope of work given the following conditions:

- Must follow the procedures set forth by the “Project Support Team” (PST).
- Must provide the “PST” with technical and business requirements.
- Must participate in the fundraising
- Must be completely implicated in the implementation of the project
- Any project must be branded or co-branded by Afaal.

The PST of the ARNGO is staffed by professionals in order to provide tools and support for any bloc to plan, control, execute, and report on their projects. Specifically, it must provide support to all blocs implementing projects as follows:

##### **Before the launch of the project:**

1. Write a concept note and/or proposal for the project
2. Prepare the budget of the project that must include services and communications costs (outsourced or provided by other blocs) in both cash and in-kind donations.
3. Approach and pitch to potential donors

##### **During implementation:**

4. Provide project management tips and tools
5. Implement accounting and spending best practices

##### **After completion of the project:**

6. Closing the project and preparation of the delivery report.

### **5. Platform Constitution**

#### **5.1. Procedures for changing this SOP**

- a. Any member can request changing the SOP by contacting the Internal Governance Support Bloc IGSB or one of the Lead coordinators.
- b. Adding, changing, up-dating and adjusting can be done to this SOP or to any point in it except to the point 2.2 which is immutable
- c. The request for changing the SOP needs the approval of 1/3 of the total number of coordinators during the monthly coordinators meeting

- d. Platform Support Bloc proceeds to make changes
- e. Open consultation period of 15 days of the draft changes shall be made by email to all Afaal members. All comments received during the consultation period will be reviewed by the Platform Support Bloc.
- f. Changes must be validated by 2/3 of coordinators during the monthly meeting for new SOP to become effective.

### **5.2. Role of Lead Coordinators**

- a. Up to 3 operational staffs are hired as Lead Coordinators by ARNGO
- b. Call for monthly coordinators' meetings, and manage the meeting and document the outputs of the blocs reported during the meeting
- c. Follow up on decisions taken during monthly coordinators meetings
- d. Be member of the Appeals Committee to solve dire Afaal problems
- e. Provide technical coordination, follow up, support, providing logistics and any other support requested by any of the blocs
- f. Observe overlapping of work of blocs, and facilitate communication and cooperation between blocs
- g. Share relevant information between all blocs
- h. Evaluate performance of all blocs

### **5.3. Role of the IGSB (Acting Appeals Committee)**

- a. Make changes to the SOP on a per need basis and after request from coordinators
- b. Act as ombudsman to the organization offering wisdom and clarity on the role and functions of Afaal and its SOP
- c. Solves dire people problems encountered by platform (differences in opinion, feud, unhappiness, etc.)
- d. Sanctions or removes member in case of dire breach of code of conduct (see 2.5)

## **6. Cooperation between blocs**

- a. Coordinator to coordinator assistance is available from the platform through a ticket support system. Any coordinator can request assistance from any other bloc through the platform. Coordinators are urged to reply to request received in the shortest delay possible.
- b. Cooperation takes place also in the following means
  - i. Through the IT platform and toolbox
  - ii. Monthly general coordinators meeting of all coordinators
  - iii. Constant communication and coordination with lead coordinator(s)

## **7. External communications rules and regulations**

- a. Afaal has its own social media presence
- b. Blocs can post to the Afaal social media after supplying the needed information via the Lead coordinator to the communication manager
- c. If more help is needed for external communications, a specialized communications team needs to be formed to support the blocs in their communications needs.
- d. Nobody speaks on behalf of Afaal, as a platform, unless designated as a spokesperson by the coordinators during the coordinators meeting and approved later by the founders. This procedure doesn't apply on field broadcasting during which the coordinator of the bloc or the lead coordinator have the right to be interviewed.



- e. Identity of any bloc needs to follow common communications guidelines (Afaal Identity Standards) developed by the communication team after getting the approval of the Lead Coordinator
- f. Any new bloc must consult the Comm. team when deciding on the identity and social media presence
- g. When communicating on behalf of Afaal (social media), communication team needs to use the Afaal identity as set in the Graphics Standards. Logo, colors, Pack shot, Press Layout, Posters, etc...have to be approved via the lead coordinator after consulting with the bloc coordinator.
- h. Comm. Team must help in the communications strategy of any bloc.
- i. All blocs must send to the Comm. Team all kinds of communication performed/produced by them such as Photos, Videos, layouts, posters, etc...for archiving purposes
- j. Any communication identity for any bloc cannot include references of political party's logos