

Management Statement of Development Purpose
Approved by the Board of Trustees, April 27, 2017

IBON Foundation is a non-stock non-profit non-government organization (NGO) serving the Filipino people through its research, education and advocacy work. Since being set up in 1978, IBON's programs have evolved in line with developments in the country's context and the needs of the people's movement for genuine social change for the better. Among others this includes improving the organization's management systems covering its structure, policies, procedures and methods.

IBON acknowledges that sound management systems are vital for the organization to operate efficiently and to be effective in pursuit of its core vision and mission. We are however also conscious of how the well-meaning development of NGO management systems may inadvertently result in inflexible and unresponsive bureaucracies, which has happened in the Philippines and elsewhere. We believe that NGO systems should make organizations more relevant to the people's movement and the situations of communities. They should also develop and harness the energies of its staff, not stifle or constrain them.

This management statement of development purpose is articulated to affirm the organization's reason for being and as a reminder that IBON's management systems are developed not for the sake of the organization per se but to ensure that IBON efficiently and effectively performs its research, education and advocacy work in the service of the Filipino people. Progress in the struggles and aspirations of the people are paramount and the organization does not conceive any successes or impact that are distinct and separate from this.

In developing our systems, we are guided by the following core principles:

1. **Stewardship.** IBON recognizes that its resources are formally and legally the organization's but also that these were raised by virtue of the organization's mission of development and intended wholly and solely for this purpose. This implies an ethic of responsible planning, management and use of resources not for the interest of the organization and its board, staff and members but for advancing the struggles and aspirations of the people. IBON commits to ensuring the best use of the organization's resources for development and for the people especially the most marginalized. This also includes committing to combat inefficiency, waste and misuse of these resources. These will ensure that the organization maintains the trust and confidence of the people's movement. The organization's accountability is most of all to the people.
2. **Democracy and collective action.** IBON upholds the principle that genuine social change and development can only be achieved through principled and organized struggles of the greatest number. This underpins our key strategy of being entrenched in the vibrant people's movement and, in particular, of working with and through the people's organizations that are at the core of the movement. These people's organizations embody the participation of the widest number of people in society and constitute the most potent forces for democracy and development in the country. This principle also defines how IBON organizes itself internally. We seek systems that emphasize collective leadership, unity and teamwork to strengthen commitment, maintain high morale, develop capacities, and unleash initiative and enthusiasm.
3. **Pro-people orientation.** IBON upholds its bias for the interest and welfare of the majority of the people. Externally, this is reflected in programs and services that are designed to support the people's movement. These are moreover implemented in ways that accommodate the particular needs and circumstances of communities and the basic sectors. Internally, this is reflected in the organization's efforts to ensure the general well-being and continuous development of all its staff.

These efforts span formal organizational systems, policies, procedures and activities – including but not restricted to due remuneration and benefits – but also the informal work environment and relations with each other. We promote collective, collaborative, constructive and mutually supportive relations and shun competition, careerism, individualism, sexism and other negative attitudes.

These core principles remind us to do the following, among others:

1. Ensure planning, monitoring and evaluation that enables effective decision-making, prudent use of resources and energetic implementation. This includes but is not restricted to seeking the democratic participation of all members of the organization in an organized manner.
2. Maintain high morale in the organization by continuously developing the spirit of commitment, volunteerism and service to the people. We strive to move along a common direction based on unity in analysis, goals and methods.
3. Ensure that the organization and all its members develop the wide range of skills, capacities and professionalism needed while remaining grounded in people's struggles and participating in people's actions. Among others this includes integrating with the life and struggles of grassroots communities and sectors, attending forums and discussions, and joining other educational activities even outside the organization.
4. Develop systems to improve our operational practice while conscious to avoid unnecessarily bureaucratic or ponderous systems, methods and procedures.
5. Ensure balance between basic organizational requirements and responding to sudden or urgent developments in the fluid social, political and economic context we work in.
6. Ensure that we have sufficient staff, equipment, facilities and activities for effective implementation of our programs while conscious to avoid excessive staff and remuneration as well as unnecessary or extravagant equipment, facilities and activities.
7. Ensure that the organization's independence and self-reliance is not compromised by, for instance, funding relationships that are inconsistent with the organization's mission, values and advocacies.
8. Share our principles and experience with our development partners to promote understanding as well as to improve our practice.

IBON Foundation survives, persists and advances on the basis of these core values, by the determined efforts of individuals committed to work collectively for a cause, and especially as part of a larger people's movement for genuine change for the better in society. We develop our systems accordingly and in pursuit of goals going far beyond the organization. ###