

4.2.4 EXTERNAL RELATIONS

4.2.4.1 Communications Policy

Commitment by UnitingWorld

UnitingWorld is committed to ensuring that all communications clearly reflect our work, our values, and that all information and images are collected and used ethically.

UnitingWorld is a signatory to the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct (2017), which includes a number of communication requirements which are covered in this policy. The policy meets the obligations in the ACFID Code of Conduct, and UnitingWorld will seek to deepen the quality of its practice over the life of the Code of Conduct.

Implementation of this policy will be guided by the *UnitingWorld Procedures Manual*.

Scope of the Policy

All representatives of UnitingWorld are bound by this policy.

'Representatives' are any personnel funded by or undertaking tasks on behalf of UnitingWorld. They include:

- staff of UnitingWorld undertaking work on behalf of UnitingWorld;
- members of the two National Committees;
- volunteers of UnitingWorld including individuals and groups who visit overseas partners or projects or individuals who represent UnitingWorld within Australia;
- advisers/consultants and associated personnel engaged by UnitingWorld; and
- personnel of organisations subcontracted by contractors or UnitingWorld.

This policy covers all communications, activities and materials produced or shared by UnitingWorld representatives. Communications materials include UnitingWorld's website, social media pages, newsletters, appeals and campaigns, advertisements, brochures, reports, images and all other print and digital media produced for public audiences. Activities include speaking engagements, training and conferences, liaising with media, representatives networking in the sector, personal social media and email communications.

This policy directs all of UnitingWorld's communications with donors, supporters, partners, the Uniting Church, and Australian and international communities.

Policy Context

The media landscape is continually shifting and evolving with new technological advances. This has caused a proliferation of sources on information into the public domain, often with conflicting messages. UnitingWorld notes the growing public interest and literacy in critical development discourses, and acknowledges its responsibility to provide clear, factual and ethical communications to inform the public and promote the sector. This responsibility is

guided by our *Communications Procedures*, which will be updated periodically to adapt to the evolving media landscape. Staff will also be trained on new updates to policy and procedures.

Principles

1. Our communications will be truthful and respectful

Guided by UnitingWorld's *Code of Conduct* and the ACFID *Code of Conduct*,¹ UnitingWorld communications must:

- Clearly and accurately describe the goals, purposes and activities of UnitingWorld, in line with our values;
- Clearly distinguish between relief and development programs and church ministry programs
- Clearly distinguish between projects and donations eligible for Deductible Gift Recipient status those that are not.
- Ensure that information and images are collected and used ethically;
- Be accessible and consistent across all our audiences;
- Portray people's images and stories in a dignified and respectful manner;
- Respect privacy and not disclose personal information inappropriately;
- Clearly state how funds donated will be used;
- Visibly and plainly acknowledge Australian Government-funded activities;
- Only make claims which UnitingWorld can fulfil;
- Uphold the values of public accountability and transparency; and
- Present our message in sustainable ways, reducing our environmental impact.

Implementation of these standards will be guided by *UnitingWorld Procedures Manual* and the *UnitingWorld Style Guide*.

2. Our communications will reinforce a brand that is consistent with our identity

UnitingWorld communications will aim to reinforce a brand (brand = ideas which are associated with our name) that is consistent with our Mission, Vision and Values; our identity as a Christian organisation; and our identity as an Agency of the Uniting Church of Australia.

To this end, UnitingWorld communications will:

- Report on programs and our connections with partner organisations in ways that are accurate, timely and accessible to supporters and the public;
- Engage the Church in Australia, to discern God's purpose globally and to help lead the Church in making effective and meaningful connections, including reducing poverty and injustice;
- Relate respectfully to our overseas partners, standing alongside them and their communities, listening and adding to their voice; and

¹ Specifically, 'Quality Principle 6' and its commitments outlined on page 8 of the ACFID Code of Conduct.

- Affirm the genuine long-term relationships which underpin all our activities.

UnitingWorld's visual branding guidelines for design, text, images, voice, and use of logos are detailed in the *UnitingWorld Style Guide* which will be periodically updated as required.

3. UnitingWorld communications will be professionally managed and subject to an approval process

UnitingWorld communications is the responsibility of the National Director. The National Director will be UnitingWorld's media spokesperson unless otherwise delegated. If the National Director is unable to speak for the Agency, then one of the Chairs, in consultation with the General Secretary of the National Assembly, may speak for the Agency.

UnitingWorld will develop and implement communications procedures to ensure compliance with this policy.

The National Director will appoint a communications focal person who will monitor compliance with this Policy, update communications Procedures as needed, and organise periodic training with UnitingWorld staff, volunteers and representatives on this policy and communications procedures relevant to their work.

Related Resources

To implement this policy, the *UnitingWorld Procedures Manual* contains associated procedures and guidelines.

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UnitingWorld is guided by the following policies, codes and requirements:

Uniting Church Assembly Policies:

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Uniting Church Assembly Privacy Policy:

http://assembly.uca.org.au/images/PDF/Assembly_Privacy_Policy.pdf

ACFID Code of Conduct:

https://acfid.asn.au/sites/site.acfid/files/ACFID%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20JUNE2017_0.pdf

DFAT Visual Branding: <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/corporate/Pages/logos-and-style-guides.aspx#branding-aid>

DFAT ANCP Manual: <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/ancp-manual.pdf>

Privacy Act and Principles: <https://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy-law/privacy-act/>

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