

Communication and Transparency Policy

Functional Area: Communication

Date approved: 01 December 2022

Board Resolution: UWB20221201-04

1 Context

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

UnitingWorld is a signatory to the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct (2017). This policy addresses the Code's communication and transparency requirements. UnitingWorld is an organisational member of the Fundraising Institute of Australia (FIA) and is committed to abiding by the FIA Code.

2 Scope

This policy applies to all UnitingWorld Representatives, defined as any personnel funded by or undertaking tasks on behalf of UnitingWorld, as per the Governance Framework.

This policy covers all communications, activities and materials produced or shared by UnitingWorld Representatives. Communication materials include UnitingWorld's website, social media channels, newsletters, appeals and campaigns material, 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 UnitingWorld's communications with donors, supporters, partners, the Uniting Church in Australia, and Australian and international communities.

3 Policy Commitments

Principle 1: We will ensure that all our communications clearly reflect our work, our values and that all information and images included in our communications are collected and used ethically.

Principle 2: We will be transparent in our work and accountable to our key stakeholders, in particular people living in poverty.

4 Policy implementation

4.1 Our communications will reflect our work

We are guided by UnitingWorld's *Code of Conduct*, the *ACFID Code of Conduct* and *ACFID Fundraising Charter*, and FIA Code. UnitingWorld communications must:

- Be truthful and respectful;
- Clearly and accurately describe the goals, purposes and activities of UnitingWorld, in line with our values;
- Clearly distinguish between development and any non-development activities (including those that meet DFAT's definition of welfare, or are social services);
- 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;
- Present our message in sustainable ways, reducing our environmental impact; and
- Not include statements about other ACFID Members with the intention of creating a reputational or other advantage to UnitingWorld.

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

4.2 Our communications will reinforce a brand that is consistent with our identity and values

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 in 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 Uniting Church in Australia, to discern God's purpose globally and to help lead the Church in making effective and meaningful connections, including by reducing poverty and injustice;
- Relate respectfully to our overseas partners, amplifying their voice; and
- 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 is updated as required.

4.3 We will professionally manage our communications, including through an approval process

The National Director is responsible for all UnitingWorld communications and is UnitingWorld's media spokesperson unless the Board determines otherwise. If the National Director is unable to speak for

the Agency, then the Chair of the Board, in consultation with the General Secretary of the National Assembly, may speak for the Agency.

Head of Fundraising and Communications is UnitingWorld's Communications Focal Point and will monitor compliance with this policy, update communications procedures as needed and organise periodic training for UnitingWorld Representatives. The Head of Operations is delegated by the National Director to sign off on communications.

UnitingWorld will conduct annual reviews of its obligations under the ACFID Code and Fundraising Charter (and successor documents) and the FIA Code.

4.4 We will be a transparent and accountable organisation

We will share information about our work with the public through a range of online platforms. We will be accountable to the National Assembly, applicable regulators and our volunteers, supporters, donors, suppliers and host governments.

The information UnitingWorld publishes and how we respond to requests for information are important aspects of accountability. We will proactively publish information, and on request will disclose information or give reasons for any decision not to disclose (for example, to respect confidentiality or privacy). In determining whether to publish or otherwise disclose information, we will consider the protection of vulnerable persons and the benefit and impact of disclosure to our partners, their communities, and our donors and stakeholders.

UnitingWorld will develop and implement transparency processes to ensure compliance with ACFID Code requirements and good practice, including compliance calendars and guidance for collection of images, stories and consent.

5 Related Resources

- Uniting Church Assembly Policies;
- Uniting Church Assembly Privacy Policy;
- ACFID Code of Conduct, including the ACFID Fundraising Charter;
- DFAT Visual Branding;
- DFAT ANCP Manual;
- Privacy Act and Principles; and
- Fundraising Institute of Australia Code.

6 Review Schedule

Date of next review: November 2025