



Communication Policy

Policy Statement

Baptist World Aid Australia (BWAA) is committed to providing accurate, transparent, respectful and timely communication to all stakeholders.

Communication is essential to advancing our mission, strengthening trust, and ensuring our work is understood by our supporters, partners, and the communities we serve. BWAA communicates in ways that uphold dignity, protect people, and accurately represent our work and impact.

Our communication practices align with DFAT requirements, the ACFID Code of Conduct, and our Christian values. We are committed to portraying people and communities fairly, avoiding harm, and ensuring contributors retain dignity and agency in how their stories are shared. BWAA is committed to promoting gender equity, the meaningful participation of people with disability, and the inclusion and representation of individuals and communities experiencing marginalisation through all communication practices.

Scope and Purpose

This policy applies to all BWAA representatives, including staff, volunteers, contractors, board members and any individuals representing BWAA in communication activities.

It covers all forms of internal and external communication.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all BWAA communication is ethical, accurate, respectful, safe, consistent with organisational values, and compliant with relevant standards.

Policy Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to: -

- Ensure communication reflects BWAA's mission, values, and priorities.
- Promote respectful and ethical communication.
- Ensure communication is accurate, honest, and compliant.
- Support consistent organisational messaging.
- Protect individuals, especially children, through safe storytelling.
- Promote gender equity, disability inclusion and the meaningful representation and participation of marginalised groups in all communication.
- Promote transparency.
- Strengthen supporter trust through timely communication.
- Ensure contributors are informed, voluntary participants and maintain their control, voice and dignity in how their stories and information are represented and used.
- Promote understanding.



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COLLABORATIVE



LEARNING

What does the policy look like in practice?

Clear, Ethical and Respectful Communication

- Portray people with dignity and fairness. (e.g. people adequately clothed, not in demeaning or vulnerable poses).
- Avoid stereotyping, demeaning language, and sensationalism.
- Reflect true context.
- Minimise risks of harm. (e.g. by not using real names of children in publications or displaying geographic markers).
- Protect identifying information.
- Support BWAA's GEDSI commitments by promoting gender equity, disability inclusion, and equitable representation, and by actively including the voice of marginalized groups.
- Use clear, easy-to-understand language.
- Avoid emotional manipulation and exploitation of suffering.
- Remain nonpartisan and avoid political endorsement.
- Respect privacy and confidentiality (e.g. by protecting identities in situations of increased risk or vulnerability).

Truthful, Accurate and Transparent Information

- Reflect true activities and outcomes.
- Avoid misleading statements and imagery.
- Avoid exaggerating impact.
- Provide truthful information.
- Clearly acknowledge partner roles in program delivery.
- Provide transparency about funding sources, including support from the Australian public and DFAT where applicable.

Informed Consent and Safe Content

- Obtain and provide evidence of meaningful and informed consent in accordance with BWAA's Informed Consent and Communications Resources Policy.
- Ensure contributors understand the ways that their information, images and stories will be used.
- Protect children and vulnerable individuals.
- Ensure no content is used outside the scope of consent given.

Child Safe Communication

- Adhere to safeguarding requirements as outlined in BWAA's Child Safe Policy and Safeguarding Code of Conduct.
- Conceal identifying details.
- Never depict children in distress or inappropriate contexts.

Consistent Brand Representation

- Consistently align with organisational brand, messaging and tone guidelines.

Communication Channels

- Use appropriate communication channels, including web content, social media, publications, email, campaigns and church engagement.
- Ensure all public channels provide access to BWAA's complaints process.

Media and Public Statements

- Ensure only authorised representatives speak on behalf of BWAA in accordance with BWAA's Media and Public Relations Policy.
- Public comments must align with approved organisational positions.

Social Media

- Manage official channels through authorised staff in accordance with BWAA's Social Media Policy.
- Moderate comments to protect safety, dignity and accuracy.
- Clearly identify BWAA where relevant.
- Ensure BWAA representatives, including staff and volunteers, do not use personal social media activity in a way that implies direct representation of BWAA or brings BWAA into disrepute.

Risk Management

- Review communication internally using BWAA's Communication Compliance Checklist to ensure compliance and guide ethical decision making.
- Manage risks in accordance with BWAA's Organisational Risk Management Framework.
- Require CEO or SLT approval for sensitive or high-risk stories.
- Fundraising content must comply with ACFID's Fundraising Charter and ethical fundraising expectations.
- Inform stakeholders where appropriate.

Responsibilities

Position	Responsible for:
CEO and Senior Leadership Team	• Strategic oversight of communication to ensure alignment with BWAA's values, safeguarding, and ACFID Code requirements. • Ensuring governance, systems and resources support ethical, accurate and transparent communication. • Providing feedback and preapproval of high-risk content.
Director and National Engagement Extended Leadership Team	• Operational oversight of this policy, ensuring communication is truthful, respectful, non-misleading and brand-aligned. • Managing review and approval processes, including high-risk content.

	Ensuring safeguarding, informed consent, and transparency in partner and donor representation in line with ACFID expectations.
Senior Manager and Communications, Marketing and Digital Teams	- Producing and reviewing content that is accurate, ethical, non-partisan and GEDSI-inclusive. - Managing official digital channels and moderate content to protect dignity and prevent misinformation. - Ensuring all channels clearly communicate complaints pathways, as required by the ACFID Code. - Ensuring stories and images have informed consent, respect culture and context, and protect children and vulnerable people. - Ensuring content reflects BWAA's commitment to gender equity, disability inclusion and the participation of marginalized groups.
Programs, Safeguarding and Partner-Facing Teams	- Ensuring stories and images have informed consent, respect culture and context, and protect children and vulnerable people. - Ensuring accurate representation of partner roles and community-led development approaches in line with ACFID communication principles. - Ensuring partners are informed about BWAA's communication policy and brand guidelines. - Facilitating inclusive storytelling by supporting participation of women, people with disability, and marginalized groups in content development.
All BWAA Representatives	- Upholding BWAA's communication policy, standards, safeguarding requirements and brand values in all communications. - Ensuring personal social media activity does not bring BWAA into disrepute or conflict with BWAA's values. - Avoiding misleading, harmful or partisan public comments - Reporting communication related risks.
Risk and Governance, in collaboration with Communications Leadership, Safeguarding and Executive teams	Monitoring compliance with this policy.

Compliance with this policy will be monitored by the positions listed in the table above.

Noncompliance with this policy will be managed in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy.

Accessing the Policy

This policy is available to all BWAA representatives through the BWAA Governance Hub on the Policies and Procedures Teams Channel and, where relevant, on BWAA's website.

It will be provided for all new staff, volunteers, and contractors as part of BWAA's induction process to ensure clear understanding of their communication responsibilities and BWAA's commitments to ethical, truthful, safe, and accountable communication.

Review and Amendment

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if required due to changes in legislation, the ACFID Code of Conduct, DFAT requirements, safeguarding standards, or organisational needs. Reviews will ensure the policy remains accurate, practical, and aligned with BWAA's commitment to responsible, ethical, and transparent communication.

Definitions

- **Communication** – Any sharing of information, images, stories or messages in digital, print, verbal or visual form.
- **Representative** – Any staff member, volunteer, contractor or Board member acting on behalf of BWAA.
- **Informed Consent** – Voluntary, informed agreement from an individual (or guardian) to collect and use their story or image, with a clear understanding of how it will be used.
- **Social Media** – Any online platform used for public communication, including Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, X/Twitter, YouTube and similar platforms.
- **Safeguarding** – Measures that protect children and vulnerable people from harm, abuse, exploitation or misuse of their personal information or images.

Related Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents, which provide further guidance on communication, safeguarding, transparency and accountability:

- Media and Public Relations Policy
- Fundraising Policy
- Informed Consent and Communication Resources Policy
- Brand Guidelines (BWAA and TAI)
- Social Media Policy
- Advocacy Policy
- Complaints Handling Policy
- Non-Development Activity Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Safeguarding Code of Conduct
- Child Safe Policy
- Communication Compliance Checklist
- Non-Development Activity (NDA) Checklist

These documents ensure BWAA's communication practices remain ethical, respectful, transparent and aligned with ACFID expectations

External References

- ACFID Code of Conduct, including Quality Principles relating to rights, dignity, accountability, transparency and truthful communication.
- DFAT Guidelines and Australian Aid branding requirements.
- Fundraising Institute of Australia requirements.
- Relevant Australian privacy, child-safeguarding and charity governance legislation.

Document Control Information

Communications Policy	
Owner	Glen Hill – Director of National Engagement
Master Copy	Risk & Governance Team
Document Type	Approval required
☐ Governance, Substantive Operational/ Organisation Policies	Board
☒ Operational/ Organisation Policies	Executive
☐ Departmental Policies	Department Director
☐ Procedure	Department Director
☐ Substantive Procedure/ Procedure that impacts whole organisation	Executive
☐ Other BWAA Documents: work instructions, forms, guidelines, manuals	Department Director
☐ Other substantive BWAA Document	Departmental Director, Executive and Board
Date created	14/01/2015
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Date Approved	26/06/2026
Date next Review	26/06/2029

Date	Version	Revision Description	Reviewed / Updated by
04/05/15	1	Finalised first draft for submission to Board	Director of Community Engagement
22/05/15	2	Updates following Board review	Director of Community Engagement
22/09/15	3	Updated to incorporate identified QA project requirements	Marketing Manager
22/01/15	4	Updates to definitions, related policies, social media section and approval requirements	Marketing Manager
10/02/16	5	Updates following review by MarComm	Director of Community Engagement
13/05/16	6	Update to 1.11 Social Media to incorporate reference to complaints handling	Marketing Manager
28/06/16	7	Update to 1.3 to incorporate the sharing of relevant policies and tools with overseas partners	Marketing Manager

14/12/2017	8	Review and update – including ACFID Code alignment, role updates, strategy updates	Marketing Manager
2/3/2020	9	General updates and review	Marketing Manager
26/7/2021	10	Updated in line with EDMF and ACFID Remedial Action	Director of Marketing and Communication
5/02/2026	11	Updated as part of policy review cycle	Director of National Engagement