

Communication Policy

Policy Statement

Transform Aid International (TAI) is committed to accurate, transparent and effective communication to our Australian constituency and all local and overseas stakeholders. Such communication is integral to achieving our aims and building public support for our vision and mission.

Scope and purpose

The purpose of the Communication Policy is to guide all individuals associated with TAI, including but not necessarily limited to Board members and Staff (see Definitions section) in the development and implementation of communication activities, in accordance with the current Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Guidelines and the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct.

This policy applies to TAI Representatives in communicating with all stakeholders whether within or outside the organisation. This Policy will be published to Staff through the intranet or to others as required. All must confirm in writing that they have read and understood this document.

The Communication Policy covers various methods of external and internal communication, including fundraising appeals, campaigns, products, church deputations and presentations which align with and support overall organisation objectives.

The Communication Policy applies to TAI and any brands operated by TAI, including Baptist World Aid Australia (BWAA), the primary brand used for engaging Australian constituents. This policy refers primarily to TAI from this point.

This policy does not provide detailed guidance on complaints, privacy, information management or personal use of social media, each of which are dealt with by separate policies.

Policy Objectives

TAI has the vision of “a world where poverty has ended and all people enjoy the fullness of life God intends”. This fullness of life extends to both those we partner with overseas and our Australian constituents. Our vision considers fullness of life to incorporate the physical, mental, emotional, relational and spiritual.

Communication by TAI aims to contribute to this vision by:

- Increasing awareness of the organisation, our goals, work and needs;
- Enhancing understanding of key issues and sharing knowledge amongst supporters, partners, our constituency and the broader community;
- Sharing knowledge internally for effective organisational management; and
- Increasing the profile and understanding of the development sector.
- Enable fundraising participants to control and determine how they are portrayed
- Make respectful, wise and ethical decisions about what information is shared and how people are portrayed.

The objective of this policy is to promote these ends by ensuring all communication is:

- Consistent with the vision, mission and values of TAI;
- In accordance with current DFAT guidelines;
- In accordance with the ACFID Code of Conduct and ACFID Fundraising Charter, to which we are a signatory;
- Adhering to Christian and biblical principles;
- Aiming to build positive long-term relationships with stakeholders;
- Building positive brand equity;
- Respectful and empowering;
- Not making misleading or false statements;
- Protects the safety and privacy of all contributors;
- Non-partisan;
- Not promoting individual Board members and Staff businesses or money making ventures;
- Not denigrating other agencies; and

- Not attacking anyone personally (not precluding appropriate criticism).

The outcomes of this policy are that:

- Relevant stakeholders are informed of key communication activities; and
- All communication activities are timely, consistent and appropriate.

Policy Detail

1 Outgoing brand communication

Outgoing brand communication is information and knowledge that is initiated, developed and distributed by Staff for external stakeholders. This includes graphic design work, both written and spoken word, imagery, and video, distributed through any channels.

1.1 Reflect organisation values

TAI will ensure our communication clearly reflects our organisation values.

TAI values are stated as:

We are called, We are caring, We are together, We are innovative, We are dedicated.

Because we are caring, we are careful to protect the people who share their stories with us, and treat them with dignity and fairness. Because we are caring, we do our best to minimise the risks of harm caused by misunderstanding cultural norms or mismanagement of content. Because we are dedicated, we give primacy to the people who we serve and who share their stories with us. Because we are dedicated, we ensure that our communications content is of the highest ethical standard. Because we are dedicated, we aim to empower through our communications and give contributors control over how they are portrayed.

Because we are innovative we are always looking for new ways to communicate with our contributors and respect the stories of the people we serve.

Because we are together we approach our communication as a partnership.

1.2 Align with brand guidelines

All communications from Board members and Staff representing the TAI brands are to align with the relevant Brand Guidelines, which serve as appendices to the Communication Policy. The Brand Guidelines include the organisation mission and values, our visual identity including logos, and guidance on writing style.

By consistent use of TAI and BWAA branding, we will help to generate positive and relevant associations in our supporter's minds that build and strengthen loyalty.

The Community Engagement department is required to communicate directly with supporters. Within the Community Engagement department, the Marketing team are responsible for overseeing brand communication that aligns with Communication Story Framework and Content Marketing Strategy to supporters and the wider Australian public. It is essential that the Marketing team are given ample time and opportunity to review communication pieces prior to publication, to ensure they comply with this policy.

It is the responsibility of the Director of Marketing and Communication to ensure all Staff and volunteers (where relevant) are aware of the Brand Guidelines and have access to branded templates for generating communication to stakeholders.

The application of Brand Guidelines in any materials produced by third parties will be at the discretion of the Marcomm team. Third parties include corporate relationships and International Program partners.

1.3 Accessible and transparent information

TAI will proactively provide accurate, timely and accessible information about our organisation, our objectives and our activities to our stakeholders. This includes TAI's Australian constituency and our overseas partners and stakeholders.

Our stakeholders are provided greater insight into the organisation, timely updates about the work and impact of TAI and its partners, opportunities to learn more and opportunities to become involved through:

The www.baptistworldaid.org.au website. The website is the key communication channel for TAI. The Digital Marketing Specialist, reporting to the Marketing Manager, is responsible for maintaining the brand website. The Digital Marketing Specialist liaises with relevant staff to ensure the timeliness and accuracy of the brand website. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Explanation of the origins, organisation, vision, mission and values of TAI;
- Information of the work of TAI and our partners, including information about the type of work (community development, child-centred community development and children, youth and communities for change framework, disaster management and advocacy) and the regions in which we work;
- Information about current fundraising campaigns; and
- Opportunities to be involved in the work of the organisation, through giving, advocacy, fundraising, education, prayer, volunteering and seeking employment.

Social Media (see Definitions section). Social Media posts provide supporters with organisation information, project information, project impact and opportunities to be involved. These channels provide supporters the opportunity to easily share this information with their contacts. Social Media Policy details are also expanded in section 1.11.

Regular supporter publications. The Communication Specialist, reporting to the Communication Manager, is responsible for the coordination and creation of publications, including newsletters, impact reports, emails and blogs posted on the brand website and shared through social media.

Content for supporter-relevant publications. The Communication Specialist is responsible for writing articles for Baptist and Christian publications that reach our core constituency.

Direct marketing campaigns. TAI communicates our objectives and activities through a number of fundraising campaigns directed to our supporters. Direct marketing campaigns are guided by the TAI Fundraising Policy.

Campaign Videos. The Communications Specialist, reporting to the Communication Manager, is responsible for the coordination and creation of campaign videos for churches. The Communication Specialist liaises with relevant staff to develop messaging and story.

Annual Reports. The Communication Specialist is responsible for coordinating the creation of the TAI Annual Report in October/November each year. The Annual Report is available to all stakeholders, including ACFID, Board members, Staff, supporters, partner agencies, and members of the public. The Annual Report provides stakeholders:

- A description of the TAI's vision, mission and values;
- A plain language summary of TAI's income, expenditure and overall financial health;
- A description of the most significant development activities undertaken during the reporting period and their impact;

- Information about evaluations into the effectiveness of and the learning from development activity conducted by the organisation;
- A report by the Board Chair;
- Financial statements prepared in accordance with the requirements of the ACFID Code of Conduct, including a reference to the availability of the full financial report and audit report on the summary financial report;
- A statement of commitment to full adherence to the ACFID Code of Conduct;
- Identification of the ability to lodge a complaint against the organisation and a point of contact; and
- Identification of the ability to lodge a complaint for breach of the ACFID Code of Conduct with the ACFID Code of Conduct Committee and a point of contact.

The Annual Report is sent to key stakeholders and is available for interested supporters as a download on the TAI and BWAA website.

Church Engagement. Australian Baptist churches are provided a range of resources to engage their constituents in the work of TAI. This includes face-to-face deputations led through the Church Relationships Managers team, who are responsible for building relationships with Baptist churches and church leaders to strengthen and broaden the support for the work of TAI. Church resources, designed to increase awareness and understanding of our work, are also available through the brand website and via the Supporter Engagement team.

Supporter services. The Supporter Engagement and the Finance and Donations teams are responsible for receiving and processing supporter donations and enquiries and contacting supporters directly through mail, email and telephone communication. These teams are guided by organisational policies.

In addition to proactively providing information, TAI is committed to maintaining and growing community support. This is detailed in the TAI Fundraising Policy.

TAI is committed to providing accurate, transparent and timely communication to its overseas partners, frequently sharing relevant policies, guidelines and tools with partners overseas through field visits.

1.4 Australian Government Recognition

TAI communications will include public recognition of the support of our donors, including recognition of the support of the Australian Government, both in Australia and in countries where support has been provided. This recognition is provided in two main ways:

- **Through key communication channels.** The on-going support from the Australian Government is recognised through the BWAA and TAI website, within the TAI Annual Report and through specific fundraising campaigns. This recognition is in line with Australian Aid Visual Identity Guidelines; and
- **With our overseas partners.** This is detailed in TAI Funding Agreements

1.5 Accuracy of Communication and Promotional Materials

TAI ensures communication and promotional materials accurately reflect the projects being supported.

Communication will be an honest representation of the work being undertaken by TAI and its partners. Text and images will relate to the country, place, context and activities being supported by TAI and will not seek to deceive or mislead the general public.

1.6 Attribution in Communication and Promotional Materials

TAI partners with like-minded local and international organisations directly or through a number of networks, including the Integral Alliance, the Church Agencies Network, the Church Agencies Network Disaster Operations (CANDO) consortium, and the Baptist Framework for Aid and Development (BFAD) in order to increase our reach and impact in line with our mission.

TAI communication and promotional materials will explain how our work is implemented, that is, through operational partners. We will ensure our communication does not lead the public to believe that TAI is undertaking work. We may identify the specific operational partner, but will not necessarily do this in all communication channels. We will consider whether identifying the partner puts them at any risk, and whether directing a supporter to their website and publications could lead to confusion about the nature of the specific work we are funding.

In key campaigns and communication, published photographs are credited and captioned to honestly portray the context.



1.7 Ethical collection and use of Communication and Promotional Materials

TAI will ensure that the use of images and messages portraying women and men, boys and girls in our communication respects the dignity, values, history, religion and culture of the people portrayed.

Communication will promote partners and beneficiaries in a dignified, respectful manner, portraying them as equal partners and active agents in the development process, and not as passive recipients of aid.

TAI will ensure images are decent and do not present people as victims. All key figures should be adequately clothed and not in poses or positions that could be seen as demeaning, sexually suggestive or otherwise inappropriate in any way. Images will not feature dead bodies or dying people.

Images and messages will honestly portray the diversity of local people including age, disability and other marginalised groups.

Images and messages will honestly convey the context and, as far as possible, complexity of the situations in which local people live.

TAI will ensure primacy is given to the people we serve and ensure our communication content is of the highest ethical standard. TAI staff will discuss and consider the risks of sharing each image or story, at conception, gathering, writing/editing and prior to publishing, if there is any concern about the impact sharing a story may have on an individual or partner, it will be carefully discussed with a range of key staff to ensure that risks are mitigated before proceeding.

Care will be taken to ensure that the identification of or use of images of local people will not put at risk or endanger the people they portray. As standard practice, we will not reveal in our communication the real names of children (apart from within Child Sponsorship, and then only the first name and country of residence without any further identification), victims of abuse, or people who may be in danger if identified. We will also ensure there are no school, partner names or geographic markers that would help a perpetrator locate an individual at risk.

TAI will also ensure that people sharing their image or story for communications give prior informed consent and have control over how they are portrayed. It is important that every individual whose story is shared by TAI feels respected, protected, and empowered.

The collection and use of images and other communications resources is governed by the Informed Consent and Communication Resources

Policy. This policy presents a critical element in respecting the dignity and privacy of our partners and beneficiaries.

TAI will ensure that any public materials are quality checked to accurately reflect the projects supported by TAI and appropriately reflect the dignity and values of the people profiled. The procedure guiding this commitment is the TAI Proofreading Procedure and the Communication Checklist. Where there are concerns/ethical issue is raised in communication, TAI will involve key staff from communication, programs, child safeguarding and executive leadership, where issues will be presented and discussed in line with TAI values and policies, and a decision documented.

1.8 Protection and Privacy

If a person is considered vulnerable or will be placed at risk by sharing their story, TAI will conceal some of the identifying information (ie. Image, name, location and personal information). Situations where people may be at increased risk include in conflict and tightly controlled government areas, victims of crime/violence/trafficking, people seeking asylum, people suffering from discrimination, and children.

1.9 Child Safe Communication

TAI is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children. TAI supports the Rights of the Child and will act without hesitation to ensure a child safe environment is maintained at all times. As such, we make particular reference here to communications that may affect children.

All communication will treat children with respect, regardless of race, colour, gender, religion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability or other status. Our communication in regard to children will never be inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate. Before taking any image of a child, TAI Staff will ensure that they are adequately clothed, and that both the child's parent/guardian and the child provides informed consent.

All communication must adhere to the Safeguarding Code of Conduct to which all Staff are signatories. TAI will ensure that children's identities are protected and that they cannot be placed at risk by concealing some information such as their name, personal information, location and image. Where a child's image/story is used this will not be accompanied by the child's full name or village/location specific information or any identifying information such as school uniform or signage. Where children are particularly at risk, in addition to concealing other identifying information, TAI may choose to ensure that their face is not visible in images.

Where child partners are used for sponsorship programs, identifying information of the child will be limited strictly to the child's image, first name and country of residence. Any further identifying information must be protected, including the child's village, region, school, family name and all images shared with sponsors cannot show any uniform or signage which could be used to easily identify a child's location.

1.10 Communicating via media contacts

Media statements and comment made on behalf of TAI must be consistent with our policies including the media policy, based on reliable information, and stay within the area of expertise, competence and authority of the spokesperson.

The Communication Specialist is the first contact for media.

The Communication Specialist, in liaison with the CEO and Director of Marketing and Communication or Advocacy Director as appropriate, can release media statements on behalf of TAI. All TAI media statements are sent to Board members for their information as soon as practical.

The Communication Specialist is responsible for responding to media contacts with facts and figures, coordinating with the relevant TAI staff.

The Communication Specialist will direct all enquires seeking comment, response or reaction by TAI to the CEO or a spokesperson suitable for the task.

TAI Board members and staff may only act as spokespersons with the approval of the Communication Specialist, Marketing Manager, and CEO.

1.11 Managing brand-owned Social Media channels

Social Media (see Definitions section) is specifically noted in this policy to ensure clarity of its use. For the purpose of this policy, Social Media is considered as either official use or personal use, and is guided by the TAI Social Media Policy.

- **Official Use** includes accounts, pages and activities formally representing TAI brands. When Board members and Staff use these official channels it is as a representative of TAI with permission of the Marketing Manager or the Director of Marketing and Communication
- **Personal Use** is when Board members and Staff use Social Media as themselves, not representing TAI, whether or not they identify themselves as being affiliated to TAI in their online biographies, profiles or posts.

The Online & Social Media Officer is responsible for managing brand-owned Social Media for official use, with support from the Marketing team. With the approval of the Marketing Manager, the Online & Social Media Officer may assign certain responsibilities for posting on brand-owned Social Media to other TAI staff. The management of Social Media includes proactively generating and curating relevant, positive, accurate and timely content and moderating conversations. Only marketing having authority to make changes or create new official social media channels.

Social Media is a two-way communication channel and an opportunity to hear community views. TAI does not want to heavily control content as this will reduce the impact and usefulness of Social Media, but may need to do so in certain circumstances. The Online & Social Media Officer may hide posts or block a user without notifying the user. TAI representatives, including the Online & Social Media Officer, are discouraged from arguing or refuting complaints or negative feedback as this can antagonise or result in further attacks on TAI's brands and/or reputation. The guidelines for hiding or deleting comments is communicated in the 'About' section of brand-owned Social Media pages. See the Complaints Handling Policy for guidance on complaints through any channels, including social media.

2 Outgoing Personal Communication

In addition to the brand communication that is developed and distributed by the organisation, various personal communications may be developed and distributed by Board members and Staff as individuals. This is likely to be most prevalent via Social Media but may also occur in more traditional media such as television, radio or print.

While respecting that Board members and Staff have the right to hold personal views that differ to those of TAI, Board Members Staff need to assess when it is or is not appropriate to share those views in the public domain.

Depending on the level of public profile attained by a Board member or Staff member,) it may be appropriate/necessary to include a disclaimer on all their Media material, such as *"The views expressed here are solely those of the author in their private capacity and do not in any way represent the views of Transform Aid International, Baptist World Aid Australia or any related entity."*

3 Community Involvement

TAI is committed to actively involving members of the community in the organisation. This is done in the following ways:

- Providing opportunity for fundraising campaigns that inform about the needs in countries and areas where we work.
- Providing inspiring and educational information about the organisation and our work through a range of online, direct and face-to-face communication, as detailed in section 1.3;
- Providing resources for running community-based advocacy campaigns and opportunities to join larger advocacy campaigns in line with the vision and mission of the organisation. This is resourced by the Advocacy team and detailed in the TAI Advocacy Policy;
- Providing education and discipleship resources for individuals, community groups and churches to engage with a Biblical view of and response to injustice and poverty. Such materials are available in hardcopy and online through the brand website and are promoted directly to Pastors and community group leaders;
- Encouraging prayer for the work of TAI and our partners;
- Providing volunteering and interning opportunities, advertised through the brand website. TAI has an extensive base of volunteers who contribute significant effort and benefit to the organisation; and
- Running and participating in conferences and events relevant to our supporters, as directed by our Fundraising Policy.

4 Risk Management

4.1 Approval of Key Communication

Sufficient mechanisms shall be put in place to ensure that communications are effectively and regularly monitored for policy compliance. Specifically, all key brand communication is reviewed using the Communications Compliance Checklist, which required approval by the Director of Marketing and Communication

All Board members and Staff shall be made aware of this policy during orientation and provided with ongoing assistance to communicate effectively in accordance with this Policy.



4.2 Monitoring of Communication

TAI has the right to monitor any communication that occurs in any form and on any device or platform and/or using any software that is wholly or partially owned or controlled by TAI. This policy serves as TAI informing Staff of this monitoring, and such monitoring will also be noted in all staff employment agreements.

Responsibilities

Responsibility for the strategic management of the TAI Communication Policy in the Organisation will lie with the Director of Marketing and Communication.

Responsibility for the operational management of the TAI Communication Policy will lie with the Marketing Manager.

The importance of adhering to this policy will be addressed with all relevant staff as part of the induction process at commencement of their employment.

This policy will be available on TAI's intranet.

This policy will be reviewed triennially, or sooner as required.

Definitions of the Communication Policy

Social Media – computer-mediated tools, included hand-held devices, that allow Board members, staff and members of the public to create, share or exchange information, ideas, and pictures/videos in virtual communities and networks. It includes any conversations or activity that occurs online where people can share information or data that may impact on TAI or our stakeholders. This may include platforms such as, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, YouTube, Pinterest, flickr, LinkedIn, etc

Staff – full-time, part-time and fixed term employees, volunteers, trainees, temporary and contract staff.

Related Policies and Procedures

- Media Policy
- Fundraising Policy
- Informed Consent and Communication Resources Policy
- Brand Guidelines – BWAA
- Brand Guidelines – TAI
- Social Media Policy



- Advocacy Policy
- Complaints Handling Policy
- Non-Development Activity Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Safeguarding Code of Conduct
- Proofreading Procedure
- Collection of Photos and Videos Procedure
- Storage of Photos and Videos Procedure
- Product Management Procedure
- Publications Procedure
- Maintaining Website Content Procedure
- Brand Social Media Procedure
- The Communication Compliance Checklist
- The Non-Development Activity (NDA) Checklist

External References

The TAI Communication Policy and related procedures are underpinned by the ACFID Code of Conduct and DFAT Guidelines.

Document Control Information

Communication Policy	
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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