

Communications Policy

1. Introduction

In all of Anglican Overseas Aid's (AOA) activities, and particularly its communications with the public, AOA will accord due respect to the dignity, values, history, religion, and culture of the people with whom it works, consistent with principles of basic human rights.

AOA strives to be consistent in all of its communications, both internal and external with complementarity between communications style and content. Being consistent in communications facilitates AOA's efforts to achieve its vision and purposes by conveying a sense of unity, focus and organisational integrity and by repeatedly and continuously reinforcing brand identity, meaning and recognition.

2. Purpose and Scope of the policy

2.1 The purpose of the AOA Communications Policy is to:

- Demonstrate AOA's commitment to respecting, protecting and promoting human rights through all communication
- Explain AOA's rights-based approach to ethical communication practices and operations
- State safeguarding mechanisms concerning personal information of those affected by development and humanitarian crises
- Detail transparency and open information compliance

2.2 This Communications Policy applies to Board members, staff, contractors and volunteers of AOA. The Policy also applies to supporters and prospective supporters visiting AOA programs. From here on, these groups will be collectively referred to in this policy as 'all parties'.

3. International and National Frameworks

The declarations underlying AOA's acknowledgement, respect and implementation of a rights-based approach in communications is guided by the provisions of the following:

- *Australian Council for International Development (ACFID)*
- DFAT - Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) Accreditation Framework
- *The Core Humanitarian Standard*
- *The laws of Australia - acts passed by the Commonwealth and State Parliament*

4. Guiding Principles

In this context:

- AOA will operate transparently with all parties and stakeholders

- All communication material including images are respectful of people's dignity, values, history, religion, language and culture and protects their safety and rights and portrays all as dignified persons
- Information about human rights is promoted to the public
- Information provided to internal and external stakeholders is truthful and accurate
- The rights and safety of all people govern the communications framework

5. Implementation

5.1 Communications

- AOA will promote responsible global citizenship through donor contributions in support of the work of AOA, through prayer and Influencing the Australian Government, national and international organisations to deliver the AOA vision of a peaceful, just and sustainable world for all
- If AOA facilitates or develops advocacy material, the content will not inflict further harm to the affected community, and content will be produced within an ethical, rights-based framework ensuring the affected communities' views are respected
- All parties will comply with the AOA Communications Style Guide and Manual of Procedures, including appropriate approval before disseminating communications materials
- Partnership agreements will proclaim partners' obligations to abide by AOA communication systems and guidelines and ensure that the governing body's compliance and effectiveness standards in all programmatic areas and operations are transparent
- Communications material will not denigrate other agencies, or make misleading or false public statements regarding other agencies
- Staff are to avoid making partisan political statements or run for political office, where such actions could be seen as an official position of AOA or cause a potential conflict of interest
- Where possible, AOA will acknowledge and attribute the Australian Government's support through communications channels and materials
- All parties and partners will abide by agreement complaints-handling mechanisms in order to elicit a culture of open communication and information sharing while ensuring confidentiality.
- AOA has guidelines with international and national coalitions and consortiums, covering appropriate attribution in AOA promotional materials

6. Transparency

AOA is committed to improving governance, transparency and accountability. AOA standing committees include:

- Governance and Nominations Committee (GAN)
- Finance, Risk and Audit Committee (FRAC)
- Development Committee (DevCom)
- Fundraising and Communications Committee (FCC)

The governing document is accessible on the Anglican Overseas Aid website.

6.1 Compliance to governance, financial accounting and reporting requirements

- AOA is a member of or answerable to a number of official bodies that hold AOA accountable for its use of funds, conducting audits, reporting schedules, programmatic work and operations. The public have the right to lodge a complaint with these bodies. The official bodies and their contact details can be found on the AOA website.

- AOA adheres to Australian privacy laws and compliance measures set by the governing bodies. These standards incorporate safeguarding measures to obtain, store and manage personal details and are defined within the AOA Privacy Policy.
- 6.2 Open Information
- AOA is committed to readily sharing information that is informative, appropriate and relevant to our stakeholders and the general public via the AOA website. These include:
- The Annual Report, which includes financial performance and auditor statement, programmatic achievements, main sources of funding and contact details. AOA will make it clear that when referring to financial statements in summary or extract that full financial statements are available on request
 - Key Policies. Stakeholders are privy to any policy upon receipt of request
 - Governance Structure
 - AOA values, principles and strategic direction
 - Evaluation reports
 - Research
 - All stakeholders are updated on development and humanitarian projects, general updates, financials, fundraising launches and significant changes via AOA's communications channels
- 6.3 Copyright
- A copyright statement will be placed on communications materials where deemed necessary to protect against possible infringement. E.g. © Anglican Overseas Aid 2018.
 - **If a stakeholder or member of the public would like to make a request for permission to use AOA communications materials or for further information on open information,** requests can be addressed to:

Anglican Overseas Aid
Phone: 1800 249 880
Email: aoa@anglicanoverseasaid.org.au
 - AOA will endeavour to respond to all requests as promptly as possible, ideally within 2 working days. Requested information, where deemed appropriate, will be supplied with 2-4 weeks unless there are extenuating circumstances.

7. Review

This policy and related procedures will be reviewed no later than March 2024 by the Chair of the Fundraising and Communications Committee of Anglican Overseas Aid, in consultation with the CEO and Communications staff.

References

1. Core Humanitarian Standard
2. Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct
3. DFAT, ANCP Accreditation Standards
4. AOA Manual of Procedures
5. AOA Communication policies that cross-cut and support this policy include the;
 - Communications Policy,
 - Use of Images and Texts Policy,
 - Media Policy,
 - Child Protection Policy,
 - Anglican Overseas Aid Style Guide and,
 - Policy on Communications for All Church Together (ACT) Alliance, read in conjunction with ACT's Code of Good Practice and Code of Conduct for the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, fraud and corruption and abuse of power, cobranding policy, public information disclosure policy, the advocacy policy and procedures, and the current communications strategy.