

Policy Number: P03
Policy Area: Publicity
Policy Title: Public Communication Policy



1. Overview

GMP is committed to ensuring that all Public Communication is accurate, consistent and respectful of partners, staff, supporters and other stakeholders. Public Communication refers to any external communications, written or otherwise, that are shared publicly by Global Mission Partners (GMP). This includes corporate material, such as the Annual Report and website, as well as newsletters, fundraising campaigns, social media content, video sharing, external emails, speaking engagements and events.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all publicity content (photos, videos, news and partner updates, stories, interviews, and personal information) is collected and used ethically and respectfully, with documented informed consent, in accordance with GMP's values, and to achieve the goals of promoting GMP's vision and mission, by inspiring supporters and resourcing partners.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all GMP staff, Board members, volunteers, partners, and contractors who are involved in collecting, creating, or using content for GMP's publicity.

4. Responsibility

Director of Engagement: Oversees GMP's communications and will approve the appropriate content and channel for each audience through the development of an annual communications plan.

CEO: The CEO has ultimate oversight and should be given appropriate briefings for publications ahead of schedule for sign-off.

Communications Team: Responsible for developing, reviewing and storing content and documenting permissions on the shared staff drive.

Program Areas: Responsible for collecting regular partner reports and sharing impact stories with key stakeholders for public communication.

Policy Statements

5. General Policy Statements

- a. GMP is committed to transparency in its communications. Documenting this commitment gives all our stakeholders a degree of assurance and confidence in the information that they can expect from us, assists them in making informed decisions and builds trust in our work.
- b. GMP will be transparent as to the support of funding partners in regard to particular projects, including Australian Aid/DFAT, CAN DO and the ACT Alliance.
 - i. GMP implementing partners will be informed and guided in the way to acknowledge the particular partner.
 - ii. Staff will be advised as to the contribution of the funding partner so that the contribution can be acknowledged.
- c. Our presumption is that all information will be disclosed, unless there is a compelling reason for non-disclosure.
- d. GMP will proactively make the following information public:
 - i. Details of our mission, vision, values, goals and history.
 - ii. Details of our governance structure, including the names of Board Members and contact details of the Chair.
 - iii. Objectives, key activities and summary evaluations of projects.
 - iv. Official contact details for staff.
 - v. Annual financial statements and project reports will be proactively made public in a timely, accessible manner consistent with ACNC and DFAT reporting requirements.
 - vi. Strategic plans.
 - vii. Project news.
- e. We will generally not make the following information public (see BG09 Privacy and Confidentiality Policy):
 - i. Staffing matters, including private contact details of staff.
 - ii. Contractual information.
 - iii. Correspondence.
 - iv. Donor information.
 - v. Information that would endanger staff, partners, project participants, third parties or contractors.
 - vi. Any information whose release would adversely affect an activity.
- f. Stakeholders may make a request for information that has been withheld, and that request will be considered in light of the above. The following information will be released on the basis of a request:
 - i. A signed register of Board Members' interests that are or could be perceived to be in conflict with those of the organisation.
 - ii. A list of any subcommittees with details of their purpose and composition.
 - iii. Non-sensitive content of minutes, agendas and other documents tabled at Board and Board sub-committee meetings.
- g. Requests for other information must be in writing and directed to the CEO, who will respond within two weeks. Where the response is to refuse the request, the response will include reasons for the refusal. If the stakeholder is not satisfied with the response, they may appeal to the Board Chair, who will respond within two weeks, and whose response will be final.

- h. Complaints regarding public materials will be directed to the CEO and processed in accordance with the GMP Complaints policy.

6. Recognition of Partners

- a. Respecting the role and value of our partners is critical to the integrity of our work and to our accountability to Christian ethics.
- b. In our communication, we will recognise the role of our partners as active agents who make a critical contribution to our shared projects.
- c. Leaders of our Partners may also be profiled in our communications, which can include general information such as biography, years of service, vision for their organisation and/or personal testimony (if appropriate).
- d. Projects will be acknowledged using the Partner's organisational name, country of location, project name and the program the profiled projects are funded by:
 - i. Churches of Christ Overseas Aid (COCOA)
 - ii. International Church Partnerships (ICP)
 - iii. Indigenous Ministries Australia (IMA)
- e. Program names and descriptions will be used to clearly distinguish between GMP's benevolent (community development) and non-benevolent (religious and welfare) activities.

7. Portrayal of Local People

- a. Respecting the dignity, culture, and values of the communities in which our Partners work is critical to the integrity of our work.
- b. GMP is committed to avoiding the perpetuation of stereotypes or sensationalism (often referred to as 'poverty pornography'), and to focus on the capabilities and resilience of local people and partners.
- c. GMP will ensure that our use of content for publicity (photos, videos, stories, interviews, written or as sound recordings, and personal information) portraying women and men, boys and girls, respects the dignity, values, history, religion, and culture of the people portrayed and protects their safety and rights. Specifically:
 - i. Content of women and men, boys and girls will present them in a dignified, respectful manner, portraying them as partners of equal value in the development process.
 - ii. Content will honestly portray the diversity of local people including age, disability and other marginalised groups.
 - iii. Content will honestly convey the context and complexity of the situations in which local people live.
 - iv. Informed consent will be obtained before collecting content for publicity (see section 9).
 - v. Origins of any content for publicity will be known and any necessary permissions, including copyright releases, be held.
 - vi. Care will be taken to ensure that the identification of local people will not endanger the people they portray.

8. Collection and Storage of information, stories and images

- a. GMP is committed to ensuring that the collection and storage of information, stories and images does not harm people or the environment. In regard to the environment, in addition to Policy OS03 EnvironmentalCare Policy, we will use technologies that reduce or eliminate the need for paper products.
- b. GMP will collect and store information in compliance with child safeguarding data management standards.
- c. In regard to people:
 - i. We will not seek to collect information, stories or images in ways that may endanger people or expose them to increased risk, including;
 - partners operating in sensitive locations;
 - vulnerable people, especially children, at risk of exploitation, including Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH).
 - ii. People's privacy will be guarded. File labels, metadata or text descriptions will not reveal information that would embarrass or put them at risk when images are sent electronically or published in any form.
 - iii. We only utilise technologies for the collection and storage of information that meet current cybersafety and environmental criteria.

9. Informed Consent and Content Collection

- a. Requirement for Consent: Informed consent is required for the use of images and written material.
- b. Right to review: The person providing consent has a right to know *where* the content will be used and, where feasible, be consulted on the *context* of its use to ensure dignity is maintained, especially for content intended for high-profile use.
- c. Unreserved Permission: Consent grants GMP unreserved permission to use the content for GMP publicity, with the understanding that the content will be publicly available and may be used in various forms (printed communications, online media, social media, etc.).
- d. Use of Content: Content will be used to promote GMP, raise funds, encourage prayer, and report Partner impact to GMP supporters.
- e. No Fees: The person granting permission will not ask for any fees or other benefits, present or future, for the use of the content.
- f. Withdrawing Permission: Permission can be withdrawn at any time by informing GMP.
- g. Cultural Sensitivity: Consent should be obtained in a way that is respectful of the person involved and responsive to their language and cultural profile. An interpreter or written interpretation of the consent form should be used if the subject is not familiar with English.
- h. Respectful Use: GMP will use the content with respect for the dignity, culture, and values of the local community.
- i. Group Photos in Public: It is not necessary to record permission for a group photo of more than four people in a public place. However, discretion must still be used, especially when portraying groups of children.

- j. Content Identifiability: Content where individuals are not identifiable does not require documented consent. If a photo/video is cropped, manipulated, or labelled to highlight or identify individuals, documented permission must be obtained.
- k. Child Safeguarding Consent: For any subject under the age of 18, meaningful informed consent must be documented via the signature of a parent or legal guardian.

10. Ongoing Permission (5-Year Use)

- a. Duration: Ongoing permission allows content to be collected for publicity featuring individuals for the next five years without needing another form.
- b. Renewal/Review: Ongoing permission will be re-checked at the end of each 5-year period, or the content will not be used and will be deleted.
- c. Withdrawal: A person can withdraw ongoing permission at any time.
- d. Highly Visible Channels: When content is shared in a highly visible channel (e.g., Annual Report cover, social media), a double-check with the relevant partner is appropriate, even with ongoing permission, to confirm the channel is appropriate and to confirm any sensitivities.

11. Acknowledgements

- a. GMP will acknowledge DFAT for ANCP supported projects, referring to DFAT's ANCP branding and acknowledgement guidelines, including the use of logos and standard text for Australian Government support.
- b. GMP will acknowledge churches, supporters and other grant providers as appropriate.
- c. Where a supporter or donor does not wish to be acknowledged, GMP will not publish or acknowledge their support in our publications.

Procedures and Related Forms

12. Content Approval Process

- a. General Process: Public materials require internal edits, and formal sign-off from relevant program areas or leads, depending on the material type (e.g., Annual Report, Newsletters, Fundraising Materials, Video, Social Media).
 - i. Step 1: Comms team verifies Digital Asset Manager (DAM) for consent tags.
 - ii. Step 2: Comms team completes self-review using the QA Checklist.
 - iii. Step 3: Content is routed through the 1–4 Level Approval Matrix.
 - iv. Step 4: Final publication clearance is documented via the digital Pre-Publication QA Google Form.
- b. Batch Approvals for High-Volume Channels: main publications, campaigns and scheduled social media to use the [Pre-publication Quality Assurance QA form](#) to ensure public communications meet compliance standards.

- c. **Crisis Procedure:** A communication crisis is any unforeseen event or public development, including negative media attention, a significant policy violation, or a serious incident, that poses a high risk of widespread negative publicity or damage to GMP's relationships with partners, supporters, or DFAT.
- i. **Crisis Activation and Notification:**
 - Any staff member, Board member, or contractor who becomes aware of a potential or active communication crisis must immediately notify the **CEO** and the **Director of Engagement**.
 - The **Director of Engagement** is responsible for assessing the severity and scope of the crisis and determining if a full Crisis Communication Response is required.
 - ii. **Crisis Response Team:**
 - The Crisis Response Team will be led by the **CEO** and include the **Director of Engagement** and a representative from the **Communications Team**. Additional staff or external advisors may be co-opted as needed.
 - The **CEO** is the primary decision-maker and ultimate authority for all external communications during a crisis.
 - iii. **Initial Response Actions (within 1 hour of activation):**
 - **Internal Communication Halt:** The **Communications Team** must immediately pause all scheduled and non-essential public communications (social media, newsletters, etc.) that are not directly related to the crisis response.
 - **Information Gathering:** The Crisis Response Team must quickly and factually gather all necessary internal information related to the incident.
 - **Prepare Holding Statement:** A brief, factual holding statement should be prepared, focusing on acknowledging the situation, expressing commitment to **GMP's values** and **transparency**, and stating that the organisation is investigating/taking action. This statement must be approved by the **CEO** before release.
 - iv. **External Communication and Messaging:**
 - All external communication, including media responses and social media posts, must be issued only by the **CEO** or a single, designated spokesperson.
 - Messaging must be truthful, consistent with **GMP's policy statements**, and avoid speculation. The focus should be on corrective action, accountability, and reasserting the commitment to ethical operation and partner dignity.
 - v. **Review and Follow-Up:**
 - Upon resolution of the crisis, the Crisis Response Team will conduct a comprehensive review of the incident and the response.
 - A formal "lessons learned" report will be documented and shared with the **Board** to inform future policy amendments and training.

- The **Director of Engagement** will issue a final communication to relevant stakeholders summarizing the outcome and any lasting policy or procedural changes.
- d. **Social Media Sign-off:** The social media team has the authority to publish posts, as the Director of Engagement and/or CEO will have approved the communications plan. However, sign-off is required from the Director of Engagement and/or CEO for posts that feature unapproved partner information, formal statements, sensitive content, or content posing a brand risk.
- e. **Methods for Obtaining Permission (for non-ongoing content):**
 - i. Getting people to sign a form.
 - ii. Taking a photo of people holding up a piece of paper saying, “I give permission for GMP to use my picture in their publicity”.
 - iii. Taking a video of people saying that they give permission.
 - iv. A Partner may write to GMP acknowledging permission was granted in the local language or custom.

13. Contractors: Contractors must agree to record informed consent using the P03.3 form and adhere to the guidelines for obtaining consent.

14. Double-Check Procedure: When using content from a highly sensitive location or situation, contact the relevant partner, detail the content and intended use, and request confirmation that it is okay to share it this way.

15. Storage of Content and Permission:

- a. Content and documented permission are to be sent to the Communications Team.
- b. The Communications team will manage, review, and store both the content and permissions on the Shared staff drive for a period of 5 years.
- c. Content without permission will be filed, flagged and not shared.

References (other policies, legislation or codes)

Related Policies

- P01 – Use of GMP logo and Identity
- P03.3 Permission to Publish Form – Staff and Contractors
- P03.4 Permission to Publish Form – Partner Use
- P03.5 Permission to Publish (Ongoing) – Staff and Contractors
- P03.6 Permission to Publish (Ongoing) – Partner Use
- P03.7 Contract for the Collection and Creation of Public Materials
- P03.8 – Approval Process Public Materials
- OS06 – GMP Code of Conduct
- F02 Investment Policy

Related Documents

- ACFID Code of Conduct [Principle 6: Communication](#)
- ACFID Fundraising Charter

- DFAT ANCP Manual
- GMP Brand Guidelines
- [ACNC Reporting Annually](#)
- [ASIC Financial reporting and audit \(Corporations Act 2001\)](#)

TABLE 1. VERSION CONTROL TABLE

Version Number	Purpose/change	Author	Date
1	Adopted June 2011.	Board	Sep2011
2	RAmended with changes to delegation levels	FRA Committee	Feb2021
3	New format with Version Control Table. Staff Health and Security paragraph removed to HR09.	FRA Committee	Nov2022
4	Adopted new format and merged numerous policies into this one.	CEO, CFO, FRA Chair	Feb 2024
5	Numerous amendments and updates, including new logo and references.	CEO	JAN2026
6	Updated Section 9 to explicitly mandate parent/guardian signatures for minors to align with DFAT safeguarding standards.	CEO	JUL2026