Communication Policy

Policy Statement

Good Neighbours Australia (GNAU) is committed to accurate, transparent, and effective communication to all our domestic and international stakeholders, as we build support and implement our vision and mission.

Scope and Purpose

The purpose of this Communication Policy is to guide all individuals, including but not necessarily limited to GNAU Committee members and staff (see Definitions section), in the development and implementation of communication materials, in line with our corporate brand guidelines, policies and procedures.

The Communication Policy covers a range of external and internal communication activities, including fundraising appeals, campaigns, reports and presentations. It does not provide detailed guidance on complaints or privacy, which are covered by separate policies.

This policy acknowledges that guidelines from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) are also in place, and will be used to inform the creation of GNAU communication materials, where relevant.

This policy will be published on GNAU's shared drive, and staff are expected to confirm that they have read and understood this document.

Policy Objectives

GNAU has the vision of "Good Neighbours Australia exists to make the world a place without hunger, where people live together in harmony". This vision extends to both those we partner with overseas and our Australian constituents.

Communication by GNAU aims to contribute to this vision by:

- Increasing awareness of the organisation, our goals, work and needs;
- Advocating on key issues amongst our stakeholders;

- Sharing knowledge internally for effective organisational management;
- Empowering the communities we work with through our storytelling and communications;
- Striving to empower and protect the people who share their stories with us; and
- Increasing the profile and understanding of the international development sector.

The objective of this policy is to ensure all communication is:

- Consistent with the vision, mission and values of GNAU;
- In line with DFAT accreditation guidelines;
- In line with the ACFID Code of Conduct and ACFID Fundraising Charter;
- Aligned with building positive, long-term relationships with stakeholders;
- Using best practice communications methods that minimise the risks related to storytelling and publishing;
- Building valuable brand equity.

The outcomes of this policy are that:

- Stakeholders are informed of key communication activities;
- Communications content will meet our ethical standard in line with brand guidelines; and
- All communication activities are timely, consistent, relevant, and appropriate.

Policy Detail

1. Outgoing brand communication

Outgoing brand communication is information and knowledge that is initiated, developed, and distributed by staff to external stakeholders, via a range of platforms and channels.

1.1 Reflect organisation values

GNAU will ensure our communication clearly reflects our organisation's values, which state that we will:

- Work anywhere, irrespective of race, religion, or gender;
- Prioritise the rights of children;
- Promote self-sustainability of individuals, families, and communities;
- Organise local volunteers to join in the development of their communities;
- Encourage people to partner and participate with us as donors;
- Work in cooperation with the communities we serve;
- Maintain professional accountability by being transparent in our reports.

1.2 Align with brand guidelines

All GNAU communications will align with the corporate brand guidelines, published in our shared drive. The brand guidelines provide a framework for developing and executing consistent and effective communications to support GNAU's mission, values, and objectives amongst our stakeholders.

The Campaign Manager (CM) is responsible for overseeing brand communications that align with GNAU's marketing plan, and ensuring that all staff and volunteers have the relevant tools and training to adhere to the brand guidelines.

The application of brand guidelines in materials produced by third parties will be at the discretion of the CM. Third parties may include corporate and community partners and government entities.

1.3 Accessible and transparent information

GNAU will proactively provide accurate, timely and accessible information about our organisation, our objectives, our activities and impact to our domestic and international stakeholders.

Information will be provided through:

Website. The website **www.goodneighbours.com.au** is the primary platform for GNAU communication and details:

- The vision, mission and values of GNAU;
- Where and how we work;
- Our core community development and child sponsorship programs;
- Our partners, policies, media and reporting;
- Opportunities to work and volunteer with GNAU;
- Ways to connect with GNAU.

Social media. Social media provides supporters with organisation information, project updates, news, reports, and promotes ways to be involved.

Supporter publications. Supporter publications include newsletters, impact reports, annual reports and blogs posted on the corporate website, distributed through social media channels and sent via mail.

Direct marketing. GNAU communicates our projects, programs and activities through a range of engagement and fundraising campaigns directed towards our current and potential supporters.

Annual Reports. The Annual Report, published on the GNAU website, is available to all stakeholders, including DFAT, ACFID, ACNC, Committee Members, staff, supporters, partners, and members of the public. The Annual Report communicates:

- GNAU's vision, mission and values;
- Summary message from the Executive Director (ED)/ Committee Chair;
- GNAU's organisational overview;
- How we work;
- Campaigns and programs executed;
- Partnership overview;
- Financial reports;
- Accountability statement.

Supporter/Donor communications. Supporters and donors receive regular contact through mail, email and telephone communication, which

is also captured in GNAU's CRM system.

1.4 Recognition

GNAU communications will include public recognition of the support of our donors, including recognition of the support of Australian Federal, State, and Territory and Local Governments, both in Australia and in countries where relevant support has been provided.

This recognition is provided:

- **Through key communication channels in Australia.** The ongoing support from the Australian Government is recognised through the GNAU website, within the GNAU Annual Report and through specific campaigns associated with this support. This recognition is in line with ACFID and DFAT guidelines; and
- **Via our overseas partners.** This support is detailed through GNAU Funding Agreements which will include details of how support will be recognised, e.g., on signage, in printed materials and reports.

Accuracy of Communication and Promotional Materials

GNAU ensures communications and promotional materials accurately reflect the projects being supported.

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

1.5 Attribution in Communication and Promotional Materials

GNAU partners with like-minded local and international organisations directly or through Good Neighbours' international networks, including our Global Partnership Centers (i.e. Good Neighbors International), in order to increase our reach and impact in line with our mission.

GNAU communication and promotional materials explain how our work is implemented, i.e. through in-country partners. We will ensure our

communication does not lead the public to believe that GNAU is undertaking hands-on work. We may identify a specific in-country partner, but will not necessarily do this in all communication channels. We will consider whether identifying the partner puts them at 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 content and context.

1.6 Dignity in Communication and Promotional Materials

GNAU 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 and respectful manner, portraying them as equal partners and active agents in the development process, and not as passive recipients of aid.

GNAU 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, the complexity of the situations in which local people live.

Care will be taken to ensure that the identification of or use of images of local people will not endanger the people they portray. As a standard practice and to ensure child protection processes are in place, we will not reveal in our communication the real names of children (apart from images associated with Child Sponsorship, where only the first name will be provided), victims of abuse, or people who may be in danger if identified.

We will also ensure there are no geographic markers that would help a perpetrator locate an individual at risk.

Child Safe Communication

GNAU is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children. GNAU 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.

All communication must adhere to the Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct to which all staff are signatories.

1.7 Communicating via media

Media statements and comments made on behalf of GNAU must be consistent with our policies, based on reliable information, and stay within the area of expertise, competence and authority of the spokesperson. The following procedures apply:

- The CM is the first contact for media;
- All planned media releases must be pre-approved by the Executive Director ("ED");
- The CM is responsible for responding to media contacts with facts and figures, coordinating with the relevant GNAU staff;
- The CM will direct all enquiries seeking comment, response, or reaction by GNAU to the ED or a spokesperson suitable for the task;
- GNAU Committee members and staff may only act as spokespersons with the approval of the ED, and will be authorised to speak within their area of expertise.

1.8 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.

Official Use includes accounts, pages and activities formally representing the GNAU brand. When Committee members and staff use any of these official channels, they need to be aware it is a representation of GNAU, therefore permission of the CM or the ED is necessary.

Personal Use is prohibited. When Committee members and Staff use their personal Social Media accounts, they need to be clear they are not representing GNAU, whether or not they identify themselves as being affiliated to GNAU in their online profiles or posts.

The Fundraising and Communications Officer (FCO) is responsible for managing brand-owned Social Media for official use, under supervision of the CM. The management of Social Media includes proactively generating and curating relevant, positive, accurate, and timely content and moderating conversations.

Social Media is a two-way communication channel and an opportunity to hear community views. GNAU does not wish 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 FCO may hide posts or block a user if content is deemed inappropriate, in line with our Risk Management Framework.

2.0 Outgoing Personal Communication

In addition to brand communication that is developed and distributed by GNAU, various personal communications may be developed and distributed by Committee members and staff as individuals, via social media.

While respecting that Committee members and staff have the right to hold personal views that differ to those of GNAU, Committee Members and 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 Committee member or staff member, as determined by the CM, 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 Good Neighbours Australia, Good Neighbors International, or any related entity."*

3.0 Community Involvement

GNAU is committed to actively involving members of the community in the organisation, by providing:

- Opportunities to contribute to fundraising and child sponsorship programs;
- Inspiring and educational information about the organisation and the impact of our programs;
- Volunteering and internship opportunities;
- Events to participate in and connect with the work of our organisation.

4.0 Risk Management

4.1 Approval of Key Communication

Mechanisms are in place to ensure that communications are monitored for brand and organisational compliance. Specifically, communication is developed and reviewed in line with the Communications Policy and Brand Guidelines Checklist. Ultimately, the ED (or their delegate) is responsible for key communication. In the event of a significant incident (e.g., reputational damage), the communication will be jointly managed by the Committee Chair and the Executive Director.

All Committee 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

GNAU 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 GNAU. This policy serves as GNAU's method of informing Staff that there will be ongoing monitoring, and such

monitoring will also be noted in all staff employment agreements.

Responsibilities

Responsibility for the strategic management of the GNAU Communication Policy in the organisation will lie with the ED. Responsibility for the operational management of the GNAU Communication Policy will lie with the CM.

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.

Review

This policy will be available on GNAU's shared drive. This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner as required.

Definitions of the Communication Policy

Social Media – Social media refers to a variety of technologies that facilitate the sharing of ideas and information among their users. This may include platforms such as, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, SnapChat, YouTube, Pinterest, flickr, LinkedIn.

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

Related Policies and Procedures

- Brand Guidelines, including Communications Checklist
- Child Safeguarding Policy
- Safeguarding Code of Conduct
- Complaint Handling Policy
- Media Consent Form

External References

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

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