

Anglican Board of Mission – Australia

Policy A1040

Transparency Policy

Approved by the Board 1 December, 2018

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Introduction and context

As an organisation within the Anglican Church of Australia, ABM's Christian principles commit it to being as transparent as possible with information about its operations, finance and activities, and to sharing this information through the ABM website and in other communications, where appropriate. *Integrity, Accountability and Transparency* are three of ABM's key values, as published in ABM's key documents and on its website.

As a signatory to the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct, ABM adheres to the Compliance Indicators for Commitment 6.1 and 6.2:

- *Members' public materials accurately describe the organisation and its work (6.1.1)*
- *Members' communications are accurate, respectful, and protect privacy and dignity (6.2.1).*¹

Section 8.1 of the *Code (ACFID Fundraising Charter)* requires of signatory organisations that:

All fundraising materials will be truthful and:

- *Include the organisation's identity including name, address, ABN and purpose.*
- *Accurately represent the context, situation, proposed solutions and intended meaning of information provided by affected people.*
- *Clearly state if there is a specific purpose of each donation.*
- *Avoid material omissions, exaggerations, misleading visual portrayals and overstating the need or what the donor's response may achieve.*²

¹ ACFID, 2017, *Code of Conduct*, Commitment 6.1.1 and 6.2.1. Available at <https://acfid.asn.au/sites/site.acfid/files/Quality%20Assurance%20Framework%20UDSEP17.pdf>. Accessed on 7 May, 2018

² ACFID, 2017, *Code of Conduct*, Commitment 8.1. Available at <https://acfid.asn.au/sites/site.acfid/files/Quality%20Assurance%20Framework%20UDSEP17.pdf>

Additionally, ABM is a member of Transparency International Australia. As such, ABM promotes the value of transparency in its own organisation, and within all organisations which are accountable to the public.

ABM(AID)'s Humanitarian Policy and Procedures commit it to the *Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS)* which sets out nine commitments, including access to information, which seek to improve the quality and effectiveness of humanitarian response provided by organisations such as ABM.

ABM(AID) has a comprehensive Effectiveness Framework which guides its work, and through which it seeks to maximise and measure the effectiveness of its development and humanitarian work with overseas partners.

ABM also has publicly accessible Complaints and Whistle Blower procedures, and a Fraud and Corruption policy.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to assert ABM(AID)'s commitment to the value of *Transparency* and *Accountability*, both internally and in its work with partners, and to outline how that commitment is observed in its practices.

Scope

This policy applies to all aspects of ABM(AID)'s work: its fundraising, public reporting and communication, and its work with partners and the communities they serve.

This Policy is guided by openness and the highest possible level of transparency with the underlying presumption that information concerning ABM(AID)'s operational activities will be made available to third parties unless it is subject to lawful exceptions, such as the privacy and integrity of the individual and protection of personal data.

Definitions

Accountability

Taking responsibility for one's actions, and being accountable to all stakeholders for what one does, especially primary stakeholders who are the people whom ABM's work seeks to assist.

Integrity

Acting with honesty. Being guided by an ethical and moral framework in all that one does.

Transparency

Openly sharing information about one's organisation and the work it does, to all its stakeholders, and to the public.

Transparency is about being easy to understand, and being open, frank and honest in all communications, transactions and operations. It is possible to be accountable by providing a lengthy and technical explanation of every detail, but if this information is not easily understood by the audience, and if key facts are hidden by the sheer volume of information then the information is not presented in a transparent form. *Accountability* and *Transparency*

go hand-in-hand, and involve being aware of who charities are accountable to, what the important pieces of information are, and how they can be communicated most effectively³.

Policy

- 1 ABM(AID) will promote a climate of *Transparency* in all its work, both internally, and with partners, donors, and all those to whom it is accountable.
- 2 ABM(AID) will make available on its website the following information:
 - (a) contact information;
 - (b) information about its legal status, its governance body, including identifying board members and staff;
 - (c) ABM's Annual Reports (which include information about evaluations and annual measurements of its effectiveness and annual audited financial statements);
 - (d) its development strategy;
 - (e) standards with which it seeks to comply;
 - (f) its partners and other collaborators and the work it does with those partners;
 - (g) its program work;
 - (h) key policies, including Child Protection, Whistle Blower, Complaints, Conflict of Interest, and policies relating to non-development activities.
- 3 ABM(AID) will make available other relevant policies (which have not published on its website) upon request.
- 5 ABM(AID) will work conscientiously with its partners to encourage them to engage transparently and accountably with all their stakeholders, including by entering into transparent contracts with community groups, and by establishing their own transparent complaints mechanisms.
- 6 ABM(AID)'s work with the development partners whom it funds will be guided by regularly renewable Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) which set out the areas in which ABM and the partner agree to work together. All funding will be governed by these MOUs, and by annual funding agreements.

Review

This Policy will be reviewed no later than December, 2019, and every three years thereafter.

³ Definition from the Institute of Fundraising UK. Accessed at <https://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/code-of-fundraising-practice/guidance/accountability-and-transparency-guidance/defining-accountability-and-transparency-and-key-principles/> on 26 April, 2018.