

Anglican Board of Mission – Australia

Policy A1040

Transparency Policy

Adopted by the ABM Board March, 2020

Contents

Introduction and context
Purpose
Scope
Definitions
Policy
Review
Related ABM Policies

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

ABM is committed to section 8.1 of the *Code (ACFID Fundraising Charter)* which 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 publishes its results on its website and in publications such as its annual reports to ACFID and the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission (ACNC).

ABM also has publicly accessible Complaints, Whistleblower policies, and Fraud and Corruption policies.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to assert ABM'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's work: its fundraising, public reporting and communication, and its development and humanitarian 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'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 will promote a climate of *Transparency* in all its work, both internally, in its governance and management systems, including financial management, and with partners, donors, and all those to whom it is accountable.
- 2 ABM 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 (but not limited to) Child Protection, Whistleblower, Complaints, Conflict of Interest, and Development and non-Development Activities policies.
- 3 ABM will make available other relevant policies (which have not been published on its website) upon request.
- 5 ABM will develop, work within and regularly review an ethical decision-making framework for all its public materials.
- 6 ABM's Communications Manual will guide ABM regarding transparency in ABM's public communications.
- 7 ABM is committed to being transparent with communities with whom it works. To that end ABM will:
 - a. ensure that its own feedback and complaints mechanisms are widely publicised and are accessible by communities with whom it works, and
 - b. work conscientiously with its partners to encourage them to engage transparently and accountably with all their stakeholders, including by entering into transparent contracts agreements with community groups, and by establishing their own transparent complaints mechanisms
- 6 ABM'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.

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.

Review

This Policy will be reviewed no later than 2023.

Policy History	
Name of Policy	Date Adopted
A1040 Transparency Policy	December, 2018
A1040 Transparency Policy	March, 2019

Table of Responsibilities for Implementation of this Policy

Responsible Body/Person	Area of Responsibility	Timeframe
ABM Board	Champion a climate of transparency internally in its governance and management systems, and with its partners and donors ;	Ongoing
Development Committee/AID team/Church to Church team/Reconciliation team	Ensure partner MOUs are transparent and are renewed on schedule; ensure partners and their churches/ communities are aware of how they may provide feedback or make a complaint to ABM; encourage ABM's partners to be transparent in their own operations.	Ongoing, as required
Marketing & Fundraising team	Ensure latest version of this policy, all the items mentioned in #2, and ABM's feedback and complaints mechanisms are available on ABM's website; ensure ABM's Communications Manual guides transparency in ABM's publications;	Ongoing
Policy Review Sub-Committee/Compliance Officer	Review this policy; ensure an ethical decision-making framework is used for all ABM's publications; ensure compliance of this policy with ACFID Code of Conduct	By March 2023

Related ABM Policies and Procedures

A1010 Complaints Handling Policy

A1001 Fraud and Corruption Policy
A1005 Conflict of Interest Policy
A1007 Declaration of Gifts Policy
A1015 Procurement Policy
A1008 ABM Code of Conduct
ABM Communications Manual
Ethical Decision-Making Framework for ABM Publications
ABM Finance Manual