

# Pacific Conference of Churches(PCC)

Executive Committee approved 25 April 2022

## Communication and Transparency Policy

### *1.0 Commitment by Pacific Conference of Churches*

PCC is committed to ensuring that all our external communications clearly reflect our work and our values and that all information and images included in our communications are collected and used ethically.

PCC is committed to being transparent in our work and accountable to our key stakeholders, particularly our member churches and national councils of churches.

Implementation of this policy will be guided by the PCC Manual.

### *2.0 Scope of the Policy*

This policy directs all PCC's external communications, including but not limited to those with donors, supporters, partners, member churches and national councils of churches.

All PCC representatives are bound by this policy. A 'representative' is any person who is funded by, or who undertakes tasks on behalf of PCC. Representatives include:

- Members of the Executive Committee;
- Finance and General Business Committee;
- PCC staff;
- Partner staff, while undertaking tasks for PCC;
- PCC volunteers including individuals and groups who visit overseas partners or projects funded by PCC;
- PCC contractors (including advisors and consultants); and
- Subcontractors of PCC overseas partners or PCC contractors while undertaking tasks on behalf of PCC.

This policy covers all communications, activities and materials produced or shared by PCC representatives. Communication materials include PCC's website, social media pages, newsletters, appeals and campaigns material, advertisements, brochures, reports, images and all other print and digital media produced for public audiences. Activities include speaking engagements, training and conferences, liaising with media, networking in the sector, posts on personal social media and correspondence including email communications.

### **3.0 Policy Context**

The media landscape is continually shifting and evolving with technological advances. This has caused a proliferation of information sources in the public domain, often with conflicting messages. PCC notes the growing public interest and literacy in critical development discourses and acknowledges its responsibility to provide transparent, clear, factual and ethical communications to inform the public and promote the sector.

### **4.0 Principles**

#### **1. Our communications will be truthful and respectful**

Guided by PCC's *Code of Conduct*, PCC communications must:

- Clearly and accurately describe the goals, purposes and activities of PCC, consistent with our values;
- Clearly distinguish between relief and development programs and church ministry programs;
- Clearly distinguish between projects and donations that are eligible for Tax Deductible status and those that are not;
- Ensure that information and images are collected and used ethically;
- Be accessible and consistent across all of our audiences;
- Portray people's images and stories in a dignified and respectful manner;
- Respect privacy and not disclose personal information inappropriately;
- Clearly state how funds donated will be used;
- Visibly and plainly acknowledge partner-funded activities;
- Only make claims which PCC can fulfil;
- Uphold the values of public accountability and transparency;
- Present our message in sustainable ways, reducing our environmental impact; and

#### **2. Our communications will reinforce a brand that is consistent with our identity**

PCC communications will aim to reinforce a brand (brand = ideas which are associated with our name) that is consistent with:

- Our Mission and Vision;
- Our identity as a Christian organisation; and

To this end, PCC communications will:

- Report on programs and our connections with partner organisations in ways that are accurate, timely and accessible to supporters and the public;

- Engage the PCC and its member churches to discern God's purpose regionally and to help lead the Church in making effective and meaningful connections, including by reducing poverty and injustice;
- Relate respectfully to our overseas partners, adding to and supporting their voices; and
- Affirm the genuine long-term relationships which underpin all our activities.

### **3. PCC communications will be professionally managed and be subject to an approval process**

PCC communications are the responsibility of the General Secretary. The General Secretary will be PCC's media spokesperson, unless the Executive Committee determines otherwise. If the General Secretary is unable to speak for the organisation, then the Moderator of PCC may speak for the organisation.

PCC will develop and implement communications procedures to ensure compliance with this policy.

The Communications Officer is the communications focal person and will monitor compliance with this policy, update communications procedures as needed and organise periodic training for PCC staff, volunteers and other representatives as appropriate.

This policy informs our communication practice, which will be updated periodically to adapt to the evolving media landscape. PCC staff will receive appropriate training on new and updated policies and procedures.

### **4. PCC will be a transparent and accountable organisation.**

PCC will seek and respond constructively to feedback from its supporters, donors, the general public, official bodies, its partners, local organisations with whom we work, governments, NGOs, trusts and foundations.

We will share information with people living in poverty, our partners and the general public. We will be accountable to the Assembly, Executive Committee, member churches, applicable regulators, volunteers, supporters and partners.

PCC will be accountable through both the information we publish and how we respond to requests for information.

We will publish information that describes how we relate with our stakeholders in a professional manner, including our policies that refer to privacy, the protection and safeguarding of people, conflict of interest, professional conduct, development and non-development activities, complaints and incidents handling, communication and transparency.

We will publish information describing our programs, including countries, partners and project. We will publish information regarding outcomes, evaluations of our programs and our responses.

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In our Annual Reports we will follow the Fiji Register of Charitable Trust guidance and include summary financial information from audited statutory accounts. Our Annual Reports will be available on our website, and full audited accounts will be provided on request.

We will disclose any information on request or give reasons for any decision not to disclose (for example, to respect confidentiality and/or privacy).

We will regularly survey our partners to seek feedback on the health of our partnership and the value of our joint programs to our partners. We will share the results of such surveys with our partners, and findings with our other stakeholders.

We will regularly survey our supporters to gather feedback on the quality of our communications and accountability and share findings with them.

We will have a diverse and accessible range of ways in which stakeholders can complain or raise issues or seek information from us.

In determining whether to publish or otherwise disclose information we will consider the protection of vulnerable persons and the benefit to, and impact of disclosure on, our partners, their communities and our donors and stakeholders.

PCC will develop and implement transparency procedures to ensure compliance with partner requirements and good practice.

### *Related Resources*

To implement this policy, PCC *Operations Manual*<sup>1</sup> contains associated procedures and guidelines.

PCC is guided by the following policies, codes and requirements:

- DFAT / partner Visual Branding;
- PCC Privacy Policy<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Under review

<sup>2</sup> Under development