# Policy of Oxfam Australia

# MCO1: Ethical Images and Stories Policy

## 1. Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that images and stories are collected, sourced and used honestly and ethically, according to Oxfam Australia's ethical content guidelines, our fundraising, legal, ethical and compliance obligations and our brand values, and that they portray the people and communities, with whom we work, with respect, dignity and accuracy.

## 2. Scope and Eligibility

This policy applies to all Oxfam Australia (OAU) and Trading employees, board members, interns, volunteers, Country Offices where Oxfam Australia is Executing Affiliate, consultants, contractors, partners or visitors who are sourcing, collecting or using content for Oxfam.

It covers both still (photographs) and moving (video) imagery and recorded, transcribed or written interviews and direct quotes, whether collected by OAU or sourced from third parties. It applies to information, stories and images collected for research, evaluation, donor, supporter and public engagement purposes and all material published by OAU regardless of format.

## 3. Definitions

1) **Oxfam Australia** – For the purpose of this policy, Oxfam Australia, Oxfam Trading and Country Offices will be referred to as a single title under Oxfam Australia, as the policy applies in total across all.
2) **Images** – means still (photographs and illustrations) and moving (video and animation).
3) **Child** – is an individual below the age of 18 years.
4) **Stories** – the direct quotes, facts and personal details obtained during an interview and used in messaging, case studies, reports and communications.
5) **Content** — videos, photos, stories and interviews that may be used to illustrate any aspect of Oxfam Australia's work, activities and functions.
6) **Informed consent** — a person understands why their image, story and/or personal details are being collected; where and how they will be used and over what period of time; that their participation is entirely voluntary; the potential risks and consequences of their image, name and words being published; and then agrees to Oxfam collecting the content.
7) **Adequately clothed** — no full nudity; no genitals, nipples or naked bottom clearly visible; any partial nudity is appropriate to age and gender and relevant to the context and Oxfam's work.

## 4. Policy Statement

Images and personal stories about the people we work with play a vital role in helping OAU raise awareness about poverty and injustice, in bringing Oxfam's work to life and in engaging supporters and the public. However, in collecting and using these images and stories, we have a responsibility to protect the women, men, boys and girls that we are portraying, and to communicate truthfully with our audiences. We must ensure that all content is collected and used ethically, honestly and sensitively and with respect for people's dignity and culture. Our content should be spirited, active and ultimately hopeful. Our communications should reflect people, their experiences and the context of situations truthfully and authentically, and accurately describe the nature, scope and impact of Oxfam's work.

Images and stories used in OAU materials will be obtained and used according to ethical principles. They will be consistent with the OAU's purpose and values, follow OAU's Ethical Content Guidelines and Oxfam's Content Standards Manual, and they will adhere to relevant guidelines and principles in the ACFID Code of Conduct, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Child Protection Policy, and Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief.

## 5. Standards for implementation

These are the minimum standards required for collecting and using content ethically:

- OAU will depict all people and their issues, experiences and lives, accurately, respectfully and truthfully, retaining the intended meaning of the information they provide and ensuring honest visual portrayals.
- Images and stories will be used in a manner that respects people's self-worth, privacy, values, history, religion, language and culture, protects their safety and rights, and presents them with dignity and strength and as active partners in the development process, with hope of potential change. People will not be portrayed as victims or presented in a dehumanised manner. We do not take or use images of people who have died or are at the moment of death.
- Images and stories will authentically represent the environment, context, situation and people — the need, the proposed solutions, and the impact of Oxfam's work. This will be done without embellishment, exaggeration, material omissions, manipulation or significant alteration to mislead audiences or to alter meaning, facts, concept or context.
- OAU content gathering will be done respectfully and sensitively, not exacerbating people's trauma, and respecting cultural differences and local traditions, laws and restrictions; particular care will be taken when collecting content related to to children, HIV and AIDS, humanitarian situations, gender-based violence, refugees and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.
- Free, prior and informed consent will be obtained from all people being photographed, filmed or interviewed. For children, consent will be obtained from both the child (if old enough to understand) and their parent or guardian.
- The collection of images and stories will not harm people, animals or the environment.
- The identification of or use of images of local people, including children, will not place them at risk — either before, during or after the content collection or as a result of publishing.
- OAU will safeguard children when photographing, filming or interviewing a child or using children's images and stories for work-related purposes across all channels and mediums. Children will be portrayed in a dignified and respectful manner, taking care that the context is relevant to Oxfam's work, they are adequately clothed, and their body position is appropriate and does not represent them in a vulnerable, submissive or sexually suggestive manner.
- OAU will protect children's identities by:
    - Changing children's first names to a culturally appropriate pseudonym, ideally agreed to at the time image or story is collected.
    - Not using children's surnames and their family's surnames.
    - Not including any information that could identify specific locations relevant to the child (eg, village, school name) in images or stories about children, nor recording them on image files or databases.
- The collection and use of content relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples will respect their unique history, diverse culture and customs, and right to protect their heritage; and will follow any sensitivities around taking and reproducing names, information, images and language.

- People, with whom we work, will have the opportunity to communicate their stories to Oxfam, in their own words, without prejudice, judgement or fear of retribution, and also have the opportunity to seek information from OAU about any aspect of the collection and use of content involving them.
- Content will accurately portray the diversity of local people including age, gender, disability and other marginalised groups
- OAU will, where possible, ensure that the content being used, and the associated permissions, are current and relevant.
- OAU will archive content once the period of consent has expired or when advised by the subjects, Country Offices, or relevant OAU staff to remove the content from circulation.
- Content will be appropriately credited and captioned, and include people's names (or pseudonyms in the case of children) wherever possible.
- All content that OAU uses from third parties, including other Oxfam entities, will reflect our values, ethical content guidelines, and meet our compliance obligations.
- OAU will only grant use of its content to third parties, where such use will raise awareness of Oxfam's work and complies with our Ethical Content Guidelines.
- OAU will safely store and archive all raw content and make approved, processed content available to staff on the Words and Pictures database.
- Where possible and practical, OAU will work with country offices in endeavouring to provide subjects with copies of images and materials in which their image and words are used.

## 6. Related Documents

This policy must be read in conjunction with:

1) Oxfam Australia Ethical Content Guidelines
2) Oxfam International Content Standards Manual

Related Forms:

1) OAU ATSIPP General Consent Form — Standard
2) OAU ATSIPP General Consent Form — Detailed
3) OAU ATSIPP Single Use Consent Form
4) OAU Schools consent form
5) OAU Parental Consent Form (Australia)
6) OAU Verbal Consent Checklist

Other related documents:

1) OAU Terms and Conditions for Downloading Resources from Words and Pictures
2) OAU Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Protocols
3) OAU Child Protection Policy
4) OAU Child Protection Code of Conduct
5) OAU Social Media Policy
6) OAU Editorial Style Guide

7) [Oxfam Global Identity Guidelines](#)

8) [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Child Protection Policy](#)

9) [ACFID Code of Conduct](#)

10) [ACFID Code of Conduct quality assurance framework.](#)

11) [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief](#)

## 7. Responsibility and Authority

N/A

## 8. Information about this policy

| Policy Name: MCO1 Ethical Images and Stories Policy | Effective Date: 21 November 2017 |
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| Author: Maureen Bathgate, Content Manager | Pages: 4 |