

# SURFAID

## Transparency and Accountability Policy

SurfAid International Australia (SurfAid Australia) and SurfAid International Incorporated (SurfAid New Zealand)

Version:	03.0
Date last approved:	March 2024
Date of next review:	March 2027

### 1. Purpose

SurfAid values its relationships with key stakeholders, supporters and the people and communities involved in its development and humanitarian work, and advocacy. The purpose of this policy is to detail our understanding of, and approach to, our core accountability commitments and ensure that all SurfAid's operations are managed in a transparent and accountable manner.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all SurfAid staff, board members, interns, volunteers, contractors and advisors. It also extends to suppliers, partners and associated implementing organisations.

### 3. Legislative Frameworks and Standards

- Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct
- Council for International Development (CID) New Zealand Code of Conduct
- Global Standard for CSO Accountability

### 4. Definitions

**Accountability:** The processes through which an organisation makes a commitment to respond to and balance the needs of stakeholders in its decision-making processes and activities, and delivers against the commitment.

**Transparency:** An organisation's openness about its activities, providing information on what it is doing, where and how this takes place and how it is performing.

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## 5. Policy Statement

### 5.1 PRINCIPLES

The following principles are central to SurfAid's approach and guide our international development and humanitarian work, as well as the governance and management of SurfAid:

- **Transparency:** operating in an accessible, clear and visible manner and ensuring our activities are subject to confidentiality restrictions, open to examination by our donors, partners and stakeholders.
- **Accountability:** responsibility to our stakeholders for decisions made and how they are implemented, as well as our actions and inactions.
- **Quality and effectiveness:** The quality and effectiveness of our work is achieved through competent staff and partners, well-designed internal processes and systems, strong contextual analysis and collaboration with others.
- **Safeguarding and Protection:** Within the framework of human rights, providing for the safety and security of communities, partners and staff through analysing and addressing identified protection risks, threats and vulnerabilities.
- **Participation and Empowerment:** Developing and implementing processes that enable primary stakeholders to play an active role in the decision-making and activities that affect them.
- **Being a professional, competent and caring organisation:** Working with a human-centred culture; investing in effective governance and management, human resource planning and staff development and care.
- **Continual learning and improvement:** Ongoing dialogue, monitoring and evaluation which enables learning and adaptation, improving management, practice and results.
- **Responsible stewardship of resources:** Financial and material resources are used and accounted for in ways that are appropriate, accurate and transparent.
- **Responsive to complaints and concerns:** Primary stakeholders can seek and receive responses for grievances and alleged harm and learning is used to improve policy and practice.

### 5.2 COMMITMENTS

SurfAid is committed to ethical, accountable and transparent practices that build and maintain public trust and confidence.

We are committed to disclosing timely, relevant and accurate information in an accessible format.

Working in partnership is central to SurfAid's approach to all our international aid and development work. SurfAid works in partnership with other organisations, communities and individuals to achieve sustainable positive change. Accountability and transparency are key attributes of effective partnerships. Our partnerships are based on long-term engagement, trust and ongoing consultation, shared learning and feedback. We support our partners to obtain the

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skills, capacity and will to deliver on our accountability commitments, and encourage their compliance through MOUs and partnership agreements.

We share information with our community partners, partner organisations, our local government partners and the general public, and we are accountable to our staff, volunteers, supporters, donors, suppliers and host governments. The information we publish and how we respond to requests for information are important aspects of accountability.

We commit to high standards of transparency and accountability in our reporting and communication with our primary stakeholders, including about results and lessons learned.

We are committed to being fully accountable to project participants, communities, partners, supporters and donors for the work we undertake and for the resources entrusted to us.

We encourage participation of project participants by being transparent and sharing information, and receiving and responding to their feedback.

We value the privacy of those we work with and those who provide us with information that may be private or sensitive. Nothing in this policy is to be interpreted as grounds for breaching SurfAid's commitments to privacy.

## 6. Policy Application

SurfAid believes accountability and transparency are fundamental commitments that enable us to:

- Achieve positive and sustainable change in the most vulnerable communities;
- Shift the balance of power and influence to ensure people and communities have a real say in the design and management of our programs;
- Achieve quality and effectiveness in our program and advocacy.

The primary stakeholders we are accountable to are:

- Our project participants: people and communities who benefit from our development work;
- Our partners;
- Our funders/donors; and
- Our staff, governing body and supporters.

SurfAid shares non-sensitive, non-private information with the public through our website, Annual Reports, Financial Statements, and social media, including about our:

- Mission and objectives: why we exist and what we aim to achieve;
- Governance including structure, responsible people, contact information;
- ABN;

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- Programs: what we do, where we work, how we implement, the results our programs achieve, and the lessons we have learned;
- Community partners (with their consent and in their best interests): the people who SurfAid exists to support;
- Implementing partners: who we work with to deliver our programs, and how we work together;
- Finances: our revenue, expenditure and financial position;
- Fundraising: how we raise money and how we use the money we raise;
- Supporters (as agreed): who supports us financially and otherwise;
- Team (as agreed): our CEO, staff, and others who keep SurfAid operating;
- Standards and commitments: key internal policies and SurfAid Code of Conduct, and external standards of practice, such as those provided by ACFID, NZ CID, DFAT, ACNC;
- Commitment to the ACFID and NZ CID Codes of Conduct, and ability to lodge a complaint for breach of the Codes with the relevant Code Committee and a point of contact.
- Complaints handling process.

SurfAid receives requests for information from time to time. We do our best to ascertain whether these requests are genuine and safe; or not genuine and potentially harmful (including spam via email / social media). To make these judgments we may utilise technology (such as email filters), and individual judgement of staff responsible for monitoring and responding to such requests, supported by training and guidance to these staff where appropriate. We aim to respond to a majority of genuine, safe requests within 24-48 hours. Where this is not possible for operational reasons, as soon as possible we inform the person making the request, when we aim to respond to them. At all times, the information we provide in response to such requests are to be governed by SurfAid's policies, the external standards of practice we commit to, and the law.

## **7. Related Policies and Documents**

- SurfAid Aid and Development Policy
- SurfAid Working in Partnership Policy
- SurfAid Privacy Policy
- SurfAid Marketing, Communications and Media Policy
- SurfAid Fundraising Policy
- SurfAid Complaints and Whistleblowing Policy

## **8. Monitoring and Review of the Policy**

This policy will be monitored, reviewed and updated by the relevant policyholder and approved by the Chief Executive Officer CEO and the Senior Management Team. The active monitoring of activities is the day-to-day role of all staff. Policy changes will be reflected, as necessary, in updated operational manuals.

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This policy will be monitored, reviewed and updated in line with the organisational policy review cycle every 3 years, however out of cycle updates are applied as needed in response to changes in the operational, organisational or regulatory environments.