



Habitat
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Use of Photos and Stories Policy

Policy Title	Use of Photos and Stories Policy		
Policy Number	FUND004		
Department	Partnerships, Habitat for Humanity Australia		
Authorised by	Board of Directors		
Author	Communications Manager		
Date endorsed	27 June 2008	Reviewed	November 2011; November 2016 May 2021
Version	Version 4		
Re-Ratified	19 December 2016		
Re-ratified	18 October 2021		

Introduction

Stories, photos and videos that illustrate Habitat for Humanity Australia's (HFHA) work with poor and vulnerable communities are a vital means of making the public aware of the realities faced by millions of people living in substandard housing and unhealthy living conditions.

HFHA bases its standards for reporting and photographing children and adults on its Child Protection Policy, Core Principles, and the Australian Council for International Development's (ACFID) Code of Conduct, Department Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Child Protection Policy (2018), the Code of Conduct for International Committee of the Red Cross and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. These standards are observed to ensure all HFHA marketing and fundraising material (including solicitations and information updates) is truthful, ethical, accessible and timely. These standards also ensure subjects are portrayed in a manner that respects their dignity, values, history, religion, language and culture, and protects their safety, rights, and adheres to local laws; and that HFHA and its stakeholders uphold this policy when collecting and using stories, photos and videos of those with whom HFHA works, especially children.

This Policy applies to all information, stories and images collected for research, evaluation, and donor and supporter purposes.

This Policy is reviewed as required to comply with any changes to HFHA's Child Protection Policy, the DFAT Child Protection Policy, ACFID Code of Conduct or applicable legislation.

This Policy must be read in conjunction with the HFHA Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

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Definitions

Stakeholder - The term 'stakeholder' includes: National Board Directors, Committee Members, Staff (fulltime, part-time, casual), consultants, contractors, interns, volunteers, partners, agents and media personnel such as photographers, journalists and videographers.

Volunteer - The term 'volunteer' includes; National Office volunteers, interns, National Board of Directors and Global Village volunteers (HFHA's international volunteering program) and volunteers assisting in domestic programs.

Purpose

This Policy aims to balance practical needs for informing stakeholders and the community with integrity and the moral imperative to protect human dignity and human values.

The objectives of the Policy are to ensure that children and adults who are the subjects of text, photo and or video resources gathered by stakeholders agree to and have an understanding of the purposes and intentions for which the resources have been secured.

Policy in Practice

1. Informed Verbal Consent

When only photographing or -filming the subject, informed verbal consent from the subject(s) of a photo or video is required. To obtain consent, stakeholders must:

- Read, accept and commit to the Use of Photos and Stories Policy, Child Protection Policy and HFHA's Child Protection Code of Conduct before entering the field.
- Identify themselves as representing Habitat for Humanity Australia
- Ensure that the subject(s) have an understanding of the intended use of the photo/video and their personal details. For HFHA staff and contractors, full name, location, age (where appropriate) should be recorded. For volunteers, recording of first name and nearest city is sufficient (e.g. Sally, Phnom Penh).
- Best practice for informing a subject is to show samples of how other photos have been used in communications and marketing materials. At a minimum, the subject should understand that their photo may be shown and seen by others outside the community but without any specific identifying details (e.g. name, address).
- It must be clear by a verbal response from the subject that the photo can be taken, before the HFHA stakeholder proceeds.
- HFHA stakeholders must obtain informed consent by the subject and/or parent/guardian of subject(s) aged less than 18 years. If a parent/guardian is unavailable, HFHA stakeholders must not take photos of the subject, until the parent/guardian is available.

2. Informed Written Consent

Prior to collecting a story (with accompanying photo(s) and video), informed written consent from the subject(s) and their parent or guardian is required. To obtain written consent, HFHA's stakeholders must:

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- Read, accept and commit to the Use of Photos and Stories Policy, Child Protection Policy and HFHA's Child Protection Code of Conduct before entering the field.
- Identify themselves as representing Habitat for Humanity Australia
- Ensure that the subject(s) have an understanding of the intended use of their story (including any photo or video).
- Best practice for informing a subject is to show samples of how stories have been used in communications and marketing materials. The subject should understand that their story/photo/video may be known and seen by others outside their community but without any specific identifying details.
- HFHA stakeholders must obtain informed written consent by the subject and/or parent/guardian of subject(s) aged less than 18 years prior to collecting a story (including any photo or video). Any child subject should also be informed in an age-appropriate manner and give permission for use of their story. If a parent/guardian is unavailable HFHA stakeholders must not proceed with collection of the story (including video and photos), until the parent/guardian is available to provide written consent
- The consent form must be explained and where possible the form should be translated into the local language. If the subject or parent/guardian is illiterate, the explanation can be conveyed verbally through a translator or through pictorial explanation.
- HFHA staff and contractors must record personal details including full name, location, age (where appropriate). HFHA should only document information that they have permission to record. (For example, if the subject has HIV/AIDS but wishes not to be identified in that way, HFHA should not document that in the collection of the story). The dignity of beneficiaries must be maintained and safeguarded.

3. Behaviour while collecting stories/photos/videos

HFHA stakeholders must adhere to the following requirements for gathering stories and photos:

- Be sensitive to and never exploit a person's vulnerability at times of trauma or grief, and always consider how a photo/story will impact on the dignity and rights, especially the safety and well-being, of the person being portrayed.
- Portray subjects, especially children, in a dignified manner and not in sexually suggestive poses. Children and adults must be adequately clothed. (*E.g. Not photos of people washing themselves*).
- HFHA does not pay or otherwise compensate subjects for telling their stories, taking their pictures, or securing their signatures on a consent form.
- GPS tracking/Geotagging on cameras/phones must be turned off when taking pictures/video of people so that any content uploaded to a website or social media cannot be identified electronically
- Maintain truthfulness and transparency when recording a story, photo or video.
- Media must not represent people in a dehumanised manner.
- Media must not feature dead bodies or people with end-of-life signs.

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4. Protocols for Use of Photos and Stories

All fundraising and marketing material must be produced in consultation with and approved by the Digital Marketing & Communications Manager. In cases where material includes information about overseas programs, the International Program team also needs to be consulted and provide approval, to ensure the information is accurate and transparent. Where there is a risk that beneficiaries will be identifiable, HFHA changes the names to protect the individual(s).

HFHA's material must respect the dignity, values, history, religion, culture of our beneficiaries and the local laws.

5. Use and storage of images:

HFHA stakeholders must adhere to the following requirements for use and storage of story, photo and video resources.

- Material that has been archived must not be used.
- Photos and stories should respect human dignity. Do not portray people as helpless victims. Balance human needs with positive language about what people are doing to help themselves.
- Ensure images are honest representations of the contexts and the facts. Photos, stories and videos will portray a truthful account of their situation. This includes not cropping photos that may alter the perception of the photo's situation, for example cropping out a parent in a photo with a child; this would show the child is alone when in fact they are not.
- If used, pseudonyms must be noted on the photo file name in HFHA photo records, so that a "Johnny" in one instance is not re-named as "Freddy" in another.
- An image must not disclose details which could enable a child to be identified.
- An image of a child must portray only a truthful account of their situation.
- No information will be published which will identify the exact location of a child e.g. surname, first name and village name may be changed to protect children's identify. This includes blurring the school crest on a subject's shirt or cropping the street name out of a photo.
- Photos, stories and videos must only be used by HFHA for a period of two years post the completion of a project. At this time they should be archived.
- In the situation of 'signature' photos (photos which have been taken of a beneficiary which we consider timeless or a true reflection of our work), these can be used beyond two years after project completion, if additional informed written consent has been obtained from the beneficiary in question.
- The following measures must be taken by HFHA staff to ensure file labels, meta data or text descriptions do not reveal identifying information about the subject when sending images electronically or publishing images in any form. These measures also assist with the tracking of the age of the photo/story/video content:
 - All photos must be tagged where possible and filed in folders relating to the volunteering activity, project field visit or project folder.
 - All stories must be dated and filed with consent forms on the HFHA secured server.

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- All HFHA initiated videos must have a brief, script or layout and documentation of where it was filmed, date of filming and consent noted in the video folder on the HFHA secured server.

6. Raising awareness of this Policy

- Stakeholders working on HFHA projects are briefed and must adhere to this Policy. They are also required to sign the HFHA Child Protection Code of Conduct.
- All new HFHA staff members are briefed on HFHA's Use of Photos and Stories Policy and procedures.
 - Annual training on Child Protection is completed for all staff (or more frequently to introduce any policy changes); this training also includes HFHA's Use of Photos and Stories Policy and procedures.
- For International or Domestic Volunteers

Pre-departure Awareness Raising

- All volunteers must read and commit to HFHA's Child Protection Policy, which includes HFHA's Child Protection Code of Conduct, the behavioral guidelines for all HFHA representatives, as well as HFHA's Use of Photos and Stories Policy.
- All volunteers are to be provided with a range of pre-departure trainings and briefings which outline their obligations around Child Protection and Use of Photos and Stories.

During the Build Trip or activity

- International or Domestic activity Team Leaders and team members are required to comply with HFHA's policies, such as Use of Photos and Stories Policy. If at any time a team member does not comply with the HFHA policies, Team Leaders are required to inform both the local host coordinator or HFHA supervisor and the HFHA Volunteering team immediately.
- Where possible, HFHA Volunteering and Communications staff will monitor the photos volunteers are sharing through social media platforms. HFHA Volunteering staff also encourages volunteers to use specific hashtags and tagging on social media whilst on their build or volunteer activity, which assists with this monitoring.

Post-Build

- A debrief with Team Leaders and follow up surveys to Team Members capture any concerns or issues, such as breaches of the Child Protection Policy and Use of Photos and Stories Policy, that have not been escalated during the build week or volunteering activity.

Use of Photos and Stories Policy Breaches

A breach occurs when a stakeholder's actions and/or behaviour contradicts the principles outlined in the Use of Photos and Stories Policy and or Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct, but does not constitute abuse. Breaches should be reported to HFHA as soon as possible. If it is also a breach of the Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct - procedures for handling these breaches are outlined in the HFHA Child Protection Policy.

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Complaints

Complaints involving the collection or use of stories, photos, videos, etc. may be made following the HFHA Complaints Policy which is available on the HFHA website or from the HFHA office or HFHA representative.

Anonymous complaints can be lodged following advice given in that Policy or advice on the HFHA website.

Complaints will be handled in accordance with the procedure described in the Complaints Policy.

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