



## **MEDIA, COMMUNICATIONS, AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

XP Missions, a department of XP Ministries, works in South East Asia to see the elimination of human trafficking, specifically related to women and children. In Cambodia, XP Missions operates under the legal authority of Operation Justice Cambodia, a local NGO supported and funded by XP Missions, which also relates to the policies and expectations outlined in this Media, Communications, and Child Protection Policy.

We aim to protect the rights of every child and individual. As such, it is our goal to provide respect and honor to each child, individual, property, and community we are working and serving with. Accordingly, we have created this policy to help guide you in your actions, especially related to the use of media and communications, while visiting or partnering with XP Missions / Operation Justice Cambodia.

Please read and follow the designated guidelines in this Media, Communications, and Child Protection Policy. Described standards are non-negotiable, and all visitors, staff members, partners, and affiliates must follow these expectations.

### **INTRODUCTION:**

XP Missions believes that every person has a destiny and purpose and that each individual was created with intent and formed in the image and likeness of God. As such, we believe that all people should be treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their gender, age, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status.

We must carefully regard guidelines that will protect children's rights, being careful not to victimize, violate, or shame them in their feelings or experiences.

We seek to uphold the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), thereby protecting the civil, economic, health, social, political, and cultural rights of every child, defined as any individual under the age of eighteen. As such, the rights of a child are to be protected over any other matter, including that of fundraising, education, awareness, and advocacy.

We believe that each child and individual has the right to their own story, testimony, and image; therefore, these communications are under the ultimate control of the individual and are not held by XP Missions or any of its partners, visitors, or affiliates.

### **DESIGNATION:**

The following policy is designated for all XP Missions staff, volunteers, outreach team members and interns, consultants, affiliates, and any media representatives working with XP Missions.

### **ASSOCIATED POLICIES AND STANDARDS:**

The following policies and guidelines may help to provide further details and explanations of the content provided herein.

- XP Ministries vision, values, and polices – specifically defined by the outlined mission and statement of faith, found at <http://www.xpministries.org>.
- UNCRC treaty
- UNICEF’s Principles for Ethical Reporting and Interviewing Children.
- UNIAP’s Guide to Ethics and Human Rights in Counter-Trafficking

### **GUIDELINES FOR COLLECTING STORIES, VIDEOS AND, PHOTO MATERIALS**

- **Protecting Identities:** All children under the care of or associated with XP Missions are NOT allowed to be photographed or filmed, unless they obtain direct consent from XP Missions. Vulnerable and at risk children, as may be seen on outreaches or while in partnership with other organizations/ministries, should likewise not be photographed or filmed without the direct consent of the XP Missions team. XP Missions team members will let you know where and when it may be appropriate. If pictures are allowed, they should be in a group format, and child identities (such as names and stories) must be kept confidential.
- **Guarantee anonymity.** In the case of approval, all children must still remain unidentifiable and visible faces must be creatively hidden, blurred, or barred, where natural censorship is preferential by taking pictures from behind, or the side where the face is not easily recognized, hidden by hair or by back-shadowing.
- **Do not list actual names or specific places.** Ensure that nothing in the photograph (ie. background, environment, etc.) or its caption or other description (ie. name of the child, parent, school, social circle, etc.) may lead to the identification, recognition, and/or tracing of the child.
- Do not take images of children in a sexualized nature or various stages of undress.

### **MEDIA ACCESS GUIDELINES (FOR JOURNALISTS, PHOTOGRAPHERS, VIDEOGRAPHERS)**

Media access to any child or community within XP Missions care of affiliated with XP Missions for the purpose of interviewing, photographing or filming, will only be granted if the subject agrees, and after careful consideration of the individual's best interest by XP Missions staff.

## **GUIDELINES FOR GATHERING INFORMATION**

To ensure media does not consciously or unconsciously cause distress to anyone media will only be given access to children and communities within XP Missions if they agree to:

- **Disclose all interview questions before.** All questions, which will be asked of subject(s), must be given to XP Missions before the interview takes place. XP Missions staff have the right to modify or delete any questions they deem necessary.
- **Stop if causing distress.** Halt interviewing, filming, or photographing at the request of the individual concerned or XP Missions staff, if they feel the media activity is inappropriate or causing distress.
- **Give opportunity for counseling after interview.** Subjects should receive information & details of whom they could consult or complain should they have concerns during or on completion of an interview.
- **Children cannot be interviewed about previous trauma or abuse they experienced.** All questions directed at children should relate only to positive experiences. You will not be allowed to ask children about abuse, physical, or sexual exploitation.
- **When talking about trafficking or exploitation, no individual faces can be shown** even if the images shown are of children/people not related to XP Missions. Avoid associating words with individual children or people, because it implies that they are trafficked or exploited. Only group shots or background shots can be used.

## **GUIDELINES FOR DISRIBUTING INFORMATION**

- **Provide XP Missions copies first.** Media will provide XP Missions with copies of the publication, broadcasts, and photographs after the visit, and **BEFORE** distribution.
- All journalists, photographers, videographers, and media representatives will agree to read and follow the ***XP Missions Media & Communications Policy*** in its entirety.

- **Maintain Sensitivity:** Be aware of an individual's possible grief, trauma, and vulnerability, with regard to their experience and story. At all costs, seek to preserve their dignity, safety, and well being, and treat them with the utmost respect when capturing dialog or video documentation.
- **Personal Gain:** Child images and stories should be respected and not used for the personal gain, including fundraising purposes, unless direct approval is granted from the XP Missions team.

#### **GUIDELINES FOR INTERVIEW CONSENT**

- **Explanation of Usage:** For personal stories and interviews, the individual should be informed of the usage of their media by being told of the potential for their story or testimony to be accessed by members of their city, nation, and the world, not being limited to language or culture.
- **Right to Withdraw Consent:** Individuals maintain their right to withdraw consent to the use of their story, image, video, or testimony, even after its publication and distribution.

#### **GUIDELINES FOR GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS**

- **Do Not Re-Exploit by Exaggeration:** Images and descriptions concerning an exploited or vulnerable person, community, or culture should not be re-exploited by the inclusion of disrespectful or exaggerated material. This includes publications involving statistics and factual reports. Images must represent the true nature of an individual, place, or community; and photo and video images must reflect reality. Above all, hope and dignity should be maintained in all communication materials.
- **Give a Completed Picture:** Reports and documentations should present a completed picture. Subjective views should be avoided and all ministries, governmental agencies, and organizations should be treated with respect and represented in a non-judgmental manner.
- **Use Appropriate Language:** All communications should respect individuals with reference to situations and descriptions. Words should be carefully chosen to not suggest shame, disrespect, or blame.

#### **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

The Child Protection Policy shall serve as a means to: a) protect the children from abuse and exploitation, b) protect XP Missions staff, volunteers, interns, partner individuals

and organizations, short-term workers, and visitors from false accusations and allegations, and c) protect XP Missions name and reputation as an organization.

For the purpose of this policy, a child is defined as any person under 18 years of age as stated in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Additionally, a partner is defined as an organization or individual who is involved in project work with XP Missions regardless of whether this relationship is short or long term, a one-off or regular/ongoing arrangement, or whether funding is involved.

### **TERMS & DEFINITIONS**

For the purposes of this policy, the following terms shall be defined as follows:

- **Child/Children:** Persons seventeen (17) years of age or younger (UNCRC).
- **Youth:** Persons between the ages of eighteen (18) and twenty-five (25).  
Vulnerable adults” Persons who are disables, handicapped or unable to take care of themselves.
- **Physical Abuse:** Actual or likely physical injury; failure to prevent physical injury, or suffering, to a child or youth, including deliberate hitting, beating, shaking, throwing, burning, drowning, suffocating, or poisoning.
- **Mental/Emotional Abuse:** Conveying to a child or youth that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate and cause children to feel frightened, in danger and/or corrupted.
- **Neglect:** The persistent or severe neglect of a child or youth, or the failure to protect a child or youth from exposure to any kind of danger, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in significant impairment of the child or youth’s development.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Sexual violation of a child or youth; such as touching a child or youth’s genitals, forcing a child or youth to watch or take part in pornography or coercing the child or youth to have sex.
- **Spiritual Abuse:** The misuse of power, authority and/or trust by a spiritual leader, or someone in a position of spiritual power or authority (whether organization, institution, church or family), with the intention.

### **BEHAVIORAL PROTOCOLS**

- All visitors in direct contact with XP Missions projects and children must sign the Statement of Commitment, follow and respect the Behavioral Protocols, and

understand that action will be taken in cases of inappropriate behavior.

- All visitors are expected to give dignity and respect to all children and youth associated with the work of XP Missions in Cambodia and Thailand.
- Visitors shall not act flirtatiously with a child or youth, or touch a child or youth in a way that goes against the UNCRC. This includes, but is not limited to, touching children in areas that are normally covered by shorts and a t-shirt, picking children up, lap-holding, kissing, and tickling inappropriately.
- XP Missions visitors shall not be alone with children associated with XP Missions who are not their own offspring in a private place without another staff member of XP Missions present (NOTE: There must always be at least 2 XP Missions staff members with a child).
- Visitors are not allowed to give money, presents, or toys to children without prior authorization from XP Missions. We do not allow our visitors, partners, or affiliates to give money to beggars on the streets. This may perpetuate the cycle. If possible, always consult with XP Missions staff member first.
- Local Cambodian and Thai children or youth shall not stay overnight in the residences or hotel rooms of XP Missions visitors or staff unless accompanied by the child's parent or legal guardian.
- Visitors shall not discipline the child or youth they visit. Any concerns of improper behavior by children shall be reported to the project staff.
- XP Missions visitors shall not use, abuse, or exploit a child in a way that is against the UNCRC law. This includes physical abuse, mental & emotional abuse, sexual abuse and spiritual abuse (see Terms & Definitions).
- It will not be permissible for visitors to take photographs or video footage of children, youth or project locations without prior authorization from the XP Missions staff.
- XP Missions visitors shall not disclose any information (names of children, locations, stories of specific victims, etc.) relating to children, youth or partner organizations that are considered confidential and/or internal to any outside party. This includes verbal disclosure, distributing internal documents, sharing project locations and posing information on the Internet. \*This is in accordance with Cambodia Trafficking Law 2007 (Article 49); and MoSVY's Minimum Standards on Residential Care (Article 9).

**RELEVANT LAWS:**

- **Law on Suppression of Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation (Cambodia, 2008) – Article 49:** This Act was created to suppress sexual exploitation and human trafficking. It criminalizes various types of sexual behavior, including that of soliciting for prostitution. All visible material that is regarded to stimulate sexual desire (such a pornographic images) is prohibited. As well, all newspaper, broadcasting, and publications are prohibited from revealing any information that could potentially lead to the exposure of identities, pertaining to the victims of the documented offense (such as that of human trafficking or other sexual exploitations).
- **Prakas on Minimum Standards on Residential Care for Children (Cambodia, 2006) – Article 9:** Careful precautions should be made to protect the identities of children, including concealing their location, name, and any other information that may be used to identify them. As well, children should be respected and protected when communication involves disclosing of child victims' information. The documentation should reflect that abuse is wrong, and it should be clearly relayed that the child is the victim, in such cases of victimization and abuse.
- **UNCRC (1991) – Article 16:** It is a child's right to have privacy, and they should be protected from attacks against their life, family, good name, and homes.

**REFERENCES:**

Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC), (UNICEF, 2011).

I have read and agree to the information contained herein, as pertaining to this Media, Communications, and Child Protection Policy. I also acknowledge that I have not been convicted of any criminal offense involving abuse or exploitation of children or youth.

As an XP Missions intern, volunteer, partner organization, or affiliate I acknowledge that I may be provided with confidential information regarding children’s backgrounds and experiences, as relevant to my job and/or partnership. I will, under no circumstances, share personal information regarding children, their background, or circumstances. Upon termination of my time or partnership with the XP Missions, I also agree to keep confidential any personal information regarding children, case specifics, or any other information that would potentially put the clients, their families, or XP Missions in jeopardy.

**NOTE:** For all positions or partnerships involving direct contact with children or youth, a corresponding criminal background check is also required.

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PRINTED NAME (INCLUDE TITLE & ORGANIZATION IF APPLICABLE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

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DATE