
Development and Peace
– Caritas Canada

**Communications
Policy**



1. Introduction

Fluid and transparent communications are essential for the organization to function effectively as a democratic movement and as part of the Catholic Church in Canada, and in accordance with Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act.

Clear communications with key stakeholders are equally necessary for Development and Peace – Caritas Canada to fulfill its mission to support the poorest and most vulnerable peoples in the Global South and to raise awareness and engage Canadians on the root causes of global poverty and injustice.

2. Purpose of the Policy

- Respond to the internal and external communications needs of the organization.
- Ensure that the organization’s communications serve its mission.
- Delineate the roles and responsibilities of those who communicate on behalf of the organization.
- Define the role of communications for purposes of transparency.
- Ensure that the organization’s visual identity is respected and strengthened in its external and internal communications.

3. Communications principles

Development and Peace is committed to communications that:

- Express the values and mission of the organization;
- Respect the dignity of all persons without discrimination;
- Promote transparency and accountability;
- Encourage dialogue, partnership and synodality;
- Reflect the social teachings of the Church, especially the preferential option for the poor and solidarity;
- Recognize Canada's two official languages.

4. Application

Any communication made on behalf of the organization by an employee, a member of the National Council, a member of a Diocesan Council and members of Development and Peace must:

- Respect the values and mission of the organization;
- Align with the decisions and positions of the organization;
- Comply with the **Policy on Public Stands**;
- Express the key messages of the organization when acting as an organizational spokesperson;
- Act with loyalty and diligence, as outlined in the **Code of Conduct**;
- Adhere to the organization's Confidentiality Policy (in progress).

For the purposes of transparency and accountability, and in accordance with its reporting obligations as set out in the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act, the **Caritas Internationalis Management Standards**, and the **Code of Ethics of Cooperation Canada**, Development and Peace is committed to:

- Producing an annual report for public distribution that provides the main results of its community development and humanitarian aid projects, as well as its education and fundraising campaigns;
- Making available its audited financial statements;
- Providing information on its partners in the Global South, including the name of the partner and project details, as long as this does not compromise the security of the partner;
- Communicating decisions that affect the governance, mission and/or work of the organization to key relevant stakeholders;
- Providing an activities report to the Plenary Assembly of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB);
- Presenting a report of activities at the regional assemblies of members;
- Responding to media requests promptly.
- In a crisis situation where the organization's reputation is at risk, the crisis management procedure must be followed, with clear spokespeople identified and mandated to speak on behalf of the organization.

Resources created both nationally and locally to promote the organization must follow the **Brand Style Guide**, including the proper use of the organization's logo and name.

5. Roles and responsibilities

The Executive Director is responsible for ensuring appropriate lines of communication at all levels of the organization and the following defines the roles and responsibilities for ensuring regular and efficient communications with organization's various audiences.

Communications with the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops

This level of communication cannot be categorized in the overall communications with other stakeholders, since "close identification and collaboration with the Church and its pastors are crucial if a Catholic agency is to be more than humanitarian and philanthropic."¹

Adequate and transparent accountability to the CCCB will serve to strengthen communications and collaboration between the two organizations. An annual communications plan will be elaborated to ensure consistent internal communications and joint external communications, as needed.

The Executive Director is responsible for communicating with the Secretary General of the CCCB. When deemed necessary, the President of Development and Peace will communicate with the President of the CCCB.

Internal Communications

This includes communications to employees, the National Council and partner organizations.

- The management team communicates key management decisions and updates to the National Council and the staff of Development and Peace.
- The International Programs Department is the primary intermediary for communicating with partner organizations.

For communications within the National Council, members must follow **the Policy on the communications between the committees, the Executive Committee and the National Council.**

Regional Communications

Regional Communications include communications to regional episcopal assemblies, diocesan councils, local bishops, local parishes and local members. A communications plan for each region will be elaborated on a yearly basis. These communications are done with support from the departments in charge of public engagement and communications, and general management, as needed.

- The department in charge of public engagement, with support from the national office, informs regional episcopal assemblies and diocesan council chairs of key management decisions and national programs or activities to be shared and promoted at the diocesan level.
- The National Council informs Diocesan councils of key governance decisions made by the National Council and provides a yearly report on the activities of the National Council at the Regional Assemblies.
- Diocesan councils share with local members communications from National Council and national programs or activities to be shared and promoted at the diocesan level. They also inform the local ordinary Bishop of Development and Peace activities and meet with him at least once per year.

¹ *Toward the Future, United in Faith and Trust: Pastoral Letter by the President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops for the 50th anniversary of the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace / Caritas Canada, November 20, 2016, p. 4*

External Communications

This includes all public information about the organization and communications to the general public, donors, supporters, the media and all those interested in the work of Development and Peace.

The department in charge of communications is responsible for, but not limited to, the following:

- Developing an annual external communications plan
- Updating the organization's website
- Ensuring that the organization's brand and visual identity are respected
- Responding to national media requests
- Producing an annual report
- Managing national social media platforms
- Promoting the organization and its campaigns at the national level

The department in charge of public engagement is responsible for, but not limited to, the following:

- Promoting the organization and its campaigns in the different regions of Canada
- Responding to regional media requests

The members of Development and Peace are also encouraged to raise the visibility of the organization by communicating with other lay organizations, their local media, the communications departments of their diocese or parish and with other community actors with similar interests to Development and Peace. A communications guide will be made available to support them in these efforts.

Government Relations

The International Programs Department is responsible for communicating with the Government of Canada and other bilateral funders, such as provincial governments, for reporting purposes and as needed

The department in charge of communications is responsible for coordinating with the Communications Service of the Government of Canada or others for public announcements.

The department in charge of advocacy communicates with the Canadian government on global social justice issues. Members are encouraged to meet or communicate as a citizen with their Member of Parliament to discuss global social justice issues, drawing on key messages provided by Development and Peace.

6. Related implementation process

1. External communications plan
2. Joint Development and Peace – CCCB communications plan
3. Regional communications plan(s)

7. Resources

- Role of the Member of National Council
- Policy on the communications between the committees, the Executive Committee and the National Council
- Code of Conduct
- Policy on Public Stands
- Brand Style Guide
- Confidentiality Policy (In progress)
- Crisis management procedure (in progress)
- Communications Guide (in progress)

Next update of the policy: November 2021. National Council should be informed of any updates made to this policy.