

THE SWALLOWS IB MEDIA POLICY

Adopted 2010-12-16

The Swallows India Bangladesh (IB) is working in a rights-based manner for better living conditions for marginalised groups. In this work increased visibility, influence over political processes and advocacy are crucial components. Media is one of the most important tools. This media policy is developed in order for The Swallows IB to conduct an efficient and credible media work and to inform the staff and the members about how to use and respond to media. Even though the policy provides clear areas of responsibilities when it comes to media contacts, it is every person's legal right to express her/his opinion freely.

The media policy includes newspapers, web media, radio, television, external blogs and twitter.

Aims with the media work

- Make the work of The Swallows IB visible to the public.
- Influence the public debate on issues related to the work of The Swallows IB.
- Provide expertise on issues in the fields of work of The Swallows IB.
- Give a balanced view of the target groups The Swallows IB works with and provide a balanced view on the countries The Swallows IB operates in.

To think about in all contacts with media

First of all; as a member of, and staff at, The Swallows IB, you represent an organisation with the fundamental vision to work for "... a just world, free from poverty, where people have the power to affect their own lives, and live in solidarity with one another in a sustainable interface with the nature". The values and other policies of The Swallows IB are to be implemented in all our work and all communication with media should be in line with the vision.

Be yourself: Always be transparent about who you are and who you represent. Use your real name. Identify that you work for The Swallows IB and what your role is. To provide your own unique and individual perspective is important but it must not conflict with the values of The Swallows. It is important that you are familiar with the policies contained within the organisation.

Be responsible: Think about what you write, and exercise good judgment and common sense. Always demonstrate respect for others' points of view, even when they are not offering the same in return.

Be informed: Your answers to media should be based on facts. The organisations we support should be considered as experts and you can refer to them. In this way, you clearly show from where you gather your information.

Consider your audience: Adapt your message to the recipient you turn to.

Have the target group in mind: When you post articles in media (e.g newspapers), remember that you represent The Swallows IB and do not publish anything that could harm the people we work with or alienate any of our target groups.

Have security in mind: The Swallows IB does sometimes work with sensitive issues. Therefore, generally we should not mention names of individuals working in projects, programmes, partner organisations or other organisations in India and Bangladesh, since we do not want to risk putting them in any kind of danger. Exceptions are leaders of organisations or reportages/interviews about individuals.

Respect copyrights: Give people proper credit for their work and make sure you have the right to use something with attribution before you publish.

If you have any doubts or do not know how to respond to media, always ask for time to prepare.

When contacted by media

The director of The Swallows IB is the main responsible for media contacts. Before giving information to media, the director should be informed and she/he will decide who should take up the contact. Ask for the contact details of the journalist in question and state that you will return as soon as possible with a reply to the request for information. If the matter is urgent, and the director is not to be reached, the board should be contacted. It is important that The Swallows IB also responds to criticism. This should first be discussed with the director to determine who and how to respond. A key message should be formulated. Afterwards the incident should be evaluated – in order to learn from the experiences.

Proactive media contacts

The Swallows IB should contact media on its own, whenever the organization aims at bringing one of its issues to media or when an area of expertise of The Swallows IB is discussed in the media. The Swallows IB could then especially stress the organization's unique contacts with the target groups in India and Bangladesh, and communicate these groups' views to the public in Sweden or elsewhere.

General guidelines

Given coordination with, and permission from, the director, these are the mandates for the offices and positions at The Swallows IB:

- Dhaka office/India office could be contacted – or contact media themselves – on issues related to The Swallows IB's work/themes, the situation in the countries, the security situation, general information about the cooperation with partners etc. (but always ask partners if media requests detailed information).
- The communicator could be contacted – or contact media on her/his own – regarding the work of the organization in Sweden, such as recycling, sales of second hand clothes and items, cooperation with organic agriculturalists etc.