

Interplast Australia & New Zealand

Statement of Human Rights Policy

Policy Status:
Pending Approval

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Board Approval Date:	February 2025
Last Review Date:	N/A
Future Review Date:	February 2027
Frequency of Review:	2 years
Policy Owner:	CEO

Revisions to Policy

Significant Changes	Endorsed by CEO	Approved by Interplast Board
Initially approved	19 December 2024	18 February 2025

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Section 1: Purpose

Human rights are for everyone, regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, indigeneity, disability, age, displacement, caste, gender, gender identity, sexuality, sexual orientation, poverty, class or socio-economic status.

Interplast Australia & New Zealand (Interplast) is committed to respecting, protecting and fulfilling the human rights of all people, particularly stakeholders, personnel and especially those who are at risk or are identified as vulnerable. In seeking to respect human rights, Interplast accepts its responsibility not to dehumanise any person or group, noting that this extends beyond its duty to 'do no harm'.

The purpose of this statement is to provide an overview of how Interplast meets our responsibility to respect, protect and fulfil the human rights of all people.

Section 2: Scope

This statement applies to all stakeholders, personnel and representatives of Interplast.

Section 3: Guiding Principles

Understanding human rights

Interplast understands that human rights are a universalist discourse, which means that they are based on the idea of a shared humanity and global citizenship. Ideas about human rights are embedded in all the major religious traditions and can be found in many different cultural forms. Ideas of human dignity and worth, ideas that all people should be treated according to certain basic standards, ideas that people should be protected from 'human rights abuse', and ideas of respect for the rights of others are not confined to the western intellectual tradition and can therefore be understood as universal. Interplast understands that human rights are both individual and collective; they are constructed through human interaction and through an ongoing dialogue (discourse) about what should constitute a common or shared humanity. This means that, even though they are universal, human rights are not static and fixed but will vary over time and in different cultures and political contexts.

Understanding legal perspectives on human rights

Interplast acknowledges international norms embodied by the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, the creation of which is recognised as a major achievement of the twentieth century. Interplast also recognises that the UN Declaration of Human Rights can and should be subject to challenge in different times, as different voices are heard, and different issues are given priority. The same can be said of other international human rights treaties as well as

Australia's domestic human rights legislation. Interplast *supports and commits to contributing to ongoing improvements* in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, the 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and other relevant international and domestic human rights instruments.

Understanding rights-based approaches to development

Consistent with its discursive view of human rights explained above, Interplast is committed to applying a rights-based approach to development. Rights based approaches to development aim to achieve a positive transformation of power relations among various development actors. Development actors include rights holders (who do not experience full rights) and the duty bearers (the institutions obligated to fulfil the holders' rights). Interplast acknowledges that rights holders also include future generations which means that equitable access to human rights must occur across time. Rights-based approaches aim to strengthen the capacity of duty bearers and empower the rights holders.

Racial justice statement

Interplast respects the dignity and humanity of every individual and is committed to equity, inclusion, and justice in everything we do. Our organisation condemns racism and racial injustice everywhere and in all its forms and stands strongly against all racist violence and discrimination. Interplast will work to advance equity and inclusion as a core strategic objective in the years ahead.

Locally-led development statement

Interplast supports locally-led development through the principles of "localisation" which include transference of power, priority setting, decision-making and ownership¹. Moreover, prioritising and supporting locally led development is a powerful means of achieving improved development impact and build capability in Interplast's partner countries. It empowers local partners to implement priorities, deliver essential services, and functions.

Interplast is a small organisation, but our focus is building the capability and leadership of local partners and supporting institutions and systems to create their own change. Hospitals, institutions and health systems that are led by local health personnel who believe in their ability to champion their health systems can lead to powerful outcomes for their communities.

DFAT has developed a locally-led development 'continuum', where Interplast can review our progress over time over the various dimensions of local agency. Interplast acknowledges that in many of the dimensions, we are only 'emerging' or 'partial' and we are working towards 'advanced', where local partners hold the primary responsibility.

¹ https://acfid.asn.au/acfid_resource/resolution-on-decolonisation-anti-racism-and-locally-led-action/

About Interplast's stakeholders

Primary stakeholders are those who are involved in and benefit from the implementation of Interplast's programs. This includes partner organisation's personnel who participate in training and mentoring activities, and people who access the surgical and related healthcare services, as well as rehabilitation and assistive technology (AT) services that Interplast supports.

Section 4: Policy

Interplast will:

- Thoroughly and regularly analyse the socio-political contexts in which we are working
- Apply its best efforts to protect primary stakeholders from discrimination, violence, abuse, exploitation or neglect based on up-to-date analysis of the contexts in which we are working.
- Maintain clear policies and follow good, evidence-informed practices addressing disability inclusion, gender equity and women's empowerment, child-safeguarding, and the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.
- Continually respect and, wherever practicable, actively respond to the needs, rights and inclusion of those who are vulnerable and those who are affected by marginalisation and exclusion.
- Integrate a rights-based approach to development into all programming efforts, from design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- Contribute to advocacy efforts for the improvement of international and domestic human rights legislation and other instruments, where appropriate.
- Provide periodic training to staff and volunteers on a rights-based approach to development.
- Undertake periodic evaluation and reflection on Interplast's application of rights-based approaches to development.
- Ensure that information about issues relating to human rights is promoted to the public and external stakeholders, including in Interplast's website.
- Ensure that Interplast's strategic plan reaffirms the organisation's commitment to human rights.

Section 5: Monitoring and Review of this Policy

This policy will be monitored and reviewed at intervals as indicated in this policy and following the process outlined in Interplast's Policy Framework.

The Chief Executive Officer is ultimately accountable to the Board for managing and maintaining this policy and is responsible for the implementation of this policy. The Board is responsible for adopting this policy.

The Director – International Programs is accountable to the Chief Executive Officer for ensuring the currency of this policy and all supporting procedures and relevant manuals and has responsibility for operationalising the policy.

Where compliance issues are identified, they will be addressed promptly. The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for taking any recommended amendments to this policy to the Interplast Board for its approval.

Section 6: Related Documents and Legislation

Name of document/legislation
Disability inclusion policy
Gender equity and women’s empowerment policy
Child protection policy
Prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment policy

Section 7: Definitions

Word / Phrase	Definition
Personnel	Personnel includes all employees, consultants, volunteers, Board Directors, Committee members, Working Group members and Ambassadors that are engaged by Interplast to perform the work of Interplast. Volunteers include both professional (e.g. administrative roles) and medical volunteers (e.g. surgeons, anaesthetists, nurses or allied therapists), students, interns, or any other person who has entered into a volunteer arrangement or agreement with Interplast.
Observer	Observers are individuals accompanying an Interplast program, delivered by volunteers in a partner country (e.g. representing a donor organisation or students on an observational placement). Observers do not have a clinical role but may assist the clinical team by completing tasks related to program delivery.
Partner	Partner includes organisations that work with Interplast to implement a joint project with mutually agreed outcomes,

	and/or with whom Interplast has a signed partnership agreement and/or memorandum of understanding. Partner organisations may or may not be recipients of funds through Interplast.
Beneficiary	Beneficiary 1) a patient receiving treatment through an Interplast activity (this may include a consult only, surgery, allied health treatment or other clinical care, and could be provided by an Interplast volunteer, or a local partner clinician during an Interplast activity), or 2) local partner personnel participating in training delivered by Interplast.
Stakeholder	Stakeholders include all personnel, observers, partners, beneficiaries and supporters, community members in the country where we work, funders, international development peers and organisations, or any other individuals or organisations that connect with Interplast.
Personal information (as defined by the Privacy Act 1988)	<p>Personal information includes a broad range of information, or an opinion, that could identify an individual.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An individual's name, signature, address, phone number or date of birth • Sensitive information • Credit information • Employee record information • Photographs • Internet protocol (IP) addresses • Voice print and facial recognition biometrics (because they collect characteristics that make an individual's voice or face unique) • Location information from a mobile device (because it can reveal user activity patterns and habits).
Sensitive information (as defined by the Privacy Act 1988)	<p>Sensitive information is personal information that includes information or an opinion about an individual's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racial or ethnic origin • Political opinions or associations • Religious or philosophical beliefs • Trade union membership or associations • Sexual orientation or practices • Criminal record • Health or genetic information • Some aspects of biometric information.

Confidential information (as defined by Interplast)	Organisational information, know how, technical data or specifications, financial information, employee, donor, patient or stakeholder records (both sensitive and personal).
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