



**Self Help
Africa**



Brand Guidelines 2018

selfhelpafrica.org



Francois Tarpaga
Ratenga Village, Yargo,
Kourittenga, Centre-East, Burkina
Faso. Photo Credit: Christine
Redmond, 2016

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Vision

An economically thriving and resilient rural Africa.

Mission

To support sustainable livelihoods for Africa's smallholder farmers.

Values

Equality

We believe in equality. People are equal in rights and must be treated with respect and dignity.

Accountability

Accountability and transparency is central to all our actions and use of resources.

Innovation

We are conscious that finding effective solutions requires innovative thinking combined with a pragmatic approach.

Learning

We strive for the highest quality standards in our work and encourage a culture of constant learning and improvement.

02. Our Brand

Self Help Africa (SHA) is a leading international development organisation headquartered in Ireland and UK, and with operations in nine countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

Self Help Africa Inc. is an affiliate organisation based in the US. Despite these multiple geographic locations and the different means that are used to target audiences, it is important to ensure a consistent visual identity is maintained throughout our communications. Only by ensuring a consistency in style, tone and visual identity can we hope to be successful in conveying a sense of professionalism and demonstrating a unity of purpose.

Our brand reflects the personality of our organisation. We can communicate the vision, mission and values of our organisation through the stylistic choices we make - our tone of voice and our visual identity, including our logo, colour palette, fonts, and other key design elements such as use of imagery and embellishments.

This document is intended to act as a guide to ensure this clear and consistent brand identity can be obtained across all channels and all geographic locations. If followed, a poster in a shop window in Dublin will have the same recognisable identity as a leaflet produced for use in Kampala, or a report in Ouagadougou.

Consistency in both visual and written form is vital to help audiences, whether they are public, institutional or peer, absorb our intended message. Ultimately, this attention to detail will increase our reputation and with it our impact on poverty.

Why are Brand Guidelines important?

Think of a world where a can of Coca Cola is a different colour in every shop; you'd be very confused. What if McDonald's Golden Arches were even just a different shade of yellow in each town? Brand style guides help to maintain a consistent look so that consumers and employees understand the brand. These guides help create uniformity and take an organisation such as ours from being just a collection of offices around the world, to becoming a brand and a global family.

03. Our Voice

Just as the content of our communication is vitally important, so too is how we say it. SHA's tone of voice is essential to how our message is received and should be an important consideration to anyone creating any form of written material on behalf of the organisation.

The tone of copywriting will naturally vary depending on the intended audience. Fundraising copy will be more emotive, advocacy more persuasive and report writing more factual and dispassionate. Despite this it is possible to orientate all our written communication around one central tone of voice and a limited number of consistent messages.

In broad terms as an organisation we communicate a message about Africa that is positive. While this is articulated within a context of poverty and need, the core message places emphasis on achievement, potential, and the transformational impact that investment in agricultural and enterprise can have in helping rural farming communities to lift themselves out of poverty.

This optimistic realism is reflected in our key messages shown opposite.

3.1 Key Messages

Self Help Africa is an international development organisation that works through agriculture to support rural poor African households to grow more food and increase their incomes.

We assist farmers with knowledge, training and access to markets, so that they can move from subsistence farming to sustainability.

We work in regions where our support, and the support of our donors is vital – because millions of people continue to live with the threat of hunger and extreme poverty.

Improvements in farming is critical to ending extreme hunger and poverty in sub-Saharan Africa. The vast majority of Africa's poor are in rural areas, and extreme poverty is concentrated in these areas.

African farming has huge potential, and investment in agriculture offers the most immediate, cost effective and sustainable solution to ending poverty for millions of people.

The quality, as well as the quantity of food being produced is critical – as malnutrition is endemic in sub-Saharan Africa, claims the lives of millions each year, and causes lifelong damage to health.

Support for African women farmers is vital as they are the engine of food production. It is an injustice that women currently do most of the work on small farms, yet receive just a fraction of the available support.

We support farmers to access markets – local, regional, national and international – and assist farmers groups and cooperatives to produce to the scale, and the quantity that is required for the marketplace.

Self Help Africa recognizes that if farming families cannot produce a year-round supply of food then they need to have the earning potential to generate an income.

We support smallholder farming communities to access credit and to develop small enterprises, as a means to earn a living.

We assist households to become more resilient to changing climate.

We believe that Africa has huge potential, and has huge unrealized possibilities.

We believe in the potential of African small-scale farmers to work their own way out of poverty with just a small amount of practical assistance – in simple terms a 'self help' approach to growth and development.

3.2 Writing Guide

Language is subjective and like all good communicators, we adapt how we speak depending on who we are talking to, for what reason and through which channel. That said, here are a few guiding principles which we advise people to keep in mind whether writing a report for an institutional donor, an article for a newspaper or a thank you letter to a member of the public.

Relax: Be Human

INGOs have developed a reputation for being too worthy and taking themselves too seriously. The work we do is important but that doesn't mean we have to communicate in an overly portentous manner.

Where appropriate always communicate with a natural and human tone of voice. Nobody, enjoys being lectured to or spoken to as if they are a child

Don't Waffle

INGOs have also developed a reputation for being excessively wordy. Why say something in four sentences that can be said in one?

Cut back on the waffle and break up long sentences into shorter ones. Every reader will thank you for that.

Be Confident

We believe that agricultural development has the potential to transform lives in rural Africa. We know this from experience and we have the evidence to back it up.

When we speak about our work, we should do so with authority and confidence. Always reassure the reader that we have the experience and knowledge to succeed.

Cut the Jargon

Acronyms and techspeak have a time and a place. They should remain there.

Unless specifically required, it is safe to assume most readers don't know or even care about the technical aspects of a project. So if not specifically necessary for the audience, remove it.

Keep it Beautiful

Have pride in what you write, strive for carefully crafted copy and always review what you have written before allowing it to leave your pen or computer. Even if the intended audience is just one person.

Sloppy, rushed or confused writing reflects badly not just on the writer but on the organisation as a whole.

3.3 Grammar Guide

Despite what some pedants may say, grammar is also subjective and we are not about to proscribe a strict house spelling and grammar guide. Whether you decide to hyphenate 'email' or use double instead of single quotation marks is up to you. Just ensure whatever choices you make are consistent within the same channel or piece of communication.

Below are just a few suggestions to help you along with some areas of inconsistency we spot on a regular basis:

British v American English

Outside of our US operations, throughout the rest of the organisation British English spelling conventions should be adhered to:

E.g. travelled, not traveled
emphasise, not emphasize
behaviour, not behavior

Currency

For UK, US and Irish audiences, when stating amounts of money, first state the in-country figure and then repeated with a local value in ellipsis.

E.g. "Birkutan received a loan of 1495 Ethiopian Birr (\$71)"

Avoid Slang

Since the world is on the web, your audience will come from different cultures and contexts. That's why it's important to use simple and straightforward language and to avoid colloquialisms or slang that could cause confusion.

So avoid saying for instance: "Our project is deadly/savage" because those terms are only seen as positive in Ireland.

Bullet Points

These are great for breaking important information into easily digestible chunks. Use them often and remember:

- When they form a full sentence, capitalise the first letter and include a full stop.
- When they consist of short phrases or words, use lower case and no full stop.

Numbers

Always spell out cardinal numbers (one, two, three) and ordinal numbers (first, second, third) below 10. Numbers higher than 10, should be written numerically.

E.g, Two farmers received 300 chickens.

Smallholder v Small-holder

As an organisation we use this one a lot. For consistency use the spelling smallholder (no hyphen).

Better still find a more accessible way of describing the people we work with.

Acronyms

Spell out acronyms in the first instance, then use the shortened version thereafter. Full stops aren't necessary.

E.g. Village Savings and Loans (VSL)

3.4 Our Name - Get it Right!

As of May 2018, in all jurisdictions – Ireland, Africa, the US, UK and Rest of the World the organisation trades as Self Help Africa.

When writing Self Help Africa, each word should be capitalised. In any written material, make sure our organisation's name is referred to in full (Self Help Africa) at least once before using the acronym SHA.

04. Visual Identity

All our communications should have the same look and feel to them - an overall style. We have several principles to describe this style.

Clean

Good design is about clarity. Our design choices should reflect this. The use of white space is encouraged and we keep our font choices and colour palette to a minimum. Avoid clutter.

Green

We are an agriculturally focussed organisation and this is reflected across our visual identity through the widespread use of the SHA green. This reflects our core work, farming.

People Focussed

Farming is what we do but farming itself is not inherently visually interesting, people are. Our design choices reflect this, the farmers we work with should always be front and centre of all our design choices. It is their story we are telling.

05. Our Logo

5.1 The Logo - Self Help Africa



Preferred



Acceptable Alternatives

In every country where we operate, and in the rest of the world, all communications should use the Self Help Africa Logo.

'Self Help Africa' must always be displayed left align and to the right of the SHA symbol. 'Africa' must appear below 'Self Help' rather than on the same line.

The preferred version of the Self Help Africa logo shows the SHA Symbol in SHA Green with text in SHA Gray.

Monochrome versions of the logo may also be use where more convenient, but must adhere to the colour palette outlined in this document.

Exclusion Zone



To protect the clarity and integrity of the logo a minimum exclusion zone based on the uppercase 'A' from 'Africa' in the logo has been designated.

It is required that no other graphic elements intrude on this zone.

5.2 The Logo - Misuse



NEVER Use an off-brand colour



NEVER Remove Symbol from logo

This logo has been specifically created and agreed upon for our use. **DO NOT** alter the logo in anyway. Logos must be reporduced from master artwork files.

Shown here are just a few examples of how **NOT** to use the Self Help Africa logo.



NEVER Change the position of any element



NEVER Use gradients or image fills



NEVER Change the proportions of the logo

06. Our colours

Below is a list of acceptable Self Help Africa brand colours for use in marketing materials in print or on the web.



SHA Green

C/M/Y/K: 50/0/100/0
R/G/B: 140/197/64
Hex: #8CC540



SHA Gray

C/M/Y/K: 25/0/0/80
R/G/B: 61/80/90
Hex: #3D505A



SHA Red

C/M/Y/K: 15/100/100/0
R/G/B: 210/35/42
Hex: #D2232A



SHA Teracotta

C/M/Y/K: 15/75/100/0
R/G/B: 213/98/42
Hex: #D5622A



SHA Orange

C/M/Y/K: 15/50/100/0
R/G/B: 213/139/41
Hex: #D58B29



SHA light Orange

C/M/Y/K: 15/25/100/0
R/G/B: 218/181/37
Hex: #DAB525



SHA Lemon

C/M/Y/K: 15/0/100/0
R/G/B: 226/228/26
Hex: #E2E41A

07. Our fonts

Our typography has been chosen deliberately for purpose. It is clear, legible and professional.

7.1 Print Use: Primary Typeface

Helvetica Neue

Aa

Helvetica Neue Roman

Helvetica Neue Roman is used for body copy.

Aa

Helvetica Neue Heavy

Helvetica Neue Heavy is used for bolding and tiltes.

Aa

Helvetica Neue Medium

Helvetica Neue Medium is also used to highlight certain body copy - such as the first paragraph of a new article - or photo captions.

7.2 Print Use: Secondary Typeface

Univers Condensed

Aa

Univers Condensed Light

Univers Condensed light can be used for titles and pull quotes.

Aa

Univers Condensed Bold

Univers Condensed Bold can be used for title.

7.3 Print Use: Typesetting Guide

TITLE AT 30PT, 27PT LEADING

Sub-head 18pt, leading 21pt.

Body copy at 10pt, leading 14pt, left aligned. Body copy at 10pt, leading 14pt, left aligned. Body copy at 10pt, leading 14pt, left aligned. Body copy at 10pt, leading 14pt, left aligned. Body copy at 10pt, leading 14pt, left aligned. Body copy at 10pt, leading 14pt, left aligned. Body copy at 10pt, leading 14pt, left aligned. Body copy at 10pt, leading 14pt, left aligned.

“Pull quote at 18pt, leading 21pt, Univers Condensed light. Pull quote at 18pt, leading 21pt, Univers Condensed light. Pull quote at 18pt, leading 21pt, Univers Condensed light.”

Point of interest 14pt, leading 14pt. Point of interest 14pt, leading 14pt. Point of interest 14pt, leading 14pt. Point of interest 14pt, leading 14pt.

Photo Caption at 7pt

When a variety of type sizes and weights are used, the differences between them should be recognisable.

It is recommended that in general type should be aligned to the left.

Line spacing (leading) should always be between 120% and 140% of the point size used in body copy for legibility. Tighter line-spacing may be used on titles and sub-titles

Please note: the example above is a guide only and each job will require its own consideration. It is advised that body copy never fall below 9pt.

7.4 Web Use: Google fonts

While our house fonts discussed in the previous pages look good on paper, they are not the fonts we use on our site. Our Google web fonts have been chosen specifically because they don't pixelate or blur when displayed on monitors which can often happen with traditional print-friendly fonts.

Oswald:

HERO

TITLE AT

102 PT

HEADLINE AT
38.845 PT

The hero title refers to the text which is overlaid over the featur/hero image on our web pages. This font colour is white are care must be applied to ensure the hero image allows enough contrast for the font to ledigible.

Merriweather:

Subheading/intro
paragraph at 22pt

Copy at 17pt Copy at 17pt
Copy at 17pt Copy at 17pt

To ensure text is always legible no matter what size the screen, font size just be a minimum of 16pt. This rule of thumb should also apply when creating digital assets requiring text.

Lato:

Copy in text box at 16pt Copy in text box
at 16pt Copy in text box at 16pt

Lato is used in text boxes, menus and in the footer.

Menu item at 15.5pt Menu item at 15.5pt Menu item
at 15.5pt Menu item at 15.5pt Menu item at 15.5pt

Footer at 13pt Footer at 13pt Footer at 13pt Footer at
13pt Footer at 13pt Footer at 13pt Footer at 13pt

7.5 Video Use: Primary Typeface

All videos produced inhouse should conform to our house style and be consistent in their treatment of font and colour.

Futura Std Book:

Title Slides at 85pt

The title slide refers to the black slate containing text that we use inbetween clips to display information. The text used here should be Futura Std. The size and colour and weight may vary depending on the video content but typically will be Futura Std Book at 85 pt with leading increased to 10 and the colour set to white. A key piece of information may be coloured SHA green and set in Medium or Heavy to make it stand out. Alignment should be either left or centre. If centred, make sure the length of each line is balanced.

Subtitles at 65 pt

The subtitles should be set in Futura Std Book at 65pt in white on a 70% black rectangular box. Where possible, they should be kept to one line.



In Ethiopia, small loans
transform lives...

▶ ▶▶ 🔊 0:02 / 0:39



I worked 24 hours a day to grow my business.

▶ ▶▶ 🔊 0:18 / 0:39





Yendoukoa Assibi (30) & Kolani Anne (44)
with goat, Nassiete Village, Togo.
Photo Credit: Ken O'Halloran, 2015

08. Our Imagery

8.1 Choice of Images

Selecting the right image for a job is hugely important. Nothing can ruin a carefully researched and crafted piece of copy quicker than a poorly selected image.

While it is vital as an organisation we only use distinctive high quality photography in all communications, selecting the correct image is not just about what looks best - we don't use models, the images we use depict real people with real lives, because of this we have a responsibility to portray them truthfully and with the utmost respect.

8.2 Context & Agency

Each piece of communication is different and will have different intended audiences and outcomes. Despite this, it is necessary to remember the images we use are real individuals and as such should be treated with respect and never deprived of agency or dignity.

The farmers we work with are not helpless and are not in receipt of handouts. As an organisation we believe in enabling individuals to improve their lives. As such their actions are central to this process not ours. Farmers should never be depicted as helpless or passive, they should be shown actively solving their problems.



8.3 Image Selection

Key to the success of our visual communications lies in which images we select, and how we use them. These can be broken down into two broad categories: Hero Images & Support Images.

Hero Images

- Hero images are typically be used on cover pages or as main images in posters and exhibition displays;
- Hero images generally show African (farmers) actively solving their problems;
- Hero images connect with the audience (eye contact & faces to camera);
- Hero images are high quality images (properly exposed and in focus);
- Hero images feel positive and upbeat (Smiles);
- Hero images do not contain any montage or photo-manipulated elements;
- Hero images should always be accompanied with a caption which introduces the person in the photo and location.



Support Images

- Support images illustrate or support a point of information within our message
- Support images may be combined with other support images to create a montage
- Support images may contain close up details of people, places or objects
- Support images contain multiple focal points, with lots of activity taking place

8.4 Image Library

We have built up a library of quality imagery from across all our project countries. To gain access to the image library please contact a member of the Communications Team who will be able to advise you on how to best find what you are looking for: Comms@selfhelpafrica.org



Showthem Sikombe (53),
Nsunda Village, Zambia.
Photo Credit: Andy Barker, 2015

8.5 Captions

It is important to caption all images that depict identifiable individuals. At the very least captions should include the following information:

- The name of the subject(s)
- Where they live
- Name of the photographer
- Year photo was taken

If space allows, or if the context of the image is not immediately self-evident, then a more in-depth (extended) caption should be used, describing what is being depicted in the image or how the individual has benefited from our intervention.

Where the image has been taken by an SHA staff member it is ok to simply state Self Help Africa as the name of the photographer. Where an external photographer has been used, it is important to state the individuals name.

8.6 Imagery of Children

While improving the lives of children is a vital motivation for the work we do we are not a child-centered organisation. Images of children are powerful and have a vital role in our communications but they must be treated sensitively. When not pictured with a parent or in a family setting, extended captions should be used to explain how the child is involved in a particular project and how they are benefiting from it.

8.7 Code of Conduct

Within Ireland we have signed the Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages.

The Code offers a set of guiding principles that can assist organisations in their decision making about which images and messages to choose in their communication while maintaining full respect for human dignity.

As a signatory In Ireland we are committed to adhering to and promoting this code of conduct, which is based on the paramount principles of:

- Choose images and related messages based on values of respect, equality, solidarity and justice;
- Truthfully represent any image or depicted situation both in its immediate and in its wider context so as to improve public understanding of the realities and complexities of development;
- Avoid images and messages that potentially stereotype, sensationalise or discriminate against people, situations or places;
- Use images, messages and case studies with the full understanding, participation and permission of the subjects (or subjects' parents/guardian);
- Ensure those whose situation is being represented have the opportunity to communicate their stories themselves;
- Establish and record whether the subjects wish to be named or identifiable and always act accordingly;
- Conform to the highest standards in relation to human rights and protection of vulnerable people.

Whilst the Dóchas Code applies only to Ireland, the spirit of the code should be applied to our use of images and messages throughout all geographic locations.

8.8 If in Doubt

If in doubt whether the use of an image is appropriate, remind yourself that even in rural Africa access to the internet is increasingly available too all. Ask yourself would the individual represented recognise and be happy with how they have been portrayal should they see it. If not, then simply don't use the image.

Selecting the correct image is not easy. If in doubt contact a member of the Communications Team for help and advice. Comms@selfhelpafrica.org

09.Examples







FARMING FOR AFRICA'S FUTURE

Cover: Emma Keyela (57) Nsunda Village, Zambia.
Photo Credit: Ken O'Halloran, 2015.
Back: Sanwogou Lalle, member of women's
enterprise group, Tonte Village, Togo.
Photo Credit: Ken O'Halloran, 2015.