**Communications Plan Template**

**Rights of Migrants in Action**

## Please use this template to develop your project’s communications plan, simply delete the existing guideline text and fill in the sections listed below. This template will help ensure that all key elements of the communications plan are captured.

1. **Background and Introduction**

The overall goal of the project should be stipulated in the introductory section – providing a brief background on the project (name of the CSO, project title, country in which it is being undertaken and its overall goal/objectives). This section should also elaborate on the how the communications plan aims to address support the overall objectives of the project.

1. **Situational Analysis**

Prior to mapping out a communications plan, a situational analysis should be conducted detailing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats associated with the project. Describe what particular issues, facts, perceptions, etc. are relevant to the communications plan being undertaken?

1. **Communications Objectives**

Set out the objectives you want to achieve through your communications efforts. Consider whether you have a different purpose behind each objective, such as raising awareness, building support or inviting action. The communications plan should support specific project objectives. What tangible outcomes would you like to achieve through a communications effort? How will you know you are achieving your goals?

1. **Target Audiences**

Describe specific audiences you are targeting through the communication effort, and the ways the knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of each needs to change in order to meet your goal(s). Who are you trying to reach and what do you want them to do? Useful to think of both your primary and secondary target audiences. What concrete action do you want your target audiences to take? What barriers must be overcome to each audience fully supporting or participating in reaching your goal? What are the characteristics of each audience that would affect how you would choose to communicate with them — language, education, media habits, etc.?) What research is needed to understand each audience better and how to reach it?

The more refined the target audience description, the more precise and effective the communication will be. Broad descriptions such as ‘general public’ are less likely to be successful than a tightly defined target. The more thoroughly you understand your target audience(s), the higher the probability of communications success.

Primary target audience – these are the key person/groups you communicate to directly. You can have more than one primary target audience.

Secondary target audience – people/groups of less importance who you wish to receive key messages, people who will also benefit from hearing the message or people who influence your target audience now or in the future.

1. **Key Messages**

List the key messages that you need to apply consistently throughout your communications activity. You should stick to no more than five ‘umbrella’ messages, which can be tailored to different audiences if necessary.

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| --- | --- |
|  | **Key Messages** |
| **1.** |  |
| **2.** |  |
| **3.** |  |
| **4.** |  |
| **5.** |  |

Guiding questions include:

* What is it that you want to change?
* What do you want the target audience to know?
* What do you want them to feel – what perception do you want to create?
* What do you want them to do – what action do you want as a result?

Your messages are closely tied to your goal and objectives. They deliver important information about the issue and compel the targeted audience to think, feel, or act. They can:

* Show the importance, urgency, or magnitude of the issue.
* Show the relevance of the issue.
* Put a “face” on the issue.
* Be tied to specific audience values, beliefs, or interests of the audience.
* Reflect an understanding of what would motivate the audience to think, feel, or act.
* Be culturally relevant and sensitive.
* Be Memorable.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Target Audience** | **Objective** | **Messages** | **Key Performance Indicators** |
| E.g. National Governments | E.g., Ensure all migrants, have access to basic human rights, in particular the right to protection, health care, education and social services, at any phase of their journey. | E.g. Consider making available access to education, health care and livelihood options for migrant populations present in a country to reduce their vulnerability and dependency on the host country and thereby fostering their potential for their own development and that of the communities around them. | E.g., Reports and public statements from officials and civil servants at the national level  Feedback from decision-makers on an individual level  Budget decisions  New bills/proposals on labour migration and human trafficking  Ratification of international conventions |
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1. **Communications Activities and Channels**

Communications channels carry your key messages to the target audiences. Channels take many forms and there is an infinite list of possibilities. Answering some key questions will aid you in identifying the most effective ways of carrying your messages to your audiences.

Based on what you know about each target audience, pick communications channels and tools that would be effective ways of reaching them. In each category, be specific about which particular channels you will use within the category selected (i.e., radio, TV, newspapers, websites, social media, etc.)

What media, organizations, agencies, councils, informal systems, and other sources of information are your primary and secondary audiences more likely to trust?

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Channel** | **Characteristics** |
| Website | URL | Official |
| Social Media | Blogs | Informal  Interactive  Engaging and conversational |
| Printed Materials | Brochures  Fact Sheets  Backgrounders | Informative, didactic  Official |
| Press Office | Press releases  Press visits  Dedicated area of website  Media events | Timely  Accurate  Transparent |
| Photography | Still digital images  Flickr page or database | Visual  Electronic |
| Video | Filmed news clips  Corporate video | Short, topical, visually engaging |
| Graphic Design | Infographics  Rollup Banners | Visually engaging  Provide coherent identity |
| Events | Various | Various according to type |

1. **Branding**

It is key to ensure that all communications are on brand – this means being consistent with logo usage, typefaces, slogan, colours and ‘on-brand’ with key messages. Detailed information regarding the Rights of Migrants in Action’s requirements is stipulated under Point 13 “Public communications and use of logos” in Annex III of the contract(Terms and Conditions).

1. **Budget**

Calculate the financial resources needed to implement your communication plan to make sure you have the budget and it is feasible.

1. **Plan Implementation**

By each planned activity, assign a budget estimate, staff that will be responsible for the deliverable and a date for each step in the implementation of the activity.

What are the activities, events, and/or materials—to be used in your selected channels—that will most effectively carry your message to the intended audiences? In choosing these, you should consider:

* Appropriateness to audience, goal, and message
* Relevance to desired outcomes
* Timing
* Climate of community toward the issue/activity
* Costs/resources
* Cultural competence (including language)
* Environment/geographic considerations

The following table can be used to plan implementation of activities:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Communications Channel** | **Audiences Reached** | **Activities** | **Materials** | **Timeline** | **Staff** | **Budget** | **Completion Timeframe** |
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1. **Monitoring and Evaluation**

It is important to assess your communications activities so that any changes, if necessary, can be made when engaging in a similar activity in the future.

Process evaluation is usually employed during the implementation of a communications plan. This type of evaluation documents and assesses implementation; quantifies what was done; and describes when, where, and how it was done and who was reached.

Process evaluation is also considered by many as easy to use for making mid-course corrections. Ongoing evaluation and mid-course corrections also allow you to:

* + Identify milestones
  + Determine strengths and weaknesses
  + Identify obstacles
  + Create and implement new approaches for success
  + Consult with communications technical assistance advisors.

Briefly describe the measure of success as well as the evaluation tool you plan to use. Examples of common evaluation tools include:

* Website hits or page impressions
* Questionnaires
* Number or nature of enquiries due to communications strategies
* Usage rates

Be sure to include:

* + Baseline (where are you starting in terms of your social media community size, website traffic volume, total donors, total members, etc.)
  + Intermediary goals (every three months, what type of growth would you like to see?)
  + End goals (where will you be in 12 or 18 months?)
  + Metrics for each platform you're using

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| **Communications Measure** | **Activity Indicator** | **Results Indicator** |
| Web portal | No. of updates, pages, persons contributing to content | No. of visitors  No. of page downloads  Website placement/ranking in search engine results  Blog statistics, including level of discussion and engagement |
| Events | No. of events | No. of participants in events  No. of press releases, statements in which project is quoted after events  No. of target audience participants at events  Disaggregated according to gender/audience |
| Media | No. of press releases issued  No. of journalists on media roster | No. of op-ed articles published  No. of favorable articles/reports published (monitored with Google alerts)  No. of media representatives participating at briefings/events/tours  No. of media requests for interview/information/media pack |