COMMUNICATION STRATEGY FOR THE AGENCY FOR COMMUNITY RIGHTS REALIZATION FOR THE PERIOD OF 2019 - 2023

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GOALS

The main goal of this Communication Strategy is to ensure that communication reaches the target group of the Agency for Community Rights Realization in time, while raising awareness of the existence of, and impact of, the Agency network and the challenges related to protection and promotion of community rights among the target groups.

Specific goals of this communication strategy are:

- Rising the awareness of the stakeholders for the role of the Agency in contributing to promote and protect the rights of the communities.
- Increasing the visibility of the Agency by more frequent presence of its representatives in the media;
- Maintaining and enhancing a positive public image both of the Agency as such and its implementing partners by efficient use of the available identification forms;
- Information to the stakeholders of the outputs, findings and results of the Agency.

OBJECTIVES

The Agency will accomplish the main and specific goals of the communication strategy by the following objectives:

- Establishing of a system of regular and timely communication both internal and external;
- Setting of forms and ways of communication;
- Creating a department for the implementation of the communication strategy and its parts;
- Optimal usage of the available resources (human and technical) in implementation of the communication strategy and action plan;
- Regular evaluation and review of the communication strategy and action plan.

PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNICATION

The Agency staff will adhere to the following principles while implementing the communication strategy:

- The process of communication is clear and familiar to all parties of the Agency;
- Communication is timely;
- Communication is truthful and transparent;
- Information are available to all and

- Communication is two-way between the Agency and the stakeholders.

TARGET GROUPS

The following target groups will be in the focus of the activities that will be undertaken by this communication strategy:

- **Citizens**

The Agency will inform the citizens about its activities on regular basis in order to:
1. Increase the visibility of its work;
2. Emphasize the benefits for citizens from Agency activities and results;
3. Strengthen the public support for its activities;
4. Inform about EU support for the action in the country.

- **Media and Journalists**

The role of the media and journalists as target group is of a special attention to the Agency and this communication strategy. The media and journalists are both target group and a stakeholder in implementation of the action, and they will be approached accordingly.

- **Civil society organizations**

The Agency will establish an active communication with CSOs in order to promote and protect the rights of the communities.

- **Central and local government**

The Agency will establish an active communication with central and local government officials in order to influence the decision making based on the recommendations made as a part of its activities.

- **EU and other international organizations and donors**

The Agency will inform these representatives on a regular basis for its activities, outcomes and results in order to secure their support, to demonstrate transparency, accountability and responsibility for its work, and to attract support for similar activities and Agencies.

- **Agency staff**

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In order to articulate consistent messages towards the external public, the Agency will establish effective mechanism for internal communication enabling timely and fully information of the Agency staff for all activities within the Agency.

TOOLS OF COMMUNICATION

The Agency will use and enhance the communication tools with all target groups building a proactive relationship with all stakeholders. Therefore, the Agency will nurture stable and consistent relationship with journalists and CSOs. The Agency will set the communication tools and activities for each activity separately in order to maximize the effects and the results of those activities. The Agency will employ the following communication tools and activities:

- **WEB pages and social media**

All information that will derive from the Agency will be published on the existing website that is managed by the Agency www.aopz.gov.mk

In order to boost Agency visibility and reinforce direct two-way communication through social networking, the Agency Page on Facebook will be renovated and a Twitter account will be created.

- **Publications**

The Agency will publish and distribute to all relevant stakeholders a series of documents as an important tool for informing the target groups about the findings, and for promoting the proposed recommendations for further development of protection and promotion of community rights.

- **News conferences**

The Agency will consider organizing news conferences as a tool for fast informing of the public about the most important results of its activities.

- **News releases**

The Agency will issue news releases when appropriate for informing the public about important issues, Agency activities and results.

- **Other visibility events**

The Agency will use every opportunity to promote the activities and increase its visibility, through achieving synergies with events organized by partners and donors, as well as other stakeholders that are compatible with action goals and methodologies. This includes participation in conferences, panels and other public events organized by third parties.

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Interviews and statements

Agency staff will consider participation in media interviews and making public statements when they want to deliver a single message of great importance.

- **Media briefings**

The Agency will organize media briefing as a tool for delivering certain position towards an issue of interest, and for lobbying in front of media for obtaining support for certain positions. Media briefings will be used only in cases when project staff needs to inform journalists and not the public in particular.

- **Informal meetings with the journalists and CSOs**

The Agency will consider having informal meetings with the journalists as a way to establish good and stable relations with the media in order to secure their support to the Agency activities of wider societal importance.

- **Regular communication and meetings of the project staff**

The Agency will set and maintain an internal communication system in order to obtain optimal use of all available resources towards more effective and successful implementation of this communication strategy.

FORMS OF PROMOTION OF THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE AGENCY

- **Promotion of the Agency slogan**

The Agency will consider making its own slogan that is catchy and berries the essence of the Agency and its mission. The Agency can further promote the slogan by placing it on all published materials and will consider the possibility of designing and printing promotional materials bearing it (banners, posters, folders, etc.).

- **Agency's branded banners and posters**

The Agency should print banner/s and posters that berry slogan/logo and other branding identity – name, partners, donor, etc. These materials will be used for promotion and identification of the Agency and its partners on all public events and activities.

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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The implementation of the communication strategy will be carried out by a dedicated PR department. This communication strategy will be implemented by all staff members of the Agency.

Prior to each public event and activity, a communication brief will be prepared defining the main communication aspects for that particular event or activity. The communication brief will point to the actions that need to be taken in order to secure proper communication with the targeted groups, as well as to the people who need to do that.

MONITORING OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The Agency will monitor constantly the implementation of this communication strategy and the action plan by quantitative and qualitative measurement of the results.

The Agency will review the communication strategy and action plan at least once a year. During the review the results of the monitoring of the implementation of the strategy and action plan will be taken into consideration.

If necessary, the strategy and the action plan can be reviewed in a shorter period, in order to adapt it to the Agency's needs and goals.

INDICATORS TO BE USED BY THE DEPARTMENT TO ASSESS IMPACT

Completion of the communication objectives will be measured using the following indicators:

- Number of news/articles published in the media
- Number of participants at the events/trainings/conference
- Number of website visits
- Number of Facebook fans
- Number of Twitter followers, and
- Number of downloads of the publications.

During the continuous monitoring and evaluation of the progress of activities, the Agency will use a combination of quantitative and qualitative monitoring and evaluation techniques. The following principles will be used for the purpose of constant monitoring of the Agency's progress:

- Baseline knowledge assessment
- Post-training evaluation, and

- Event evaluation forms.

The evaluation will document all the Agency activities, outputs and outcomes using internal records, anonymous surveys, observation, training questionnaires and/or "public" information (e.g. media and printed data).

REVIEW OF THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The Agency will review the communication strategy as least once in a year, at the calendar ending of the year. During the review the results of the monitoring of the implementation of the strategy will be taken into consideration.

If necessary, the strategy can be reviewed in a shorter period, in order to adapt it to the project's needs and goals. The review will be done by the dedicated department in cooperation with the Agency staff.