

**EHTIOPIAN ORHTODOX CHURCH
DEVELOPMENT AND INTER – CHURCH AID COMMISSION
(EOC-DICAC)**



Communication Strategy

November, 2020
Addis Ababa



Background

EOC-DICAC is the long standing faith based non-government development & humanitarian partner of the government of Ethiopia. For the last forty seven years, EOC-DICAC has shown its commitment in saving lives and livelihoods of target beneficiaries (Ethiopian people and refugees). The government and beneficiary community witnessed this in various forms and trust EOC-DICAC and all its undertakings.

While watching, reading or listening communication messages, EOC-DICAC audiences become confident on the content of the message. The selection of communication media will depend on the type of message, audience, availability of funds and government policy.

Furthermore, it is important to clarify that local audiences have relatively better knowledge than international audiences on EOC-DICAC's work. In this regard, EOC-DICAC believes that it will benefit from the communication media and branding thereby maintaining its reputation and the disseminate information to a larger target audience.

The current development on the means of communication (such as digital communication media and smart phone) in addition to the traditional ones is providing an opportunity to enable EOC-DICAC reach its constituency and target audience in general. One of the current means of communication is social media. In general, communication media will foster interaction, to reach critical mass with affordable cost within and outside of EOC-DICAC and Ethiopia.



I. Target Audiences

1. The public

- Project beneficiaries
- Women, youth and adults
- Refugees, returnees and internally displaced
- Religious and community leaders
- Community mobilizers/activists
- Associations
- EOC-DICAC general assembly and board members
- EOC-DICAC staff and job seekers

2. Government and likeminded organization

- Government tiered institutions (Federal, Regional District/Woreda and Kebele) administrations and sector bureaus
- Faith based and secular organization consortium/coalitions
- Partner implementing organizations

3. Donors

- Bilateral and multilateral secular funding partners
- Faith based/Ecumenical funding partners
- Embassies
- Individuals & businesses
- Financial institutions
- Trusts & foundations

II. Communication approaches

Since EOC-DICAC is committed to strengthen and enhance communication strategy, it shall review the overall function & activities of the communication officer.



1. Prioritized and focused messages

The ultimate goal of communication is to help EOC-DICAC achieve its mission through transparent and participatory way. The sources of information will include but not limited to EOC-DICAC Commissioner office, departments, coordination offices and project offices. The sources of information shall provide tangible information to the communication officer. Accordingly, the communication officer shall prepare and make sure that the message is to the standard, clear, focused and timely and convey the message to motivate target audiences. The messages planned to be disseminated, and time & resources are allocated to reach target audiences & get feedback timely to enable EOC-DICAC meet the desired positive impact on the works of the Commission, visibility and action.

Moreover, the messages planned to be communicated need to be strategically focus on the mandates and works of the commission to enable it achieve the necessary change at grass-root level. In consultation with the pertinent departments, the communication officer will prioritize the messages and disseminate the message through appropriate communication media. Expertise in communicating messages in text, photo and film is highly valued.

While using the social media, EOC-DICAC shall maintain in delivering quality and reliable information to avoid un-necessary misunderstandings. The existing wide range of communication media will help strengthen reaching vast majority and different levels of audiences.

In case of issues that may have risk on the organization, the communication officer shall secure suggestions, comments and approval from EOC-DICAC commissioner prior to disseminating the message.

2. Timely Response

Communication is one of the tasks of the Commission. Its staffs are aware of the importance of communication and timely convey messages to the respective audience. Depending on the urgency of the matter, for instance, humanitarian emergency, the communication officer shall filter and after verifying the risk he/she shall quickly communicate or disseminate the message to the relevant audience.

Given its mandate, EOC-DICAC is concerned to take quick action on communicating emergency issues so as to solicit financial support from funding partners so as to execute the work. EOC-



DICAC has well established infrastructure and staff at grass-root level to rapidly communicate disaster and take emergency response actions.

3. Principles

Human dignity, partnership, accountability, transparency, evidence based, research & professionalism, sustainability integrated approach, do no harm and inclusiveness are the major principles of EOC-DICAC for all its undertakings. Accordingly, the Commission gives due respect to all of these principles.

With respect to communication, EOC-DICAC respects human dignity to all human being regardless of age, sex, language religion, race and ethnicity. The fact that the Commission aims at attaining self reliance of target individuals with the hope of ensuring their wellbeing, the Commission shall document case stories, respect their culture, living condition, opinion and knowledge and communicates in very accountable & transparent way. Also, it is committed to respect individuals' willingness for interview and comply with photo policy.

4. Reputation

As a result of the reputable good development works and involvement at times of humanitarian crises, the Commission is highly respected by the government, donors and beneficiary communities. Reputable good works have been witnessed by its acceptance to work in all regions of the country and awards it received from different government & non-government organizations. Given these, EOC-DICAC is committed to maintain its reputation thereby dedicating itself in showing good results & disseminate this on different communication media, and applying all its development principles mentioned under 3 above.

The communication officer is responsible to continuously assess reputational risks and reactively or proactively react. In general, the communication officer is expected to prepare mission & oriented activities inside & outside EOC-DICAC and make a summary analysis of such issues and disseminate to relevant target groups. EOC-DICAC shall seek advice and suggestions from the communication officer on media issues as needed.

5. Enabling Environment for Smooth Implementation of communication Strategy

The following elements are positive tools & means to facilitate the implementation of communication strategy within EOC-DICAC.



- i. The church's profound experience, constituency and assets in: forest conservation, social and psychosocial support
- ii. Large number of enlightened clergy who could be used as change agent for development interventions
- iii. Its strong networks with faith based and secular organizations such as ACT Alliance, WCC, CCRDA, EIFDDA
- iv. Diversified experience of EOC-DICAC in development and humanitarian interventions
- v. The church structure down to the grass-root level which would be used for communication and development interventions
- vi. EOC-DICAC has development interventions with seven point models namely: integrative/holistic, convergence, learning driven, critical mass, community participation, partnership, interactive course correction through systemic reflection process to effectively address poverty emanated from complex root causes.
- vii. High level of commitment of communities and government trust on the church and EOC-DICAC
- viii. EOC-DICAC's commitment to equally serve needy communities in various parts of the country irrespective of religion, ethnic and other social back-ground and affiliations. EOC-DICAC's inclusive projects; for instance in Kedida Gamella water supply (where beneficiaries are predominantly protestant), and in Gursum & Jarso dry land development projects, Haik integrated rural development project and Mekedela food security project (where beneficiaries are predominantly Muslim) can be mentioned as example.

6. Branding

To enable EOC-DICAC be recognized in the country and in the world at large, staff shall bear EOC-DICAC's logo as much as possible and EOC-DICAC shall at all times put its logo in all visual communication materials. In addition, in consultation with the beneficiaries we work with, EOC-DICAC will also put communities' photo as appropriate. In doing so, it is also possible to ensure accountability.

