

SADC



COMMUNICATIONS AND PROMOTIONAL STRATEGY

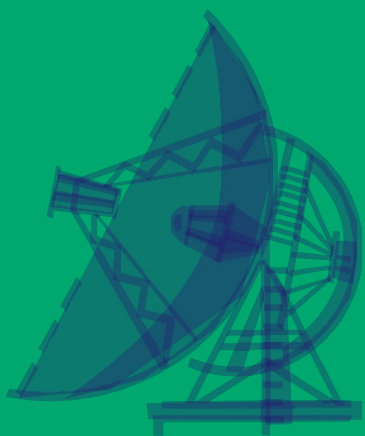


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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS / ACRONYMS

SADC	-	Southern African Development Community
SCPS	-	SADC Communications & Promotional Strategy
CCU	-	Corporate Communications Unit
SNMCs	-	SADC National Media Coordinators
SNCs	-	SADC National Committees
NCPs	-	SADC National Contact Points
CM	-	Council of Ministers
ICM	-	Integrated Committee of Ministers
ES	-	Executive Secretary
DES	-	Deputy Executive Secretary
CD	-	Chief Director
HCCU	-	Head: Corporate Communications Unit
SWOT	-	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

SADC COMMUNICATIONS AND PROMOTIONAL STRATEGY (SCPS)

I. INTRODUCTION

This document serves as the blue print for the Southern African Development Community to adopt effective strategies to communicate with all its stakeholders internal and external. The purpose of the strategy is to support the realization of the SADC Vision: Which is “A common future, a future within a regional Community that will ensure economic well-being, improvement of the standards of living, quality of life, freedom, social justice peace and security for the peoples of Southern Africa. This shared vision is anchored on the common values and principles and the historical and cultural affinities that exist among the peoples of Southern Africa.

The document is divided in seven (7) main sections, leading with the introduction and followed by the objectives of the strategy. These are followed by the prevailing environment for communicating SADC as derived from the scan analysis on the basis of which five broader communications challenges were developed. Section five deals with the programmes of action that would address the challenges and are outlined in accordance with the five main challenges they seek to address. Section six outlines the general central framework for the SADC messages and themes while section seven deals with the division of labour. To be implemented in phases, the work plan with relevant time frames and proposed budgets shall be developed to guide all the major players in implementing their part.

The development of this document was undertaken through a consultation process involving stakeholders across a broad spectrum of the region's citizens and their institutions. Its implementation will be thus a partnership based on a division of labour amongst all the stakeholders at their respective levels. At regional policy level, there is the Council of Ministers and the Integrated Committee of Ministers (ICM). At policy level within Member States are the SADC National Contact Points and their National Committees that consists of the stakeholders as provided for under Article 16A of the Agreement Amending the Treaty of the Southern African Development Community.

The SADC National Media Coordinators (SNMCs) are the focal point for SADC communications at national level and are an integral part of these Committees. Roles have also been identified for other communicators in Member States, including government information departments, the private sector and civil society organisations dealing with information or willing to serve as additional information entries to facilitate access to SADC information by their constituencies, some of whom are beyond the reach of conventional media of mass communications.

As the civil service of the region, the SADC Secretariat shall be the custodian of the SCPS. At this level, the roles are clearly divided amongst specific players. While each and every staff member of the organisation is its ambassador, specific roles have been designated for the Executive Secretary who is the chief public relations officer of the organisation to the Deputy Executive Secretary, the Chief Director, Directors and Heads of Units, and the Corporate Communication Unit staff in particular. The Corporate Communications Unit, shall spearhead the implementation of the SCPS, including the coordination, generation and dissemination of information to all stakeholders in order to create understanding and support for SADC's aims, objectives, policies and actions. This includes the branding, positioning and projection of the corporate image of the organisation at all times. The mandate of the Unit also includes the establishment and maintenance of mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and co-operation between SADC and its stakeholders.

This strategy is an enabling tool in which the SADC communications processes are consolidated in one document to serve as a reference point and a guide for SADC communications at all levels.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE SCPS

The objective of the SADC Communications & Promotional strategy is to ensure increased access to SADC information by all its Member States with the view to:

- Increase awareness about SADC in all Member States through the creation of various channels for SADC information as well as in the media of Member States among current and potential partners.
- Facilitate information exchange and knowledge sharing amongst the SADC Member States, including amongst the region's ordinary citizens in accordance with their interests.
- Enable stakeholders within their categories to access SADC information relevant to their interests and have working knowledge of the SADC goals, objectives and achievements.
- Facilitate the sharing and exchange of information and knowledge among the 200 million citizens of the community.
- Develop and maintain cohesion in SADC Secretariat internal relations, which in turn would concretise synergy of the institution's professional and efficiency towards its external publics.
- Position, project and maintain the status of the SADC corporate image throughout all its Member States and beyond.
- Widen the coverage of SADC Summits and Council of Ministers & ICM.
- Foster and strengthen the partnership between SADC and the media as major partners in communications with the view to securing SADC due qualitative and quantitative media coverage.
- Build and foster relationships between the SADC and the news and information media in the local, regional and international media.
- Widen the knowledge base by increasing awareness of SADC vision, mission, programmes and actions among SADC current and potential international partners.

3. THE COMMUNICATIONS ENVIRONMENT

SADC has a long, proud history, commencing with its historic beginnings among the Front Line States in opposition to the apartheid government of South Africa. Since its inception, SADC has evolved to be a highly regarded and effective developmental community for the Southern Africa region, with a strong positive record for delivery. It currently has hundreds of projects in partnership with a variety of international governments and organizations.

Its 200 million citizens share various historical, cultural and social affinities. The region has developed sound infrastructures for both communication and transport. The SADC Member States, in general, have seen an improvement in media freedom. The media in most Member States are increasingly vibrant and diverse, and there are strong regional media associations.

Despite these tremendous assets, the communications capacity of SADC has not kept pace with its other accomplishments. SADC, despite the expenditure of billions of dollars, lacks a comprehensive communication strategy, as well as communication methodologies that are in line with international best practices. There is a poor communication culture within the organisation which needs to be improved.

There is a lack of adequate financial and human resources - within the Secretariat as well as Member States - that are dedicated to communication functions. There is also a need for the Secretariat to build stronger relationships with the media, and to generate many more public/private partnerships.

Many assets are at the disposal of SADC for utilisation in correcting some of these deficiencies. Chief among them is to bring the corporate communications into international best practices, by placing it directly under the Office of the Executive Secretary, the Chief Spokesperson for SADC. Among other things, this relocation would demonstrate recognition of the critical role of communications in the execution of SADC programmes and facilitate smoother and quicker communication with stakeholders.

There must be greater SADC utilisation of state and public media in Member States, and greater support for the National Media Coordinators. There needs to be much more creative engagement with the multiplicity of public and private media organisations in all the Member States.

SADC and the Member States possess a wealth of developmental expertise, as well as an abundance of projects and sponsored programmes that serve as

communication opportunities. There is a demand and hunger amongst the media for more information about SADC activities.

Even if these communication opportunities are realised, SADC will continue to face a number of serious challenges to its ability to communicate effectively because some media in the region have limited knowledge of SADC integration issues.

Other limitations are posed by the multiplicity of languages in the region with no readily available denominator as well as low literacy levels. There is a continued lack of interest by some media practitioners in developmental news. The absence of a policy on the free movement of persons among Member States also hinders the flow of information and the exchange of knowledge.

4. SADC COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

In light of the communication environment outlined in the preceding section, five challenges that need to be addressed to enhance the effectiveness of SADC communication have been identified.

- 4.1 Strengthen the Media and Public Relations programmes of SADC in order to improve its image and to reach and impact on its citizens;
- 4.2 Improve the communications culture within SADC in order to maximise the strategic role of communications in executing SADC programs;
- 4.3 Establish communication mechanisms to mobilise support for SADC programmes;
- 4.4 Strengthen the inter and intra SADC communication systems in order to improve information flows within the organization;
- 4.5 Establish a SADC crisis communication strategy.

5 SADC COMMUNICATION PROGRAMME OF ACTION

These programmes are identified to address the challenges enumerated under point 4 of this strategy.

- 5.1 Strengthen the Media and Public Relations programmes of SADC in order to improve its image and to reach and impact on its citizens:
 - 5.1.1 Develop a distribution strategy to ensure that all SADC legal instruments and other major policy documents are accessible and available to the media;
 - 5.1.2 Update media institutions and professionals databases periodically and ensure they are accessible and user-friendly;
 - 5.1.3 Raise awareness and understanding of SADC priority intervention areas and the enabling instruments through training and workshops to build capacity of the media;
 - 5.1.4 Develop an aggressive media plan at Secretariat and Member State level including the promotion of the region's shared vision;

- 5.1.5 Mobilise resources from Member States, and other sources for the implementation of the SADC Communications and Promotional Strategy;
- 5.1.6 Establish and strengthen a network of partners that can contribute to the media and public relations programme;
- 5.1.7 Develop mechanisms to disseminate information on SADC achievements;
- 5.1.8 Develop collateral material to promote the corporate identity of SADC on a sustained basis;
- 5.1.9 In accordance with Article 6 of the Protocol on Culture, Information and Sport, there is a need for Member States to mobilise more resources and provide annual budgets for the SNMCs to implement the SADC Communication and Promotional Strategy within their respective Member States;
- 5.1.10 SADC Day, on 17th August, and other regular events should be used for raising awareness on SADC activities;
- 5.1.11 SADC Secretariat to widen the coverage of SADC activities, including but not limited to Summit, CM and ICM beyond the borders of the hosting nation;
- 5.1.12 Engage the media, to ensure that they receive and disseminate fresh information; and
- 5.1.13 SADC to update website regularly.
- 5.2 Improve communication culture within SADC in order to maximise the strategic role of communication in executing SADC programmes
- 5.2.1 Reposition the Corporate Communications Unit in line with international best practice by bringing it directly under the office of the Executive Secretary, who is the Chief Spokesperson of SADC;
- 5.2.2 Communications training to raise awareness and capacity for all core staff at the Secretariat and SNCs in order to engage the media effectively;
- 5.2.3 Clearly define various roles of officials and structures in implementing the communication strategy;

- 5.2.4 Develop Corporate Identity Manual for SADC; and
- 5.2.5 Improve mechanisms for the information flow within the SADC.
- 5.3 Establish stakeholder plan to mobilize support for SADC programmes
- 5.3.1 Engage private and public media fully to support the communication strategy;
- 5.3.2 Enter into smart partnerships with regional media organisations to facilitate the process of publicising SADC activities;
- 5.3.3 Develop an advocacy plan to influence support for SADC programmes;
- 5.3.4 Together with the private sector, parastatals, academia and non-governmental organisations establish multi-purpose centres for the sharing of information on SADC policies, programmes and activities;
- 5.3.5 Engage the business sector to financially support SADC Media Awards at national and regional level;and
- 5.3.6 Parastatals to be encouraged to assist the process, in kind and otherwise including distribution of materials and other services.
- 5.4 Strengthen inter and intra SADC communication systems in order to improve information flow within the organization
- 5.4.1 The human and financial resources of the CCU are inadequate. The CCU must be restructured to include a Head of Unit, the Manager of External Communications and the Manager of Internal Communications;
- 5.4.2 Establish and maintain a continuous secondment programme of communications professionals from Member States to the Secretariat to assist in the implementation of the strategy;
- 5.4.3 National Media Coordinators should be provided with the necessary equipment and capacity to access and distribute SADC information;
- 5.4.4 Establish and strengthen internal communication tools and mechanisms, such as in-house journals, intranet, notice boards and debriefing sessions;

- 5.4.5 Establish and strengthen intra SADC communication, including Intranet and other forms of information exchange, such as chat rooms;
- 5.4.6 Streamline and upgrade internal communications systems and mechanisms for greater efficiency;and
- 5.4.7 Update the calendar of events on a regular basis and review calendar monthly.
- 5.5 Establish a SADC crisis communications strategy
- 5.5.1 Establish a Crisis Communication Strategy
- 5.5.2 Draw up a Crisis Communication Manual

6. MESSAGES AND THEMES

- 6.1. SADC needs to produce messages and themes which should be guided by SADC positions on various issues.
- 6.2 Themes and messages should be based but not limited to the following Priority Intervention Areas: Trade, Economic Liberalisation and Development, Infrastructure Support for Regional Integration and Poverty Eradication, Sustainable Food Security, Human and Social Development, Poverty Eradication, Combating HIV and AIDS pandemic, Gender Equality and Development, Science and Technology, Information and Communications Technology, Environment and Sustainable Development, Private Sector Development, Statistics.
- 6.3 These messages should be publicised on relevant major international days such as the World AIDS Day, the International Day on the Eradication of Poverty, World Water Day etc.

All actions on the messages and themes enumerated above should take into account the multiplicity of languages in the region that at times limit access to information and provide translation/interpretation.

7. STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES

As stated in the introduction to this document, the successful implementation of this strategy depends on the action of all players. The division of labour in accordance with the identified tasks follows here below

7.1 Council of Ministers (CM)

1. Approve the SADC Communication and Promotional Strategy;
2. Allocate resources for implementation on an annual basis;
3. Review the implementation of the SCPS;
4. Urge Member States to allocate adequate resources for the implementation of the SCPS and at national level.

7.2 Integrated Committee of Ministers (ICM)

1. Integrated Committee of Ministers to meet, consider and recommend the Strategy to CM for approval;and
2. Review the implementation of the SCPS.

7.3 National Contact Points / National Committees

The NCP in each Member State should:

- 7.3.1 Publicise SADC at every possible opportunity;
- 7.3.2 Mobilise resources to facilitate the work of the SNMCs in the implementation of the SCPS;
- 7.3.3 Mobilise resources to facilitate access to SADC information by all citizens including minority and disadvantaged groups;
- 7.3.4 Encourage the introduction of SADC studies into the school curricula of the Member States up to at least Secondary school level where they do not already exist;and
- 7.3.5 Ensure that the SNCs are fully functional and all stakeholders are active participants in them, in particular the SNMC.

7.4 SADC National Media Coordinators (SNMCs)

Although SADC National Media Coordinators are civil servants on the payrolls of

their national governments and with specific duties and job descriptions, they are seen as part of the frontline SADC communications structure on the ground in each Member State given their special role, SNMCs should have access to the SADC extranet to keep abreast with regional development issues. To successfully play their role, they should:

- 7.4.1 Spearhead the implementation of the SADC Communication and Promotional Strategy at national level by formulating a media and PR campaign plan for implementation at national level;
- 7.4.2 Provide a link between the NCP/SNC and the media in full to publicise SADC decisions and highlight SADC projects being implemented at Member States level;
- 7.4.3 Facilitate a link between the SADC Secretariat and the local media for quick dissemination of information;
- 7.4.4 Compile, maintain and update a mailing list of all the media in their country;
- 7.4.5 Facilitate budgetary allocation for the implementation of the SADC Communication and Promotional Strategy; and
- 7.4.6 Lobby for the ratification of protocols and ensure that the media explain the benefits of the protocols to the citizens.

7.5 SADC Secretariat

- 1. As a means of ensuring a coherent and systematic implementation of the communication strategy, there must be only one exit and entry point for public information. The Corporate Communication Unit (CCU) is tasked with this responsibility.
- 2. A basic principle is that the CCU must edit and sanction all media statements and communiqués.

7.5.1 Executive Secretary

The Executive Secretary (ES) shall spearhead the implementation of the communication strategy including:

- ==> Fostering an effective internal communication system;
 - ==> Improving inter-personal communication;
 - ==> Building effective relations with the media;and
 - ==> Ensuring the provision of adequate resources for the implementation of the strategy.
2. The ES as Chief spokesperson of the institution shall work directly with the CCU to ensure that information disseminated is accurate, appropriate and timely.

7.5.2 Deputy Executive Secretary, Chief Director, Directors and Heads of Units

1. The Deputy Executive Secretary, Chief Director, Directors and Heads of Units shall fully support the ES in the implementation of the strategy.
2. In addition, they should fully cooperate with the CCU in the generation and dissemination of information to the region and give timely responses to media inquiries.

7.5.3 The Corporate Communications Unit

1. This Unit is the hub and custodian of the general communication of the institution and has a responsibility to enable all the players to successfully fulfil their communication duties and obligations. The Unit's communication role is strategic to the organisation's success.
2. The CCU shall be the leading player in the implementation of this strategy as well as monitoring and reviewing it.
3. Brand and reputation management is also the responsibility of the CCU.
4. The CCU as the custodian of the image of the organisation should ensure that relevant staff is equipped with skills to handle customer and media relations.
5. The Unit should work with management in putting into place a crisis management communication plan.
6. The CCU should take primary responsibility to foster partnerships with NGOs, CBOs, the business sector and the international community.

7. CCU should be responsible for provision of general information and response to queries on SADC.

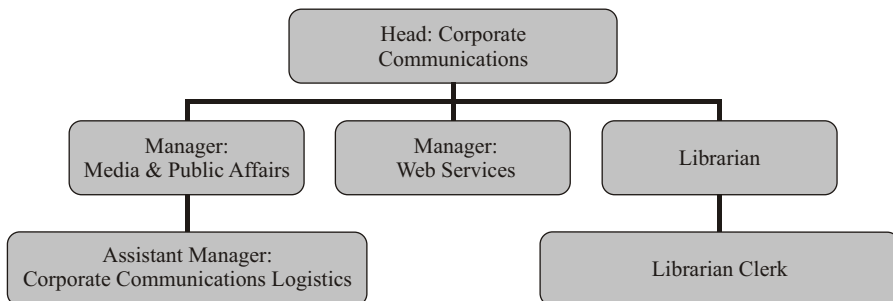
7.6 Role of communicators in Member States *(these are the actual communicators e.g. government information departments)*

1. Ensure a link at all government websites to the SADC website;
2. Establish SADC pages on all government websites;
3. Ensure SADC focus on national magazines and publications (mainly state owned);
4. Incorporate SADC awareness programmes incorporated into national communication strategies;
5. Facilitate access by SADC to national broadcasters and educational institutions; and
6. Ensure formal interaction with national SADC structures to evaluate progress and challenges.

8 POSITIONING AND STAFFING THE CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

As referred to earlier under the communication environment, the current structure of the CCU is hampered by the absence of a communication strategy; the lack of adequate institutional and communication infrastructure; inadequate financial and human resources, as well as inadequate private/public partnerships. The current structure is not capable of implementing the communication strategy envisioned in this document.

8.1 Current Structure of Corporate Communication Unit



-
1. Head of CCU
 2. Manager: Media and Public Affairs
 3. Info 21 Coordinator (*tied to a project October 2003 - October 2006*)
 4. Manager: Web Services (*frozen*)
 5. Assistant Manager: Corporate Communications Logistics
 6. Librarian
 7. Librarian Clerk

8.2 Ideal Structure of Corporate Communication Unit

Council, at its meeting of in February, 2005 approved the structure at 8.1. However, for the CCU to successfully implement the SCPS, it needs to be restructured to bring it in line with international acceptable best practices of corporate communications as management systems. The restructuring should strengthen the Media and Public Relations programmes of SADC; improve the organisation's corporate image; reaching its citizens in a consistent and sustainable manner and improve the communications culture within the SADC Secretariat in order to maximise the strategic role of communications in executing SADC programs; establishing communication mechanisms to mobilise support for SADC programmes; strengthening inter and intra SADC communication systems in order to improve information flows within the organisation at both intra and inter levels within the possible minimum time.

8.3 Following are some of the restructuring actions that could be taken to bring the CCU in line with international best practices:

8.3.1. The Corporate Communications Unit should be placed under the direct supervision of the Executive Secretary.

8.3.2 Human Resources for the Ideal CCU

1 **Head of the CCU** taking overall charge of the Unit and reporting directly to the Executive Secretary. (Currently reporting to DES)

2. **Manager: Media and Public Affairs Manager (instead: External Communication)**

2.1 Assistant Manager Communications Logistics

These officers shall be responsible for Media, Public, and Stakeholder Relations - this relates to the communications with other stakeholders not forming part of the SADC Structures on the ground.

3. **Manager of Internal Communication (not on approved Structure)**

3.1 **Assistant Manager Internal Communications (Not on approved structure)**

These officers shall deal with intra SADC Secretariat relations such as customer care/frontline public relations, in-house journal, notice boards etc, as well as the inter relations with SADC structures and information channels at Member States level, especially the SNMCs and or the information and communications sub committees of the SADC National Committees as well as information officers responsible for SADC information within the offices of the SADC National Contact Points. They will also be responsible for the production and publication of SADC Today and an electronic daily news bulletin to be introduced as a way of improving internal communication. Currently the production and printing of SADCToday is outsourced.

4. **Manager: Electronic Communications (Web Services - Officer level)**

(This position is on approved structure but frozen and with too many functions which can obviously not be carried by one person as this include some of the functions listed under positions 3 above, making the workload of this position unmanageable)

The functions of this position include the clearing, editing and preparation of all materials for publishing on the web, managing website including monitoring of the coverage of SADC in the regional and international media through regular visits to their websites and manage institutional/corporate electronic news and current affairs (audiovisual communication both narrow and broadcast) as well as translate news releases and other brief documents from English into French and/or Portuguese for immediate posting on the website.

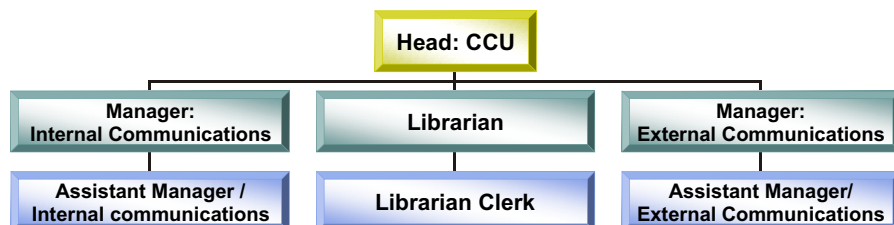
5. Librarian.

Manages the library

5.1 Librarian Clerk.

The duties and functions of this position include but are not limited to typing all library correspondence catalogue cards, and orders, register new books, shelves library documents, displays journals and newspapers and store old ones, assist library users in search for information and issue and deals with books loaning and returns.

8.4 Ideal CCU Structure & Organogram



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