

**ANNEX 1**

# **COMMUNICATION POLICY AND GUIDELINES 2025**

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# 1 Charm's Communication Policy And Guidelines

## Introduction

The global trend that has assumed a ubiquitous cultural character is towards greater openness. The right to know and the right of access to information have become key planks of the constitutional and governance order in most countries, the SSA region included. It is now normative and widely accepted that information sharing is an essential component of the process of governance and development. The clamour for transparency as a governance tenet, in the context of radical developments in the global communications arena, has optimised public expectations about the type, range, frequency, and even effectiveness of the delivery of information that is provided by organisations in the public, private, and non-profit sectors.

CHARM, as a key factor in the SSA public space, must reckon with the challenge of not only advancing human rights and media freedoms but also meeting the diverse demands for information from the various publics it serves.

This communication policy sets out the principles and the direction for internal, external, and other forms of communication to be undertaken by CHARM and its partners.

## Essential CHARM Public Communication Principles

The specific purpose of this set of guidelines is to ensure that the consortium undertakes its engagement programmes with stakeholders in a deliberate, professional, and strategic manner. The following essential principles shall, therefore, serve this objective:

- CHARM shall undertake its communication programmes without fear or favour;
- The consortium shall speak with one voice on all issues that lend themselves to public engagement;
- CHARM shall remain visible, accessible, proactive, and accountable; it shall facilitate two-way engagement with all its stakeholders;
- All staff of CHARM and its partner entities shall act as loyal agents of the consortium in its advocacy;
- CHARM communications shall be managed professionally in all respects;
- Public information from the consortium shall be fact-checked and approved by authorised persons before dissemination;
- The consortium's IEC outputs must conform to basic standards of quality, branding, and overall image in both content and form;
- CHARM shall endeavour to update its stakeholders on its activities at least once every month, or as events and circumstances may dictate;
- While appropriate engagement on social media is ideal, appearances on radio and television and engagement with print media are generally encouraged;
- Thorough preparation shall precede the engagement contemplated above.

## **Preparation of Communication Materials**

### **Persons tasked with preparing the consortium's IEC material shall pay regard to:**

- The purpose the IEC outputs are meant to serve;
- The nature, scope, and quality of the material;
- Alignment of the content with the target audiences;
- Requisite approvals.

## **Document Guidelines**

In an endeavour to create and adopt a CHARM house style, our documents shall conform to the following standards:

- Generally, unless context requires variation, documents shall be set in MS Word format at Font Size 12, with Times New Roman as font type;
- ALL printed IEC material must go through an editorial review process;
- The emphasis shall be on soft copies, unless hard copies are more appropriate;
- Abbreviations/ acronyms shall not be used before an initial full form has been given.

## **Responsibilities of CHARM's Communication Office**

In line with best practices, the designated CHARM Communication Office shall coordinate and offer advisory support in all communication activities of the consortium. Specifically, the Communication Office shall:

- Play the role of spokesperson for CHARM under delegated authority;
- Act as the liaison person with media and stakeholders;
- Organise media coverage for CHARM activities;
- Optimise the use of digital media to advance outreach;

- Maintain a central depository of key information to be communicated externally;
- Ensure CHARM-wide compliance with the house style;
- Establish and manage an effective public, media, and stakeholder feedback mechanism;
- Maintain a high-quality and resourceful website;
- Establish and manage social media interactions;
- Be the reference point for information clearance and standardisation;
- Generate ideas and messages around the consortium's advocacy programmes.
- Assist in ensuring professionalism and coherence in CHARM's messaging;
- Facilitate proper dissemination of information through the right channels;
- Provide advisory support to CHARM partners where necessary;
- Seek and exploit opportunities for media engagement;
- Initiate and manage an official newsletter or magazine;
- Steer CHARM-wide sensitisation on this document.

## **Language Standard for Charm**

All CHARM communication shall be in British English and/or Standard French. Where the wider general public in a particular area or region is targeted, a deliberate effort will be made to publish specific documents in the language of the target audience.



# Emergencies & Crisis Communication Guidelines

## Introduction

An emergency is an unusual situation that requires prompt action beyond routine procedures in order to limit damage to life, property, or other intangible values such as the integrity and reputation of an organisation. Most organisations today provide for strict procedures and decision-making protocols for effectively handling emergency situations both when they occur and thereafter.

CHARM shall mainstream effective communication as an integral part of emergency management. Therefore, effective emergency communication management is essential for helping restore and maintain order and confidence in the consortium during such times. CHARM shall therefore have the following emergency communication guidelines to be deployed whenever there is a crisis or emergency situation:

- Set up an emergency team;
- Identify and train emergency spokespersons;
- Prepare a press centre and a preliminary press release;
- Determine the communication channels to be used;
- Identify and carefully craft the messages to be communicated;
- The approved message(s) shall be promptly shared with all CHARM partners;
- The stakeholders that need to be communicated to urgently shall be identified;
- The emergency team shall have a uniform, consistent message.

## Post-Crisis

The strategic rationale for a post-crisis action plan is to restore normal status and inspire internal and external publics. CHARM shall reference the following post-crisis guidelines:

1. Appreciate staff and stakeholders who played an important positive role.
2. Adopt a business as usual approach by resuming normal operations.
3. Relax controls and monitoring to bolster confidence.

The foregoing set of crisis management measures shall serve as basic guidelines for any significant crisis eventuality the consortium may face. Importantly, every crisis presents learning opportunities for better future crisis management.

# Charm's Branding And Corporate Identity

The strategic aim of branding is to strengthen an organisation's corporate visibility and public standing. This ideal requires CHARM to maintain a consistent corporate image and identity in all its internal and external communications, IEC material, and engagements. The consortium adopts the following key principles and approaches to its branding and corporate identity:

- Our brand identity shall be projected in our documents and items of merchandise. The documents include correspondence, presentations, advertisements, and/or any other form of publicity;
- The CHARM logo shall be promoted by our partners in a wide spectrum of their communications, promotional material, and platforms.
- Each partner shall carry the phrase "A Member of the Consortium for Human Rights and Media in Sub-Saharan Africa (CHARM)" as a footer in its letterhead, website, and other places it may determine.
- Our corporate colours shall be aligned to the colours of our logo.

- The consortium shall endeavour to signpost the logo in and outside its offices and ensure that its assets, such as vehicles, stationery, and communication material, uphold this branding.
- The proper use of our brand identity shall be closely monitored by the Communications Office to ensure consistency.

A resource centre shall be established and capacitated to serve as an important complement to the realisation of the information and communication objective of the consortium. For this reason, the use of digital libraries and information storage systems should be expanded and promoted, and the involvement of partners encouraged. A compendium of the centre's resources shall be made available and continuously updated.



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