



**EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA FARMERS'
FORUM**

(ESAFF)

Draft

**ESAFF COMMUNICATION
MANUAL
and
Implementation Plan**

November 2013

Funded by



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I. Executive Summary

This Communication Strategy is developed primarily for small scale farmers' organisation and especially for the Eastern and Southern Africa Farmers' Forum (ESAFF). It is developed to address the shortcomings in some of the Forum's Internal and External Communications. It has been designed to guide the Forum and its members on how Communication – especially to the outside stakeholders should be done – indicating the kind of information to be communicated, the form into which it should be done, the timing of the communications, the responsible persons, the resources required, and equally important, how the Forum is going to Monitor the implementation and Evaluate the progress.

This Communication Strategy has been designed through a consultative process which involved different stakeholders – who included among others – Professionals in the field of Communications, ESAFF's Member Organizations and other key stakeholders and ESAFF well-wishers.

It is hence the expectation of ESAFF that through the effective use of this Communication Strategy by all responsible parties, the Forum's Communications are going to improve, reaching out to more audiences (especially in a targeted and well-coordinated manner), sending out more information – and above all – making change on Policy, Practice and Attitude.

ESAFF Chairman

2. Introduction and Background

The Eastern and Southern Africa small scale Farmers' Forum – ESAFF, is a network of small holder farmers that advocate for policy, practice and attitude change that reflects the needs, aspirations, and development of small-scale farmers in East and Southern Africa. It was established in 2002 after the World Summit of Sustainable Development (WSSD) held in Johannesburg in South Africa. ESAFF is registered in Tanzania under Non Governmental Organizations Act of 2002 of the United Republic of Tanzania.

2.1 Geographical Scope

To-date ESAFF operates in 13 countries in the Eastern and Southern Africa region. These countries are; Tanzania through MVIWATA; Kenya (Kenya Small Scale Farmers Forum – KESSFF); Uganda (ESAFF Uganda); Zambia (ESAFF Zambia); Zimbabwe (Zimbabwe Small Organic Smallholder Farmers Forum – ZIMSOFF); Lesotho (Lesotho Small Scale Farmers Forum); South Africa (ESAFF South Africa); Malawi (National Small Scale Farmers Movement - NASFAM); Rwanda (APPPE); Burundi (ESAFF Burundi); Madagascar (Confédération des Agriculteurs Malagas - CPM); Seychelles (Seychelles Farmers Association - SeyFA) and Mozambique (ROSA).

2.2 The Purpose

The main Purpose of ESAFF is to enable small farmers in Eastern and Southern Africa to speak as a united voice so that the issues, concerns and recommendations of farmers become an integral part of policies and practices at grassroots, national, regional and international levels.

2.3 Vision Statement

A strong and effective forum of empowered Small Scale Farmers with united voices in the policy processes for ecological agriculture and poverty free Eastern and Southern Africa region.

2.4 Mission Statement

Empowering Small Scale Farmers in Eastern and Southern Africa to influence development policies and promote ecological agriculture through capacity strengthening, research and networking.

2.5 Activity Focus

So far, ESAFF's focus has been on building the capacity of smallholder farmers on different areas including agro-ecology and policy engagement. Also the forum has been working on Policy Advocacy – influencing Policy and Practice change in the region to be in favor of small-scale farming and building networks and alliances with different stakeholders on issues related to small scale farming.

The Forum also has been working on collecting, processing and disseminating information to its audiences in member countries and the world at large. Other areas include conducting researches and field studies on different subjects.

3. Goals and Objectives

3.1 Main Goal

The main goal of this ESAFF's Communications is to raise awareness of the target audience about ESAFF's work, that of its members and partners in member countries and beyond.

3.2 Objectives

The following are specific objectives which ESAFF's Communications and this Communication Strategy envisage to achieve:

- i. To ensure that ESAFF's communication targets and audiences are aware of ESAFF and its partners.
- ii. To raise awareness within ESAFF member countries and beyond about ESAFF's activities and about ESAFF's partners' roles in supporting ESAFF and its activities.
- iii. To guide the production of Quality and Timely Information by ESAFF

4. Audience Analysis

Due to its regional nature, ESAFF has many and diverse stakeholders who make-up its audience list. Those are:-

- i. Member Organizations/Forums

This is one of the strategic audiences of the Forum. ESAFF depends much on their knowledge and cooperation to be able to successfully implement most of its activities – including wide sharing and dissemination of information in member countries and reaching out to more actors.

ESAFF needs to keep this group well and regularly informed about its activities (progress and status of implementation), future (near and long term) plans, other developments in the sector, National and Regional Policy frameworks and implementation, Positions and Responses to different developments and statements, funding opportunities available for them, networking and alliance-building opportunities, capacity building and other relevant news from all over the world.

- ii. Policy Makers. Law makers

As one of the key goals of ESAFF is to influence Policies and their practice, targeting policy makers with the right and timely information makes one of the major endeavors to achieving that goal. This group includes Politicians (Member of Parliament and National and Regional Levels), Government leaders (Heads of states/governments and Ministers) and Bureaucrats and the Donor Community.

To achieve its core purpose, mission and vision, ESAFF will need to target these groups with information containing the feedback and voices/demands of the people (farmers and their farmer groups), Policy analysis, Research findings, Position Papers, Positions and Responses to different developments and statements, and the normal undertakings of the Forum in general.

- iii. Private Sector

This group includes farm implement manufacturers and traders, seed producers and sellers and business people involved in buying and selling crops produced by small scale farmers. This group is very strategic to achieving success for small holder farmers as it is the link for them to first get the necessary farming inputs they need and then trade their produce.

ESAFF will need to target these groups with information on Policy and legal frameworks and obligations for fair dealings in their businesses, agro-ecology, Positions and Responses to different developments and statements, agricultural research findings, new inventions and technologies etc.

iv. Civil Society Organizations

This group includes a lot of other subgroups which include Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Farmer groups. ESAFF will need to reach out to all these Civil Society Organizations and groups with relevant information available. This is because not only that they are important actors in furthering ESAFF's agenda on sustainable development, but also in widely disseminating the information generated by ESAFF to reach a wider audience.

Civil society organizations are also important sources of information from the grassroots on different areas – including small scale farming – as the focus for most of their work is on improving livelihoods and sustainable community developments. Getting them understand ESAFF's work (Mission and Vision) is very key in winning their support which ESAFF needs to achieve its goals.

ESAFF will target this group with information on its Programme Implementation Updates, Policy processes and practice, research findings, policy analysis, opportunities for partnership and collaboration, Positions and Responses to different developments and statements, news-updates from the region and around the world.

v. The general public

Finally, ESAFF will want to target the general with different sets of information that it considers necessary. The general public will be targeted with information on policy analysis, policy processes and implementation, ESAFF's reactions and responses to different developments and statements, small scale farmers' products, ESAFF's regular activities.

5. Information to be Communicated

ESAFF will be communicating the following information to the above-mentioned target audiences.

- i. About ESAFF – first and foremost, ESAFF will be sharing information about itself. Making introduction to different stakeholders – especially those who have not been targeted with enough, correct information about the forum and others.
- ii. *Programme / Projects updates* – this will include information on ESAFF's core programmes and projects and the progress on their implementation. This is very important because ESAFF needs its target audience to know where it is and where

it is headed in terms of programme and project focus. This information is also in ensuring that the target audiences know the relevance of ESAFF.

- iii. *Research Findings, New Inventions and Technologies* – ESAFF will conduct research and or gather research findings from researched done by other actors, analyze them and disseminate them in user-friendly formats and languages depending on the targets group. It will also include information on new inventions and technologies related to small scale farming and ecology.
- iv. *Project/event-based and Annual Reports* – ESAFF will also be sharing its reports (project/event-based and annual reports) to all stakeholders.
- v. *Positions and Responses* – ESAFF will be developing its positions or responses to different positions or statements by other actors and sharing them widely to all stakeholders.
- vi. *Policy Analysis* – ESAFF will also be disseminating information on Policy analysis done under its programmes or by other stakeholders.
- vii. *News Updates* – these will contain relevant news and information from the region and the world at large to the target audience. The new will that related to small-scale farming and ecological agriculture.
- viii. *Opportunities for target audience* – other information to be shared with target audience will be that related to opportunities for the target audience. These can be opportunities for funding (as in the case of member organizations/forum and other CSOs), opportunities for capacity building or opportunities for engagement and partnership for other stakeholders.
- ix. *Success Stories* – ESAFF will also be documenting and sharing success stories from members and other farmer groups and organizations. These will range from Organizational Development and management to successful agro ecological practices, information on market access, adaptation and mitigation of climate change effects etc.

6. Communication Channels and Tools

In implementing this strategy, ESAFF will employ the following communication channels of and tools:

Channels	Tools
i. Website ii. E-Newsletter iii. Email iv. Print Media (Newspapers, Periodicals, Journals) v. Electronic Media (Radio and Television) vi. Internet-based Social Networks (Facebook, Twitter, Youtube). vii. Physical meetings	i. Press kits ii. Position Papers iii. News stories iv. Periodical and Project Reports v. Communiqués vi. Video clips vii. Still photos viii. Letters ix. IEC Materials <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Brochures/Leaflets, b. T-Shirts, c. Wall and Table Calendars, d. Diaries for Staff, Board Members

	and Target stakeholders, e. Office signboard x. Wall and Standing Banners xi. Video and Audio Documentaries
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7. How to develop communication tools

Some communication materials/tools need to some expertise to prepare them in a format that will properly convey the required message. It is so important to prepare well these materials that in case the organization does not enough capacity to so, it is advised to seek professional guidance for the same. Remember, a mistake in the preparation/form of the materials/tools used may put off the audience even before getting to know what the message was. Here are some guidelines on how to prepare some of the communication tools:-

7.1 Press kit

A press kit is a folder that contains all of the information that a member of the media of might need to prepare a story about our campaign. Typically, we assemble a press kit in preparation for a press conference or media event or at the start of a new advocacy campaign. A press kit is usually sent only once to each member of the media but the individual pieces of our press kit can be used independently which allows us to be ready with information for the media at all times.

A press kit contains the following articles/elements:-

- Press releases about the event/activity/issue
- Background information on the issue and a description of the general organization activities
- A “question and answer” sheet that answers all basic questions, easy to read
- Charts, photographs and other visual evidences
- Any other very relevant information on the subject – like a presentation, quotes from important in support of your course etc.

How to prepare a press statement/release:-

A press statement / press release is a written or recorded communication directed at members of the news media for the purpose of announcing something ostensibly newsworthy. Typically, they are read out to journalists a press conference followed with question and answers for clarification. Otherwise, they can be mailed, faxed, or e-mailed to assignment editors at newspapers, magazines, radio stations, television stations, or television networks.

In brief, a press statement has to contain six key elements – as for any complete news story. It has to tell who is doing or going to do what is to be done. It has also to tell where it is going to happen, when it is going to take place, how it is going to happen or be done and why it is important for the media and the public in general.

Key Elements of a Press Release

<p>WHO is the subject?</p> <p>The subject may be a person, group, community, or event.</p>	<p>WHAT is happening?</p> <p>Grab the reader's attention quickly with simple, compelling language.</p>	<p>WHERE is it happening?</p> <p>If it is an event, where is it going to take place? If it is an issue, where are the people affected by the issue?</p>
<p>WHEN does it happen?</p> <p>For an event, make sure the date and time are very clear. For an issue, focus on how often or how long the problem has been occurring.</p>	<p>WHY is it newsworthy?</p> <p>Consider the perspective of the reader. What would be important or interesting to them?</p>	<p>HOW are we involved?</p> <p>How is our advocacy campaign affecting the situation? Does the information in the press release affect society?</p>

Note:

- Attractive headline: make sure that you give your statement a headline that easily attracts attention of the reader
- A Press release should not be too long. It should be one page and maximum two pages. Remember to have it printed on a headed paper (with organization logo and address).
- Also make sure at the end the press release gives contacts for the contact person responsible for the activity for further consultation with the media.
- Do not forget to include other basic elements like date on the top as well.
- Correctness of facts is key, make sure all the information contained in the statement is correct, and where necessary, you have the evidence/proof for that standby – in case the media or any other needs it.
- It should thus contain NO unfounded allegations.

7.2 Brochures/Leaflets

Brochures and leaflets are another good way to communicate general organizational information or project/event specific information. Due to their small size in nature, you need to consider the following:

- Design key messages in advance – from the general organization or project/programme, identify key messages you would like to be disseminated through the brochure.
- Summarize all key information in brief paragraphs
- Prepare few, good pictures related to the text information prepared for the brochure also to be printed on the brochure/leaflet
- In the design, make sure they represent the organizational or project colors, they are handy, attractive in form (appearance) and content
- Do not forget to include other important information about your organization including contact information.

7.3 E-Newsletter / News bulletin

More and more people are joining online communication services and communities. This presents an opportunity for an organization to reach out to more people with very cost-effective means. One way of doing that is through an E-Newsletter. This is a collection of important news stories, information, updates etc. from the organization to the target audience. Its frequency of release depends on the pace at which the organization produces newsworthy information. Depending on that factors, some organizations produce weekly e-newsletter,

some monthly, bimonthly, quarterly and even bi-annually. Key things to know and consider in producing an e-newsletter include the following:-

- i. **Timeliness of the information.** It is important to make sure the information you are compiling for sending out through an e-newsletter is timely. You do not have to send out outdated information to the public or your target audience. Outdated information is information that emerged long time ago and had already reached your audience in time. If you do that most users will find your e-newsletter useless and might end up unsubscribing from your mailing list or even blocking you from sending them future communications.
- ii. **Correctness/Objectivity of the information.** Always make sure that the information you are sending out to your audience is as correct as possible and as objective as possible. Your information should not contain unfounded allegations, biases or any kind of misleading information. This is because the information you send out as news can have legal implication on your organization – especially if it contains allegations or any kind of unfairness or misleading.
- iii. **Developing an emailing list.** To simplify the sending out of an e-newsletter, you will need an emailing list. A list that will include the emails of your target audience. An emailing list will help you send the e-newsletter once and reach all your targets. There are several ways to develop a list. The easiest way to use the yahoo-groups or google-groups services. These allow you to add emails to a single group and reach them with all the information using that single group email. You can also other bulk email sending software like sendbalster.

7.4 Wall and Stand Banners

These also can be good communication materials for the organization. In their designs, consider the following:-

- Design short message – not long sentences
- Prepare good pictures (in high quality) to accompany the text messages
- They need good designing for them to be attractive
- They should not be too big or too small (standard measures are 1m x 3m)

7.5 Other materials (like Shirts, T-Shirts, Caps, pens etc)

- The need short messages (not long sentences)
- Need to be different sizes according to wearers' sizes
- They should consider cultural dress practices (local/cultural dress code for men and women)
- In dissemination, targets should be the beneficiaries

8. Choosing Communication channels and tools

When choosing which communication channels and tools are to be used in the organization's communication activities, it is important to consider several key factors. The combination of the factors to be considered must be giving the assurance beforehand that the required results will be achieved with efficiency and effectiveness. Some of the factors to consider when deciding which channels and tools are to be used include the following:-

- i. Audience to be reached – it is important to understand the audience to be reached with the communication. Different audiences can be reached through different channels or with different tools. Factors here can include age, literacy/education levels, occupation etc.
- ii. Cost to be involved – also, when considering which medium is to be used for a certain communication, it is important to understand the cost implication of that, to make sure it one that an organization can afford sustainably. You do not have to invest all the resources in one communication activity and end it there. Communication is and has to be a continuous, sustainable endeavor, make sure you choose affordable but effective ways of communicating to ensure that the organization will continue doing for a long time.
- iii. Advantages and shortcomings for each channel/tool – it is important to make an analysis of the advantages and shortcoming of each communication channel and tool the organization wants to use for communication. The analysis should show what are the advantages and disadvantages of each channel/tool in a particular context. Use the analysis to decide which channel and tool is suitable for a certain kind of communication the organization wants to do. Remember that the channels and tools can change from time depending on other internal and external changing factors. A chart below shows some of the key advantages and shortcoming for most communication channels and tools.
- iv. Capacity to use the channels/tools – sometimes, the organization will need to consider if it has enough capacity to communicate using a certain channel. For example, using radio and television programmes for communicating certain messages need people who are competent enough to do so. A person who understands thoroughly the messages to be communicated, a person who can clearly respond to questions by journalist and viewers/listeners where applicable. An incompetent person will mislead the audience and even convey a wrong message to the audience. In this case, using edited, printed or recorded materials for the audience to read or listen/watch without interaction may be more appropriate.

9. Advantages and Shortcomings of Channels and Tools to be Used

Channel/Tool	Advantages	Shortcomings
Online (Website/Social Networks)	Low cost Easy to implement Easy to access by Audience Readily available for audience at all time	It needs Internet access – which can be a challenge – especially for rural populations – the majority of whom are the farmers served by ESAFF
Radio	Easily accessible by the audience Only verbal-based, no showing of images or visual illustrations for audience Can be used in different ways (Talk-shows, Documentaries,	A bit more costly than the internet-based communications

	News bulletins, advertisements)	
Television	Easy to convey messages through Audio and Visual materials Can be used in different ways (Talk-shows, Documentaries, News bulletins, advertisements)	More limited to urban audiences More costly than radio and internet channels
Print Media (Newspapers, Journals, Magazines)	Somehow cheaper than television Messages can last for long times and still be accessed	Limited reach to audience (mostly limited in urban areas) They cost the audience to access them Unlike radio and television, they require literacy
Advertisements	They are short and direct to the point They attract more attention when properly designed They are easy to be understood, memorized/remembered by the audience	They are costly in both Electronic (Radio and Television) and Print media They are easy to be missed (not heard/seen) by audience (especially on radio and television)

10. How to Engage the Media

Media engagement is one of the key elements in mass communication. And as such, due to wide – usually open – reach, it is important to understand and prepare well for media engagements. Engaging the media can be in different forms and approaches, including through Press Conferences, one-to-one or group interview, radio/tv recorded or live programmes, publishing information in print media, advertisements etc. Here is some of the important information to understand and consider when planning to engage the media.

10.1 Press Conference

It is always recommended to organize physical meetings with the media/journalists when the organization has a press statement instead of just mailing/emailing it to the media houses. However, for this meeting to be effective, there are some important steps and preparations to be made in advance, including the following:-

How to Prepare a Press Conference

What is a Press Conference? A press conference is a voluntary presentation of information to the media. In a press conference, you decide what information is presented, how it is presented, and who presents it. It is an opportunity to get your story on TV, radio or in the paper. To hold a press conference you contact the media, pick a time and place, make a presentation and respond to reporters' questions. The following are the major steps to follow when preparing a press conference:-

- i. *Define your goals*

Clearly state a good reason for holding a press conference: the news you are going to reveal has not been covered in the press yet, or there is an emergency, or an important new issue. Being clear about your goals will help you do a better job of planning the press conference. The goals might include:

- To get publicity about your efforts and problems;
- To get widespread media coverage;
- To send a message to a decision maker about what you want;
- To get more people involved in your organization;
- To develop the skills of your members;
- To show the strength of your group.

Whatever your organizational goals are, remember that you have to have something newsworthy to announce, reveal, or talk about at your press conference. Do not invite the media to a press conference if you are not convinced that your issue is newsworthy. You will disappoint them and they might not show up next time you invite them.

ii. Decide the message

The second step is to decide what message you want to deliver through the media. Outline your demands to your targets – mostly a decision maker – someone who has the power to give you what you want. Include information about what people can do to help, and the date, time and place of your next action.

iii. Venue for press conference

Work out the location of the press conference. Find an appropriate place that is convenient and has the facilities you need like a public address system (Microphones and speakers), well ventilated, well lit, etc. Where you choose to have a press conference depends on your needs and the specific circumstances of your situation.

iv. Set date and time for Conference

Set the date and time of the press conference, taking into account reporters' deadlines. Usually the best days of the week to get news coverage are Tuesday through Thursday. Check to see that there are no competing news events already scheduled at the time of your conference.

v. Invite the media

Send a press conference advisory to appropriate local media outlets at least a week before the press conference. Follow up with a phone call at least two days before the press conference to make sure that everyone received the advisory. Call them the day before to remind them about the event.

vi. Invite important guests

Invite prospective guests you want to have at the press conference, such as other members of your group, allies, and friendly politicians. Prepare your speaker with 30-second answers for radio or TV, and quotable, simple messages for print reporters. Help your speaker practice

with a video camera or tape recorder where possible. It is important to ensure that different groups with interest in the issue being addressed are well represented. No group should seem sidelined.

vii. Prepare spokespersons

Prepare your spokespersons to deliver your message. Generally, it's good to have just one or two speakers during a press conference so people don't talk on top of each other, or mix the message. Rehearse with the speaker(s) to make statements brief and clear and usually no longer than ten minutes. The spokesperson should be experienced in the subject so s/he will be able to respond to questions after the statement. Often reporters will want to interview the spokesperson. Let the press know that the speaker is available after press conference.

viii. Choose a moderator

You will need a person to control the process and keep reporters on the subject. If someone goes off subject, the moderator can return the focus by saying such things as: "That's an interesting point, but we are here today to discuss..." to make sure that the journalists do not turn away the conference to address other issues different from what you had planned.

ix. Prepare background materials

Many reporters and guests may wish to have a copy of written statements or a press release. You can prepare a packet of factsheets, charts or graphs, visual aids, and relevant information about your organization in general and specifically about your event or demands. This information should be in the press kit

x. Practice roles with the members of your group

It's important that everybody understands his/her role in the event. Think about what will happen all the way through the press conference, and how it will look to reporters. The key question to ask is "what if..?" (What if reporters ask a non-spokesperson member a question? What if your opponents show up and heckle?) etc. It is important to prepare for different scenarios.

10.2 Interviews

Organizing media interviews is one of the best ways to engage with the media as well. As the case for a press conference, preparations and conducting of a media interview should consider the following key aspects:-

i. Speaker(s)

Before arranging the interview with the media (time, venue and other logistics), it is very important to identify a speaker or speakers. These should be people who are well informed about the subject to be addressed in the interview. A person who can very well express him/herself, able to face the cameras/journalists without fear, not shy, smart wearing and equally important – confident. Interviews need speakers who not only know what they are talking about – but can also be seen to know what they are talking about.

ii. Preparing the content

As the case for the speakers, it is also very important to prepare the content of the interview. Here, it involves identifying the subject matter to be addressed in the interview, writing a short script about it, giving it to the speakers for socializing it and understanding the key messages that have to be brought up in during the interview and rehearse the interview.

iii. Organizing the interview

This includes the logistical arrangements prior to the conference. They include identifying the venue and time, inviting the Journalist(s) who will be conducting the interview, briefing the journalists about your organization, your core activities and specifically about the subject to be addressed in the interview beforehand.

iv. Securing Media spot to broadcast/publish interview

In the case where the organization (not the media) organizes the interview, it is important for the organization to make sure that it has also secured space or airtime in the media for airing or publishing the interview. This is not always the case when the interview has been organized by the media where the media usually sets aside space/airtime for airing the interview. Also the organization can plan to multiply in multimedia format (audio or video) the interview and distribute it widely to target audiences for wider visibility and publicity.

v. Controlling emotions

Sometimes the journalists tend to be provocative by asking provocative questions which might be out of subject or even too personal. The speakers need to know how to handle such situations by not charging emotionally. When such a situation happens, the speaker may just politely remind the interviewer that that question is out of subject/context of the current interview and that if need be it can be addressed in a separate interview.

10.3 Event coverage

Another better way to engage the media is through inviting them to cover your organizational events and activities. To do this, you need plan well beforehand by doing the following (and more relevant):-

- i. Prepare a concept note for the event or activity. Always, it should begin with a brief background about the organization, its goals, objectives and focus areas. Then describe what the activity/event is all about. Add all this information together in the press kit.
- ii. Use visual aids. It is important to have a lot of visual materials at an event to help the journalists and the public to see and understand more about your organization and your activities without having to ask everything from someone. Prepare enough banners – with pictures and brief descriptions, brochures and fliers, pictures and other materials that help provide valuable information to the media without a need for verbal consultations.
- iii. During an event, it is important to spare some time and deliver the key messages to the media. This can be through brief arranged interviews, a brief press conference

in between the event programme etc. This is because most journalists will not spend the entire day at one event. They always have to cover several events per day and still need office to prepare the news stories, submit to their editors for final editing and selection for airing/printing. So it is important to spare some minutes to brief the media about the key messages of your event and continue with your programme.

Note: Engaging the Editors. In all cases, it is extremely important to engage the editors of the media houses you are targeting to report on your events/activities. It is not the journalists (writers and reporters) who decide which news story is going to be aired/printed or not – it is the Editor.

It is hence very important to make sure that you engage the editors as well. You can do this by sending key information about your organization and your events to the editors, clearly indicating what makes your issues newsworthy and that you are not looking for commercial publicity but rather for public good.

You can also engage the editors by organizing a brief event for them. Most organizations will organize a breakfast/lunch talk with editors to familiarize them with the issues they are addressing, focusing on their importance to the public, clearly indicating there are no commercial interests behind the issues and also how the newsworthiness of the issues can be beneficial to the media outlets – in terms of increasing their leadership/listenership/viewership.

II. How to use the Internet for Communications

The internet is increasingly becoming the major means of communication in the world. It offers many opportunities and in different forms for one way and interactive communications. The Web 2.0, which basically refers to the new generation of internet that offers highly interactive online communication tools, offers highly efficient and less costly means of mass communication. Some of the online communication tools and how an organization can use them include the following:-

i. Interactive Social media

The number of social media websites is increasing on a daily basis, but the most popular so far are Facebook and Twitter. These internet-based interaction platforms allow users to link with other people (as 'friends' or followers) and allow them to share information in the form of text, pictures, audio or video format.

They enable users anywhere in the world to post any information and give them options to choose who can see the posted information. The best ways to use these channels for communication and reaching a wider audience includes understanding and doing the following:-

For Facebook:

- a. Sign up for Facebook and get your Facebook account (at www.facebook.com)
- b. Choose a "User name" that will be displayed to viewers to know who you are – preferably the Name or the popular Abbreviation of your organization's name.

Always use the commonly known name and logo for users to easily find you on the network.

- c. For an Organization, it is recommended to set up 'a page' instead of using a normal profile (information on how to set-up a Facebook page can be seen after signing up and having an account)
- d. Fill the profile information about your organization, what you do, where you are found, your contact details – for the viewer to easily identify who you are and how to reach you when they want to.
- e. Invite people to 'Like' you page. By liking your page, they will be able to see your posts (the information you post) on their profiles directly without having to visit you page (Facebook displays your posts on their 'walls' of those who have 'liked' your page). They can also comment on your posts directly from their 'walls' without having to navigate away. Facebook provides different options on how you can invite people to like your page, choose the one that works the easiest for you.
- f. Populate your profile page with banners and photos that easily identify your organization
- g. In advanced settings, you can choose to popularize your page of posts by paying for the same. Facebook will generate adverts about your page or posts to different users in areas of your choice and they will be able to see your page or posts even when they have not liked your page.

For Twitter:

- a. Open www.twitter.com and sign up for your organization's account.
 - b. Choose a twitter 'handler' (@something) that can easily identify your organization and can easily be memorized by people who need to communicate or link up with your organization.
 - c. Identify key Organization to 'follow' that will provide you with relevant needed information
 - d. Invite people to 'follow' you. As the case for Facebook, by following you, the followers will be able to see all your 'twits' on their pages without having to navigate away.
- ii. Photo and Video sharing platforms

The internet also provides free and paid platforms for sharing photos and videos. The most popular video sharing website is google's Youtube (www.youtube.com). On this page, you can sign-up and get your account which gives access to post any number of videos for free for the world to see.

On the other side Flickr (www.flickr.com) offers free space for sharing your photos. After signing up (to create your account), you will get access to post your photographs online for the public to see or just for storage. Other photo sharing sites include shutterfly, snapfish, picasa and photobucket. Some of these offer totally free services and some offer free services for 'basic' use and they charge for 'professional' users.

Key things to understand and consider when planning to use photo and video sharing websites:-

- a. Prepare/edit your photos or video in user friendly/attractive format (this might require some basic photo/video editing skills). Raw/un edited photos or especially videos might be boring or not attractive to watch for many viewers hence most of them might not be interested to visit your pages and watch what you shared.
- b. Use other communication means to popularize your photo/video posts. These can be through emails, e-newsletter or through the social media accounts mentioned above.

iii. Static and dynamic websites

Static websites are websites that allow only the owner to post information on it and the rest of the viewers can only view/read without making any contributions to the same while dynamic websites are websites that allow the users and visitors to also post information or interact with each other using the same website as a platform. The difference between the two depends on the type of Website designing programmes used to develop each of them.

Websites are good tools of communication as they allow the organization/owner to post information there and the information will stay there as long the owner wants and can be accessed by any one at any time thereafter (unless the owner sets restrictions on access to website content). Development of a website needs knowledge in website development, so the organization might need to engage someone with such skills in case it does not have one among its staff.

Compared to other online communication channels, websites are usually costly, from the designing, to hosting, to maintenance and annual fees. Compared to other online communication channels, Websites are good for storing information and ease of its access thereafter.

iv. Website logs (Blogs)

Blogs are free sub domains attached to other website domains on the internet. The most popular are www.blogger.com and www.wordpress.com. They offer users a chance to have their version of a website in a form of a log. They do not have advance options for page set ups and navigation as it is for websites, but they are still good for posting simple text information, photographs and videos.

Developing a blog requires less technical knowledge of website designing and development. This means, almost any person with basic knowledge of the internet can have their own blog. On top of that, most blog service provider provide guiding information on how to start establishing your blog and how to manage it thereafter.

To start a blog for your organization, log into services provider's webpage (e.g. www.wordpress.com) then sign up to register your blog's name, and your username and password for access when you want to publish or post anything on your blog.

Note:

- ✓ Each of the above online communication channel needs extra popularization mechanisms for you audience to know about it and be able to follow it and use it as

their source of information. Every day in the world, there are millions and millions of posts on the internet on almost all subjects. This creates huge competition in reaching your audience. For example, you can add extra information on each email you send out (as part of the signature below), information about your website address or social network accounts. Make sure you add this information to other organizational publications as well.

- ✓ Post/publish information as frequently as possible. For your audience to see your website or social account a reliable source of information, they have to be finding new posts/information regularly. Make sure you post new information at least once or twice a week. People should not visit your page or website and find the same information for several months. They will stop visiting and never consider it a reliable source of information.
- ✓ Post newsworthy information. Make sure you design messages and information for posting in a way that makes it seem newsworthy. Do not post just everything. Be selective of the information you post and share. For example, design your messages and posts in a way that provokes deeper thinking or taking a certain action by the audience, give answers to people's questions through your posts etc.
- ✓ Identify and target people with the same interests as your organization. For example, if your organization works on agricultural issues, target other organizations and individuals who are working or might be interested in issues related to agriculture. You do not need to feed people with information they are never interested in. They will consider that information as junk or spam and may block your future communication.

12. Opportunities and Risks

The following have been identified as Opportunities or success factors and risks that might impact on ESAFF implementation of the strategy.

12.1 Opportunities

- i. **ESAFF staff capacity:** ESAFF Secretariat has enough, capable staff who can collectively collaborate in implementing the communication strategy
- ii. **Technical/Physical Resources:** the Organization has in place enough technical resources to facilitate the implementation of this communication strategy.
- iii. **Low cost communication channels:** Most of the Communication channels identified in this strategy that will be employed are relative of low cost or free in some cases. This makes it a big opportunity for ESAFF to be able to communicate effectively even with little financial resources.
- iv. **Relevance of issues:** ESAFF, being a farmer organization, will mainly be sharing information on Agriculture and especially Food Security. This is information which is or should be relevant to every person. That means ESAFF will only have to work on how to package the information to be communicated to its target audience, knowing that it is an area of interest for most target audiences.
- v. **Accessibility of target audience:** The communication channels identified to be used in this strategy are also already being used by most target audiences. That means it will be easy to reach them with the messages and other forms of communications.

12.2 Gaps / Risks

- i. Members' capacity to implement this communication in their own countries and context
- ii. Availability of enough financial resources to implement the strategy in all member countries

13 Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

Implementation for this strategy shall be done according to the implementation plan below. Monitoring shall hence be done following the plan and evaluation shall be done from the results of the monitoring process. The indicators shown in the plan shall be key references to show the implementation of the plan. Other key indicator will be the feedback from the target audiences.

Implementation and monitoring tools will be developed and used. They will include checklists for information dissemination by different ESAFF staff – at office and for those traveling outside the office – to make sure that there is tracking of information dissemination according to the plan and that all the information and communication activities are well documented.

Annex I: ESAFF COMMUNICATION STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Activity	Detailed Activities	Target	Time	Indicator / MoV
Internalizing the Communication Strategy within ESAFF Secretariat and Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Share Draft/Strategy with Staff and ESAFF Members ii. Develop and Share CS Implementation Plan iii. Conduct an Internal/Staff Session to Socialize the CS and Plan 	ESAFF Staff, Leaders and Members	October 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feedback from Targets - Smooth implementation
Generation of Information for sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Analyze information from different sources ii. Generate user-friendly and relevant information from those sources for ESAFF and target audience iii. Record Audio and Visual clips from different events and consultations iv. Extract key messages from ESAFF, Members and partners documents and publications for wider sharing 	-	Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key messages designed - Online updates - Audi and Video clips
Produce ESAFF IEC Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Design and Print Brochures/Leaflets ii. Design and Print T-Shirts and Caps iii. Design and Print Conference Information Packs iv. Design and Print an ESAFF Booklet v. Produce project-specific (roll-up and wall) banners 	-	October – December 2013	Produced/Printed Materials

Produce and Disseminate an E-Newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Write E-Newsletter Stories ii. Collect E-Newsletter Stories from ESAFF Members iii. Compile Stories in E-Newsletter Template iv. Share draft E-Newsletter with Staff for Comments v. Finalize and Share E-Newsletter widely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Civil Society Organizations - Donor Community - Decision/Policy Makers - The general Public 	<p>Quarterly</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shared Versions of the E-Newsletter - PDF Versions - Feedback from target audience
Design and Disseminate ESAFF E-Bulletins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Identify Monthly topics to cover in the E-Bulletins ii. Write and Design the E-Bulletin iii. Disseminate the E-Bulleting Widely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 	<p>Monthly</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Version of the E-Bulletin - Distribution list - Feedback from the audience
Organize Press Conferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Identify and agree on issues to be Addressed ii. Prepare Press kits (Press Release, Background Materials, ESAFF IEC Materials, Visual Materials etc) iii. Identify Speakers iv. Identify and Organize Journalists, Venue and Logistics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy Makers - Donors and Development Partners - Farmers - General Public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Periodical (Responding to Issues) - During ESAFF Annual General Meeting - During ALL (non-internal) Workshops organized by ESAFF - For every Moment of Action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o World Food Day o Women’s Day o African Youth day - On demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Press Kits - Press Cuttings - Feedback from targets on issues addressed

Conduct Radio and TV Programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Identify and agree on issues to be Addressed ii. Prepare Audi/Visual Materials to be used iii. Identify Speakers iv. Book radio/TV programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy makers - Donors and Development - Private sector - Civil Society Organizations - General Public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For every Moment of Action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o World Food Day o Women’s Day o African Youth day - Responding to Topical Issues - Launching of ESAFF Products (like Publications; Projects) - On demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Audio and Video Clips - Feedback from audience
Establish a Team of Journalist Collaborators on Farming in Member Countries	Generate a list of Journalists writing on Agriculture/Farming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Journalists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - October – December 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - List of Journalists Published Articles
Publish Newspaper Articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Identify issues to be covered in Newspaper Stories and Features ii. Share information with identified Journalists iii. Monitor publications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy makers - Donors and Development - Private sector - Civil Society Organizations - General Public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monthly – within Member Countries - For every Moment of Action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o World Food Day o Women’s Day o African Youth day - On demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - News stories and Features - Press cutting - Feedback from audience
Redesign ESAFF’s Website	i. Redesigning the website to include News Navigation features, applications and links and a new look	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Online Audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - December 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A redesigned website with the new feature and navigations

Update Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Keep tracking events relevant to ESAFF and target audience ii. Write Stories to be posted on website iii. Collect stories from Different sources for posting on Website iv. Edit and Customize Reports and Publications for Online use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ESAFF Members - Policy makers - Donors and Development - Private sector - Civil Society Organizations - General Public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weekly and on demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Up to date website
Update Social Media Accounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Develop brief messages for sharing through Social Media ii. Capture Audio and Video Documentations at different events and Edit them for Online Use iii. Collect information from Members and share them on Social Media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy makers - Donors and Development - Private sector - Civil Society Organizations - General Public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Daily and on demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social Media Updates
Disseminate ESAFF Information tools and Publications through Physical Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Package different ESAFF Information in user-friendly, portable formats ii. Develop Calendar of events for sharing that information iii. Package information kits for All ESAFF Traveling Staff and leaders for sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy makers - Donors and Development - Private sector - Civil Society Organizations - General Public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Through ALL Physical Meetings ESAFF Organizes or Attends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information packs - Dissemination list - Feedback forms from participants



Annex II: Checklist for Information Dissemination at ESAFF Office

Dates: to

Responsible Officer: _____

Number of Visitors/Guests entered office: _____

Number of Information Materials given to Visitors:

IEC Materials	Brochures	T-Shirts	Calendars	Diaries	Books/Publications	DVDs	Business Cards	Others
Copies/Number Distributed								



Annex III: Checklist for Information Dissemination by Travelling ESAFF Staff

Dates: to

Responsible Officer: _____

Venue/Place of Event: _____

Number of Information Materials given to Visitors:

IEC Materials	Brochures	T-Shirt s	Calendars	Diaries	Books/Publications	DVDs	Business Cards	Others
Copies/Number Distributed								