

CONSERVATION TRUST FUND (MoAFF)

Republic of Sierra Leone



COMMUNICATION STRATEGY FOR THE The Conservation Trust Fund

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1. Background

1.1 Situational Analysis

With a renewed focus on improving climate change, by developing policies and strategies for adapting the National Protected Areas System to the impacts of climate change, there is need to raise awareness around forest management, and to promote sustainable land use practices for communities to help change people's attitudes and abilities. To achieve this means, Government and donor support need to meet the minimum standard required for quality implementation in achieving climate change objectives. Thus, as part of a wide strategic plan, this strategy will set out the plan of action in achieving the communication objectives of the Conservation Trust Fund's agenda to combat Climate change. As an institution established by an act of parliament 2012, the trust will ensure to communicate issues on how resources could be mobilized and in turn uses such resources to improve biodiversity and wildlife management and also ensure a sustainable conservation practices.

1.2 Project Overview

The CTF hired Mimi's Media Consultancy, to develop a strategic communications plan for its activities. The strategy development process is expected to be concluded and utilized within a period of 12 months spanning from September 2019, unto September 2020. An agreed budget was set aside for the implementation of the communications strategy and other activities,

2. Aims and Objectives

This strategy will contribute to the overall goals of the Conservation Trust Fund initiative to exercise oversight and authority over National Parks and



Protected Areas designated for conservation purposes and to promote sustainable land use practices and sustainable environmental management. Furthermore, section III (f) of its 2012 Act states that another function of the CTF is to collaborate with other stakeholders in developing a national REDD+ Strategy, and to promote REDD+ projects in Sierra Leone as a sustainable source of financing for protected area management. Section III (xi) of the same Act seeks to promote co-management of natural resources for the CTF within and outside national protected areas with local forest edge communities in Sierra Leone.

The strategic aims of the communication strategy include:

- Ensure that there is a sustained and enlightened population on wildlife management and biodiversity issues and there consequences

The strategic objectives are to:

- Increase knowledge and awareness of CTF programs among MDAS and Donor Partners
- To maintain a healthy, consistent, transparent communication flow between CTF, and the relevant MDAs and among partners and stakeholders
- Increase coordination of stakeholders to establish clear roles and responsibilities for the maximization of resource generation
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- Improve understanding of stakeholders on the purpose of improving the national environment including climate change and mechanisms for handling it.



3. Target Audience

This strategy will target all users of natural resources (forest users, beach attenders, fishermen etc.) and MDAs working on conservation and wildlife issues. Recognising the role played by the natural resources users, it became very obvious that potential audience are critical in developing an effective communication strategy to help in achieving set goals and objectives. Stakeholder analysis was done on the following primary and secondary level targets

3.1 Primary Stakeholders

Considering that the project is related to local communities, the primary audience and stakeholders are;

- Donor partners, (Global Environment Facility (GEF), Green Climate Fund (GCF), United State Agency for International Development (USAID) etc.). The GCF, GEF, USAID are institutions that funds biodiversity and wildlife management activities and actions
- Communities
- Local administrators (headmen, section chief paramount chiefs)
- Area committees (youth organizations)
- Civil societies
- NGO's (Conservation Society Sierra Leone (CSSL), Climate Change Environment and Forest Conservation Consortium (CEFCO) etc.). CSSL implements activities on conservation and biodiversity management, unlike CEFCO engages in dissemination and sensitization of environmental and biodiversity issues.
- MDA's (National Protected Area Authority (NPAA), Environment Protection Agency (EPA), Ministry of Lands Housing and



Environment, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources etc.)

3.2 Secondary Stakeholders

The Sierra Leone public are the secondary stakeholders. They are vital to the development of this strategy as they influence the primary stakeholders. In addition, they shape normative practices associated with the program and enhances accountability and transparency structures. The public are informal monitors of the program.

3.3 Tertiary stakeholders

The Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Food Security and their relevant offices at district levels remains the tertiary audience. These stakeholders play a vital role in the decision-making process in setting regulations and standards for the National Protected Area Authority and Conservation Trust Fund. They are key in ensuring ownership and sustainability of the program.

4. Message Development

Messages that are specific, clear, simple and directly communicate to each of the identified stakeholders is a critical process in the strategy development. Messages will be formulated based on proven evidence, cultural and traditional norms, religious beliefs and national context to attain the desire outcomes of the strategy. International context will also bear influence on certain messages.

4.1 Message framing



Taking into consideration the needs and demands of the primary stakeholders, the message will be framed under the physical, sociological, emotional and ethical theories that underpin environmental degradation and its related issues. In addition, by applying the combined principles of conserving and preserving the environment in critical areas, the following areas that influence critical consciousness and change will be incorporated into the messaging.

- Perceived susceptibility – the risk of not accessing the grant.
- Perceived benefits – benefits associated with accessing the grant.
- Perceived barriers or costs associated with the program.
- Self-efficacy – confidence or ability of stakeholders to influence decisions associated with the project.
- Transparency and accountability
- Cues to action – what will drive or motivate the primary stakeholders to apply knowledge derived from the project.

4.2 Key messages

Messages will be accurate and consistent among stakeholders. Based on the project details and relevant data, core messages will capture:

- The promotion and awareness raising on the activities for forest management, and to promote sustainable land use practices.
- Triggering a discussion on the importance of the environment and wildlife management and the role of the communities in effecting such messages
- Co-responsibilities of NGO's, donor partners, civil societies, local administrators, etc.



4.3 As an institution we will engage in a robust crusade on the dangers of environmental degradation and the need to pay for ecosystem services and also educate individuals on the benefits of making such payments and the dangers of encroachments and the need to maintain our wildlife and ecosystems.

4.4 Quality assurance mechanisms

- Adopt wide range communication channels
- Specific messages that address associated rumours, misconception and misinformation
- Specific messages for specific audience
- Establish dialogue – establish platform for feedback
- Pilot communication materials to help standardize messages
- Approval of messages by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security, prior dissemination (if need be, or where there is collaboration).

4.5 Tools

For effective and efficient implementation of the strategy, the tools mentioned below will be produced. See appendix section for detail.

- Jingle messages and recordings
- TV scripts for drama and infomercials
- Messages for flyers, poster, billboard

5. Communication Channels

As an institution we will work in close collaboration and partnership with the media for wider dissemination of messages on conservation, biodiversity management and ecosystem services. We are sure a mix



of various communication channels will enhance our work and enlightened the general populace. These could be achieved though;

5.1 Interpersonal

- **Meetings** – engagement with secondary and tertiary stakeholders through meetings, conferences or workshops to increase interaction. Based on the available resources, the Trust Fund can hold meetings and workshops across the country.

5.2 Mass media

- **Radio (SLBC,AYV, RADIO BONTICO AND RADION PENINSULAR) jingles** will be designed to capture the attention of the target audience in order to pass on vital components of the message. Jingles will be recorded in English and translated into 7 local languages (including, Krio, Mende, Temne, Limba, Fula, Madingo and Kono) and aired on 46 radio stations for a period of six months or 180 days. The total listeners of the combined radio audience is approximately 3 million people. This channel is expected to meet a greater proportion of all the categories of stakeholders.
- TV infomercial would be very instrumental in the Western Area and Regional Headquarters. The infomercial provides a visual sense of what the campaign is all about. The services of the Sierra Leone broadcasting Corporation (SLBC), African Young Voices (AYV), Star Television (STAR TV) and Freetown Television Network (FTN) would be very necessary. Those platforms could also be used to broadcast TV Drama.
- TV Drama would act as a catalyst for people to understand what the Trust Fund is all about. It would provide both audio-



visual sense of the actual activities and processes of the Trust Fund, and it is one of the most effective means of capturing people's attention, of all ages. The drama would be done, using a production company, with good cast line and adequate professionalism in film production. The locations should be very easy to relate with and the plots should be child-friendly.

- SMS would be developed to capture a wider audience, particularly adults, as most adults make use of mobile phones. A text/sms platform would be utilized, using bulk size messages and broadcast to at last 1 million subscribers of any given mobile company.
- Social media platforms – Facebook, WhatsApp can also be utilized for the purpose of dissemination byte sized information, succinctly produced.

5.3 Print media

- Cotton banner could be produced, targeting the 16 administrative districts. A total of 5000 cloth banners could be produced in 4/8 feet's cloth size.
- Flex/SAV banners can also be produced targeting district headquarter towns and placed in strategic areas. A total of 2500 flex banners of 4/8 feets could be printed, using beautiful and catchy inscriptions and photos. Because of the size and strategic nature, Western Area (Urban and Rural) would have 750 of those banners and 125 each for the other 16 districts.
- Stickers are very useful for such campaigns, especially car/bumper stickers. A total of 50,000 stickers (A5) would be appropriate.

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- Posters are very useful during such campaigns. Three sets of posters of 25,000 each could be produced in A2 size, capturing pupils, school authorities and communities.
 - Billboards give overall visibility to campaigns. There should be at least a billboard (6x3 meters) in every district, to give an overall visibility to the campaign. Skins should be printed on flex and a local company contracted to carry out the installation.

5.4 Social mobilization

Outdoor promotion (road show) using local artists, comedians or public announcements (using mega phones) would be essential. Road shows target people who do not have time to listen to radio and other media platforms, due to their economic activities. An example could be market women and hawkers. Flyers could also be given to them during the process. The road show should have at least 20-40 people per district, in teams of 3-4 per mega phone.

6. Management and Coordination

A Media Agency shall coordinate with the Conservation Trust Fund and their partners to ensure updated information is been shared in formal forums. Biweekly and monthly meetings will be established to maintain dialogue and keep track of activity progress. Emergency meetings will be organised as and when necessary by informing each party through any means necessary.

7. Implementing the plan (Matrix could be helpful here)



The strategic plan should be implemented by people with competence and capacity to implement a communication strategy. Internal and external monitoring mechanisms should be put in place to ensure quality assurance at each level.

The requisite media agency will provide guidance and support to the Trust Fund in the implementation of the plan. Likewise, the media agency should have the required and available resources to successfully implement a nationwide communication strategy

It will be good that you include discussions on visibility, its plan and guide.

Using matrix can also help a lot

8. Review, Monitoring and Evaluation

Quantitative and qualitative methods will be used to collect data from the implementation of the strategy. This method will produce statistical analysis as well as understand the views and perceptions of people participating in the program.

A simple monitoring and evaluation framework or matrix will be developed to track progress and improve on gaps where necessary.

9. Appendices

Appendix 1: Jingle messages and recordings

Appendix 2: TV scripts for drama and infomercials

Appendix 3: Messages for flyers, poster, billboards

Appendix 5: List of Radio stations

NOTE: Please see page 13 for a summary matrix for communication. This can be applied to the visibility aspect too.

Signed by.....
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Communication	Type of Communication	Target Audience	Communication Channel/ Tools	Purpose
Public Communication • Local authorities, relevant stakeholders at grassroots level • National authorities, • Projects beneficiaries • General public	External			
Operational Communication	Internal			