

Communication Strategy for the Sustainable Land Management Project in the Highlands of Mount Kilimanjaro, Tanzania

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Abstract

The Communication Strategy (CS) for the Sustainable Land Management (SLM) project essentially sets out the overall framework on how the SLM project communicates and engages with its audiences over the project implementation period. The CS in this manner specifies target audiences for specific messages, documents a detailed implementation plan and identifies entities that deliver parts of the strategy. A total of 65 respondents were interviewed (41 farmer group members from the SLM project catchment areas and 25 SLM project key stakeholders). Focus group discussion (FGD) was employed to interview farmer groups. A checklist was used to guide face to face interviews and the FGDs. The CS in place is set out to be implemented in three phases: first focuses on raising and increasing awareness among key target groups, the second phase aims to link the level of public awareness to the problems related to soil/land degradation and of the opportunities generated by SLM project and the third phase, focus on raising the profile of the SLM project groups, establishing them as an indispensable governance tool in addressing environmental, social and economic challenges and generating benefits. Four entities selected to implement the CS include IPP Media Ltd, Mwananchi Community Ltd, Moshi FM Radio and Tanzania Broadcasting Corporation. The selection of these entities was based on their track record to undertake SLM related activities.

Keywords: Sustainable Land Management, Communication Strategy, Kilimanjaro

1.0 Introduction

The Government of Tanzania, with support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) through United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), is implementing a four year project aimed at reducing land degradation on the highlands of Kilimanjaro region, which has 7 administrative districts, namely Rombo, Hai Moshi Rural, Moshi Municipality, Mwanza and Same. The project is in response to the fact that despite its local and global significance, the Kilimanjaro ecosystem is experiencing extensive degradation and deforestation driven by a set of interrelated factors, such rapid population increase, land use change, poor land-management practices, unsustainable harvest of natural resources, declining commodity prices, and climate change. The project's goal is to ensure that "Sustainable Land Management (SLM) provides the basis for economic development, food security, and sustainable livelihoods while restoring the ecological integrity of the Kilimanjaro regions ecosystems". Its purpose is to provide local land users and managers with enabling environment (Policy, financial, institutional, capacity) necessary for the widespread adoption of sustainable land management practices (Tennigkeit *et al.*, 2013; Kalipeni, 1992; Plane and Rogerson, 1994; SLM project document, 2013).

The project intends to interactively communicate with various stakeholders by sharing its results, experiences, and lessons learnt. In return, the project would be receiving feedback on relevance, impact, and effectiveness of work in progress. To ensure that such information is effectively shared, a communication strategy (CS) for the project is designed to serve as a tool to support the effective implementation of the project. To be effective, the CS requires efforts from various actors such as Regional Information Officer (RIO), responsible for information dissemination to various stakeholders in collaboration with media house and Project Coordination Unit (PCU). The PCU is responsible for overall coordination of project and communication strategy activities. Regional Technical Teams (RTTs) responsible for providing technical, economic, legal and scientific information on land/soil-related issues. District Facilitation Teams (DFTs) responsible for facilitation of the SLM project and CS activities in the project catchment areas, on one part and local people on the affected areas and selected entities which would effectively deliver SLM messages in the catchment areas of the project. However, civil society, the public at large, the scientific community and the private sector each have an important role to play in bringing about the desired outcome.

To develop the CS, it was important to conduct a study in order to observe actual SLM project activities in the catchment areas which is the basis of this paper. A CS is a document that uses findings from formative research to propose how the project should be implemented in a most effective way within a specific cultural and social setting. It is a logical document and its recommendations must be derived from the findings and insights of

research (Bingham *et al.*, 2009). The study conducted helped to get detailed information from different SLM project stakeholders who are expected to take part in the implementation of the CS. Information obtained from the study areas together with the literature reviewed helped to come up with two deliverables namely: communication strategy with a detailed implementation plan; and recommended entities with full justifications for their selection.

2.0 Materials and Methods

2.1 Study sites

The study sites involved in collecting information for developing the CS included: Kikafu (Hai District), Rau River (Moshi Municipal and Moshi Rural), Butu (Mwanga District), Hedaru Vunta (Same District), Ibukoni (Rombo District) and Lawate (Siha District). The selection of study sites were based on the fact that they constitute the SLM project catchment area. Accordingly, the selected study sites are part of the SLM ongoing/accomplished project activities. The selection of respondents was made randomly from the list available at District Focal Persons (DFPs) offices in the seven administrative Districts of the Kilimanjaro region. For the RIO, RTTs, DFTs and DFPS purposive sampling was employed since the role they play is crucial in the project coordination in collaboration with the PCU at the regional office. It is asserted that purposive sampling is considered desirable when the universe happens to be small and a known characteristic of it is to be studied intensively (Kothari, 2004). The RIO and Media house representatives were also purposively selected as key informants. The sampling of media houses (sites) was the result of discussion with the RIO, RTTs, DFPS and the FGD members in all the Districts of Kilimanjaro Region. The discussions provided insights to researchers as to which media houses to assess so that the best can collaborate with the RIO to implement the CS.

2.2 Data Collection Methods

Primary and secondary information were collected; the former was collected from the field study sites, but the latter from published and unpublished documents. Primary information were collected from media houses representatives (8), RIO (1), RTTs (6), DFTs(10) and SLM catchment area farmer groups' representatives (41) from all six Districts and one Municipal Council in Kilimanjaro Region. Focused Group Discussion (FGD) method was employed to collect information from farmer group members from the SLM project catchment areas. Members of the FGD randomly selected from the list available at the DFPS offices in all the Districts. One FGD was conducted in each District and the total number of FGD members who participated in the whole exercise were 41 and the checklist prior prepared guided the group discussions. Accordingly, the checklist used to guide face to face interviews with RTTs, DFTs, DFPS, RIO and media houses representatives. A total of 25 respondents participated in the face to face interviews. The purpose of interviewing RTTs, DFTs, DFPS, RIO were to get insight on the activities that have been or are being implemented in the SLM project catchment areas; to get lessons, experiences and messages to be shared/communicated. The media houses representatives interviewed in order to get information on costs, besides knowing which ones the RIO can work with. Since the RTTs, DFTs, and RIO interviewed as key informants it was logical to use a checklist of items or topics with the respondents, as they responded to listed items, more questions emerged and were asked besides the prepared ones. In addition, the logistic of getting the respondents made in collaboration with the DFPS in all the Districts of the Kilimanjaro Region.

2.3 Audience identification and analysis

Audience identification and analysis was done to determine groups of people who have similar roles/responsibilities regarding the SLM project and therefore similar needs for information and communication. In order for CS to be fully successful, it aims toward the intended audience knowledge, opinions, needs, and wants. Since the audiences are the end-user and all communications need to be targeted towards them. It was therefore important to assess the audience to make sure that information provided to them will be at their appropriate level. As such, the audiences in the CS were identified through face to face interviews with RTTs, DFTs, DFPS, RIO and the FGDs with members from the SLM project catchment areas. The audiences therefore were grouped based on characteristics and communication needs.

2.4 Selection of entities to implement the strategy

The selection of entities was based on an entity track record in undertaking the following activities (i) matching stakeholders with information needs; (ii) developing communication messages to suit the various stakeholder groups; (iii) negotiating with relevant dissemination channels such as radio, television, newspapers, social media, schools, and develop a plan for the effective use of those channels; (iv) disseminating messages accordingly, through radio programs, newspapers, websites, internet, seminars, workshops, demonstrations (farmer field school techniques), and; (v) monitoring dissemination, uptake, and impacts of the communication. The named criteria were used to prepare a checklist of questions that were used to assess the media houses. Each criterion

assigned score(s) to assess each entity (media house). In addition, a topic on which entities can implement the CS was included in the checklist of questions used in the face to face interviews with RIO, RTTs, DFTs, DFPs and the FGDs run in all the SLM Project catchment areas.

3.0 Results and Discussion

3.1 Assessed Entities to Implement the Communication Strategy and Justification

On the basis of details provided in section 2.4 of this paper, the following entities were assessed to implement the CS.

3.1.1 IPP Media Ltd

IPP Media Ltd was ranked the first entity to implement the CS among the eight entities selected after scoring a total of 20 points. It was found that the entity has vast experiences of disseminating land management related messages for about 20 years. The entity provides message delivery services through television, radio, newspapers, social media and websites (ITV, Capital TV, East Africa TV; Radio one, East Africa Radio, Capital Radio; Nipashe, The Guardian, Kulikoni; Facebook, Twitter; www.ippmedia.com). An interview with IPP Media Ltd representative in Kilimanjaro Region confirmed that the entity participated in covering the Kilimanjaro Regional Commissioner's and other government officials visit/meetings in Kilimanjaro Region where SLM issues has been one of the agenda. The interviews made with RIO (1), RTTs (6), DFPs (7) and farmers' group representatives (36) showed that the entity covers almost the whole country and all parts of the Kilimanjaro region through ITV, Radio one, Capital TV, East African TV, Nipashe, The Guardian, Kulikoni; Facebook, Twitter. The entity has formal rate cards for its services. The interviewed IPP media representatives in Kilimanjaro Region confirmed that the feedback mechanisms in place include short messages service, telephone calls, emails, facebook, twitter and blogs. Generally through multiple channels it possesses, the entity has the ability to deliver SLM related messages in all the catchment area of the SLM project in Kilimanjaro Region.

3.1.2 Mwananchi Communication Ltd

Mwananchi Communication Ltd through its Mwananchi News Paper is ranked the second entity to implement the CS among the eight entities selected after scoring a total of 17 points. The entity provides services through radio, television and newspapers (Mwananchi News Paper, Daily Nation, NTV, Business Daily, The East African, Daily Monitor, Mwanaspoti, The Citizen, KFM radio). Interview with Mwananchi Communication Ltd representative in Kilimanjaro region confirmed that the entity has experiences in covering Kilimanjaro Regional Commissioner SLM related events and it was confirmed that is capable of providing feedback mechanisms through short messages service, telephone calls, facebook, blogs and twitter. Mwananchi News Paper was said to be preferred by many people and therefore wider outreach in Kilimanjaro Region as per interview with stakeholders; RIO (1), RTTs (6), DFPs (5) and SLM catchment area farmer groups' representatives (32).

3.1.3 Moshi FM Radio

Moshi FM Radio is ranked the third to implement the CS after scoring a total of 16 points. The entity provides services through radio in the whole Kilimanjaro Region and neighboring areas such as Tanga, Manyara and some parts of Arusha. The entity has experiences in disseminating SLM related activities as it was evidenced by the interviewed representatives that it has participated in message delivery in the following projects: Envirocare project 2009/10 in Rombo District which focused on sustainable land management in coffee planting; the entity is in partnership with Farm Radio International in airing messages related to farming activities and environmental sustainability; partnership with LAPAJA- an NGO with an initiatives of tree planting campaign in Kilimanjaro region; partnership with Forestry Industries Training Institute (FITI) to air out a half an hour programme on environmental related activities; partnership with Kifimbo FM Dodoma and TBC Taifa during news broadcasting and it has a formal rate card for its services. The interviewed stakeholder had the following preference(s): RIO (1); RTTs (6), DFPs (4) SLM catchment area farmer groups' representatives (28). Feedback mechanisms includes: short messages service, telephone calls, face book, twitter, blog and use of special forms to record feedback from radio service users. The entity therefore can be used to disseminate SLM related messages in all parts of Kilimanjaro Region.

3.1.4 Tanzania Broadcasting Corporation

Tanzania Broadcasting Corporation (TBC) is ranked the fourth to implement the CS after scoring a total of 15 points. The entity provides services through television, radio and internet (TBC1, TBC Taifa, TBC FM, TBC International, Face book, and Twitter). The entity has an active website (www.tbc.go.tz). The feedback mechanisms employed by the entity include; short messages service, telephone calls, email messages, face book, twitter and blogs. The preference(s) from stakeholders interviewed was as follows: RIO (1); RTTs (6), DFPs (4) and SLM catchment area farmer groups' representatives (27). The entity through TBC1 TV and TBC Taifa

Radio can be used to disseminate SLM related messages in all parts of the Kilimanjaro region.

3.1.5 *The Business Times Ltd*

The Business Times Ltd is ranked the fifth entity to implement the CS after scoring a total of 14 points. The entity provides services through newspapers (Business Times Ltd, Majira Newspaper, Spoti Starehe). Preferred by stakeholders interviewed as follows: RTTs (4), DFPs (3) and SLM catchment area farmer groups' representatives (26). The entity provides feedback mechanisms through short messages service, Newspaper sales, telephone calls, face book, blog and twitter. The entity can be used to disseminate SLM related messages through its Business Times and Mwananchi News Papers in Moshi Municipality, Hai District, some parts of Moshi Rural District and other areas in the region which can access the News Papers.

3.1.6 *Lutheran Radio Centre*

Lutheran Radio Centre is ranked the sixth entity to implement the CS after scoring a total of 13 points. The entity provides services through radio in the whole Kilimanjaro Region and neighboring areas such as Arusha, Tanga, Manyara and Morogoro. The entity has an active website (www.sautiyainjili.org) and reported by the Public Relations Officer that it collaborates with Tanzania Broadcasting Corporation (TBC) radio in providing services. The entity provides feedback mechanism through short messages service, telephone calls, face book, blogs and twitter. Preferred by stakeholders interviewed as follows: RTTs (4), DFPs (2), SLM catchment area farmer groups' representatives (24). Have a formal rate card for 2013/14. The entity can be used to disseminate SLM related messages in all the catchment areas.

3.1.7 *Kili FM Radio*

Kili FM Radio is ranked the seventh entity to implement the CS after scoring a total of 12 points. The entity provides services through radio and motor vehicle road show in the whole Kilimanjaro Region and neighboring areas such as Manyara Region. The entity has experiences in disseminating sustainable environmental messages in the project namely: *Ahadi hizi ni za kweli?* conducted in Kilimanjaro Region 2012-13. The entity does not have a formal rate card (pricing depends on negotiations with clients). It has a partnership with TBC Taifa during news broadcasting programmes. The preference(s) indicated by stakeholders interviewed was as follows: RTTs (4), DFPs (2) SLM catchment area farmer groups' representatives (22). The entity receives feedback through Kili FM mailing- short messages service, telephone calls, face book and blogs. The entity can be used to disseminate SLM related messages in all catchment areas for the seven districts in Kilimanjaro Region.

3.1.8 *Boma FM*

Boma FM is ranked the eighth entity to implement the CS after scoring a total of 10 points. The entity provides services through local radio in the parts of Kilimanjaro Region including Hai, Siha and Moshi rural Districts areas. The entity receives feedback through short messages services, telephone calls and face book. Preferred by stakeholders interviewed as follows: RIO (1); RTTs (3), DFPs (2) SLM catchment area farmer groups' representatives (12). The entity can be used to disseminate SLM related messages in Hai District, Siha District and some parts of Moshi Rural District only.

Other notable findings from the FGDs conducted in Siha, Same and Rombo television was said to be expensive to farmers' group members to access television services as of now the services require monthly subscriptions. This entails that if the televisions are used to channel SLM messages will be accessed by few people who are able to subscribe for the services. Radio services were acknowledged to be easily accessible for the reason that it is free and easy to access. Farmers and DFPs in Hai and Siha Districts preferred their local radio (Boma FM radio) since it is highly preferred by a large population in the area. Newspapers were accepted but mostly by farmers living in town centre's who insisted that swahili newspapers to be a priority when disseminating SLM project messages.

3.2 **Entities to collaborate with the RIO in delivering messages**

Collaboration with media entities is essential for effective public information dissemination and SLM project agenda setting. The RIO, together with the selected media entities, will collaborate jointly to promote SLM project activities/achievements. The RIO in collaboration with the PCU will serve as a catalyst and provide impulse and coordination to the extent of their capacities and, with the assistance of the other partners in the SLM project, continually assess the CS purpose in view of its objectives in an evolving context. The use of multiple channels/entities has more advantages than using only one channel/entity as it increases the likelihood of reaching more intended audiences. It can also increase repetition of messages, improving the chance that intended audiences will be exposed to it often enough to absorb and act upon it. For this reasons, a combination of channels has been found most effective in producing desired results, including behavior change (MoH-

Republic of Macedonia, 2007). Therefore it is recommended that RIO will collaborate with the first four entities which ranked the highest in section 3.1 of this document in delivering SLM related messages.

4.0 The Communication Strategy

4.1 Communications Purpose and Objectives

4.1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the communication strategy is to contribute to the successful implementation of the SLM project with the right communication delivered to the right audiences at the right time.

4.1.2 Objectives

The objectives of the CS include:

- (i) Improve conditions of affected ecosystems: Provide information to enable people in the SLM project catchment areas to be advocates of the project activities
- (ii) Improve the living conditions of affected populations: Create awareness on how SLM can be a basis for economic development, food security and sustainable livelihood
- (iii) Demonstrate the necessity of the SLM project
- (iv) Generate positive reports in the media
- (v) Generate local and national benefits: Deepen understanding among political decision makers, leaders and people on how land/soil restoration and SLM in the catchment areas can contribute to expansion of livelihood options in the region and the country at large
- (vi) Build Synergy of the SLM project groups: Provide communication that helps build the project groups in the catchment areas,
- (vii) Manage Expectations of the SLM project beneficiaries: Reinforce the scope of the project realistically (under promise/over deliver) to manage perceptions/expectations and to ensure project beneficiaries understand that there will be (temporary) takeaways prior to long term gains being realized.

4.2 Communication Principles

- (i) Tailor communications to discreet audiences according to needs analysis
- (ii) Design communication using fact-based information and deliver openly, regularly and in a straight forward manner
- (iii) Ensure communications contain consistent core messages
- (iv) Consistently ask for feedback and involvement, and acknowledge same
- (v) Evaluate at pre-determined points to ensure message is understood,
- (vi) Pursue communication opportunities at involvement activities (focus groups, workshops, training sessions, etc).
- (vii) Consult with RIO and PCU through various phases of the project to ensure communications related decisions fit within SLM project protocol and standards.

4.3 Communication Activities

4.3.1 Content formation

The CS is expected to cover a wide range of needs in order to support the ability of each target group to play its role. These range from advocacy to information, to technical and logistical needs. Furthermore, the response to these needs will be tailored to specific circumstances in which they will be applied. The selected entities, RIO and PCU, after consultations, will to the extent possible, determine the information and content deemed most compelling or effective for mobilizing action. Each communication activity in the CS will centre into two types of messages viz; awareness-raising messages and educational messages as explained below:

a) Awareness-raising messages

Awareness-raising messages are meant to capture the imagination and attention of the general public so that they view land/soil degradation in Kilimanjaro region as their problem and concern regardless of their location. In this regard, the approach needed is to connect SLM with people's daily lives. Messages depicting the negative impact from failure to pay adequate attention to SLM are needed, but have limited value for CS due to society's limited tolerance for negativity. By contrast, messages that inspire and activate the "desire to act" by demonstrating the benefits and achievements of SLM would generate hope and increase motivation. This approach may succeed with the public at large, but it is necessary to capture the interest of decision makers by highlighting the political and economic gains (UNCCD, 2010; Tasmania Government, 2008).

b) Educational messages

Educational messages are designed to deepen understanding of issues of interest, including for the policy process

and in the field for practical solutions. Key messages should aim to move decision makers and the public from a position of “can we afford it?” to “can we afford not to do it?” These messages will include analysis of SLM as an investment, as well as a comparison between the mounting cost of “inaction” – that is, of a business as usual scenario – and of appropriate action. Messages will also include a comparison between the cost of land/soil protection and of restoration. User-friendly documents will be prepared on the feasibility of land restoration and soil health and on the regional and national benefits of land/soils. A “business case” for private sector involvement in SLM, and “how to” materials on effective, cheap and easy to implement solutions will also be prepared. Some educational content will be compiled as reference material for the regional government to prioritize SLM in its development plans and as “training of trainers” packages for media and civil society groups. Existing material needs to be reviewed, insufficiencies in data and analysis identified, and additional research conducted as appropriate. Educational messages will be designed based on the selected entities, RIO and PCU research into the information needs and gaps of various implementing partners (UNCCD, 2010; UNICEF, 2008; DFID, 2005).

4.3.2 Tools

The variety of targets and diversity of messages and approaches envisaged in the CS have implications for the mechanisms and tools required. Organizations distinguish and differentiate themselves by their products, which also serve as vital publicity tools. The quality of each product matters as it has implications for the authority of an organization. Consequently, the nature and quality of the communication materials require careful consideration. Seven primary mechanisms will be used as a media of communications and information function of CS namely print and electronic materials; the web portal and clearing house; the mass and alternative media; public awareness events/campaigns; computer mediated communication; SLM champions; and capacity-building. Possessing effective dissemination capacity is as important as producing quality materials. Specific communication and information dissemination drives and campaigns will build on the substance of these materials, and take into account the specific roles and capacity of the target groups. The CS will draw from its products and the outcomes of the partnerships simple messages to be used in a number of ways: op-eds; speeches; lectures; one-to-one communications; and radio and television interviews. Several methods will be used to disseminate the organization’s materials, raise awareness, carry out education initiatives, provide access to information to stakeholders and gather feedback (UNCCD, 2010; UNICEF, 2008).

4.4 Communication Strategy Implementation Plan

The implementation plan of the CS is guided by objectives, action steps, messages, target audiences, media/channels, timelines, responsible parties and evaluation measures to be taken. The proposed implementation plan will accomplish seven key objectives and will be implemented in three phases.

4.4.1 First phase

The first phase will focus on raising and increasing awareness among key target groups on the considerable environmental, social and economic impacts of land degradation, and its relevance to the global major challenges. It will also focus on the potential for SLM to address some of the current major challenges in the highlands of Mount Kilimanjaro. Information about the SLM project activities will be disseminated during this phase and as appropriate, but priority will be given to making the issues known or better known. Attention will be paid to the visibility of the contributions of all actors to land/soils issues. The RIO will structure its public information materials on SLM to link them to people’s daily lives. This phase will cover the following objectives:

- i) Improve conditions of affected ecosystems: Provide information to enable people in the SLM project catchment areas to be advocates of the project activities.
- ii) Improve the living conditions of affected populations: Create awareness on how SLM can be a basis for economic development, food security and sustainable livelihood.

Strategic actions to be taken during the first phase will include:

- i) Building and/or strengthening databases on specific target groups as an integral part of establishing appropriate distribution channels with partners in order to provide a network of networks-type structure;
- ii) Designing relevant and timely target-specific messages backed by strong research and scientific evidence;
- iii) Establishing a small network of “SLM champions” who have sufficient clout to influence a wide range of decision makers and media organizations;
- iv) Reviewing existing substantive, scientific and public information documents and studies, synthesizing, complementing and reshaping them as necessary in order to provide stakeholders with convincing and easy to use communication materials;

Timelines: year one and two of the project life/to be determined by the RIO and PCU when deem necessary

Responsible parties: RIO, PCU, SLM champions, RTTs, DFTs and external consultants (selected media)

Budget: SLM project budget for CS implementation

4.4.2 *Second phase*

The second phase aims to arrive at a point where the level of public awareness of the problems linked to soil/land degradation and of the opportunities generated by SLM for addressing major challenges facing the Highlands of Kilimanjaro Region matches a new understanding by political and economic decision makers of the advantages of making SLM a real priority for investment even after the SLM project ends. During this phase, the provision of information on the SLM will be stepped up. This phase will cover the following objective:

- i) Demonstrate the necessity of the SLM project
- ii) Generate positive reports in the media

Strategic actions to be taken will include:

- i) Stepping up communications with the public at large through a mix of media relations, launch of authoritative documents, television joint ventures, radio programmes, journalists training, media field trips and advertising where feasible;
- ii) Targeting specific movers (influential people and institutions) and decision-makers with direct fine-tuned communication, involving them in special events and brainstorming sessions, and piggy-backing on events centered on related issues and, where appropriate, organizing one-to-one exchanges – some of which may involve the participation of the SLM champions.

Timelines: year two and three of the project life/to be determined by the RIO and PCU when deemed necessary

Responsible parties: RIO, PCU, SLM champions, RTTs, DFTs, and external consultants (selected media, journalist)

Budget: SLM project budget for CS implementation

4.4.3 *Third phase*

During the third phase, efforts will focus on raising the profile of the SLM project groups, establishing them as an indispensable governance tool in addressing environmental, social and economic challenges and generating benefits, in addition to making a significant difference at the local level.

This phase will cover the following objective:

- i) Generate local and national benefits: Deepen understanding among political decision makers, leaders and people on how land/soil restoration and SLM in the catchment areas can contribute to expansion of livelihood options in the region and the country at large.
- ii) Manage Expectations of the SLM project beneficiaries : Reinforce the scope of the project realistically (under promise / over deliver) to manage perceptions/expectations and to ensure project beneficiaries understand that there will be (temporary) takeaways prior to long term gains being realized.
- iii) Build Synergy of the SLM project groups: Provide communication that helps build the project groups in the catchment areas.

Strategic actions to be taken will include:

- i) Harnessing the outreach capacity of the technical teams at regional and district level by building strategic alliances and involving the local leaders in the SLM project catchment areas to boost dialogue at the local level and assist in implementing the resulting measures;
- ii) Reaching out to new actors, from local and regional authorities to the private sector, and creating innovative partnerships and pilot programmes;
- iii) Establishing cross-institutional substantive virtual practice networks on SLM among field practitioners and researchers, thereby boosting information exchanges and pooling knowledge among them;
- iv) Improving in-house information circulation by harnessing internal exchanges and building a strong outreach communication capacity.

Timelines: year three, four of the project life (onward)/to be determined by the RIO and PCU when deemed necessary

Responsible parties: RIO, PCU, SLM champions, RTTs, DFTs, Research institutions, private sector, local leaders and external consultants (selected media)

Budget: SLM project budget for CS implementation

In implementing the three phases, the RIO will collaborate with the selected media houses to create a quarterly detailed work plan based on the annual approved SLM project budget for implementing the CS covering all the strategic actions outlined above. The work plan will provide explanation of the proposed actions and deliverables (such as press conferences, seminars, information materials) their time schedule and costs –target groups, developing messages for the selected target groups, designing and producing information materials which will

address the information needs of the relevant target groups, as well as developing of a dissemination strategy. Based on the approved annual CS budget and external factors the quarterly work plans will be firmed up and used as a basis for detailed planning of activities and shall form the basis for quarterly payments.

4.4.4 *Making adjustments*

It is a known fact that implementation process may not always proceed as expected. Materials may be delayed at the printer, a major news story may preempt your publicity (or focus additional attention on your issue), or a new priority may delay community participation. A periodic review of planned tasks and time schedules will help RIO and the PCU to revise any plans that might be affected by unexpected events or delays. There is nothing wrong with altering plans to fit a changed situation. In fact, the RIO and PCU must be willing to be flexible in order to avoid any risk of damaging chances of success.

4.4.5 *Managing implementation: monitoring and problem solving*

Managing a CS is much like managing any other project. Key activities include monitoring activities, staff, and budget; problem solving; process evaluation; measuring intended public satisfaction; and revising plans and operations. Therefore, the quarterly work plans prepared by RIO in collaboration with selected media houses shall indicate how and when resources will be needed, when specific events will occur, and at what points the efforts will be assessed. Once implementation is under way, however, contingencies may arise. In this regard, the RIO and the PCU will periodically, assess whether:

- Activities are being completed at scheduled times
- Intended audiences are being reached
- Certain activities or materials are more successful than others
- Certain aspects of the program need to be altered or eliminated
- Expenditures are within budget

By following above steps, monitoring the communication activities will be often corrected quickly if they are identified as they arise. For example, if PCU/RIO asked the public to call for more information, a simple form (electronic or manual) should be developed and made available to PCU/RIO office in order to be able to record the questions asked and the answers given. Frequently review responses to identify inquiry patterns, to be sure that correct or adequate information is being given, and to find out whether more or different information may be needed.

4.4.6 *Process evaluation*

The process evaluation will take place during implementation of the CS to monitor the functioning of Communication activities. It will include assessment of whether messages are being delivered appropriately, effectively, and efficiently; whether materials are being distributed to the right people and in the right quantities; whether the intended activities are occurring; and other measures of how well the program is working. Since a comprehensive technical assistance from the selected entities is envisaged to support RIO in the implementation of the CS, the process evaluation will be mainly used to track the following:

- The functioning and quality of program
- Partner/coalition involvement
- The effectiveness of publicity, promotion, and other outreach efforts
- Media response
- intended audience participation, inquiries, and other responses
- Adherence to schedule
- Expenditures and adherence to budget

Activities will be focused on measuring performance of selected media houses support staff:

- Are professionals doing the creative and managerial work?
- Are they devoting enough time and money as per the program?
- Are deadlines being met?
- Are performance and deliverables in keeping with the approved quarterly work plan?
- Are the expenses reasonable for the work performed?
- Are there problems in the relationship?

4.4.7 *Plan to monitor and evaluate effectiveness of the CS*

Monitoring communication outcomes of the CS involve making periodic checks on “How are we doing?” by tracking who-is-doing-what. While both monitoring and evaluation of the CS attempt to measure results, the difference is that monitoring track inputs, outputs and intermediate outcomes so that adjustments can be made to the CS during its implementation (City of Westminster, 2011; DFID, 2005; AIDS.gov, 2013). Monitoring also limit the number of indicators so that data are easy to collect, analyze and disseminate periodically during the life

of the communication activities. Monitoring of the CS should focus on what is happening to the SLM project target audiences. Evaluation, on the other hand, is a more comprehensive study of communication's role in the overall CS, and is done, usually, at the end of the project cycle. By being more comprehensive, evaluation explores why behaviours are/are not happening. In view of the above explanation, the CS monitoring and evaluation is an ongoing exercise since most of the CS activities are implemented in line with the implementation of the SLM project activities. When monitoring/evaluating the effectiveness of the CS generally the following questions require to be addressed:

- i) To what extent does the communication strategy respond to the information needs of the target audience(s)?
- ii) How coherent are the tools and messages with the objectives of the strategy, with each other and with other existing initiatives in the field?
- iii) How effective is the communication strategy in improving awareness and knowledge about SLM in the field?
- iv) To what extent does the communication strategy contribute to a better understanding/perception of the SLM in the field?

In most cases evaluation of CS necessitate describing briefly the measure of success as well as the evaluation tool you plan to use on the CS objectives, measures as well as how to measure.

Participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E) is recommended for the CS as a method that allows all SLM project stakeholders - particularly the target audiences who have taken part in the design of SLM project activities, its ongoing assessment and the response to findings. This give the stakeholders a chance to help define SLM project key messages, set success indicators, and hence provides them with tools to measure success. These usually include Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tools - such as mapping, problem-ranking and seasonal calendars - as well as surveys, oral testimonies and in-depth interviews. The four key principles to keep in mind with this approach include the fact that:

- (a) Local people are active participants, not just sources of information.
- (b) Stakeholders evaluate, outsiders facilitate.
- (c) The focus is on building stakeholders' capacity for analysis and problem-solving.
- (d) The process should build commitment to implementing recommended corrective actions.

Although it is crucial to monitor and evaluate the CS; communication activities are required to be continuously monitored in order to achieve better results of the CS. Therefore it is important to honour that monitoring and evaluation of both the communication activities and the communication strategy are crucial for the success of the SLM project.

5.0 Conclusion and recommendations

The CS will promote SLM project-related concerns and issues in all strategic forums in Kilimanjaro Region. It will seek to provide timely access for stakeholders to relevant and accurate information and knowledge. The CS will contribute to strengthening coordination within and across relevant issue areas, among key stakeholders. The CS will further support the mobilization, technical and human resources for SLM project implementation through new and innovative communication tools, and facilitate the collection of regular feedback on the implementation of the SLM project. These measures will contribute to raising the profile of the SLM and its issues of concern in Kilimanjaro Region and the nation at large.

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