Handbook for External Communication

A practical guide to media and communication work in Cooperation Offices and Representations

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA

Index

* Sections of this chapter will be updated in 2013/2014

How to use this manual

Who can use this handbook?

While this handbook is primarily designed to assist communication officers working in the Cooperation Offices of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), anyone working on external communication for a Swiss representation abroad will also find many parts of this book useful. For example: rules and guidelines pertaining to media queries or working with television teams, writing media releases or organising public events.

We also encourage staff members at headquarters in Bern to familiarise themselves with the contents of this handbook in order to gain a better understanding of the rules and instruments of external communication.

A note regarding terminology:

Throughout the book we speak about Swiss Cooperation Offices and representations. We are fully aware that the SDC has various types of offices in partner countries, ranging from Programme Offices to Field Offices, from Swiss Cooperation Offices to Swiss Contribution Offices. We are also aware that there are Embassies and Consulates and General Consulates. For simplicity's sake, we use the terms "Swiss Cooperation Offices" and "representations" throughout this handbook as terms inclusive of all the above-mentioned varieties.

☞ Links and references

💡 Useful tips and hints

⚠ General rules

Chapter 1:
Public relations work in the partner country

In this chapter:

> Role and tasks of the Communication Officer

> Writing a communication policy

> Annual communication planning

> The Communication File

Successful external communication requires careful planning, management and coordination. Experience shows that communication which is not planned, managed or coordinated does not lead to the desired results and, in the worst case, produces undesired results.

Role and tasks of the Communication Officer

The resources available to Swiss Cooperation Offices and representations for communication work and activities vary considerable from office to office and country to country. Many have to make do with very limited resources. Whatever resources are available to your office, doing communication work without a designated communication officer is not possible.

The Communication Officer (sometimes also called the "Media and Communication Officer") plays a key role in designing, promoting and implementing public relations work in the partner country.

The Communication Officer can help sensitise staff to the role played by external communication and its tools (e.g. the website) in informing the public, other donors as well as partners in Switzerland and in the partner country about Switzerland's aims and projects in a given country.

With limited available human resources, the Communication Officer depends on the assistance and support from colleagues and programme officers, for example in updating information on the Cooperation Office website or generating ideas for communication opportunities.

The tasks of a Communication Officer include

› **Identify communication opportunities**: Communication Officers should regularly come up with ideas for communicating about the work of Switzerland's engagement in a partner country. The process should be as creative as possible and, ideally, involve all staff members. Don't let the negative voice in your head block ideas from the start. Better to have a good list of ideas and then submit it to a "reality check" later. Communication issues and topics should be part of regular staff meetings.

› **Decide on key communication activities**: Together with management, set realistic goals that match your budget and available human resources. Rather do fewer activities well than many activities badly.

› **Build alliances with the media**: This doesn't mean "wining and dining" journalists. It does mean making and maintaining contact with journalists and editors, familiarising yourself with local and regional media products, finding out what topics journalists are interested in, suggesting ideas for articles. In the section "Building media relations" in chapter 2 you will find more information on this point.

› Create and maintain the **Communication File** (see "The Communication File" in this chapter)

› **Sensitise staff to communication work**: Staff of Swiss Cooperation Offices and representations should think of external communication less as a "PR exercise" involving only the media but more as an integral and complementary part of Switzerland's engagement abroad.

› **Maintain regular contact and exchange ideas** with communication officers from your partner organisations. For example: build a network and meet regularly, brainstorm ideas for communication activities, identify communication opportunities, share experiences, organise workshops for the communication officers.

› Ensure that the goals and principles outlined in the **communication policy** are met and followed and that the **Annual Action Plan for Communication** is implemented. Communication Officers are the primary authors of the Annual Action Plan – but input comes from management and staff.

Please note: If you have the time and resources, build a network with communication officers of other international donors working in the partner country with the aim of exchanging ideas, information and advice. You may be in some degree of "competition" but you share common interests and common goals. These may include sensitising the public and the partner country about key issues in development, such as the effects of climate change on the poor, public health concerns, disaster risk reduction, access to rights, to name but a few.
Networking with other communication officers is one way to share experiences and best practices in communicating on development.

Writing a communication policy

A communication policy outlines the purpose, aims and target audiences of an organisation's internal and external communication, defines the roles, responsibilities, and processes and names the key tools.

It ensures that communication is coordinated, effectively managed and meets the information needs of the specified target audiences. It is, therefore, an important part of the work of every Swiss Cooperation Office and representation.

A communication policy does not need to be 30 pages long to be effective and useful – in fact, the shorter and more to-the-point the policy is, the more likely it is to be read and used.

The main purpose of a communication policy is to:

> provide guidelines for internal and external communication. This includes defining roles and responsibilities as well as procedures within the office. For example: What is the procedure to be followed when a journalist calls with a query? Or during a crisis situation? Who may speak to the media? What is the process for writing and publishing media releases, who is responsible for what, etc?

Also include the role partner organisations play and what expectations the Swiss Cooperation Office has of them in regard to their external communication about Swiss-funded projects and programmes.

> define the goals of the external communication in a partner country. What does the Cooperation Office or representation want to achieve with its external communication?

> specify the target audiences: who are you trying to address or reach with your external communication? (See "Target audiences" in this section)

> define the level of visibility. The desired level of visibility may vary over time or from region to region or from project to project. For cultural or political reasons it may be necessary to maintain a low profile on certain projects while a higher profile, allowing for active external communication, is unproblematic or even desirable for other programmes and issues.

> broadly outline the main communication tools and channels for external and internal target audiences.

Please note: A communication policy is not changed every year. Under normal circumstances, a communication policy can be valid for as long as five years (e.g., the length of a Country Director's or Head of Representation's term in a partner country). If, for example, …
› there is a change of management (new Coordinator or Head of Representation)
› the country or regional strategy has been changed significantly (new themes or fields of operation are included or removed)
› the political situation in a partner country has altered considerably
… then it might be necessary to revise or update the communication policy.

A communication policy usually contains the following sections:

1. An introduction
Briefly state the purpose of the communication policy and how it is to be used.

2. Context
A brief (3–5 paragraphs) overview of the context in which the Swiss Cooperation Office or the representation works, including the media context.

3. Vision and Mission statements
What is the Swiss Cooperation Office's or representation's vision for the partner country? The Vision statements can be aspirational, even idealised. See, for example, Article 54 of the Federal Constitution of the Swiss Confederation: "The Confederation [...] shall in particular assist in the alleviation of need and poverty in the world and promote respect for human rights and democracy, the peaceful coexistence of peoples as well as the conservation of natural resources."

The purpose of the **Vision statement** is to create a common understanding of what Switzerland is trying to achieve in a given partner country. It describes the best possible outcome of Switzerland's engagement in a partner country.

Vision statements also serve the purpose of being a motivational tool to rally staff around a common goal. For this reason, they are not necessarily shared with a broader public.

Examples of a Vision statement:
"The work of the SDC in [country X] reduces poverty and inequality and contributes to a just society."

"Switzerland's engagement assists [country Y] to achieve sustainable development and a successful transition to a market economy rooted in democratic principles."

The **Mission statement** explains in a few sentences (up to 3 or 4) how the Swiss Cooperation Office or representation intends to achieve the vision or how they plan to contribute to the achievement of the vision.

Examples of a Mission statement:
"Switzerland's mission is to achieve equal access of people to decision-making processes and to contribute to the development of a market economy in [country Y]"

"SDC in [country Z] aims to improve the livelihoods of the rural population by supporting the responsible use of natural resources through ecologically oriented social and economic development."

4. Objectives of external and internal communication

What are you trying to achieve with your internal or external communication in the partner country?

External communication: Is your aim, for example, to brand Swiss development cooperation as a leader in the areas of water and food security? Or do you wish to change a false perception about Switzerland? Perhaps your objective is to create a better understanding of fundamental principles of Swiss foreign policy, for example in the areas of human rights and governance.

Internal communication: While this handbook is focused on external communication, efficient internal communication processes must be an integral part of any Cooperation Office's or representation's daily work. Without sound internal communication, external communication suffers. Define the internal communication processes in the communication policy, set internal communication goals and values, and name a few of the tools you plan to use to improve internal communication.

5. Target audiences

In order to make this section of your communication policy useful, it is advisable to break down the target audiences into more specific and manageable groups. Stating that "the people of country X" are a target audience is too broad. Whom do you really want and need to reach? Political or economic decision-makers? Unemployed youth? Rural or urban populations? Refer back to your objectives to help you define your priority target audiences.

Knowing whom you want to reach with your messages and communication activities will also help you to determine which media channels or communication instruments are most effective for reaching your desired target audience.

6. Key messages

Key messages are short, usually no longer than one-sentence statements that represent the primary thought or idea that you want to leave with your target audiences with every communication activity you undertake.

Key messages help to shape the perception and image in your partner country of Switzerland or of Swiss development cooperation and the work it does. They also help to ensure that what you communicate to your target audiences is consistent.

Your key messages remain the same for all your target audiences.
› Key messages are short, memorable sentences or phrases.
› Key messages are free of jargon or acronyms (spell them out if they are unavoidable).
› Key messages are active and positive (i.e. focus on what you are doing, not on what you are unable to do).
› Key messages are credible. Behind each key message lies at least one concrete example to back up what it states.

You don't need a long list of key messages. Ideally you should have one or two key messages to serve as overall messages for the Swiss Cooperation Office. In addition, you can develop one to two key messages per area in which the office is active (education, migrant's rights, etc.) or per project or programme.

Examples of key messages:
"The Swiss Cooperation Office in [country X] provides funding and technical expertise to the priority areas education and water management."

"SDC in [country Y] supports refugees and displaced people in accessing health care, water, shelter, education and employment."

Annual communication planning

Each year Swiss Cooperation Offices and representations go through the process of planning for their programmes for the coming year. The **Annual Action Plan** for Communication is developed in tandem with this annual operational planning. During this process communication opportunities, both for internal and external communication, are identified. (☛ see Annex for Annual Action Plan table)

The Annual Action Plan lists communication opportunities and goals, identifies target audiences, broadly lists tools and instruments (press conference, brochure, exhibit, youth contest, etc) and sets deadlines and responsibilities. You can use the grid in the Annex of this handbook.

All Swiss Cooperation Offices and representations, but particularly ones with small staffs or where Communication Officers have limited time for communication work, should focus their energies and resources on only a few key communication opportunities in a given year. It is better to concentrate your time and effort on one or two key events than to try to do four or five superficially. For the rest, engage only in reactive communication.

The level of effort made in communicating also depends on the level of visibility you have defined for specific programme areas or projects.

For each larger communication opportunity you then develop a **Communication Strategy** that sets out goals, target audiences, tools and instruments, deadlines, and responsibilities more in detail.

For example:
You have identified the 30th anniversary of Swiss development cooperation in your partner country as a communication opportunity for the coming year. You have broadly outlined the goals, tools and deadlines in your Annual Action Plan. Now you write a strategy, listing the specific tools and instruments you want to use to make the various target audiences aware of this anniversary and, more specifically, of Switzerland's commitment in the partner country.
The strategy for communicating about the anniversary may include several communication tools:
› a press release announcing the anniversary
› a field trip for local journalists to a selection of programmes

› a flyer highlighting the achievements of the past 30 years
› a photo exhibit to highlight what Swiss development cooperation has achieved in the past 30 years in the partner country.
For each of these tools and instruments you define the priority target audience, the steps that need to be taken, who is responsible for what, and the deadlines. (For organising a media field trip see "Organising media events" in chapter 2.)

For the photo exhibit you outline in your strategy what decisions have to be made and what steps have to be taken to make this exhibit a reality, e.g. choosing the photographer, deciding on the theme, setting a budget limit, selecting the venues, etc.. What are the deadlines for each step? Who is responsible for what?

If you are looking for ideas for a communication opportunity, look for links to international events that are in the news, such as large international conferences, events or international days.

For example:
› The European Football Championships held in Switzerland and Austria in 2008: several Swiss Cooperation Offices working in countries where "football is king" came up with ideas for public events where Switzerland and Swiss Cooperation could be featured. The detailed planning included: what events, where, when, what information material is needed, when to invite the media, etc.
› The "Year of the Potato" or "International Women's Day" or any other "Year of…" or international day can provide a "news hook" for local media and be used to draw attention to a programme or focus area. Visit this UN website for a list of international days: http://www.un.org/en/events/observances/days.shtml. (Or: on www.un.org enter "observances" in the search engine.) Tools and methods could be: producing a teaching tool or contest on the issue for local schools, organising a public campaign with a local media partner, organising a media field trip for local journalists to visit relevant projects, etc. Your strategy includes the details and each task needed to make the events a reality.

💡 **Please note:** Maintaining and updating the Cooperation Office website and handling media queries efficiently and according to the defined procedures should be recurring annual communication goals.

The Communication File

The Communication File has two purposes:

> It is a practical tool for organising all communication activities.
> It ensures that the "institutional memory" concerning all matters related to communication is not lost.

How does it work?

The Communication File is a folder, put together by the Swiss Cooperation Office or representation, containing all relevant information for communication work.

The Communication File is designed to preserve all important information to assist the Communication Officer to do her/his work – it also helps new Communication Officers to find the most relevant information quickly.

The Communication File centralises key communication-related information in one place and prevents the loss of this knowledge when a Communication Officer leaves the organisation or is not available during a crisis situation.

It is advisable to have an electronic version of the Communication File but a hard-copy file is also useful in case there is no computer access, for example during a natural disaster.

Only one person in each office should be in charge of adding or changing information in the Communication File.

What is in a Communication File?

This list includes the most important information needed to do your office's communication work. It is not comprehensive. You can add or amend items to fit your country or regional context.

> Instructions on what needs to be coordinated with the Swiss representation or Cooperation Office and what needs to be cleared by Information FDFA

> Contacts for journalists, editors, media houses. Include the journalists' "beats", i.e. their specialisation (politics, environment, etc). For television and radio also include producers.*
> Deadlines for newspapers, best (or worst) times/days to send media releases or to contact journalists (some daily newspapers have more than one edition per day, therefore include all deadlines)
> Contact details for journalists' associations, foreign correspondents' associations in your country/region
> Contacts for partner organisations' directors and communication officers (including home and mobile numbers)
> Communication policy and strategy
> Terms of reference for the Communication Officer
> Templates and/or best examples of media releases
> Information FDFA contacts and key contacts at headquarters
> Internal contact list (incl. mobile and home numbers)
> Best examples or templates of factsheets
> Instructions for use of Corporate Design and logo
> Specifications for printers and contacts for printers*
> List of acronyms and frequently used development terms
> Frequently asked questions (and answers) about Switzerland's work in your partner country
> Short 1–2 sentence description of SDC, the Swiss Cooperation Office, partner organisations
> Vision, Mission statement and key messages
> Crisis communication procedure
> Links to key documents (MDGs, Paris Declaration, Country or Regional strategies)
> CD with photos and policy for use of photos (☞ see also chapter 6 "Visual communication")
> Contacts for photographers, videographers*
> Contacts for media officers at international donors, government and NGO partners

*It is useful to annotate these contacts. If you have had bad experiences with certain journalists/media or photographers/videographers or printing companies, find a discrete way to record this information (perhaps a small "black star" in the Communication File is enough) so that new Communication Officers don't risk repeating the same bad experiences.

Chapter 2:
Working with the media in the partner country

In this chapter:

> Building media relations

> Handling media inquiries (including: Briefing Note and one-voice principle)

> Using media releases effectively

> Interviews: how to prepare for and give an interview

> Organising media events

Setting up and maintaining media contacts is part of every Communication Officer's job. The media are one of the most important channels for informing the public about Switzerland's engagement abroad.

Building media relations

"Building media relations" is more than just maintaining a list of journalists and editors. It requires taking the initiative to contact the media practitioners, to offer ideas for articles, to suggest topics that might be of interest. With good media contacts, it is easier to disseminate information about projects and raise awareness about issues important to Switzerland's foreign policy. Building good relations also means easier access to journalists in times when your office might need it.

What the media want

Around the world, journalists and editors work under often severe time constraints and with increasingly limited resources. In many parts of the world, journalists are getting younger and have less training. Fewer journalists have a "beat", that is, are specialised in a particular field. Understaffed newsrooms mean that journalists are often required to report on a wide range of issues with little time to prepare and do in-depth research. This means that journalists and editors have to be sensitised to the issues and themes of development cooperation and foreign policy.

The majority of journalists around the world want the same thing: interesting stories for their publications, radio or television programmes. Their expectations are also largely the same:

> Build sustainable, professional relationships with journalists
> › through visits to media houses (for example, with a newly appointed Country Director, Head of Cooperation or Ambassador);
> › with occasional emails and calls suggesting story ideas, from time to time, even if they have nothing to do with SDC or Switzerland;
> › by inviting a small select group of key journalists on a planned field visit with a programme officer or the Coordinator or Ambassador.

> Journalists want concise, clear, relevant information. You should be able to state the main point of your story or story idea in 2–3 sentences. They don't need all the information in hard copy, as they will visit the website if they are referred to it.

> Tell journalists what is "newsworthy" about the topic you are suggesting. If you send a media release, you need to follow it up with a phone call. "Sell" them the story. That means:
> › suggesting newsworthy angles
> › if possible, making the connection to what is currently in the news, nationally or internationally
> › providing context (the "big picture")

> Highlight the "5Ws and H" (Who, What, When, Where, Why, How). But you need to emphasise what relevance this issue or project has to the media's audience and explain its impact.

> Find the human angle – journalists are interested in human-interest stories because they know that readers/viewers/listeners are interested in the lives of other people. They want to know what the impact of a programme or problem is on groups and individuals.

> Journalists receive dozens of media releases every day in their email inboxes: make yours stand out with a relevant and attractive subject line and headline. (☛ See "Media releases" in chapter 3)

> Don't expect journalists to cover every story or programme you suggest, but with this extra bit of effort, chances are the journalists will follow up on other media releases you send. Be more proactive and don't give up too easily.

Trouble shooting

What to do when a journalist publishes incorrect information or has published false and/or damaging claims?

Swiss or international media
If the error was made by a journalist for Swiss or international media (BBC, Al Jazeera, Financial Times, etc), inform Information FDFA. Decisions on how to handle the publication of incorrect information is handled by the head of Information FDFA on a case by case basis. Write to info@eda.admin.ch, providing the name of the media organ, the date of the publication or broadcast and which information was incorrect.

Media in the partner country
How errors and corrections are handled varies from country to country and from media organ to media organ. Even attitudes towards errors made in journalism differ across the globe. However, if you have been misquoted, quoted out of context in such a way that alters the meaning of your statement, or if a media organisation has made a false or potentially damaging claim about Switzerland or the SDC and its work in the partner country, this procedure can be followed in most countries:

› Contact the journalist who wrote the article and the editor to inform them of the error. If the error is serious, the editor will usually agree to publish a correction. If you feel a correction is necessary and the newspaper refuses to publish one, you can contact the local media ombudsman or press or media council to lodge a complaint. This path should only be followed in the case of a serious error which could damage SDC's or Switzerland's reputation or cause harm to its partner organisations.

› In some cases, it may be enough to complain to the editor and journalist and then drop the matter, because you may risk drawing even more attention to a false and damaging statement and causing other media to pick up on the issue.

› If you are interviewed by a television or radio journalist, you have the right to view or hear the portion of the interview the journalist wishes to use. After the broadcast corrections are more difficult than in the case of print publications. However, if the error is serious, the same procedure as above applies.

Please note: In the interest of improving media standards, you should always inform journalists and editors about errors made. How far you take the issue should be decided on a case-by-case basis and depends on the gravity of the error.
You should also routinely ask to see the article – or at least the part of the text which mentions the SDC, Switzerland or where someone from your office is quoted – before it goes to print. While this is routine in Switzerland, it is not standard practise in all countries. (☛ See "Interviews" in this chapter)

Paying journalists?
In some countries where Switzerland has Cooperation Offices or representations, it is standard practise for journalists to be paid a certain amount of cash, for example by companies during a media conference to "encourage" journalists to write and publish a positive story about a company or product (so-called "brown envelope" or "red envelope" journalism). In some countries, journalists are paid by non-governmental organisations to report on a project.

› Switzerland has a clear policy against corruption and unethical practises. No bribes are paid to anyone, including journalists. This is not to be confused with the absolutely legitimate practise of hiring a journalist, for example, to write about Swiss-funded projects for information material or your website. In such cases, terms of reference are drawn up and a contract is signed; the journalists are paid for their work. It is also acceptable to pay a small per diem when inviting journalists on field trips to cover certain expenses, e.g. beverages or meals. (☛ See "Organising media field trips" in this chapter)

Procedure in the event of media inquiries

This procedure applies to all FDFA personnel in Switzerland and abroad.

Principles:

❭ Respond to media inquiries as rapidly as possible.

❭ First-hand information on Switzerland's activities is valuable for the media. Ambiguities or misunderstandings can be cleared up in a direct discourse with journalists.

❭ Although such contacts offer good opportunities, they also represent a risk: rash statements or misunderstandings can give rise to the publication of critical reports.

❭ FDFA personnel represent the official position of the FDFA (or the SDC) during their contacts with the media and not their personal opinions or privately held views.

What media are we talking about?

❭ "International media": media with global reach, such as Reuters, AFP, CNN, BBC, Al Jazeera, Financial Times, etc.

❭ "Swiss media": all Swiss media, including their correspondents abroad.

❭ "Local media": media bodies with headquarters in the host or partner country.

How do I proceed?

What media is inquiring	Inquiry content	OK needed from Information FDFA?	Further procedure
Swiss or International Media	Technical inquiries concerning one's own area of speciality as well as deployments or missions, programmes or projects (without political content or statements)	No	Personnel are to inform Information FDFA immediately after having provided the information. E-mail to info@eda.admin.ch: with the name of the media organisation, name of the journalist, and the topic of the inquiry. In this way, Information FDFA maintains an overview of current journalistic research.
	Specialist/technical information plus oral interview (telephone or face-to-face)	Yes, for the reason that journalists rarely limit themselves to technical/specialist questions during oral interviews.	Together with the responsible specialist units, Information FDFA rapidly seeks clarification as to whether an interview makes sense at the given moment in time. If it is, Information FDFA supports the members of staff and together they formulate the response or the position to be taken.
	Interview or written information on the contents of Swiss foreign policy (e.g., "Why is Switzerland active in country X or implementing a project on theme Y?")	Yes	Information FDFA rapidly seeks clarification from the responsible specialist units as to whether an interview is sensible at the given moment in time. In cooperation with these units, Information FDFA formulates the briefing note/position to be taken, and coordinates inquiries that concern more than one FDFA division or section.
Local Media	Technical inquiries concerning deployments or missions, programmes or projects from one's own domain of work (Inquiry to Coof/representation)	No	
	Technical inquiries concerning deployments or missions, programmes or projects from one's own domain of work plus interview with political content (Inquiry to Coof/representation)	No, but….	… information or statements with political content provided even to local media in the partner country must coincide with the position of the entire Department. Please consult Information FDFA to clarify whether a briefing note already exists on the topic in question or whether similar inquiries from Swiss media have already been answered.
	Interview on politically sensitive themes (Inquiry to Coof/representation)	Yes	In the case of politically sensitive issues, representations and offices abroad must first consult with Information FDFA, even for interviews with local media. Due to the Internet, even local media have a global reach: the information provided must coincide domestically and abroad!

Contacts Information FDFA
E-mail: info@eda.admin.ch
Telephone: +41 (0)31 322 31 53

On weekends and holidays, there is always an In-formation FDFA spokesperson on the job. By con-sulting www.eda.admin.ch/pikett, you can find out who is on-call.

What to do when a journalist shows up unan-nounced at a Swiss representation or Coope-ration Office wanting information or an inter-view?
From time to time individual correspondents or jour-nalists may arrive unannounced from abroad at the Cooperation Office or representation. You can pro-vide them with information of a technical nature. If they ask questions of a political nature, first consult Information FDFA. The journalists will have to wait until your office has received a response from Infor-mation FDFA. Don't let yourself be pressured and remember, journalists do not have a "right" to an interview.

The Briefing Note and one-voice principle

Briefing Notes are internal papers which are written by Information FDFA in collaboration with relevant units at SDC and FDFA headquarters in Bern. Brief-ing Notes are never handed to the media. They are designed to ensure that the "one-voice principle" is adhered to by all involved FDFA units, in Switzerland and abroad.

The "one-voice principle"
All FDFA units, including SDC, speak in one voice: even if different units provide information to exter-nal audiences, all state the same thing. Particularly in crisis situations it is essential that the one-voice principle is followed. Differing or contradictory statements create confusion and damage credibility – the one-voice principle is designed to prevent this kind of confused, uncoordinated communication. The Briefing Note is the main instrument used to ensure adherence to the "one-voice principle".

The Briefing Note contains the agreed wording regarding a particular issue. All involved units are required to follow the wording. Briefing Notes are confidential and for internal use only.

As a rule, Briefing Notes contain:
› Guiding principles underlying FDFA's actions in a particular case or stance on a particular issue
› What may be said to the public and the media on a given topic or issue
› Anticipated questions, including "nasty ques-tions", and their answers
› Issues or aspects of the issue that are to be avoided when speaking to the media and other external parties because they may be misleading, incorrect or speculative.

If you have questions concerning media enquiries and Briefing Notes, please contact:
info@eda.admin.ch or +41 31 322 31 53.
Intraweb: https://.intraweb.deza.admin.ch –> Key documents –> Communication working aids
Intranet: intranet.eda.admin.ch/medien (primarily German and French)

Using media releases effectively

No other instrument is used as regularly to reach the media than the press or media release. For it to be an effective tool, consider these points:

› The main purpose of a media release is to draw the attention of the media to an event, an issue or an announcement.

› A media release is often issued to announce an event to which the media are invited (e.g. a press conference, a signing or handing-over ceremony of a project etc.) or to a high-level visit. In the case of events, it may be necessary to issue a media invitation which is sent out ahead of the event, followed by a media release published on the day of the event (and/or at the end of an event that lasts several days).

› Media releases can be used to state your organisation's view on a relevant issue that has been getting attention in the media recently (e.g. climate change, effect of financial crisis on the poor, discrimination of minorities, etc.).

› Media releases can also be used to sensitise the media on issues important to Switzerland, by, for example, using international days or years as a "news hook". An example: a media release issued on the SDC's work in regard to water or women's empowerment ahead of World Water Day or International Women's Day. For such purposes, you can also write and post an article on the issue on your website.

› Media houses, journalists and editors around the world receive dozens of media releases every day. In most of Switzerland's partner countries, the SDC is one among many donors. The same applies to Swiss representations. So you have to make your media release stand out, by:

› writing an informative and eye-catching subject line if you are sending the media release by email.

› clearly and succinctly stating your point in the lead (the first paragraph of the media release)

› highlighting the "news" angle – why should the journalists be interested in the event or issue highlighted by your media release? Please note that while journalists worldwide want to know how much a donor spends on a project, Switzerland is a comparatively small donor. Rather highlight other aspects of Swiss development cooperation or of a specific project in the lead and mention the amount of the financial contribution later in the text.

› making a follow-up phone call. Later the same day or the next day, phone journalists or editors of a few key media organisations to make sure the media release has been seen and read. Time the follow-up call so it does not conflict with deadlines (see your Communication File for deadlines). Use this opportunity to offer an interview with one of your in-house experts, the Coordinator or Ambassador. (☛ See "The Communication File" in chapter 1)

☛ For more details on writing effective media releases, see chapter 3 "Tools of external communication".

Interviews: how to prepare for and give an interview

Whether face-to-face or by telephone: interviews are the most important means of providing information to journalists. They also offer those being interviewed a good opportunity to inform journalists about a particular issue and to build relations with the media.

Once you have agreed to give an interview, the most important first step is preparation. Never go into an interview "cold", i.e. without preparing for the interview, even if it is on a subject you know inside and out. The better prepared you are, the more confident you will be and the better the interview will turn out.

Preparation for an interview also includes anticipating the questions a journalist might ask. Try to put yourself in the shoes of the journalist. What questions will certainly be asked? What are the worst possible questions that the journalist could ask? And how will you respond?

☛ Before agreeing to an interview with journalists or foreign correspondents of Swiss or international media, read the rules in "Procedures in the event of media inquiries" in this chapter.

On and off the record: definitions

As a rule, the majority of interviews you give should be "on the record". In some select cases, it can be useful to give a "background briefing". Background briefings may be conducted "on the record", "off the record", "on background/not for attribution" or as a combination of the three. The rules for use of the information given during a background briefing must be agreed upon beforehand between the parties involved.

These are the standard definitions:

On the record: Anything said may be quoted directly and attributed by name. This is what journalists prefer.

Off the record: Information offered off the record may be given so that a reporter will better understand a confusing or potentially harmful situation, or it may be intended to prevent a damaging error that a source thinks a reporter might make if not informed. The information is not to be disseminated, even in conversation.

On background/not for attribution: What is said may be quoted directly but the source cannot be identified. For example: „A source close to the president said…".

⚠ As a general rule:

› SDC and FDFA staff should avoid off-the-record interviews particularly with journalists who are unknown to them or who may not be trusted to honour the "off the record"-rule.

› Do not just use the terms "on the record" or "off the record" when negotiating an interview with a journalist. While "on the record" is defined the same way in all countries, the definitions of "off the record" vary internationally. It is therefore important to state clearly how the information is to be used before you agree to an interview.

› Always ask for the questions in advance – but be prepared for questions that are not on the list supplied.

› Ask to see the article (or at least the parts of the article where you are cited) before it goes to print. In Switzerland, it is standard practice to ask the journalist to see the article before it goes to print. While this is not common practice around the world, you have the right to ask – just don't be surprised if the journalist says no.
In a broadcast interview, you have the right in Switzerland to view or hear your interview again before it goes on air. Even in a country where that is not standard practice you may stop the recording and ask to repeat your answer.

Practical tips for interviews

› Keep your answers short, concise and to the point. Prepare your key message(s) beforehand.

› Take your time and don't rush your answers. Make sure you and the journalist have agreed on the length of the interview, but allow for extra time. Choose a venue where you will be undisturbed.

› Use concrete examples to illustrate a point rather than talking about abstract concepts. Do not assume that the journalist knows a lot about the topic or the issues about which you are being interviewed.

› If you don't know the answer to a question, don't ramble and try to bluff your way through the answer. Tell the reporter you will find the answer and get back to him or her, or direct the reporter to a person who is able to answer the question.

› Answer the question that was asked, not the one in your head or the one you wish the journalist had asked. Listen, engage and show genuine interest.

› Stick to the topic.

› If the journalist has not addressed something you think is important, you can add something at the end. Tell the reporter that you have one more important point to make.

› Suggest other people the journalist could contact for the article – for example, experts in a particular field at a local university or institute or in a partner organisation. Ideally, have the contact details handy. This is part of building relationships with the media.

› Be aware of your body language and maintain eye contact. Try to have some time to relax before the interview. Remember: this is not an adversarial situation. The reporter is not your enemy. In most cases, the journalist just wants information which you can provide.

☛ See also "Trouble shooting" under "Building media relations" in this chapter.

Organising media events

The media are an important channel through which Switzerland communicates about the themes of Swiss development cooperation and foreign policy to a wider audience.

The most common media events are:
> The media conference
> Media field visits to projects

Media conferences

Media conferences (also known as press or news conferences) are a standard instrument of public relations. Media conferences are organised in order to disseminate information on a specific subject to a broad audience via the media. Most media conferences also give journalists the opportunity to ask questions and to do short interviews with the main speakers after the press conference.

⚠ As a general rule:
If you are organising a media conference or other event to which international media are also invited, inform Information FDFA in advance to ensure adherence to the one-voice principle, particularly if the conference or event deals with political issues or Swiss foreign policy.

When to call a media conference

Swiss Cooperation Offices and representations are responsible for organising media conferences in the partner countries. You decide when it is opportune and appropriate to hold a media conference. But: only organise a media conference if you have something newsworthy to say.

Calling a media conference is appropriate in such cases as:
› High-level visits from abroad (for example, a visit from the Swiss Foreign Minister, the SDC Director-General, or the head of an SDC domain or FDFA delegation)
› Conclusion of a cooperation agreement
› Signing of a new agreement
› The start of a new project or the beginning of a new phase
› Awarding of a nationally or internationally important prize
› Announcement of important findings (for example, in research which was funded by Switzerland)
› Before the opening of an exhibition or conference

During crisis situations it may also be necessary to hold media conferences to provide updates on an on-going situation. (☛ See chapter 5 "Communication in a crisis").

Preparing a media conference

1. Define the goal or goals of the media conference. What are you trying to achieve? Is a media conference the best way to reach this goal or these goals?

2. Write down 1–3 messages that you want to convey at the media conference. What do you want to say? Can you formulate a headline that you would like to appear in the newspaper the next day about the media conference? Draft the "speaking notes" for the speaker(s) at the media conference. Speaking notes are not distributed to the media.

3. Anticipate what the journalists might ask and prepare your answers – including for "nasty questions".

4. Prepare the invitations and send them out approximately one week in advance. Make follow-up phone calls to key media. The invitations must be on official letterhead and be signed by the highest ranking representative in your office (e.g. Country Director or Ambassador).

The next steps are of a logistical nature and are important to ensure a successful media conference:

› **Choose a time and date.**
  › Check that the time and date do not conflict with other important events (wire services usually produce a daily or weekly schedule of media conferences for a city or country).
  › Consider whether you want to target daily or weekly newspapers. Deadlines for weekly papers are different than for dailies (check your Communication File). (☛ See "The Communication File" in chapter 1).
  › In many countries mornings are the preferred time for media conferences. Also in most countries, media conferences held on a Friday are of no interest to daily newspapers which appear Monday to Friday because they assume the weekend papers will cover the conference and by Monday the event will be "old news".
  › Generally, a media conference lasts no longer than one hour.

› **Think of innovative ways to hold a media conference**. Brainstorm ideas with other staff members. It is not necessary to hold every media conference in the same standard format. Also think of ways to include other voices, for example of project beneficiaries. Remember: television and photographers need interesting visuals.

› **Choose a venue**.
  › Choose a centrally located, easily accessible venue. Most large hotels will be able to provide appropriate venues for media conferences.
  › Make sure there is no noise near the conference venue that could interrupt the media conference (for example, street construction or repairs in the building).
  › Set aside a quiet place for one-on-one media interviews after the conference. If you choose a room with air conditioning or a ventilator make sure the noise level is low and that the air conditioning does not interfere with recording equipment.

💡 **Please note:** Your choice of venue also depends on the topic of the media conference and your chosen messages. If you want to let the public know what Switzerland is doing to reduce poverty in the partner country, it will send the wrong message if you hold a media conference in a five-star hotel. Choose another, more appropriate location.

› **Select and brief the moderator**. Discuss the procedure for the media conference and define the time frame (for the presentations, for the question-and-answer session). Choose someone with experience and some degree of authority to moderate the press conference. Have someone on stand-by in case the moderator is suddenly not available.

› **Have a "gofer"** – someone who can run back to the office to fetch forgotten material or call for a taxi, etc.

› If necessary, organise **translator**(s). If translations are necessary, decide if it is better to hire translation equipment (headphones, booths, microphones) or whether a simultaneous translator will be sufficient. In either case, choose tried-and-tested, professional translators (check the Communication File).

› If necessary, organise **security personnel**. This is essential for high-level delegations/speakers in some countries. Check well in advance with the offices of the guests to find out what their requirements are.

› **Set time limits** for the speakers at the media conference. Brief them on the procedure and on what is expected of them. At the media conference, the moderator should let the journalists know that there will be time for questions. Also let them know whether the main speakers will be available for individual interviews and for how long after the media conference.

> **Organise media kits**. What information material should be included? Does any material need to be prepared specifically for the media conference (for example, a factsheet)? By when must it be ready and in which languages? Are there enough folders for the media kits? Does information on the website need to be updated ahead of the media conference? If a speech will be held, can it be included in the kit or will it be posted online after the conference? (Make sure to include the notice "check against delivery" at the top of the speech.)

Please note: Don't overload the media kits. Choose only relevant information and for the rest refer journalists to your website.

> **Organise placards or banners**. If your office doesn't already have a generic banner with the SDC or Swiss Federal logo, invest in one that you can use at all public events. Place it near or behind the main speaker. If the media conference is to announce a new theme in Switzerland's development cooperation, it may be worthwhile to produce banners with thematic messages and information which you can use at other planned events throughout the year.

Ballpoint pens and paper should also be made available for the speakers and the journalists. (☛ See chapter 6, "Visual communication" for the correct use of the logo.)

> Make sure **water** and glasses are ready on the speakers' podium and for the journalists. Decide whether there will be **food and beverages** after the media conference and organise the catering well in advance. In some countries it is common practice to offer meals after media conferences – in others it is seen as an attempt to influence the media's reporting. Find out what is appropriate in your partner country so that you don't inadvertently send out the wrong signal.

> **Check all electronic equipment** before the conference (beamers, microphones, recording devices, etc.). Make sure extension cables are available.

> Organise the **arrival of the speakers** and guests – who will accompany them to the conference room?

After the media conference

Keep a record of articles and broadcasts following a media conference in order to monitor coverage.

Write a media release highlighting the main points made at the conference and place it on your website. You can send this media release out to all media, including those media organisations which did not attend the press conference. Do not wait more than 24 hours to publish this type of media release – prepare what you can in advance.

Do a debriefing in your office to discuss what went well and what could be done better next time. If the venue was inadequate or the translator particularly competent or incompetent, make a note of this in the Communication File. (☛ See "The Communication File" in chapter 1)

Media field trips

Development cooperation work is best experienced firsthand in the field. Organised journalists' field trips to projects are the most effective way of getting across Switzerland's development cooperation activities and concerns.

Why media field trips are effective

Journalists have the opportunity to interview various actors – from SDC programme officers and directors, to partners managing projects in the field, to beneficiaries – and can observe development cooperation in action. Through their reports, a broader public learns more about what Switzerland does in the partner country and about the principles and values which underpin Switzerland's development cooperation.

It is through exchanges and observations during such field trips that journalists gain a deeper understanding of the workings of development cooperation and humanitarian aid, what challenges development practitioners face in various contexts and what impact these projects have on local populations.

Experience has shown that media field trips have a positive long-term effect on the reporting on development cooperation and humanitarian aid. These trips also are an important part of building relations with the media.

Field visits are also an opportunity for local partner organisations to present their work to local or international media – and at the same time to show beneficiaries and donors what they have achieved.

When is a field trip for journalists appropriate?

The aim of media field trips is to show journalists development cooperation and humanitarian aid activities in a partner country in action. Such visits are appropriate both for local journalists in a partner country and for visiting Swiss journalists to a partner country.

The timing of organised field trips can be determined by various factors and events. For example:

> a VIP-visit from Switzerland to a partner country

> the anniversary of Swiss development cooperation in a partner country

> the coming-to-an-end of a project/programme

> the staging of a large international event in the partner country, e.g World Cup or large international conference

Also issues of a global nature (which have a local impact) are of interest to journalists, for example:

> projects that contribute to environmental protection and disaster risk reduction

> how women or minorities are being empowered through a project that strengthens their rights and teaches them income-generating skills

> an international conference is taking place in another country but is of global importance – your office can use the opportunity to highlight what Switzerland is doing in this field (e.g. international Climate Change, Education for All or AIDS conferences: take journalists to related projects funded by Switzerland in the partner country)

Whether Swiss or local, you can find good reasons to interest journalists in a field visit, but you will have to choose **different approaches with local and with Swiss journalists** because their level of understanding about the partner country's context and their target audiences are not the same.

However, both local and Swiss journalists will want to know…
… how the local population (or specific population groups) is benefitting from a project
… how the project fits into Switzerland's development cooperation strategy for the country or region.
… why Switzerland is working in the partner country
… how much money Switzerland is spending on the project and in the country/region

🔅 Please note: On a field trip, journalists want to interview people they could not interview elsewhere and to witness a project firsthand.
The main reasons for coming on a field trip are:
› to do interviews, to hear from people in their own words what impact a project has had on their lives
› to see projects and people in action
› to ask various actors questions, to find answers that cannot be found online or in a document

Preparing a media field trip

Media visits to projects are demanding and time-consuming. They call for careful preparation and good coordination with partner organisations and beneficiaries.

For the Cooperation Office organising a field visit the time invested may not always lead to the expected media coverage. A day spent travelling to a project may only lead to a two-minute segment in a television report or a short article in a newspaper. The journalists may do a dozen interviews during a field trip but in the end only quote three people in an article. That is the nature of journalism.

But the investment is still worthwhile: for journalists, both from the partner country and from abroad, such field trips are often unforgettable personal experiences that can have a lasting positive impact on their reporting about Switzerland's engagement abroad.

⚠ As a rule
› Information FDFA organises visits from Swiss media to a partner country in coordination with SDC headquarters and the relevant Cooperation Office(s) or representation(s).
› Cooperation Offices and representations decide when to organise a field visit with journalists from the local media in the partner country and whom to invite.
› From time to time individual journalists, working freelance or for a Swiss or international media organisation, may contact the representation or Cooperation Office directly with the request to visit a project. Find out what kinds of questions the journalist intends to ask and consult Information FDFA before agreeing to take the journalist to the project. (☛ See "Procedure in the event of media inquiries" in this chapter for the applicable rules.)

Key points to consider regarding media field trips

Before the trip
❯ Put together an interesting, but not too tightly packed programme. Avoid repetitions: if the visitors have seen one drinking water project, they think that they have seen them all. To avoid boredom, make sure the programme offers enough variety.

❯ Provide media kits with the most relevant and important information. This includes: factsheets on the projects to be visited, information about Swiss development cooperation in the partner country, other already existing topic-related information material (e.g. brochures or flyers). Before the trip refer the journalists to the website (www.deza.admin.ch and the Cooperation Office's website) as preparation for the trip.

❯ For longer field visits: if possible, invite the journalists to your office for a briefing a few days or weeks before the trip.

❯ Do not assume that the journalists participating in a field visit have any previous knowledge of development work or of the topic of the project being visited. Swiss or international journalists may also only have a rudimentary knowledge of the partner country. All project staff coming into contact with the media during such a visit must bear this in mind. Some of the journalists may know more than others, but make sure that all participants are provided with the basic information they need to understand the project and the context.

❯ Do not try to "orchestrate" the interviews but do choose interview partners who are willing to speak to journalists and are comfortable with speaking in front of microphones. Brief the interviewees on who will visit and on the purpose of the field visit. Journalists will soon realise if the interviewees have been coached or if they are speaking from the heart. Get consent from children or vulnerable population groups prior to an interview. (☛ See chapter 7 and the Annex for a sample informed consent form)

❯ Ask the journalists before the start of the trip if they will need to file articles during the field visits. This is often the case for journalists who work for wire services. If you plan to visit sites that have no Internet access or mobile phone connection, let them know in advance so they can inform their editors/producers. As a general rule, arrange accommodation with reliable Internet access whenever possible.

During the trip

> Allow for enough travelling time between locations. Simply getting a group of people into a bus, to a location and then back on the bus at the end of the visit takes more time than you might think. No one will be upset if there is extra time to spend on a break or at a project site. But most journalists will be unhappy if they are no allowed enough time for interviews and are herded from one location to another.

> Do not plan briefing sessions in the bus between locations to save time. Firstly, it is difficult to take notes while riding in a vehicle. Secondly, it is often difficult to hear someone speaking in a moving car. And, thirdly, journalists need the drive between locations and project sites to digest what they have seen and heard, prepare for the next stop, or simply to relax.

> In contrast to a project evaluator or a technical specialist, journalists do not want to see and understand every last detail. Give them only the information they need and don't overload them with technical details and jargon. Those who want to know more will ask. (☛ See "Giving presentations" in chapter 3.)

> Journalists want interesting stories, captivating photos and gripping sound to take back to their newsrooms. Therefore make sure that you visit locations during daylight hours, so pictures can be taken/films shot and that people are available for interviews when journalists arrive at a location. If for some reason a project visit is necessary in the evening or at night, make sure you inform camera teams ahead of time so they can bring the necessary equipment. (☛ See "Film and TV productions" in chapter 3.)

> Allow for enough rest and recreation. On longer trips plan a half-day break for every two working days. On trips of more than one day, also allow time for journalists to read through their notes and, if necessary, write articles.

> For visiting journalists from abroad or when taking local journalists to an area of the country far from the capital where there are interesting sites: leave time for cultural and touristic interests in the programme.

After the trip

At the end of the field visit hold an evaluation and debriefing session with the journalists and organisers before the departure of the journalists. Take note of their feedback for future field trips.

Chapter 3:
Tools for external communication

In this chapter:

> Deciding on the appropriate communication tool

> Media releases

> Factsheets

> Website

> Publications: flyers, brochures, books

> Film and television productions

> Public events

> Giving presentations

Deciding on the appropriate communication tool

Numerous instruments can be used for effective external communication. These are the most commonly used:

› Media releases
› Factsheets
› The Cooperation Office or representation website
› Publications: Flyers, brochures, books
› Film and television productions
› Public events
  (For media events, ☛ see chapter 2 "Working with the media in the partner country)

The decision to publish information material about Switzerland's work abroad is often quickly taken. Unfortunately, the decision to publish a book or to produce a film is not always based on clear or realistic communication goals. All too often, these books, films and flyers – which use up considerable financial and human resources – are little used and end up forgotten in a filing cabinet.

It is therefore important to ask a few key questions before deciding to publish a brochure or book or agreeing to the production of a film. Be as specific as possible when answering these questions:

› **What?**
  What is the main message that you want to convey? What are you trying to say?

› **Why?**
  What is the purpose of this information material? What goals are you trying to achieve?

› **For whom?**
  Who is your target audience? Whom are you trying to reach? For example, is your goal to reach a broad audience in Switzerland or the public in your partner country? Or do you have specific audiences in mind?
  Are you sure that your target audience is the right one for your message – and vice versa?
  Ask these questions to ensure you know who your desired readers or viewers are.

  ☛ For more on target audiences, see "Writing a communication policy" in chapter 1.

› **How?**
  Once you have decided on your message and your target audience you need to ask yourself in what form you want to convey your message to your chosen target audience: brochure, book, web-based information, local television channel, in presentations, etc.?

It is easy to choose a product quickly, but ask yourself first:
› Is there another, perhaps more effective or less costly way to reach your target audience (for example, via the Web or an event) than the tool you have chosen?
› How certain are you that your target audience will read this book? Are you sure this film will be seen by the desired audience; where will it be shown?
› What reactions can you anticipate from your target audience(s)? Could the SDC or your representation be accused of wasting financial resources that could have been put to better use elsewhere?

Media releases

As we saw in chapter 2, the main purpose of a media release is to draw the attention of the media to an event to which the media are invited (e.g. a media conference or a handing-over ceremony of a project), an issue, an announcement or a high-level visit.

The purpose of a media release is not to give the media all the information you have on a given topic but to get the media interested in the issue so that they will call you or consult your website for further information.

⚠ **The following points concern media releases published by Swiss Cooperation Offices and representations targeting media in the partner country.** For the rules regarding media releases targeting Swiss media, please see "Procedure in the event of media inquiries" in chapter 2.

Approval process	You must have a process for approving media releases before they are published, including during planned or unplanned absences of key people in your office. Make sure the media release has been approved by the appropriate person in your office before sending it to the media.
Structure	All press releases must have: › A title (you can also have two headings) › A lead (see "Lead" below) › A short text providing relevant information on the event or issue (see "Length" below) › Name and details of the contact person – who must be contactable after the release is distributed › Your web address › The SDC or representation logo. Inform partner organisations when the logo is to be used in their media releases on Swiss-funded projects or programmes. (See chapter 6 "Visual communication")
Title	The title should be clear, succinct and address the topic of the release. Please be aware that the title of a media release is also used as a navigation title (hyperlink) in the right-hand column on your web page under "Local news". (See chapter 4 "Communicating on the Web").
Lead	The lead is the first paragraph of the media release and is usually printed in bold face. The lead contains the most important information of the media release. NB: Many Swiss Cooperation Offices like to put the amount of a Swiss contribution to a project in the lead. Bear in mind that Switzerland is a small donor compared to other international donors who also send releases to the local media. Rather than first stating the amount of a financial contribution, focus on the impact of the project. The financial contribution can be mentioned later in the media release.
Main message	Be specific – narrow down the main message of your media release to one or two sentences. These should be included in your lead. Try building one of your key messages into the media release. (For more information on key messages see chapter 1)
Length	Media releases should be no longer than one page in total. Only in rare circumstances can they be longer. Bear in mind that journalists and editors receive dozens of media releases every day. The shorter and more to the point your media release is, the more likely it will be read.
Language	Avoid jargon and acronyms. If you must use acronyms, spell them out at first mention, including SDC and FDFA. Find ways to explain your point without using jargon. Not everyone knows what "capacity building" means. The language used in your media release should be clear, the tone professional. Use strong, active verbs and avoid passive voice. Keep sentences short and clear.
Statistics	Keep figures and statistics to a minimum. Too many numbers can confuse readers. Use only those statistics that best illustrate impact.
Newsworthy angle	Find an angle that makes your issue more newsworthy or interesting to the media. The more relevant your media release is the more likely the editors and journalists will follow up on it. Relevance also means demonstrating impact on people's lives.
Subject line	If you email your media releases make sure your subject line says more than "Media release from the SDC/the Embassy of Switzerland" – give an indication of the content of the media release.
Localise a national or international issue	If you can, make a connection between the issue highlighted in your media release to an issue that is currently in the news, nationally or internationally.
Quotes	When possible and appropriate, use a strong and relevant quote from an expert, SDC Coordinator or Ambassador to give a "voice" to your media release.
Spelling and grammar	Are all names and titles spelled correctly? Is the grammar correct? Ask someone in your office to proofread the release.
Titles and honorific titles	As a rule, SDC and FDFA do not use "Mr", "Ms" or "Mrs". Check with those responsible for protocol regarding correct titles for media releases or publications of a diplomatic nature. Also consider the local cultural context when deciding whether to use an honorific (Professor, Her Excellency, etc.).
Follow up	Later the same day or the next day make a follow-up call to the journalists or editors to make sure the media release has been seen and read. Time the follow-up call so it does not conflict with deadlines (see your Communication File for deadlines). If you don't have much time, just make follow-up phone calls to key media. Use this opportunity to offer an interview with one of your in-house experts, the Coordinator or Ambassador. (For more information on preparing for an interview, see chapter 2)

Factsheets

Factsheets on programmes and projects are part of the basic communication package of every Swiss Cooperation Office. SDC offices should prepare one factsheet per programme or project. This project/programme information must also appear on your CoofWeb. (☛ See chapter 4 "Communicating on the Web")

Information on FDFA's engagement in a particular country (e.g. Tunisia) or region (e.g. Horn of Africa) is featured on the SDC and FDFA websites on its Country Pages. The Country Pages gather input from all relevant divisions of the FDFA. Because Country Pages are regularly used by headquarters to inform interested parties (including Swiss journalists) the language used should be clear and jargon-free.

During large-scale crises Switzerland's Humanitarian Aid in Bern regularly provides up-to-date information using factsheets that are published on the SDC and FDFA websites. These factsheets are used to inform the media and concerned Swiss citizens.

Content of project factsheets

Factsheets do not include all the available information on a project or programme – the aim is to provide the most important information. People who require more detailed information can visit your CoofWeb or the SDC's main websites to download relevant documents. The content of the project factsheets featured on the CoofWeb should be the same as the content of printed versions.

Each factsheet should start with a lead: one paragraph (1–2 sentences) explaining the main point of the project or programme.

Factsheets include the most relevant information on the:

> **Goals of the project/programme**: state the goals in 1–3 sentences.

> **Target groups**: who are the beneficiaries?

> **Results achieved/expected**: if it is a new project, write only the expected results; for projects that have been running some time or will continue, state both achieved and expected results.

> **Background/context**: while it is important to give some background on the project and the context in which it operates, this is the area where many Cooperation Offices tend to provide too much information on a factsheet. Ideally summarise the background and context to a maximum of 1–2 short paragraphs.

> **Main activities**: what will be done to achieve the results?

> **Budget**: total budget in Swiss francs, US dollars and/or local currency for the entire project

> **Geographic focus**: in which part(s) of the partner country will the project be implemented?

> **Implementing partners**: which organisation(s) will carry out the project?

> **Funding partners**: which other donors or organisations are financing the project or programme?

> **Time frame**: this is the project's duration. Avoid using "Phase 1" etc., rather just state the years of the phases ("from 2010–2013")

> **Contacts**: Because a factsheet may not be updated for several years, it is best to avoid giving a specific person's name as contact on the factsheet. Rather provide the office's general contact details.

Design and layout

Some Cooperation Offices require printed versions of project factsheets for the local media, other donors, partners etc. Cooperation Offices have the option to print out factsheets from the CoofWeb.

If you wish to produce more professional-looking factsheets and you have the resources, you can hire a local graphic designer to do the design and layout. Each Cooperation Office is free to choose its own design.

The only rules that apply to factsheets are:
› Length: maximum two pages (double-sided)
› Typeface: use Arial or Futura BT
› Font size: 10–11 points
› Logo: the correct logo must appear once on the factsheets (see chapter 6 "Visual Communication")

☛ Cooperation Offices generally organise the design and printing of their factsheets in the partner country. If you need advice or support regarding design or layout of factsheets, please contact Information FDFA: cdbund@eda.admin.ch.

Website

The website of the Swiss Cooperation Office or representation is one of the most important tools for external communication. Every possible effort should be made to maintain the website. It is one of the essential communication tasks to ensure that the website is up-to-date, informative and attractive.

☛ For more information see chapter 4 "Communicating on the Web"

Publications

Publications include a wide range of printed information material: flyers, brochures, books, calendars, diaries, etc. Ask yourself the questions at the beginning of this chapter under "Deciding on the appropriate communication tool" before embarking on the production of a publication.

Only once you have determined that your chosen product is the best method for conveying your key message to your defined target audience go ahead with authorising its production.

Guidelines for external publications

For publications with an external target audience in the partner country

Switzerland's representations abroad and the Cooperation Offices are responsible for producing their own information materials, but they must comply with the rules of Federal Corporate Design. (☛ See chapter 6 "Visual Communication")

Uniform design and procedural rules and guidelines apply to SDC and FDFA publications intended for external audiences in Switzerland and in the partner country if these publications deal with core topics or services of the FDFA.

"Core topics or services" include:

> publications about priority areas of the FDFA or SDC
> publications that describe Switzerland's position on specific issues (human rights, climate change, etc).
> annual reports of the SDC or FDFA

The aim is that all FDFA and SDC publications are readily identifiable as FDFA products thanks to uniform cover design and layout and to the application of Federal Corporate Design regulations.

☛ Representations should also adhere to the guidelines of Switzerland's communication abroad (see Presence Switzerland: http://www.eda.admin.ch/presenceswitzerland).

For publications produced by partner organisations

Publications produced by partner organisations about Swiss-funded projects with an external target audience in the partner country are only required to carry the Federal logo and to mention Switzerland's support.

The partner organisations should inform the Cooperation Office about such publications before they go to print.

For publications with an external target audience in Switzerland

SDC or FDFA sections or divisions in Bern, wishing to produce a publication with a primary external target audience in Switzerland, are required to contact the Publications coordination unit in Information FDFA before proceeding with production (see below).

☛ For information on rules and regulations concerning publications with external target audiences in Switzerland visit:
http://intranet.eda.admin.ch –> Processes and instruments –> Support processes –> Communication –> Publications [1]

Guidelines for SDC publications for selected target groups

SDC publications for selected target groups (also referred to as "internal papers") include: country or regional strategies, Swiss Cooperation Office's annual reports and annual programmes, project reports and all publications that do not deal with core topics or services of the SDC or FDFA.

☛ Uniform design rules apply to these documents. You can find more information on the Intraweb:
https://intraweb.deza.admin.ch –> Communication working aids –> Visual Communication team –> instructions and tools [2]

Please note

Publications coordination unit and Visual Communication unit:
The Publications coordination unit and the Visual Communication unit within Information FDFA are responsible for processes and visual appearance (layout and design). These units provide the departments, representations and Cooperation Offices with advice and support.
Cooperation Offices and representations are asked to report new publications to the Publications coordination unit for statistical purposes. Write to:
koordinationpublikationen@eda.admin.ch.

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[1]　http://intranet.eda.admin.ch/portal/page/kern/PG_KERN/10_PROZESSE/1015_UNTERSTUETZUNGSPROZESSE/101515_KOMMUNIKATION/10151515_PUBLIKATIONEN
[2]　https://intraweb.deza.admin.ch/de/Home/Leitdokumente/Arbeitshilfen/Arbeitshilfen_fuer_Kommunikation/Visuelle_Kommunikation/Anleitungen_und_Werkzeuge/Produktion_und_Gestaltung_von_Publikationen?contentLangID=1&targetGroupID=1

Film and television productions

The film medium is eminently suited for conveying the key messages about Swiss development cooperation and foreign policy.

Films make it possible to portray the reality of life in the South and East and allow those who benefit from Switzerland's foreign commitments to present their views. The interplay of sound and image communicates much information in a very short time frame, and with great emotional impact.

Films are also becoming increasingly important in the age of the New Media.

Please note the following procedures:

Planning a film production

A distinction must be made in this context between internal and external productions.

1. **Internal productions** are those commissioned by a Cooperation Office, a Swiss representation abroad or the FDFA and SDC head offices.

2. **External productions**, generally speaking, are those produced by Swiss or foreign film or television crews.

1. In the case of internal productions

Productions commissioned by SDC Cooperation Offices or Swiss representations abroad must follow these rules:

› For the production of films intended for broadcast or viewing in a partner country (main target audience public of partner country), contracts are awarded by Cooperation Offices or representations abroad on their own authority.

› For the production of films to be shown in Switzerland (main target audience Swiss public), the responsibility and project leadership is in the hands of Information FDFA.

› For internal productions initiated by the Head Office the responsibilities and procedures are outlined in the FDFA Intranet and SDC Intraweb.

⚠ **Questionnaire for film productions**

For all internal productions with a Swiss target audience the "Questionnaire for Film Productions" must be completed and forwarded to Information FDFA before awarding a contract to a production company.

The questionnaire asks for essential information: communication objectives, budget, planned distribution channels and possibilities of showing the film. On the basis of this information a decision can be taken whether or not an internal production is appropriate.

☛ The "Questionnaire for Film Productions" can be found on the Intranet. [3]

It can also be found on the SDC Intraweb as an external link. (Enter "Film production" in the search engine on the Home page: http://intraweb.deza.admin.ch)

💡 **Please note:** It is worth your while to make contact with Information FDFA prior to awarding a contract even when the responsibility for the film project lies with the Cooperation Office. For Information FDFA

› has the overview of all SDC and FDFA film productions and can prevent projects being unnecessarily duplicated
› has considerable experience in the area of audiovisual communication and will readily give advice with regard to concepts and contracts
› has a list of contacts for suitable film producers
› is able to assess the budget in relation to the services required, for Switzerland and abroad
› knows what needs to be taken into consideration when awarding a contract
› has the overview of existing archive material and can thus help to avoid unnecessary reshooting of already available film material

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[3] http://intranet.eda.admin.ch/portal/page/kern/PG_KERN/10_PROZESSE/1015_UNTERSTUETZUNGSPROZESSE/101515_KOMMUNIKATION/10151518_FILMPRODUKTION

Films to be shown in the partner country

When are internal film productions appropriate?

Film productions are always expensive. To ensure that the effort will be worthwhile the following must be made absolutely clear:

› Who is the target audience?
› Where will the film be shown? On what occasions? Where can the film realistically be shown?
› Is it worthwhile, in view of the cost in time and money, or might there be a valid alternative medium for getting the message across?
☛ See "Deciding on the appropriate communication tool" at the beginning of this chapter.

2. In the case of external productions

Television and film crews planning a reportage either on their own initiative or commissioned by a TV station often make direct contact with a Swiss representation or Cooperation Office abroad. In such cases the applicable rules are those given in chapter 2 under "Procedure in the event of media inquiries". Namely:

› Information FDFA must be informed of all requests from Swiss or international (BBC, Reuters, Al Jazeera, etc.) television and film crews. Cooperation Offices and representations must first obtain the OK from Information FDFA before agreeing to participate in any TV or film projects.

› If Swiss television journalists planning to report on a project financed by Switzerland contact a local partner organisation, the latter must only obtain the approval of the Cooperation Office if Switzerland is among the main funders of the project. In such cases the Cooperation Office must get the OK from Information FDFA.

› In the case of requests from local or regional stations or film crews in, and targeting, the partner country the representation or Cooperation Office is free to decide on its own authority.

Please note:
› TV journalists may ask critical questions – it's part of their job.
› Even if a film shoot requires much patience and is time consuming, the Cooperation Office or representation should be as cooperative as possible with the TV or film crew. TV reportages are a good opportunity for making a broad public aware of Switzerland's activities.
› Face to face conversations on long overland journeys provide TV journalists with an opportunity to learn more about Swiss activities. Any misunderstandings and false impressions can be corrected.
› Even a film lasting just a few minutes takes several hours of preparation. A documentary of 20 minutes requires several days of filming.

Film productions make sense to achieve the following objectives:

› **Presentation of development cooperation themes or of SDC programmes and their effectiveness**
Films can provide concrete examples of SDC activities in partner countries and the challenges involved, while giving a voice to those benefiting from Swiss development cooperation, cooperation with Eastern Europe, and humanitarian aid. Films provide an opportunity to show what achievements have been made. Using real life examples, films can help demonstrate the importance of development cooperation.
Possible target audiences: domestic and foreign clients or guests of the Cooperation Offices, including other donor countries and organisations; participants in information events in Switzerland and in the partner countries; schools and universities in Switzerland and in the partner countries; and new staff members of a Cooperation Office or at Head Office.

› **Presentation of Switzerland's commitments abroad**
Films document Switzerland's foreign policy in action, focusing on specific thematic and geographical areas (peace building in general, the promotion of International Humanitarian Law in a given region, and so on).
Possible target audiences: domestic and foreign clients and guests of representations, including other foreign representations and multilateral organisations; participants in an information event in Switzerland or abroad; schools and universities in Switzerland and in the partner countries; and new staff members of a Cooperation Office, representation or at headquarters in Bern.

Procedures for internal productions

In the case of films whose main target audience is abroad project leadership will be in the hands either of a Cooperation Office or a representation, which appoints a project leader. This person will

> oversee the entire production
> work closely with the production team
> be responsible not only for the coordination of financing and logistics but also for discussing questions of content with the production team

The head of the film production team is responsible for translating the content and the chosen theme(s) into visual language. The Cooperation Office or representation project leader is responsible for ensuring that the content and messages in the film are factually correct.

Since each theme must be brought to life on the screen, film crews often choose a protagonist as the central figure to help convey the film's message. The project leader participates in the choice of protagonists and interviewees and works closely with the partner organisation responsible for implementation of the project being filmed.

The 10 key steps in internal film productions:

1. Definition of the key message

The subject matter and key (or "core") message must be precisely defined. Some key points:

> **Keep it simple**
> The message must be kept as simple as possible so that it can be presented in a way that is immediately understandable. Comparisons often help in the presentation of facts. What was it like then – what is it like now? What would be a good example, what a bad one?

> **Stick to basics**
> The film audience often knows very little about the subject matter. So the following questions need to be addressed: what is the present situation? What are the current challenges? Some interesting key facts? Why does it make sense for Switzerland to have a programme in this specific area? How exactly will Switzerland implement the programme?

> **Don't be overambitious**
> Golden rule: whatever cannot be summed up in three points is too complicated as a subject for a film.

A good film makes its audience think and has emotional impact.

2. Developing a basic concept

A concept must address the following points:

> Objectives of the film production
> Target audience
> Core messages: which messages (three at most) do you wish to convey?
> Duration of film (in minutes)
> Distribution channels and/or use on the Internet
> Language versions, subtitles, voice over
> Format, audiovisual quality
> Budget and cost ceiling (incl. translation costs)
> Production plan with details of final steps (editing, sound, subtitles, etc.)

Please note: In many countries prior authorisation is needed from the government for filming, either nationwide or in specific areas. This should be obtained well in advance.

3. Choice of production company

It is worthwhile to select a production company with care. Consult colleagues from other development cooperation organisations, seek advice from advertising agencies, television contacts, filmmakers and others. Who has had a particularly good, or a particularly bad, experience with a production company? Do you find earlier productions by this company convincing? Has the company produced films on a similar subject?

Please note: Collaboration with competent professionals able to stick to a deadline is often better than working with artists who are either unable to implement their ambitious ideas or to meet deadlines.

4. Estimating costs

Seek offers from two or three production companies, as the price differences can be considerable. It is a good idea to compare these with the cost of past film projects. Information FDFA can advise Cooperation Offices and representations that have had no experience of film projects.

5. Rules concerning copyright

In accordance with FDFA rules copyright lies with the contracting authority. All performance and broadcasting rights thus become the property of the latter (SDC, FDFA). Contracts that fail to mention the performance and broadcasting rights must be amended accordingly.

The production company must make all of the filmed material available for other uses. Material used for the film may not be used for other purposes by the producers or the production company. The contract should also specify what is to be done with original material not included in the final version of the film.

6. Signing of contract

The services to be provided by the producers must be defined as precisely as possible in the contract. The contact must also specify services to be provided by the Cooperation Office or representation (vehicles, accommodation, support staff, etc.). Travel and accommodation costs should be estimated as accurately as possible.

The contract must specify how the contracting authority is to be mentioned in the film credits. In most cases the SDC logo will be shown in the credits with the mention "On behalf of the SDC". The name of the SDC project leader is not mentioned in the credits.

7. Preparing the script

The production company is responsible for preparing the script. The script must be submitted to the project leader before shooting begins.

Who is to be the protagonist? Who is to be interviewed? What questions are to be put to the interviewees? Where is the filming to take place? etc.

Please note:
› The choice of protagonists and interviewees is governed by the same rules as apply in the choice of photo subjects for external publications (☛ see chapter 6, "Visual communication").
› The protagonists and interviewees selected should be comfortable and behave naturally in front of a camera and be able to express themselves clearly. Decide on the topic of the interview in advance and inform the interviewee. Interviews should not appear "choreographed".

8. Agreement on shooting schedule

The schedule for filming must be discussed and co-ordinated internally. The following should be taken into consideration when filming:

› Filming is time consuming, so allow sufficient time for each location.
› Film crews depend on light conditions; they often prefer sunrise and sunset when shooting outdoors.
› Give the film crew enough time to acclimatise itself, particularly at high altitudes or in tropical regions.
› Time must also be allowed for the film crew to rest and "recharge", and to view the filmed material.

9. Planning the shoot

Make out a checklist and prepare a precise, and realistic, shooting schedule.

Planning must take into consideration the climate, the rainy season, the condition of vegetation, public holidays, availability of transport, appointments with interviewees and with project staff, etc.

› Do you have all the important telephone numbers to enable you to contact interviewees and local NGOs involved in the filming?
› Can you be sure that the desired subject will be available at the chosen time?
› Has enough travel time been allowed to ensure arrival at the chosen landscape in time for the sunset?
› Are vaccinations required for the location where the shoot will take place?

If children or persons who are vulnerable and in need of protection (e.g. threatened minorities, HIV-positive individuals) are to be interviewed the project management must first obtain their informed consent. It is the responsibility of the project leader to inform interviewees what consequences might arise from their interview being aired on screen and seen by a broad audience.
(☛ See chapter 7 "Language: gender, minorities and vulnerable groups").

10. Final steps

Viewing: before the final cut the project leader views the film. At this stage the project leader can either decide to accept the film as is or ask for certain changes to be made.

Raw footage: the raw footage of the film must be added to the archives of the Cooperation Office or the representation and kept on a secure server for use in future film projects.

File copies: at least one copy of the film must be kept at the SDC division responsible and three copies forwarded to Information FDFA: Information FDFA, Bundeshaus West, 3003 Bern, Switzerland

Public events

Public events are any event held in a public place or in a location which is accessible to a general audience. While the media are invited to cover public events organised by the Cooperation Office or the representation certain events target the media specifically (e.g. media conferences or media field trips). (☛ See chapter 2 "Working with the media in the partner country".)

Public events are effective communication and awareness-raising tools because they reach a broader audience directly without the "filter" of the media. At public events the public can engage directly with development practitioners or members of Swiss representations.

Examples of public events in partner countries:
› Photo exhibit at a public library or in another public space (such as shopping areas), for example, on a Swiss-funded project which helps improve the living situations and addresses the rights of ethnic minorities in the partner country
› Stand at an agricultural fair, for example, on watershed management or drought-resistant seed varieties, or on specific projects on the occasion of an international day or year, e.g. Year of the Potato, World Water Day etc.
› Stand at an international or national conference taking place in the partner country, for example, on a psycho-social support programme for AIDS-affected children at an AIDS conference.
› A public discussion or a seminar at a university on a particular topic to which various speakers are invited or includes a panel discussion; for example, on the impact of the Geneva Conventions, the application of international humanitarian law, etc.

Points to consider when organising public events

Before the decision is taken to organise a public event in the partner country, clarify communication goals and target audiences.

› What is your message?

› What do you want the audience to know, understand or learn – and is the event you have chosen the best way to achieve this goal?

› Are there specific groups within the general public that you want to reach – are there venues where you can hold the event where these groups would best be reached?

Public events have to be carefully planned and budgeted. Regardless of the type of public event, you must make a careful action plan which lists tasks, deadlines and responsibilities.

Once you have set a date and found a location for the event (remember to check whether you need permission for events in public spaces!), work backwards from the date of the event to decide what needs to be done and by when.

For example:
› Printing and mounting of photos for an exhibit
› Writing, editing, translating of information material
› Drafting and finalising invitations or announcements
› Inviting keynote speakers or panellists and organising logistics (accommodation, transport, etc)
› Hiring sound equipment and organising translators, catering, transport, etc.

🔅 **Please note:** Each event is different – but all events require careful planning well ahead of time and with special attention to details.

Giving presentations

Presentations – on Swiss-supported projects or themes, and aims of Swiss foreign policy – are a key part of any media conference, public event, seminar, media or VIP field trip. Clear presentations targeted at the audience ensure the success of such events.

Share these guidelines for preparing and giving presentations with your partner organisations that may be called upon to give presentations during VIP or field visits or at conferences.

1. Know your topic

If you are confident about your topic, your presentation is more likely to go well. Know your topic by having discussions with others working in the same field, doing research and keeping up-to-date on the topic. Anticipate questions people may ask.

2. State your objective

Be clear on your presentation's main objective. Being clear about your objective helps you to choose what to include – and what information to exclude.

It is vital that you are able to clearly state your main objective. You may find that you come up with several objectives. Try to set priorities. Your presentation is likely to be more successful if you can say: "My main objective today is to…" Your objective will determine how you structure your presentation.

3. Know your audience

Are you addressing experts who know your topic inside out? A lay audience? A mixed audience? Pitch your tone to the audience. If your audience comprises experts and lay people, determine which is your principal target audience at the event. Use the Audience Analysis matrix in the Annex to help you define and prioritise your target audiences.

Treat the media as you would a lay audience. With high-level visits from Bern you can assume some prior knowledge. Regardless of who is in the audience, keep jargon to a minimum.

4. Know your presentation environment

Find out:

> What, if anything, will happen at the meeting before and after your presentation? Are you the first speaker after lunch or a long drive?

> What venue you will present in, and how it will be set up?

> What equipment you need, e.g. overhead projector, plug access, extension cords, flip chart stand, computer, projector, etc. If you have particular needs for your presentation, let the organisers know in advance.

5. Draft an outline

Successful presentations are rarely based on a single draft. Rework your presentation until you are satisfied.

Present your key points in a logical order. Remind yourself of your presentation's objective.

If you struggle to explain a complex issue or have a mountain of information and find it difficult to find the focus for your presentation, imagine you are telling your mother/brother/friend about this topic. What would interest them? How would they best understand the topic?

Some key points on presentations:

› You can reuse previous presentations but your audience will be different – adapt your presentation to fit the audience. Update it with new information.

› With your introduction you should try to grab your audience's attention. Perhaps you can use an interesting "before and after"-statistic to catch their interest? A related anecdote or human interest story to give the issue "a face"? If you are one of several speakers, you can find a way to link your presentation to the one before yours.

› Choose a powerful conclusion. Avoid summarising what you said, but you can briefly recapitulate the key point(s). Or perhaps you can link back to the introduction? Or end with a thought or challenge to the audience? Remember: it is the last message with which you leave the audience.

› Stick to the length you were given. Nothing annoys and bores an audience more than long speeches that go over the allocated time. Practise your presentation and time it. Also practise your speaking skills – monotone voices tend to put listeners to sleep.

› If you can, don't stand in one place during the entire presentation. Move from time to time and make eye contact with audience members.

A few words on PowerPoint:

Nowadays few conferences or seminars take place without PowerPoint presentations. While PowerPoint is a useful presentation tool remember: it is a visual aid that is intended to support your spoken presentation, not replace it. Therefore:

› Limit the number of slides (ideally no more than 10)
› Do not overload slides with too much information: maximum 3–5 points per slide, each stated as a simple sentence or using keywords.
› If you use a graphic or show a chart, make sure it can be easily read and quickly understood (☛ see chapter 6 "Visual communication")
› Sound or visual effects should be kept to a minimum as they can distract from the presentation. Use such gadgets only if you wish to get the audience's attention and to draw it to an important point you are making. Sound or visual effects can be used to inject some humour into a presentation – but they need to be appropriate to the setting.
› Include relevant photos
› Use the PowerPoint templates with the correct logo (☛ See chapter 6 "Visual communication")

NB: This chapter will be updated in accordance with the changes effected by the Project WebEDA once it has come to a conclusion in 2013/2014.

Chapter 4:
Communicating on the Web

In this chapter:

❯ The Cooperation Office and representation websites

❯ Writing for the Web

❯ Photographs and multimedia

❯ Social media: guidelines for Facebook, Twitter & Co
(NB: information will be provided at a later stage)

The Cooperation Office website (CoofWeb) and representation website are central communication channels. With relatively low costs you can provide information to a large audience, local and international.

Your websites are directed at a broad audience with a range of interests and varying levels of background knowledge about Swiss development cooperation and Switzerland's commitment abroad. It is one of the key tasks of communication officers to ensure the information on the website is up-to-date, user-friendly and topical.

Advertise the Cooperation Office or representation website in all your media releases and information material. Ask partner organisations to place a link from their website to your Cooperation Office website and to use your website address in their publications and information material on Swiss-funded projects.

Maintaining the website

The structures, contents and responsibilities of Cooperation Office websites (known as CoofWebs) and representation websites differ. The following sections therefore cover the CoofWeb and the representation website separately. The section "Writing for the Web" applies to all SDC and FDFA websites.

The CoofWeb

Swiss Cooperation Offices are responsible for the maintenance and content of their websites. They write, edit and upload all information themselves.

According to statistics, between approximately 35-65% of CoofWeb users are from the partner country. Approximately 10-40% of users are from Switzerland. With such a varied audience a clear structure and easy-to-understand texts are critical.

Texts on the CoofWeb are produced in the Cooperation Office's working language (English, French or Spanish). You may choose to translate and publish key texts and news items into the partner country's national language.

☞ For support contact:
web@deza.admin.ch
Tel: +41 31 325 56 18

The representation website

The representations are responsible for the maintenance and content of their websites. They write and edit all information themselves. The Web team of Information FDFA can provide support during crises or if the representations are shorthanded.

The websites of the Swiss representations abroad are all found under "Representations" on the FDFA's main website: www.eda.admin.ch. They all follow the same layout and basic structure. Each representation uses a short URL for their external communication, e.g. www.eda.admin.ch/paris or www.eda.admin.ch/nairobi.

Representations may produce their own texts (e.g. information on representation-sponsored events, updates on crisis situations in the host country, etc) to supplement the basic information. Representations enter the texts they wish to post on their websites in the Content Management System. The texts are checked in Bern before they are uploaded.

☞ For support contact:
internet@eda.admin.ch.

Writing for the Web

Writing for the Web is not the same as writing for a print publication. Here some facts you should be aware of when writing web-based texts:

› Online texts are read 25% more slowly than texts on paper.

› 80% of readers of online texts "scan". Only 20% read an online text word for word.

› In less than one second a user scans a text from the top left-hand side of the screen to the top right-hand side and then down. If a user begins to scroll it means, "I'm interested".

› But: only 22% scroll down to the bottom of the page.

What does this mean for you?

Producing texts for the Internet means writing and editing them in a manner that considers the specificities of reading texts online. It also means: do not copy and paste texts from print products (credit proposals, brochures, and the like) on to the website. If you do wish to use a printed text for your website you must edit the text to make it more web-friendly.

Writing resources

☛ For guidelines on writing for the Web, see the *FDFA Webtext Guidelines*:
Processes & instruments > Support Processes > Communication > External communication[1]

☛ There are numerous books on the market for writing in English, English usage, etc.. Here are a few recommendations:
› *The Elements of Style*, W. Strunk and E.B. White.
› *On Writing Well: The Classic Guide to Writing Nonfiction*, William Zinsser
› *Style Guide*, The Economist
› *Troublesome Words*, Bill Bryson

☛ For definitions of commonly used (and over-used) development terms:
› DevelopmentSpeak (BBC): http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/specials/916_dev_speak/index.shtml
There you will also find glossaries for migration and climate change terms.
› Jargon Finder (The Communications Network) http://www.comnetwork.org/category/jargon/

Photographs and multimedia

For the use of photographs, please refer to "Guidelines for use of photo material" in chapter 6 "Visual communication".
NB: Information on the new multimedia library will be provided at a later stage.

Social media

NB: Once the findings of the e-Diplomacy pilot programme have been released, this section will provide information and guidelines on the usage of social media, including Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, etc. in the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA.

Key points for writing and editing online texts

Headings/titles	Choose an intelligible, stand-alone heading/title that clearly identifies the subject matter. Text headings are also used as navigation titles in the navigation bar.
Structure	Write texts in "inverted pyramid" style: the most important information comes at the top, in descending order of importance. Avoid chronology (i.e. starting with "In 1972 Switzerland...")
Length	Online texts should be a short as possible – remember less than one-fifth of readers scroll to the bottom of a page. The less scrolling a text requires, the better.
Active voice	Active voice means sentences are direct and more interesting to read. Sentences in passive voice tend to seem detached and dull. "Switzerland funds the project with CHF 100'000" is better than "The project is funded by Switzerland with CHF 100'000." Active voice also means avoiding "This project aims to contribute to..." – the project either does x or y or it does not.
Tonality	The tone of all SDC and FDFA texts (online and in print) is straight-forward and neutral. Plain language does not mean dull language. Through careful word selection, sentence construction, phrasing and consideration for rhythm (variation of shorter and longer sentences), texts become interesting to read.
Lead	The lead (first paragraph) contains the main message of the text. It is written much like a lead in a news article. A lead is not a summary. The 5Ws+H (Who, What, When, Where, Why, How) must be answered in your text, but the lead only focuses on the most important Ws. Aim for maximum 450 characters (with spaces).
Sentence length	A sentence should generally be no longer than 10–15 words.
Paragraph length	A paragraph should not be longer than 3–5 lines. Remember that a paragraph on your computer screen on an A4-sized sheet will be much longer when reduced to a column online. One statement or thought per paragraph.
Cross-headers/sub-headings	Use cross-headers (also referred to as subheadings) to break up texts. Cross-headers are reader-friendly and useful for scanners and scrollers.
Acronyms	Spell out acronyms on first mention, or "translate" them. For example: if for space reasons you can't write out the official meaning of UNHCR – Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees – you can use "UN Refugee Agency".
Lists	Bullet point lists are reader friendly. But don't overuse lists. One list with 3–5 bullets is usually enough in a shorter text. Use numbered lists only when the preceding text refers to, for example, "Five key points": 1. ..., 2. ..., etc.
Links and hyperlinks	Always provide links at the end of the text to documents related to the topic and trusted websites (e.g. of UN agencies, partner organisations or pages on SDC's main website). Do not place hyperlinks in the text as these lead readers away from your website. Precede each link with a few descriptive words: "Media release: …" or "Swiss platform for Rio+20: …" Don't write: "Link: ….." or "More information: …"
What to avoid	Fillers like "however", "furthermore" and "nonetheless". Is the meaning of the sentence still clear without the filler? Then delete it. Jargon. What is meant by "grey water"? Can you use another word or phrase instead of "capacity building" to explain what you mean? Remember, online texts are also read by lay persons. Long sentences with multiple clauses. Adjectives. Use only sparingly. Rather than writing that a project or intervention had "a significant impact", state what impact it had. Redundancies. For example, "very unique", "very comprehensive" – something is either unique or comprehensive or it's not. Do not use italics in online texts.

Chapter 5:
Communication in crisis situations

In this chapter:

Floods, earthquakes, terrorist attacks, corruption allegations, major accidents: all these constitute a crisis.

Crises are events which cannot be controlled and which develop their own momentum. What can be controlled is the communication about the crisis. Because crises generally occur unexpectedly, it is important to be prepared for any eventuality.

Don't wait for the crisis to happen before you put plans in place for how to handle crisis communication. Good communication contributes to overcoming the crisis and avoiding an escalation.

What to do before, during and after a crisis

Before: preparing for crises

Once a crisis occurs decisions have to be made and action taken under increasing pressure. Journalists, relatives and friends may call. You will need to coordinate with and speak to various authorities, counterparts and headquarters in Bern. Partner organisations may also be implicated – either as victims of natural disasters or because they receive Swiss funding.

Quick, well-founded decisions and actions can be taken only if there are clear directives which can be referred to on short notice. Representations and Cooperation Offices have a crisis management plan which guides them through crisis situations. Communication is an essential part of crisis management.

A crisis communication plan should include:
> Allocation of tasks: who is to be in charge of media queries? Who is allowed to speak to the media? What happens if the most senior manager is absent?

> Clarification of responsibilities

> The procedure to be followed when a crisis occurs

> List of all people who must be contacted in a crisis with up-to-date contact details.

Discuss crisis communication procedure with the representation or Cooperation Office in your partner country and with your partner organisations.

Please note: It is essential that family members of victims of accidents, attacks or natural disasters are notified first. Family members should not find out what has happened to their relatives through the media.

During: how to handle a crisis

If a Cooperation Office or a representation becomes embroiled in a crisis (e.g. accusations of corruption or mismanagement) the affected office should inform the other Swiss representations in the country or the region so they don't find out about the accusations from the media.

⚠️ As a rule:
> In general, Information FDFA handles media queries from Switzerland as well as from international media (BBC World, CNN, Al Jazeera, Financial Times, etc.).

> The Cooperation Office or representation handles media queries from the partner country, including foreign correspondents based there.

1. Inform headquarters in Bern and Information FDFA
When a crisis strikes, inform Bern: headquarters and Information FDFA.

2. Appoint a media officer
The media and communication officer will be responsible for having the media contact list at hand, fielding media queries and coordinating communication work, internal and external, together with senior management.

As a next step, the decision-making process and information channels must be defined. Who makes contact with whom and how is information gathered internally?

> If the media pressure becomes overwhelming, ask Bern for support.
Bern can send reinforcements to assist your office with communication and security issues. In certain situations you can also refer all media queries from foreign media outlets to Bern. These decisions are taken at headquarters in coordination with Information FDFA.

> Make sure up-to-date information is placed on the website throughout the crisis at manageable intervals.
> This will allow you to refer journalists to your website for answers to the most frequently asked questions thus reducing pressure on your office.
> If necessary, ask Information FDFA for support and coordinate the updating of information with the Web team in Bern.

3. Determine a course of action

The course of action will be determined by the FDFA's Security Principles and the crisis response plans. The Crisis Management Centre is responsible for all matters related to security and crisis management for Switzerland's representations and Cooperation Offices.

Ensure that communication is always included in your management of a crisis situation.

☛ For more information, visit: http://intranet. eda.admin.ch –> Processes & instruments –> Core processes –> Consular processes –> Travel recommendations and crisis response –> Crisis response plans (representations)[1]

☛ Contact for the Crisis Management Centre: kmzkrisenmanagement-zentrum@eda.admin.ch

4. Prepare Briefing notes

Briefing notes are internal papers which are written in collaboration with Information FDFA and relevant units at SDC and FDFA headquarters in Bern. Briefing Notes are designed to ensure that the "one-voice principle" is adhered to by all involved FDFA units or other affected departments, in Switzerland and abroad. They are not distributed to the media.

At all times, but particularly during crises, it is essential that the "one-voice-principle" is applied and followed.

If a partner organisation is affected by a crisis, consult official statements with the organisation to avoid contradictions.

☛ See "Briefing Notes" and "One-voice principle" in chapter 2

5. Don't hide from the media

At times of crisis, you should make your presence felt within the media but only when you have solid information and a clear overview. It may be more efficient to hold a media conference in order to provide all the media with available and verified facts at the same time, rather than handling media queries individually.

⚠ As a rule, when speaking to the media:
> Abide by the "one-voice" principle and the wording of the Briefing notes.
> Emphasise what is being done, steps that are being taken.
> Do not speculate or second guess: only provide verified information.
> Do not place blame on anyone, whether individuals, authorities or organisations.
> Show compassion with victims.
> Avoid "officialese": use clear, jargon-free language.
> Speak only about matters relating to your area of expertise: you are not spokespeople for local authorities, other donor agencies or other countries' representations.
> You are always speaking as a representative of Switzerland, never in your personal capacity.

After: follow-up after the crisis

After a crisis has ended or died down, hold an internal debriefing session (including both the Cooperation Office and representation). Discuss openly how the crisis plan worked and what could be improved.

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1   http://intranet.eda.admin.ch/portal/page/kern/PG_KERN/10_ PROZESSE/1010_LEISTUNGSPROZESSE/101015_KONSULARI- SCHE_PROZESSE/10101563_REISEHINWEISE_KRISENMANAG- MENT

Consular protection

Consular protection: what it is

Swiss nationals abroad can receive support from their home country when asserting or defending their rights; this support and assistance is known as consular protection.

Swiss diplomatic missions abroad extend consular protection by intervening with the competent authorities of the host state. Cases of consular protection include, for example, arrests of Swiss citizens for criminal offences in the partner country or Swiss citizens falling victim to a crime abroad.

> **Swiss Cooperation Office**: If a consular protection case is brought to the attention of any of your staff members, they should refer the callers to the nearest Swiss representation. Refer all enquiries, including media queries, to the nearest responsible Swiss representation.

> **Swiss representation**: Consular protection cases are reported to the consular directorate which develops an official position together with Information FDFA for media enquiries. Contact: kd@eda.admin.ch.

☞ More information on consular protection: http://intranet.eda.admin.ch –> Processes & instruments –> Core processes –> Consular processes –> Consular protection [2]

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[2]   http://intranet.eda.admin.ch/portal/page/kern/PG_KERN/10_PROZESSE/1010_LEISTUNGSPROZESSE/101015_KONSULARI-SCHE_PROZESSE/10101560_KONSULARISCHER_SCHUTZ?_mode=16

Chapter 6:
Visual Communication

In this chapter:

"Visual communication" is the term used to describe information imparted through visual aids. These can include a range of images: photographs, graphics, signs, design, illustrations etc. In many instances, visual communication complements communication through text.

For the purposes of this handbook, we focus on three aspects of visual communication which are most relevant to communication in the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs: Corporate design ("CD Bund") and the federal logo, photos and photo material, and graphics, including charts and diagrams.

The Corporate Design and logo

What is Corporate Design?

The term Corporate Design (CD) refers to a part of the corporate identity and encapsulates the total corporate image of a company or organisation. It includes both the design of its communication (logo, letterheads, publications, Internet appearance etc.) as well as how an organisation presents itself to the public.

"CD Bund"
This term refers to the Corporate Design of Switzerland's Confederation (Bund = German for Federation, i.e. Switzerland's Confederation).

⚠ The "CD Bund" rules apply to all seven departments comprising the Federal Administration, including the FDFA.

What are the basic rules regarding the "CD Bund"?

The rules governing the "CD Bund" apply to business cards, signage on the exterior of representations and Cooperation Offices, use of the logo on all information materials, correspondence, banners, documents etc. as well as the design of publications. (☛ See "Publications" in chapter 3)

☛ A number of manuals provide detailed information on the rules governing application of the official Corporate Design. These manuals can be found on the following websites:

EDA Intranet: http://intranet.eda.admin.ch –>"Processes&Instruments" –> "Support processes" –> "Communication" –> "The Corporate Design of the Federal Administration FDFA" –> "CD Bund for representations" [1]

SDC Intraweb: "Key documents" –> "Working aids" –> "Communication aids" –> "Visual Communication team" [2]

Using the logo correctly

The logo must be used according to the rules on all business cards, information material, correspondence, banners, publications, caps, pens etc. It is part of the communication officer's tasks to ensure that the logo appears correctly on all materials, including those produced by partner organisations about projects that receive Swiss funding (e.g. project factsheets, brochures, etc.).

⚠ One of the most important rules is:
The logo is to be treated as one unit, which includes the Swiss coat of arms and the text in Switzerland's four official languages (German="Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft"= Swiss Confederation). The elements of the logo (such as the coat of arms) cannot be used on their own.

The "Logo Manual" found on the FDFA Intranet and the SDC Intraweb explains all the rules in detail (see links on the left).

☛ Swiss Cooperation Offices will also find useful information on SDC's Intraweb: https://intraweb. deza.admin.ch –> "Communication Working Aids" –> "Visual Communication team" –> "Corporate Design for Coofs" –> "Logos for Coofs". [3]

What rules must partner organisations be aware of?

The work performed by SDC partner organisations contributes to Switzerland's visibility in the host country. It is therefore important that partner organisations acknowledge Switzerland's contribution by using the federal logo on all of their media releases and information materials published about Swiss-funded projects.

Decisions regarding Switzerland's visibility must be made on a case-per-case basis in conjunction with headquarters.

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[1] http://intranet.eda.admin.ch/portal/page/kern/PG_KERN/10_PROZESSE/1015_UNTERSTUETZUNGSPROZESSE

[2] https://intraweb.deza.admin.ch/en/Home/Key_documents

[3] https://intraweb.deza.admin.ch/en/Home/Key_documents/Working_Aids/Communication_Working_Aids/Visual_Communication_team/Coprorate_Design_for_Coofs/Logos_for_Coofs

The Communication Officer should communicate expectations and rules to the partner organisation regarding use of the logo and the mention of Swiss support. The following questions are used to assess each individual situation:

> Who is the author, publisher? Whose views are being represented?

> Who is the target audience?

> What is the extent of Switzerland's involvement and what role does Switzerland play?

> What is the political, societal and historical situation in the recipient's country?

> Does Switzerland want to maintain a high or a low profile?

☞ You will find more information on Switzerland's visibility abroad on SDC's Intraweb: https://intraweb.deza.admin.ch –> "Communication Working Aids" –> "The SDC Corporate Design" –> "Visibility" [4]

Business cards

The most important features of business cards in accordance with the "CD Bund":

> The Confederation logo is coloured

> The card is in one language

> The front side shows: name, function and the representation or Cooperation Office. All other information is shown on the back

Who produces business cards?
You can choose to have business cards produced in the partner country. Work with a reliable printer and graphic designer and make sure they receive the correct specifications for size, colour etc. (check the Logo Manual). For more information on producing business cards in the partner country see "CD Bund for representations" in the FDFA Intranet.

If it is not possible to have the business cards locally produced, you can use the order form for business cards abroad to order business cards from FDFA Procurement.

☞ You can find the order form on the FDFA Intranet: http://intranet.eda.admin.ch –>
"Processes & Instruments" –> "Support Processes" –> "Communication" –> "CD Bund for representations"

☞ SDC staff order business cards via the business card tool in the CD-Box on the SDC Intraweb: https://intraweb.deza.admin.ch –>"Communication Working Aids" –> "Visual Communication team" –> Instructions and tools –> CD-Box [5]

☼ If you have questions, ask!
As you can see, the correct use of the CD Bund and federal logo can be complicated and depend a great deal on the country where you work or a particular project.

Please contact cd-bund@eda.admin.ch. The Visual Communication team will be glad to help.

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[4]   https://intraweb.deza.admin.ch/de/Home/Leitdokumente/ Arbeitshilfen/Arbeitshilfen_fuer_Kommunikation/Visuelle_Kommunikation/Das_Corporate_Design_der_DEZA/Visibilitaet

[5]   https://intraweb.deza.admin.ch/de/Home/Leitdokumente/ Arbeitshilfen/Arbeitshilfen_fuer_Kommunikation/Visuelle_Kommunikation/Anleitungen_und_Werkzeuge/CD_Box_Datenbank_ mit_Photos_und_Visitenkarten_Tool?targetGroupID=1

Guidelines for use of photo material

The work of the SDC in the field and events of representations in the host countries are documented photographically. The Swiss Cooperation Offices and representations organise and archive good quality photographs for their own use in publication materials and on their websites as well as for the use of the headquarters in Bern.

Headquarters often needs good quality photographs for publications and on the Web. The photographs illustrate the different types of activities Switzerland is engaged in abroad. It is therefore important that photographs are archived systematically so they can be retrieved easily.

Amateur or professional?
While good quality amateur photographs can be used as illustrations on occasion, experience has shown that hiring a professional photographer to document key Swiss-funded or -sponsored projects, activities and events in the partner country is a good investment. In Switzerland, most illustrations for external publications are taken by professional photographers.

When looking to hire a photographer for an assignment in the partner country, speak to other agencies, representations and partner organisations for recommendations. Note the names and contact details of photographers with whom you have had good experiences in the Communication File. (☞ See "The Communication File" in chapter 1).

Archiving photos
In the partner country, the Cooperation Offices and project desk officers in Bern as well as the representations are responsible for the production and archiving of picture material.

💡 NB: From mid 2013, the Cooperation Offices and representations can upload photographs themselves in to the new multimedia library. All units of the FDFA will have access to this library that replaces all previous photo libraries. (☞ www.eda.admin. ch/mediathek).

Captions
All archived photographs require a caption that includes:

› Who and what activity is being depicted in the photo?

› Where was the picture taken (country, city and/ or province)?

› When was the picture taken?

› The full name of the photographer (see also "copyright" in this section)

› If relevant, also include the project name

› It is also important to attribute "key words" to the photo. The key words are needed to locate photos in the multimedia library during a search. The key words are stored together with the image. This information is known as "metadata" and can be written into the image properties or, while uploading the photos into the multimedia library. Simply fill in the corresponding fields.

Technical specifications
Photographs taken with a standard digital camera can be used for publication on the Internet and for simple illustrations in Office documents.

For high-quality publications, resolutions and lens quality are important factors. For optimal results in offset printing, a picture of the size of 10 x 15cm needs to have 1181 x 1772 pixels; for a full A4 page, 2516 x 3579 pixels.

Always keep the original image, in its original size. Photos should be scanned and electronically stored in jpeg (medium- to high-quality setting) or Tif format. Minimum scanning resolution should be 300dpi.

Collect good material and store it on a hard drive. Hard drives must be backed up regularly. Beware: the "life" of a CD Rom is maximum 10–15 years.

Negatives and slides
Negatives or slides may be given to the Cooperation Office or representation or remain with the photographer. In the latter case, the photographer may publish these images elsewhere. Should the negatives remain with the photographer, then it is important to agree on the author's rights. (☞ See "Copyright" in this section).

Content of photos

People and their activities should be at the centre of the photographs documenting Switzerland's engagement in the partner country. This is of particular importance for images of Switzerland's development cooperation.

Dos:
> Show people in their environment engaged in an activity: planting, harvesting, drawing water, constructing something, pursuing a pastime, at their work place; children in school, studying, at play, doing household chores, etc.

> Focus on real-life events and situations. Photographs depicting personal fates have a greater impact than photographs focusing on aesthetic beauty.

> When illustrating themes (climate change, governance, food security) aim for a range of images, with people and without. For example: show images illustrating the impact of pollution on city dwellers or of people participating in an election as well as of smog hanging over a city or of a wall covered in election posters.

> When photographing events (handing-over ceremonies, events hosted by a representation) avoid taking shots of large groups. Rather, focus in on the main actors, e.g. during a presentation of an award, a speech, and take additional photos of people's reactions, conversations during a party etc. Don't try to pack everything into one picture.

Don'ts:
> SDC does not publicise photos of people passively awaiting aid, i.e. the stereotypical images of the poor and hungry so often seen in the media.

> Avoid photographs that show a tool or building without people. For example: photograph a silo or brick press being operated by someone.

Ethical standards

Ethical standards come into play when photographing people belonging to vulnerable and at-risk population groups. These include, among others:

> People who are excluded from society or subject to harassment and abuse due to their religious beliefs, sexual orientation or because they belong to a minority.

> Women and men who have been raped or sexually abused, for example during crises or conflicts.

> Children

> People living with HIV or other stigmatising illnesses (e.g. leprosy, albinism)

> Mentally handicapped people

Utmost care must be taken to protect the individuals shown in the photographs. The highest ethical standards apply. "Do no harm" is the guiding principle.

These standards apply regardless of whether the photograph is to be published in the partner country or abroad. In today's globalised world and with increasing access to the World Wide Web, no guarantee can be given that a photograph published on the SDC website or in a FDFA publication will not be seen by someone in a partner country who recognises the photo's subject.

⚠ Always consider: What are the possible consequences of a person being identified in a photograph?
Vulnerable subjects must give informed consent before being photographed. Explain the planned and potential uses of the photographs to the subjects. These rules are particularly important when photographing children. (☛ See Annex)

Copyright

In the matter of copyright of photo material there are four categories:

1. Photos taken by staff members of the SDC or FDFA
If staff members take photos during private or work-related trips and offer pictures for use by the SDC or the FDFA, they become part of the multimedia library of the FDFA and the copyright belongs to the FDFA/SDC. In the captions of these photographs the credit reads "©SDC/[name of photographer]".

2. Photos taken by professional photographers
When hiring a professional photographer the copyright of the photographic material produced during the assignment must be clarified in the contract. Standard practise is: the copyright belongs to FDFA/SDC and the photographs are placed in the multimedia library. The photos may be used in all SDC and FDFA publications and on the websites. The photographer is credited in each use of a photo.

3. Photos from the Internet
Photographs published on the Internet are copyright-protected and may only be used with express permission of the photographer. The only exception: the photographer has been dead for more than 70 years (the same applies to art work). If you wish to use a photo from the Internet on a Cooperation Office or representation website you must contact the photographer to get permission. You may have to pay for the rights to use the photograph.

4. Photos from photo agencies
You can purchase pictures from professional photo agencies, e.g. Keystone, Reuters, Panos, etc. The distinction is made between "rights-managed" and "rights-free" pictures.
When you purchase a photo on a "rights-managed" (RM) basis, you have to specify where and how you will use the photograph (on the cover of a publication and on the website; as part of a PowerPoint presentation at a conference; as an illustration for an invitation, etc.).
When you purchase a photo on a "rights-free" (RF) basis, you can use the photo as often as you wish.

Use of graphs, charts and diagrams

Numerous types of graphs exist: pie charts, bar graphs, line graphs, tables, diagrams. These can be a reader-friendly way to package information and an excellent graphic design element in texts. These, too, are a form of visual communication.

When to use a chart or graph?
Graphs, charts and the like are most useful when you need to present data. If you want to show a change, a trend or illustrate results of a survey etc, charts or graphs can be far easier to understand than several paragraphs of text. Graphs or charts present facts in visual form.

Packaging information in a short table can also be a useful way to present information.

The type of graph or chart you use depends on the data you want to present. Microsoft Word and PowerPoint offer a number of different types of charts and graphs.

What to consider when preparing a chart or graph?
› Your main concern must be readability. Is the data clearly presented? Can readers understand the graph on its own without needing a lot of additional information?

› Every chart or graph needs:
› A title: give a heading that explains what the graph or chart is about, e.g. "Proportion of employed people living on less than USD 1.25 per day".
› Source: who is the originator of the data? If you reproduce charts from other sources (Human Development Report, UN agencies, etc), you must credit these sources.
› When using charts or graphs in a PowerPoint presentation, make sure the information can be read from a distance. Bar graphs, pie charts or a one-line graph (e.g. depicting a trend) are more effective for PowerPoint presentations than, for instance, cluttered multi-line graphs that try pack too much information into one graph.

☛ See PowerPoint presentations under "Giving presentations" in chapter 3.

💡 A suggestion: Show the chart or graph you intend to use to a person in your office who is not familiar with the topic. Is the information clearly presented? Does he or she understand the point the chart is trying to make? If not, make the necessary adjustments before publishing.

Chapter 7
Language: gender, minorities and vulnerable groups

In this chapter:

> Gender-appropriate language

> Sensitive language

> Multilingualism

Equality between men and women has been anchored in Switzerland's Constitution since 1981. In order to make this equality amendment a reality, measures had to be taken in various spheres of society: in the work place, in politics, education etc. Language runs like a red thread through all these areas. Informed by the equality amendment, gender-appropriate language is used throughout the federal administration. In 2007 a law was passed to ensure that Federal authorities make every effort to use gender equitable formulations in all documents (Sprachengesetz, BBI 2007 6951, 5 October 2007).

These laws and rules apply to the internal and external communication of Swiss Cooperation Offices and representations abroad. Furthermore, in our work we not only strive to use language that is gender equal and non-sexist but also culturally sensitive and respectful of minorities and vulnerable groups.

What is meant by "gender-appropriate language"?

Language is one means by which the constitutional equality between men and women becomes a reality. Particularly in languages which use the male and female form, for example of professions, it is no longer acceptable to assume women are included in the male form – today it is appropriate and necessary to name women and men explicitly.

Sometimes space constraints require us to use other formulations, but we should always strive to use either gender-neutral or gender-equal language. With the consistent application of gender-equal and -appropriate language we make a contribution to the realisation of the equality between men and women.

☛ Note to German and French speakers: On the website of the Federal Chancellery you will find guidelines for gender-appropriate, non-sexist language which you can download from the site.

› „Geschlechtergerechte Sprache: Leitfaden zum geschlechtergerechten Formulieren im Deutschen" (German): http://www.bk.admin.ch –> Dokumentation –> Sprachen –> deutschsprachige Dokumente
› « Guide de formulation non sexiste des textes administratifs et législatifs de la Confédération » (French): http://www.bk.admin.ch –> Documentation –> Langues –> Documents en français

Steps to achieving gender equality in external and internal communication

❯ Make it a matter of routine to think, speak and write with both sexes in mind.

❯ Quote experts of both sexes in reports, articles for the Web, Briefs, newsletters etc.

❯ Avoid clichés or stereotypes. Do not use outdated speech or stereotypical references which belittle or defame men or women or do not take them seriously. Don't always quote women when you are interviewing victims and men when you are interviewing someone who is in a management position. Strive for gender balance.

❯ In written or spoken texts (e.g. in voice-overs for films) formulations that try to achieve gender neutrality or appropriateness can sometimes appear awkward or forced. Rework those sentences. Gender-appropriate language should sound natural and sincere. Sometimes it is simpler not to specify the sex or to use the plural form to avoid having to use "he/she".
For example: "When inviting journalists, make sure they bring their press cards." Not: "When inviting a journalist, make sure he/she brings his/her press card."

❯ Do not use photos, illustrations and caricatures that promote clichés or outdated role models. Also show women in professional and leadership positions and men as carers. (☛ See also chapter 6)

❯ Consider both men and women in the planning and conception of reports, lectures, exhibitions, seminars and projects.

❯ Make sure to include a balance between men and women and their various points of view in working or project groups. When putting together a working group, avoid appointing a "token woman" or a "token man" who is supposed to represent the views of their entire sex.

Using titles

Do not use "Mr.", "Ms.", "Miss" or "Mrs." in articles and texts for the Web.

Also omit Mrs., Mr. or Ms. in cases such as this: "Guests of honour were the political science professor Sonja Brunner-Senti and the psychologist Samuel Brunner" and not: "Guests of honour were Mrs. Professor Brunner and her husband."

In invitations, when writing an email or letter use "Dr", "Mr" or "Ms" etc.

On name tags or name plates (e.g. for a seminar or media conference) or in cultures or situations when it would be considered rude not to, using titles is optional.

Titles and honorific titles

For VIP and state functions, check with protocol in Bern or the Swiss representation in the partner country regarding the proper usage of titles or honorific titles.

Please note:

› Nowadays it is common in the English-speaking world to use "Ms" when addressing a woman (in person or in writing) whose marital status you do not know. Depending on the cultural context and practices in the partner country this may not be appropriate. But for women in Europe and North America it is common practise to use "Ms" and not "Mrs" when you don't know the marital status of the woman being addressed.
› If staff members of Swiss Cooperation Offices or representations have first names which do not clearly indicate the sex of the person, it is advisable to add Mr, Mrs or Ms in the signature of your email. The same applies to persons who are given as contacts for the media on media invitations or on websites.

Some examples:
› Taylor Thomkins (Ms.) – "Taylor" is both a female and male given name in anglophone countries.
› Andrea Bugatti (Mr.) – "Andrea" is a common given name for men in Italy, but more common as a woman's first name in most German- and English-speaking countries.
› Gift Mashaba (Mr.) – Here, too, the sex of the person is not immediately clear when seeing the name in print.

Sensitive language

As government representatives, SDC and Swiss embassies should set high standards in terms of language used when writing and speaking about cultural issues, minorities and vulnerable groups. The language used should always be non-stigmatising and sensitive.

HIV/AIDS

In many countries where Switzerland is engaged in development cooperation, HIV and AIDS affect large parts of the population, both directly and indirectly. According to the United Nations, "language has a strong influence on attitudes towards HIV/AIDS and people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS".

Keep yourself informed about appropriate language. Always consider what effect your chosen words may have and whether they may be considered judgemental by people living with HIV. Trust sites like UNAIDS or WHO for the latest information on HIV and AIDS.

Avoid stigmatising or inaccurate language when writing or speaking about HIV/AIDS. Here some examples taken from the "UNESCO Guidelines on Language and Content in HIV- and AIDS-Related Materials":

Avoid	Because	Use instead
AIDS virus	There is no "AIDS virus". AIDS is a syndrome, not a virus.	HI-Virus Human Immunodeficiency Virus The virus that causes AIDS
AIDS scourge AIDS plague Killer disease	These are sensational terms which can fuel panic and fear and lead to discrimination and fatalism	HIV epidemic AIDS epidemic
AIDS victim AIDS sufferer	People living with HIV feel that these terms imply that they are powerless, with no control over their lives. But people with HIV can do something about their situation. Such terms also dissuade others from being tested. Not all people living with HIV suffer.	Person with HIV Person or people living with HIV

(Source: "UNESCO Guidelines on Language and Content in HIV- and AIDS-Related Materials")

Other stigmatising diseases and issues

Leprosy, Female Genital Cutting, mental or physical disability, albinism: these, too, can lead to stigmatisation and ostracism of affected people. Depending on the cultural context in which your office works, there may be more or different reasons why people are singled out, marginalised or become targets of abuse.

With Switzerland's tradition of respecting the human rights of all individuals, Swiss Cooperation Offices and representations should take care to use language that does not harm or stigmatise any individuals or groups. The points regarding language listed in the previous section on HIV and AIDS also apply to other stigmatising diseases and issues.

Minorities and marginalised groups

In every society there are groups, often in the minority, who are pushed to the margins of society. They are frequent targets of discrimination (in society generally or in employment, in school) and stereotyping. These groups are ostracised because they are foreign, part of an ethnic group, are followers of a certain religion, or differ from the perceived norm in some other way.

The promotion of human rights is an explicit objective of Switzerland's foreign policy.
In cooperation with other states, civil society and experts, it tries to improve the human-rights situation for as many people as possible throughout the world. This is based on Switzerland's long humanitarian tradition, and the conviction that the protection of human rights serves the cause of peace and international stability.

As Swiss government representatives, Swiss Cooperation Offices and representations must ensure that the language used when writing about minorities and marginalised groups does not discriminate against any population group, does not use or further stereotypes and is culturally sensitive.

Cultural sensitivity means making a conscious attempt to be considerate of cultural beliefs, norms, or traditions that are different from one's own.

Therefore ensure that
› you give adequate space to minorities and marginalised groups in your external communication

› representatives of minorities and marginalised groups are considered, where relevant and appropriate, as speakers at events, as panel members at seminars, in working groups, etc.

› when interviewing minorities and marginalised groups for articles for the Web, newsletters or information material, ensure you have informed consent from the interviewees, particularly when you are interviewing children

Informed consent

When you are planning to produce information material or articles for the Web on a project involving people affected by a stigmatising issue, make sure that you get informed consent (☛ See the sample informed consent form in the Annex). Informed consent requires you to:

› Seek to obtain informed consent in the individual's home language (use a translator, if necessary).

› Clearly identify yourself when requesting to interview or photograph people living with HIV or suffering from a stigmatising disease (this also applies to victims of sexual violence).

› State the purpose of the interview/photograph, the context in which these may be used and the potential consequences for the individuals, their children and other family members. This means that you should explain where the article and/or photograph will be used, in which languages the article will appear and who may be able to see it.

› Ensure that the person being interviewed has disclosed his or her HIV status to partners and family members or, in the case of victims of sexual violence that they are aware of what happened to the interviewee. Partners and family members should not be getting this information from your text.

Further points to consider:
› As a general rule, avoid publishing photographs of children affected by a stigmatising illness or issue (e.g. HIV-positive children or children orphaned by AIDS) on your website or in information material, even if you have consent from a caretaker or from the child.
If you do publish such photographs, ensure the child is not identifiable. Neither the child nor the caretaker may fully understand the possible consequences and may not feel they can say "no" to an adult or a representative from a foreign agency. "Do no harm" should be your guiding principle when interviewing or photographing children.

› If you have agreed to use first names only, make sure you do not add information in the article or text through which the person may be identified anyway (street names, unusual clothing, tattoos, etc). The same applies to photographs: if you have agreed to disguise the subject of the photo, make sure that nothing else (clothing, hair style, the background, jewellery) identifies the person.

› Avoid making any promises that cannot be fulfilled. People affected by a stigmatising disease or, indeed, people living in poverty may agree to an interview or to have their photograph taken in the hope that they may receive some material benefit or assistance. The provision of money or other benefits cannot be a condition for the granting of an interview.

Multilingualism

As a country with four official languages, Switzerland holds the importance of multilingualism high. All departments of the Federal Administration are bound by rules governing multilingualism and its daily application in internal and external communication.

Working in partner countries where there may be far more than just four official languages means that Swiss Cooperation Offices and representations also should respect multilingualism in the partner country and not only in the internal communication within the FDFA and other departments of the Swiss Confederation.

We recommend that...

> Important texts are translated into at least one official language of the partner country.

> Publish at least some if not all articles on your website in the official working language as well as an official language of the country or region (depending on the target audience for the articles).

> If resources allow and where appropriate, consider translating some of the standing information on your website (e.g. on Switzerland's work in the partner country) in an official language of the partner country.

> Meetings must take place in a *lingua franca* but foster an environment that supports multilingualism in your office.

Annual Action Plan: Communication

Communication planning should be an integral part of any Swiss Cooperation Office's annual planning. Everyone should be involved in brainstorming ideas and making suggestions – ideally, this should not just be the job of the Communication Officer.

Identify the key communication opportunities for the coming year in advance (e.g. in october before the coming year). Choose your communication tasks carefully and set realistic goals: given your human and financial resources, what media and communication work can you manage? What goals can you set? Which tasks can be delegated to assist the Communication Officer in his/her work?

1. *Internal*

Purpose/Objective	Tool/Instrument	Target audience	Deadline/frequency	Responsibility

2. *External*

Purpose/Objective	Tool/Instrument	Target audience	Deadline/frequency	Responsibility

Audience analysis

This matrix can be used both for writing a published text and for preparing a speech or panel presentation.

Step 1: Distinguish between the different target audiences
Make a list of the categories of people (and individuals) that are part of your audience

Step 2: Prioritise within the target audience
Which of these categories and individuals are you principally targeting?

Step 3: Picture your target audience
Who are these people in the categories you have identified? What are their needs, interests etc?

Step 4: Audience analysis matrix

Audience	*What does my audience know about this topic? What do they not know?*	*What do I know about my topic that they do not know? What research do I need to do, if any?*	*What are my audience's attitudes, values and beliefs about my topic?*	*What does my audience expect and need from my piece of writing/speech?*
Primary				
Secondary				
Tertiary				

(from Civicus tool kit)

Please note:
This informed consent form is an example. Cooperation Offices need to adapt it according to their needs, the topic and purpose of the interview. Copy it on your office's official letterhead.
The text in square brackets is additional information for the person filling in the form and is to be deleted before handing the form to the interviewee.

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

[*Purpose*] **For caregivers of children to give permission for an article to be written and published on the website of the Swiss Cooperation Office** [*fill in country or city where the office is located*].
[*If you are planning to use the article for the website and printed information material or in a text you will submit to a newspaper, you must also state this on the consent form and explain it to the interviewee.*]

Topic of the articles: The coping strategies and resilience of children who have been abused. The children are beneficiaries of a SDC-funded project.

This consent form will be explained verbally in a language understood by the interviewee (if necessary someone will be asked to translate). A copy will also be given to the caregiver. This form will only be used for those children who will feature in the article(s).

My name is [*fill in name(s) of person(s) doing the interview*]. I work as a [*fill in position, e.g. Communication Officer, National Programme Officer*] for the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in the Swiss Cooperation Office in [*fill in city and country*]. I am working on articles about the coping strategies of children who have been abused. These children are part of a project which helps abused children and is funded by Switzerland through the SDC. I live in [*fill in city where interviewer lives*].

I would like to write an article for our website [*or: a brochure, annual report, etc. – state any other forms of publication*] that includes the comments and/or story of your child or the child in your care.

The article will appear on the Internet and many people can read it here and abroad. It is possible that people who know you, go to school with your child or live near you could read the article. To protect you and your child, we will not use your or your child's names. [*Generally, with children and other vulnerable groups use pseudonyms or first names only and do not publish identifying characteristics or details about where the person lives that could allow easy identification and harm them. In other cases, the use of names must be negotiated each time.*]

We would also like to publish a photograph of the child along with the article on our website [*or: in information material*]. We will make sure the child cannot be

recognised in the photograph. [*Taking, use of and publishing of photographs must be negotiated for each individual case.]*

I promise to make a reasonable effort to show you or [*fill in the name of the partner organisation implementing the project*] the article before it is published.

If there is anything your child says that you decide you don't want to be published, we will take it out of the article. You can choose to be interviewed. You can choose to allow your child's story to be told in the article.

If you choose not to allow your child's story to be published or don't agree to an interview with the child, it will have no negative consequences for you or the child. If the child is in a support group as part of this programme, it will not make any difference to your child's participation in the support group.

Just to make sure you understand and agree that it is OK for us to write and publish an article about the child we are asking you to sign this form. You can decide to withdraw your child at any point.

You can contact [*fill in name of interviewer*] at [*fill in mobile number of interviewer or office number*], if you have any questions about this form or about the article.

CAREGIVER'S [*or interviewee's*] **consent for article [and photograph]**

I agree to allow my child's story to be told in the article. I agree to be interviewed for the article.

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Date   Signature of caregiver [*or interviewee*]

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