



Lesotho Planned Parenthood Association

Communications Strategy

1. Introduction

1.1 Context

The Lesotho Planned Parenthood Association's previous communications strategy was agreed and implemented from 2011 to 2015. Since then there has been progress in a number of areas to strengthen internal and external communications, but there remains more to do to support delivery of our strategic objectives as per our new Strategic Plan (2015-2020).

There has been significant growth into new areas since 2015 and more expansion is planned for the five years ahead. Together with progressing towards our desired goals, we are redefining who we are and what we do. This is reflected in the brand of the organisation, and it goes beyond just setting a new strategic direction. It is about creating an identity that our volunteers, staff and our clients can relate to, and building engagement which can drive better quality care for our clients.

The existence of good systems and practices for management and staff, as well as for programme implementation, makes LPPA to run efficient and effective operations. LPPA has skilled personnel for programme development, implementation

and evaluation. In response to emerging Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) issues, LPPA's focus is based on IPPF Strategic framework, which evolves around four Outcomes. In addition to these, LPPA includes the IPPF support strategies in order to reinforce the framework and its application at the grassroots and institutional level as follows: Governance and Accreditation, Resource Mobilization, Capacity Building, Knowledge Management, Communication, including Monitoring and Evaluation, as well as Operational Research.

LPPA has seven Service Delivery Points (SDP) in five of the ten districts of Lesotho namely Botha-Bothe, Maseru, Mafeteng, Mohale's Hoek and Quthing. Among the 7 SDPs there are two special clinics – Male and Youth Clinics based in Maseru. In addition to the clinic based services LPPA provides outreach services in hard-to-reach areas, as well as work places.

Services that are offered by LPPA comprise the following:

- Family planning (various FP methods ranging from short to long term)
- Management of Sexually Transmitted Infections
- Treatment of opportunistic infections and minor ailments
- Physical examination
- Screening of reproductive cancers (VIA, Pap smear and prostrate screening)
- Male circumcision
- Male SRH services
- Voluntary Counselling and Testing for HIV
- HIV and AIDS care and treatment
- Provision of Sexual and Reproductive Health Information and Behaviour Change programmes.
- Voluntary Medical Male Circumcision

LPPA has a good corporate image and enjoys a harmonious relationship with Government, stakeholders, partners, donors and the community. With recruitment and retention of key staff a major challenge in the country, communications priorities over the coming years need to be actively supporting all aspects of attracting and retaining the best people. Building and maintaining a reputation and brand as one of the leaders in Sexual and Reproductive Health services is a key part of achieving our desired goal.

Our vision: A healthy and inclusive society where freedom of choice in Sexual, Reproductive Health and Rights, and equal opportunities are guaranteed for all.

Our mission: To provide and enable quality SRHR information, education and services, and advocate for Sexual Rights and equitable access to services, especially for key populations, the underserved, young people, men and women through volunteers, trained and competent staff

Our values:

- Respect,
- Inclusiveness,
- Accountability,
- Volunteerism,
- Quality,

- Commitment

1.2 Scope of this strategy

The communication strategy focuses on strengthening the brand identity of the organisation, the core communications channels we use to engage with our key audiences, particularly internal and external communications. Effective internal communication has the potential to have a positive influence on not just staff engagement but also on how service providers interact with clients, volunteers, and external stakeholders that include donors.

LPPA is governed by detailed engagement strategies and policies that prescribe how we interact with our core stakeholder groups. This strategy supports the objectives and priorities within those individual strategies and policies without looking to duplicate their content. The core strategies/focus areas include:

- How our Staff and volunteers engage with one another, as well as our external world
- How our Staff engage with our clients
- How our Staff and volunteers engage with our donors and stakeholders

Further, improving internal and external communications, together with strengthening our brand, also supports delivery of the quality strategies; recruitment and retention strategy; organisational development plan; and resource mobilisation strategy.

This strategy however, does not seek to address direct communications between our staff and clients during consultations/treatment. These are governed by IPPF Clients' Rights, which are visible in all our waiting rooms at our service points.

1.3 Current position

Looking at the current position on internal communications and staff support, the Association will have to undertake a staff survey to:

- Find out whether people feel senior management communicates effectively with the rest of the organisation's staff.
- In terms of staff support for the Association whether LPPA has improved by any margin on the number of staff who are saying they would recommend the Association as a place to work, meaning they are satisfied with the support they are given,
- They are now agreeing that they would be satisfied with the quality of care if a friend or relative needed services at the Association's service points.

1.4 Review

During the life span of the current strategic plan, the communication strategy will be reviewed after two and half years of the life of the plan.

2. Principles and approach to communications

Our communications strategy adopts the same principles and approaches which we have set across our Strategic Plan.

2.1 Best practice principles for communications

- Clear and accurate
- Inclusive and meaningful
- Targeted and tailored
- Timely and honest
- Value people
- Provide follow-up

2.2 Our approach to communications

- Consistent with LPPA values as prescribed by the Strategic Plan
- Linked to strategic priorities
- Build on and responsive to our vision

3. Audience segmentation

LPPA has identified the following key stakeholder groups, and in their engagement strategies, each will be considered for its uniqueness. This communications strategy identifies improvements to the LPPA's core communications channels and policies to help deliver the objectives identified for each audience.

Staff

- Volunteers
- Clients
- External Stakeholders

- Donors
- Media

4. Objectives and benefits

4.1 Objectives

Our high level communications objectives are listed below.

- To provide clients with clear and accurate information about LPPA and our services.
- To keep staff informed and engaged; feeling valued, involved and clear about how their work connects to the strategic priorities of the Association and vice versa.
- To increase recognition of LPPA among our key audiences and support our wider engagement strategies to build the Association's reputation as a service provider and employer of choice.

Our plans for delivery against these objectives are set out in the priorities in a work plan which is an annex to the document

4.2 Benefits

Strengthening our reputation as a high quality service provider and building a brand which staff, clients, partners/stakeholders and donors can relate to will help us to deliver our strategic objectives.

- The quality of communications within an organisation is a key influencer on levels of staff engagement. In turn, staff engagement levels influence quality of clients' care as well as productivity.

- New recruits will base partly on their decision on whether to join LPPA or not on the feelings and assurances they get from the externally facing brand.

Strong brands are not established by accident, and our clinicians doing a great job on the front line is not always enough. It is a well-known fact that when it comes to how we deliver, perception and reality are not always aligned.

Our brand is not our name or our logo. It is what people say about us when we are not in the room. We can influence it, but ultimately it is the perception of others that defines it. To influence a positive brand, we need:

- Engaging leaders across the organisation, visible internally and in local, national and regional networks with partners and other external stakeholders.
- A clear narrative on our strategic direction and the unique selling points that will encourage people to work for and with us.
- A satisfied, valued, healthy workforce.
- Effective internal and external communications channels.

5. Insights

The following insights are gathered from a range of formal and informal sources including the staff survey, senior managers workshop, team visits and general conversations. Addressing these issues is what shapes the objectives and priorities in this strategy.

5.1 Current themes

Brand and reputation

- The Association's name and Logo(s) still have the ability to build a really strong identity to attract and retain both staff, volunteers and partners.
- LPPA has a fund-raising component, included in its Resource Mobilization Strategy, for growth, but there are no specific marketing approaches to this effect.
- Quality service provision to clients still remain a key component to the sustainability of the Association.
- LPPA's Recruitment Strategy must guide in attracting and retaining the best staff LPPA needs for a strong reputation and unique selling points that set it apart from others and draw people to it.

Internal communications

- Professional networks exist across the country but are not widely promoted.
- Regular easy access to internal news remains challenging for clinical staff and volunteers.
- Variable approaches to internal communications within Senior Management Team, Senior Staff, Departments and office based channels not always used to maximum effect to promote core messages/campaigns.

Clients information

- Variable quality and availability of Clients information brochures across our services with mixed use of latest branding.
- Processes to feed service changes through to our website and social media Choices need improving.
- A mobile app which LPPA is building through the UNFPA support will be an important asset in future if it will be used to maximum effect.
- Systems and processes for clients' information management in accessible formats need to be improved.

Stakeholder and Donor communications

- A range of established face to face channels are in place between the LPPA and key external stakeholders and donors although centrally co-ordinated stakeholder communications are limited to quarterly reports and ad-hoc emails of key announcements.

7. Channels

7.1 Existing channels

The table below outlines the established channels which the LPPA uses to communicate with all its stakeholder groups.

It is important to note that the most important communication channel we have with clients is the daily interactions people have with our frontline services (receptionists and service providers). There are a number of LPPA quality indicators which measure how well we do on clinician-patient communication, and projects in place for continuous improvement. These are addressed through the quality of care strategy, and in particular the tools we have in place to gather the opinions of clients about our reception and services.

Two-way communications channels which bring information from clients and the public into LPPA are also essential. The table below includes some of the channels through which we hear the views of clients and the public. However, the detail of how we gather feedback from clients and use it to improving our services is not included in this Strategy.

Channel	Summary	Audience & frequency	Lead
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Face to face			
Listening events	Clients events tailored to specific messages and services (Static clinics and outreach activities)	Clients & public	Senior Nurses
Staff meetings	Monthly and Quarterly meetings.	Staff	CE
NEC Meetings	Regular NEC meetings and Standing Committees	Committees members	President and Chairpersons
AGM	Representatives from branches and NEC members	AGM members	CE Office
Donors and Stakeholders	Wide range of established forums for engagement with donors and stakeholders	CE, Directors and Partners	Various
Staff events	Variety of events ranging from corporately managed annual staff retreats and senior staff team building workshops through to profession related internal events such QoC workshops.	Internal staff	Various
Online / digital			
LPPA website	The main corporate website hosting service information, news and key publications.	All external	POIEC
Mobile App	Currently being developed mobile app providing service information.	Clients and Youth	Youth Officer
Facebook Page	Thakaneng Facebook page; a platform where youth volunteers are able to communicate with the rest of the world.	All external	Youth Officer & Ass. Librarian
Waiting Rooms talks	Some development of electronic gadgets for information dissemination e.g. videos induction on SRH issues.	Clients	Senior Nurses
Written			
Clients Booklets	A wide range of information developed for service summaries and treatment advice.	Clients	Various
Newsletter	Half yearly printed newsletter for members and wider stakeholders (previously called Malebela.)	All external	POIEC & Youth Officer

Annual report	Formal corporate publication	Donors and Stakeholders	PD
Financial Statements	Formal corporate publication	Donors and Stakeholders	FAD
LPPA policies and published strategies	Strategic Plan and other LPPA policies +s	Donors and Stakeholders	CE
MEMOs	MEMOs serving as circulars to inform staff about internal issues that affect them and the Association	Internal	Various
Emails	Daily news email to all staff	Internal	SMT
News / media releases	Formal press releases sent directly to media houses	All external	CE

7.2 Gaps in channels

- Social media channels – Social media is of late a potential platform to reaching young people. Almost all of our targeted young have mobile phones that have social apps. This can be very helpful in building LPPA’s reputation. There is a need to develop greater use of individual account from staff and volunteers, encouraging and guiding people at all levels to have an active work related presence WhatsApp account, twitter and Facebook. Already, LPPA has email accounts for its senior staff, and this has made it easy to facilitate internal communication.
- Video based information – LPPA would benefit from developing simple low-cost video content to use for internal and external stakeholders. This offers more engaging content than traditional written statements/news updates. A typical example would be electronic board in our waiting rooms providing information on the services we provide.

- Regular bulletin for all external stakeholders – options need to be explored for bulletins to all our external stakeholders on general news and developments. Mapping of stakeholders and sharing information with them, at least half-yearly can be very helpful to keeping them aboard with LPPA’s developments.
- Thought leadership articles/events – a number of our senior team, Senior Nurses and Clinic Managers are often involved in international and national forums. We could build on this to develop LPPA’s position as a thought leader in Sexual and Reproductive Health. It is mandatory that such staff produce reports from such events for publication upon the approval of the Chief Executive or his appointee.

8. Roles and responsibilities

Communication by everyone in the Association impacts on our reputation and the perception of the quality of care we provide. Below is a summary of key responsibilities that different internal groups have in supporting the objectives of this strategy.

8.1 All staff

- Ensure all communications (verbal or written) with clients, external stakeholders and colleagues is produced and delivered to an excellent standard.
- Keep all locally developed client/stakeholder information up-to-date and in line with National guides; using the latest information where available.
- Actively participate in the internal communications and staff engagement opportunities available to you.
- Highlight areas of concern on time to line managers.
- 8.2 Communications team
- Provides expert advice and support on communications issues to projects and programmes across the Association.

- Promotes best practice in communications to all parts of the Association and leads on identifying and adopting new tools/technologies to drive improvements.
- Manages production and delivery of core publications and events including the Annual General Meeting and Annual Report.
- Manages the Association's visual identity and ensure effective templates and guides are in place to support staff.
- Ensures there is a process in place to respond to media and provides communications support on major incidents on a daily basis.
- Ensure effective channels and tools are in place for communications plans for improvements based on regular evaluation of quality.
- 8.3 Service team
- Regularly review published information about services and inform the central communications team about any updates needed to service information at all social media, website, printed materials or other channels.
- Alert the communications team to relevant good practice that needs to be promote or managed.
- Ensures that every key service has a nominated person who maintains its technical information.

8.6 Senior Management Team

- Champions high quality communications and engagement and lead by example; making the time needed in every day for effective communications with internal and external stakeholders
- Chief Executive acts as the Association's key spokespeople on significant issues.

9. Measures of success

9.1 Key Performance Indicators

To show progress against this specific strategy there is a need to track performance against indicators that show how good key stakeholder groups think LPPA is at communicating.

9.2 For staff there has to be an annual staff survey within which the measure is built:

% of staff agreeing that communications between senior management and staff is effective

% staff recommending LPPA as a place to work

% staff satisfied with the quality of care and support they receive from management

For clients, as flagged in the scope of this document there are a number of tools in place through which LPPA M&E section is able to assess clients' satisfaction about the services they receive. Such tools measure of how well staff communicates with clients i.e. clients' feelings they were treated with dignity and respect, involved in their care, time they spent before receiving the services.

10. Conclusion

Good communication is everyone's business. Successful organisations are good at communicating. We are pretty good at it and getting better; but we should aim to be outstanding. Communicating well helps to build a happy and engaged workforce, which drives quality and productivity, which leads to more satisfied clients, partners and stakeholders. Delivering against the objectives and priorities of our new strategic plan will make LPPA better.

Progress to date

LPPA has delivered a number of successful communications projects and refreshed key channels for internal and external audiences.

Internal

- Consistent and effective use of local staff emails to communicate LPPA business. This makes it possible to communicate our business in time, and cheaper costs.
- Branches and Clinics awards to the best performers. This has even been documented as a best practice.
- Regular Quality of Care refresher trainings, especially for our clinic staff.
- Staff meetings, from the general meetings to Senior Management meetings.

External

- Successful AGMs as well as organised campaigns that have led to increased number of people interested in joining LPPA as volunteers
- LPPA's Thakaneng Facebook page which reaches a wider external stakeholder audience. There is a need to tap this and use it as a recruitment channel for young people
- Printed IEC materials for our clients and the public at large
- Audio and visual

Communications strategy action plan 2016/2020

Priority	Actions	Timeframe	Lead/support	Audiences
Internal communications and staff engagement				
Support induction/on boarding of new Staff and volunteers.	<p>Orientation and induction plan in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a post orientation engagement plan • Update internal registers and structures to include all new teams • Develop welcome pack with summary info on key internal systems and policies 	<p>2017</p> <p>2017</p> <p>2017</p>	<p>CE</p> <p>POIEC</p> <p>HRO</p>	Newly recruited staff volunteers
Set up a communications Team to develop and implement annual communication work plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a joint communication plan annually • Implement the work plan • Monitor implementation of the plan 	<p>2017</p> <p>2018</p> <p>2018</p>	<p>SMT</p> <p>POIEC</p> <p>SMT</p>	Staff and Volunteers

Conduct communications training sessions for communication Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold refresher training for the team half early • Identify international trainings/workshops and send the team to attend 	2017	SMT	Communications Team
		2018	SMT	
Support implanting understanding of new strategic position of LPPA within operational divisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular progress review by SMT and Senior Staff at least quarterly (Retreat) 	Quarterly	CE	All Senior Staff and Management

Clients information				
Audit existing clients' information to identify outdated content and branding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications Team to review existing soft and hard information materials • Prioritised list for redevelopment and reprinting 	2017	POIEC	Staff and Clients
Produce public information material that highlights the work of LPPA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and print LPPA Newsletter • Update LPPA website regularly 	2017-2018	POIEC and Youth Officer	Public

Update data tools for clients information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop simple excel tool for service providers to report statistics monthly 	2017	M&E	SN
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Reputation building				
Organise communication training for media houses and LPPA stakeholders on how to report SRH issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold workshops and meetings with media houses and stakeholders Hold press conferences to inform the public about MA programs implementation Award best SRH news report annually 	2018 2017 2018	POIEC	Media Houses
Support recruitment programmes with MA information and brand guidance for job adverts and associated induction material.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update communications section of online induction Develop an “about us” summary document for part of recruitment materials 	2017/2018 2017	POIEC HRO	ALL
Online presence				
Implement new social media strategy focused on reputation building, recruitment and supporting staff and volunteers to	<p>Social media strategy will have dedicated action plan; summary actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresh corporate accounts on Facebook and skype 	2017	LA	SMT & Senior Staff

engage with social media for professional networking/development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote events and case-studies of how service providers use Mobile Application• Support senior LPPA staff to develop Twitter accounts• Audit strategy success and revise actions as needed			
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