

ACE II

Eastern and Southern Africa
Higher Education Centers of Excellence Project



**AFRICA CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR
INFECTIOUS DISEASES OF HUMANS AND**

ANIMALS (ACEIDHA)

AT

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

ACEIDHA COMMUNICATION PLAN

FOR 2022

Lusaka, April 2022

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The main objective of the Africa Centre of Excellence for Infectious Diseases of Humans and Animals (ACEIDHA) Communication Plan is to achieve significant impact of the Project. It will play a vital role of informing, engaging, creating awareness and promoting ACEIDHA. This Communication Plan outlines the communication strategies designed, in line with the ACEIDHA Annual Work Plan and Budget for 2022, that will be implemented to ensure remarkable engagement with key stakeholders during the project and beyond.

Communication is, undoubtedly, critical for turning the project's work (training, research, capacity building and collaboration) into impactful benefits to all stakeholders and the community. When ACEIDHA produces breakthrough research results, then stakeholders and the community need to be reached by disseminating messages that are important and beneficial to them.

In the ACEIDHA Project, strategic targets for the communications plan and activities have been set. The situational analysis was carried out using the SWOT Analysis tool which informed the development of the Plan's objectives. Further, stakeholders (audiences) were identified and categorised using the Stakeholder Matrix of Power & Interest which assisted in selecting channels (media) to be used for each category of stakeholders as well as measurements of communications success. In this Plan, meticulous efforts were made to develop strategies and their performance indicators that would be used in disseminating key information to stakeholders in order to achieve the set targets.

Remarkably, the Communication Plan has included the Monitoring and Evaluation section which will be used to assess the attainment of the set targets and evaluate communication success. The Plan's strategies and targets will be reviewed annually as the Project progresses.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Africa Centre of Excellence of Infectious Diseases of Humans and Animal (ACEIDHA) was launched on 25th April 2018 by Minister of Higher Education, in order to develop capacity to tackle increasing challenges of emerging infectious diseases affecting both humans and animals. This was formed through the World Bank loan to the Republic of Zambia. The Centre is anchored at the University of Zambia in the School of Veterinary Medicine.

ACEIDHA's main objective is to develop research capacity and improve training of academic staff and postgraduate students with the focus on research into infectious diseases such as bird flu, Ebola, tapeworms, Brucellosis, Anthrax, coronavirus and others.

ACEIDHA has developed this Communication Plan to support its main objective of developing research capacity and improving training of academic staff and students, through enhanced internal and external communication. In addition, the plan is envisaged to ensure that only accurate and official information about ACEIDHA is regularly disseminated to all stakeholders through various channels of communication such as meetings, memos, letters, television, radio, website, social media, branding, and community sensitisation campaigns.

ACEIDHA Vision, Mission and Core values are highlighted as follows:

VISION:

To become a leading Centre for generating knowledge and skills for infectious disease prevention and control.

MISSION:

To conduct high level training through cutting edge research.

CORE VALUES:

- i. Excellence,
- ii. Innovativeness,
- iii. Integrity,
- iv. Collegiality,
- v. Transparency and
- vi. Equity.

2. SITUATION ANALYSIS

In analysing the situation of ACEIDHA, the SWOT analysis was used to fully understand the environment in which the project is operating.

Strengths:

- a) Qualified Communication officers
- b) Available financial resources
- c) ACEIDHA Management support
- d) IUCEA support and mentorship
- e) Appropriate communication tools
- f) Available communication media such as website, Facebook page, twitter account, You Tube, Newsletter, flyers, posters, etc.

Weaknesses:

- a) Communication Officers are part-time staff
- b) Management and procurement bureaucracy/red tape

Opportunities:

- a) Availability of wide range ICT Platforms to enable mass dissemination of information such as Websites, Facebook Page, Twitter, You Tube, Instagram, etc.
- b) Regular internal and external staff capacity building
- c) Enhanced digital media which further increases coverage
- d) Available public and private electronic and print media such as television, radio stations and newspapers.
- e) Positive media relations

Threats:

- a) Rampant fake news
- b) High costs of ICT Platforms
- c) High costs of media advertising and air time
- d) Increased substandard communication tools on the market
- e) Cyber bullying and fraud
- f) Pandemic outbreak with global impact

From the foregoing, ACEIDHA is committed to taking advantage of its strengths and opportunities to address its weaknesses and putting in place measures to mitigate the impact of the threats.

3. ACEIDHA OBJECTIVES

3.1. General Objective

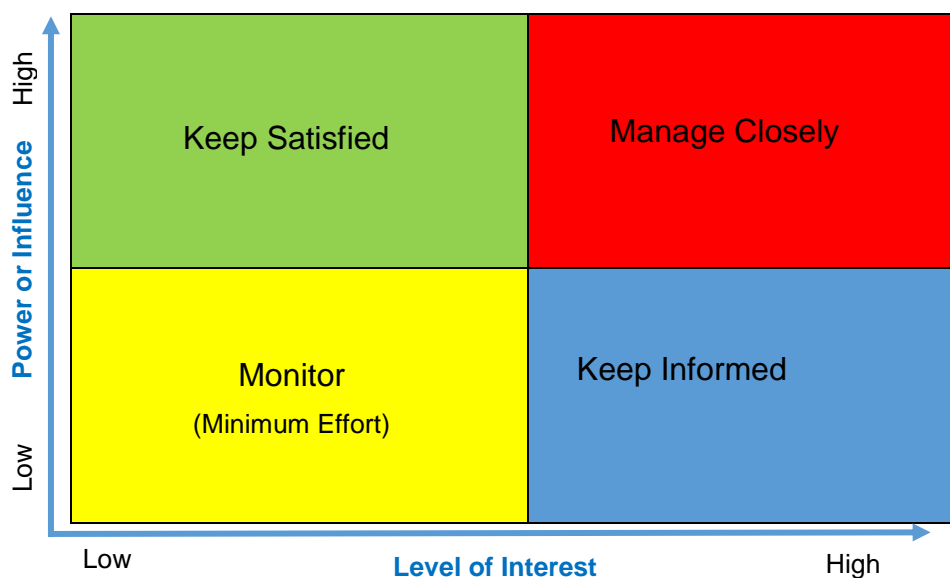
To support achievement of ACEIDHA objectives and goals by increasing project awareness and visibility through regular dissemination of accurate and official information to all stakeholders about the Project activities using various channels of communication such as meetings, memos, letters, television, radio, website, social media and branding.

3.2. Specific objectives:

- i. To hold one (1) stakeholder awareness engagements by December 2022.
- ii. To enhance ACEIDHA visibility by increasing Facebook followers from 500 to 1,000 by December 2022.
- iii. To populate ACEIDHA website with 20 uploads by December 2022.
- iv. To enhance ACEIDHA media coverage by holding one (1) press briefing by December 2022.
- v. To produce three (3) editions of the ACEIDHA Newsletter by December 2022.
- vi. To enhance the ACEIDHA brand and visibility by erecting two (2) billboards by December 2022.
- vii. To generate six (6) stories that will secure wider media coverage at national and international levels.

4. KEY STAKEHOLDERS/AUDIENCES

This section aimed at identifying, segmenting and mapping all the key stakeholders of ACEIDHA. The stakeholders of ACEIDHA are divided into four (4) categories using the Stakeholder Matrix of Power and Interest:



Source: www.solitaireconsulting.com

High Power – High Interest: These stakeholders are decision makers who have the biggest impact on the project’s success. They have a direct bearing/impact on the existing and operation of ACEIDHA. The Project will keep them informed and manage their expectations to win their support and goodwill through specially designed messages to address their interests and concerns.

High Power – Low Interest: These stakeholders will be kept informed with what is happening on the Project because they have high power which they could use negatively if they are unsatisfied.

Low power – High interest: These stakeholders will be kept adequately informed, as they may be helpful with the progress of the project.

Low power – low interest: ACEIDHA will continue monitoring these stakeholders with minimal communication.

Table 1: Stakeholders Matrix of Power and Interest

High Power – High Interest	Low Power – High Interest
Ministry of Education in Zambia/Ministry of Science and Technology	Employers
Council of the University of Zambia	Industries/manufacturers
The University of Zambia Senate	Consulting firms
The University of Zambia Management	Suppliers/service providers
Funders/donors (World Bank, IUCEA, etc)	Financial institutions
Students	Media
Lecturers and other staff	Community & Opinion leaders
High Power – Lower Interest	Low Power – Low Interest
Regulatory authorities	Civic leaders
Accreditation bodies	Community
National Research Centres	Opinion leaders
Other universities & colleges	Political leaders
Higher Education Authority	Non-governmental organisation (NGOs)
Zambia Qualifications Authority	Primary & secondary schools

5. KEY MESSAGES

ACEIDHA has developed tailor-made key messages according to the various target groups. The broad messages developed for each of the stakeholders are indicated in Table 2 below. The overall project core message is: ACEIDHA is developing research capacity and improving training of academic staff and postgraduate students with the focus on research in infectious diseases in Eastern and Southern Africa.

Table 2: Key Messages

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Category	Audience	Key Message	Channel	FQ
Manage Closely	The World Bank	The Bank is strengthening capacity in research skill and training and employment through the production of high quality and skilled human resources in priority growth sectors, infectious diseases.	Meetings e-mails	2 12
	IUCEA	IUCEA provides supervisory and communication support to all ACEs under ACE II so as to achieve the main objective of the project which is to strengthen selected Eastern and Southern Africa Higher Education institutions to deliver quality postgraduate education and build collaborative research capacity in the regional priority areas.	Meetings e-mails,	2 4
	Ministry of Education/Science and Technology	The Ministries provide oversight and guidance over the implementation of the ACEIDHA activities	Meetings phone calls	4 10
	The University of Zambia Council & Management	The University supervises the day to day operations of ACEIDHA.	Meetings reports	6 4
	Students	Students will benefit from high quality training and scholarships offered by ACEIDHA.	E-mails social media	12 12
	Lecturers and staff	Promote and support benchmarking of best practices	Meetings e-mails	4 12

Keep Satisfied	Regulatory authorities	Promote and monitor compliance	Letters	2
			Phone calls	6
	National Research Centres	Promote collaboration and partnerships in key research areas with the key focus on infectious diseases.	Letters	2
			Phone calls	6
Keep Informed	Partner institutions	Provide capacity building, skills development, administrative support, and supervision of research with the focus on infectious diseases. Spreading Project outputs and research results among their own networks	Video conferencing	4
			Symposium/workshops	1
			e-mails	6
			Flyers	2
	Media	Assist in disseminating accurate and official information on ACEIDHA activities and research findings to all stakeholders	Interviews	4
			Documentaries	1
	Industry/private sector	ACEIDHA will enhance partnership in research, labour productivity and skills development as well as knowledge transfer.	Meetings	2
			Events and exhibitions. Student research activities	1 2
Consulting firms	Provide professional services	Letters	2	
		e-mails	2	
Suppliers/service providers	Provide products and services to the Project	e-mails	20	
		Phone calls	30	
Financial Institutions	Providing banking services	Letters	5	
		Phone calls	12	
Civic and community leaders	Enlighten them about the benefits of ACEIDHA's activities to the communities in order to gain their support and good will.	Meetings	2	
		letters	2	

Monitor (Minimum Effort)	Community	Enlighten them about the benefits of ACEIDHA's activities to the communities in order to gain their support and good will.	Meetings	1
			Social corporate responsibility programmes	1
	Non-Governmental Organisation	Provide advocacy and civic education	Meetings	1
			Flyers	2
	Secondary & Primary Schools	Encourage pupils to take up science subjects	Flyers	2
			Social media	4

6. COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

ACEIDHA will meticulously employ various strategies in order to effectively communicate accurate information to all stakeholders. These will include the following:

6.1 Media Engagement

Zambia has vibrant media houses with different coverage and reach at national level. Much of their editorial focus is on issues affecting the country. The media is a critical ally to ACEIDHA and shall endeavour to leverage its relationship with members of the press for wide and positive coverage. And ultimately increase ACEIDHA awareness and visibility to all stakeholders. Some of the media channels to be used include the following, among others:

i. Television:

Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC) stations, Muvi TV, Diamond TV,

ii. Radio:

ZNBC Radio 1, 2 & 4, Radio Phoenix, Q-Fm, 5 FM, Hot Fm, Millennium Radio, Pan Africa Radio, UNZA Radio,

iii. Newspapers:

Times of Zambia, Zambia Daily Mail, The Mast, and Daily Nation.

6.2 ACEIDHA Newsletter

ACEIDHA has been producing a quarterly newsletter to publish news, features, photographs, interviews and profiles. The newsletter has been distributed both electronically and hard copies to key stakeholders. The editorial content include some of the following: students enrolment and scholarships, students outreach activities, innovative solutions, Research outputs, collaborations/ partnerships with local, regional and international institutions and the private sector, entrepreneurship among students, new methods of teaching and learning, introduction of new education programmes, research output commercialisation, faculty development and staff training, conferences and workshops, events, generated income from research, etc.

6.3 Annual Reports

The annual reports has be one of the key performance indicators for ACEIDHA as it plays a key role in communicating the progress, performance and the results of the project and compliments other information sources such as the website. Hard copies and soft copies of the annual report be circulated widely among stakeholders. The annual report is also posted on the website and shared via social media

6.4 Events

ACEIDHA would like to host and participate in various event locally, regionally and internationally. The events include seminars, workshops, conferences, ACE II annual meetings, international conferences on higher education, RUFORUM meetings, IUCEA annual forums, Zambia International Trade Fair, Agricultural and Commercial Show and others. These events provides opportunities to promote the image of ACEIDHA and create its visibility among stakeholder and the public. However, due to COVID-19, the Project did not participate in any event in accord with the health guidelines in 2021.

6.5 Website

ACEIDHA website has be created as an information and knowledge sharing platform and is a main official channel of communication. The website is user friendly and interactive platform where members can share information. The website is designed to ensure transparency of ACEIDHA funding and decision-making procedures.

The ACEIDHA website have key partners' logos with link to their respective websites. It enables all stakeholders (institutions and other partners) full access to all information they may need as an indicator of transparency, adherence to safeguard procedures and the project's potential for regional development impact. It has links to all editions of the archived newsletters, financial reports, annual work plans, research outputs, Links to websites of the ACEs or hosting institution's feature on the website. The website is updated on a regular basis.

6.6 Video Stories

ACEIDHA would continue to produce short video stories of 2-5 minutes on a quarterly basis featuring beneficiaries, students, research findings, Centre leader and other key stakeholders, which would be uploaded on its website, social media, and YouTube. Thus, four (4) short videos would be produced annually.

6.7 Social Media

ACEIDHA understands that social media provides a powerful and versatile platform for rapid dissemination of information in real time. In this regard, the project has developed and maintained a Twitter account and a Facebook Page as avenues for information sharing

7. TIMESCALES AND BUDGET

ACTIVITIES	START BY	END BY	BY WHOM	UNIT PRICE	QTY	RESOURCES (BUDGET AMOUNT) US \$1 = K22.0	DELIVERABLES
Populating information on ACEIDHA website	1 st January 2022	30 th December 2022	Project Manager and Communication Officers	K4,867.74 (\$270.43)	2	K9,735.48 (\$540.86)	ACEIDHA Website populated
Boosting ACEIDHA social media Facebook Page	1 st January 2022	30 th December 2022	Project Manager and Communication Officers	K1,800.00 (\$100.00)	4	K7,200.00 (\$400.00)	ACEIDHA Facebook Page boosted
Newsletters (quarterly)	1 st January 2022	30 th December 2022	Project Manager and Communication Officers	K4,098.96 (\$227.72)	3	K12,296.88 (\$910.88)	Newsletters printed
Documentary and buy airtime for broadcasting	1 st January 2022.	30 th December 2022	Project Manager and Communication Officers	K81,818.10 (\$4,545.45)	1	K81,818.10 (\$4,545.45)	Documentary produced and broadcasted on ZNBC TV1
Short videos	1 st January 2022	30 th December 2022	Project Manager and Communication Officers	K3,272.58 (\$181.81)	4	K13,090.32 (\$727.27)	4 short videos produced
Media briefings (quarterly)	1 st March 2022	30 th December 2022	Project Manager and Communication Officers	K 8,181.90 (\$454.55)	1	K 8,181.90 (\$454.55)	1 Media Briefings held

Conference and Workshops for stakeholders (annually)	1 st September 2022	30 th October 2022	Centre leader, Project manager, Training Coordinator, Communication Officers	K122,727.24 (\$6,818.18)	2	K245, 454.48 (\$13,636.36)	2 workshops held
International Exhibitions and Events a) Trade fair b) Agricultural & Commercial Show	1 st May 2022	10 th August 2022	Centre leader, Project Manager, Communication Officers	K95,454.54 (\$5,303.03)	2	K190,909.08 (\$10,606.00)	Participated in Zambia International Trade fair, and Agricultural & Commercial Show,
Orientation workshops of stakeholders	1 st March 2022	30 th October 2022	Centre leader, Project Manager, Communication Officers	K163,636.38 (\$9,090.91)	1	K163,636.38 (\$9,090.91)	1 Stakeholders Orientation Workshop held
TOTAL						K732,322.62 (US \$ 40,912.28)	

8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

To measure the effectiveness of the ACEIDHA Communication Plan so as to understand whether the set objectives and targets are achieved, the monitoring process would be instituted throughout the calendar year and evaluation would be done through the following:

- a) Annual reports.
- b) Quarterly reports.
- c) Number of media engagements
- d) Number of updates, uploads and followers of ACEIDHA Website, Facebook Page, and Twitter.
- e) Number of ACEIDHA Newsletter editions
- f) Number of stakeholder engagements
- g) Number of ACEIDHA documentaries and short videos produced and uploaded
- h) Number of PhD and Masters applications advertisements
- i) Number of orientation workshops for stakeholders

Approved by:



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