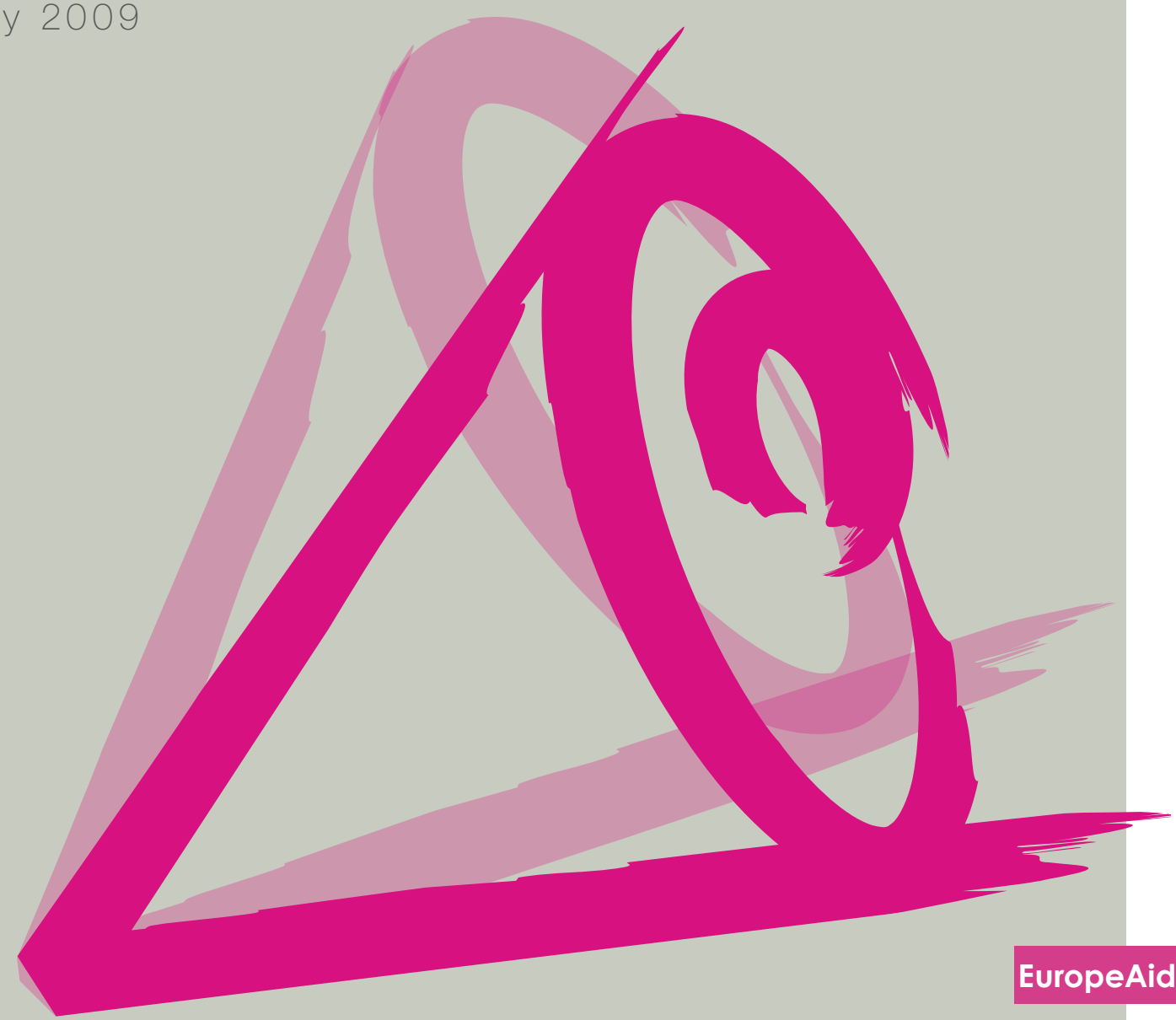
COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY MANUAL

for European Union External Actions

July 2009



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1 INTRODUCTION

This manual has been designed to ensure that actions that are wholly or partially funded by the European Union (EU) incorporate information and communication activities designed to raise the awareness of specific or general audiences of the reasons for the action and the EU support for the action in the country or region concerned, as well as the results and the impact of this support.

The manual mainly covers the written and visual identity of the EU. It sets out requirements and guidelines for briefings, written material, press conferences, presentations, invitations, signs, commemorative plaques and all other tools used to highlight EU participation. In addition, it offers tools designed to enable the development of a dynamic communication strategy that will highlight the achievements of EU support.

This manual contains compulsory requirements for all contractors and implementing partners under contracts and financing agreements which specifically refer to them, whether signed by the European Commission or by any other Contracting Authority. In all other cases the manual is only designed to provide guidance, unless otherwise stated. In all cases the provisions of specific contracts, financing agreements and contribution agreements prevail.

Over and above the basic elements of static visibility and information, and bearing in mind the context of every action, contractors, implementing partners and international organisations[1] are encouraged, where the available budget and resources permit, to develop a communication and visibility plan that will highlight in a dynamic way the impact of the EU support. This may require the engagement of outside expertise.

Furthermore, it should be clear that the terminology used in this manual does not refer to "Communication for Development" (which can be defined as being "a social process based on dialogue using a broad range of tools and methods. It is also about seeking change at different levels including listening, building trust, sharing knowledge and skills, building policies, debating and learning for sustained and meaningful change. It is not public relations or corporate communication."[2]) These elements should certainly be taken into account in project inception and implementation, and may be financed from the project's communication and visibility budget, but fall outside the scope of this manual.[3]

All communication and visibility activities should be carried out in close cooperation with the appropriate Delegation of the European Commission or the relevant department of the European Commission.

This manual replaces the EU Visibility Guidelines for External Actions (September 2005).

1 Chapter 3 of this Manual on international organisations applies to the United Nations Organisations and the World Bank Group, which have both signed specific agreements on communication and visibility with the EC (see chapter 3).

2 Definition taken from "The Rome Consensus. Communication for development: a major pillar for development and change". The participants - World Congress on Communication for Development Rome - Italy October 27, 2006.

3 For more information, see (inter alia): www.devcomm-congress.org/

2 COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

A Step By Step Guide

2.1 Appropriate Visibility

In all actions (projects, programmes, and so on) communication activities should be properly planned.

Communication should focus on development with the EU as partner and on the achievements and impact of the action, not on administrative or procedural milestones. In order to maximise the impact of communication efforts:

- Activities need to be timely
- Information used must be accurate
- Activities should be coordinated closely with the Commission
- The right audience(s) should be targeted
- Messages should interest the target audience(s)
- Activities should be appropriate in terms of resources spent and expected impact

However, there should also be room in any plan to seize a good opportunity. A good communication reflex and the ability to exploit unexpected opportunities to the benefit of the action will often be as important as more formal efforts and may often be free of cost. Where such opportunities arise, they should be exploited. The communication and visibility plan for any action should seek to maximise synergies with the overall visibility strategy of the EC Delegation (or the relevant Commission department) and, in the case of the United Nations, that of the relevant United Nations Organisation.

2.2 Key Audiences and Target Groups

In order to communicate effectively, target audiences should be clearly identified in communication and visibility plans. Audiences will include opinion formers and influential figures, as well as those beyond government and media who have a stake in the action, or are affected by it.

Contractors, implementing partners and international organisations should focus their communication and visibility plan on audiences in the beneficiary country, who are the ones for whom the impact of the action will be most apparent and most immediately relevant.

In as much as the financing is available, and the urgency, nature, and context of the action will allow, international organisations should include in their communication and visibility plan audiences within the EU, specifically opinion-formers and "elite" audiences involved in the field of international cooperation.

2.3 Communication and Visibility Plans

2.3.1 Communication and Visibility Plan Template

A budgeted communication and visibility plan should be included in the work plan of any EU-funded or co-funded action, highlighting the external communication activities that need to take place at key stages in the life of the action.

The level of detail should be commensurate with the nature, extent and cost of the communication activities envisaged.

Contractors, implementing partners or international organisations should produce a communication and visibility plan which will have to be agreed with the Commission (Delegation) staff managing the action, in close coordination with the Commission (Delegation) staff responsible for communication activities.

In case a communication and visibility plan is considered, the following template can be useful.[4] In principle, it should be based on the implementation section of the visibility matrix (see Annex 1). The visibility matrix is a simple tool that has been designed to offer basic guidance on the main elements of communication activities at various stages of the project cycle.

4 For international organisations see chapter 3.3.

Communication and Visibility Plan Template

GENERAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Objectives

1. Overall communication objectives

2. Target groups

» Within the country(ies) where the action is implemented

» Within the EU (as applicable)

3. Specific objectives for each target group, related to the action's objectives and the phases of the project cycle

Examples of communication objectives:

» ensure that the beneficiary population is aware of the roles of the partner and of the EU in the activity

» raise awareness among the host country population or in Europe of the roles of the partner and of the EU in delivering aid in a particular context

» raise awareness of how the EU and the partner work together to support education, health, environment, etc

COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

4. Main activities that will take place during the period covered by the communication and visibility plan

Include details of:

» the nature of the activities

» the responsibilities for delivering the activities

5. Communication tools chosen

Include details of advantages of particular tools (media, advertising, events, etc.) in the local context

INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT[5]

6. Completion of the communication objectives

Include indicators of achievement for the different tools proposed

7. Provisions for feedback (when applicable)

Give details of assessment forms or other means used to get feedback on the activity from participants

RESOURCES

8. Human Resources

» Person/days required to implement the communication activities

» Members of the management team responsible for communication activities

9. Financial resources

» Budget required to implement the communication activities (in absolute figures and as a percentage of the overall budget for the action)

5 Consistent with those set out in the logical framework for the action.

2.3.2 Communication Budget

The funds set aside for communication activities should have been included in any financing agreement, contract or contribution agreement, and should be reflected in the appropriate working document (e.g. annual work plan, "devis programme", etc).

The communication budget should be sufficient to have a real impact, and reflect the size, and, consequently, the likely impact of the action. The precise budget allocated to communication should be agreed with the Commission on the basis of contextual and project-related factors.

There may be situations where a financing agreement or contribution agreement does not include a specific budgetary provision for visibility activities. In this event, and in consultation with the Commission, a minimum of €1,000 should be identified for basic visibility items (e.g. stickers or other visual identity material).

2.3.3 Drafting and Implementing the Plan

While the plan should be agreed with the Commission, partner country officials and other partners (e.g. other donors) may need to be brought into the process, to ensure complementarities of effort.

In devising communication activities to be funded under operational agreements, EU and partner organisation staff should take account of the following:

- ➔ Methods of communication selected and messages given should be compatible with prevailing social or religious norms in the place where the communication activity is carried out.
- ➔ Activities should respect the local environment.
- ➔ In all communication activities, the local language(s) should be used as far as possible.

Outside expertise may be called upon, to be funded from the budget for the action, to carry out the communication activities.

Smaller programmes may be carried out directly by the partner with the support of the Commission (provision of brochures, assistance with press contacts, etc).

In any event, the resources (human, financial, etc.) needed for implementation of specific communication activities should be carefully assessed during the design of the communication and visibility plan.

Changes to communication and visibility plans should be agreed with the Commission.

2.3.4 Reporting

The standard reporting requirements foreseen in the provisions of specific contracts, financing agreements and contribution agreements prevail. These reports should include details on the progress of visibility activities.

3 INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the specific aspects of communication and visibility in the framework of EC cooperation with the United Nations and the World Bank, which have both signed specific agreements in these areas. It reflects not only the more complex environment of multi-donor coordination, but also the special role of major partner international organisations and the EC's commitment to multilateralism.

3.2 United Nations Organisations

3.2.1 Background and Existing Framework of Cooperation

The United Nations and the European Commission have developed a strong partnership in the pursuit of shared humanitarian and development goals. These have been outlined in a number of strategic policy and programme frameworks. Both the United Nations and the Commission are also committed to increasing the effectiveness of aid in line with the principles of the Paris Declaration.

The nature of the relationship, and its bearing on the purpose and manner in which communication and visibility activities are carried out, is reflected in the Joint Visibility Action Plan signed by Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner and United Nations Deputy Secretary General Mark Malloch Brown in September 2006. The Action Plan emphasizes the shared commitment to communicate the results of the United Nations/EC partnership to beneficiaries and external stakeholders in the interest of transparency in the use of public funds, and as a means to foster global solidarity.

The funding relation between the United Nations and the EC is governed by the 2003 Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA). This agreement is applicable to all EC Directorates-General and all the United Nations Organisations that are party to it and sets out the legal obligations in relation to a number of aspects, including visibility. In particular, Article 11 of the FAFA sets out the legal obligations of the United Nations in relation to visibility. Its content is repeated and expanded in Article 6 of the General Conditions applicable to European Community contribution agreements with international organisations.

Both Article 11 of the FAFA and Article 6 of the General Conditions clearly indicate that United Nations Organisations should take all appropriate measures to publicise the fact that an Action has received funding from the European Union. These articles also provide basic guidance in terms of the target audiences and visibility tools, and delineate the correct procedure regarding the size and prominence of the acknowledgement, disclaimers on United Nations publications, and visibility requirements in relation to equipment bought with an EC contribution. The other chapters of this manual contain cross-references to the relevant provisions of the FAFA and the contribution agreements.

Eligible costs in relation to communication and visibility are set out under section 3 of FAFA and Article 14 of the General Conditions.[6]

3.2.2 Operational Criteria Applicable to the Visibility and Communication Actions Undertaken by the United Nations and the EC

As agreed in the Joint Action Plan on Visibility, the main objective of visibility activities is the communication of "positive results of the partnership". In addition to inputs, visibility activities should focus on outputs and the impact of the action's results.

Within the inception phase of an action, a communication and visibility plan highlighting the related communication activities should be discussed and agreed between the United Nations Organisation carrying out the action and the EC focal point [see chapter 2]. Once agreed, the United Nations Organisation shall report on the implementation of the plan under the regular reporting requirements foreseen in the respective Contribution Agreement.

In the preparation of a Contribution Agreement both the United Nations Organisation and the EC should agree on the appropriate financial allocation to be included for the budget line entitled "Visibility Actions".

In identifying appropriate communication and visibility activities, certain overarching criteria will be taken into account:

- **Size and proportion of the Commission's financing**

The EC recognises that visibility activities need to take into account and reflect the multi-party nature of multi-donor agreements even as they highlight the partnership with the EC.

6 http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/international_organisations/annexes_standard_documents/index_en.htm

In the event that the EC contribution is to a multi-donor action or is channelled through a United Nations Organisation Trust Fund established for global, regional or broad thematic initiatives, and where it is not reasonably possible or appropriate to identify the activities financed by the EU, the European Commission agrees that adequate visibility for its contribution will be provided within the context of broader visibility and communication designed for the overall initiative. This issue will be discussed between the United Nations Organisation and the European Commission on a case-by-case basis during the inception phase of the action and the outcome will be reflected in the Contribution Agreement.

- **Urgency**

Where a speedy intervention is envisaged in response to a sudden crisis, the United Nations Organisations are not expected to prepare a full communication and visibility plan immediately. United Nations agencies should nonetheless ensure that in such situations the Commission's support for their action is displayed from the start in an appropriate manner for the action. It is understood that in such cases the provisions of the FAFA and General Conditions should continue to be respected unless otherwise agreed by the parties. It should be noted that, in the context of their humanitarian partnership, United Nations agencies and the Commission may adopt specific visibility and communication approaches in order to preserve a distinct identity for impartial, needs-based humanitarian aid operations.

- **Nature of the action**

The communication and visibility plan should be adapted to the nature of the action. The *thematic area* and *geographical scope* of the action should set the parameters of the visibility activities. For instance, projects relating to coordination, security, etc. are unlikely to require a major visibility component, if any.

- **Other considerations**

Factors such as *insecurity*, or local *political sensitivities* may curtail information activities in some crisis zones and, in extreme cases, it may be necessary to avoid visibility altogether. Some actions require a high level of *political neutrality*. In these cases, the target audience and visibility tools will be chosen in relation to what is appropriate, in consultation and agreement with the EC delegation. When standard procedures for visibility are not possible due to security reasons, the visibility requirements will be foregone, or possible alternative arranged where appropriate (e.g. communication actions in EU member states).

3.2.3 Communication and Visibility Actions

A non-exhaustive inventory of specific activities which may, depending on circumstances, be implemented is found in chapter 4 of this manual. In practice, the choice of the most effective and appropriate modalities will depend on the *size and proportion of the EC's financing*, and the *urgency*, *nature* and *context* of the action as per section 3.3.

In addition to action-based communication activities, whenever possible and practical, communication and visibility should be strategic, and build on broader sets of activities or programmes, focusing on activities which better lend themselves to attract the target audiences. For example, when a number of programmes are financed by the Commission in a country or region, or covering a common theme, it could be envisaged, subject to previous agreement from the Commission, to use the individual project communication and visibility budgets to put together a more comprehensive communication programme and to achieve greater impact. Such an arrangement would however still require reporting to take place on a project basis.

To the extent possible, United Nations agencies should identify potential areas where broader and more strategic communication could be sought using the various EC-UN Strategic Partnership Agreements as a guiding reference. These proposals should be shared with the relevant EC and United Nations staff in Brussels for information.

3.3 The World Bank Group

3.3.1 Background and Existing Framework of Cooperation

In the case of the World Bank (WB), our cooperation is also underpinned by strong policy considerations. The Limelette process, the annual review of coordination and cooperation between EC and WB staff, provides a forum for nurturing this relationship. The EC-WB Trust Funds and Co-Financing Framework Agreement

(Framework Agreement), signed on 20 March 2009, sets forth the terms and conditions upon which the EC and WB co-operate in financing development projects, programmes and other activities through trust funds and other means. The provisions regarding visibility in the Framework Agreement are set out in Article 8 and Attachment 4 of the latter.

The EC and the WB signed Joint Visibility Guidelines on 27 May 2009, which should be read together with the visibility provisions in the Framework Agreement which they are designed to complement . The operational provisions of these Joint Guidelines have been incorporated into this Manual.

3.3.2 Financing Instruments and Roles

The Framework Agreement envisages that the EC can provide funding for WB-administered trust funds (see Article 2). In other cases, the EC provides parallel financing which goes directly to the governments in developing countries but has close ties with ("parallel to") WB-supported activities ("parallel co-financing", see Article 6).

The WB-administered trust funds can be categorised into three types: Recipient-Executed Trust Funds (RETFs); Bank Executed Trust Funds (BETFs) and Financial Intermediary Funds (FIFs), defined in Article 1 of the Framework Agreement. These categories of trust fund can be financed by either a single donor (Single Donor Trust Fund) or multiple ones (Multi-Donor Trust Fund).

The points, to be taken into consideration by the two parties in cases of Multi-Donor Trust Funds, are dealt with in section 3.3.3. point (d) below.

In the case of parallel co-financing, governments are the implementing agencies for the purposes of the EU Manual and have a direct obligation to the EC to carry out communication and visibility activities in the field. While the WB has no formal role or responsibility regarding communication and visibility-related activities in such cases, the WB will make a strong effort to make it easier to recognise EC financing, for example, by means of public events, the publication of press releases, etc.

3.3.3 Appropriate Communication and Visibility Activities

(a) Matching communication and visibility activities to the size of the trust fund

The EC contributes to WB-administered trust funds, which can vary in size, from two hundred and fifty thousand US dollars at IFC, and one million US dollars at IBRD/IDA, to several billion US dollars. The communication and visibility activities called for in such cases will necessarily vary because of the differences in available resources, the anticipated impact of foreseen actions and other considerations. The Joint Guidelines therefore allow for different approaches to communication and visibility activities, depending on the overall size of the trust fund:

- Many small trust funds with an overall size below $10 million do not have a significant communications budget because they are focused on programme activities (however, see point c below). Nevertheless, as a general rule, simple

communication plans should be prepared, through media such as websites, press releases, etc.

- Trust funds with an overall size above $10 million should normally have a dedicated communications budget which also includes the preparation of more detailed communications and visibility plans.

These approaches are a guideline and will need to take into account the available budget and certain overarching criteria (see points c and d below).

(b) Types of Activity and Target Audiences

Chapter 4 contains a list of specific activities which may, depending on specific circumstances, be implemented. These elements may be useful when drafting the communication and visibility plan, as well as in the absence of a formal plan.

Whether special logos are created and used will depend on decisions taken by the EC, the WB and other donors or partners, as applicable. For instance, consistent with the principles of the Paris Declaration, donors often agree to highlight country ownership rather than donor contributions, and have foregone the use of their own logos. The extent of Community outreach is also at the discretion of EC and WB staff and other donors or partners, as applicable, depending on all relevant circumstances, including the project or programme's own social communications goals and activities.[7]

Communication and visibility plans should focus on audiences in the beneficiary country, who are the ones who will be most affected and for whom these actions are most relevant. Such target audiences should be clearly identified in communication and visibility plans. Audiences will include opinion leaders and influential figures, as well as those beyond government and the media who have a stake in the action, or are affected by it.

(c) Budget

The funds set aside for communication and visibility activities should be reflected in the relevant working document (e.g. the annual work plan). The communication budget should be sufficient relative to the overall size of the trust fund in order to realise the communication and visibility objectives. The budget may need to be adjusted in the light of relevant circumstances by agreement between the EC, WB and other donors, as applicable. Changes to communication and visibility plans should also be mutually agreed by the parties. There may be situations where no dedicated budget for communication and visibility activities is agreed upon. In that case, the EC will provide a minimum of €1,000 for agreed visibility actions. In these situations, the EC Delegation may be best-placed to organise and implement such modest visibility actions, although this will need to be determined on a case-by-case basis.

(d) Overarching Criteria

In identifying appropriate communication and visibility activities, certain overarching criteria will be taken into account:

- **Size and proportion of EC funding**

The EC recognises that visibility activities need to take into account and reflect the multi-party nature of multi-donor agreements, even as they highlight partnership with the EC. If the EC contribution funds a multi-donor action or is channelled through a trust fund established for global, regional or broad thematic initiatives, and where it is not reasonably possible or appropriate to identify the EC-financed activities, the EC's contribution will be made visible within the context of broader visibility and communication actions designed for the overall initiative. This issue will be discussed between the parties on a case-by-case basis during the inception phase, and the outcome will be reflected in the relevant Agreement.

- **Urgency**

Where speedy intervention is envisaged in response to a sudden crisis, a full communication and visibility plan does not need to be immediately prepared. It should nonetheless be ensured that in such situations the EC's support for trust-funded actions is displayed from the start in an appropriate manner.

- **Nature of the action**

The communication and visibility plan should be adapted to the nature of the action. The thematic area and geographical scope of the action should set the parameters for activities geared towards visibility. For instance, projects relating to coordination, security, etc. are unlikely to require a major visibility component, if any.

- **Other considerations**

Factors such as insecurity, or local political sensitivities may hinder information activities in certain crisis zones and, in extreme cases,

7 See for example, the World Bank's website on Development Communications.

it may be necessary to avoid visibility altogether. Some actions require a high level of political neutrality. In these cases, the target audience and visibility tools will be chosen in relation to what is appropriate, in consultation and agreement with the EC Delegation. Where standard procedures for visibility are not possible for security reasons, the visibility requirements will be foregone, or possible alternatives arranged where appropriate (e.g. communication actions in EU Member States). Where standard procedures on visibility are not possible due to insecurity and political sensitivities, the steps agreed to be taken at country level will be communicated to EC and Bank headquarters.

(e) Developing a Communication and Visibility Plan

Where a communication and visibility plan is called for and mutually agreed upon, the types of communication and visibility activities selected should focus principally on the achievements and impact of the financed action, rather than on administrative or procedural milestones. In order to maximize the impact of communication efforts:

- ➔ Activities need to be timely
- ➔ Information used must be accurate
- ➔ Activities should be coordinated closely with the EC and WB
- ➔ The right audience(s) should be targeted
- ➔ Messages should interest the target audience(s)
- ➔ Activities should be appropriate in terms of resources spent and expected impact

However, there should also be room in any plan to seize a good opportunity. A good reflex for communication and the ability to make use of unexpected opportunities to benefit the action will often be as important as more formal efforts. The communication and visibility plan for any action should seek to maximize synergies with the EC's overall visibility strategy and that of the WB and other donors or partners, as applicable.

Annex 2 on EU Visual Identity Elements and Annex 4 on General Statements about the European Union provide guidance on the correct use of the EU's visual identity and general statements by international organisations and implementing partners.

4 ADJUSTING THE COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY PLAN TO THE ACTION

Contractors, implementing partners and international organisations are responsible for giving adequate publicity to the action they are implementing as well as to the support from the EU.

Different activities may be appropriate at different stages of the project cycle. In any event, communication activities should focus on achievements and the impact of the action, not on administrative and procedural milestones. The signature of a document, even if it relates to a large amount of money, will not necessarily attract much media attention, particularly in the EU.

The following sections contain an overview of possible communication activities. These elements may be useful when drafting the communication and visibility plan, as well as in the absence of a formal plan.

4.1 Basics

Before initiating any information, communication or visibility activity, contractors, implementing partners and international organisations should contact the Press and Information Officer at the EC Delegation accredited to their country. The Press and Information Officer is responsible for co-ordinating the overall EU communication strategy in the country or countries to which his/her EC Delegation is accredited. The Press and Information Officer can also provide information on intellectual property rights issues (copyrights, etc). The Project Manager should always be included in contacts with the Press and Information Officer.

Contractors or implementing partners or international organisations should use their normal stationery in letterheads or fax headers sheets, but should add the phrase "*This project/programme is funded by the European Union*" as well as the EU flag when communicating on matters related to the action (see Annex 2). The graphic identity of the EU (see Annex 2) must enjoy an equally prominent place and size as that of the contractor or implementing partner. Specific rules apply for international organisations (see Standard Contribution Agreement, article 6.2 of the General Conditions).

The disclaimer (see annex 2.6) must be included in all publications.

4.2 Other Communication Activities

Other elements of the communication and visibility plan might include:

- ➔ Press releases (see section 4.2.1)
- ➔ Press conferences (see section 4.2.2)
- ➔ Press visits (see section 4.2.3)
- ➔ Leaflets, brochures and newsletters (see section 4.2.4)
- ➔ Web sites (see section 4.2.5)
- ➔ Display panels (see section 4.2.6)
- ➔ Commemorative plaques (see section 4.2.7)
- ➔ Banners (see section 4.2.8)
- ➔ Vehicles, supplies and equipment (see section 4.2.9)
- ➔ Promotional items (see section 4.2.10)
- ➔ Photographs (see section 4.2.11)
- ➔ Audiovisual productions (see section 4.2.12)
- ➔ Public events and visits (see section 4.2.13)
- ➔ Information campaigns (see section 4.2.14)

Basic guidance on these elements is provided below. Templates for various communication products are provided in Annex 3.

4.2.1 Press releases

Press releases can be a very useful contribution to the communication activities around an action. As a general rule, a press release should be issued at the start of all actions.

Where the implementing partner or international organisation launches the press release in the context of the action, it should liaise with the Press and Information Officer at the EC Delegation or the relevant Commission department before sending it out. Where the Commission launches the press release, the contractor must provide all necessary technical information that would allow the Delegation or Commission department to do so. The general policy is that contractors should not issue press releases and make public statements unless cleared with the Commission. In the context of actions implemented with international organisations, where the EU plans to issue a press release focusing on the action, it should liaise with the relevant international organisation for a similar clearance.

The release should incorporate the EU flag, mention that funding was provided by the EU and mention the amount of EU funding in euro and in the local currency. If a press conference is planned, the press release should include the name of an EU personality who will be present at the press conference, if appropriate.

The release should be dated at the top and should also indicate when the information may be released. Generally, journalists prefer to be able to use the release immediately; in this case '*For immediate release*' should be written at the top of the document. However, it is sometimes appropriate to embargo the release until, for example, the publication of financial figures. In this case, a simple expression such as '*Not to be used before 10:00 hours, 15 October*' should be included at the top of the document.

A newsworthy press release should contain: a heading, a strong leading paragraph summarising the essential facts, the main body of the story, quotes, some background information, and contact details for further information.

The release should be kept to one side of an A4 page whenever possible; if it is longer, '*more follows*' should be written at the bottom of every subsequent page. At the end of the document, make sure to write *'End'*.

After *'End'*, the press release should provide the name of at least one person whom the journalist can contact for further information. Where possible, both a work and a home telephone number should be provided.

4.2.2 Press Conferences

Press conferences organised in the context of the communication and visibility plan should always be organised in cooperation with the Commission. The invitations should bear an EU flag in accordance with the applicable general rules (see section 3.1).

At the press conference itself, an EU flag should be displayed if other flags or symbols are being displayed.

4.2.3 Press Visits

Group visits by journalists to project sites may offer additional visibility opportunities. Such visits should be well-timed and focus on tangible achievements. Where appropriate, groups of visiting journalists should be accompanied by representatives of the EC Delegation.

4.2.4 Leaflets, Brochures and Newsletters

Publications such as leaflets, brochures and newsletters can be useful in communicating the results of an action to specific audiences.

- Leaflets can provide basic factual information and the address (such as a mailing address or web site) where further information can be found;
- Brochures can go into greater detail, highlighting the context, including interviews with stakeholders, beneficiaries, and so on;
- Newsletters are characterised by their regularity, and can be issued to inform on the progress of an action. This is useful, for example for infrastructure projects, training programmes, and so on, where the impact of an action can be appreciated over time.

Publications should always be tailored to the audience in question, and focus on the intended results of the action, not the financial and administrative details. Texts should be short and simple, and photographs used where possible to illustrate the action and its context. If possible, photographs should be of the people involved in the

action, rather than the officials responsible for its management.

In general, all material produced in paper form should also be made available in electronic form, so that it can be sent by e-mail and posted on a web site. For material in paper form, distribution capacity (mailing lists) should be considered.

All leaflets and brochures should incorporate the basic elements of the EU visual identity, i.e. the EU flag (Annex 2) and the disclaimer (Annex 2) and project details, contact name, address, telephone, fax and e-mail.

Leaflets and brochures produced by a contractor and/or implementing partner must also incorporate a definition of the EU (see Annex 4). Furthermore, in these cases, the cover page must clearly identify the action as being part of an EU-funded action. The front page lower banner must carry the disclaimer in Annex 2. The upper banner of the newsletter must be designed as shown in Annex 3 (section 4).

Copies, including electronic copies of the publications should be made available to the Commission.

4.2.5 Websites

Websites are increasingly a basic requirement for communication, but separate websites are not always required for all actions since information could simply be made available via the website of the Commission Delegation or the partner's website, for example.

If the action is designed to have a long life, and will give rise to significant material that could be communicated on a website (photographs of the evolution of the action, short interviews, material for the press, etc.), it may be agreed in the communication and visibility plan to establish an independent website related to the action.

The site should be established in close cooperation with the Commission Delegation or the responsible officials in the EuropeAid Cooperation Office who can ensure coherence, and provide links to the relevant Commission sites.

As a minimum, links should be made to the websites of the local Commission Delegation and the EuropeAid Cooperation Office as follows:

➔ http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/index_en.htm

At the end of the action, the website should be copied onto CD-rom and transmitted to the Delegation for possible further use in its general communication activities and for archival purposes.

4.2.6 Display Panels

Infrastructure-related actions funded by the EU may be identified as such by means of display panels describing the action. The display panels should be clearly visible so that those passing are able to read and understand the nature of the action. The display panels should be erected beside access routes to the site where the action is taking place and should remain in place from the start of the action until six months after its completion.

Contractors, implementing partners or international organisations should also produce a display panel with which to promote their EU-funded action at an exhibition or event, or at the entrance of a training centre or office reception. The shape, size and dimensions of panels vary depending on the amount of information that needs to be conveyed, and whether the panel is intended to be portable or permanent. Low-cost panels can be made using self-adhesive lettering and a well-positioned EU flag in the upper left-hand corner. When contractors or implementing partners consider it appropriate to add the logo of a partner organisation on the display panel, it should be positioned in the upper-right hand corner. Specific arrangements should be agreed with international organisations.

4.2.7 Commemorative Plaques

Permanent commemorative plaques are an effective way of acknowledging the involvement of the EU in the construction or planning of permanent structures such as houses, clinics, factories, institutions, training centres, roads, bridges, etc.

As part of the opening ceremony of permanent structures erected with EU funding or co-funding, contractors, implementing partners or international organisations should place a permanent plaque in the most visible part of the building, such as the main entrance or in front of the building. When appropriate, the plaque could contain the following sentence: "*This* [name of the structure] *was funded by the European Union*" with the EU flag placed underneath it.

When contractors or implementing partners consider it appropriate to add the logo of a partner organisation on the plaque, it should be positioned in the lower-right hand corner, and the EU flag should be in the lower-left hand corner.

4.2.8 Banners

Plastic or textile banners similar to the example given in Annex 3.6 should be produced when specified in the communication strategy of an action. They are intended to serve as a backdrop for special events such as inaugurations and conferences.

4.2.9 Vehicles, Supplies and Equipment

Any vehicles used in an EU-funded action should be clearly identified, and visibly carry the EU flag and the phrase "*Provided with the support of the EU*" in the operational language of the EU programme and in the local language. The company logos of the contractor, the implementing partner and other donors may appear on vehicles, although the EU flag should be displayed at least as prominently as the logos of all parties involved in the action.

Unless otherwise agreed with the Commission, any supplies or equipment delivered under an EU-funded action should be clearly identified and should feature prominently the EU flag and the mention "*Provided with the support of the EU*" in the operational language of the EU programme and in the local language. Any vehicles used in actions supported by the EU should carry vehicle panels (Annex 3).

Specific rules apply to international organisations (see Standard Contribution Agreement, Art. 6.1 of the General Conditions).

4.2.10 Promotional Items

Promotional items should be distributed when specified in the communication strategy of an action. All kinds of promotional items (such as T-shirts, caps and pens) can be produced by implementing partners, contractors or international organisations as supporting material for their information and communication activities in the framework of their action. Before taking any decision on the production of such items, the Press and Information Officer at the EC Delegation should be consulted.

The promotional items produced should be clearly identified with the EU flag, and if possible carry the words "*European Union*" and key messages or key phrases. The Press and Information Officer can provide samples of such items.

On certain promotional items (e.g. pens and banners), where it is not possible to include key messages in their entirety, at least the EU flag should appear, followed by a key phrase to be agreed with the EC Delegation (see also Annex 3).

4.2.11 Photographs

Photographs showing the progress of all actions should be taken where appropriate to document the progress of actions and events related to these (their launch, visits by EU officials, and so on) so that they can be used in communication material.

The following sections should help contractors, implementing partners and international organisations in their search for pictures to illustrate their communication materials.

4.2.11.1 Picture Selection

Where possible, the communication and visibility plan should make provisions for the use of a professional photographer on a regular basis to illustrate the evolution of an action.

The photos chosen should be those which will best illustrate the results and impact of the action, and should match any written information on the action. As with written material, people involved in the action are the focus, not the officials involved in managing the action, in holding meetings about the issue, and so on.

4.2.11.2 Picture Archives

As a general rule, digital photography should be used in order to facilitate reproduction on web sites and other information material (for producing printed materials, 300 dpi is the minimum quality standard).

Duplicates of the photos should be sent to:

- ➔ The Press and Information Officer at the EC Delegation;
- ➔ The EuropeAid Information Communication and Front Office Unit (see section 6 for address).

The duplicate photos should state on the back:

- ➔ The name and contact details of the person sending the pictures.
- ➔ The name of the organisation or person that owns the picture copyright.
- ➔ The name of the action to which the picture relates, its duration (e.g. 2004-2008) and the country in which it was taken.

The European Commission will be entitled to use or reproduce photos submitted to the above archives without payment of royalties.

4.2.12 Audiovisual Productions

Audio-visual material may be appropriate, but can be expensive to produce, so should only be prepared when there is a realistic chance of it being distributed by the media. However, small video clips can be produced very simply for displaying on web sites, or publicity material.

As with all material the productions should acknowledge the EU support, by featuring the EU flag at the beginning and / or end. As with photos, the contractor, implementing partner or international organisation should make sure that duplicates in the final distribution format and in the professional format are sent to:

- ➔ The Press and Information Officer at the EC Delegation;
- ➔ The EuropeAid Information, Communication and Front Office Unit (see section 6 for address).

Unless otherwise specified in the relevant contract/agreement, the broadcast line-up for the rush material broadcast should be sent to the EuropeAid Information, Communication and Front Office Unit.

4.2.13 Public Events and Visits

Organising a public event (or participating in an event organised independently from the action, for example by the EC Delegation) may offer excellent opportunities for generating interest in an action's particular achievements. Such events can include conferences, workshops, seminars, fairs, and exhibitions.

Those attending EU-funded training courses, conferences, seminars, fairs, exhibitions and workshops should be made aware that the EU is financing the event. The EU flag should appear on all material.

Depending on the circumstances, the opportunity should be taken to display the European flag and/or banners (see annex 3) in meeting rooms.

High level visits by Commission officials or political leaders are a potential communication opportunity – through press releases, press conferences, events, and through public diplomacy such as photo opportunities when visiting a project site.

The EC Delegation accredited to the beneficiary country should be closely involved in the preparation and implementation of such events, including contacts with the media.

4.2.14 Information Campaigns

Large actions can support the organising of an information campaign during the lifetime of the action. Such campaigns can raise the visibility of the action and the EU by promoting discussion of the issues around an action, such as public health, road safety, the environment, and so on.

Such a campaign requires adequate resources in terms of management, and should always be coordinated with the Commission.

4.3 Visibility for Specific Types of Action

Specific activities may be more appropriate to some types of action than others.

4.3.1 Provision of Supplies and Equipment

This type of action can particularly lend itself to communication activities, given the clear link between the substance of the action and a visible improvement in the functioning of, for example, a building or a piece of infrastructure.

Where the impact of the action is significant in an area likely to arouse public interest, the media should be alerted to the possibility of a photo opportunity when the supplies arrive in the country. Many opportunities will arise to alert the media at installation, first operation, etc.

4.3.2 Infrastructure-related Actions

Physical infrastructure actions (roads, bridges, buildings, etc.) or other actions which are tangible in nature (agricultural, forestry, water management, etc.) offer the greatest possibility for significant communication activities, given the direct impact that the action is likely to have on improving people's lives. This is valid regardless of whether the EU is providing funding for the construction, rehabilitation or running of the action.

Aside from static visibility activities such as signs and other visible indications, communication activities can be aimed at explaining the impact of the action on improving people's daily lives – safer transport, warmer housing, better schooling, cleaner water, etc.

4.3.3 Technical Assistance Actions and Studies

Since this type of action can be very technical in nature, involving policy advice, or may require a certain degree of confidentiality, particular care will be needed in selecting communication activities.

4.3.4 Grants

Given the small size of many grant-aided actions (as compared to, for example, infrastructure actions) communication activities may be smaller in scale and/or more focussed on a restricted group of people. Nevertheless, due to their proximity to the beneficiary population, they can be extremely helpful in demonstrating the added value of EU support.

4.3.5 Budget Support

This manual is not designed for budget support operations. Nonetheless, information and communication measures should be foreseen as part of the accompanying measures. It is recommended that the contractor or implementing partner involved with these accompanying measures liaise closely with the Commission to define an appropriate communication strategy.

5 REPORTING[8]

Contractors and/or implementing partners are required to produce administrative reports to update and inform the European Commission on the progress and findings of EU actions. These should have an EU style front cover sporting the name of the action and the date of the report's submission. The report's back cover should contain the following disclaimer:

"The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of <name of the author/ contractor/implementing partner> and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union."

The European Commission requires these reports to facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of actions. It also uses these to inform governments in partner countries of the progress of EU actions.

There are three types of administrative reports covering the different stages of the project cycle:

- The inception report which defines an action's plan of operations or work plan.
- The periodical progress reports which cover the activities of an action.
- The completion report.

Reporting requirements vary from action to action. Details concerning the context, frequency and submission procedure are given in the general conditions of all contracts.

Contractors and implementing partners should make sure that at least one section of their reports (interim and final) contains a detailed description and evaluation of their communication activities (giving concrete examples) and their impact (illustrating this with a file of press cuttings and audio-visual transcripts whenever possible).

If the report is to be made available to the public, the cover must use the report presentation template:

8 This section does not apply to international organisations.

6 FURTHER INFORMATION

This manual was drawn up by the Information, Communication and Front Office Unit of the EuropeAid Cooperation Office. It incorporates the Joint Guidelines agreed with the United Nations.

Further details and/or clarifications can be obtained from the EC Delegation accredited to the country in which the contractor, implementing partner or international organisation is operating or from the EuropeAid Cooperation Office Information, Communication and Front Office Unit at the following address:

European Commission

EuropeAid Cooperation Office

Information, Communication and Front Office Unit – 04

L-41, Office 06/84

B - 1049 Brussels

Tel: + 32-2 296 94 97

Fax: + 32-2 299 64 07

E-mail: europeaid-info@ec.europa.eu

Web site: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/

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ANNEX 1

The Communication Matrix: How and When to Communicate What to Whom?

Communication should occur throughout the life cycle of the action and should be timely. Communication and visibility efforts should be used to announce and accompany key milestones.

In order to tailor visibility activities both to the specific stages of the action (or of the project cycle') and to the target population, the matrix below can be used. This matrix outlines the types of visibility activity appropriate to the various stages of the life cycle of an action.

It should be noted that the stages of the project cycle set out in the matrix are proposed for the purpose of planning only. They are not intended to be the focus of the communication activities (the focus should be *achievements* and *impact*). The matrix is intended as a flexible tool and may be updated and adapted at any stage of the action, if necessary.

The scope of the visibility matrix goes beyond the scope of individual contracts, contribution agreements or financing agreements (it also covers programming, identification, appraisal, financing, evaluation and audit). Although it is useful in the context of drafting communication and visibility plans (see section 2.3 above), it should therefore be clear that not all activities proposed under the visibility matrix can be funded in the context of specific contracts, contribution agreements or financing agreements.

Project cycle stage/ communication activity & target groups	Programming	Identification	Appraisal	Financing	Implementation	Evaluation & Audit
Communication objective	Announce EU support	Information on action status	Information on action status	Highlight amount of EC support, and context	Awareness raising	Demonstration of impact
Responsibility	Commission	Commission	Commission	Commission/ Partner	Partner	Commission/ Partner
Type of key message	“The world’s biggest donor at the service of the Millennium Goals”	"More, better, faster – Europe cares"	"The EU and <partner>- delivering more and better aid together"	“The world’s biggest donor at the service of the Millennium Goals”	“Cooperation that Counts”	"The EU delivers"
Most appropriate tools	Press conferences, events, interviews	Information campaign	Information campaign	Press conference	Events, site visits, TV and radio spots, high level visits	Videos, reports
Beneficiary population	Press conference following pledge	Information campaign to accompany visit of identification mission	Inform via the media on selection of partner	Inform via the media when financing is confirmed Public signing ceremony	Information campaign Photo opportunities, (joint) high level visits to mark milestones Formation of multi-donor action steering committees	Make key results publicly available Work with the media to show the impact on the ground
EU institutions and international donor community	Press conference following pledge	-	-	-	Information campaign Photo opportunities, (joint) high level visits to mark milestones Joint presentations to Parliament Thematic events	Make key results publicly available & broaden to include key strategic messages
European citizens	Press conference following pledge	-	-	Inform via the media, if appropriate Work with specialist press Thematic events	Photo opportunities, (joint) high level visits to mark milestones Broad awareness raising campaigns, using a specific programme as an anchor Thematic events	Inform via the media, if appropriate Make key results publicly available and broaden to include key strategic messages

ANNEX 2

EU Visual Identity Elements

1 The EU Flag

The common element branding all EU-funded actions is the EU flag:

Whatever the size, scope or objectives of an action, the EU flag must be prominently displayed as specified in this manual on all materials produced by the contractor, implementing partner or international organisation.

Electronic templates have been developed for each type of communication tool and can be downloaded from the following site:

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/index_en.htm

The EU flag constitutes the main element of the European visual identity. For this reason, specific guidelines have been drawn up to ensure its accurate use and reproduction.

While most points on the standard colours that should be used in the EU flag and on how to create this EU flag are included in the present document, more detailed instructions can be found in Annex A1 of the Interinstitutional style guide available from the following site:

http://publications.europa.eu/code/en/en-000100.htm

2 Geometrical Description

The EU flag is in the form of a blue rectangular flag of which the fly is one and a half times the length of the hoist. The 12 gold stars situated at equal intervals form an undefined circle, of which the centre is the point of intersection of the diagonals of the rectangle. The radius of the circle is equal to one-third the height of the hoist. Each of the stars has five points that are situated on the circumference of an undefined circle of which the radius is equal to oneeighteenth the height of the hoist. All stars are upright - that is to say, with one point vertical i.e. pointing upwards, and two points in a straight line at right angles to the mast.

The circle is arranged so that the stars appear in the position of the hours on the face of a clock. Their number is invariable.

3 Colours

The flag has the following official colours:

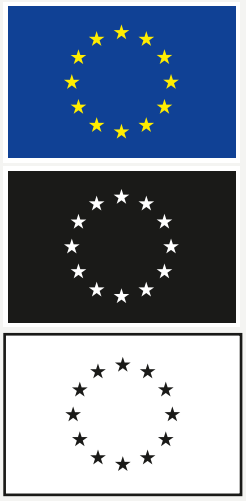
- ➔ Pantone Reflex Blue for the surface of the rectangle.
- ➔ Pantone Process Yellow for the stars.

Contractors, implementing partners and international organisations must, until further notice, use the “Pantone Process Yellow” and the “Pantone Reflex Blue”.

The international Pantone range is widely available and easily accessible, also for non-professionals.

4 Backgrounds

The flag should preferably be printed on a white background. Multicolour backgrounds should be avoided, especially those involving a colour that clashes with the blue. Where a coloured background is unavoidable, a white border with a thickness equal to 1/25th of the height of the rectangle must be used.



The EU flag can be downloaded from the following web page:

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/index_en.htm

5 Alterations and Additions

Contractors, implementing partners and international organisations should be aware that when reproducing the EU flag in newsletters and other graphic presentations it must be used in its entirety, without any alterations or additions made to it. Thus the EU flag must not be shown to incorporate any flag or symbol of another country, donor or institution. Each should be presented separately from the other.

6 Disclaimer

The EU is not responsible for the contents of communication material prepared by contractors, implementing partners or international organisations. These must therefore include the following disclaimer in their publications:

"This publication has been produced with the assistance of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of <name of the author/contractor/implementing partner/ international organisation> and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union."

7 Internet Links

All publications produced by contractors or implementing partners should refer to official EU sources for more information and, in particular, to the Europa home page (see Annex 3) and/or EC Delegation home page. In addition, reference can be made to the European Union in the World web portal, which can be found at **http://ec.europa.eu/world/**. This portal contains links to more specialised sites with information on the EU's external relations.

8 EU Visibility after Completion of the Action

An action may continue to be managed by the beneficiary or partner after the EU-funded phase of the action has been completed. In this case, six months after the phase funded by the EU has finished, no EU symbol may be included in any communication tools of the action, with the exception of any commemorative plaques.

However, the following sentence must be included on material, with the same prominence as was given to the EU flag: "The initial phase <dates> of this project/ programme was supported by the European Union".

Specific arrangements should be agreed with international organisations.

ANNEX 3

Templates for Communication Products

Use of the templates below is recommended for contractors and implementing partners.

Electronic versions of these templates are available at the following address:

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/index_en.htm

1 Press release

PRESS RELEASE

Sarajevo, 31.04.2000

All media are invited to the inauguration of the Laboratory for Quality Control of drugs on May 15 2000 at 11.00 in Sarajevo. The reconstruction and equipment of the laboratory have been financed by the European Commission to the tune of 2 million Euro. The works have been performed by the NGO Lab Help.

Quality control of drugs is vital for the development of BiH's domestic production and will ensure that it conforms to European standards.

For more information, please contact:
Mr Frane Maroevic, EC press and information adviser
Mr Ivan Ivanic, project manager NGO Lab Help

A project implemented by the contractor

Marsala Tita 14
71 000 Sarajevo
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Tel:
Fax:

This project is funded by the European Union

Delegation of the European Commission in Bosnia and Herzegovina
Dubrovacka 6
71000 Sarajevo
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Tel: +387 71 666 044
Fax: +387 71 666 037

The European Commission is the EU's executive body.

"The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders".

2 Leaflets

For more information
The European Union's XXXXXXX programme for "Partner Country"
"The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms.
The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders".
The European Commission is the EU's executive body.
Industrial Development programme
This project is funded by The European Union
A project implemented by (CONTRACTOR)

The industrial Development Programme for "Partner Country"
The concept
The objectives
Programme Components
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ANNEX 3

3 Brochures

The European Union's XXXXXXX programme
For "Partner Country"

The industrial development programme

for Partner Country

Activity report

This project is funded by
The European Union

A project implemented by
(CONTRACTOR)

4 Newsletters

IN FOCUS

Title

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In this issue:

Supporting the Property Law Implementation Plan p.2

Enforcing the customs law p.3

Interview with Mr Hansjörg Kretschmer p.4

This project is funded by the European Union

This project is implemented by (contractor).

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission.

ANNEX 3

5 Display Panels

6 Banners

7 Commemorative Plaques

8 Vehicle Panels

ANNEX 3

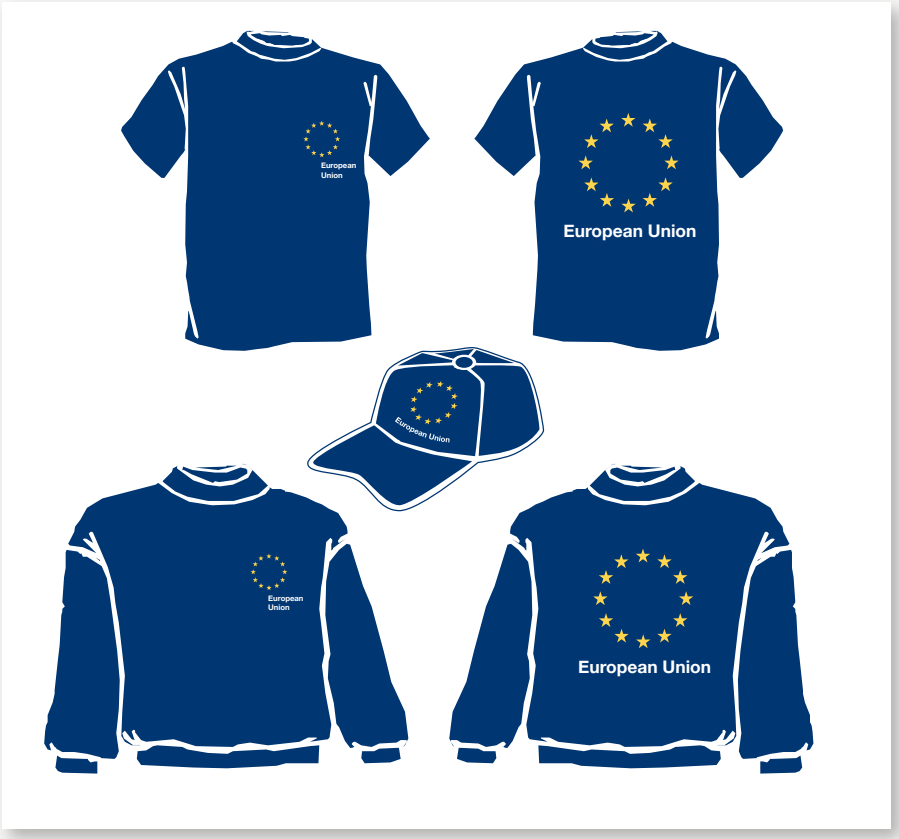
Provided by the European Union
European Union
Contractor

Provided by the European Union
Contractor

9 Promotional Items

Important note: On certain promotional items (e.g. pens and banners), where it is not possible to include key messages in their entirety, at least the EU flag must appear, followed by one of the following key phrases (or similar), underlining the beneficiary country and the sector concerned:

- ➔ "Cooperation that Counts".
- ➔ "The European Union and the countries of [insert the names of the countries or region]: A Cooperation that counts."
- ➔ "The European Union's [insert the nature of the programme, e.g. Health] cooperation programme with [insert the country's name]".
- ➔ "European Union – [insert the country's name], partner rather than donor".
- ➔ "European Union – [insert the country's name]".



ANNEX 4

Definitions & General Statements

1 General Statements

If the contractor, implementing partner or international organisation wishes to put a general statement on the EU for its region in written communications such as press releases, fact sheets, publications, project web sites or electronic information materials, it should use the relevant standard general statement. A general statement on the EU and standard definitions for the EU and its institutions are provided below.

Other general statements may be appropriate, e.g. for the instrument under which the action is being implemented, for more general EU development or cooperation objectives, or to emphasise a particular partnership. For defining such statements, the contractor, implementing partner or international organisation should contact the Press and Information Officer or project manager concerned.

General Statement on the EU

"The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms.

The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders".

2 Definitions of the European Union and its Institutions

If the contractor, implementing partner or international organisation decides that more detailed information about the EU is needed, the following approved definitions should be used in any communication materials, unless otherwise instructed by the Press and Information Officer.

European Union

The European Union is established in accordance with the Treaty on European Union. There are currently 27 Member States of the Union. It is based on the European Communities and the member states cooperation in the fields of Common Foreign and Security Policy and Justice and Home Affairs. The five main institutions of the European Union are the European Parliament, the Council of Ministers, the European Commission, the Court of Justice and the Court of Auditors.

The European Union is a major player in international cooperation and development aid. It is also the world's largest humanitarian aid donor. Today, the European Community has political and financial responsibility for over 11% of the world's public aid (ODA), compared with 5% in 1985.

The primary aim of the EC's own development policy, agreed in November 2000, is the eradication of poverty. To enhance its impact, the EC is targeting its assistance on six priority areas: trade and development; regional integration and cooperation; support to macroeconomic policies and equitable access to social services; transport; food security and sustainable rural development; institutional capacity building, good governance and the rule of law. In addition to these core areas, important crosscutting issues are being mainstreamed into development activities namely: human rights, gender equality, environment and conflict prevention.

http://europa.eu/

European Community

The European Communities consist of the European Community (previously the European Economic Community before it was redefined by the Maastricht Treaty in 1992) and Euratom. These communities share the same institutions and management structures.

European Parliament

The European Parliament is the directly elected expression of political will of the European Union and the largest multinational Parliament in the world. The European Parliament upholds citizens' rights, adopts legislation and monitors the use of executive power.

http://www.europarl.europa.eu

Council of the European Union

Usually known as the Council of Ministers, specialised government ministers meet from each Member State to take decisions and resolve national differences in the various policy areas. The European Council, made up of 27 Heads of State or government, meets at least twice a year to set objectives and fix priorities. Each Member State takes the Presidency in turn for a term of six months.

http://www.consilium.europa.eu

European Commission

The European Commission is the European Community's executive body. Led by 27 Commissioners, the European Commission initiates proposals of legislation and acts as guardian of the Treaties. The Commission is also a manager and executor of common policies and of international trade relationships. It is responsible for the management of European Union external assistance.

http://ec.europa.eu

European Court of Justice

The European Court of Justice provides the judicial safeguard necessary to ensure that the law is observed in the interpretation and application of the Treaties and all legislation based upon them.

http://www.curia.europa.eu

European Court of Auditors

The European Court of Auditors is responsible for checking that the European Union spends its money according to budgetary rules and regulations.

http://www.eca.europa.eu

Other institutions

European Investment Bank (EIB)

The European Investment Bank is the European Union's financing institution. It provides loans for capital investment promoting the Union's balanced economic development and integration. It is the leading institution for basic infrastructure investments in South Eastern Europe.

http://www.eib.europa.eu

European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)

The European Economic and Social Committee represents the views and interests of organised civil society vis-à-vis the Commission, the Council and the European Parliament. The Committee has to be consulted on matters relating to economic and social policy; it may also issue opinions on its own initiative on other matters which it considers to be important.

http://www.eesc.europa.eu

Committee of the Regions (COR)

The Committee of the Regions is the political assembly which provides local and regional authorities with a voice at the heart of the European Union. It has to be consulted on matters concerning regional policy, the environment and education. It is composed of representatives of regional and local authorities.

http://www.cor.europa.eu/

European Central Bank (ECB)

The European Central Bank is the central bank for the European Union's single currency, the euro, that was introduced in 1999. The ECB's main task is to maintain the euro's purchasing power and the price stability in the euro area. The euro area comprises 16 European Union countries.

http://www.ecb.eu

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