# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## ACRONYMS

| ACRONYMS | 1 |

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | 2 |

## OVERVIEW

| OVERVIEW | 5 |
| USAID in Kenya | 5 |
| Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) | 6 |
| USAID’s Development Outreach and Communications Program | 7 |
| USAID in Kenya Outreach and Communications | 8 |

## STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

| STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS | 10 |
| Process Roadmap | 10 |
| Emphasis on Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting (CLA) | 11 |

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

| RESEARCH FINDINGS | 15 |
| External Findings | 15 |
| Internal Findings | 19 |
| Situational Analysis – Key Learning Points | 22 |
| Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses and Threats | 25 |

## GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

| GOAL AND OBJECTIVES | 30 |
| Communications Goal | 30 |
| Audiences | 32 |
| Communications Objectives | 34 |
| Indicators | 40 |
| Theory of Change | 40 |
| Assumptions | 42 |

## COLLABORATING, LEARNING, AND ADAPTING

| COLLABORATING, LEARNING, AND ADAPTING | 43 |
APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Links to Related Documents
Appendix 2: Communication Strategy Development Roadmap
Appendix 3: Situation Analysis
Appendix 4: “In reach” vs. internal communications
Appendix 5: Role of Communications in USAID’s Program Cycle
Appendix 6: Messaging
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACRONYMS</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AOR</td>
<td>Agreement Officer’s Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APS</td>
<td>Annual Program Statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C&amp;R</td>
<td>Communications and Records Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDC</td>
<td>U.S. Centers for Disease Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDCS</td>
<td>Country Development Cooperation Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLA</td>
<td>Collaboration, Learning and Adapting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COP</td>
<td>Chief of Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COR</td>
<td>Contracting Officer’s Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COVID-19</td>
<td>Coronavirus Disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOAG</td>
<td>Development Objective Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOC</td>
<td>Development Outreach and Communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSN</td>
<td>Foreign Service National</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOK</td>
<td>Government of Kenya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFES</td>
<td>International Foundation for Electoral Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IP</td>
<td>Implementing Partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPA</td>
<td>Legislative and Public Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Nongovernmental Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDS</td>
<td>Public Diplomacy Section (formerly Public Affairs Section (PAS))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMP</td>
<td>Performance Management Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEPFAR</td>
<td>U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMI</td>
<td>U.S. President’s Malaria Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWOT</td>
<td>Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID/KEA</td>
<td>USAID Kenya and East Africa Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USG</td>
<td>United States Government</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

USAID’s Development Outreach and Communications (DOC) program was established by the Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA) Bureau in 2005 in response to a growing need for expanded communications with host country publics in the aftermath of 9/11. The program pre-dated the growth of the public’s collective expectation of high quality, visual, real-time content to communicate with host country publics worldwide, including extensive social media engagement. USAID’s expansion into new communications areas and approaches has to a large degree mirrored that of society – and our collective desire to be engaged and deliver our own information or “user-generated” content.

Although the demand for communication skills and experience has grown, most USAID Missions cannot keep pace due to a variety of factors. USAID lacks a professional development program focused on communications for all staff, and, perhaps most significantly, communications is not a formal career track within the Agency and is not built into the technical approaches of implementing partners (IPs), nor the mission’s program cycle.

For USAID in Kenya specifically these factors are coupled with an endless barrage of events, hierarchical clearances of print products, consistent content generation required to feed social media handles, the need for strong visual assets, demand for training for local organizations with underfunded communication staff, and requests from many stakeholders for the DOC team’s communications skills. There is a need to make strategic shifts in how communications are managed at the Mission level.

Fortunately, USAID in Kenya is one of the best- resourced DOC teams at USAID, with a core team of six communications professionals plus three additional communications staff embedded in the technical teams and a support contract. However, there remains little time to pause and reflect about what works and what does not. There has also been an inability to engage broadly with stakeholders due to routinely heavy workloads, resourcing constraints, and the onslaught of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) restrictions. Engagement would ideally help to build consensus on the goal and objectives of our work or to gather evidence to verify whether USAID communications reflect the country’s strategy of walking with Kenyans as the leaders on their development journey.

This communications strategy aims to address those gaps.

Now, more than ever, the Mission needs a different approach to communications that is more targeted and selective; one which recognizes the ever-present demands placed on this active Mission with a significant regional footprint in East Africa.
Throughout the strategy development process, there has been a growing understanding at USAID/KEA of the important role those strategic communications can and does play in helping Kenyans understand U.S. contributions to their country’s overall social, economic, and political development – their potential and necessary contributions to the future of the country for Kenyan-led development, Agency policies, and the overall National Security Strategy of the United States.

Effective implementation of more targeted and strategic communications – to specific target audiences – is key to achieving the communications objectives highlighted below. This targeted communications strategy will focus staffing time, resources, and tactics. Without it, the Mission’s efforts will be dispersed among a wide range of activities that do not reach the average Kenyan – and may not employ the most effective tactics. It will also allow USAID to authentically listen to Kenyans, be informed by their input, utilize feedback loops to strengthen learning, and build its own capacity to communicate strategically across its own systems. Finally, strategic engagement will allow USAID to co-create development with Kenyans and work together to further development that is Kenyan-owned, Kenyan-led, and Kenyan-managed.

**The communications goal is: Strategic two-way engagement with target audiences catalyzed.**

By seeking, listening, and responding to feedback or engaging in conversations with target audiences through our communications activities, (i.e. engendering two-way engagement), there will be more ownership of issues by Kenyans and greater space for discussion, which will contribute to better development outcomes and improved quality of life.
Feedback will help USAID to improve the impact of programming. This will be implemented through four complementary and reinforcing objectives:

- **Communications Objective 1:** Diversity and number of Kenyan voices engaged in development discussions increased.

- **Communications Objective 2:** Strategic communications approaches to support programmatic objectives increased.

- **Communications Objective 3:** Use of research for evidence-based decisions and measurable impact strengthened (across all communications efforts).

- **Communications Objective 4:** Capacity and enabling environment for outreach (to key target audiences) across USAID’s ecosystem increased.

Developing this communications strategy has been collaborative, extensive, and iterative. It is hoped this strategy’s analysis, findings, and new strategic direction will provide the agency with a more nuanced approach to communications and outreach.
**OVERVIEW**

**USAID in Kenya**

Kenya “has the largest, most diversified economy and the second largest population in East Africa. It also has a young, ambitious and well-educated workforce eager to contribute to developing the country.”

Youth between the ages of 15-24 make up nearly 1 in 5 Kenyans and 35 percent of the working population. This is a particular challenge given the lack of economic opportunities and relevant job skills.

The U.S. relationship with Kenya is nearly 60 years old, dating to Kenya’s independence. Today, overall U.S. Government assistance to Kenya is more than $1 billion per year. USAID, with its contribution of about $560 million per year, remains the largest donor that funds the country’s development. USAID’s long relationship with the people of Kenya is focused on improvements in education, quality health care delivery, effective and responsive governance, and economic growth through trade and investment. This relationship has provided “a firm foundation for achieving common development, diplomatic, economic, and security objectives.”

To provide context, USAID/KEA has six technical offices that contain both bilateral and regional programs including: office of economic growth and integration (OEGI); education and youth (EDY); health, population and nutrition (HPN); democratic governance, peace and security (DGPS); environment; and bureau of humanitarian assistance (BHA) - which is a combination of two previous offices, Food for Peace (FFP) and the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA). The total budget is roughly $560 million in humanitarian and development assistance to Kenyan citizens annually.

USAID/KEA holds a critical position in a region experiencing growing public and private foreign investment and implementing all Agency and presidential initiatives.

---

1. www.usaid.gov/kenya
In addition, with regular delegations and visits, it is a high-profile mission with competing demands not only in the field but also from USAID/Washington. Although USAID/KEA includes both bilateral and regional programs, this strategy focuses on Kenya. A distinct regional strategy will be developed at another time.

Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS)

Despite progress achieved over the last decades, Kenya faces challenges to retaining its status as a middle-income country. For instance, there is still a persistent gap between rich and poor, public expenditure is declining, corruption remains pervasive affecting all walks of life, and adolescent girls face challenges due to marginalization, discrimination, and psychological and physical abuse. In addition, a youth “tsunami” (the average age of a Kenyan is 19 years old) poses challenges due to lack of education and employment skills.

USAID in Kenya completed a new CDCS for 2020-2025 (link: usaid.gov/kenya/documents/kenya-country-development-cooperation-strategy), a process informed substantially by qualitative and quantitative analyses to assess Kenya’s development trajectory and using these analyses to drive community discussions across all 47 counties. (See Appendix 1.1 – CDCS Qualitative and Quantitative Analyses: What Does the Data Show and What do Kenyans Think?) The iterative and ongoing process also included the Kenya Country Roadmap, which looks at progress along key indicators including business environment and trade freedoms.

The long-term vision for the new CDCS is that Kenyans achieve their aspirations toward self-reliance by leading their own development and mobilizing their own resources. This includes a “private-sector first” lens, greater synergies with county and national governments, and direct relationships between USAID and local actors and organizations. USAID/KEA aims to support citizen participation, institutional accountability, and leadership and ensure USAID interventions focus on adolescent girls, women, and youth as entry points for transformational development in Kenya.

The strategy is supported by four mutually reinforcing development objectives:

- **CDCS Objective 1.** Key systems such as health, governance, and markets improved;
- **CDCS Objective 2.** Resilience of vulnerable populations and environments improved;
- **CDCS Objective 3.** Economic growth opportunities, especially for young men and young women, catalyzed; and
- **CDCS Objective 4.** Kenya’s regional opportunities leveraged and external risks mitigated.

Throughout, the CDCS focuses on incorporation of Agency strategies and contribution to sustaining American leadership in global development and humanitarian assistance.

---

3 USAID Full FY2020 Roadmap document.
One gap in the previous CDCS was the lack of directly applying communications to support the achievement of development objectives. Outreach and communications are embedded in the new CDCS as one of the main guiding principles.

**USAID’s Development Outreach and Communications Program**

The original DOC program was established by LPA in 2005 before social media and the growth of the public’s expectation of high quality, visual, real time content. With the advent and rising popularity of social media and instant messaging apps, our collective societal desire to have high quality visual content, develop our own content, and engage with others in online discussions has grown.

The vast majority of DOCs are primarily focused on creating content within USAID and with partners for websites, social media, speeches, events, collateral materials (fact sheets, overviews, success stories), and to respond to numerous USAID/Washington requests for content. This leaves little to no time to listen to conversations on social media, gather analytics, apply learning, understand the messages that resonate, or identify how USAID’s work and contributions can be an authentic part of people’s lives. In other words, DOCs cannot ascertain return on investment from activities nor how these messages resonate or impact opinions toward development and humanitarian investments.

Overall communications and outreach skills have grown exponentially, and in many Missions human and financial resources have increased, but the resources have not grown at the same rate as the demand. Communications has become increasingly understood as critical to ensuring stakeholder buy-in and reaching overall programmatic objectives. In addition, the DOC function has not been formalized as a USAID career track, despite repeated efforts under numerous Administrations to do so; and many Missions have faced the loss of superior talent. These factors often result in DOCs not having the time or resources to meet the demand for communications expertise across the Mission as a whole.

Broad communications and outreach skills are now essential for a successful 21st century professional across all sectors, public and private. For example, across Missions there are constant requests to take a “good” photo, summarize long, technical narratives into easily understood “elevator speeches,” develop fact sheets/talking points, create visually appealing PowerPoints, develop social media posts on updates across the entire mission’s portfolio, and report back to staff on the conversations happening in the country around development issues. Many of these are skills rather than expertise and they are skills that more people in the mission should be developing. Finding ways to impart these skills to all mission staff would add great benefit to the Mission and reduce requests long viewed as the prerogative of communications professionals only.
USAID in Kenya Outreach and Communications

Historically, communications has played a strong and prominent role at USAID/KEA, namely: as a driver of information to Kenyan audiences; as a platform for building greater understanding of programs, their objectives, and results; and to a lesser degree, to solicit information from and engage with Kenyan audiences through social media, events, community outreach, and more.

However, within the mission there has been little consensus on communication objectives or priorities. Unfortunately, throughout the last five years, the DOC team has too often been overextended and has lacked the time to gain a stronger consensus or establish clear communication objectives.

Since 2014, the growth in the size of the DOC team has paralleled the increased profile of USAID/KEA and its presence as a regional hub, including large humanitarian programs in Kenya and the region.

The six-person DOC team is one of the largest in the world – comparable in size only to teams in the Central Asia Republics (8 DOCs), Pakistan (8 DOCs), Guatemala (5 DOCs) and Jordan (5 DOCs). In addition, three additional communication professionals have been hired with technical teams bringing complementary experiences from other sectors, including from other donors, the private sector, the U.S. Embassy, and the non-profit sector. Together, the extended communications team includes nine professionals. Although the three staff are not on the DOC team, they are extended members, and are already helping USAID to increase the quality, relevance, and timing of content. This includes drafting speeches and press releases; event planning; story collection, editing, and placement; and coordination across the large teams for fact sheet and website updates, generating draft social media posts, and maintaining close coordination with the implementing partners.

USAID/KEA’s bustling communications activities exceed that of other Missions, with a highly active social media presence, captivating photography and video, and superior print collaterals. Congressional and staff delegations occur regularly, and technical offices’ needs for communications support continue to grow, placing extra demands on an already busy mission. In addition, the DOC team manages logistics during events, trips, visits, and exhibitions. Finally, the DOC team also manages numerous relationships across the interagency and often leads USAID coordination on Ambassadorsial trips, interagency exhibitions, and interagency material development.

DOC participates in the Interagency Communication Working Group and has been
appreciated by the Ambassadors, Deputy Chiefs of Mission, and Public Diplomacy Section for helping to make the “One USG” a reality. The goal of “One USG” has been to ensure that the Mission with all the agencies present in Kenya, have one voice and are seen to be under the one umbrella. In order to make this Mission Kenya goal a reality, USAID has helped to create “One USG” exhibits, visuals, and a collaborative effort to international days and events that involve multiple agencies.

Since 2016, there has been a somewhat loose implementation of a previously developed strategy. However, the focus on English print products – with heavy editing and review processes – plus the constant barrage of events, visits, and exhibitions generated by teams, implementing partners and others, resulted in more “reactive” activities, without the human or financial resources to be “proactive” or fully implement, monitor progress, or assess the effectiveness of activities.

An informal assessment process in 2017 predated the launch of this formal strategy development process a year later (See Appendix 1.2 - Assessment Report for Development Outreach and Communications for Planning and Strategic Positioning - January 2017). This informal assessment prioritized feedback from mission staff on the current state of communications, guided by two previous communications strategies in 2012-2013 and 2015-2016. These strategies laid the groundwork for how communication and outreach was perceived and executed, although they were developed through a limited consultative or research-based process. Unfortunately, they did not generate data that would help the mission learn the effectiveness of communications activities or whether the investment was worthwhile.

Many of the areas for improvement and strategic shifts in communications approaches explained throughout this document are already being implemented since this is a “living” document that has evolved throughout the drafting and finalization process.
STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

This strategy has been carefully developed to help the mission achieve its strategic development objectives and in doing so expand the current scope of the communications function to add greater value and return on investment.

The strategy will:

1. Align activities and resources with an overarching communications objective that is well understood by the mission staff and its partners;
2. Focus on results and outcomes that are smart, strategic, selective, and necessary to reach the overarching communications objective;
3. Align the strategy with the CDCS process, the Interagency Country Strategy, the National Security Strategy, and Kenya's development journey;
4. Leverage communications as a tool for solving development challenges;
5. Create a realistic, results-oriented budget for implementation; and
6. Engage and empower staff and partners so that their work supports the implementation of the strategy, including outreach and messaging to a greater and more diverse number of Kenyans.

This document reflects an extensive and interactive consultation and collaboration process, visually represented (See Appendix 2 – Communications Strategy Development Roadmap).

Process Roadmap

That process included five distinct phases:

1. **Background Research and Situation Analysis:** This included an extensive desk review of more than 100+ policy, research, and evaluation documents, consultations with more than 200 people and focus groups within USAID and across three Kenyan cities, and a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis (See Appendix 1.3 – Presentation: USAID Kenya and East Africa Strategic Communications, What We Know and Next Steps);
2. **Co-Creation Process and Stakeholder Engagement:** This included dozens of meetings with USAID staff and partners, a consultative Open House with USAID staff to explain the analysis and data that were being considered, discussions and meetings with implementing partners, and discussions with the Interagency Communication Working Group.

3. **Realignment and Pivot to Kenya-led, -owned, and -managed development:** The realignment included the DOC team’s implementation of a “90-day plan” toward evidence-based decisions to maximize resources. This pivot illustrates the integration of approaches and messaging which underscores Kenyans leading their own development, and a focus on synchronizing with this strategy with the CDCS, e.g. the consultations processes in 2019 for the Annual Performance Statement (APS) and the CDCS as well as adaptations due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

4. **Finalization of the Strategy:** In November and December 2020, two Theory of Change workshops were conducted with staff from across the Mission to finalize the goal, objectives, and expected activities. A performance management plan (PMP) for this strategy in concert with the PMP for the CDCS will be developed.

   The strategy was also presented and shared for feedback with all office directors and deputy directors, communications staff, USAID technical and support staff, implementing partner communications staff, town hall, the Interagency Communication Working Group, Legislative and Public Affairs, and the DOCs in the region. The Mission Leadership Council was the final reviewer and approver of the strategy document with an illustrative PMP and budget.

5. **Implementation of the Strategy:** Implementation is underway, including mentoring new communication staff on extended DOC team, staff training, expansion of research, and the implementation of new approaches. Case studies of these implementation efforts are included within this strategy, especially considering that COVID-19 required an accelerated adoption of new approaches. Technical teams will develop communication plans in support of the strategy, and the performance monitoring plan and budget will also be finalized and approved.

**Emphasis on Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting (CLA)**

Incorporating CLA into the strategy development process was essential. It reflects USAID/KEA Mission Director Mark Meassick’s desire to use the approach to improve effectiveness internally and externally. It is also a key objective of USAID’s planning and program cycle. Building the communications skills of senior leadership, technical teams and implementing partners will be a strong factor in the strategy’s implementation success.

**COLLABORATING**

As part of our CLA emphasis, we collaborated extensively within USAID and externally in the planning and visioning process. While this depth of collaboration took a significant amount of time given the size of the mission and competing priorities, staff and partners
were provided with multiple opportunities to engage throughout the process. The DOC team sees ongoing stakeholder understanding and buy-in as critical to success. Ultimately, this approach offered USAID staff and implementing partners a greater understanding of their role in implementation and its alignment with overall U.S. government and Agency priorities. Specifically:

- **USAID leadership was engaged at regular intervals** to ensure alignment with overall mission priorities and the CDCS, including regular update meetings with the Mission Director, Deputies, and technical office directors.
- Discussions were held regularly with the Embassy’s Public Diplomacy Section (PDS), the Interagency Communication Working Group, the mission’s newly formed KEA Communications Group, and the Mission Leadership Council.
- Implementing partners were engaged at numerous points in strategy development, specifically including an initial communications assessment survey (See Appendix I.4 - Implementing Partner Self-Assessment Survey Findings) focused on their capacities and needs, and a focus group held with communications personnel in March 2019.

Engagement with key partners has focused on the ways in which communications can contribute to more effective development and humanitarian outcomes.

- **Chiefs of Party (COP) were involved in the process** with a presentation at the May 2019 USAID/COP meeting, followed by an intensive 3-hour discussion with 40 communications personnel on the backbone of the strategy (a first-of-its-kind Communications Results Framework for USAID in Kenya), and further refinement of key audiences. In February 2020, the Senior Regional Development Outreach and Communications Advisor, Kim Case, presented the findings and the proposed focus of the strategy to COPs during the monthly meeting.

- **Consultations with Legislative and Public Affairs and experienced DOCs** around the world contributed to the thinking behind this strategy, adding critical considerations throughout the development process based on their understanding of Agency priorities and USAID Missions around the world. Conversations with colleagues outside of Kenya have confirmed that USAID/KEA is the most comprehensive strategy development undertaking thus far, given the combination of technical office inputs, overall

---

**COMMUNICATIONS IN THE CDCS AS A GUIDING PRINCIPLE**

“Concurrent to the country strategy, the Mission has been developing a communications strategy. The overall goal is about increasing two-way engagement with the Kenyan people, especially young people. As the implementation plan is developed a key element will be creating feedback loops to the technical teams about topics relevant to their activities.”
staff consultations and feedback opportunities, as well as focus groups, implementing partner surveys, and more. In fact, the mission’s efforts will provide a CLA opportunity for other Missions.

**LEARNING**

Perhaps the most important element of learning is the commitment we made to listening and engaging with Kenyans. We held a series of focus groups in Nairobi, Isiolo and Kisumu in July 2019 with several demographic groups (youth, media, and nongovernmental organization [NGO] representatives) to gather their views on foreign aid overall and its contributions to Kenya’s development. Those focus groups brought to light the fact that, USAID’s information products (except for annual calendars), are perceived to be “one-way” and focused primarily on promoting USAID’s interests and brand. Focus group participants expressed that they provide little use to them or the average Kenyan (See [Appendix 1.5 - Focus Group Key Takeaways](#)).

In addition, alignment with the new CDCS is an integral part of the learning process. Communications will target issues that impact all programs such as gender, social cohesion, COVID-19, and corruption. Kenya’s challenges have become more complex due to devolution and the mission will continue reinforcing Kenya-led, -owned, and -managed development – creating specific opportunities for additional messaging and engagement at all levels of society and government. The DOC team anticipated this during the design process as it considered audiences.

In addition, an important aspect of the learning approach was to assess how well the mission communications activities and products reach stakeholders and/or audiences to achieve objectives. These internal analyses included a communications product audit, an audience (stakeholder) analysis, social media analytics, and a full year of media monitoring analysis.

**ADAPTING**

USAID in Kenya has adapted in significant ways to the findings of this strategy development process. The two-year communications strategy and CDCS development processes was punctuated by several opportunities for staff to better understand and recognize the role of communications as a technical discipline that adds specific value, and the ways in which they can support it. Examples of adaptation include:

- The DOC team organized multiple “whole-of-mission” stakeholder consultations processes in which technical and support staff progressively took on greater responsibilities and made important representational, organizational, and logistical contributions. In the past, these were often relegated to the DOC team above and beyond the communications role.

- The DOC team, with the support of the Front Office and the Strategic Planning and
Analysis (SPA) office leadership, made strategic decisions to discontinue costly and often ineffective activities, freeing up financial and human resources for more strategic activities.

- With an initial 90-day work plan, the DOC team was able to refocus on supporting critical mission objectives, such as county stakeholder consultations for the CDCS (See Appendix 1.6 - CDCS Consultations Key Insights) and county signing of memoranda of understanding (MOUs) in February 2020.

- With the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, activities pivoted to supporting Kenya’s national response to risk communication and community engagement, all contributing to strategic choices for the limited resources.
RESEARCH FINDINGS

The strategy is informed by extensive primary research, including surveys and focus groups noted above. In addition, it is informed by secondary research from sources including the Pew Charitable Trust, Hootsuite, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), Dalberg Research, We Are Social, Afro Barometer, and the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau for Intelligence and Research (INR), as well as key USAID policy documents, including USAID’s Private Sector Engagement Strategy, USAID’s Policy Framework, and USAID’s Redesign and Transformation Strategy. Research findings are summarized below.

External Findings

1. What Kenyans are concerned about

- The high cost of living, unemployment, and corruption are the key pressing problems mentioned most often by Kenyans when surveyed. This correlates with the findings of the USAID/KEA’s CDCS county consultations. The top three themes that participants felt were most relevant to their communities were persistent poverty, youth unemployment, and pervasive corruption.
- High unemployment is of greater concern to younger Kenyans (18-34) than Kenyans 35 and older.
- COVID-19 worries are focused on children missing out on a school year (2020), as well as worries about sending them back to school because they might contract it.
- People (including young people) tend to me more concerned about their livelihoods and missing meals than getting COVID-19.

2. Youth have a powerful force in Kenyan society

- Youth, ages 15-24, comprise nearly 1 out of 5 Kenyans (19 percent of the population) and 35 percent of the workforce.
- USAID’s definition of youth in Kenya is 18-35 years which comprises 75 percent of the population.
- Young people are becoming micro-entrepreneurs by establishing small or small-scale business opportunities with as little as $1. These businesses are expected to recover from the impact of COVID-19 faster than some larger businesses.

“Kenya is referred as the ‘Silicon Savannah’ and most Kenyans use various social media platforms to connect with one another, engage with news content, share information, and entertain themselves.”

- Social Media Consumption in Kenya Report, 2019

---

4 Public perception survey, IFES, Prepared by TIFA Research, April 2018 and U.S. Embassy public perception survey, TBD date.
5 Appendix 8 - CDCS Consultations Key Insights
6 Public perception survey, IFES, Prepared by TIFA Research, April 2018 and U.S. Embassy.
8 Kantar and Shujazz Barometer
9 Shujazz Compass, September 2020
3. Radio is a more dominant source of information than television or print publications/newspapers

- More Kenyans listen to the radio (65 percent) than watch TV (49 percent). There was a total of 178 radio stations in 2017, up from 139 in 2016.

- Just 9 percent of Kenyans (less than 1 out of 10) read print publications. The top and most influential daily newspapers in Kenya are The Daily Nation and The Standard. Other important news dailies include People Daily, Kenya Times, Nairobi Star, and Daily Metro.

- Since all radio, newspaper and television broadcasts are now also digital, many of these will also be accessed on phones or computers.

- USAID and partners used little radio according to a USAID-funded baseline on media coverage from July 2017 – June 2018. (See Appendix 1.7 – media monitoring deep dive report)

**RECOMMENDATION**

*USAID must explore using radio, especially to engage and listen to communities.*

4. WhatsApp, YouTube, and Facebook are the dominant Kenyan social media channels

- While many Kenyans use social media to stay in touch with others, the main reason most are active on social media is for news, politics, and entertainment.

- WhatsApp is the most active social media platform in Kenya followed by Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram. Twitter is ranked sixth among social media channels, but its use is growing.

**RECOMMENDATION**

*USAID should be careful to balance taking on new social media platforms without a clear purpose. However, the growing use of YouTube and the high interaction with WhatsApp should be explored as growth areas. Also, LinkedIn provides a platform for what people often ask about on USAID social handles, such as jobs and an opportunity to elevate Kenyan voices within the Mission in a professional context.*

---

10 Source: Hootsuite/We are Social’s 2019 research findings
12 Source: Hootsuite/We are Social’s 2019 research findings
5. Social media usage is highest among educated, urban youth, and young Kenyans and usage differs among urban and rural dwellers

- Social media usage is highest amongst 18 to 34-year-olds.¹³
- Males most often use Yahoo (61.9 percent) and Twitter (67.0 percent), more than other social media platforms.¹⁴
- Overall, there is heavy use of social media platforms among those with college-level education, while the least are primary school graduates.¹⁵
- Importantly, there is a significant difference amongst social media usage and preferences between rural and urban areas. Most rural Kenyans use Facebook, WhatsApp, and Google platforms, whereas most urban residents use LinkedIn, Snapchat, Instagram, and Twitter (see Figure 2 below).
- LinkedIn is far more popular among urban dwellers. Of note, USAID’s partner is working to create “LinkedIn” for youth called “Mesh.”

**RECOMMENDATION**

*USAID should continue to use social media to reach young people, but routinely learn and adapt to ensure that messages and content resonates with the range of experiences of young people. Social media is an essential piece of the media mix, but since it only reaches a fraction of society, the level of effort against the objectives must be carefully considered.*

---

¹³ *Social Media Consumption in Kenya Annual Report, We Are Social, page 18.*
¹⁴ *Social Media Consumption in Kenya Annual Report, We Are Social, pg. 18.*
¹⁵ Ibid, pg. 18.
6. Kenyans have positive perceptions of the U.S., but these sentiments could change based on global events.

![Figure 2](image1)

**Figure 2**
Social media usage varies widely in rural and urban areas. LinkedIn, for instance, is far more prevalent in urban areas.

![Figure 3](image2)

**Figure 3**
Favorability ratings of the U.S. between 2002 and 2018, according to the Pew Global Attitudes Survey.
Public perceptions of Kenyans toward the U.S. have been historically strong. For instance, the Pew Global Attitudes survey looks at favorability ratings of Kenyans toward the U.S. dating back to 2002. Over the course of that 16-year period, most Kenyans consistently rated the U.S. favorably.16

The Pew survey showed a high rating of 94 percent in 2010; and a low rating of 54 percent in 2017. There may be many reasons for this far beyond what USAID can control.

A national poll (Kantar Public Voice) was conducted just before and after an intense COVID-19 prevention and response radio, social media, and print media campaign undertaken by USAID in Kenya. Kenyans’ rating of support from the U.S./American people in fighting the coronavirus increased about 10 percentage points over a six-month period. Although there might be many reasons for this, regular polling can help us to start to track what may or may not change public opinion.

![Rating of support from US/American people in fighting the coronavirus](image.png)

**Figure 4**

*Rating of support in fighting COVID-19, according to Kantar Public Voice, 2020.*

### Internal Findings

#### USAID Staff

The findings that emerged from the all-staff survey conducted in December 2019 and regular consultations with USAID staff are important to gaining a greater understanding of overall USAID/KEA communications opportunities and challenges.

---

Key takeaways from these discussions include the following, although it is important to note that progress has been made in many of these areas given when the research was initially conducted:

- Staff are “lost” when it comes to an overall USAID message.
- They are confused over USAID/Washington-driven initiatives vs. messaging to the Kenyan public.
- They feel disempowered to communicate;
- There is a need for more and wider Kenyan voices in designing programs and communicating with other Kenyans; and

![Figure 5](image_url)

_Nearly half of all USAID staff surveyed in December 2019 said that they did not know enough about USAID in Kenya’s communications efforts, such as key audiences and message to participate in communications and outreach activities._

- Although high-quality print products are developed and distributed, staff believe that they are only reaching a narrow subset of the Kenya population (for instance, not those that are illiterate or marginalized).

However, staff also said that they believe strategic communications and outreach is “very important to achieving development objectives.” An even greater number – 9 out of 10 surveyed – said that they believe they have “a professional responsibility to help communicate the mission’s priorities.”

---

17 USAID/KEA IP survey conducted October – November 2018.
18 USAID/KEA All staff survey conducted in 2019.
RECOMMENDATION

Focus on building staff capacity to empower them to “lean forward” on messaging and ensure that key USAID messages are developed, refined, and understood by staff. This will help to address the “lack of time” or lack of “understanding of the Mission’s communications objectives” expressed by staff surveyed. Also, efforts must ensure that staff are able to effectively communicate within all the policy and legal frameworks.

U.S. Government Interagency

Kenya is home to an interagency working group that meets monthly to coordinate communication efforts. The DOC team has established a strong working partnership with PDS, Center for Disease Control (CDC), U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), and Department of Defense, among others. There is also an interagency aspect to communications at USAID/Washington, where personnel for Feed the Future, Prosper Africa and the Women’s Global Development and Prosperity program, coordinate on an interagency basis in terms of implementation and communications. By building relationships and routinely reaching out early to prepare for high-level events and visitors, the DOC team manages these multiple equities by maintaining strong relationships.

Implementing partners’ communication professionals

Out of over 100 implementing mechanisms, there are currently between 50-60 communications professionals who are actively engaged with the DOC team through monthly coordination meetings that have been occurring since September 2019. Although not all these staff are solely dedicated to communications, there is a strong network to draw upon, learn from, and leverage.

This outreach helped USAID better understand the communications challenges, needs, and experiences of the implementing partners, as well as solicit their ideas on the direction of...
this communications strategy. Through these efforts, we learned that IPs view the current strategy as serving a collective need.

Other key takeaways included:

- Of the IPs that participated, most (77 percent) had a branding and marking plan, but only half had a communication strategy (51 percent), which is considered an essential plan for reaching target audiences.\(^\text{19}\)

- Partners’ communication tactics seem to mirror USAID’s (see Figure 6). For instance, there is very little emphasis on radio and a strong emphasis on print publications.

- Partners considered the top communications problems to be: 1) Bureaucratic process for content approval (e.g. the time that it takes to clear content which makes it difficult for IPs to “push” their content through the system to various USAID platforms); 2) A stronger focus on public relations instead of communications that would support programmatic objectives; and 3) persistent lack of clarity and/understanding of USAID’s key/target audiences and messages.

- The biggest barriers to effective communication for their activities are a lack of resources and staff.

### RECOMMENDATION

Place greater emphasis on the role that implementing partners can play in providing local knowledge and insights. Given their proximity to communities, implementing partners will materially contribute to the implementation of this strategy specifically in media engagement, campaigns and informing decision-making through research and on-the-ground experience. Their familiarity with the communities they serve will also help us tap into authentic voices and create messages and campaigns that resonate with Kenyan communities.

### Situational Analysis – Key Learning Points

As part of the strategy development process, the DOC team also conducted a detailed situational analysis that included an audience analysis, a product audit, and feedback from the key informant interviews and focus groups. Full details of the situational analysis can be found in Appendix 3. Below are some of the top learning points.

1. Corporate communications such as printed documents in English coupled with high-level events tend to reach the same audience, while not reaching most Kenyans.

Printed communications products of the mission are written exclusively in English. Staff time and resources were devoted to an annual report, 47 county brochures, and other print materials. These materials reached an estimated 4,000 people due to the print quantity and

\(^{19}\) Appendix 1.4 - Implementing Partner Self-Assessment Survey Findings
were delivered mostly to implementing partners and Kenyan government officials. Although written in simple English, the language, breadth of content and overall writing style meant that the products could only be read by the most educated sections of the population.

Key findings revealed that while these products clearly serve a need for communicating with elites and public officials, the time and resources needed to produce them left little or no resources to devote to more targeted efforts to reach rural citizens, youth and numerous beneficiaries which are key audiences and partners in sustainable development. Additionally, there is little that USAID can do to ensure these publications are read once they are delivered to their intended locations or determine if they meet the audience’s information needs.

Although USAID was able to amplify the information featured in print materials to 200,000 followers on social media handles, data shows that the most effective way to reach more Kenyans is through radio and by using Kiswahili or local languages.

In fact, the print materials reach the same audiences as most of the mission’s public events. For instance, there are more than 100 events per year across the technical teams, the majority of which are prioritized by the implementing partners. These cater to a handful of English-speaking government officials and implementing partners, as opposed to beneficiary communities.

According to a complete product audience, there is an imbalance between the amount of time and resources the mission spends on “corporate communications” activities versus more strategic approaches. Most of the time, corporate communications is about ensuring that people know who “we are,” what “we do,” and what “we achieved,” but this approach is not meeting our broader development objectives.

2. Communications professionals should be focused on communications rather than coordination, logistics, etc.

Over the last year, the priorities of the front office encouraged the Mission to experiment with new ways of operating. In the past, when there were cross-Mission outreach activities, DOC shouldered much of the logistics and coordination, which drew the communication team’s attention away from its core function.

However, during three activities - CDCS consultations, MOU signings, and ventilator events - that took place across multiple counties in a short period of time, the whole Mission participated in the planning and execution. There were teams established to manage travel logistics and meals, overall site and control officers to manage the on-the-ground program and relationships, and teams to manage printing, coordination, distribution and return of all materials. With the ventilator events, staff took on representational roles that allowed them to tap into the county partnerships, which meant there was much more press, especially local radio.
RECOMMENDATION

USAID must shift towards catalyzing conversations, being engaged in discussions that matter to Kenyans, and finding ways to build the longer-term capacity of people and local organizations to advocate, communicate, and engage in key conversations themselves.

Reached 40 million people

Investment of: $22,000 (2,432,854.75 KES)
Ad Value Equiv: $188,000 (20.7 million KES)

Return on investment: 754%
Calculated: $188,000-$22,000=$166,000 net gain: (166,000/22,000)×100= 754%

Figure 7

This figure shows the return on investment of distributing most of the 200 ventilators across 20 counties within 2 weeks. The investment value of $22,000 includes costs of photographers, videographers, and travel cost for the communication support across at 5 partners. This investment returned $188,000 of earned media, which is often calculated as advertising value equivalent (AVE), in other words what it would have cost if we had paid advertising rates for the same amount of coverage.

With essential logistics, coordination, and on the ground relationship building covered, the DOC team could focus on developing and coordinating the strategic communication approach, including: media and social media strategy; remarks talking points, press releases, and media engagement; material development and distribution; defining what branding should be utilized and providing the materials to the teams; planning and executing photo and video documentation; and developing social media to amplify the team efforts.

RECOMMENDATION

There is a need for strong coordination and sense that communication efforts are owned and implemented by the whole mission, which ensures that the DOC expertise is most effective.

3. The current communication efforts are ad hoc and often reactive rather than proactive so being strategic and increasing engagement requires new approaches.

Two new activities showed the Mission an example of how communication and outreach can be different: the COVID-19 risk communication and communication engagement activities, which were led by the DOC team. With additional funding and a reduction in the number of events due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the DOC team was able to pilot and learn from new outreach approaches, including building and tracking feedback loops through
new communication platforms; employing “pre-testing,” which is systematically sharing
the content with a select portion of the target audience to understand if the messages and
format resonate or require revisions; utilizing research to assess effectiveness; and convening
partners for greater local impact. (See Strategy in Action #1: An Opportunity During a Crisis: A
Case Study on COVID-19 Risk Communications and Community Engagement on page 29).

4. Prioritizing DOC effort on “in reach” to achieve outreach goals helps
delegate tasks that are only “internal”.

DOC is often asked to take on tasks that tap into the skills of the team such as photography,
videography, design, and layout, and copy editing. When these tasks meet outreach goals, it
can be called “in reach.”

However, when it is truly for internal audiences such as staff bios, photos of internal strategy
developments or staff functions, celebrations, or announcements for staff, that is “internal.”

**RECOMMENDATION**

Continue to define this distinction between “internal” and “in reach” (See Appendix 4 – “In-
reach” vs internal communications) so that people with the appropriate skills can be identified
for those functions.

**Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses and Threats**

This “stock-taking” and strategy development process has also informed an extensive SWOT
analysis. Despite internal challenges, the SWOT assessment shows substantive strengths
within USAID, as well as external opportunities to raise USAID’s profile and build a more
solid understanding of its priorities.
**Case Study #1. An Opportunity During a Crisis: A Case Study on COVID-19 Risk Communications and Community Engagement (RCCE)**

As Kenya reported its first case of COVID-19 in March 2020, the Ministry of Health co-designed RCCE strategic approaches and implementation with the support of USAID, CDC, and other partners. The specific interventions are explained elsewhere, but the purpose of this case study is to demonstrate how DOC’s involvement provided an opportunity to pilot and learn from new outreach approaches; such as: 1. Building feedback loops through new communication platforms; 2. Pre-testing messages as a form of co-creation; 3. Utilizing research to assess reach and effectiveness; and 4. Convening partners for greater local impact. Although this case study will reference COVID-19 as the topic, the approaches could be used for many cross-cutting and integrated issues in the mission such as gender, corruption, and social cohesion.

**Building feedback loops with key audiences is essential to be able to stay connected to audiences without needing to launch separate and independent campaigns for each new issue.** Partners used different forms of data collection and analysis to track current, accurate information generated from feedback loops created with their audiences. These feedback loops included traditional approaches such as radio call-in shows and interviews and digital innovations including qualitative analysis of social media analytics, digital focus group discussions via WhatsApp, online events and SMS conversations. This consistent collection of information made it possible to adapt messages and priorities to content that aligned with the ever-changing landscape of COVID-19 in the country.

**Pre-testing places the audience at the center of communications and provides a forum to co-create messages with the audience.** Through local partners, messages and images were rapidly pretested using focus groups to ensure radio and visual messages and products resonated with the target audiences prior to airing. The feedback was used to inform, amend, and improve the quality of the final messages. Within the DOC team, USAID in Kenya has not used pre-testing as a way of ensuring that messages are co-created with target audiences.

**The abundance of information generated during COVID-19 was called an “infodemic,” and it was key to learn from and leverage data to generate new insights.** Through a meta analysis of the research sources on knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors, key takeaways were generated that partners could use to guide implementation. Also, tapping into national surveys that leveraged pooled resources, rather than standalone research, DOC was able to measure the level of awareness of their ongoing campaigns and gain critical insights on emerging issues.

**Robust coordination across governments and technical partners, led to rapid planning, frequent sharing, and fluid adapting at county and national levels.** By coordinating and engaging these efforts through a community of practice, DOC was able to identify synergies, add local credibility to produced content, maximize investments, and reduce duplication of effort for greater local impact. For example, partners recommended local experts and community leaders to participate in radio talk shows and live social media events and an expanded pool of journalists was trained on COVID-19 and gained access to pre-recorded radio dramas, conversations and public service announcements for use on their respective stations.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths (internal)</th>
<th>Weaknesses (internal)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Communications strategy development process was comprehensive and increased staff involvement and understanding</td>
<td>• Some constraints due to “One USG” messaging that remove or reduce USAID messaging, but this can also be an opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strong leadership support for communications, which is critical to success</td>
<td>• Multiple, highly differentiated target audiences, which requires customized approaches/content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Talented DOC team with key relationships with technical offices</td>
<td>• Extremely busy Mission which constrains ability of technical teams to contribute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• DOC Support Contract expands outreach to audiences and diversity of products</td>
<td>• Reactive posture of DOC team due to day-to-day “crises” and demands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strong support from PDS willing to work closely on media contacts, media events, and press releases</td>
<td>• No use of Swahili or other languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interagency communication coordinated through working group that meets on monthly basis</td>
<td>• Lack of dedicated comms budget or strategic approaches amongst most IPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Experience working in challenging media environment</td>
<td>• IPs do not have consistent requirements for awards or solicitations for communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strong desire of IPs to work together and monthly coordination meetings established</td>
<td>• Lack of engagement of DOC in the full program cycle (esp. design)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ambassador with strong outreach aspirations</td>
<td>• Lack of deep relationships with media since PDS oversees those relationships and press releases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• One USG messaging provides additional press support for all external engagements</td>
<td>• DOC team often pulled into “internal” communications which distracts from outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The addition of communications specialists across technical teams provides an opportunity to be more focused on specific messages and audiences across audience groups, as well as be responsive to routine tasks such as events, responding to journalist, and social media queries</td>
<td>• The design of this strategy is to support the implementation of the CDCS, which could have a different understanding than is documented here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Within the Mission there are often differing perspectives to what is critical for the comms team to be achieving</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DOC team experienced with wide range of products and activities, including design, video, photography, PowerPoint, website management, writing, event management, exhibitions, and branding

Agency-wide policies/strategies on development, gender, private sector, and digital approved between 2018 and 2020

Newly formed “county liaison teams” (CLTs) help to enhance relationships at the county level and access to appropriate personnel

New office structures to strengthen synergy between government liaison and DOC team

Visionary Mission leadership as it relates to the power of communications for achieving programmatic objectives

Leadership committed to setting up internal structures to meet the Mission’s needs

Recent USAID KEA youth assessment and gender assessment

DOC team often tapped for their “skills” but those should be skills fostered throughout the Mission (e.g. PowerPoint, basic design, effective writing, events, exhibition, basic photography, branding)

Government-wide and Agency-wide changes during and after U.S. elections

Lack of critical digital tools for efficient, effective contact relationship management

Internal processes and policies need harmonization with outreach goals

New senior leadership change and shift in priorities

Lack of formal assessment of USAID branding

Proliferation of logos (USA Marafiki, FtF, PEPFAR, U.S. President’s Malaria Initiative, W-GDP, Power Africa, Prosper Africa) which represent critical political interests

Possible development of new One USG logo might add to the mix and be a risk or opportunity
## Opportunities (external)

- Media environment is active and well developed, a growing blogsphere and social influencers
- Some implementing partners experienced with social influencers or are even influencers in their own right
- Robust social media channels and engagement of key target audience (youth)
- USAID is well positioned with a large budget and dynamic program as well as relationships as being “chair” of multiple donor working groups
- Strong private sector partners for media buys, placement
- Strong private sector engagement in multiple programs that could be better leveraged
- Staff across the Mission are beginning to see the value of communications for the implementation of their programs as well as for their own professional development
- Events with governors generate more press and social engagement (e.g. APS events during Summer 2019 and MOU signings in Feb 2020)
- IP comms network could be better leveraged to scale communication efforts and reach deeper into communities

## Threats (external)

- Terrorism, security threats, elections, and pandemics interrupt routine communication engagement
- Drought and other emergencies refocus communications and programs, which requires frequent shifting of effort
- Ever-evolving GOK relationship and issues related to the Development Objective Agreement (DOAG), corruption, funding freezes, elections, etc. altering the course of our communication objectives
- GOK narrative on DOAG/DFCA and development assistance overall
- Stiff competition for media space – not just a development issue
- Difficulty in messaging across population given size (nearly 50 million)
- Difficult to access the voice of the remote and marginalized
- Critical population 12-18 years, especially girls, are more difficult to reach with research or programs - often partners do not, but those voices are critical
- Increased risk of data privacy breaches
- Increased risk of “fake news” hijacking other forms of legitimate news
- Increased risk of fraud and scams on social handles
GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

As a key part of this process, the DOC team defined a results-based strategic communications framework; the heart of this framework is an overarching communications goal. This goal will help to drive activities in a “causal” fashion using a results-based approach to communications, which has been adopted by many Missions worldwide to bring greater selectivity and focus to activities and resources.

Communications Goal

This communications goal is an important pivot to focus on how best to achieve Kenyan-owned, -led and -managed development. Communications activities embody a strategic shift as articulated in the CDCS that will facilitate outreach and engagement with more, and a greater diversity, of Kenyan voices as a catalyst to drive their own development trajectories and lead the country toward self-reliance.

COMMUNICATIONS GOAL:
Strategic two-way engagement with target audiences catalyzed.

To understand this goal, it is key to have a definition of the carefully chosen words that have been used:

- The word “strategic” refers to the type of communication that defines an objective and audience before making decisions about the tactic (activity or project). Other aspects of “strategic” communications are monitoring and evaluation methodologies to assess whether the objective has been achieved, a budget has been adhered to, and the timeframe has been met.

- In this case “two-way” communication is a distinct move away from the one-way products and activities where there is no engagement. For instance, many USAID/KEA produced English-language products were distributed without a feedback or evaluation mechanism. Although there are certainly opportunities for information to flow in many directions, the goal with using this term was to highlight a pivot away from more traditional, one-directional communications.

- Many traditional communication activities undertaken by USAID/KEA focus on communicating information to people. However, more recent best practices show that “engagement” is far more important so that the work that is being done is important and relevant. The word “engagement” also implies actively listening to people and adapting programming based on that feedback. (See Strategy in Action #2: Two-way Communication Creates Higher Impact through the #16barsforpeace Hip-Hop Challenge on page 34)
Case Study #2. Two-way Communication Creates Higher Impact through the #16barsforpeace Hip-Hop Challenge

Purpose: Increase social engagement through authentic dialogue

To improve and increase online engagement with social media users through authentic conversations, the Mission launched its first-ever national social media creative campaign dubbed #16BarsForPeace. At the core of this was popular Kenyan rapper, entrepreneur, and philanthropist, Kennedy Ombima aka King Kaka. King Kaka, a credible, trustworthy and digital influencer with more than 2.7 million followers on social media (1.3 million on Instagram, 740,000 on Twitter and 623,000 on Facebook). Many of his fans and followers are within the youth demographic. The campaign leveraged his brand to reach our target audience, build and maintain trust, and drive engagement and participation of young Kenyans. In this competition, peace was defined broadly as global, national, community, household, and mental peace. Nearly 200 young Kenyans submitted raps that articulated their own opinions and perspectives on peace and shared them publicly to spark greater conversation amongst their peers.

Results: 40 percent increase in USAID social engagement; 200 youth voices on peace

By working with King Kaka, the mission increased engagement (likes, shares, comments, retweets) with USAID content on our social media handles by more than 40 percent, an increase of 2,331 engagements per week - a nearly 7,000 engagement boost during the most active part of the campaign. Specifically, the campaign earned 16,745 engagements over three weeks on USAID platforms (roughly 5,581 engagements per week), as opposed to an average of 13,000 engagements we usually garner during a standard month (about 3,250 per week). The addition of King Kaka’s Facebook and Twitter platforms - boosted engagement by 795,006 and Instagram contributed 48,266.

Return on Investment: Nearly 3000 percent increase in value

USAID invested $18,607 to support the campaign including video production paid for by King Kaka. Based on a recent analysis that examines one year of social media management and performance, we have learned that USAID invests $0.50 in staff time for every one engagement. Achieving the same engagement results explained above would have been prohibitively expensive, requiring an investment of nearly $400,000.

Utilizing Kenyan actors and organizations who have the ear of our target audiences and incentivizing participation provides significantly more engagement. More research and experimentation such as this is needed to learn how we can achieve greater engagement and drive conversations within our campaigns (e.g. King Kaka gets more engagement on facebook and USAID got more on twitter). This type of engagement creates a wealth of information directly from young people that could be investigated in a deeper way to understand the perspectives and the words of young people.
• Communication professionals refer to “target audiences” as the people we seek to reach with messaging and engage with. Through this process, it became clear that many development professionals often refer to these same groups as “stakeholders.” The word is not as important as is the fact that groups of people will be defined by characteristics, which will then alter the most effective and relevant types of communications.

• The word “catalyze,” is used to underscore the idea that the conversations are not owned or led by USAID, but rather those that occur between Kenyans. By USAID’s engagement in and support of Kenyan-led discussions, USAID is a true partner in Kenya’s development. By catalyzing two-way engagement there will be more ownership of issues and greater space for discussion by and among Kenyans, which leads to better development outcomes and improved quality of life.

Now, more than ever, the Mission needs a different approach to communications that is more targeted and selective; one which recognizes the ever-present demands placed on this active Mission with a significant regional footprint in Africa.

Audiences

Defining a realistic number of audiences to reach systematically and effectively with communications and outreach activities is one of USAID in Kenya’s biggest challenges. With six technical offices, numerous presidential initiatives, more than 100 implementing partners, and a robust congressional delegation schedule, there are a wide-ranging and varied set of competing audience priorities.

For instance, the DOC team is heavily relied upon for assistance with events – which takes time away from other, more impactful communications activities. As one Technical Office Director lamented, “Some people confuse comms with events and articles.” Figure 8 below shows the overarching approach to how the core audience will shift.

**Figures 8**
This figure demonstrates the shift that is and will continue to occur as USAID shifts to reaching and better defining its target audiences.
Some technical offices have been more deliberative than others. For instance, the environment office is recognized for its forward thinking in its communications approaches, partnering with the private sector and the media to deliver compelling messages around conservation. The office helped develop more than 50 episodes of NTV Wild, a popular show that was funded in partnership with Wildlife Direct. USAID also partnered with National Geographic in Washington, D.C. to produce several short documentaries on Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT), which featured various aspects of the NRT model including women and community governance. A launch event was held in Washington, D.C. in April 2019.

The DOC team reviewed an initial list of 40 distinct external and eight internal audiences, taking into consideration demographic variations, consumption preferences, and the methods by which these individuals and groups have previously received, or consumed information produced by USAID. The following chart represents a prioritized list of audiences; they will be specifically targeted with resources and honed tactics to engage them.

The full list of all audiences can be found in Appendix 1.7 - Audience Analysis DRAFT. The critical aspect will be for each strategic communication approach, audiences will be clearly defined.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Audience</th>
<th>Audiences</th>
<th>Why Should They Be a Priority?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GOK Audiences</strong></td>
<td>Key local and county officials</td>
<td>Key partners; critical partners in Kenyan-led, owned and managed development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parliamentarians</td>
<td>Key partners; critical partners in Kenyan-led, owned and managed development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key national Government officials (at key ministries)</td>
<td>Key partners; devolution, critical partners in Kenyan-led, owned and managed development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>External Audiences (“General”)</strong></td>
<td>Urban youth, including university students and beneficiaries</td>
<td>Critical drivers of development; energy and hope of youth to drive change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural youth, including program beneficiaries</td>
<td>Critical drivers of development; energy and hope of youth to drive change; face unique challenges due to poverty, service delivery; promise and potential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Program beneficiaries</td>
<td>Ongoing buy-in and understanding of USAID programming and objectives; key partners on Kenya’s development journey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adolescent girls</td>
<td>Key demographic, beneficiaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private sector partners</td>
<td>Ongoing buy-in and understanding of USAID programming and objectives; key partners on critical partners in Kenyan-led, owned and managed development, private sector engagement strategy and sustainability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Communications Objectives**

The communications goal will be supported by four communications objectives which are explained in further detail below. This targeted communications strategy will focus staffing time, resources, and tactics. Without it, the Mission’s efforts will be dispersed among a wide range of activities that do not most effectively reach the average Kenyan – and may not employ the most effective tactics.

**Objective 1: Diversity and number of Kenyan voices engaged in development discussions increased**

USAID in Kenya is placing an emphasis on increased conversations to drive development by using more targeted tactics to reach out to and engage those who may have not previously had a “voice” in development or their country’s future.

It’s clear that this may require fresh skills building around engagement and dialogue, a process already underway within the DOC team, and outreach to non-traditional, private sector actors.

There is a need to create partnerships and media engagements with radio stations and journalists, especially vernacular and community stations. These stations reach deep into
communities that are home to the rural and marginalized people that USAID is least likely to hear from and whose perspectives are key to a dynamic development discussion.

USAID can also focus on using expanded digital tools, including social media listening tools. Media and social media engagement, as well as digital tools, will drive Kenyan-led development discussions, as well as create feedback loops to inform USAID’s learning and adapting in its implementation of the CDCS.

**CORE CONCEPTS APPLIED THROUGHOUT THE STRATEGY**

*Across all these objectives are core concepts of:*

- Using feedback loops
- Focusing on scale
- Using paid media campaigns where relevant
- Focusing on local radio
- Engaging with new partners
- Finding more interpersonal ways to engage
- Humanizing USAID
- Grounding approaches in research
- Expanding local languages/Swahili, and
- Applying digital tools and analytics as much as possible.

*Photo caption:* This is a screenshot developed during the annual program statement consultations and shown at a USAID’s Annual Program Officers conference at USAID headquarters. It highlights Kenyans’ views as they participated in recent consultative processes.
On the USAID social handles, when people from the community get a chance to tell their own stories, there is much higher engagement.

Some of the activities that we will undertake to accomplish this CO include:

- Utilize innovative youth engagement platforms that integrate a variety of two-way communications platforms, putting Kenyans between the ages of 10-24 at the center of the conversation;
- Establish radio partnerships to generate and “listen” to conversations at the community level;
- Use social media to amplify many and diverse Kenyan voices; and
- Create video training modules that can be shared on messaging services so that young people across the country can learn to tell their own stories.

**Objective 2: Strategic communications approaches to support programmatic objectives increased**

To reach this communication goal, it will be critical for USAID to invest in strategic approaches to communications. As explained in the situation analysis, often people approach communications in terms of what they think the product should be, without defining the communications purpose and audience first. In order to achieve this objective, and the broader CDCS, communications efforts should be strategic, which means defining a clear purpose that also explains how the communications effort will help the program/project meet its overall objectives, as well as clearly identifying the audiences.

As stated in the CDCS, a mix of strategic approaches should be used such as: advocacy, social and behavior change; corporate; knowledge management; internal; and information and education communications. Each implementing partner will need to define its strategic approaches and demonstrate alignment with this strategy.

One of the key findings during the CDCS process is that there are systemic issues across the whole of USAID in Kenya that cannot be addressed by one team or one activity. Issues such as gender, corruption, COVID-19, and social cohesion are issues to be defined, addressed and evaluated in this strategy, which will also include implementation plans by each technical team.

By using targeted campaigns that leverage the full efforts of multiple implementing partners and technical teams, USAID in Kenya will be better positioned to achieve greater impact with its communications efforts.

Some of the activities that we will undertake to accomplish this objective include:

- Develop strategies for issues that cannot be tackled by one team or partner such as social cohesion, gender inequity, corruption, COVID-19, among others
• Ensure all implementing partners develop strategic communication strategies

• Work with the technical teams to develop implementation plans to align with this strategy, compile a list of strategic communication approaches across all technical areas, and consider developing strategies for each program design document

Objective 3: Use of research for evidence-based decisions and measurable impact strengthened (across all communications efforts)

Research to better identify, test, improve, and adapt communication efforts is of central importance to USAID’s support to Kenyan-led, -owned and -managed development and telling a more compelling story about the mission’s achievements and impacts. Research plays a significant role in testing the effectiveness of campaigns and helps inform when course change is needed and how it needs to be done. Over time, it can be a great way to acquire short-term data to continue to pivot communications strategies and messages seamlessly. This can ensure that communications efforts are agile, resonate with target audiences’ information needs, and inform the design of follow-on communication activities based on data collected and lessons learned during implementation.

Use and sharing of qualitative and quantitative evidence will be utilized across the whole communications ecosystem, from ideation to post-implementation, in all channels.

This will include:

• **Co-creating messages with relevant stakeholders**: These will be pre-tested alongside media channels with target audiences to ensure that the messages being delivered, and the communications channel choice is appropriate to meet the desired behaviors.

• **Use of public opinion polling and focus groups**: This will be particularly used for issues of interest among key target audiences (i.e., youth and adolescent girls), to strengthen understanding of the ever-changing information needs of various demographics and assist in the design of social and behavior change communication campaigns.

• **Use of social media analytics for online audiences**: We will gather information on youth, who are primary consumers of social media, to create an opportunity for broader discussions about strengthening content consumption, engagement, brand awareness, driving traffic to other electronic platforms such as YouTube and websites, and more. Deeper social media analysis can ensure that the language and imagery used in messaging meets set objectives, identifies, and leverages Kenyan voices across relevant issues.
• **Traditional media (print, radio, and TV) research**: This will focus on access, trust, information quality and audience segmentation to help ensure that resources are invested where there is a high return on investment of communications efforts. The research will also build a base of evidence that can inform what tool could be best to manage various audiences’ access to and trust of media channels.

Methodologies will include:

- A population-based household survey;
- Focus groups and key informant interviews;
- Media consumption survey reviews;
- Media monitoring;
- Return on investment analyses;
- Social media analysis and research; and
- Case studies.

**Objective 4: Capacity and enabling environment for outreach across USAID’s ecosystem increased**

USAID/Washington and USAID/KEA have been striving on parallel paths to increase communications capabilities for years. The strategic focus is working towards an “orchestra” approach, as stated in the text box. There is a communications role for everyone in the USAID ecosystem; this objective is about ensuring everyone has the skills, tools, and opportunities to take on those roles.

Building the capacity and enabling environment for USAID technical staff has enormous benefits. First, by having technical staff support communication functions, they gain a better understanding of how communications can support their work. Second, it puts local staff at the forefront of messaging. Third, it enhances the professional development of technical staff.

In addition, there are many other staff within technical teams that could be better connected to communications efforts. For example, in 2020, DOC began training program development assistants (PDAs) in basic communications activities to increase the number of people capable of doing some of the work that the DOC team has shouldered. The ten-session training covered basic content on: effective writing, branding and marking, social media content creation, mobile videos, photography, layouts and basic graphic design, event planning procedures, exhibition considerations, developing an elevator speech and more.

The DOC team expects that these new communications champions will know where things are stored and how to find templates; understand basics of branding to support email signatures, providing the logo or the bumper to those that ask; gain skills in writing and design to support fact sheet updates, internal posters, development of briefing books; support the website and MyServices updates by team; and support the planning, set up,
staffing, and break down of all exhibits. These skill-building sessions will be rolled out numerous times and be customized for different audiences.

DOC aspires to develop a weeklong course for agreement officer agreement officer’s representatives (AORs) and contracting officer’s representatives (CORs) that will be recognized for continuing learning points, which are points that need to be earned through training each year. This will help to address the fact that CORs and AORs are often not well versed in communications basics or how such efforts can be part of the core of program implementation.

In addition, there are many people across the mission that are willing and will benefit from media training and other more advanced communications efforts, such as team leaders, deputies, and CLTs members.

A core aspect of the USAID ecosystem includes the implementing partners, which vary widely in their human capacity and partner investment in communications. Critical to strong communications by the implementing partner is to build in communications throughout the program cycle, especially during design and solicitation. Language will be embedded throughout these processes.  

Appendix 5 – Role of Communications in the Program Cycle.

Although there is a monthly coordination meeting, as new and likely more local partners are brought on board, there will be a need to build the capacity for effective outreach and media engagement. There will be a specific orientation training “bootcamp” program developed with an accompanying “Kenya Partner’s Survival Guide” that will be drawn from the LPA’s DOC Survival Guide but customized for partners in Kenya. The goal will be to provide the tools and training to local partners, so they are better equipped to tell their story, communicate with stakeholders, and engage with their communities and the media to achieve the program’s objectives. There could also be an opportunity to develop an internship program to support local partners who may not have the funds for a full-time staff person. Also there could be a reason to develop a small grants program similar to the way that PDS implements to meet its objectives by working with small community entities.

Some of the activities that we will undertake to accomplish this objective include:

- Access to communications training (which responds to USAID technical, County/Ministry liaison teams and administrative staff needs) increased;
- Access to communications training for implementing partner communicators (which responds to needs, especially of new partners) increased;
- Knowledge sharing of best practices across USAID ecosystem increased;
- Implementing partners’ ability to work together to collaborate on campaigns and leverage outreach activities strengthened; and
- Ensure communications throughout the CDCS, project design and more.
Indicators

This strategy, built around a results framework, parallels the results-driven approach of the CDCS and programming for the Agency. At this stage, the indicators are illustrative as the development of a full PMP will be completed in conjunction with the CDCS PMP.

Performance data will be gathered on a quarterly basis, reviewed by the team, and shared throughout USAID to help staffing and technical offices understand what activities are and are not having impact, and how this will feed into future planning. This will be an iterative process.
For more information see: Appendix 6 – New Draft Communications Indicators.

Theory of Change

By catalyzing two-way engagement Kenyans will have more understanding and ownership of development issues and create greater space for discussion, which leads to greater accountability for development outcomes and improved quality of life as envisioned in USAID’s strategic development objectives.

To achieve the five-year goal:

- **USAID and its partners must increase the number and diversity of Kenyan voices engaged in dialogue on development issues.** USAID will instigate this change by systematically engaging with networks, content creators, media personalities, and faith-based and community leaders; creating platforms for dialogue; utilizing vernacular language radio and social media; and training press on inclusive engagement.

- **To support programmatic objectives USAID and its partners must increase the use of strategic communications approaches.** USAID will use audience segmentation, and continuous media monitoring to conduct targeted campaigns which support programmatic objectives. By enhancing co-creation processes with partners and through grassroots peer consultations USAID will inform and improve its strategic communications approaches over time including increasing the use of strategy approaches such as advocacy, strategic behavior change and public relations.

- **USAID must strengthen its use of research for evidence-based decision making and to understand impact.** Through more effective use of feedback loops, digital data, message testing, and evidence, polling and surveys, USAID will utilize communications adaptive management. By distilling information regularly and using it comprehensively USAID will use research for impact.

- **Finally, increasing messaging and outreach capacity amongst the entire USAID ecosystem will enable the mission to focus on strategic communications efforts and increase their impact.** When USAID staff and implementing partners possess and utilize a broad range of communication skills, then the organization will be prepared to achieve strategic, long-term communications objectives.
Such skills may include stakeholder analysis, dialogue and engagement, messaging, photography, public speaking, and presentation.
Assumptions

The achievement of this communications goal breaks away from USAID’s usual way of executing and measuring communications as it offers a “toolbox” of approaches across the wider USAID ecosystem of the DOC team, wider mission staff, the communications support contract, technical team communications experts, and implementing partner communications professionals. As such, the achievement of this goal and the underlying communication objectives is based on the following assumptions:

- Widespread buy-in and commitment from the mission on the goal and objectives with an understanding of the inherent trade-offs (for example, stopping things that are not contributing to the achievement of this strategy, which means a shift in mission culture, particularly in how day-to-day demands are managed to achieve greater impact);
- The time, money, and staff required will far exceed the current resources and will require additional resources;
- The entire mission, including implementing partners, will be held accountable for achieving the goals and objectives articulated in this strategy, not just DOC or the mission communications support contract; and
- Mission senior leadership and the Public Diplomacy Section support the approach.
COLLABORATING, LEARNING, AND ADAPTING

Incorporating Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting into the strategy-development process was essential and will continue throughout implementation. The performance monitoring plan will track activities, providing information that will feed into quarterly pause-and-reflect sessions. These sessions will bring staff and partners together to share lessons learned and their application to future communications activities. Building the skills of senior leadership, technical teams, and IPs is also an aspect of this approach; the strategy attempts to emphasize the need for ongoing professional hard and soft skills development to succeed in an increasingly complex international development operating environment.

This strategy is fluid and flexible enough to change and be customized to each audience segment based on what is learned in the next few years. Understanding how to convey a message in an authentic way to connect with Kenyans will take time, but with data and analytics USAID will be able to track the success of its communications and adapt as needed.
APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Links to Related Documents

Appendix 2: Communication Strategy Development Roadmap

Appendix 3: Situation Analysis

Appendix 4: “In reach” vs. internal communications

Appendix 5: Role of Communications in USAID’s Program Cycle

Appendix 6: Messaging
Appendix I

Links to Related Documents

1.1 CDCS Qualitative and Quantitative Analyses: What Does the Data Show and What do Kenyans Think?

1.2 Assessment Report for Development Outreach and Communications for Planning and Strategic Positioning - January 2017

1.3 Presentation: USAID in Kenya Strategic Communications, What We Know and Next Steps

1.4 Implementing Partner Self-Assessment Survey Findings

1.5 Focus Group Key Takeaways

1.6 CDCS Consultations Key Insights

1.7 Audience Analysis

1.8 Fact Sheet on Two-way COVID-19 Risk Communication and Community Engagement through Radio

1.9 Vents Distribution Stories in the Media Nov.2020 to Jan. 2021
The Road Map to Strategic Communications

**GOAL:** An integrated, five-year Mission strategic communications plan

**PHASE 1: Background Research and Situation Analysis (Current to March)**
- Information Gathering and Review (Current)
  - Previous strategies
  - Draft audience mapping
  - Draft Results Framework
  - Implementing partner self-assessment review
  - Initial USAID meetings
  - Planning calendar
- Research and Assessments Conducted (November)
  - Outline of key informant and focus group interviews underway
  - Consideration of CLA as part of strategy process
  - Outline of key training and capacity building opportunities
  - Draft USAID-wide survey
- Evidence Gathering (November to March)
  - Focus groups and key informant interviews (IPs, USAID media, Kenya government, donors, etc)
  - Secondary research
  - DOC Office consultations and initial capacity building
  - Media landscape and mapping
  - Product audit
  - Identify broader research needs

**PHASE 2: Facilitate Stakeholder Process/Develop Draft Strategy (April/May 2019)**
- Participatory Workshop (April)
  - Peer review
  - Review of analysis/research/assessments
- Strategy Draft Completed (May)
  - SWOT
  - Define overarching objective and RF
  - Define target audiences/s
  - Create core messages/s
  - Align tactics/products/campaigns with budget
  - Monitoring plan

**PHASE 3: Feedback to Stakeholders, Detailed Planning (June onward)**
- Strategy Presented and Next Steps Outlined (June)
  - Create calendar
  - Finalize Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP)
  - Budget completion
  - Ongoing consultations as needed
  - Ongoing capacity building

**PHASE 4: Implementing and Developing Technical Team Plans (June onward)**
- Technical Team Strategies and Content Plans
  - Ongoing technical team strategy development and support
  - Team level content plans developed
  - Ongoing monitoring and learning

**PHASE 5: Implementation, Monitoring and CLA**
- Activity Implementation, Monitoring and Capacity Building
  - Activities and campaigns underway
  - Social media, website and additional content development
  - Ongoing media monitoring
Appendix 3

Situation Analysis

By analyzing the mission’s communication and outreach activities and experience with the internal and external research, a clear picture emerges of what is working and what is not. In this section, each activity or product is evaluated for its effectiveness, cost efficiency, and potential to achieve broader mission communication goals. This evidence is the rationale for the strategic shifts in communication methods, some of which have been implemented during 2020 and are highlighted here as case studies.

**Investing in a support contract is essential.**

In this dynamic operating environment, the mission has managed two successive communication contracts – Kenya Support Project task orders from 2012 to September 2018, and the Development Outreach and Communications Support Contract from October 15, 2018 to date. Embedded within the DOC team is a COR, who manages compliance, contract, and financial issues, as well as an activity manager who supports with day-to-day management and oversight of tasks. The DOC team, with support from the communications contract manages a full range of communication products and activities.

**Learning and adapting**

- The level of communication activities would not be possible without the “thought partnership” and implementation support from the support contract.

- The first task order was deliverables based, which generated enormous amounts of content that could not all be absorbed but did not afford the team the flexibility that was needed to prioritize effort within an ever-evolving context. The second is a stand-alone cost-reimbursable contract. Although there is plenty of flexibility in terms of activities, it is not easy to add additional funds without a total estimated ceiling increase, which limits being able to truly tap it as a mission support mechanism.

**High-level visits are a heavy lift but can help us meet outreach goals.**

The DOC team, with support from the Kenya DOC contract, provides extensive support for high-level visits. For instance, at very short notice and during a pandemic, the team provided extensive coverage for USAID Acting Administrator Barsa in Oct. 2020 that included multiple site and press events including a request for social media, photos, and videos at each site. USAID Deputy Administrator Bonnie Glick’s visit to Kenya in April 2019 included on-site photo and video coverage, social media coverage including social media content for @BGlick, on-site media management, Flickr stories (Nairobi, Isiolo), recap video and slides for USAID’s internal TV slideshow.

**Learning and adapting**

- Many high-level visits will request photo, video, and social media support on a near instantaneous basis. Setting up a shared Google folder through the support contract
makes it easier for suppliers to provide raw content to be readily available by LPA and Africa Bureau.

- By providing communication leadership in close consultation with PDS for such visits, it is possible to **get significant amounts of local press coverage** (See Appendix 1.9 Vents Distribution Stories in the Media Nov.2020 to Jan. 2021), but it is key to ensure adequate staffing for the various roles: press, social, photos, videos, event set up and branding.

- **Congressional visits can also reap dividends** since personal on-the-ground experience helps to achieve long lived support for development.

### Mission-driven events better meet our outreach goals.

The DOC team typically supports 100 events annually for the mission’s implementing partners and technical offices. When high-level representation is required at these events DOC works closely with the front office to ensure events are chosen based on the priority of the overall mission. Over the last year, more of the events were based on whole-of-mission priorities and not just one partner or office.

---

**Dreams Wellness Center**

**COVERAGE | FACEBOOK POSTS**

An example of social media promotion from the Dream Wellness Center, an event that was covered by DOC and included on-site photo coverage, social media coverage, a Flickr story, and slides for USAID’s internal TV slideshow.

---

**Learning and adapting**

- Despite a mission order, mandatory training sessions, and an animation on event planning, events are often late and many opportunities for greater engagement are missed. With **communication professionals embedded within the teams** the process is smoother, the timeliness and quality of the official documents is better, and the DOC
team is utilized more appropriately to strategize, support with documentation and website management, and amplify through social media and press. As the communication professionals are on-boarded, they will be able to take more responsibility for making this work more smoothly.

- Weekly strategic communication meetings with front office and SPA leadership has created a vetting process to help ensure the events proposed for front office participation require that level of representation and whether they meet overall communication objectives.

- With close alignment with the front office to set clear whole-of-mission priorities (such as the consultations for the APS and CDCS, MOU signings, and ventilator distribution events (Dec. 2020)) communication and outreach efforts were infused throughout the mission and not relegated to the DOC team and the activities generated much more local press.

- With whole-of-mission priorities, DOC could provide communication leadership while technical and program staff took on more responsibility. For instance, DOC created explicit roles, responsibilities, and checklists for the teams going out; orienting technical and program staff on their roles, responsibilities, and key messages; and developed templates for press releases and remarks. DOC was able to then focus on using the website, press, and social media to amplify efforts.

- Events involving the county generate more press than other national events and the newly formed CLTs should be able to help the mission navigate the county leadership, including its public information officers and press leads as well as their networks.

- Communication efforts are required at each stage of the program cycle as well as multiple levels in the ecosystem e.g. mission, team level, project level, activity level.

**Social media is a critical component of media mix, but more could be done to increase engagement.**

The mission’s social media presence has significantly expanded in the last few years. The Facebook page consistently ranks among the top 10 most active USAID mission pages, increasing the number of followers from 9,000 in September 2014 to 285,207 in 2020 (on average increasing by about 46,000 followers per year). Similarly, during this same time the Twitter handle increased from 6,000 followers to 39,694 (on average increasing by about 6,000 followers per year). Although having followers is positive, it is critical to maintain frequency and relevance of posts and to consider whether that is meeting your objective.

However, more important than followers is the rate of engagement, e.g. how many times do people “like,” “share,” or “click” on a link. Across both Facebook and Twitter in FY2019, the platforms earned more than 3.4 million impressions and 130,000 likes, shares, and comments. Social media toolkits are also developed for events to increase engagement and Adobe Spark toolkits have been found to be a good way of curating content and getting our implementation partners and other bilateral Missions interested in the work and easily able to engage on social media. (e.g. National Geographic Film Launch, Adobe Spark,+200 views).
Over the last year the focus was on increasing engagement. The project introduced a new social media management tool earlier this year to better manage its social media platforms (AgoraPulse), allowing it to gather information on engagement and usage per quarter. One success was the #16BarsForPeace Hip-Hop challenge (See Strategy in Action #2: Two-way Communication Creates Higher Impact through the #16barsforpeace Hip-Hop Challenge on page 34). However, a subsequent activity, without an influencer or USAID branded merchandise, did not increase engagement.

**Learning and adapting**

- Much of the content for the social handles is still generated by the DOC and activities covered by the Mission’s Communication Support contract team. Generating our own content or “trolling” for content is time consuming and does not generate high levels of engagement. When technical teams take the time to develop draft posts in a timely way, the posts resonate more and are more likely to be relevant to online conversations.

- Investing in social media “listening,” experimentation, and research will allow us to make more informed decisions about types of posts that resonate, types of goals that we can achieve, how we could use social to achieve new objectives, how to work with influencers, etc. [https://businesstoday.co.ke/digital-influencers-in-kenya-top-digital-influencers-in-kenya-top-digital-influencers-in-kenya/](https://businesstoday.co.ke/digital-influencers-in-kenya-top-digital-influencers-in-kenya-top-digital-influencers-in-kenya/)

- As with other areas of communication, there is a need to have a strategic purpose and to use research. Effective use of social media takes effort beyond developing content, such as: social listening, analytics, developing FAQs, and responding to comments.

- Utilizing Kenyan actors and organizations who have the ear of our target audiences and incentivizing participation provides significantly more engagement (See Strategy in Action #2: Two-way Communication Creates Higher Impact through the #16barsforpeace Hip-Hop Challenge on pages 30-31)

- While every activity may not require a social media handle, partners who develop and manage them strategically provide an opportunity for the mission to learn from and reach specific audiences. USAID KEA has transitioned social handles from one partner to the next, which could become a model for maximizing resources building a social platform.

**Video production is a growing area and DOC is developing the team’s expertise.**

Over the last few years, with the increase in technology, there is a higher demand for video content. YouTube is the second highest site in Kenya. Improvements in mobile phones have made shooting and editing high quality video more accessible.

DOC has explored multiple types of videos including animation, short raw videos, one-minute stories for social media, as well as highly produced three minute “hero” stories according to the USAID headquarter guidelines. This includes recap videos, such as that produced for Deputy Administrator Bonnie Glick’s visit and the recent APS consultations, as well as a video on a youth mobilizer for tuberculosis, an animation for resilience, among many others.
Learning and adapting

- Over the last few years there has been high demand from USAID Washington and American audiences for visual storytelling in the form of short (two minutes or less), well-produced videos. DOC is becoming more strategic on how many of these videos are needed, what are the priority messages for these audiences, and if/when the message can be delivered through less expensive visual content such as mobile or user-generated videos.

- Given the proliferation of social media platforms that feature user-generated content, DOC is exploring campaigns that incentivize Kenyans to develop and submit their own videos. However, this could generate an overwhelming amount of content and more thought needs to be given to how we would store and use them.

- YouTube is an active social platform. As we invest in video production, there needs to be a greater focus on improving engagement on our YouTube channel e.g. ads/promotions, responses to comments, etc.

- There are a lot of varieties in types of video content and it is important to always focus on the objective, audience, and delivery methods. At times implementing partners and teams utilize expensive video shooting and production without thinking these through.

Media engagement can be more effective through media partnerships.

USAID’s media engagement has been primarily “reactive” rather than “proactive.” First, there are requests from local and international journalists for information, clarifications, and interviews. These are responded to by DOC, in close consultation with PDS, the technical teams, and the front office. Second, at times implementing partners create and maintain relationships with journalists that results in media coverage of events, however, DOC’s engagement at these events has been limited to supporting USG principals when these journalists are present. Third, at times there have been controversial issues to be addressed with the media, but pre-planning for those issues has been minimal.

Learning and adapting

- USAID should prioritize partnerships with local and vernacular radio stations to elevate community conversations on key development issues. In some cases, this provides an opportunity to highlight the Kenyan actors and organizations USAID is working with. (See Appendix 13 - Fact sheet on Two-way COVID-19 Risk Communication and Community Engagement through Radio)

- Counties have their own media infrastructure and when we plan events with the counties, USAID benefits from greater publicity and media engagement. At times these events may become platforms for political statements, which although a risk, does not outweigh the benefit.
Although the content of county brochures was appreciated, it is key for the data systems to be strengthened to be able to provide this information in real time.

In support of Kenya’s devolution in the CDCS (2014-2020), DOC led the development of printed county brochures in 2014, 2017, and 2019. There was one for each of the 47 counties. The first two rounds were USAID specific and the last one was interagency. These contained a narrative that was the same for all of them and then a GIS generated specific per county as well as county specific activities and results. For the last version, they were loaded on the website and social media toolkits were developed. These are distributed mainly to county government officials, including senators, governors, county assemblies, elected and nominated representatives and implementing partners across all counties. These brochures were sought after by county leadership and Ambassadors have also made a point of carrying these on any county visits and often ask for the electronic copies as well.

Learning and Adapting

- Although these are well received by counties and an effective way of being transparent with USAID county level efforts, the reality of creating these was laborious because the data systems were not sufficient to provide the necessary information in an accurate and timely manner.

- Ideally there would be real-time online platforms to aggregate county level information from USAID activities. However, this would require investment by USAID to upgrade data systems. DOC is working with a wide range of USAID staff to ensure the systems are developed so that county level information is available and accurate.

- There is no dispute about the usefulness of a county level product once the information can be reliably and efficiently provided.

Although annual reports were meant to increase the transparency of our results, the human and financial costs were found to outweigh the benefit and have been discontinued.

This publication was produced and distributed annually across Kenya; it was first published in 2011 for Kenya. The content in the annual report was gleaned from the Performance Plan and Report (PPR) and provided a useful set of achievements to promote to Kenyan audiences so they are better able to understand USAID’s work. The initial objective of the annual report was to be transparent about USAID’s investments in Kenya. The report took 8 months – one year to finalize, approve and distribute, the lack of timeliness of the report also raised questions about its effectiveness. At best, we were reaching 4,000 people with English-language print material to elite audiences who could theoretically be reached through social media.
Learning and adapting

- Feedback from internal staff and external focus group research indicate that the reports were not useful to the average Kenyan or government officials. Given the significant investment of time across the mission and the heavy production cost, the DOC team has decided it is not a cost-effective way of reaching its target audiences. These have been discontinued and new ways of being “transparent” are being reviewed.

Calendars are in high demand, and the annual content collection is a best practice to support communications all year round.

The mission began producing an annual calendar in 2011. To date, 21,000 calendars have been distributed at events, to implementing partners, and to Government of Kenya officials.

![DISTRIBUTION SUMMARY 2020 KENYA CALENDAR](image)

The chart above summarizes distribution of the 2020 calendar, which is representative of previous years.

Learning and adapting

- Of the print products, this provides timely data from the precious year on the first day of the new year. The process ensures that DOC gets the latest data and creates a visually appealing way of showing it with a good photo. The process also helps us identify the gaps in photos and stories and helps to prioritize content creation for the next year.

- The visual representations (memes) are then used throughout the year on social media and can be printed when there are high-level visitors.

- The focus has been on results; however, we still have a need to have our results communications within a more compelling data framework.
The KEA Mission used to produce an electronic newsletter, but it was stopped since the audience was unclear. To do a newsletter well, there needs to be a clear audience and then the type of content should match what that audience is interested in. Also, any e-newsletter should not be managed by the DOC team only. Technical teams would need to be involved to identify the content, curate, and refine the content, manage the contacts, etc. However, when the content was drawn across the whole bilateral and regional, each team had only one piece of content which was not a satisfactory representation of what they wanted to communicate. Since the e-newsletter was developed by the DOC team, the content was not much different than the type of content that is regularly produced for social media. Also, since the content was digital and in English, it was reaching a similar audience. However, the newsletter was only reaching a few thousand when we could reach hundreds of thousands through social media.

Learning and adapting

- The effort required did not meet the needs and this product was discontinued.
- There is a need to get more staff engaged in the social media platforms so that they can “see” the items.
- The Environment Office started a newsletter focused on the environment in Kenya and East Africa. The team manages their own content and contacts. DOC reviews for clarity and to ensure overall message coordination. The newsletter provides substantive updates to environment specialists in the region. The product is meeting the needs of a particular niche audience and the process is coordinated through the technical office so that it is relevant and curated by them.
- The Office of Economic Growth and Integration started a newsletter that was sent to other bilateral Missions, specifically to the staff that needed to know the regional trade and other OEGI activities. They share knowledge and documents and coordinate a calendar. DOC does not review because this is basically an internal newsletter managed by their office -- a prettier version of what could be an email.

No e-newsletters should be developed unless:

1. There is a clearly defined audience and a system to keep contacts up-to-date and relevant.
2. There is a clear purpose for what is to be achieved through the e-newsletter.
3. There is a process for the collection and curation of the content with the purpose and audience in mind.
Briefing materials such as website, fact sheets, briefing books, and presentations are key for congressional audiences and high-level visitors.

The DOC team has always managed two parts of the USAID website (one for Kenya and one for East Africa), about 100 fact sheets, one per activity as well as sector-wide fact sheets (e.g. HIV or CVE), and briefing books. Although these are English and print and most likely are not the best method of communicating with Kenyans, they do serve a purpose. These are the most important ways that we can ensure that Congress, U.S. audiences, and staff supporting the mission in D.C. have the information that they need to answer frequent enquiries. The fact sheets are also critical to the briefing books that are developed for each trip or high-level visits. DOC is also often involved in developing and formatting slides for high-level visits or to brief a new Ambassador. However, there have been a few improvements in these processes.

Learning and adapting

- **Website:** LPA recently changed the website to allow us to post stories without a long clearance process in D.C. Also, the format has been changed to that a wider range of communication products can feature on the first page.

- **Fact Sheets:** USAID/KEA has edited all activity fact sheets to be more “evergreen” by removing information from the main text that is evolving such as text as well as any “stories” that are quickly considered old. Over the last year, these have also been moved to Google documents, which should make updating more efficient. With the communication personnel embedded in teams, DOC is expected to provide less hands-on editing. In addition, DOC has trained PDA to be able to do the formatting, so that they will be able to support the teams to have the fact sheets look professional and streamlined.

- **Briefing Books:** With improvements in printing services in EXO’s Communications and Records Office (C&R), booklets can be printed on an as needed basis. DOC has established a system where finalized fact sheets and other key information can be quickly compiled and printed in C&R. Also, PDAs have been trained in the same process so DOC can focus on the high-level briefing books and teams can easily do their own for new staff or implementing partner meetings.

**DOC does bring outreach to internal audiences (“in reach”), but internal communications should be done by others.**

One of the biggest risks to the achievement of this strategy and particularly DOC resources is confusion between in reach, internal and external communications. People often think that because DOCs have the skills that we should do everything that needs the skills such as: simple layout, photos, videos, social media, and event planning. However, these are critical skills for all employees and there is a need to both ensure the skills are developed across the workforce as well as define what work is outreach versus internal. In order to clarify, the term “in reach” was coined to explain that “in reach” is to bring to internal audiences
what is being done externally or to inform internal audiences (staff) of what they can do to help reach external goals, such as participate in an external campaign or use external talking points. However, internal is all the other work that is strictly for staff information or awareness or to get internal stakeholders to participate in mission activities such as strategy development, PPRs, etc.

**Learning and adapting**

- Clear definition of the difference between internal and in reach for external communication roles is critical and the mission needs to invest in the capacity of staff to meet these internal communication roles within the EXO, SPA, and other offices. (See Appendix 12 – “In reach” vs. internal communications)
- DOC has started training PDA on some of these communication skills so that these will no longer be DOC tasks such as: knowing DOC systems and how to access template, coordinate the team’s e-signature and briefing books, etc.

**Branding strategies and marking plans are limited in helping us meet our objectives and may even need to be reconciled with the concept of Kenya-led, -owned, and -managed development.**

Despite many partners having the branding strategies and marking plans (BSMP), there seems to be little COR/AOR insistence on proper branding, new awards are not given names according to the guidance, and there is little visibility.

**Learning and adapting**

- Since the branding effort started in 2004, there has been improvement in awareness of USAID, however, it is not enough and does not reach deeply enough into communities.
  - There is a need to ensure communications is included as part of the solicitation.
  - Since the BSMP was created at the beginning of the award, DOC has started requesting a Communication Strategy within the first 6 months as well as an annual communication plan with the annual work plan.
  - There needs to be increased discussion around how to ensure that USAID assistance is acknowledged while also recognizing that local organizations need to build their visibility and their capacity to brand themselves.

Photo caption: Key findings from our conversations with implementing partner communications professionals also revealed a tension between USAID branding and Kenyan-led, owned and managed development. Click here to watch the full video.
## Appendix 4

**“In reach” vs. internal communications**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the purpose? How will it be used?</th>
<th>IN REACH - DOC Role</th>
<th>INTERNAL - FO, EXO, SPA or others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Reach internally to share what is happening externally (see photos of an exhibit at Devolution Conference) • Inform staff of what they can do to help reach external goals (encourage staff to engage with #16BarsforPeace)</td>
<td>• Raise staff awareness for internal purposes such as: meetings, processes, strategy development, opportunities • Celebrate staff and achievements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal screens</td>
<td>Use internal TV screens to show staff photos/videos about outreach events and activities.</td>
<td>Use internal TV screens to encourage staff to participate in an internal strategy meeting, announce new staff, inform of staff processes or schedules that impact everyone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events / meetings</td>
<td>• Coordinate the <strong>process</strong> for external events. • Support for <strong>high-level guests</strong> at the mission in terms of documentation, materials to distribute, press, etc.</td>
<td>• Planning and documentation of internal events for staff such as birthdays, celebrations, staff engagement on strategy • Documentation of internal technical meetings or meeting processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bios</td>
<td>Coordinating senior staff bios to share with external populations, high-level events, congressional delegations, etc.</td>
<td><strong>Staff bios for internal use (HR)</strong> or on MyUSAID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Staff arrivals</td>
<td>No role</td>
<td>Announcement of new staff, collecting of bio, sharing on screens and storing content</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Staff departures** | No action except sharing photos from external activities. | • Town halls, photos, celebrations, gifts, etc.  
• **Design** (cards/collages) and event planning for **staff activities** for when a member is departing, someone has died, or other internal HR functions.  
• Recording, storing, and figuring out how to use staff “exit interviews.” |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Celebrating staff or creating staff comfort** | • Sharing content from public newsletter, YouTube, etc. that highlights a staff person.  
• Collecting of staff work in the field to celebrate local staff on external products | • Staff awards, announcements on screens  
• Staffcare and other announcements  
• Highlights of support offices to staff  
• Decor of staff rooms.  
• Photos of staff for internal purposes |
<p>| <strong>Knowledge management</strong> | Coordinate/communicate the electronic storing of outreach materials such as calendars, fact sheets, speeches, templates, etc. and ensure that people know where they are. | Updating and making sure people know about internal electronic sharing sites Intranet, My USAID, etc. |
| <strong>Print material</strong> | Coordinate/communicate the design, development, storage, distribution and tracking of distribution of print materials for outreach and ensuring that everyone knows where they are stored and how to collect them. | Printing items to give to staff or to support internal knowledge sharing, whole-of-mission strategy development and other internal processes. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Town halls</strong></th>
<th>Presenting at a Town Hall or letting everyone know in other ways about a <strong>new external campaign</strong> such as the “Democracy Is” campaign or when there is a full staff photo taken for external purposes or photos with a high-level visitor.</th>
<th>Setting up Town Hall meetings (including audiovisual, flags/branded banners) organizing the agenda, taking and storing photos - usually these are only for internal purposes.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Photos of staff</strong></td>
<td>Coordinate/share the electronic storage of all photos <strong>related to outreach</strong> activities and stories/success stories or for use in competitions, print materials, and even to hang on the walls in the building (if related to external activities)</td>
<td>Take, store, share, and sometimes print <strong>photos</strong> taken inside the building or during Town Halls or parties that are for <strong>internal use only</strong> or hung on the walls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Videos of staff</strong></td>
<td>Short videos/photos of staff holding a sign with an opinion for gender-based violence activism that be shared on social media; other staff videos to be shared on social to advance our development objectives.</td>
<td>Short videos that are requested of the mission by D.C. for internal purposes such as for the holidays, to highlight foreign service national (FSN) staff for internal FSN day, wearing pink or for other health awareness activities for health of the staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equipment</strong></td>
<td>Coordinate/communicate the procurement, distribution and tracking of all equipment such as cameras and branded collateral and ensuring people know how to access them.</td>
<td>Coordinate the camera equipment for internal purposes and for people to borrow across the mission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Editing/writing</strong></td>
<td>Editing documents for <strong>external use</strong> or summaries of external documents for internal sharing.</td>
<td>Editing / synthesizing documents for internal, bureaucratic use including PPRs, evaluations, RFPs, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Electronic</strong></td>
<td>Website management.</td>
<td>Intranet management.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 5
Role of Communications in USAID’s Program Cycle

Outer circle:

- **Development Policy:** As with any program, the communication efforts must be grounded in the development policy of the administration, national security strategy, and interagency country strategy. In addition, USAID communications reflect both guidance from Legislative and Public Affairs as well as from the Public Diplomacy Section in the Embassy.

- **Resources:** There are nine communication professionals at the mission plus a mission support contact. With an effort to diffuse communication skills, more staff should be able to take on additional roles as part of their professional development.

- **Budget:** Current resources are inadequate to address the multiple layers of communication challenges and different approaches are needed to address the different layers, including advocating for additional budget by developing this strategy.

First ring in:

**Country strategy (CDCS) planning:**

- Stated in the CDCS: “Co-create, co-invest and co-manage development efforts with Kenyans will not occur without effective communications, and more specifically the application of genuine two-way communication principles and practices. With a strategic view of the overarching development objectives as reflected in the CDCS, and at a program, project and activity level, USAID, through its partners, will direct and leverage a diversity of communications approaches and specialties to achieve mission outcomes at the DO, IR and sub-IR level. This mix of approaches include advocacy; social and behavior change; corporate; knowledge management; internal and information and education communications.”

- There are systemic issues across the whole mission that cannot be addressed by one team or one activity if real change is to take place. Issues such as gender, corruption, COVID-19, social cohesion, etc. are issues to be defined, addressed and evaluated in the USAID/KEA Communication Strategy which will also include implementation plans by each technical team.
**Project design and implementation:**
- Communication professional on each extended project design document (PDD) team.
- There are systemic communication challenges that cut across multiple program areas and building those issues into the PDD process will ensure that it is considered as part of activity design. For instance, public perception of technical and vocational education and training (TVET), or increasing the skills of young people to advocate for themselves, enhancing public engagement in community conservancies. These levels of communication challenges should be addressed in an integrated way across multiple teams and implementing partners. This might also include issues such as building the capacity of specific local counterparts.

**Activity design and implementation:**
- Each activity should be designed with a consideration about what aspects of communications, community engagement, demand creation, advocacy, etc. should be utilized and how that will address the activity goals. At times this may mean capacity development of specific local counterparts or entities and could include the development of social media or media engagement structures for local organizations and county governments.

**Monitoring and evaluation:**
- Throughout the activities, projects, and country strategies, there are aspects of communications that should be monitored and evaluated. As with other program areas, without monitoring and evaluating there is no way of knowing if communication elements have been effective at achieving the intended result by reaching and influencing the specific stakeholders.
- Since people are inherently “integrated” there could be ways to leverage evaluation and monitoring methods that could inform multiple teams, projects, and activities as well as understand cumulative impact or duplicative communication inputs.

**Inner blue layer: Learning and Adapting**
- From a communication perspective, creating feedback loops and listening to stakeholders is a critical means to learn and adapt. There will also be a need for multiple layers of listening, but digital tools are available that help to streamline some of that process.
- The processes of learning and adapting should also include packaging, discussing, and sharing. This should perhaps be “learning, adapting, and sharing.”

**Center: Results:**
- The best results are expressed directly by the people who have achieved or benefited from these results through personal stories and narratives.
- Results are not a means in and of themselves, the results need to be packaged to be compelling to external audiences, especially those that are meant to benefit from the results.
Appendix 6

Messaging

Key messages are concise statements that summarize the main points of information you want your audience to hear, understand, and remember. These messages serve as the foundation of the mission’s branding and communications efforts and should be reflected consistently across written and spoken communications including press materials, talking points, speeches, and social media posts. While they may need to be supplemented with additional information to “add color” (e.g. data, visuals, personal narratives, or locally relevant information), adherence to these messages help speakers and writers (i) Prioritize and define information; (ii) ensure consistency, continuity and accuracy; and (iii) stay focused when speaking with the media or stakeholders.

As key messages may vary based on topic, audience, location, and development/diplomatic policy, the topline messages are summarized below:

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
\text{USHIRIKIANO} & \text{UFANISI} & \text{KUJITEGEMEA} \\
\text{Partnerships} & \text{Prosperity} & \text{Self-Reliance} \\
\end{array}
\]

**Message 1:**

**The U.S. and Kenya share a long and rich partnership**

- **Nearly 60 Years of Close Relations** - Spanning more than five decades, the US-Kenya partnership has accomplished much, and we look forward to continuing advancing security, prosperity, and democratic values for the benefit of both the American and Kenyan people. The US-Kenya partnership is based on shared values, interests, and mutual respect.

- **The U.S.-Kenya Partnership is a Tapestry** - Beyond our government-to-government relations, the United States and Kenya have an extraordinary tapestry of ties in business, academia, people-to-people, and many other areas. For example, the University of Nairobi has partnerships with more than 50 U.S. universities and millions of dollars are being invested in Kenya and East Africa by U.S. businesses. Hand in hand, we’ve improved the lives of Kenyans and Americans. Our relations are government-to-government, business-to-business, civil society-to-civil society, university-to-university, and people-to-people. The tapestry of our relationship is vibrant and varied.

- **The U.S. is committed to supporting Kenya’s vision for its development journey** - The benefits of development cannot happen overnight and there are no easy solutions to the development challenges. It takes years to create structural change, to strengthen institutions, to reverse the destruction of the environment and to improve livelihoods through better healthcare, education, and job opportunities. The U.S. is committed to the evolution of its partnership with Kenya, while supporting its journey to self-realization and self-reliance (English: Prosperity, Partnerships, Self-Reliance and Swahili: Ufanisi, Ushirikiano, and Kujitegemea).
Message 2:
Locally led development is at the center of U.S. government’s strategy in Kenya

- The U.S. Government is committed to partnering to achieve Kenyan goals - The United States currently provides close to $1 billion (100 billion Kenyan shillings) in annual assistance to Kenya in a wide range of areas, including health care, agriculture, education, and security. We have carried out initiatives aimed at building Kenya’s capacity for effective and responsive governance, supported civil society and independent media, and helped to strengthen democratic institutions, including the judiciary.

- Devolution is achieving - The remarkable 2010 Kenyan Constitution holds great promise for Kenya’s future. The U.S. government is working closely with the county and national levels of government to strengthen service delivery and to improve the ability of the counties to meet their own development goals and the needs of its citizens. (USAID specific)

- Kenya will meet its goals if it focuses on leaving no one behind - Equality can only be assured if women play an equal role in society – no one can succeed if half of the people are left behind. Female genital mutilation and early childhood marriage have no place in a modern society where women are equals. USAID focuses on giving young people and people with disabilities the training and leadership opportunities for their own benefit and the benefit of the nation.

Message 3:
Economic prosperity is essential to Kenya’s future

- Supporting expanded trade and investment ties between our countries is our top priority in the bilateral economic and commercial relationship. A responsibly regulated, free, fair, and open market is the only way to unlock Kenya’s potential and give Kenyans the future they deserve.

- For resilient and sustainable economic prosperity, everyone has to be included. While economic growth has been steady in Kenya, the same proportion of the population remains in poverty since independence, and it matters who is benefiting from this growth--right now it’s only the top/elite group, and women and youth in particular are left behind. To achieve real economic growth that reduces poverty, it has to be inclusive and resilient.

- Kenya’s prosperous future can only be secured with good governance and a commitment to transparency. Corruption is a cancer that is killing Kenya. The U.S. is Kenya’s strong partner in the fight against corruption, but every Kenyan needs to stand up and reject corruption on every level.

- To attract investment and fuel growth, Kenya needs a strong, well-educated workforce. The U.S. is putting books into the hands of every first, second and third grader in Kenya, in English and Kiswahili. We believe that education plays a critical role in socio-economic development and that everyone deserves the chance to achieve
their full potential no matter what their challenges might be. Expanding opportunities for
young people in the agricultural sector as well as providing targeted training to fill skill
gaps within manufacturing industries is working. Last year, U.S.-Kenya bilateral merchandise
trade was over $1 billion – and the United States imported over $100 million more in
Kenyan goods than we exported to Kenya.

**Message 4:**

A healthy, peaceful Kenyan society is a more stable, prosperous partner

- **A healthy society is essential to Kenya’s growth and development.** Thanks
to the generosity of the American people, over one million Kenyans are receiving life-
saving antiretroviral therapy, allowing them to live productive lives and build Kenya’s future
while being HIV positive.
  - With over $600 million (60 billion Kenyan shillings) in annual support, the United States
    is by far the largest international investor in Kenya’s health sector. We help improve
    public health research and administration, which leads to better policies, preventing
    outbreaks and ensuring the next generation avoids HIV.

- **The U.S. values the Kenyan commitment to building a more peaceful and secure Kenya and East Africa region.** The United States is and will remain a
  steadfast partner with Kenya in the fight against terrorism and extremism. We applaud the
  positive role Kenya continues to play in the politics and security of the East Africa region.
  We share important goals with Kenya, including helping to stabilize Somalia, providing a
  safe haven for refugees, supporting the South Sudan peace process, and developing regional
  economic and political partnerships.

**Message 5:**

Kenyan-led, Kenyan-owned, and Kenyan-managed are concepts at the heart of USAID’s work.

- Through rich data analytics, and with consultations across all 47 counties and at the
  national level, the Kenya Country Development Cooperation Strategy for the next five
  years (2020-2025) was developed.

- At the heart of this strategy is the belief Kenyan-led, Kenyan-owned and Kenyan-managed
development is essential to self-reliance being possible.

- Underlying the strategy is the belief that there is an imbalance of power between the civil
  society, private sector, and public sector, and balancing them will create the environment
  for Kenyans to thrive.

- In order to implement the strategy, we are deepening our strategic relationship by
  establishing county liaison teams and co-creating our planned development activities with
  Government of Kenya Counties and key sector ministries. We are also working with the
  private sector, academic institutions, and civil society organizations.