

# MENA HRA COMMUNICATION STRATEGY



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# OVERVIEW

A communication strategy refers to a set plan that is designed to promote an organization's core values in order that its objectives and milestones may be achieved.

Internal and external parties must be considered in the strategy such that the discussion of interests with the relevant stakeholders is streamlined, efficient, and mutually beneficial. Moreover, this allows organizations to adapt to an ever-changing industry and professional climate. Through a clear and structured communication plan, leadership strategies can be implemented so that tasks are managed and run smoothly, and key stakeholders, partners, and donors are involved in the decision-making and execution processes.

An organization must showcase that it is invested in its own services and mission. An effective and clear communication strategy prevents misunderstandings between the organization and other parties, in addition to mitigating the spread of misinformation or the mishandling of tasks. The organization then avoids creating a bottleneck in its operations, thus forming a sustainable business model.

External stakeholders especially benefit from a structured communication, as they will be able to access the organization's interests, services, and resources. Internally, the organization benefits from a cohesive and systemic workflow, the efficacy of communication being a priority.

A communication strategy is not to be confused with an action plan—the former is a long-term roadmap designed with the organization's overall direction in mind, while the latter is a short-term focus plan to complete a specific task or project. While action plans are desirable for such cases, they alone are not sufficient to keep an organization running. A communication strategy aligns the values of the organization, its activities, and its relationship to external parties, thereby permeating all aspects of the organization's structure, and guides the formation of action plans accordingly.

MENAHRA is dedicated to ensuring that at-risk populations are able to access the health services and psycho-social care that will reduce the harm caused by substance use.

The aims and values of MENAHRA render the organization paramount to overcoming the obstacles regarding substance use and abuse in the region, from the individual to the societal level. There is much work to be done to destigmatize addiction and recovery, which is only one of MENAHRA's objectives, and so in reaching out to relevant audiences and bodies, communication is the channel through which these objectives may be achieved. The impact is too costly for the communication strategy to be inefficient. Too much is at stake and there is so much to gain; the work needs to be done right.

A situation analysis of the present communication at MENAHRA should be informed by consultation meetings held with the MENAHRA staff, key informant interviews, and online analytical tools that assess the organization's social and digital outreach.

# I. SITUATION ANALYSIS

## A. SCOPING

Any communication strategy must begin by conducting a preliminary diagnosis: the current state of the organization's communication must be assessed in order to proceed with its improvement. Following the preliminary diagnosis, a road map was created, clearly outlining a plan with specific tasks and deadlines over a given time period. The roadmap is dedicated to implementing the necessary steps to update the communication strategy.

Roadmaps are often adjusted should the need arise! For example, if the third week is dedicated to conducting interviews with key shareholders, the responses of the interviews may warrant additional tasks that would then be included in the roadmap. Roadmaps must be clearly defined yet flexible.

For the purpose of ensuring a cross-sectional view of the organization and a wider image of the organizational structure and its needs, focus group discussions and interviews were conducted with select individuals from various departments of the organization. The selected individuals were determined based on their experience and their relation to the communications department.

A preliminary diagnosis conducted via an internal scoping involved gathering the team for a workshop dedicated to understanding the present communication strategy and developing the framework for its update. The workshop included discussion points such as the reasons behind the development of the strategy, why the strategy is relevant to the organization at the present time, and what are the expected outcomes of having such a strategy.

The following questions were additionally raised:

- 1. What are the objectives of the present communication strategy?**
- 2. Is it in line with MENAHRA's new vision and mission? Why or why not?**
- 3. Why update the communication strategy?**
- 4. Does the strategy have a target audience?**
- 5. What are the strategy's current strengths? Its weaknesses? Include specifics, such as mechanics and application.**
- 6. How have previous communication strategies succeeded? How have they failed?**
- 7. Do you intend on making the strategy public? Why or why not?**
- 8. What would the team like to add to the current strategy? What would be taken away?**

The workshop was structured according to the internal scoping, which aimed for a diversified perspective that covers all the bases at MENAHRA, including the specifics of its mechanics and functions.

An effective roadmap was outlined under three headlines: tasks, milestones and timeline.

## B. AUDIT: BRAND, MEDIA, AND SKILLS

Auditing is the process by which an organization assesses its present state as it relates to various departments. The aspects emphasized in this section are the brand image, media, social media, but auditing often also includes human resources areas of the organization.

The purpose of auditing allows the communications team to take advantage of present strengths and improve its weaknesses so that they may be in line with the organizational values and mission.

### 1. Internal Communications

Prior to going into the specifics of auditing, it is important to have a healthy flow of internal communication so as to include everyone in the conversation. Effective internal communication can be determined through its adaptability, accessibility, and employee awareness of organizational happenings.

Having an effective internal communication flow requires assessing its current state and devising a plan of improvement.

It is essential to identify the communication tools used such as emails, meetings, mobile applications, internal telephone extensions, and others. Then, identify the appropriate communication tools that streamline and facilitate the flow of information among various departments. This process must ensure that all stakeholders are kept in the loop of MENAHRA's activities.

A suitable communication channel should foster teamwork, collaboration, and idea-sharing. Employees need to be able to freely communicate their ideas, suggestions, and feedback, and be sure that their comments reach the appropriate recipients. Following-through and responding to such correspondence is also essential; employees must receive a reply or update in a timely manner to ensure that internal communication is not stagnant.

Team members from various departments must be continuously updated and informed about MENAHRA's activities and progress. As an example, weekly memos or internal newsletters are great ways to keep everyone in the loop.

### 2. Brand Audit

The brand of an organization is not necessarily the product or specific goods and services provided to a clientele. Rather, it is the impression and image that it seeks to communicate with the outside world. Specifics of a brand include the logo, user interface on social media and the official website, and its tone of language and communication.

In this fast-paced world where user behavior is constantly changing, an organization must always keep its aesthetic up to date, always giving its followers a modern and professional look whether through refreshing the logo or designing a new one. This is especially true if the organization has a new vision and has enlarged its scope of work like MENAHRA. An aesthetic update is a way to alert followers on the new vision, mission, and scope of work, and simultaneously appealing to a wider audience.

However, any aesthetic modification should always accurately represent what the organization is trying to communicate - this includes consistency of colors, communication style, and typeface across all platforms. A brand needs to be recognizable from the logo, aesthetic, and personality and this is done through consistency. Team members need to have easy access to brand guidelines to ensure that this consistency is present regardless of who is producing content. Content should not identify certain individuals, but the brand itself.

### 3. Media Audit

A media audit aims to keep track of and review the organization's presence in the media. This includes news platforms and other mass communication channels. The audit has three aims: (1) to assess the usual channels on which the organization appears, (2) to assess whether or not it is being portrayed in a justified manner, and (3) to determine how to increase positive media coverage on various platforms.

Knowing that past media coverage effectively communicated MENAHRA's purpose, it is imperative to harness the power of media to reach specific groups within the target audience. To that end, it would be beneficial to increase the frequency of MENAHRA's appearance in the media. Gather inspiration by observing previous headlines and which organizational activities have received more attention. Once the common features are identified, they can be capitalized and improved upon for future media coverage.

### 4. Website and Social Media Audit

In the present day and age, an attractive online presence is crucial for any organization or company—even individuals—to garner an audience that will be compelled to follow the organization's relevant activity. Individuals, potential partners, and other external parties look to organization websites and social media as databases that contain all the needed information for the organization's mission, values, contact information, relevant locations, and on- and offline activity. An audit of the website and social media should aim to ensure that these foundational blocks are up and running—complete with an update to the organization's aesthetic.

It should be noted that a website audit differs marginally from a social media audit. The former involves a full traffic analysis: the website's engagement, search engine visibility, and user experience must be assessed and recorded to inform future updates, and may prove useful to certain stakeholders. The latter, however, involves a reassessment of the digital marketing strategy: determining which social media platforms reach the widest audience and levels of engagement, how to improve platforms that are not performing as efficiently, and whether or not the aesthetic and language of the social media presence is in line with that of target audience.

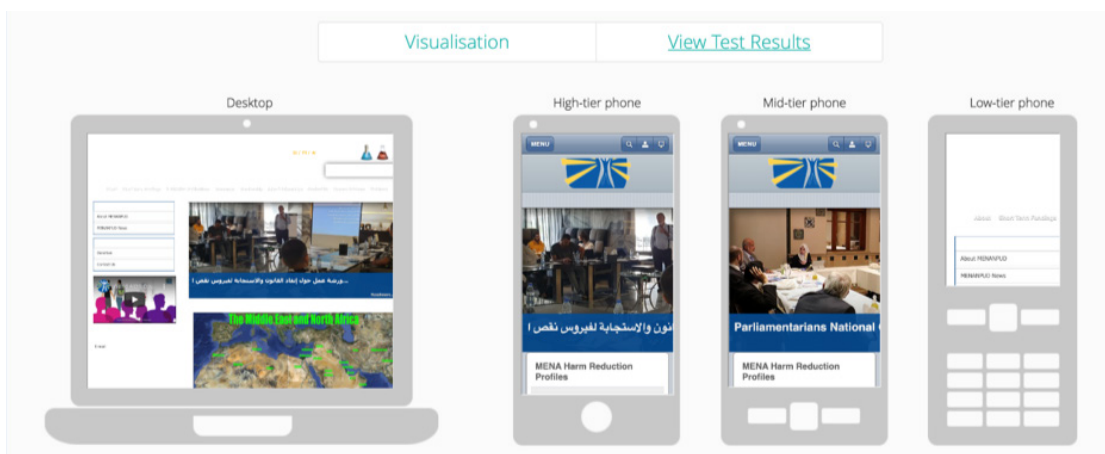
#### 4.1 Website Audit

##### 4.1.1 Analytics

Various tools, such as Google Analytics, may be used to understand the audience that visits the organization's website. Analytics are the results of a website screening that showcase the website performance, user traffic, user engagement, user demographics, as well as the success of certain marketing campaigns. The purpose of analytics is to improve search engine optimization (SEO) so that the website is more visible through web searches, in addition to targeting the correct audience via marketing.

An audience analytics over the past year shows a positive high rate of returning visitors (74%) to the MENAHRA website. Around 62% of the visitors used their mobile to log into the MENAHRA website, which at this moment is not optimized for mobile use. If the majority of the audience is accessing the website via mobile, enhancing their user experience is imperative to ensure that they remain on the website and click through its links to learn more about harm reduction. Otherwise, the limited functionality would repel a large portion of your audience.

Below is the performance of the website on mobile and how it appears on various screen sizes.



## Your mobiReady Score

<http://menahra.org>



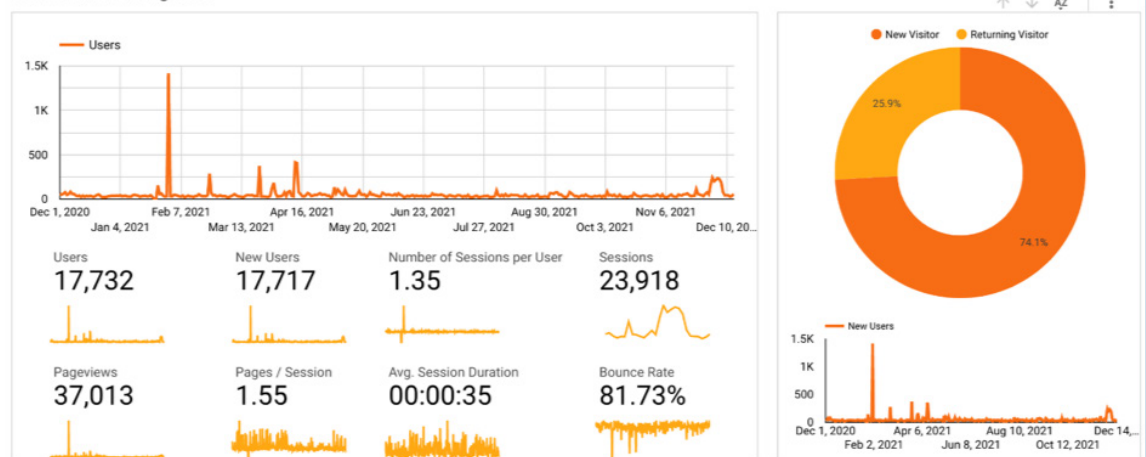
The tested page performed very poorly in mobile readiness tests, scoring only 1.53 out of 5. Some serious test failures were detected and should be addressed. The page download weight is acceptably low, this is likely to improve user experience.



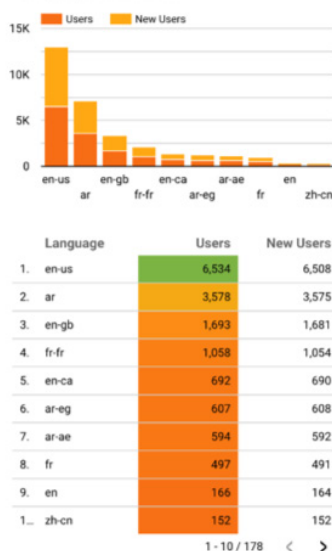
## Google Analytics Audience Overview

Continent Region Channel Device Dec 1, 2020 - Dec 14, 2021

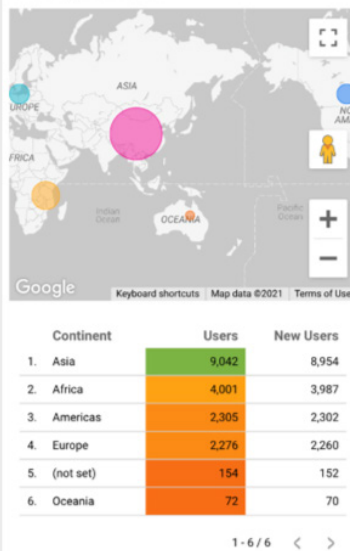
### Your audience at a glance



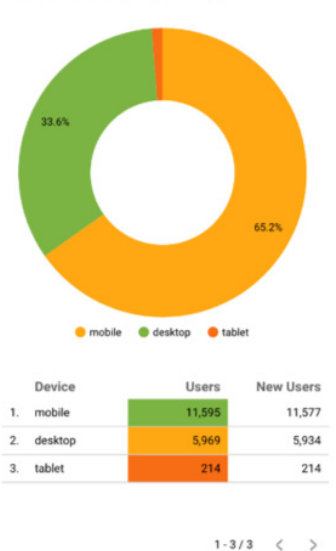
### Language breakdown



### Country breakdown

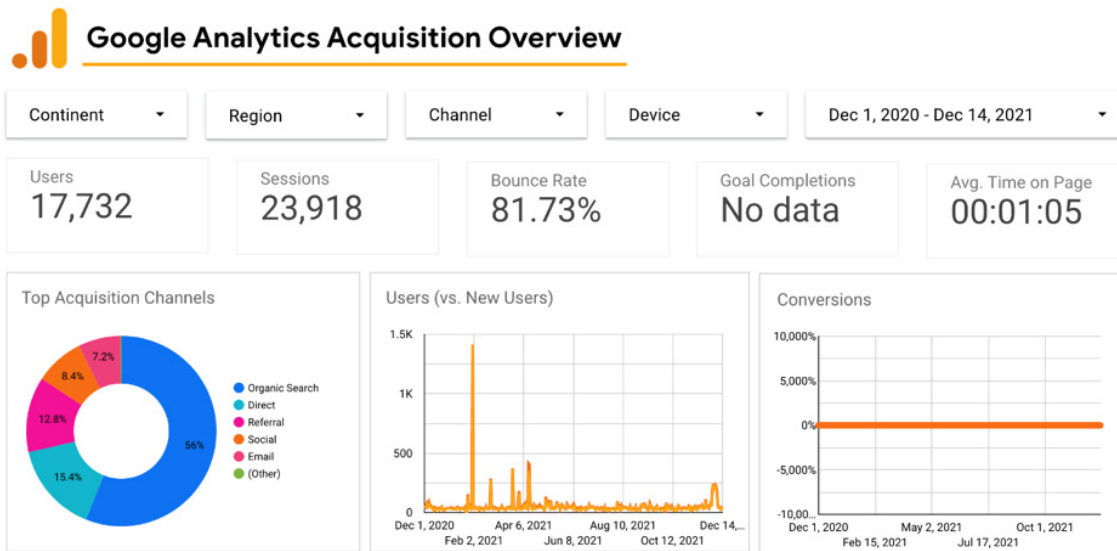


### What device are people using?





According to further analytics, there is a positive organic growth (56%) of user acquisition in the past year on the MENAHRA website, 15% of which log in directly to the website, while the remaining user base is referred via social media or email. The latter two need additional engagement to increase audience referral.



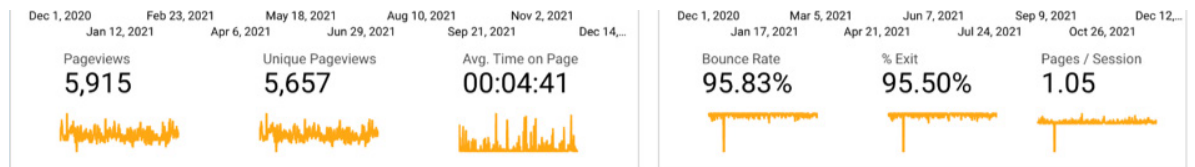
The table above shows the distribution of languages among the user base. English is the main language, followed by Arabic and French, respectively. MENAHRA offers all three language options on the website, but this is handled differently on its social media platforms. There needs to be a proper organization of English, Arabic, and French content on social media so as not to alienate audiences and to ensure clear communication.



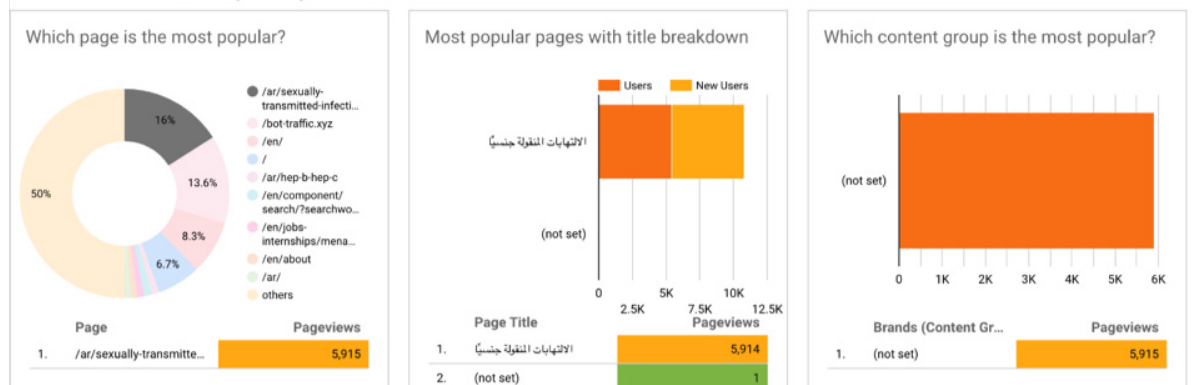
Below is an example of how various languages can be included on a social media post.

	Acquisition			Behavior		
	Sessions	Users	New Users	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration
	23.9K	17.7K	17.7K	81.7%	1.5	35
Source / Medium	Sessions	Users	New Users	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg Session Durat...
google / organic	12,639	10,471	9,902	88.09%	1.35	00:00:38
(direct) / (none)	3,305	2,903	2,898	75.85%	2.5	00:00:56
bot-traffic.xyz / r...	2,999	1,286	810	99.77%	1	00:00:00
menahra.org / re...	1,089	866	864	1.19%	1.99	00:00:09
phpList / email	976	700	657	75.41%	1.81	00:01:16
l.facebook.com / ...	764	697	691	86.91%	1.61	00:00:47
cucYvfg / email	720	647	634	36.67%	2.09	00:00:16
m.facebook.com...	656	624	620	91.62%	1.24	00:00:15
facebook.com / ...	155	155	155	96.13%	1.12	00:00:08

Spending more time on the website is important to ensure proper engagement, and so content needs to be optimized accordingly. The numbers show that the average session for a user on the website is 1 minute, 16 seconds when directed through email, while an organic log in averages only 38 seconds in comparison.



What do users see when they are in your website?



Further, analysis shows an increased interest among users in certain topics. MENAHRA can thus build on and create content for these interests, allowing the organization to expand its scope while serving its strategic objectives.


#### 4.1.2 SEO Audit

A preliminary website SEO audit shows an overall optimization score of 43%. Improvements in content and other technicalities are recommended to increase the website's search engine visibility.

[Overview](#) [Project settings](#) [Crawler settings](#) [Keyword Monitoring](#) [Share](#)

### Project Overview

URL	<a href="https://www.menahra.org/en/">https://www.menahra.org/en/</a>
Project name	Menahra
State	finished
Created on	12/14/21 06:46 am
Finished on	12/14/21 07:02 am
Crawling duration	16 min. 4 sec.
Crawlings count	1
Scheduled crawling	No



### Project Options

[Start new crawling](#)

[Delete project](#)

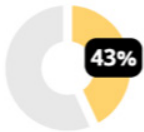
[Create PDF report](#)

### Project Checklist

Charset encoding	utf-8
Average links per page	65
www. redirect	<a href="#">Problems</a> <a href="#">Details</a>
Redirect for https://	<a href="#">Problems</a> <a href="#">Details</a>
Avg. response time	0.67
Average amount JS files	4
Average amount CSS files	3
Only for adults	No
Domain blacklisted?	No

### Optimization score

Overall optimization score



43%

- / -  
Since last crawling

- / -  
Since first crawling

Tech. & Meta	15%	<a href="#">Show results</a>
Structure	77%	<a href="#">Show results</a>
Content	37%	<a href="#">Show results</a>

#### Page optimization and guidelines

Check	Amount	Change
Problems with H1 headings	957	-/-
Problems with headings	311	-/-
Problems with strong and bold tags	165	-/-
Pages with frames	0	-/-
Pages that contain error reporting	0	-/-
Images with missing alt attributes	0	-/-
Pages with big file size	0	-/-

#### URL details

Check	Amount	Change
URL parameters	414	-/-
Session ID in URL	257	-/-
Too many subdirectories	38	-/-
URL too long	32	-/-
Questionable URLs	0	-/-

#### Meta tags and page attributes

Check	Amount	Change
Pages with problematic page titles	744	-/-
Problems with meta descriptions	819	-/-
Duplicate page titles	799	-/-
Duplicate meta descriptions	454	-/-

11

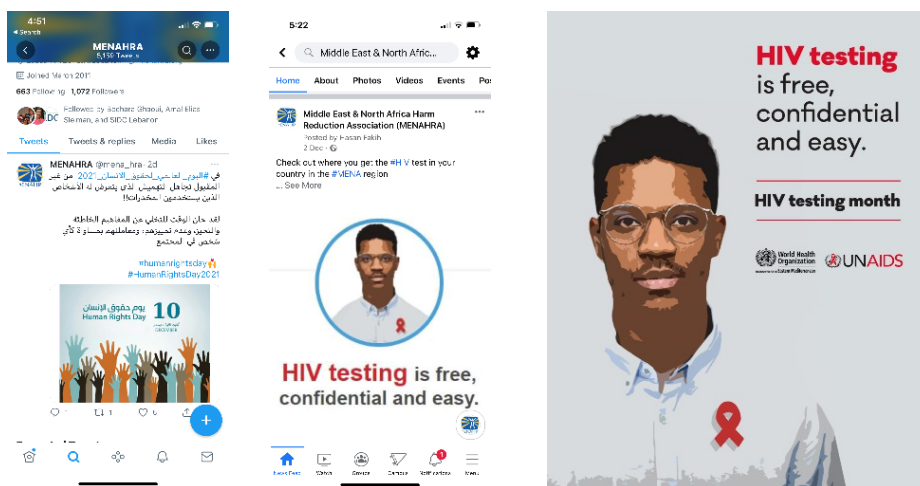
## 4.2 SOCIAL MEDIA AUDIT

Improving your online presence depends on a high-quality and consistent aesthetic on your social media platforms. This consists of making sure all profile fields are filled, a high definition square profile picture is used rather than a rectangular one, a profile bio (such as on Twitter and Instagram) that clearly states who you are, what you do, and a clear call-to-action.

A LinkedIn page is recommended to showcase organizational activities and various connections with stakeholders. The LinkedIn page is to be run by one or more admin.

Ultimately, a consistent brand is essential to increase MENAHRA's visibility. In addition to visual branding, including the right keywords and hashtags will improve search engine visibility.

It is always essential to use high-quality images that follow the recommended dimensions for each network.



A cover photo or a header of a social media channel occupies a significant amount of space on a profile. It is convenient and opportune to include a high-quality image that contains a simple message that introduces the organization's mission, ongoing or upcoming campaign launches, or other relevant activity.



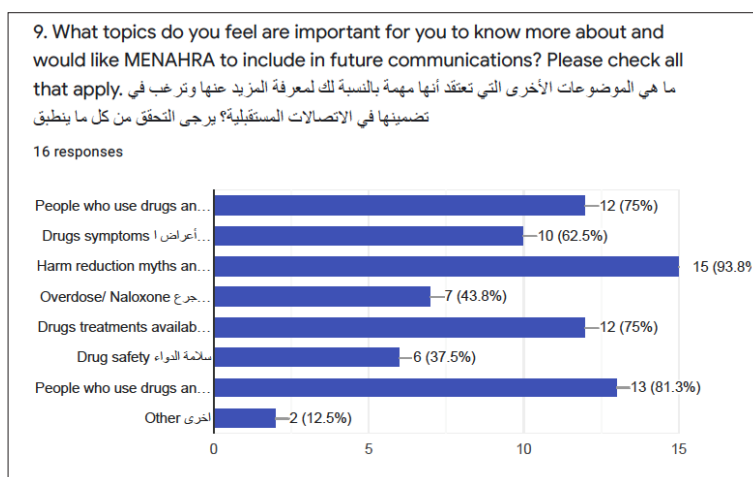
#### 4.2.1 Content

Content, similar to aesthetics, needs to be consistent in tone, voice, and style. The organization's brand is what needs to be recognizable to users, not individual admins.

A mission statement must be assigned to every platform and content must be optimized for each platform. LinkedIn can be used for recruitment and advocacy, or finding prospective partners, while Instagram is dedicated to educational infographics and stories that showcase relevant events or updates. Twitter can be dedicated to sharing ideas and real-time information, as well as campaigning and HR updates.

The goal is to have each platform showcase a different facet of the organization while maintaining a consistent social media presence and promoting MENAHRA's objectives.

Inspiration can be drawn from organizations with successful social media presence. Another great way to improve is by directly asking the audience. This can be done through polls on Instagram Stories or Twitter, emailing a quick survey, and other methods. This also shows that you are dedicated to catering to your audience's needs and making their interactions with MENAHRA pleasant in terms of aesthetics and content.



11. Write down any further comments, suggestions, or feedback related to communications and engagement with MENAHRA (Optional): اكتب أي تعليقات أو ملاحظات أخرى تتعلق بالاتصالات والمشاركة مع شبكة مينارة (اختياري):

7 responses

Sending request for info via different route, I think perhaps it could be interesting for you to have on your board a very much harm reduction oriented academic but who works in a different field of activity, nicotine and tobacco. It could potentially increase your reach as well as our reach in your region. Thank you and kind regards, Atakan Erik Befrits, INNCO

none

Thank you

مقترح:  
١. ان يكون هناك لقاء عبر الزوم بشكل فصلي  
٢. ان تكون هناك تدريبات للحد من المخاطر و ايضا وضع الاسرئرتيجيات لذلك  
٣. ان ترسل احداث المعلومات للحد من مخاطر استخدام المخدرات بشكل بروشورات  
٤. التدريب حول الاتصال و التواصل للتركاء  
٥. ان تكون هناك تشجيع و تقييم لمنظمات المجتمع المدني نحو المزيد من العمل للحد من انتشار المخدرات

Content should not be exclusively promotional or dedicated to every milestone that MENAHRA achieves. This can discourage your audience from engaging with you, as they are first and foremost interested in the cause and not the brand.

As such, following the 80/20 rule is optimal: 80% of content should directly engage your audience via information, entertainment, and inspiration. The remaining 20% can directly promote MENAHRA's activities, achievements, and campaigns.

A social media calendar with dedicated dates and times for each channel can help organize the content so that it follows the 80/20 rule. The calendar should consider frequent posts as well as long-term campaigns. This makes sure that content is consistent and evenly spaced out.

Posts published at certain times tend to have better engagement, so this is also important to optimize MENAHRA's social media presence. Analyze previous engagement rates to determine when posts perform the best and organize publishing times accordingly.

Content goals should be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, and Time-Bound. For example, a goal for Instagram could be stated as follows: We will increase our Instagram audience (Specific target) by 30% (Measurable and Attainable) per quarter (Time-Bound).



#### *4.2.2 Social Media Engagement*

The overload of information on social media means that audiences generally avoid longer-form posts with complicated language, statistics, and information. When it comes to updating the audience on social media about organizational publications, it is recommended to make the extra effort to simplify and translate any dense reports, so that their modified format may be more attractive to audiences.

Inserting the key takeaways of studies and updates will keep people in the loop. Moreover, extracting information from a larger document will ensure that there is a continuous flow of content to social media.

Another idea is to use other channels and modes to launch the reports. You can create infographics that are visually organized and attractive, or organize a Facebook event where an invited guest or author can chat with a colleague about the key points and conclusions of a study, with a Q&A segment from the audience. This makes the publications more accessible to the audience and includes them in the conversation.

#### *4.2.3 Cultural Sensitivity*

Several modes of communication must be considered to ensure that the information you wish to portray is appropriate to the channel. Moreover, there is the issue of competing channels, causes, and bouts of information, which means that the organization needs to find increasingly creative ways to break through that obstacle and reach the intended audience.

However, in addition to these obstacles, there is the issue of cultural sensitivity. MENAHRA addresses a multicultural population in the MENA, African, and Asian regions. There is then the sensitivity that comes with religious, moral, and social values. For example, it would not be possible to raise the issue of sex work in the region by directly placing a photo of a woman representing the issue. The organization must instead find ways to communicate the core values of its audience in order to create trust and ultimately inspire positive change in the community.

The issue of language also applies in this scenario, as the organization needs to keep in mind that specific terminology is not necessarily common to the general public. At MENAHRA, the issue of harm reduction is a common term, but this does not mean that the audience knows what it means. A way to overcome this terminology barrier is by clearly defining obscure terms and using the language of the audience to aid their understanding of the cause, giving them reason to care about the specific issue, and empowering them to be part of the change.

#### *4.2.4 Captioning*

Under any social media post or newsletter, it is important to write engaging captions. If the full post is linked to the organization's website, to ensure click-through and engagement, the caption must contain a briefing of the full post to capture the user's attention. It is not sufficient to point out that an article is interesting, for example, but rather include in the caption some interesting facts or even a question that would make the audience feel more involved in the subject, thereby creating more click-through rates.

## 5. Newsletter

The captioning issue applies to newsletters as much as it does to social media posts. However, in newsletters, the diversity of the audience can be more challenging to navigate.

Some audiences tend to have a language preference, especially for longer-form posts or articles. For this reason, providing subscription options for English, Arabic, or French is ideal to avoid a confusing and alienating newsletter format.

However, not every organization has the capacity to fully translate longer-form posts, but it is equally valid to opt for partial translations that may provide audiences a brief summary of the post, even if it is not fully available in their preferred language. This way, audiences still feel included in the updating process and that they are being catered to.

The issue of separating audience (without alienating them) applies not only to language, but to the content itself. For example, at MENAHRA, newsletters often contain updates of future meetings and resource capacities, which are relevant information for the organization's donors and third parties. However, not every individual subscribed to the newsletter is interested solely in those activities. If an objective of MENAHRA's is to increase awareness of harm reduction in the region, for instance, it is also required that the newsletter includes such material, so that audiences actually receive what they signed up for. Such news gives people a reason to become more involved and invested in the change that MENAHRA is mobilizing; having a shared vision and providing them with the means to support that vision is one of the elements that will keep people following the cause.

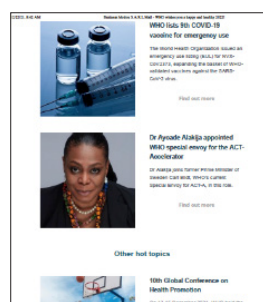
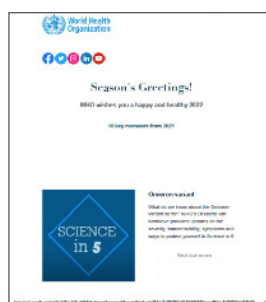
### Subscribe to our newsletters

IDPC Monthly Alert in English

Alerte mensuelle de l'IDPC en français

Alerta informativa del IDPC en español

Weekly Asia-Pacific News Digest in English



## 6. Additional Communication tools

Other forms of online communication can include having a blog that publishes longer-form-yet accessible-articles. Snippets of information can be extracted from these articles and then designed to be promoted through social media, thus continuing the stream of content and cross-referencing the various communication channels.

Creating a podcast can also help audience stay informed on various topics related to harm reduction in a convenient and cost-effective way. Podcasts also create opportunities for audiences to send in various questions that can be discussed in episodes, in addition to interviewing key figures that can assist in promoting harm reduction, such as doctors, social workers, or recovering PWUD. This makes the topic of harm reduction more tangible and relevant to people's daily lives and can help create change in behaviour and attitude in targeted communities.

## 7. Employees' Capacity & Skills Audit

Human resources are an indispensable part of the whole process, as they relate to the capacity that employees are able to work part- or full-time as well as determining the quality of the work atmosphere and flow. In addition, an audit of human resources can inform the organization's outsourcing process to hire additional staff, if need be.

The audit in this department involves a staff review of present skill sets and their relevance to improving the organization's communication. The communication strategy depends on the competence and maximization of the present skills available, so it is crucial to identify these strengths and discern if there are any gaps that need to be filled accordingly.

After conducting this audit, a clearer picture of the organization's current skillset, strengths, and capacity to improve will be formed. This may include capitalizing on what is already there, conducting training workshops to mitigate any gaps, or outsourcing altogether to fill the gaps entirely.

### Staff skillsets must include:

1. **A designer or a design team that is consistently producing high-quality content in various formats, such as infographics, videos and social media posts. Content needs to be consistent with the organization's aesthetic and overall communication strategy.**
2. **An individual or a team of writers and translators who consistently produce high-quality content for the website, social media, campaigns, and any copywriting opportunities. Content reflects the organization's values and overall communication strategy.**
3. **An individual or a team responsible for the general calendar of the workplace. The entire workplace is able to access this calendar and receive regular updates and changes on appointments, meetings, campaign launches, etc. It can be linked to the internal newsletter/email of the workplace for easier access.**
4. **An individual or a team that is responsible for gathering information about the target audience. Is the target audience effectively engaged? How is the target audience responding? What can be improved?**
5. **An individual or a team that regularly keeps track of online traffic and keeping the organization in the loop on relevant statistics and analytics.**
6. **An individual or a team responsible for overseeing the communication strategy, assessing its results, and making decisions or modifications accordingly.**
7. **An individual or a team that watches analytics on the website, email marketing, and social media. In other words, an individual that is responsible for evaluating and monitoring the results of communication plans.**



## 8. Market Analysis

A market analysis comprises two areas: peer and target audience analysis.

### 8.1 Peer Analysis

MENAHRA targets the harm reduction of drug use. Similar bodies and entities are emerging in the region that provide similar services. The purpose of a peer analysis is to compare and contrast those entities with one another alongside MENAHRA, and to capitalize on what makes MENAHRA unique. This will help strengthen MENAHRA's identity and in turn influence its overall communication activities.






### 8.2 Target Audience Analysis

In running a target audience analysis, we asked who we are trying to reach, we understood and researched our target audience's motivations and why we believe they would benefit from MENAHRA.

We then gathered information related to what the target audience is generally interested in, what it needs, and the kind of outlets it resonates with. Since our target audience is not homogenous, we can diversify our communication to reach certain subsets of the audience, thus making our communication strategy better-informed and more attuned to the target audience's language and aesthetic needs.

Understanding our audiences' background, nationality, and how they interact enables us to refine our communication activities. It is necessary to utilize all available media platforms to reach our target audience.

### MENAHRA Target Audience

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	PRIORITY	SUB GROUP					
 ORGANIZATIONS	Primary	Local & Regional Civil Society Organizations	International Organizations	MENANPUD	Donors	Network Members	
 COMMUNITY SOCIAL SUPPORT	Primary	Religious Leaders	Law Enforcement Agents	Members of Parliament	Governmental Agents	Judges & Lawyers	Healthcare Professionals
 EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS	Primary	Universities			Youth		
 PWUD	Secondary	PWUD		Sexual Partner		Family Members	
 GENERAL PUBLIC	Secondary	Citizens & Communities					

## 9. SWOT Analysis

To proceed, a SWOT analysis is essential to determine the needs of the organization and, in turn, the focus of the strategy.

### STRENGTHS

- The most established HR organization in the region.
- MENAHRA has an online presence with a loyal audience that has been ongoing since 2012. Its online outreach is wide.
- Positive relationship with its key stakeholders. These connections built on trust and commitment strengthen the organization's outreach and resource capacity.
- Content produced by MENAHRA is unique and provides a recognizable brand that positively impacts communities.
- MENAHRA stands for a clear and compelling purpose which is relevant to many people's lives.
- Large network capacity means partners reach out to MENAHRA to contact CSOs.

### WEAKNESSES

- External/internal communication is not aligned with professional standards.
- Lack of human resources in the communication department. Certain skillsets of the current team are missing.
- MENAHRA's new strategy needs significant and timely internal communication efforts.
- Minimal inclusion or interaction with partners, CSOs, and community members thus minimizing the advantages of the partnership.

### OPPORTUNITIES

- MENAHRA's new vision, mission, and scope of work forms an opportunity that cements its reputation as unique and distinct in the region.
- Widening the scope of the discussion of harm-reduction beyond HIV and including the risks of contacting other sexually transmitted infections (STIs), Hepatitis B and C, tuberculosis, as well as risks of overdosing expands the conversation on harm reduction and attracts a new audience.
- Already established network connections increase opportunities for participatory and collective work between organizations and volunteers as MENAHRA promotes its messages.
- Increase of MENAHRA's visibility due to the intersection of drug use with other areas such as mental health, communicable diseases, human rights, and gender.
- Collaborations with regional and international organizations bringing forth visibility and other resources to create a lasting impact as MENAHRA undergoes this new mission.

### THREATS

- Regional organizations on the rise that bear a similar mission to MENAHRA threaten its status as a distinct organization with a unique voice.
- The absence of a budget dedicated specifically for communication threatens the implementation of the needed campaigns and various activities.
- Risk of miscommunicating its message if it is not adequately adapted to the specific community it addresses. Every piece of content directed towards a specific region or country needs to be well researched and well-informed on the political situation, socio-economic status of the population, and language and cultural sensitivities.

## STRENGTHS

The strengths that are outlined must relate to the advantages the organization's communication currently holds. Variables to consider might include what the organization excels at, the public's perception of the organization's strengths, as well as access to internal resources that can be drawn upon, among others.

**Weaknesses:** Weaknesses may be outlined from the results of interviews and focus groups with relevant stakeholders. The organization's communication weaknesses may also be identified by comparing activity and services to similar civil societies in the region. Further variables to consider might include what needs immediate improvement, public perception of weaknesses, and in what areas are resources lacking, etc.

**Opportunities:** As mentioned, opportunities reflect the external factors that the organization may engage in, and may thus be identified by asking what communications opportunities are there? What opportunities are currently available and may be taken advantage of, in addition to utilizing the identified strengths to maximize the results of the presented opportunities.

## THREATS

Threats tend to be related to the internal weaknesses, thus it is essential to have a clear idea of the potential consequences and repercussions that the organization might suffer. Determining threats involves outlining the areas most prone to harm, what the internal weaknesses contribute to these threats, and observing competitive organizational activity that may undermine yours.

## II. COMMUNICATION STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

There are certain goals that MENAHRA must aim for with its communication efforts, known as the strategy objectives. The basis for these objectives can be derived from the SWOT analysis as well as the audits discussed previously. The objectives are formulated in accordance with the organization's vision and mission, so that the core values are perpetuated in organizational activity. Two questions to ask are (1) "What is MENAHRA trying to achieve?" and (2) "How is our communication strategy going to help us achieve these objectives?" It is necessary to focus both on output and outcome, the former relating to the quantity produced and the latter being the behavioral impact it creates. In the case of Harm Reduction, it is important to ask whether the communication material about the topic is reaching the target audience and influencing their attitudes and behavior as well.

### **It is important to note that:**

1. Strategy objectives must be specific and actionable, and not more than one sentence long. This is to narrow the focus of a task and ensure that it will be completed.
2. Strategy objectives need to be worded simply so that everyone in the organization will be able to understand, remember, and act on them.
3. The number of strategy objectives formulated must be challenging yet realistic—too few is not likely to yield significant outcomes in the long-term, and too many may be overwhelming and counterproductive.
4. The strategy's objectives must be written in a way that you can measure its results. It is not enough to simply have the objective be, "Increase awareness on Harm Reduction," for example. Rather, the objective must be written in such a way that you can measure the awareness of your audience on Harm Reduction over time, such as through engagement, click-through, and outreach. Every objective must have a measurable outcome, so that you can keep track of progress and actually achieve your goals.

### **COMMUNICATION STRATEGY OBJECTIVES OF MENAHRA**

- 1 | INCREASE THE INTENDED AUDIENCE'S KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS ON HARM REDUCTION**
- 2 | INCREASE THE AWARENESS OF CURRENT RIGHTS AND POLICIES RELEVANT TO PWUD**
- 3 | ADVOCATE FOR PWUDs RIGHTS IN THE POLITICAL AND HEALTH SPHERE**
- 4 | PROMPT CHANGES IN POLICY-MAKING REGARDING SUBSTANCE USE AND HARM REDUCTION**
- 5 | EFFECTIVELY BUILD THE CAPACITY OF CSOs TO BE ABLE SUPPORT PWUD**

The advantage of developing communication strategy objectives is that they are aligned with the overall goals of the organization, so progress may occur in parallel with other objectives.

# III. CHANNELS

This section is directed at improving communication with external stakeholders. The organization is ultimately responsible for effectively communicating its strategy objectives with the appropriate parties, and to determine which channels are best to transmit these messages.

## Channels:

A channel is the means through which a message is communicated, and this may be internal or external. To determine what channel is most appropriate, it is necessary to consider what is preferred within the organization's communication, as well as those of the stakeholders. Moreover, certain messages may require different channels, and so it is best to have a variety of channels in use for this purpose.

Channels may be chosen by (1) identifying current channels in use, (2) determining each's popularity, strengths, and weaknesses, and (3) discarding inefficient channels and implementing or maximizing better options.

Internal communication channels may include emails, intranet networks, in-person meetings, and calls, among others. To communicate with external stakeholders, some appropriate channels may be press releases, social media, events, conferences, and meetings. Whatever channel is chosen, it is necessary to continue monitoring its results and adapt it to effectively communicate the organization's messages, or otherwise replace it.

In addition to assessing communication channels on their level of targeting, interactivity, depth of message, and reach, the target audience was then mapped to the appropriate communication channel.



### ORGANIZATIONS

Emails, Websites, Conventions, Social Media, Podcasts



### COMMUNITY SOCIAL SUPPORT

Emails, Conferences, Workshops, Website, Online Ads, Social Media, Billboards, TV, Radio



### EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Emails, Conferences, Workshops, Website, Online Ads, Social Media, Billboards



### PWUD

Billboards, Social Media, Website, Online Ads, Online Articles/Blogs, TV, Radio



### GENERAL PUBLIC

Billboards, Social Media, Website, Online Ads, Online Articles/Blogs, TV, Radio


# IV. MESSAGES

The messages communicated by the organization must have a set purpose and a clear target audience. Messages are important in communicating and maintaining the organization's image and reputation, and thus must be aligned with organizational values and services. Further, messages are opportune for highlighting what makes the organization unique, and why it demands public attention. The characteristics of a message may be outlined as follows:



1. All organizational activity may be seen as a message, as observers must be able to determine the values and purpose of the organization through visible communication.
2. The message must be consistent in wording and tone, across all platforms or channels, and within the organization itself.
3. Not all messages are equal, and some must take priority over others, depending on its place in the hierarchy of the organization's values and services, and what is of interest to the audience.

## EACH OF MENAHRA'S TARGET AUDIENCES HAS SPECIFIC MESSAGE OBJECTIVES



### MESSAGE OBJECTIVES – ORGANIZATIONS

ORGANIZATIONS	Local & Regional Civil Society Organizations	International Organizations	MENANPUD	Donors	Network Members
	Strengthening advocacy capacity of CSO's	Showcasing developments on Harm reduction in the region	Assist them in planning and managing harm reduction programs	Showcasing developments on Harm reduction in the region	Strengthening advocacy capacity of network members
	Strengthening the capacity on innovative service delivery (emerging technologies, harm reduction integration with mental health and primary health care, among others.)		Strengthening the institutional capacities of members and develop their skills related to advocacy and service delivery		Strengthening the capacity on innovative service delivery (emerging technologies, harm reduction integration with mental health and primary health care, among others.)
	Promote understanding of harm-reduction, raise awareness on harm-reduction services, promote harm-reduction as a healthcare issue				
	Promoting decriminalization, human rights, gender equality, etc.				
	Broadening MENAHRA's visibility				



## MESSAGE OBJECTIVES – COMMUNITY SOCIAL SUPPORT

 COMMUNITY SOCIAL SUPPORT	Religious Leaders	Law Enforcement Agents	Members of Parliament	Governmental Agents	Judges & Lawyers	Healthcare Professionals
	Strengthening collaboration and referral between government and CSO services					Strengthening advocacy on the health aspect of harm reduction
	Influence specific policies towards adopting legal frameworks such as social and health policies					Shaping the perception of drug use as a disease that requires medical attention and psycho-social support
	Promote understanding of harm-reduction, raise awareness on harm-reduction services, promote harm-reduction as a healthcare issue					
	Promoting decriminalization, human rights, gender equality, etc.					
	Broadening MENAHRA's visibility					

## MESSAGE OBJECTIVES – EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

 EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS	Universities	Youth
	Promoting and upholding the rights of PWUD and at-risk groups	
	Promote understanding of harm-reduction, raise awareness on harm-reduction services, promote harm-reduction as a healthcare issue	
	Promoting decriminalization, human rights, gender equality, etc.	
	Broadening MENAHRA's visibility	

## MESSAGE OBJECTIVES – PWUD

 PWUD	PWUD	Sexual Partner	Family Members
	Promoting and upholding the rights of PWUD and at-risk groups		
	Promote understanding of harm-reduction, raise awareness on harm-reduction services, promote harm-reduction as a healthcare issue		
	Shape the perception of drug use as a disease that requires medical attention and psychosocial support		
	Promoting decriminalization, human rights, gender equality, etc.		
	Increase acceptance of harm-reduction among society		

## MESSAGE OBJECTIVES – GENERAL PUBLIC

 GENERAL PUBLIC	Citizens & Communities
	Promoting and upholding the rights of PWUD and at-risk groups
	Promote understanding of harm-reduction, raise awareness on harm-reduction services, promote harm-reduction as a healthcare issue
	Shape the perception of drug use as a disease that requires medical attention and psychosocial support
	Promoting decriminalization, human rights, gender equality, etc.
	Increase acceptance of harm-reduction among society

## CAMPAIGNING

Campaigning is the basis of all marketing efforts: it is the foundation upon which the organization builds its reputation and awareness.

A campaign can be framed as various organized activities that aim at a specific goal. This is often a short-term goal with a clear start and end date. The outcomes of the campaign must be stated in a way that they can be tracked and measured. Using various social media platforms can help promote the campaign and assist in brand and content consistency.

While conducting a campaign, the organization must be clear about the target audience and the specific call-to-action the organization hopes to inspire. You must ask what it is specifically that you want your target audience to achieve: this could involve donating money or supplies, volunteering at events, or other activities. As an organization, it is important to write out these campaign outcomes in such a way that you can measure their results over time.

### KEY STEPS TO FOLLOW WHEN DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN

1   Identify target audience	2   Identify message objectives for each target audience	3   Identify communication channels	4   Map communication channels to target audiences	5   Define media campaign types
Identify key target audiences i.e. <b>the stakeholder groups that will be targeted by the media campaign</b>	Identify <b>message objectives</b> that need to be transmitted to the target audiences	Identify long list of media channels across: - Physical - Digital media - Print - Traditional media	Identify <b>communication channels</b> that will be used to carry forward the <b>media campaign messages</b> to each target audience	Identify <b>various media approaches</b> that can be adopted when activating the media campaign

### SET OF COMMUNICATION CHANNELS TO DELIVER THE DESIRED COMMUNICATION MESSAGES

Type	Digital	Physical	Print	Traditional
Channel	Social Media (facebook, twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn)	Conferences	Newspapers	Television
	Emails		Magazines	
	Website	Workshops / Training	Brochures	Radio
	Podcasts		Billboards	
	Online Ads (e.g Google Ads)	Conventions		
	Online articles and blogs			



## TARGET AUDIENCE MAPPED TO THE APPROPRIATE COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

### RECOMMENDED COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

 <b>ORGANIZATIONS</b>	Emails, Websites, Conventions, Social Media, Podcasts
 <b>COMMUNITY SOCIAL SUPPORT</b>	Emails, Conferences, Workshops, Website, Online Ads, Social Media, Billboards, TV, Radio
 <b>EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS</b>	Emails, Conferences, Workshops, Website, Online Ads, Social Media, Billboards
 <b>PWUD</b>	Billboards, Social Media, Website, Online Ads, Online Articles/Blogs, TV, Radio
 <b>GENERAL PUBLIC</b>	Billboards, Social Media, Website, Online Ads, Online Articles/Blogs, TV, Radio

### THREE TYPES OF MEDIA TO LEVERAGE WHEN ACTIVATING A CAMPAIGN

Examples	Earned Media	Paid Media	Owned Media
	<b>Tradional</b> News media coverage, TV coverage, etc.	<b>Tradional</b> Sponsorships, TV/radio advertisement, etc.	<b>Tradional</b> Brochures, press releases, etc.
	<b>Social</b> News coverage in digital media outlets, social media endorsements from influencers, etc.	<b>Social</b> Ads on social media (e.g. Facebook Ads), ads on search engines, etc.	<b>Social</b> Own social media channels, website, etc.

# V. PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

The below visual template includes the objectives, the audience, corresponding activities, a description of the tasks, the channel/tool to be used, the strategic value/objective it hopes to achieve, as well as the estimated cost. This way, each objective is organized and all the relevant details are filled out as the implementation process progresses.

Objective	Audiences Engaged	Program Activity	Communication Activity	Description	Channel/ Tool	Cost	Key Performance Indicators
Objective 1							
Objective 2							

The timeline must be clearly defined and organizational milestones must be inserted as well. This will ensure that as tasks are completed, the milestones may be evaluated and monitored in terms of the larger organizational objectives. The implementation plan may be organized into an editorial calendar that is accessible to all employees and relevant parties.

The tasks must be feasible and must maximize, but not exhaust, organizational resources and channels. Other factors to consider include the timeframe itself, return on investment, and the relevant stakeholders to be contacted or included in the process. Each task must have a finalization date determined so as not to fall behind schedule.

## The following elements are considered:

1. Every objective must have a target audience in mind. MENAHRA needs to make sure that the language it uses will be understood by the audience, and that the audience will be responsive to the message.
2. Prior to starting implementation, review the list of all the stakeholders in the organization, and divide them into categories to better understand their role and relationship to the organization.
3. Make sure that with every objective and activity, the employee capacity is defined. It is not recommended to set goals that cannot be realistically reached, as this can exhaust resources and cause setbacks. Make sure that the objectives are challenging, but realistic.

# VI. CONCLUSION

For an organization to reach its core objectives, the external communication objectives must be aligned with those of the organization. The synchronization between objective, team, and external communication plan facilitates the fulfillment of the mission and ensures its efficacy.

To watch your organization's vision and values resonate within the society and make the impact you always aimed for is an unmatched reward. For this purpose, it is imperative to know your audience and address them appropriately. Any communication actions taken must be preceded by a clear vision of who, how, and where. This task is made difficult given the sensitivity of your cause and its position in the region.

Harm reduction has proven itself to be an effective approach in limiting the risks involved in substance use and abuse, as well as the recovery process. Nevertheless, it is still inadequately implemented in the MENA region. It is a goal of MENAHRA's to make HR programs a health priority for the MENA countries, and such a goal requires solid communications that ensure a wider audience outreach and that said audience is being communicated with effectively.



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