



HADIS FOUNDATION: COMMUNICATION POLICY

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preamble

The story of the Habiba Dangana (Hadis) Foundation is one steeped in an uncommon tradition founded on the need to create a new culture of enhancing women's personhood at minimum cost to them and to the Foundation itself.

Founded in 2012 by a feminist and social entrepreneur Amina Salihu, Hadis is now in its fifth year. It has grown through a design and inception phase. The design phase was the stage of conceptualisation of the purpose and the ways in which it will work as captured in a vision document. The inception phase was the stage of testing that design.

This communication strategy is a work in progress to strengthen internal and external communications and also to support delivery of Hadis strategic objectives across 3 years, 2018-2020. There has been significant growth into new areas since 2012 and more expansion is planned for the years ahead. The strategy is about creating an identity that our staff and other stakeholders can relate to and building engagement which can drive better quality projects for the beneficiaries.

With the challenge of competition across the NGO sector, communications priorities over the coming years need to be actively supporting all aspects of attracting and retaining the best people. Building a reputation and brand as one of Nigerian's leading Foundations, this strategy is a key part of achieving this.

1.2 Hadis: A Brief Herstory

In 2012 an organisation was formed to give a headstart to women, girls and their communities. The founder of Habiba Dangana Foundation Dr. Amina Salihu, a feminist and social entrepreneur drew upon her mother Habiba Dangana's life of giving. Hajiya Habiba Dangana, had a sensitive eye for details and was always helping people in need, which made her always broke.' No amount of money was enough to help Maami (as she is called by her children) realize her dream of helping the underprivileged'. Her daughter, Amina, then thought of setting up a Foundation which would transform Maami's passion into structured work.

Slogan: 'giving a head start in life'.

Vision: a world where more opportunities reach those who need them.

Mission: to work with small groups and ideas towards building big dreams with potential to transform communities.

Goal: to provide early start-up opportunities for businesses and innovative ideas with the potential to uplift girls, women and their communities.

2.0 OBJECTIVES AND PROGRAMMING

The objective of the strategy is to take cognisance of the multifarious audience(s) Hadis interacts with, bearing in mind their particularities. In order to realise the ultimate objective of making Hadis a household name in Nigeria and indeed Africa on account of her positive projection via her communication policy, a Social Media Manager (SMM) and a Traditional

Media Manager (TMM) are needed – preferably part time employees in order to save cost

2.1 Objectives

Our high-level communications objectives are listed below.

- • To ensure effective and efficient communication both within and outside Hadis
- • To provide beneficiaries with clear and accurate information about the Foundation and its projects
- • To keep staff informed and engaged; feeling valued, involved and clear about how their work connects to the strategic priorities of Hadis and vice versa.
- • To increase recognition of Hadis among key audiences and support our wider strategies to enhance Hadis reputation.
- • To ensure a high level of awareness and accountability and to underpin a continued strong support among key stakeholders and the wider public

2.2 Benefits

We believe this communication plan brings many benefits including:

- a. Approach strengthens our reputation as a trustworthy foundation building a brand which staff, beneficiaries, partners and donors can relate to. This will help deliver strategic objectives.
- b. The quality of communications within an organisation is a key influencer on levels of staff engagement. In turn staff engagement levels influences quality of projects as well as productivity.
- c. Existing donors and partners will be reassured by well-articulated and publicized accounts of the quality and productivity of projects, beneficiaries satisfaction and the difference we are making in delivering our mandate.
- d. New donors will base part of their decision on whether to join or fund Hadis or not on the feelings and assurances they get from externally facing brand. Strong brands are not established by accident, and programme officers doing a great job on the front line is not always enough. Hadis knows from experience that when it comes to delivery, perception and reality aren't always aligned.
- e. The Foundation's brand is not the name or logo, it's what people say about Hadis and this can be influenced, but ultimately, it's the perception of others that defines it. To influence a positive brand Hadis needs:
- f. Engaging leaders across the organisation, visible internally and in local, regional and national networks with partners and other external stakeholders.
- g. A clear narrative on the Foundation's strategic direction and the unique selling points that will encourage people to work for and donate to Hadis.
- h. A satisfied, valued, healthy workforce
- i. Effective internal and external communications channels

2.3. What we do and how we do it

Hadis has since 2012 been connecting potential to opportunity through three key interrelated programming pathways namely;

- Foundational Programmes
- Community Safe Space
- Voice & Accountability

Foundational Programming

Under this programming head, Hadis offers educational opportunities from nursery to university for first degree level for young person's; women and men, who may otherwise not have the opportunity to start or complete school. It is premised on the logic that completing a course of schooling especially secondary school changes life's chances for the better.

Community safe spaces

Environment creates opportunity when it is adequate for the actualisation of potential. If it is not responsive enough, it could diminish opportunities or even be life threatening. The safe spaces programming enables convening and investments that address safety and security matters for women girls and their communities.

Voice and Accountability

From the feminist philosophy described in the earlier part of this RM, it follows logically that Hadis would lend itself to enabling voice for participation and inclusion and as a tool to demand accountability. It has done this in a variety of ways; enabling women's political organizing and supporting organisations that work with women, including women with disabilities.

2.4 Highlights of Overall Organisational Strategic Plan

Hadis Organisational strategic plan seeks to reflect the aspirations of the community which Hadis seeks to serve. It has benefitted immensely from the insight of the Hadis Board of Trustees and Advisory Board as well as the technical advice of partners. It is a working document which is reflective of the visioning of the Foundation for the next ten years. The Strategic plan will remain a living document which will guide the work of Hadis Foundation and will be subject to reviews as the need may arise.

The priority of Hadis Foundation is to ensure effective and efficient communication both within and outside Hadis. There are two basic elements of communication in Hadis Foundation – internal and external. Internal communication is between and among staff. It could also be between Management and the BOT and/or Advisory Board. External communication is engagement with stakeholders beyond the confines of Hadis, e.g. donors, development partners, goodwill ambassadors, beneficiaries, etc.

3.0 PRINCIPLES AND APPROACH TO HADIS COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

3.1 Visibility

The Communication strategy focuses on strengthening the brand identity of the Foundation, the core communications channels Hadis use to engage with key audiences and particularly internal communications. Effective internal communications has the potential to have a positive influence on not just staff engagement but also in how staff interact with external stakeholders. This strategy supports the objectives and priorities within individual strategies without looking to duplicate their content. The core strategies are:

- Strategic Action Plan
- Board Constitution /strategy
- Personnel and Ethical Policy
- Resource Mobilisation Strategy

3.2 Best practice principles for communications

We believe that effective communication should have the following elements

- a. Clear and accurate: The messaging should be simple, to the point and say what needs to be said
- b. Inclusive and meaningful: Messaging should show respect for the rights of all and be sensitive to the situation
- c. Targeted and tailored: messaging that is focused on a few types of audience is more effective even though a broad audience may still receive it
- d. Timely and honest: messaging that is prompt and has the facts is more effective and
- e. Value people: inclusivity is important because we must think about the lives of people and what the message means to them
- f. Provide follow-up: when people share their thought, affirm their agency by responding with feedback whether positive or negative it counts to give reports

3.3 Our approach to communications

The Hadis Foundation approach to communication is one

- Consistent with Hadis organisational values
- Linked to strategic priorities and business plan priorities
- Based on courtesy: Staff must show politeness in their attitude and behavior towards others.
- Mutual respect: Team members should accept individual strengths and seek to understand weaknesses.
- Judicious use of resources: for example telephone users should keep their conversations short in order to minimize distraction; in order to minimize communication cost, email should be used rather than calls.
- A belief that non-verbal communication is as important as verbal communication and Team members are to listen to the nuances of it .
- Built on and responsive to insight

3.4 Communication Platforms

The communication platforms currently used by Hadis are face to face meetings, email, telephone, Skype, WhatsApp etc. Through each of the platforms, Hadis endeavours to reach both the primary and secondary audiences. There is need to measure the frequency of such messaging.

- a. Written communication: for example, letters, memos, minutes, reports, news releases, emails, newsletters, Short Message Service(SMS) (text messaging), leaflets, posters, brochures, business cards, newspaper advertisements, signage and research reports.
- b. Spoken communication: for example, interviews, meetings, telephone communication, seminars, representation on groups and committees, radio advertisements, speeches, launches, talking to people generally
- c. Visual communication: for example, photographs, graphics, presentations, display stands, signage
- d. The media: for example, newspapers, magazines, internet and social media, DVD recordings, television and radio
- e. Symbolic gestures: for example, facial expressions, tone, silence and, very importantly, attitude.

3.5 Gaps in Channels

- a. Social media channels – to support recruitment and reputation building, Hadis will develop greater use of individual account from staff across the Foundation, encouraging and guiding people at all levels to have an active work related presence on Twitter and other channels
- b. Video based information – Hadis will benefit from developing simple low-cost video content to use for internal and external stakeholders. This offers more engaging content than traditional written statements / news updates.
- c. Regular bulletin for all external stakeholders – options need to be explored for bulletins to all external stakeholders on general news and developments.
- d. Marketing materials – linked to refreshing the Hadis brand we need to develop a core set of marketing / promotional materials which can be used by a range of services for events/campaigns with potential beneficiaries, partners, members and other external stakeholders.
- e. Thought leadership articles/events – a number of Board members are involved in national forums. Hadis could build on this to develop the Foundation's position as a thought leader in the civil society.

4.0 OUR AUDIENCE

4.1 Audience segmentation

We have three core categories of audiences

- a. Internal team: Board and Staff
- b. Beneficiaries; women, girls, and their communities and;
- c. External stakeholders: Partners, Donors and Media

4.2 Focal Audience (FA)

The primary focal audiences are donors, development partners, government and beneficiaries. The secondary focal audiences are those who influence the primary target audiences i.e. Hadis BOT, Advisory Board, Goodwill Ambassadors, management and staff. We envisage that as Hadis matures there may be yet unidentified potential tertiary audience!

4.3 Desired Action from Focal Audience

The primary FA members are expected to support the work of Hadis through contributions in cash and kind. Beneficiaries improve their lives and livelihood as a result of such support. The secondary FA is 'in-house' in Hadis will carry forward campaigns on how to measure the impact of the donations to beneficiaries through effective and efficient Monitoring and Evaluation and Learning (M&EL).

5.0 CODE OF ETHICS FOR THE BOARD & MANAGEMENT

When communicating with the primary Focal Audience (FA):

- a. The Administrator shall circulate minutes of meeting within one week of every meeting to BOT and Advisory Board.
- b. Financial reports shall be provided by the accountant as required at meetings.
- c. Information for economic opportunities e.g. loan, grant, training etc shall be circulated to

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- all BOT and Advisory Board members.
- d. Where BOT nominates for project support etc, the rationale for such shall be communicated to the Advisory Board.
 - e. Where Hadis organises platforms, the BOT, Advisory Board and the Team Lead are invited to participate in a fair and representative manner within available means.
 - f. All Goodwill Ambassadors (GAs) are encouraged through adequate notice to participate in designated meetings.
 - g. An annual conference with a theme relevant to the work of Hadis is to be held annually.
 - h. The Administrator shall keep a mailing list of all BOT/Advisory Board members and GAs, which shall be updated regularly.
 - i. Text messages and emails shall be the preferred mode of communication. For record purposes, hard copies of reports and letters may be produced and kept or dispatched as necessary.
 - j. A budget, as decided by the BOT shall be set aside for communication.

6.0 MESSAGING

- Article topics for Hadis's website should appeal to the various focal audiences (FAs) and be relevant to the Foundation's work.
- There should be daily and weekly themes to guide the communications officer in charge of social Media as regards messaging. The officer takes charge of Hadis 'showing' on Twitter, LinkedIn, Blog, Website, Instagram, Google+, Video conferences via skype, etc. The percentage of messages for each theme is clearly stated from time to time, depending on the current programmes being handled by Hadis. Visibility on social media could be made to generate income if adverts could be placed on Hadis website. The SMM should suggest competitive charges for such adverts.
- The Communications officer takes charge of Hadis content for TV, radio and newspapers. and keeps a calendar of key dates for every year for example;
 - Conference and retreat dates
 - International Women's Day
 - 16 days of Activism against Gender based violence
 - Human rights day
 - Anti corruption day
 - Rights of persons with disability day etc

6.1 Key Message

Different audiences will require different messages. To facilitate this, communications must deliver simple, explicit and easily understood messages. In communicating with staff, the focus will need to be on ensuring that they know what is expected of them and how the changes will impact on them; and ensuring that they are provided with relevant and timely information. It also needs to be recognised that people will not always absorb information completely at first hearing, and messages will need to be repeated where necessary – using different media and

messages where appropriate.

6.2 Campaigns

Hadis will aim to launch one relevant campaign yearly. The Resource Mobilisation committee will be actively involved in the activities to raise funds for campaigns.

7.0 BENCHMARKS FOR SUCCESS

- Intermediary benchmark: e.g. size of Twitter / Instagram following, email list, etc.
- Organisational objectives: e.g. total donations / grants / awards, number of awardees / mentees.
- Baseline: Social media presence, website traffic volume, total number of donors/amount donated (in cash and kind), total number of mentees/awardees.
- There should be intermediary goals set every three months. Such goal setting should draw heavily from projects being executed.
- End goals: In the next ten years, what would an effective and efficient communication policy deliver for Hadis? In the next ten years, to deliver a Hadis Foundation that is a household name on account of her positive presence in traditional and social media. Hadis in the next ten years should also be known by her 'works' i.e. the number of mentees/awardees and the verifiable and viable projects completed or being executed.
- A reference point: Hadis should become a veritable first choice of donors working in areas similar to Hadis. Government has a positive view of Hadis as a foremost partner in progress in the area of delivering positive dividends to women, girls, boys and other vulnerable groups. More importantly, Hadis should thrive on internally generated revenue (IGR), accruing from investments, consultancy, farming, etc.
- Website analytics should be embarked upon by the communications officer at least twice a year. The benchmarks for such analysis should be updated regularly.
- There should be Communication Strategy reviews at least once a year, which should assess the following:
 - a. Benchmarks met
 - b. Benchmarks that are elusive; to find out why
 - c. Strategies for boosting elusive benchmarks.
 - d. Biggest successes. Why?
 - e. Need to adjust and update Communication policy/plan?
 - f. The difficult questions while highlighting mistakes with a view to learning.

The Communication team (CT) will work closely with the M&EL team for effective and efficient cross-fertilisation of ideas and mutual reinforcement of the learning process. The M&E L team brings in assessment from the field and marries it with the CT's feedback from comments on social media as regards Hadis work. This synergy ensures that a realistic assessment of the public perception of Hadis is always kept in view.

7.1 Key Performance Indicators

To show progress against this specific strategy we need to track performance against indicators that show how good our key stakeholder groups think Hadis is at communicating.

For staff have a measure built into the annual staff survey:

- agreeing that communications between management and staff is effective?

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- staff recommending Hadis as a place to work
 - staff satisfied with projects implementation

For beneficiaries:

Endline survey to measure how well staff communicate with beneficiaries e.g. beneficiaries feeling they were treated with dignity and respect, involvement in activities etc.

7.2 Additional Measures of Success

A number of the priorities identified in this strategy have implementation milestones; delivery against which will be a key measure of success. Timings for these are set out in the workplan in appendix 1.

8.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Communication by everyone at Hadis impacts on the reputation and perception of the projects Hadis implements. Below is a summary of key responsibilities that different internal groups have in supporting the objectives of this strategy.

8.1 All Staff

- a. Keep all locally developed beneficiary information up-to-date and in line with Hadis branding and style guides; using the latest centrally provided content where available.
- b. Ensure all communications (verbal or written) with beneficiaries, external stakeholders and colleagues is produced and delivered to an excellent standard.
- c. Actively participate in the internal communications and staff engagement opportunities available to you.
- d. Highlight areas of concern to Administrator
- e. Make an effort to learn and speak the local language
- f. Make room for translation and use of sign language as much as possible in programme delivery

8.2 Communications Team

The following are the tasks of the communication team

- a. Provide expert advice and support on communications issues to projects across programmes areas.
- b. Promote best practice in communications to all parts of the Foundation and lead on identifying and adopting new tools/technologies to drive improvements.
- c. Manage production and delivery of core publications and events including the Annual Board Meeting and Annual Report.
- d. Manage the Hadis visual identity and ensure effective templates and guides are in place to support staff.
- e. Ensure effective channels and tools are in place for communications with all stakeholder groups with ongoing plans for improvements based on regular evaluation of quality.

8.3 Administrator and Team Lead

- a. Regularly review published information about projects and inform the communications team about any updates needed to service information on Hadis website, printed materials or other channels.
- b. Alert the communications team to relevant good practice and reputational risks that need to be promoted/managed with internal and external stakeholders.

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- c. Ensure effective systems are in place for two-way staff communications within programme areas including making sure information from teams is cascaded effectively.
 - d. Champion high-quality communications and engagement and lead by example; making the time needed every day for effective communications with internal and external stakeholders.
 - e. Oversee and performance manage the implementation of this strategy; approving any shifts in priorities needed during the life of the strategy.
 - f. Act as spokespersons for the Foundation on areas of responsibility; working with the communications team on all official statements/interviews to the media.

8.4 Board members

Champion high-quality communications and engagement and lead by example; making the time needed for effective communications with internal and external stakeholders.

Chair Board of Trustees/ Founder act as the Foundation's key spokesperson on significant issues.

9. CONCLUSION

Good communication is everyone's business. Successful organisations are good at communicating. Hadis is getting better at it; but aims to be outstanding. Communicating well helps to build a happy and engaged workforce, which drives quality and productivity, which leads to more satisfied beneficiaries, partners and donors. Delivering against the objectives and priorities in this strategy will make Hadis a better feminist organisation

Appendix 1: Communication strategy workplan

Appendix 1: Communication strategy workplan

Priority	Action	Timescale	Lead/Support	Audiences
1.	Support induction of communication team	January 2018	Team Lead	Internal
2.	Audit existing beneficiary information to identify outdated content and branding.	January 2018	Communications team (CT)	Internal and beneficiaries
3.	Media Database	March 2018	CT	All
4.	Review and update core sections of Hadis website.	January 2018	CT	All
5.	Implement new social media strategy focused on reputation building and supporting more staff to engage with social media for professional networking/development.	Ongoing	CT	All
6.	Budgeting	January 2018	CT	Internal
7.	Trainings	Ongoing	Team lead	Staff

Priority	Action	Timescale	Lead/Support	Audiences
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • report writing • media skills 			

Appendix 2: Social Media Strategy

	Twitter	Instagram	LinkedIn	Weekly Frequency	Lead
Monday				2	Programme
Tuesday				3	Communication
Wednesday				3	Programme
Thursday				2	Communication
Friday				1	Programme
Saturday				1	Communication







