

Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection



THE JESUIT CENTRE FOR THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY 2021

Plot 3813 Martin Mwamba Road

Olympia Park, P. O. Box 37774, 10101 Lusaka, Zambia

Tel: +260 211 290410, +260 954 755319+Fax: +260 211 290759

E-mail: media.information@jctr.org.zm / jctr.info@gmail.com

Website: www.jctr.org.zm

JCTR COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

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Part 1: General Information

Vision for Development

A just Zambian society guided by faith where everyone enjoys the fullness of life

Vision

A leading, prophetic well-resourced think tank that speaks and works for the poor and marginalized

Mission Statement

To enhance justice and equality for all, particularly the poor and marginalized through the promotion of Christian values, empowerment, care for the environment and provision of policy alternatives.

Introduction

The JCTR is a research, education, advocacy and consultancy team that promotes study and action on issues linking Christian faith and social justice. JCTR began in 1988 as a project of the Zambia-Malawi Province of the Society of Jesus (Jesuit Order). The social justice work of JCTR advocates for pro-poor policies aimed at promoting economic development and addressing poverty and inequality in our society. JCTR's communications strategy is designed to help JCTR to communicate effectively and meet core organizational objectives.

Mandate

This document is prepared to coordinate communication in support of the JCTR Programmes research, education, advocacy, consultancy and outreach activities. It is a proposed framework for enhanced coordination of communication efforts and implementation of JCTR goals and plans to fulfill the mission of "enhancing justice and equality for all, particularly the poor and marginalized through the promotion of Christian values, empowerment, care for the environment and provision of policy alternatives".

Part 2: Situation Analysis

The JCTR operates in Zambia – a country with high levels of poverty, illiteracy, poor communication infrastructure and many other challenges. Understanding the communication environment at any given time will be a cardinal task of the JCTR in the implementation of this strategy.

This document is prepared to serve as a guide for the JCTR staff, and collaborators of the JCTR including the national structures, regional and international bodies. It focuses on advocacy communication structures and activities to be implemented by the programmes of the JCTR with the aim of creating, sustaining and increasing awareness about social justice concerns from the national to the global level.

This strategy seeks to promote synergies and complementarities within the Centre and between the JCTR and other likeminded organizations as well as strategic and cooperating partners. It also aims to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of communication and advocacy activities undertaken.

Part 3: Objectives

The JCTR aims at wide interaction and communication with stakeholders, both government and non-governmental, as well as with the broader community in order to influence policy and decision making to impact positively on the lives of the people especially the poor and the marginalized. The strategy will help map out series of activities and programmes that not only help it engage with key stakeholders both internally and externally in an effective and streamlined way but also help reach the organization's core objectives.

3.1.1 Objectives of the Centre

- To create and increase awareness
- To mobilize people to positive action
- Advocate for policy change and action to improve the lives of the people especially the poor and the marginalized

3.2 Objectives of this Communication Strategy

- To have a clear outlined road map beyond an action plan that provides a strategic vision for communications over the long term.
- To increase JCTR's visibility among different stakeholders both at local and international levels by creating awareness of its mission and vision
- To support the activities of the JCTR programmes by ensuring that all activities are publicized and all information generated is widely distributed to stakeholders and the general public through the use of planned, positive and targeted communication
- To gain the support and buy-in of stakeholders by enabling them share in the Centre's vision on issues of social justice
- To encourage participation and collaboration with communities to help achieve just public policy that addresses the needs of especially the poor
- To make widely available the independent studies and analyses by the JCTR
- To provide a mechanism for seeking and acting on feedback

Part 4: Implementation

The following are various levels in the implementation of this communication strategy:

1. Local
2. National
3. Regional
4. Continental
5. Global

Each of the level's stated above has an audience specific and relevant to it as well as proposed activities adapted as necessary in order to elicit support and action. It is important to note that at each and every level mentioned above has key target groups which include the following:

- The media
- Individuals and households
- Employee representatives (unions and workplace representatives)
- Donor community
- Church leaders
- Civil Society Organizations
- Researchers and students
- Local and central government
- National and international community

JCTR's work involves the following:

- Researching - to inform understanding and positions in order to make recommendations that are realistic and achievable
- Advocating – for good policies that ensure justice and adequately respond to the needs of the poor
- Educating and sensitizing – to raise awareness about what social justice is and the concerns of the people and what action can be taken
- Consulting - to understand what people think about a particular action or decision

Part 5: Strategy

The following are the three elements of the JCTR strategy:

1. Using the media to reach wide audiences in providing information to the general public both within and outside Zambia to create awareness and critical understanding
2. Targeting key actors and stakeholders in advocating for policy change and action to improve the lives of the people
3. Reaching out to areas outside Lusaka and outside Zambia and mobilizing for positive action

5.1 Key Strategic Issues

Communicate to promote social justice and highlight social injustices to bring to the fore the needs of especially the poor, make policy recommendations and mobilize for positive action to address these identified injustices.

STRATEGIC ISSUE ONE: Communicate to Promote Critical Understanding

JCTR shall promote communication that facilitates the achievement of the Mission to foster equality and social justice for all. This involves sharing research reports and advocacy plans with key stakeholders and key actors as well as current and potential change makers.

STRATEGIC ISSUE TWO: Public Awareness

JCTR will seek to employ as many strategies as possible that will facilitate as much public awareness as possible. These may consist of one or more of the strategies indicated in 6 below. These may be employed individually or collectively depending on what is judged to have the most impact.

STRATEGIC ISSUE THREE: Media Relations

A productive relationship with key media (local and national) is to be maintained. This is by sending regular updates of the JCTR work and organizing media briefing programmes to update them on the areas of focus and approaches of the JCTR. This is in order to forge relations with individual journalists as well as institutions in order to ease follow-up.

Timely and coordinated response to media inquiries & key issues as they arise in the public domain is to be given to ensure adequate dissemination of key messages. Media communication is to be coordinated through the Information Officer in conjunction with the Programme staff by identifying specific issues and relevant expertise within the organization on the issues in question.

STRATEGIC ISSUE FOUR: Advocacy Communication for Policy Change

Given that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) critically affects the environment we work in, JCTR needs to deal with matters pertaining to information economy, the interaction of information and communication technologies and the availing of these technologies, to the staff, interns and other volunteers. Maximum use of these technologies is to be sought at all times in influencing policy and education for people-centered development as priority issues.

STRATEGIC ISSUE FIVE: Promote JCTR's Role in Zambia's Social Economic and Political Development

There is to be vigorous regular updating and communicating of information with the JCTR advocacy targets i.e. experts, collaborators, partners and interested people's list, and databases so as to ensure that key stakeholders are not left out. The Information Officer is to coordinate all JCTR publication and distribution.

STRATEGIC ISSUE SIX: Reach Information Deprived Groups

This is to ensure that JCTR continues to remain relevant to the service of the poor. Based on the strengths and capacity of the Centre the information needs of the people must be sought to be met. JCTR shall collectively ensure that the outreach teams and the communities they serve are kept abreast with the activities at the Centre, in the country, on the continent and on the globe, on issues of concern. This is to be done through timely sharing of information and all materials produced at the Centre, using the established structure of the outreach engagement.

STRATEGIC ISSUE SEVEN: Raise the Profile of the Centre

Efforts to communicate and advocate must always take into account the standing, activities, quality and relevance of JCTR. The values that guide the work such as simplicity and concern for the poor must always be considered when arriving at which mode of communication is to be used. This is in order to present a unified and consistent image of JCTR and possibly add to raising the profile of the Centre.

Part 6: Key Messages

JCTR Information/ Messages

At each particular time, it is important to ask relevant questions on what is to be communicated. What is it that you want the audience to know, think and do? Is the message designed to raise awareness, capture the interest of the target audience or is it meant to draw desire for action? The information and messages from the Centre are meant to educate, inspire critical understanding, popular positive action, and eventually lead to civic participation. It is therefore important for the Centre to endeavor producing honest, succinct, credible and cost-effective communications. The messages must be easily understandable, precise and should be tailored to the specific audience and event in a tone that is suitable and acceptable. By so doing, it will be easy to attract the audience to sit, listen and eventually buy into your idea thereby helping raise the profile of the Centre.

The work of JCTR is to advocate and sensitize therefore, messages are to be reiterated constantly/consistently.

Part 7: Communication Methods/Strategies

The best communication engages the emotions. Therefore in order to get JCTR messages across, a mix of communication methods and channels are to be considered in given situations to best communicate the issue at hand. It is however important to ask questions aimed at capturing the objectives of the Centre.

The methods and tools to use depend on the following factors:

- the level of engagement required
- the interest of the audience in the message
- how the target audience prefers to receive messages
- the technicality or complexity of the subject
- whether it is simply relaying information or there is a requirement for two-way communication, and
- careful consideration of the pros and cons of each of the methods as listed below

Media Releases: Media releases in both print and non-print media i.e. newspapers, radio and television based on interactions and relationships that exist between JCTR and different media partners. It should be clear from the onset that this relies so much on relationship that exists between two parties. Always bear in mind that it is possible for journalists to filter the message or ignore your message altogether by not running/published it. Media releases are good for reaching out to a wider network across the country as long as you have an updated media list (journalists/news editors) from across the nation.

Digital Media: We cannot ignore that fact that technological advancements are progressing at a fast rate and adoption, adaption and utilization of this technology in an effective way is of high benefit in reaching

out to a thousand audience within a short period of time. The website is one important channel to make available information to the audience. This is to be emphasized and promoted highly because it allows 24-hour 7-day access and people can browse to the depth that suits their interests. This can be very effective if promoted, managed and maintained properly (up to date information/messages). The Centre will share more precise and consistent information, short videos and catchy infographics to attract readers/followers via various channels/platforms such as the Centre's Facebook page, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube etc. It is important to bear mind that these are likely to have more foreign visitors than Zambians because of the technological/internet challenges the country currently faces.

Publications: The Centre will endeavor to communicate, raise awareness and educate its target audience by using different publications such as reports, brochures, policy briefs etc. to enable popular distribution for the duration of their shelf life. Therefore, publication dates must always be indicated. These are easy to distribute as long as the target audience is known. In addition to this, JCTR has a standing Resource Centre that is equipped with a lot of materials relevant to different audiences (students, researchers, politicians, civic leaders etc.). Capitalizing on technological advancement, the Centre through automating the resource Centre will make available all its publication digital via the online public access catalog (KOHA and Dspace for the repository). The platforms if well-advertised and utilized have the potential to capture the attention of a wider network that cannot physically visit the resource Centre. This is a unique way of selling the Centre's work and achievements across the globe.

Community Meetings: This is a good way to ensure two-way communication. Can be open or selective depending on the issue. It is cardinal to utilize the time by making useful presentations to the audience to convey the message. These meetings are also helpful and carry more weight when you capitalize on them by making use of leaders in politics, trade unions, government, industry associations, community leaders and artists to relay information or to collaborate. This often adds credibility and relevance to the messages and the Centre at large.

Public Displays: Such as Agricultural show, gallery walks, Civil Society Day among others where people can stop to talk, collect read materials and messages are also an effective way of reaching people that are not reached in other methods, because they tend to stop by randomly. The Centre should strive to participate in public displays as widely and possible even though time and resources may pose to be challenge. With the emergency of the pandemic, this is almost impossible to achieve due to restrictions with public gatherings.

Social Forums: These are helpful as they provide an opportunity for exchange of ideas, debate national issues affecting them, draw lines for action to influence policy change etc. JCTR will strive to communicate and interact with participants and make them understand why the Centre exists and plan for action to speak for the poor and marginalized.

Mail: mail is an important channel used to communicate to a specific audience. Both hardcopy and electronic mail will be sent to relevant authorities drawing attention to issues of concern or to affected publics or individuals refereeing to their specific needs and concerns.

Key to note that as we communicate using the various medium mentioned above, JCTR should strive to brand the messages. The set of words, designs, symbols or features should distinguish JCTR from other organizations. It is important to keep the colors, messaging style and fonts consistent so as to conform to the JCTR brand. Branding images, videos, posters, brochures, flyers, t-shirts, pop ups etc. has the potential to bring to light the existence of the Centre capturing its vision and mission. It is prudent to recognize that

all these channels have risks and therefore plans of mitigating them to achieve effective communication to the audience at any given time should always be considered.

Part 8: Advocacy Communication Materials

JCTR recognizes that advocacy communication requires specific materials to communicate the intended message to the masses. The Centre will put to good use posters, flyers, articles, briefing packages, pop ups, documentaries, reports, newsletters, etc.

The type of material required for the specific activity or campaign and who is best placed to produce such material is identified using the criteria stated above.

Certain groups require more detailed and technical information than others. JCTR however in given circumstances uses a single set of information materials for a range of audiences. This takes the form of press releases, research reports, *Policy Briefs*, pamphlets, brochures and posters, as well as TV and radio programmes for those with no time or opportunity to read printed material from the Centre.

Part 9: Strategic Target Audiences

9.1 INTERNAL (Within Zambia)

Media Groups

The media is a crucial partner for informing a wider general public and building mass public support. There is great importance of developing proactive relationships with journalists by sharing information with them in a timely manner.

The Centre will invest in building relationships with editors and journalists. One of the ways to establish this kind of relation is to arrange regular briefings with reporters and journalists, and media editors/managers. Constantly and consistently invite them for workshops and other activities on an on-going basis.

Outreach Structures (JCTR Outreach Programme)

Government has national structures, some at cabinet level, and some at the level of constituencies others in the communities. Civil Society Organizations and the church also have similar structures existing. These are key allies in the popularization of the work of JCTR at the national level.

It is crucial for the success of the Centre's advocacy communication efforts at the grassroots level such as that Zambian local languages be used in dissemination. E.g. translation of Information, Education and Communication materials into local languages if we are to promote an image of JCTR as the people's Centre. These efforts are aimed at reaching out as widely, simply and as close to local realities as possible.

Catholic Church Structures

The presence of the Catholic Church in almost all parts of Zambia is an advantage to JCTR. Our Catholic connection must help us to serve; Catholic groups, Catholic schools and learning institutions, and Catholic chaplaincy of learning institutions

Other Religious Groups

Religious leaders have access to and exercise considerable moral authority with large numbers of people with whom they could advocate for social justice and the right to development for all. Communicating with religious groups also has the advantage of raising awareness among some Congregations in donor countries who could also become advocates for Zambia and Africa in their respective countries.

Government Ministries and Departments

Parliamentary Committees

Civic and Professional Organizations

Civil society through, academia, NGOs, Professional organizations, advocacy and lobby groups and community based groups

Business Groups

Business people are a critical set in the civil society. While recognizing that attracting the support of these groups would require concrete actions beyond advocacy, efforts should be made to provide up-to-date relevant information and gain their attention.

Traditional Rulers

Community Leaders

Student Groups

Women Groups

Professional Associations/Groups

Market Women, Traders, Mothers etc.

Labor Movements/Associations

- Chambers of Commerce and business groups
- Professionals
- Politicians
- Technocrats
- Farmers
- Particular age groups such as youths and elders
- Educational leaders and administrators

9.2 EXTERNAL (Outside Zambia)

Cooperating Partners

Feedback from partners regarding their view on the progress or usefulness of the work of JCTR

International/ Intergovernmental Organizations

International Media

International media is not only a channel to convey our messages to the target audiences, but it also plays a major role as opinion molder.

In the past and even currently in many respects, major press groups in the West have contributed to Africa being known for its ills (poverty, disease, hunger, AIDS, wars, natural calamities, refugees, corruption, absence of law and order etc.). This strategy proposes using the same media to advocate for Africa's development by offering information and ideas that can showcase a more accurate picture of Africa.

Prominent Africans

These are a key group because there are several Africans holding leadership positions in the mainstream western media, international establishments etc.

In order to enable them to communicate these messages we must send them information and contact them on a regular basis as well as have briefings where possible

Africans/Zambians in the Diaspora

There is a growing group of well informed, influential, educated and well-to-do Africans based abroad especially in Europe and North America. This is a critical resource that can be used to add international voice and recognition of our work e.g. UK Zambians

Some have aspirations to return to the country and run for public office. It is therefore imperative that they are kept aware if the social justice concerns of the time.

African Academia and Intellectuals

Most people in this category have ways of influencing policy which we may not even be aware of. They act as high level consultants to people with authority in the governing process. Most have found themselves appointed to strategic positions in the government.

Part 10: Evaluating Success

At the end the day, it is important to conduct an evaluation to establish the extent to which the strategy has achieved the intended purpose. How will we know if we have succeeded and met our objectives? How are we going to evaluate our success, what performance indicators and evaluating measures will we use?

Some ways to monitor will include but not limited to;

- Putting website addresses and phone numbers on all materials then measuring requests for information, where they came from and establishing a database of inquiries for later tracking
- Asking callers where they got the number from (e.g. an advertisement or off a brochure)
- Putting a hit counter on the website to measure patterns of visits to the site, including who is visiting the site when and from where
- Assessing the growth of the mailing lists
- Assessing the number of social site visits per week/month, the level of engagement in terms of messages, comments, post shares and total number of people reached
- Recording media coverage on a customized tracking template
- Taking into account what type of materials are being downloaded

Part 11: Communications Plan

STAKEHOLDER/STAKEHOLDER GROUP	OBJECTIVES	KEY COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES	COMMUNICATION CHANNEL	MESSAGE CONTENT	Frequency	RESPONSIBILITY
Media groups	<p>To inform and educate wider general public about the vision and mission of the JCTR</p> <p>Disseminate information as widely as possible</p> <p>To create strong partnerships</p>	<p>Share JCTR Produced information</p> <p>Inform Media Houses on JCTR values and works</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meetings/engagements • Press briefings • Press statements • Comments on \current affairs • Radio • Television • Newspaper • Social media 	Dissemination of JCTR produce information	On-going	<p>Director</p> <p>Program Managers</p> <p>Program Officers</p> <p>M&I</p>
outreach	<p>Raise awareness on key policy issues</p> <p>Inform and educate the members about JCTR mandate</p>	<p>Prepare Information Pack.</p> <p>Organization JCTR display of produced works</p> <p>Work with PO in Organising TV and Radio</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community meetings • Social forum • Policy briefs • Reports • Posters • T-shirts • Fliers • Brochures • Radio 	<p>JCTR Values and works.</p> <p>Social and economic issues</p> <p>Awareness</p> <p>Capacity building</p> <p>Lobbying and advocacy</p>	On-going	Program Officers

Catholic groups/ Religious group/ CSOs/ FBOs	Raise money to fund JCTR activities Recruit volunteers to help/ support JCTR work	Prepare plan for use of produced information or data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Meetings • Reports • Policy briefs 	Unity of Voice with like-minded Institutions Build partnership/synergies Build advocacy and lobbying strategies		Program Managers Program officers M&I
Government ministries/Departments/ Parliamentary committees/Duty Bearers	To influence policy change Lobby/advocate for better policies Voice out on matters affecting ordinary citizens	Develop strategies for disseminating information Prepare infographics Advise on presentation of summary reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports • Meetings • Workshops • Submissions • Focus groups • Newspaper • TV 	Policy alternatives Lobby and advocacy	On-going	Director Program Managers Program Officers M&I
Civic and professional organizations		Prepare information packs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statements • Workshops • Reports • Meetings 	Unity of Voice with like-minded Institutions	On-going	Program Managers Program Officers M&I
Traditional rulers/ Community leaders	Community Awareness on community development	Prepare information packs	Workshops Trainings Engagement meetings	Community development	On-going	Programme Officers

Student groups	To inform and educate	Prepare information packs Connect social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social forums • Workshops • Policy briefs • Social media 	Social and economic issues Youth participation in governance	On-going	M&I Program Officers
Marketers/ Women groups/ Traders/ Mothers etc.	Raise awareness on nutrition	Prepare information packs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community meetings • Workshops • Posters 	Importance of consuming locally produced foods	On-going	Program Officers M&I
Labour movements/ Professional groups	Lobby and advocate for better livelihoods and wellbeing of members	Prepare information packs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seminars 		On-going	Director Program Managers

Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR)

JCTR Repository

<https://repository.jctr.org.zm>

JCTR internal policy

Access to Information

2021-05

JCTR's Communication Strategy 2021

Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection

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JCTR (2021). JCTR's Communication Strategy 2021: Lusaka, Zambia. Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR)

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