Aarhus Centres Communications Strategy

A handbook for effective communications for Centres around the OSCE Area

OSCE Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Introduction

This strategy will serve as a road map and toolkit to enable the Aarhus Centres to engage with key stakeholders and audiences through traditional media, digital channels, and in-person outreach. It outlines communications goals, key messages, target audiences and stakeholders, guidelines, content, brand and other relevant information needed for communicating the Centres' work. It aims to be a robust tool that enhances brand recognition but also helps the Centres increase credibility and engagement, enabling the Centres to contribute to achieving communications and strategic goals.

The UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (also known as the Aarhus Convention) was signed in 1998 in Aarhus, Denmark, and entered into the force in October 2001. The Convention grants the public rights regarding access to information, public participation and access to justice, in governmental decision-making processes on matters concerning the local, national and transboundary environment. There are at the moment 47 parties to the Convention, most of which represent the OSCE participating States.

The Aarhus Centres provide platforms to engage citizens, governments and the private sector in a dialogue on environmental challenges. To turn the Aarhus Convention's principles into concrete actions on the ground, the OSCE through its field operations and the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA), began establishing Aarhus Centres in 2002. The first Aarhus Centre was established in Yerevan, Armenia. Since then, working closely with host governments among its participating States and in close partnership with the UNECE Aarhus Convention Secretariat, the OSCE has been supporting the establishment, operation and networking of Aarhus Centres which now covers more than 50 Aarhus Centres in 15 countries in four regions (Central Asia, South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe, South Caucasus)

The Aarhus Centres' role is twofold: assist the governments in realizing the requirements of the Aarhus Convention and help the citizens in understanding and exercising their rights, as mandated by the Convention. The Aarhus Convention establishes a number of rights to the individuals and civil society organizations with regard to the environment. The Parties to the Convention are required to make the necessary provisions so that public authorities, at a national, regional or local level, will contribute to these rights to become effective.

The Aarhus Convention provides for:

Access to environmental information: The right of the citizens to receive environmental information that is held by public authorities

Public participation in environmental decision making: The right of the citizens to participate in preparing plans, programmes, policies, and legislation that may affect the environment

Access to justice:The right of the citizens to have access to review procedures when their rights with respect to access to information or public participation on environmental matters have been violated

The Aarhus Centres differ not only in geographic location and activities, but also in maturity, structure and independence. Some operate as NGOs, with or without financial support from government ministries, as part of state institutions, as projects, parts of academic institutions and other constellations. Therefore, their operational modalities and capabilities vary widely, as well as their financial status, projects and capacities. This strategy seeks to address the needs of a wide variety of Centres. This strategy is accompanied by a Brand Book and Visibility Plan.

Strategic Goals

This strategy and accompanying tools are essential in enabling the Aarhus Centres, through effective communications, to contribute to achieving the medium and long term goals of the Aarhus Centres. Of the goals outlined in the Aarhus Centre Strategy and Action Plan, communications efforts are envisioned to contribute to:

Mid-term goals:

- Advocate for public interest issues through effective and wide-reaching communications
- Establish a wide array of productive partnerships

Long-term goals:

- Increase visibility which will facilitate establishment of working relationships with other partners
- Contribute to financial self-sustainability of the Centres
- Recognized by the community for expertise in environmental democracy

Aarhus Centres Communications Goals

In order to contribute to achieving these strategic goals, the Aarhus Centres shall seek to achieve a number of communications goals.

- Communicate the role and mission of the Aarhus Centres and why they are well positioned in the field
- Increase Credibility of the Aarhus Centres
- Increase the Visibility of the Aarhus Centres
- Increase public awareness of environmental issues

Connect with and inspire youth to engage with the Aarhus Centres.

This relationship between the goals, capacity inputs, and strategic outcomes is further outlined in the flowchart below:
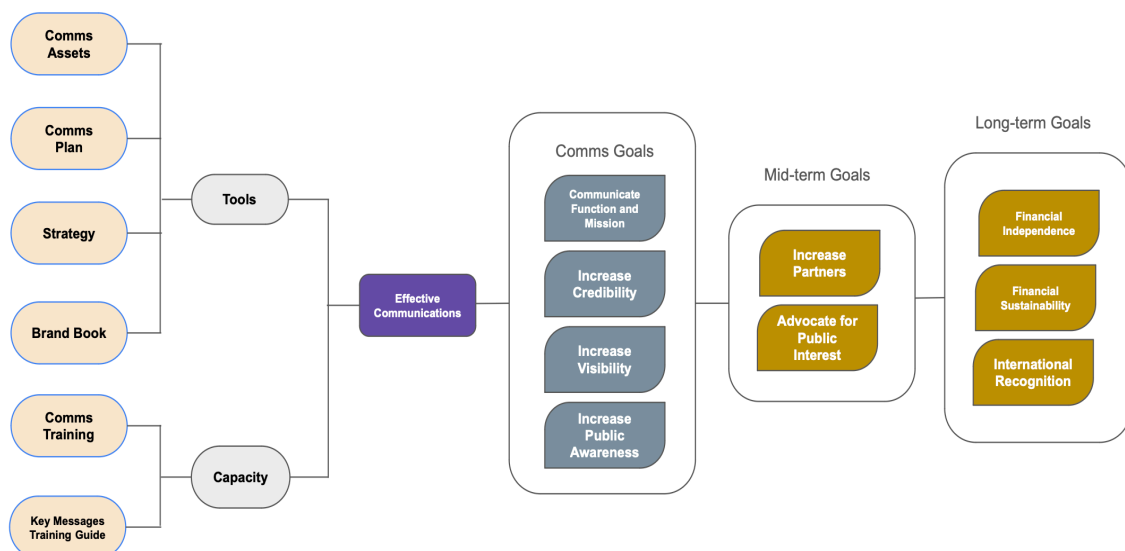
Theory of Change

If the Aarhus Centres are equipped with communications knowledge and tools that are applied effectively, then they can conduct effective communications efforts. If communications are effective, then the Centres will be able to increase their credibility, visibility, and contribute to facilitating partnerships. Through these partnerships and accompanying financial or functional support, the Centres can achieve financial sustainability.

Users of this strategy will be equipped to:

- Contribute to achieving the strategic communications goals of the Aarhus Centres
- Communicate about the goals and function of the Aarhus Centres
- Uphold Aarhus Centre branding and style
- Identify stakeholders and communicate with them effectively
- Identify key messages and deliver them to relevant audiences
- Make informed independent decisions
- Plan communications projects, initiatives and content

	Summary	Indicators	Means of Verification	Risks/Assumptions
Goal	Contribute to attracting implementing partners, donors, volunteers	Increased number of partners and donors	Annual report, survey or interview	Through increased partnerships and donors, Centers will have the resources to thrive.
Outcome	Communications efforts will contribute to raising the profile and knowledge of the Centres, increasing their credibility and increasing visibility	Increased interest and trust among partners, donors, and volunteers	Annual report, survey or interview	Partners are engaged, support work and and support financially or other resources.
Outputs	Uniform and targeted communications across key stakeholders and platforms	Aarhus Centres use communications materials and plan as applicable	Annual report, survey or interview	Communications efforts will be effective in delivering key messages and communications goals to the right audiences.
Activities	Build capacity through training and equip the Aarhus Centres with the tools and resources to communicate their work effectively including Strategy, Brand Book, Comms Plan and Materials	By EoY 2023: - Aarhus Centres Trained - Strategy - Brand Book - Comms Plan - Comms Assets	Deliverables accepted and signed off	The created communications strategy, brand book, communications plan and materials will be used effectively.

Target Audiences and Stakeholders

Stakeholder Groups

Through dialogue with the Aarhus Centres, several audiences and stakeholders have been identified. They are outlined below, and further elaborated in the following stakeholder matrix. These, however, represent stakeholder groups that should be further subdivided and these general descriptions should be replaced by specific stakeholders. Each stakeholder should be evaluated individually, and key messages crafted to attract their attention and address their specific questions and needs. The more refined and specific the description of the stakeholder, the more effective communication efforts.

Stakeholders of the Aarhus Centres can be divided into broad groups including:

- International organizations: including UNECE, UNDP, UN Environment Programme, UNDER and others
- Scientific and expert community, key universities and scientific research institutes: involved in the area of sustainable development and environmental governance
- Donors: entities who only contribute financially, working space, or in kind to the Centres without supporting in project implementation; they can include international financial institutions, environmental foundations and development funds potentially interested in establishing partnerships
- Government officials/ministries: can be currently supporting ministries and national authorities of the host country, or of participating States, in charge of implementing commitments under the Aarhus Convention, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other international treaties, as well as the key actors in the preparation of the Aarhus Convention National Implemen-

tation Reports
- Relevant NGOs: including organizations working in similar or cross-cutting issues who would be fruitful implementing partners
- Women's associations: engaging these associations can help increase gender mainstreaming and inclusivity
- Citizens/local communities: residents of the communities in which the Centres operate, in particular the urban and rural communities living in areas affected by environmental threats. Due to the nature of the Aarhus Convention, these stakeholders play an active role in awareness raising and training activities, as well as in knowledge sharing, networking, communication and participation in environmental democracy. These stakeholders are those who would be affected and protected by the work of the Centres
- OSCE Secretariat and OSCE Field Operations in Central Asia, South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and South Caucasus, which support the establishment and operation of the Aarhus Centres and are involved in the co-ordination of the activities and liaise with local stakeholders
- Youth: which is divided into three categories: children, young people and young adults. This is described in further detail in the section on communicating with youth.
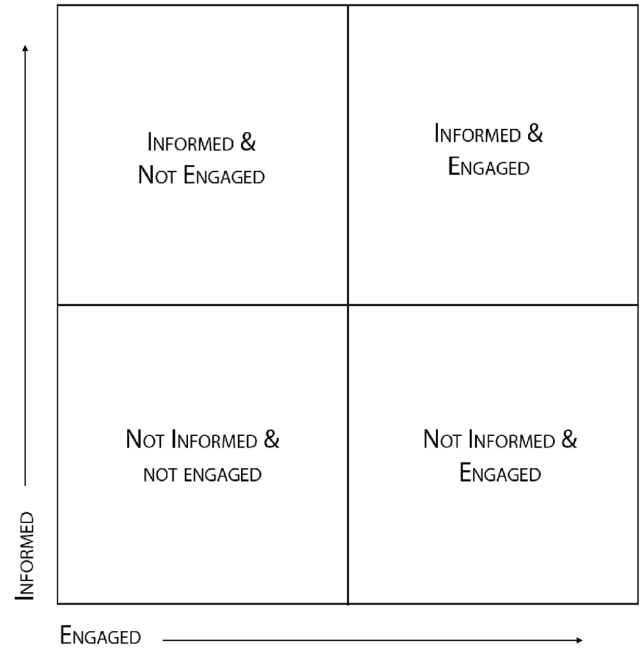
Stakeholder Matrix

Below is the stakeholder matrix for the common stakeholders among the Aarhus Centres. This will help guide communications planning and messaging at the macro level and will serve as the basis for each Centre to work from when determining stakeholders and how to communicate with them.

Stakeholder Matrix

Stakeholder	Key Messages	Comms goal	Channels	Content
International Organizations	K1: Partnerships and unique offering K2: Engaging civil society and citizenry K3: Youth engagement at different levels	- Communicate the role and mission of the Aarhus Centres and why they are well positioned in the field - Increase Credibility of the Aarhus Centres - Increase the Visibility of the Aarhus Centres	- In-person meetings and traditional outreach - conferences - organizational website - email - Social Media - Traditional Media	- Handouts & brochures - PPT presentation - organizational website - email Newsletter - SM posts on Centre's work, goals and relevant themes - Op-eds & guest articles - Press conferences and meetings
Scientific and Expert Community, Universities, Institutes	K1: Unique offering, need for scientific support & research			
Donors	K1: Project diversity and scope, ongoing projects K2: Civil society			
Government Ministries	K1: Unique offering K2: Engaging civil society and citizenry			
Relevant NGOs	K1: Project diversity and scope, unique offering			
Women's Associations	K1: Project diversity and scope focusing on projects engaging and supporting women K2: Engaging women as key partners			
Citizens/Local Communities	K2: Role of civil society as key partner	- Increase public awareness of environmental issues - Increase the Visibility of the Aarhus Centres	- Traditional media - social media - outreach events	- Handout/brochure - PPT presentation - organizational website - email Newsletter - social media - Op-eds - Press conferences and meetings
OSCE Secretariat and OSCE Field Operations	N/A	- Increase visibility of Aarhus Centres	- Reporting - regular meetings	- PPT presentation - Annual Reports
Youth (Children)	K2: Citizens' right to information K3: Volunteer opportunities	- Increase youth participation in Aarhus Centre activities - Increase public awareness of environmental issues - Increase the Visibility of the Aarhus Centres	- Presentations/outreach events	- children-centered presentation
Youth (13-18)	K2: Citizens' right to information K3: Volunteer opportunities		- Presentations/outreach events	- youth-centered presentation & materials - social media
Youth (18-30)	K2: Citizens' right to information K3: Volunteer opportunities, career enhancement opportunities		- University and career outreach events	- youth-centered presentation & materials - social media

Stakeholder Awareness

A stakeholder map helps identify a stakeholder's level of awareness and how they are to be engaged. All currently engaged and future stakeholders will lie somewhere on this plot, which defines their level of awareness and engagement. For example, a funding international organization may not be aware of the Centre, but will be well informed about environmental issues in the locality. Therefore, it would be useful to inform them of the work and role of the Aarhus Centre, focusing specifically on common focus areas and goals. Alternatively, residents of a neighborhood in your locality, may not at all be aware of the public works project, the environmental impact, their platforms, or that the Aarhus Centre is in place to support them. This would necessitate a different approach and key messages than the former example.

INFORMED & NOT ENGAGED	INFORMED & ENGAGED
NOT INFORMED & NOT ENGAGED	NOT INFORMED & ENGAGED

INFORMED (vertical axis)

ENGAGED (horizontal axis)

Key Messages

Key messages are the cornerstone of effective communications, providing a clear and consistent framework for conveying information and ideas. They distill complex concepts into concise, memorable points, making it easier for audiences to grasp and remember the core message. Consistency in messaging across different communication channels helps build a strong and recognizable brand identity. Key messages also ensure that all stakeholders are on the same page, fostering alignment and understanding. Moreover, they enhance the persuasiveness of communication, as well-crafted messages resonate with the values and emotions of the target audience, leading to more impactful and persuasive communication efforts.

Aarhus Centre Key Messages

Below are a few basic key messages that guide all communications of the Aarhus Centres. All messaging from the Centres should align with the below key messages.

K1) Transparency, Participation, and Environmental Justice: The Aarhus Centre stands as a beacon for transparency, participation, and environmental justice. By championing the principles of the Aarhus Convention, through our multifaceted approach of raising awareness, disseminating accurate environmental information, and aiding citizens in asserting their rights. With our diverse projects across South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, we contribute to the creation of a society where every individual has the knowledge and tools to actively participate in environmental decision-making processes.

K2) The Environment, and Your Right to Knowledge: We believe that every citizen has the right to know about the state of their environment. Our commitment is to bridge the gap between information and individuals, ensuring that you are well-informed about environmental issues that matter. By sharing insights, research, and updates, we empower you to be a proactive force in safeguarding our shared environment.

K3) Youth for Change - Volunteer with Purpose: We are calling on you to be a driving force in environmental action. Join our volunteer community and become an advocate for positive change. Your passion, energy, and ideas can shape a sustainable future. Together, let's amplify the impact of our collective efforts and make a lasting difference for the environment.

Forming Key Messages

When creating your key message, the following needs to be considered about the stakeholder:

- What do you want to change?
- What is your goal as an organization?
- What do you want your stakeholder to do/change?
- What is the most important information that they need to know?
- What can they uniquely provide?
- What can you offer them?
- What keywords can you include?

Key messages will differ from stakeholder to stakeholder, between projects, and among the different Aarhus Centres. Key messages should be reassessed as often as possible to ensure their relevance and to adapt to changing circumstances and needs.

1. Define Your Purpose: Clearly outline the purpose of your communication. In other words, what is your communications goal?

2. Understand Your Audience: Identify and understand your target stakeholder/audience. What does the Aarhus Centre offer them that is most relevant to their objectives?

3. Identify Key Points: Distill your main ideas into a few key points. What are the critical pieces of information or arguments that support your purpose? Be concise and focused.

4. Clarity is Key: Use simple language and avoid jargon. The key message should be as brief as possible while including the information specified above.

5. Consistency Across Platforms: Ensure consistency in messaging across different communication channels. Whether it's social media, press releases, or presentations, your key messages should remain cohesive.

6. Tailor for Different Audiences: If the message needs to reach diverse groups, it must be tailored to different audiences. It may even contain the same information for different audience groups, but will need to be delivered to cater to diverse demographics.

Communications Guidelines

General Guidelines

Be concise: Use as few words as possible. This applies to all types of communications, especially to reports and presentations.

Be optimistic: It is easier to hold the attention of readers and audience members through positive messaging. This does not mean to obscure or omit negative information, rather, to focus on solutions rather than problems. In our communications environment, cutting through the negative messages is important for achieving the goals of your Centre, but also to distinguish your accomplishments and goals.

Focus on successes: This does not only mean successes of your Centre, but also in what can be achieved.

Clarity is key: Clarity is important in all communications. Avoid the use of jargon, opting instead for more widely understood terminology. It is important to know the distinction between the language used in formal reporting documentation and how to communicate the work of your Centre to a lay public.

Tailor to your audience: Be considerate of the relevant information for the audience or segment. Questions to consider could be, "Does this audience need to know anything more specific?", "What is the education level of this audience", "Is there something that could be more important to them?"

Communicating with Youth

A key part of the Aarhus Centre communications strategy is increasing youth engagement. For our purposes, there are three segments of young people that we need to reach: children for community outreach and environmental projects in schools etc., volunteers for project implementation (13-25), and volunteers for administrative and functional support in the Centres (18-30). These segments overlap in many ways, but have different selling points and end goals.

Children are also an audience group, reached through school engagement programmes. They are informed about environmental issues and engaged in environmental activities.

The group 13-18 is non-expert, all-hands-on-deck support who can be engaged to help implement environmental projects. They are likely directly affected by environmental degradation and mismanagement, and also have the least barriers for entry into engagement. They can be called on for one-off initiatives, and have the least amount of commitment, but with the most immediate effect.

The oldest group are youth experts who are students, recent graduates, and young professionals who can offer their expertise in supporting the work of the Centres in a number of ways including administrative, functional, and scientifically. The barrier to entry is much higher, as they will be offering highly sought-after skills, potentially for free. They need to be engaged and shown that their work makes a difference. They can also be the most disillusioned, as they are highly trained and educated, but may be lacking optimism or passion for environmental projects.

The following guidelines will help engage these youth segments:

Define Your Goals: What do you want your audience to do? Think critically about the action you want them to take and what category your initiative falls into. For our purposes, we want them to join our organization. We need to show them what the benefits are, and why our initiative is important.

Define Your Audience: To which segment do they belong to?

Appeal to their Values: Young people are environmentally conscious, yet, disillusioned because of the seemingly bleak outlook for the environment and climate goals. It is important to appeal to hope, speaking optimistically about new ideas.

Be Authentic and Transparent: Be transparent about your values, mission, and corporate culture. Avoid sounding too formal or overly promotional.

Utilize Visual Content: Use images, videos, and infographics to convey your messages. Ensure your content is visually appealing and shareable.

Embrace Social Media Platforms: Consider using social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter. Tailor your content to fit each platform's style and audience.

Create Engaging Content: Develop content that is relatable, entertaining, and informative. Incorporate humor, storytelling, and trending topics to capture attention.

Interactive Campaigns: Create interactive campaigns, challenges, or contests that encourage user participation. Engagement is key to maintaining interest and building a community around your brand.

Incorporate Influencers: Partner with influencers who resonate with your target audience. Influencers can help amplify your message and add credibility to your brand.

Emphasize Social Responsibility: Demonstrate your corporate social responsibility initiatives. Young people often support brands that align with their values and contribute to social or environmental causes.

Use Conversational Language: Communicate in a language that resonates with young people. Avoid jargon and use a conversational tone to connect with your audience on a personal level.

Responsive Customer Service: Provide prompt and personalized customer service on social media platforms. Respond to comments, messages, and mentions in a timely and helpful manner.

Mobile Optimization: Ensure that your content is mobile-friendly, as many young people access social media primarily through mobile devices.

Measure and Adapt: Use analytics to measure the performance of your campaigns. Analyze engagement metrics, feedback, and user demographics to refine your strategy continually.

Gender-sensitive Communications

Gender-sensitive communication is a crucial aspect of effective and inclusive dialogue that advances gender equality by recognizing and respecting diverse gender perspectives. In the realm of communication, being gender-sensitive involves using language and messaging that avoids reinforcing stereotypes and discrimination. It aims to foster an environment where all individuals feel acknowledged and valued.

One fundamental principle of gender-sensitive communication is to be aware of and challenge gender stereotypes. Furthermore, gender-sensitive communication emphasizes the importance of inclusive language. This means using terms and expressions that encompass the experiences of all members of society. For instance, opting for gender-neutral language when addressing a mixed audience or using "they" as a singular pronoun can contribute to a more inclusive discourse.

Understanding the power dynamics at play in communication is also integral to gender sen-

sitivity. Recognizing that certain language constructs can reinforce existing power imbalances is crucial. A gender-sensitive approach involves actively working to dismantle these structures, giving equal voice and representation to all individuals.

Some examples of gender-sensitive communication include:

Using Gender-Neutral Pronouns: When addressing a mixed-gender group, use gender-neutral pronouns like "they" or "their" instead of defaulting to "he" or "him." Example: "Managers are responsible for ensuring that their teams take part in regular training courses" instead of "Every manager is responsible for ensuring that his team takes part in regular training courses."

Diverse Visual Representations: In marketing materials, advertisements, or any visual content, include a diverse representation of people. Showcasing different individuals in various roles helps break stereotypes and fosters inclusivity.

Avoiding Stereotypes in Educational Materials: Educational materials should steer clear of reinforcing traditional gender stereotypes. For example, textbooks and learning resources should depict a wide range of career choices for all members of society.

Equal Opportunities and Recognition: Ensure that communication within an organization reflects a commitment to providing equal opportunities for career growth. Acknowledge achievements and contributions without gender bias, fostering a culture of recognition and appreciation.

Acknowledging Intersectionality: Recognize and address the intersectionality of gender with other aspects of identity, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, birth or other status, in communication to ensure a more nuanced and inclusive understanding.

Disaggregate data to provide a fuller picture. For example: "The workshop was attended by 10 women and 5 men" instead of "The work-shop included 15 participants."

Be specific when relevant. For example: "Priority issues for the Economic Empowerment Plan include improving recycling facilities in urban areas, developing eco-tourism and engaging women in capacity-building in the areas of marketing and sales" instead of "Priority issues for the Economic Empowerment Plan include improving recycling facilities in urban areas, developing eco-tourism, and gender equality."

Effective Stakeholder Presentations

Presentations are a key tool for outreach with stakeholder groups who are a captive audience, e.g. at a meeting, conference or university lecture. Presentation decks are a great medium for informing stakeholders through presentation of visual elements, graphics, small and digestible bits of information, and visually friendly text. Below are some guidelines and best practices for effective presentations.

Keep it Simple and Visual:
- Limit the amount of text on each slide. Use bullet points or brief phrases to convey key ideas rather than full sentences. It is better to have more slides with less info per slide, than few very information-dense slides. Your audience will either read your slides or listen to you, but not both at the same time.
- Incorporate visuals like images, graphs, and charts to enhance understanding and engagement.
- Ensure that the overall design is clean and that there is breathing room (blank space) on each slide so that audience members are not overwhelmed with too much information at once.

Use a Clear Structure:
- It is helpful to have an outline at the beginning so that viewers know what to expect and that you yourself can guide them. If it is a lecture, include learning objectives.
- Use headings and subheadings to guide your audience through different sections of your presentation.

- Number your slides if it helps to provide a sense of progression and for ease of reference.
- A summary and the end of each section or a preview before can be helpful.

Engage Your Audience:
- Foster interaction by including questions, polls, or discussion points throughout your presentation.
- Invite questions at appropriate intervals and be prepared to address them, or hold space at the end of the presentation for a dialogue.

Practice and Rehearse:
- Familiarize yourself with the content to reduce reliance on your slides. Be prepared to speak about the topic with supplementary information not shown on the slides.
- Practice your pacing to ensure that you stay within the allotted time and maintain a comfortable speed for your audience.
- Be respectful of time limits.

Know Your Audience:
- Tailor your content and language to your audience's level of understanding and interest.
- Anticipate potential questions or concerns your audience may have and address them in your presentation.
- Be mindful of cultural and demographic differences that may impact how your information is received.

Below are examples of common presentation mistakes:

Too much text

Welcome to NGO X, a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering communities and fostering positive change. Founded in 2010 by visionary leaders committed to making a lasting impact, NGO X has grown to become a beacon of hope and progress. Welcome to NGO X, a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering communities and fostering positive change. Founded in 2010 by visionary leaders committed to making a lasting impact, NGO X has grown to become a beacon of hope and progress.

Mission
Our mission at NGO X is to uplift and transform communities through sustainable development initiatives. We strive to address pressing social, economic, and environmental challenges by implementing innovative solutions that create lasting positive change.

Origin
NGO X was born out of a collective desire to address the root causes of inequality and poverty. Recognizing the power of community-driven efforts, our founders came together with the vision of creating an organization that would serve as a catalyst for transformative change.

Accomplishments
Over the past decade, NGO X has achieved significant milestones in pursuit of its mission. Some key accomplishments include:
1. **Education Empowerment:** Established and supported schools in underserved areas, providing quality education to thousands of children.
2. **Healthcare Initiatives:** Implemented healthcare programs, reaching remote communities with medical services and awareness campaigns.
3. **Economic Development:** Facilitated microfinance programs and vocational training, empowering individuals to build sustainable livelihoods.
4. **Environmental Sustainability:** Launched initiatives promoting eco-friendly practices and conservation efforts to protect natural resources.

Impact
NGO X's impact extends beyond numbers; it is reflected in the transformed lives of individuals and the strengthened fabric of communities. We measure success not just in projects completed, but in the resilience and self-sufficiency of the communities we serve.
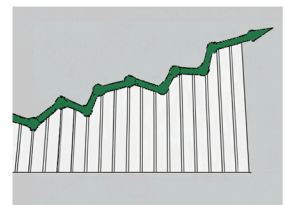
Too much text with a graph

Introduction:
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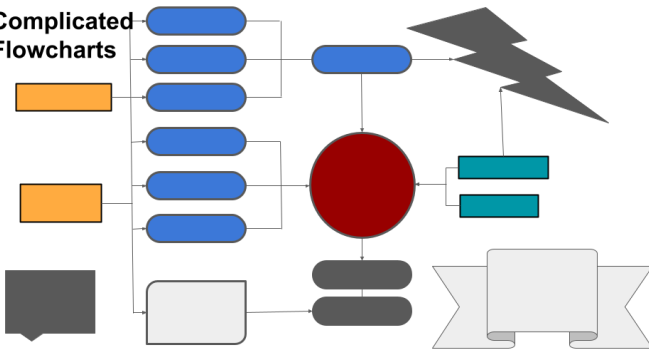NGO X was born out of a collective desire to address the root causes of inequality and poverty. Recognizing the power of community-driven efforts, our founders came together with the vision of creating an organization that would serve as a catalyst for transformative change.
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Complicated Flowcharts

Too many Images

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Text On Pictures

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Too many bullet points/too long

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Artificial Intelligence Best Practices

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Large Language Models can be powerful tools for content creation. They can generate responses by predicting and completing text based on the input, or prompts. Trained on diverse Internet text, they aim to understand context and provide relevant and coherent information or assistance. Generative AI is a dynamic tool that can amplify your Centre's online presence.

AI serves as an invaluable tool for ideation, inspiring creative content through trend analysis and topic exploration. Its multilingual capabilities cater to global audiences, while real-time engagement features, such as automated responses, ensure continuous interaction.

Performance is best in English, but can also work very well in Russian. Posts will need to be edited, and can contain incorrect information. Therefore, it is just to be used as a basis for posts. It can generate good ideas from which to work with. Experiment with different prompts and instructions until you get the desired result.

1. Define Your Purpose: Clearly, outline the purpose of your social media post. Are you raising awareness, sharing updates, or encouraging action?

2. Crafting a Prompt: Begin with a clear and concise prompt. Specify the tone, style, and any specific information you want to include. For example:

"Compose a heartfelt social media post to promote our upcoming charity event. Encourage followers to participate and donate."

3. Setting the Tone: Specify the tone you want in your post. Whether it's formal, casual, inspiring, or urgent, guide ChatGPT accordingly.

4. Adding Emojis: To add emojis, you can include specific instructions like:

"Add a smiley emoji at the end of the post to convey warmth and gratitude."

5. Editing the Output: Review the generated response and make edits as needed. You can refine sentences, adjust the tone, or add more details.

6. Incorporating Hashtags: If applicable, guide ChatGPT to include relevant hashtags:

"Include the hashtags #CharityEvent #NGOCommunity #GiveBack in the post."

7. Call to Action: Clearly state the desired action from your audience. For example:

"End the post with a strong call to action, encouraging followers to share the post and tag friends who might be interested."

8. Multiple Versions: Generate multiple versions of the post to have options. This can be especially useful if you're unsure about the tone or want to A/B test.

9. Engage the Community: Encourage the model to engage with the community by asking questions or prompting discussion.

10. Check for Accessibility: Ensure your post is accessible. If you're sharing important information, make sure it's clear and concise.

Example Prompt:

"Compose an informative and empathetic social media post to update our community about the impact of recent donations. Include a call to action for continued support. Add emojis to convey gratitude and positivity."

Brand Guidelines

This document outlines the key elements and guidelines of the Aarhus Centre brand in order to maintain a consistent and cohesive brand identity across communication channels and touchpoints. It is a reference tool for creating Aarhus branded materials, ensuring that the brand is represented accurately and effectively. Many parts of this document are borrowed or adapted from the OSCE brand guidelines where applicable to meet the needs of the various Aarhus Centres.

Logo

This section specifies rules and guidelines for using the Aarhus Centre logo. Consistency with use of the logo is essential as it fosters instant recognition, and helps to build trust and show professionalism, thus enhancing credibility. This helps to streamline marketing efforts and brand presence while unifying under a cohesive brand identity. Individual Centers are allowed to design their own logos if desired, however, when using the original brand logo, the below guidelines must be adhered to.

- Do not modify the logo. When using the logo, preserve the original colors and proportions.
- The logo should stand alone when using multiple elements such as other logos or graphics.
- The logo should be placed on a white background, but when this is not possible, use the logo version with padding.

- The CMYK version of the logo is used for print purposes only whereas the RGB logo is meant for digital. They are not interchangeable due to the different color space on screens vs print.
- Alway provide a margin around the logo. Do not place objects within the logo's rectangular boundaries.

- Do not place graphic elements on top of or underneath the logo.
- Do not distort the logo.

Color Palette

When creating communications materials, the brand identity is maintained through using the brand colors. They help to distinguish the work as part of an Aarhus project, leveraging the familiarity of the logo and the colors.

The colors are based on the logo. Be mindful of the differences between RGB (digital) and CMYK (for print).

Hex: 04079
RGB: 0, 64, 121
CMYK: 100, 83, 27, 12

Hex: 0081c3
RGB: 0, 129, 195
CMYK: 84, 41, 1, 0

Hex: a2c617
RGB: 162, 198, 23
CMYK: 42, 3, 100, 0

Typography

Typography can be somewhat flexible, as different typefaces work better with different languages. However, Open Sans, the standard font for the OSCE, is an open-source font and is available in Latin and Cyrilic alphabets. This font is also web safe, and therefore recommended for external communications.

Other Resources

Digital Assets:
* Envato
* Pexels

Stock Images:
* Getty Images
* IStock
* Shutterstock
* Unsplash

Graphics:
* Freepik
* Myfonts

AI Resources:
* OpenAI
* Midjourney
* Google Gemini

Cover Photo by Marina Zvada (Pexels)
Strategy and layout by Kaleb Warnock

Outreach and Communications Plan Aarhus Centres 2024

Outreach Plan				
Comms Activity	**Comms Goal**	**Channel**	**Content**	**Timeline**
In-Person Meetings & Traditional Outreach	CG1, CG2, CG3	Stakeholder Presentation	Standardized slide deck (?) - focusing on achievements of Centre - tailored to audience and stakeholder matrix - Call to Action based on collaboration goals	Ongoing
	CG1, CG2, CG3	Handouts & Brochures	Factsheets based on the Centre's activities (?)	Updated yearly / Quarterly
	N/A	Annual/Quarterly Reports	Regular Reports - Yearly/Quarterly/monthly - Centre vitals, accomplishments etc. - Adaptable for donors, OSCE, etc.	Updated Yearly / Quarterly / Monthly
Online outreach	CG1, CG2, CG3, CG4, CG5	Organizational Website	News items, press releases, blog posts - Regular updates, quarterly or monthly depending on project(s) cycle(s) - Blog/expert posts - Driven in part by social media posts	Weekly / Monthly / Daily, throughout project cycle
		Newsletter	- Regular updates on projects - Drives content to organizational website	Monthly, after milestones
Conferences	CG1, CG2, CG3	Stakeholder Presentation	Standardized slide deck - Focusing on areas of collaboration - Remove unneeded modules	Ongoing
Traditional Media	CG1, CG2, CG3, CG4, CG5	- In-person meetings - Interviews	Expert Interviews - Opinion pieces	As often as possible, whenever there is a

		- Press conferences	- Commentary Press - Press releases - Press meetings - Press conferences	major milestone, or external event

Social Media Plan			
Date	**Post/Event**	**Goal/Key Message**	**Content**
Evergreen	What is an Aarhus Centre?	CG1	Aarhus Centres provide platforms to engage citizens, governments and the private sector to dialogue on environmental issues. We turn Aarhus Convention's principles into concrete action in more than 40 Centres in Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Learn more about our work (LINK)
Evergreen	What does our Centre do?	CG1, K1	Our mission is simple: we're here to spread the word about the environment, share information, and help the public stand up for their rights. Through our projects, our Centre works towards a society where everyone has the know-how and tools to get involved in decisions about the environment. 🌍🌿 Learn more about our work (LINK) (or mention specific ongoing project)
Evergreen	Engaging Citizens	CG4, K2	We believe that every citizen has the right to know what is going on in public works and private industry, so we work in our communities to ensure that people are well-informed about environmental issues that matter. By sharing insights, research, and reporting, we empower the public to be a proactive force in safeguarding our shared environment. 🌳🏞️ Learn more about our work and how you can get involved (LINK)
Evergreen	What is the Aarhus Convention?	CG1	Our mission is to uphold the Aarhus Convention, a pivotal agreement established in 1998 to empower the public on environmental issues. It focuses on essential rights regarding information access, participation in decision-making processes, and the pursuit of justice, specifically concerning environmental matters at local, national, and transboundary levels. 🤝 Learn more about the Convention and why it matters (LINK)

11 February	International Day of Women and Girls in Science	CG1, CG2, CG3	On International Day of Women and Girls in Science, we celebrate women's contributions that are key to learning more about our environment and how it can be protected. Learn more about how we are increasing women's participation in environmental protection 👩‍🔬👩🏻‍💻#womeninscience (LINK to relevant project or website)
March	Quarter 1 Update	CG2, CG3	*It is good practice to give short updates on projects or the organization regularly and when able. Quarterly is a good rhythm to start with. However, if there is nothing to report, there is nothing to report.*
21 March	International Day of Forests	CG3, CG4	🌳 On International Day of Forests, we reflect on the important role of forests as a natural resource, complex ecosystem and essential part of cleaning the air we breathe. #IntlForestDay (highlight related project)(LINK)
22 March	World Water Day	CG3, CG4	From sustaining ecosystems to fostering community well-being, water plays a crucial role in our lives, yet, it is a vulnerable resource that needs our protection. At the Aarhus Centres, we work to ensure that our shared resources are protected for everyone. #worldwaterday (mention relevant project)(LINK)
22 April	Earth day	CG3, CG4	On Earth Day, we celebrate the beauty of our planet, but must also recognize the importance of preserving it for future generations. That is why we work to unite the public, government and private sector to tackle environmental challenges to protect it. #earthday (highlight relevant project, can add CTA if looking for volunteers) (LINK)
22 May	International Day for Biological Diversity	CG3, CG4	Happy International Day for Biological Diversity! Biological diversity enables the processes that allow life to survive on our planet. However, if human intervention is not observed and controlled, it can hurt or destroy delicate ecosystems. This means research and co-operation to protect the environment is essential, which is why we work to implement the Aarhus Convention. Learn more about the Convention:
June	Quarterly Update	CG2, CG3	*It is good practice to give short updates on projects or the organization regularly. Quarterly is a good rhythm to start with. Has there been any development from the project shared in Q1? It would be interesting for your followers to see some development to a project you have already*

			introduced them to. You can also think more generally about your Centre and what is developing.
5 June	World Environment Day	CG3, CG4	On this world environment day we celebrate the wonders of nature and work collectively to protect the planet and ensure a sustainable future. #environmentday (this is an opportunity to promote a community-based project focusing on community engagement, or whatever activity your Centre is doing this day)
15 August	International Youth Day	CG4	Are you looking to get involved in local projects to protect the environment in your neighborhood? As an Aarhus Centre, we value the energy and contributions of young people while offering volunteering opportunities (in our team, or in a project) where you can use your skills and learn what it is like to protect the environment. #InternationalYouthDay Learn more about how you can get involved.
September	Quarterly Update	CG2, CG3	*It is good practice to give short updates on projects or the organization regularly. Quarterly is a good rhythm to start with. Has there been any development from the project shared in Q2? It would be interesting for your followers to see some development to a project you have already introduced them to. You can also think more generally about your Centre and what is developing.*
7 September	International Day of Clean Air for blue skies	CG3, CG4	Cross-sector collaboration is key in ensuring that we have clean air and blue skies. Learn more about our important work to ensure that we work together to clean the air we breathe. (relevant project)(LINK)
28 September	International Day for Universal Access to Information	CG3, CG4	Universal Access to Information is the cornerstone of our work. It is essential that the public receives environmental information that is held by public authorities to ensure environmental protection and justice. Learn more about how we work with governments, industry and the public to share information and protect the environment. 📊📈 (Link to about the Aarhus Centres page)
December	Quarterly Update	CG2, CG3	*You can either, as above, share developments on ongoing projects or your Centre, or do a year in review to recap your work for 2024. It is also an opportunity to highlight a favorite project or to repackage some well-performing multimedia content.*

How to use this plan with our Canva Templates

This document can be used with corresponding Canva templates. These basic posts can be used on any social media platform with minor adjustments to the text and post length. There are three sets of template: About the Centres, which are for information about the Centes; International Campaign, which are to be used for international campaign days; and Project Update, which are intended for project update and general posts.

For a brief introduction to Canva, watch this tutorial. There are many resources available beyond this if you want to get more creative!

To use the templates:

1. Find the appropriate template set (linked above)
2. Select a preferred template, or the corresponding template to the international campaign day
3. Make a copy of the template & rename the copy to your own language
4. Translate the copy into your language. The text in the calendar above will need to be shortened to fit into the template. You can use the full text in the accompanying post
5. Replace the image or video if you prefer. (Pexels is a great resource for free images)
   a. Make sure that the new video or image is placed as the bottom layer. Right-click the image, then "layer" then "send to back"
6. Download the graphic
   a. Click "Share" at the top right of the page
   b. Select download
   c. Under select pages, select your page
   d. Download as MP4 if video, PNG if image
7. Delete the post you have created
8. Post to your channels