Government of Islamic
Republic of Afghanistan

State Ministry for Martyrs and Disabled Affairs

Communication Strategy
& Action Plan

May 2019

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Acronyms

CSAAP	Communication Strategy and Action Plan
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
IED	Improvised Explosive Devices
MMD	State Ministry for Martyrs and Disabled Affairs
MoPH	Ministry of Public Health
MoWA	Ministry of Women Affairs
PO	Public Outreach
PA	Public Awareness
VA	Victims Assistance
PWs	Participatory Workshops
CS	Communications Strategy
PSAs	Public Service Announcements
TV	Television
Ads	Advertisement

Executive Summary

State Ministry for Martyrs and Disabled Affairs (MMD) is the focal ministry of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) in the affairs of disabled and the heirs of martyrs. It was separated from Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MoLSAMD) on January 17, 2019, by presidential decree.

MMD is the country's leading authority to plan, implement, manage and coordinate affairs of the disabled and martyrs on a national level and it has the responsibility to make policies and provide professional support and advice to other ministries and other government and non-government departments and organizations.

The decades-long war, suicide bombings, ongoing military operations, landmines, cross border shelling, and various other forms of violence have left a huge number of Afghan civilians and security forces killed and many more injured. From 2001 to 2017, nearly 3,500 civilian deaths and over 7,000 civilian injuries were reported in Afghanistan as a direct result of armed conflict between government security forces and militants.

Managing two national sectors, the affairs of both the disabled and the heirs of martyrs, in addition to its other responsibilities was a challenge for one ministry. Service delivery was delayed while MoLSAMD struggled to keep up with the increasing issues and concerns of the disabled and the family members of martyrs. The establishment of an independent national authority was seriously needed.

Following its establishment, one of the key priorities of MMD was to 1) raise public awareness of the ministry, 2) identify and adopt the best strategies to reach out to its broader Afghan audience and stakeholders and 3) to establish and maintain an efficient and productive system for the ministry's internal and external communication. This Communication Strategy and Action Plan (hereafter referred to as CSAAP or 'the strategy') aims to enable MMD to communicate effectively within the organization and outside—with its rural and urban broader Afghan audience and stakeholders.

Introduction

The CSAAP aims to enable the State Ministry for Martyrs and Disabled Affairs (hereafter referred to as 'MMD or the ministry') to establish and maintain effective communications with its broader Afghan target audiences (particularly people with disability and family members of martyrs) and stakeholders. It outlines strategies for effective and result-oriented communications. It aims to enable MMD's communication staff to design, plan, implement, and finally monitor and evaluate its communication activities in a timely and cost-effective way.

The development of the CSAAP was guided by regular technical and coordination meetings between MMD, COMAC and Sayara Strategies' communications specialists. Concepts presented in the strategy are based on the information obtained from the Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) and Participatory Workshops (PWs). FGDs and PWs were planned and conducted in southern, northern, eastern and western regions between January and March 2019. These sessions aimed to produce a comprehensive understanding of perceptions of victims' assistance (VA) and rights and to generate concrete ideas for improving communications between MDD and its stakeholders. The development of the CSAAP draws on the findings of the PW and FGDs to ensure the strategy reflects the reality on the ground and is tailored to the MMD's needs.

Topics covered at the FGDs and PWs included the existing level of communication capacity within the MMD, at an individual and organizational level; identifying key audiences; current communication channels and methods used by the MMD; barriers to effective communication; and effective outreach strategies with a focus on reaching out to women and minorities. Participants' views and ideas were documented, compiled, reviewed and analyzed at initial stages of the strategy development.

The perspectives and recommendations provided by government officials including MMD, MoPH, MoWA and others at the national and sub-national level were critical for developing the CSAAP. The framing and formulation of the strategy primarily rests on the feedback and recommendations of government officials specifically MMD's leadership to ensure buy-in and applicability. Ultimately, MMD's leadership including the Public Relations and Media Advisor Khalid Sangar, Plan and Policy Director Zabihullah Ishaqzai and IT Advisor Mohibullah Sayed conducted a thorough review of CSAAP and all of their comments and requests to date have been incorporated.

The CSAAP is divided into the following sections: Goals and Objectives, SWOT Analysis, Target Audiences and Key Stakeholders, Key Messages, Communication Methods, Communication Products, Proposed Organogram, Internal and External Communications, Budgeting the Action Plan (Dissemination), and Monitoring and Evaluation. Each section opens with a brief introduction.

Vision Statement

A society where persons with disability enjoy equal rights and responsibilities, have the opportunity to participate in the social, political, and economic affairs of their country, and where the rights of the family members of martyrs are protected.

Mission Statement

As the state ministry responsible for the affairs of the disabled and the heirs of martyrs, MMD strives to efficiently and effectively plan, implement, coordinate and manage support to the disabled and the heirs of martyrs and serve as GIRoA' s leading ministry to make policies and provide professional advice.

1. Goals and Objectives

MMD's overarching communication goal is 'to create, promote and maintain an effective internal and external communication system while increasing the level of public awareness about the ministry's roles, responsibilities and services on a national level'. MMD will focus obtaining this overall goal through the implementation of various types of communication activities outlined in the strategy.

Following are a number of specific communication objectives that the CSAAP will aim to obtain in a one year communication campaign period:

- Create MMD's Website, Facebook page and Twitter account (social media);
- Design, produce and broadcast 10 Dari and Pashto radio PSAs via prominent national radio stations;
- Design, produce and air minimum 10 TV messages via prominent national TV stations;
- Design, print and disseminate at least 4000 leaflets;
- Design, print and disseminate two photo books depicting the ministry's activities and achievements;
- Send regular press releases to media outlets and post activity/performance reports via on the ministry's social media platforms;
- Design, print and place at least 40 billboards in Kabul and key provincial centers across the country;
- Conduct at least 4 town hall meetings in four regional provinces (Nangarhar, Herat, Balkh and Kandahar);
- Conduct regular weekly, monthly and quarterly staff meetings, share meeting minutes with all staff, publish them on the ministry's social media platforms and;
- Special announcements are made and reports published on the occasion of public holidays (particularly Eid-ul-Fitar, Eid-ul-Adha and Nowroz).

1.1. Expected Outcome

The CSAAP is a road map for MMD to achieve its core communication goal and objective. The attainment of these core objectives is only possible through proper designing, planning, coordination and implementation of the communication activities outlined in the CS. Following

outcomes are expected with successful implementation, and a standard monitoring and evaluation system of the CSAAP:

- Increased in the knowledge of MMD's activities, its roles and responsibilities and the services it provides (particularly VA);
- MMD has active online presence and there exists effective two-way communication system between MMD and its key audience;
- Improved internal and external communication system, MMD uses professional and effective communications strategies for public outreach and engagement;
- Improved inter-government and donor/stakeholder communications.

2. SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
• High Interest of main target audiences • Pervasive target audience	• Outreach to rural areas • Limited current resources due to nascency and limited government funding • Lacking clear goals
Opportunities	Threats
• Many potential funding sources for VA from the donor community	• Lack of transparency in beneficiary registration process

3. Target Audience and Key Stakeholders

A session at the FGDs and PWs was dedicated to 'key audience identification and segmentation'. The session aimed to identify the MMDs target audiences and then to divide the general population into manageable categories by priority for the MMD: primary, secondary and tertiary. The key goal was to reflect participants' experiences into audience segmentation and to ensure the strategy tailors its messages to each category of the audience.

The primary audience or stakeholders are the groups or individuals possessing high interest in the activities and services of MMD as they are either direct beneficiaries, related to beneficiaries,

or play a role in service delivery/funding. The secondary and tertiary audience play a role in raising awareness, influencing knowledge of victims' assistance and rights, and increasing the likelihood that potential beneficiaries will come into contact with information about MMD's services.

The following table outlines the ministry's key audience and stakeholders, both internal and external:

Audience/ Stakeholders	MMD's Level of Interest (High, Medium, Low)	Current Knowledge (Low, Moderate, High)	Power (Low, High)	Network of Influence	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary
EXTERNAL AUDIENCE					
Persons with disability (Urban)	High	Moderate	High	Local Communities and Other Disabled Persons	Primary
Persons with disability (Rural)	High	Low	High	Local Communities and Other Disabled Persons	Primary
Heirs of Martyrs (Urban)	High	Moderate	High	Local Communities and Other Heirs of Martyrs	Primary
Heirs of Martyrs (Rural)	High	Low	High	Local Communities and Other Heirs of Martyrs	Primary
Families of disabled (Urban)	High	Moderate	High	Key Beneficiaries and Local Communities	Primary
Families of disabled (Rural)	High	Low	High	Key Beneficiaries and Local Communities	Primary
Donors/Funding Partners	High	Moderate	High	National and International Organizations	Primary
Afghan Government e.g. MoPH, MoWA, Provincial Governor's office	High	Low to Moderate	High	Central and Provincial Government Departments	Primary
Religious and Tribal Leaders	High	Low	High	Local Communities, Mosques and or Religious Seminaries	Secondary
Schools, Universities, Government and Non-Government Learning Institutes	Medium	Low	Medium	Local Communities and Learning and Educational Centers	Secondary
Local, National and International Media	Medium	Low	Medium	News Organizations	Secondary
Youth and Civil Society Organizations	Medium	Low	Medium	Local Communities, Media, Youth and Civil Society Organizations	Secondary
Youth, Women and Minorities	High	Low	High	Local Communities and Potential Beneficiaries	Primary
Public Populace	Low	Low to Moderate	Low	Afghan Citizens	Tertiary

INTERNAL AUDIENCE					
MMD's Staff in Kabul	High		High	State Ministry For Martyrs and Disabled Affairs	Primary
MMD's Provincial Department and District Directorates	High		High	Ministry of Martyrs Provincial and District Level Administrations	Primary

4. Key Messages

Participants at the FGDs and PWs drafted key messages for the CSAAP. Messages were crafted and selected with a key focus to ensure they were tailored to the strategy's goal and objectives, were short and simple, easy to read, understand and remember by the MMD's broader target audience.

The suggested messages are listed below. In addition to billboards, these messages can also be used while creating content for other communication channels. For example, leaflets, posters, radio and TV PSAs and etc.

- We Hear Your Voices
- State Ministry For Martyrs and Disabled Affairs– Is the State's Ministry in Affairs of Martyrs and Disabled
- Disability Is Not Inability
- Let's Join Hands and Empower Disabled with the Power of Education
- We all Have Equal Rights and Responsibilities
- We Serve You – So You Serve Your Country and People
- MMD is Committed to the Provision of Timely and Effective VA
- We Pay Tribute to the Sacrifices of Our Heroes (Afghan Security Forces)
- Our Religion Forbids Discrimination Towards People with Disability
- Our Services Are Available Equally for all Disabled and the Heirs of Martyrs

5. Communication Methods

5.1. The Approach

MMD is a newly established organization. It will therefore need to rely on multiple types of communication methods to reach its external audience and establish an effective system for internal communication.

This section details communication methods that MMD will use to reach its internal and external communication goals. The methods or 'the tools' outlined in the following sections were proposed and selected by participants of the FGDs and PWs and are solely based on their field experiences in the affairs of martyrs and the disabled.

5.2. Radio and Television

Radio and TV are to most effective communication methods in the country. Despite the recent growth and popularity in the use of smart phones and internet, radio and TV maintain its popularity among Afghans. They target literate and illiterate alike and reach both urban and rural audience while ensuring broader impacts. MMD will use radio and TV as primary broadcast methods to communicate with its intended receipts in Kabul and provinces.

5.3. Brochures and Posters

Brochures, posters and leaflets are also three widely used, productive and cost-effective methods of communication. The three methods are largely used by government and non-government organizations in the country. They are cost effective and easy to disseminate. Through its communication campaign, MMD will design, print and disseminate brochures and leaflets to reach out its literate audience and those who are at least able to read simple text.

5.4. Online and Social Media

Considering the rapid growth and popularity and dominant use of internet and social media platforms in Afghanistan, the success of any communication strategy is unthinkable. Today Afghans whether living in heavily populated urban centers like Kabul or in a rural and distinct part of the country use internet-based social media platforms as key source of information and or communicating with the family and friends. The use of social media platforms—particularly Facebook and Twitter—is also becoming widespread within the government administrations.

Besides its many other benefits, social media platforms are the best methods for two-way communication. For example, an Afghan sitting far away in a distinct part of Helmand province will react to or comment on a Facebook post shared by MMD. This is the most effective form of communication where there is feedback from the recipient.

Since MMD is a newly established and structured organization, one of the CS's objectives is to design and develop MMD's website, its Facebook page and Twitter account and an internal mailing system. Creation of the website, Facebook page and Twitter account will allow the ministry to establish and maintain a productive and result-oriented two-way communication system. This will also help the ministry to establish and promote relations with other government organizations, key stakeholders and the donors or funding partners.

5.5. Billboards and Murals

Billboards is other effective method that MMD will use to communicate with its audience specific communication messages. While the billboard is primarily a tool which targets literate audience, with professional graphics it can also attract illiterate audience and can thus effectively convey the intended message. Wall graffiti on the other hand is becoming one of the most popular means of communications in the country. MMD will also reach out its target audience through this method of communication.

5.6. Traditional Methods

Mosque Imams and community or tribal leaders are the most effective traditional messengers in the Afghan society. They are widely respected, and their words are acted upon. MMD's communication teams in Kabul and provincial or district centers will also establish links to community leaders and mosque Imams and will work with them to send out MMD's messages and or raise awareness about the ministry's assistance and services. Friday prayer sermons and community based shuras (councils) are two of the most effective venues to reach out rural audience.

5.7. Public Outreach

No other communication method can be as effective as face to face meetings or group discussions. In such settings, messages are communicated in a very effective way with timely feedback from the audience. Depending on the ministry's logistic facilitation and communication budget, MMD officials will conduct time to time site visits and meet the public populace. These meetings will pave ways for a more effective two-way communication that will enable local Afghans to share their concerns, issues and or provide best recommendation that will contribute in the future communication campaigns. Progress and reports of these public outreach events or site visits will then be published via the MMD's official website.

6. Communication Products

This section outlines communication products that MMD will produce and disseminate. These products are also selected by participants at the FGDs and PWs. The products include print, broadcast and online media platforms. While selecting the products, special focus was paid to ensure they are tailored keeping in view the diversity of the audience and to ensure they are the best mediums for the information dissemination.

The portfolio of communications products includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Product	Description	Key Themes / Messages	Target Audience
MMD Website	MMD's website is the gateway to information about its work. It will be redesigned and populated with a full range of information pertaining to MMD's work. The website will include all basic information (mission statement, scope of work, and access to key documents) as well as dynamic information (new themes, updated information, breaking news). Staff will be appointed and dedicated to managing and sustaining the website for accuracy, relevancy, and timeliness. This staff will be responsible for uploading content, photos, and videos to the website.	• General information on MMD • MMD's Scope and areas of operation • Type of services MMD provides • Information about registration • Funding needs	• Public • Beneficiaries (victims) • Stakeholders • MMD staff • Other government agencies • Donor Community
Brochure	Brochures will highlight the key responsibilities, structures, activities and achievements of MMD. This high-quality	• General information on MMD • MMD's Scope and areas of operation • Type of services MMD provide	• Public • Donor Community • Stakeholders

	brochure will be accessible in color format and will be published in Dari,		
Media Releases	Media releases will be used to convey information about MMD's activities through print and broadcast media. Releases will document activities, events, initiatives, and policies. A template for media releases will be developed for use across the provinces.	• Key Achievements • New initiatives	• General Public • Stakeholders • Beneficiaries
Public Service Announcements (PSAs)	PSAs are short messages usually broadcast by the media without charge and are used to convey brief messages in the public interest with the aim of raising awareness and/or changing public attitudes on the topical issue. We will use PSAs in our communications campaigns.	• MMD is the State's Ministry for the Affairs of Martyrs and the Disabled • MMD is Committed to the Provision of Timely and Effective VA • We Serve You –So You Serve Your Country and People • Our Services Are Available Equally for all Disabled and the Heirs of Martyrs	• Beneficiaries (Victims) • Families of Victims • Stakeholders
Newsletters	Stories collected in the field on provincial development initiatives will be published in a newsletter and shared electronically with target audiences.	• Key Achievements • New initiatives	• General Public • Stakeholders • Beneficiaries • Other government agencies
Billboards	Billboards illustrating programs and achievements of local government and depicting how citizens can be more involved in government are a good way to promote the work of MMD to both literate and illiterate populations.	• We Hear Your Voices • MMD is the State's Ministry for the Affairs of Martyrs and the Disabled • Disability is not Inability • Let's Join Hands and Empower Disabled with the Power of Education • We All Have Equal Right and Responsibilities	• Beneficiaries (Victims) • Families of Victims • Stakeholders

		- We Serve You –So You Serve Your Country and People - MMD is Committed to the Provision of Timely and Effective VA - We Pay Tribute to the Sacrifices of Our Heroes (ANDSF) - Our Religion Forbids Discrimination Towards People with Disability - Our Services Are Available Equally for all Disabled and the Heirs of Martyrs	
Posters	MMD will create a package of simple posters to promote the work of MMD to both literate and illiterate populations.	- We Pay Tribute to the Sacrifices of Our Heroes (ANDSF) - Let's Join Hands and Empower Disabled with the Power of Education - Disability is not Inability	- Beneficiaries (Victims) - Families of Victims living in remote areas
Video and Photo Library	MMD will maintain an archive of video clips and photographs. This could include photos of a provincial development committee meeting, a provincial council photo during a monitoring visit, a provincial governor's photo taken at the inauguration of a development project, photos of regional development conferences. These video clips and photographs will be stored electronically and will be made available to the media as required.	- Type of services MMD provides - Key achievements and success stories - MMD's key stakeholders and partners	- MMD Staff - Public - Donor Community - Stakeholders - Media
Comic Books	Graphic books with text are good vehicles for disseminating messages and are easy	Disability is not Inability	- Beneficiaries (Victims) - Families of Victims - Teenagers

	for populations with low literacy levels to follow.	• Let's Join Hands and Empower Disabled with the Power of Education • We All Have Equal Right and Responsibilities • Our Religion Forbids Discrimination Towards People with Disability	• Illiterate population
Wall Graffiti	A wall graffiti is another good tool to promote MMD's activities to both literate and illiterate audience.	• Type of services MMD provides • Key achievements and success stories • MMD's key stakeholders and partners	• Beneficiaries (Victims) • Teenagers • Illiterate population
Mobile Theatre Shows	Mobile theatre shows are meant to be an effective tool in conveying messages to a broader audience.	• How MMD works? • What is VA? • What type of services MMD provide? • To what category of population the services are provided?	• Beneficiaries (Victims) • Teenagers • Illiterate population
Print Ads	Are a good way to promote the work of MMD.	• How MMD works? • What is VA? • What type of services MMD provide? • To what category of population the services are provided?	• General Public • Stakeholders • Beneficiaries

6.1. Social Media Products

Following the creation of its website, the Facebook page and Twitter account, MMD's communication staff will ensure the ministry has active online presence and there is consistent exchange of information between the ministry and its broader Afghan audience and stakeholders or the implementing partners. Products designed and produced under this section may include social media posts and stories and various other types of online content.

6.2. Radio PSAs

To ensure the campaigns maximum reach and impact, MMD will design, produce and disseminate radio public service announcements (PSAs). PSAs' scripts will be drafted in Pashto and Dari and the final products will be aired via national and or local FM radio stations. The number of PSAs, the airing frequency and selection of radio stations will be defined considering MMDs' communication budget.

6.3. TV Advertisement

As discussed in the "Communication Methods" section, TV continues to be one of the most effective mass communication tools in the country. It targets both literate and illiterate audience, in cities and rural parts of the country. MMD will use TV as its primary broadcast media tool. Under this section, the ministry will design, produce and broadcast TV ads. The length, broadcasting frequency and the TV channel will be selected as per the ministry's communication budget.

6.4. Billboards

Billboards is one of the most popular and effective way of mass communication in the country. If designed professionally and placed in key urban and populated sites, billboards undoubtedly will extend the reach of MMD's communication campaign with positive results.

Depending on its communication budget, MMD will design, produce and place billboards in the capital Kabul and in key provincial centers across the country. MMD will use this tool to raise awareness about its activities and performance and the VA it provides.

6.5. Murals

Over the past few years, graffiti or street art has gained significant amount of popularity in Afghanistan—particularly in public places in Kabul. Wall graffiti in a speedy pace takes the place of mainstream billboard and sign board advertising. MMD will also use graffiti as a way to inform its audience about the ministry's services and activities and its core aim of existence.

6.6. Brochures and Posters

Brochures, posters and leaflets are the three most productive and cost-effective way of communicating to the audience. Nothing can convey a company or organization's message in an effective and productive way as posters and brochures do. The number of printed brochures and posters will depend on MMD's communication campaign budget. They, however, will be disseminated in the provincial centers through the line-departments of martyrs and the disabled and—if the budget allows—in the district centers to ensure broader audience reach.

6.7. Newsletters

MMD's communications and public information department will produce and send out regular newsletters to the media outlets. Through the newsletters or news releases, MMD will inform the public populace about the ministry's plans and polices, its activities and performances and the future plans. These press releases will also be posted on the ministry's official website and Facebook page.

6.8. Photo Books

Throughout the annual communication campaign period, MMD will design and publish at least two photo books. The photo books will depict the ministry's success stories in the language of photos and they will cover the ministry's quarterly success stories and key achievements. The books will also be published on quarterly basis if the ministry's communication budget allows.

7. Internal and External Communication

The success of an organization's communication depends on the system of internal and external communication it follows. If the system is clearly defined, the organization will communicate effectively with both its external audience and internal staff. Conversely, if the system is ambiguous, the organization will face challenges while communicating internally and externally. Therefore, the way an organization communicates is integral to its success.

This section after a brief introduction internal and external communication, outlines key methods for MMD to communicate in a timely and effective way within the organization and outside. The section will help the ministry obtain its core organizational and communication objectives outlined in "goal and objectives" section of the communication strategy.

7.1. Internal Communication

Internal communication is the exchange of information and ideas within an organization, that is central to it performing its mandated functions. Messages or information in internal communication can be exchanged via personal contacts and meetings. Or it can take the form of electronic communication such as emails or communicating via Skype, WhatsApp, Viber or other mobile applications. Also, internal communications can be formal or informal and the information exchange can be vertical, horizontal or diagonal.

 A clearly defined and maintained internal communication system helps employees perform their work in a productive way, be in regular contacts with external audience, developing a clear sense of organizational mission while being able to identify and deal with potential problems. To ensure there exists an effective system of internal communications and dialogue between the employees of MMD in Kabul and in the provinces, the ministry's communication staff will consider methods explained in the following sub-sections.

Developing an Internal Communications Plan

The first step is to develop an internal communications plan including 1) MMD's communications goals 2) MMD's communication tools and policies and 3) a timeline for achievements, monitoring,

and events. **It is important to divide the goals between the Kabul HQ and provincial offices**. When developing the internal communications plan, MMD should consider the following factors:

Specific: What is MMD's goal? How often will plans take place? Where?

Measurable: How will MMD measure its internal communication goals?

Attainable: Are MMD's goals attainable given its current resources and status?

Realistic: Is MMD's plan realistic given its structure and current capacity?

Timely: Is MMD's timeline well-defined and achievable?

Two-Way Communication

Internal communications that are only top-down, coming from the highest levels of management down to the lowest, will not be effective. Two-way communication that flows from the top of the organogram downwards, and then from the bottom of the organogram upwards is very important for effective international communications. Employees want to know that they can respond to information, express concerns, and promote ideas. MMD should make time to encourage communication from all departments and directorates, especially the lowest. Weekly meetings and staff events (discussed below) are a good way to do this.

Important Considerations

To be effective, the internal communications plan must be inclusive and consistent. It must include and reach everyone inside the Ministry, across all departments, and importantly, out to the provincial offices. Additionally, staff should be familiar and comfortable with communication protocols. This includes the methods/tools used and appropriate response times. MMD should agree upon one primary form of communication with a back-up. A standardized email system is most effective as the primary communications tool, with phone calls as the back-up option or for urgent matters. Using multiple communication channels such as Skype, Viber, email, and SMS breeds inefficiency. Storing records of all communications in one place is best for effective daily operations and also makes problem-solving/auditing easier. MMD should also develop an agreed upon response time e.g. 24 hours for emails and 2 hours for phone calls. All Ministry personnel should abide by the tools and timeframes; from the Minister to the lowest level.

Tools

Email System

MMD will create a standard system for email communication for both its internal use and while communicating outside the ministry. All MMD employees—in Kabul and the provinces— must have unified and standard business email addresses. The email should include first name, last name, position, business phone number, email, ministry's name and address and the link to the MMD official website.

Staff Events

MMD will hold staff events, at least one event on a quarterly basis. At these events, department heads or representatives will report on the progress of their activities and will have the opportunity to voice concerns or provide recommendations. The events will provide MMD an opportunity to improve working relations between its employees and will facilitate a venue for open discussions where the problems will be mitigated that might create obstacles against the effective flow of information. Employees from provincial offices should also intend; this is important in making sure personal contact is maintained with Kabul and that goals and operating procedures are aligned.

Weekly Staff Meeting

MMD will hold regular weekly staff meetings. These meetings will provide department managers the opportunity to report on their weekly activity progress and the planned activities for the next week. A designated person will send the meeting scheduled via email to all intended recipients and the meeting minutes will then be shared with those who attend.

Employee of the Month

"Employee of the Month" is an effective tool for internal communication. While acknowledging the hard work of the employee and motivating him/her to keep the quality work, it also strengthens team spirit among the employees. Hence, MMD will select one of its hard-working employee as employee of the month and will then publish his/her profile through the ministry's website and social media platforms.

7.2. External Communication

External communication is the form of communication that takes place with the people 'outside' the organization. Those outside the organization can be individuals or organizations, recipients of the organization's communications messages. Through external communications, an organization stay in contact with the individuals or entities that are vitally important for the organization's success. It's through the external communication that people outside know about the organization's mission and goals, its services and activities and lastly the core existence of the organization.

Developing an External Communications Plan

The first step is to develop an external communications plan. This will be the Action Plan outlined in Section 11 in addition to MMD's external communications goals e.g. amount of new donor funding, new victims registered, members of the public reached, government agencies engaged. It is important to divide the goals and key actions between the Kabul HQ and provincial offices. When developing the internal communications plan, MMD should consider the following factors:

Specific: What are MMD's goals? How often? Where? Who is responsible?

Measurable: How will MMD measure its effectiveness and reach?

Attainable: Are MMD's goals attainable given its current resources and status?

Realistic: Is MMD's plan realistic given its structure and current capacity?

Timely: Is MMD's timeline well-defined and achievable?

Tools

Various tools and methods are used for communicating with the people outside the organizations. Some of the widely used and effective tools and methods for external communication are public relations, media relations, press conferences, stakeholder meetings, website content and social media posts, press releases, emails and etc. MMD will use the following methods for its external communication to ensure it effectively engages its stakeholders and the Afghan population in a timely and effective way.

MMD Website

MMD will communicate its core messages and information with the ministry's external audience through the ministry's website. This website will serve as the ministry's official website where people will refer to obtain reliable information about MMD. In addition to being an effective tool for external communication, the website is vitally important to maintain result-oriented tow-way communication with the audience.

Social Media Platforms

 Social media is one of the most important external communication tools. Over the past few years, Facebook and Twitter has emerged as two of the most effective tools for the organizations while it comes to establishing and maintaining quick and efficient communications with the audience. The two platforms have become the most cost effective and efficient tools for external communications. MMD will use Facebook and Twitter as two of the ministry's key social media platforms for external communications.

Emails

MMD will also use email communication as a key tool for external communication. The ministry will particularly engage its stakeholders via emails. The ministry's employees both in Kabul and the provinces will use a unified emailing system as stated in the 'internal communication' sub-section.

 A quarterly newsletter informing key stakeholders including potential beneficiaries, their family members, donors, and other governmental ministries on the activities and accomplishments of MMD. Branding and marketing should be consistent across all email communications.

Press Conferences

Participation at the press conferences is also an effective way to reach out external audience and communicate the organization's core messages. MMD's senior officials will attended the press

conferences and will communicate the ministry's message to broader Afghan audience. Participation at these conferences will also provide MMD officials to create relations with local, national and international media outlets. The ministry's communication and public relation department will also prepare a plan to track down regular press conferences to ensure flow of interesting information for the media.

Media Outreach

Establishing and maintaining media relationships is critical to the MMD's communications goals; the media, when managed well, can act as an outsourced communications team supplementing the work that is done internally. MMD should focus on both paid and unpaid media coverage. Paid media coverage such as PSAs and print advertisements are not difficult to obtain, but the important thing is for the MMD's communications team to build trust and friendship with one point of contact at the top media channels to secure good time slots and prices. Unpaid media is harder to obtain; though MMD is at an advantage because victim's assistance includes many human-interest stories, which media outlets often look for. If MMD provides outlets with positive stories about disabled or heir of martyrs receiving assistance, it benefits both the outlets and the MMD. These stories will likely reach more people and have greater impact than paid media stories.

Call Center

A call center is an option for engaging with target audiences, particularly potential beneficiaries and family members of potential beneficiaries. However, call centers tend to require significant resources and also demand very efficient recordkeeping. If requests, complaints, or registrations of disabled or heirs of martyrs made through the call center are not completed or properly followed-up, the risks discrediting the ministry. Alternatively, MMD might consider analyzing comments on its Facebook page to understand local perceptions, needs, and realities without risking public relations failures.

MMD TV Channel

The ministry might consider a TV channel, though this is also resource-intensive. A designated channel requires constant design, production, and dissemination of high-quality content. Given the ministry's limited human and financial resources, public service announcements, which will air on TV, are likely more effective and remain within the budget.

Provincial and District Tours

Site visits and in person meetings is one of the most effective tools of external communications. Depending on the ministry's communication budget, MMD officials will travel to the provinces and if possible to the district centers and will speak to the residents. Progress of these visits will then be published via the official website and social media platforms.

8.3 Coordination with other Ministries

Ministries and their respective departments at the provincial level are a key external audience. MMD particularly has close relations with Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Women Affairs and Ministry of Higher Education. To ensure there exists consistent exchange of information and communication between MMD and other government departments, MMD officials should consider the following:

- Establish points of contact within key ministries
- Maintain frequent email communication with points of contact including updates, questions, and invitations to relevant meetings
- Participate at externally organized coordination meetings with key ministries
- Plan quarterly/bi-annual coordination meetings and invite key ministries
- Highlight partnerships with key ministries in media products to encourage additional cooperation
- Develop inter-agency coordination plans for provincial offices
- Emphasize importance of inter-agency coordination and staff meetings and quarterly events
- Work to establish internal culture of inter-agency collaboration

8.4 Communication with Donors

Donors or funding partners are also MMD's primary external audience. Timely and effective communication between MMD and its potential funding partners is key to the successful planning and implementation of future communications and public awareness campaigns. Through regular coordination and technical meetings, effective exchange of emails, and providing donors reports that shows transparency and results in activities implementation, MMD will cultivate an efficient and effective system of communications all its primary and potential donors. Earned media pieces, highlighting success stories and key achievements are also vital to raise awareness and enhance the reputation of MMD among donors. Be assertive and email/share earned media pieces to donor contacts to highlight MMD's work.

8. Budget

This is the budget section of the MMD Communication Strategy. The ministry must take into account the costs of its communications activities and allocate budget for communication activities and events explained in the "Action Plan" section. Financial resources available to MMD's communication campaign can be government's budget allocated to MMD for its communications, information and public relations activities. Or it can be national and international donor organizations. The following sample budget sheet template will help MMD during the budget estimation process for its communications strategy and for any future budget preparations.

COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES							
Sn.	Activity	Unit	Frequency / Time of Release	Quantity per time	Unit Price	Source of Budget	Total Budget
PRINT PRODUCTS							
1	Posters						
2	Leaflets						
3	Photo Books						
4	Billboards						
ONLINE/ SOCIAL MEDIA							

5	Create Website					
6	Create Facebook Page					
7	Create Twitter Account					
8	Promote Facebook Page and Twitter Account					
BROADCAST MEDIA/ TV & RADIO						
9	Design, Produce and Broadcast Radio PSAs					
10	Design, Produce and Broadcast TV Spots					
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT/NETWORKING EVENTS						
11	Plan and Conduct 4 Networking Events					
12	Celebrate Public Holidays					
Grand Total						

9. Action Plan

Following is a one-year activity implementation or strategy roll out plan for the strategy. Communications activities outlined in this action plan are activities proposed by participants at the FGDs and PWs. Communication activities outlined in the following plan will be designed, planned, implemented and finally monitored and evaluated within a one-year campaign period. Actual activities planning would have been clearer and realistic if the amount of allocated budget was known. Activities planned in the following action plan is only estimation and MMD communication staff will make necessary changes, revisions and edits as they feel fit.

No	Communications Activity	Milestone	Medium/Channel	Purpose	Target Audiences	Key Msg/Content	Responsible Person	Timing & Frequency											
								July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
PRINT MEDIA																			
1	Posters	MMD's Factsheet updated, published and distributed	In-person delivery and email distribution	MMD's image, vision, mission and achievements are communicated through its stakeholders.	All MMD's external and internal audience.	MMD's communications objectives, achievements, plans, and key activities.	Content development specialist/social media and communications specialist			■			■			■		■	
2	Leaflets	MMD's key achievements, plans and activities are reflected through soft and hard copies to its key audience and stakeholders.	In-person delivery, post and publishing through website/email distribution	MMD's image, achievements, plans, policies and activities are communicated through its stakeholders	All MMD's external and internal audience.	MMD's communications objectives, achievements, plans, and key activities.	Content development specialist/social media and communications specialist		■		■		■			■		■	

#	Item	Objective	Method	Communicated through stakeholders	Audience	Message	Responsible													
3	Photo Books	MMD's key achievements, plans, and activities are reflected and communicated through photo books designed and published twice in the campaign period.	In-person delivery, post and publishing through website/email distribution	MMD's image, achievements, plans, policies and activities are communicated through its stakeholders.	Internal audience, visitors and key stakeholders and funding partners.	MMD's communications objectives, achievements, plans, and key activities.	Content development specialist/social media and communications specialist/Designer/information and provincial coordination specialist			▓							▓			
4	Brochure	MMD's plans and policies, its activities and mission is communicated and the audience informed about VA.	Hard copy/email	MMD's image, vision, mission and achievements are communicated through its stakeholders	Internal audience, visitors and key stakeholders and funding partners.	MMD's communications objectives, achievements, plans, and key activities.	Content development specialist/social media and communications specialist/designer			▓			▓			▓				▓
5	Billboard	MMD's plans and policies, its activities and mission is communicated and the audience informed about VA.	Billboards	MMD's image, vision, mission and achievements are communicated through its stakeholders	All MMD's external and internal audience.	MMD's communications objectives, achievements, plans, and key activities.	Content development specialist/social media and communications specialist/designer			▓										
	ONLINE/SOCIAL MEDIA																			
6	Create MMD Website	MMD's website is developed.	Online	MMD has online presence.	Online Audience	MMD's communications objectives, achievements, plans, and key activities.	Website designer, online media specialists		▓											

#	Activity	Description	Medium	Objective	Audience	Content	Responsible	Timeline
7	Create MMD's Facebook Page	MMD's Facebook page is created.	Online	Increase MMD's social media presence.	Online Audience	MMD's communications objectives, achievements, plans, and key activities.	Social media and communications specialist	▓
8	Create MMD's Twitter Account	MMD's image is communicated with its audience through Twitter	Online	Boost the reach of MMD through social media	Online Audience	MMD's communications objectives, achievements, plans, and key activities.	Social media and communications specialist	▓
9	Create Standard Email System	MMD staff is engaged for better team building.	Email	For team building purpose, all MMD staff communicate via standard email system	MMD internal staff and key stakeholders.	MMD's communications objectives, achievements, plans, and key activities.	Social media and communications specialist	▓
				RADIO/TV BROADCASTING				
10	Radio public services announcement (PSA)	MMD's mission and public services announcements are communicated through its stakeholders and external audience.	Radio	Public are aware of the public services announcements and MMD's roles and responsibilities and its services are publicized.	All MMD's external and internal audience.	MMD's communications objectives, achievements, plans, and key activities.	Content development specialist/social media and communications specialist/designer	▓ ▓
11	TV Spot	MMD's mission and public services announcements are communicate	TV	Public are aware of the public services announcements and MMD's	All MMD's external and internal audience.	MMD's communications objectives, achievements, plans,	Content development specialist/social media and communications	▓ ▓

#	Activity	Description	Type	Outcome	Audience	Message	Responsible															
		through its stakeholders		roles and responsibilities and its services are publicized.		and key activities.	specialist/designer				▉				▉							
	Gatherings/Networking Events																					
12	Town hall meetings	Town hall meeting held MMD's key messages are delivered to the public.	Public Engagement	Public are aware of the public services announcements and MMD's roles and responsibilities and its services are publicized.	All MMD's external and internal audience.	MMD's communications objectives, achievements, plans, and key activities.	MMD's communication and public awareness department.			▉							▉				
13	Public Holidays Celebration	Key public holidays (particularly Eid-ul-Fitar, Eid-ul-Adha and Nowroz) are celebrated.	Gathering	Public are aware of the public services announcements and MMD's roles and responsibilities and its services are publicized.	All MMD's external and internal audience.	MMD's communications objectives, achievements, plans, and key activities.	MMD's communication and public awareness department.	▉	▉	▉	▉	▉	▉	▉	▉	▉	▉	▉	▉	▉

10.   Monitoring and Evaluation

Without monitoring and evaluation, it will be challenging to decide whether communication activities outlined in the strategy are carried out in the right way and they achieve the expected outcome. MMD will therefore conduct regular monitoring and will evaluate its communication activities to ensure set objectives are obtained.

12.1 Communications Audit

MMD, depending on its staffing plan and budget, will assign a team for the strategy's monitoring and evaluation. This can be done internally or outsourced to an external monitoring and evaluation services providing company. An internal source is usually best for internal communications and an external source for external communications. Though budgetary restrictions might require an internal source for both, which is acceptable. Throughout the strategy's dissemination phase, assigned team will conduct monitoring on regular basis to ensure activities are planned, designed and disseminated in accordance with the plan and achieve intended outcomes.

The audit will include the following:

Internal Communications:

1) Conduct SMART analysis
2) Conduct key interviews with ~10 staff across all-levels on communications including provincial offices
3) Compile findings of achievements, gaps, and recommendations for adjustments
4) Implement findings with relevant MMD staff

External Communications:

1) Analyze effectiveness of external communications tools
2) Conduct quality check of media products
3) Assess achieved reach across communication tools
4) Identify whether communication tool substitutions, additions, or adjustments are necessary
5) Ensure budgetary compliance
6) Implement necessary changes with relevant MMD staff

Annex 1: Organogram

Proposed Structure for State Minister office for Martyrs and Distality Affairs (MMD)
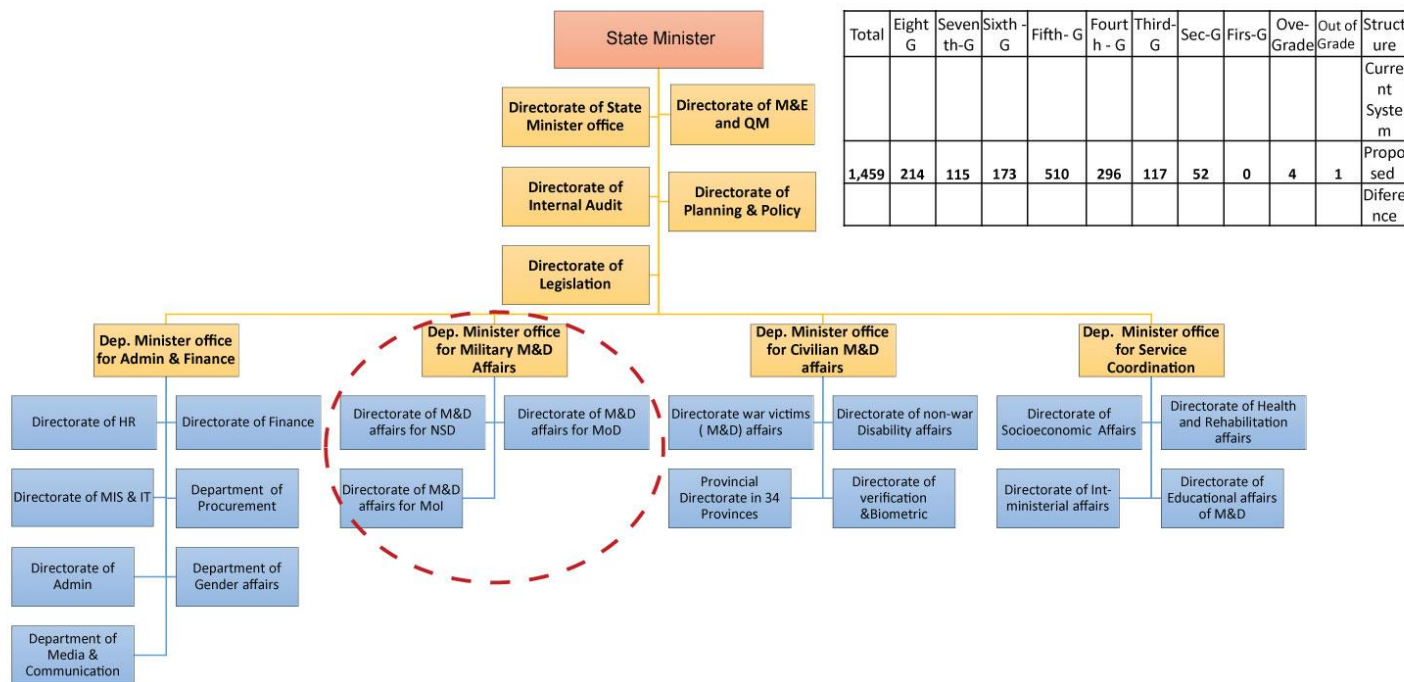
Total	Eight G	Seven th-G	Sixth - G	Fifth- G	Fourt h - G	Third- G	Sec-G	Firs-G	Ove- Grade	Out of Grade	Struct ure
											Curre nt Syste m
1,459	214	115	173	510	296	117	52	0	4	1	Propo sed
											Difere nce

Annex 2: Branding and Marketing

All promotional and communication material going out from MMD to the targeted audiences to be branded as per the developed branding policy of the MMD. MMD encourages all its employees and staff to consider below specifications in all communication and promotional activities.

Email

Microsoft Outlook is most commonly used for official emailing

English Fonts

- Arial
- Calibiri

Dari and Pashto Fonts

- Time New Roman

Font size should be "11"

Email Signature

For email signatures, "Candara" font should be used. Font size for name and job title should be "14" while for the rest, font size "10" is good.

- Name
- Designation
- Details and Logo of MMD
- Contact Details (Email and Phone No.)

Name:	اسم
Designation:	وظیفه
State Ministry for Martyrs and Disabled Affairs	وزارت دولت در امور شهدا و معلولین
Phone:	شمارۀ تماس
Email:	ایمیل
www.mmd.gov.af	

Documents

MMD wants to ensure that documents conform to below MMD branding guidelines.

Font

For English:

- Arial
- Calibri
- Candara

For Pashto and Dari:

- Arial
- Times New Roman

FONT SIZES: All font sizes should be consistent in any given document

- For presentations, use font-size "40" for the title page
- For title of the slides, use font size "40"
- For presentations, use font-size "24" for content slides
- For all other documents, use font-size "11"
- For brochures, use font size "10"
- For business cards, use font size "8"
- For success stories titles, use font size "28"
- For success stories content, use font size "11"
- For success stories photo captions, use font size "11"

Promotional Material

All fonts used in any document should use MMD's approved fonts.

Font Size

The normal size of font is "11pts".

Text Color

The normal color of all text is black.

Images

Images are integral part of MMD's communications. We encourage everyone to take photos of any activity or services we provide and that highlights our success. Photos in written documents should have a caption.

All the captions are written in MMD fonts *Italic "10 pts".*

Headers and footers

MMDs logo should be in the header of the first page of all documents. If the document exceeds one page the subsequent pages should have the name of the document on the header.

On the footer of all documents there should be the State Ministry For Martyrs and Disabled Affairsand the website www.mmd.gov.af.

Logos

The Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) logo should always be used in all of the promotional material going out from MMD. In addition to this, whenever an external party is going to sponsor or provide technical/financial assistance in a pre-determined activity, their logo can also be added to the branding line.

The GIRoA logo should always be used against a white background. It shall never be used against any color background.

Business Cards

Business Cards should include one logo to represents MMD and the Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. This logo should be in the top center of the business card, in a PNG format.

The business cards are usually printed on both sides. The English language side remains generic, while the other side can be printed on either Pashto or Dari, based on the request made by the business card holder.

The information within the business card is limited to the name, designation, mobile-phone number and email address. No additional information will be written on the business cards such as: Skype name, additional phone numbers, or additional email addresses.

The dimension of the current business card is 3.5 x 2". The current design of the business cards is shown below. It may change in the future.

Letterhead

The letterhead should include MMDs logo on the top center, a reference number on the right, and a date on the left.

Brochure

All brochures printed by MMD shall always have the GIRoA logo, but if an external partner sponsors an activity, the partner's name and logo may be added in accordance with MMD branding and marking rules.

Poster

All posters printed by MMD shall always have the GIRoA logo, but if an external partner sponsors an activity, the partner's name and logo may be added in accordance with MMD branding and marking rules.

Billboards

All billboards printed by MMD shall always have the GIRoA logo, but if an external partner sponsors an activity, the partner's name and logo may be added in accordance with MMD branding and marking rules.