

6. STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The 2021-2027 programming cycle will adopt a new approach to pooling, programming and deploying strategic communication and public diplomacy resources.

At country level, action documents for specific sector programmes are no longer required to include a provision for communication actions promoting the programmes concerned. These resources will instead be consolidated in CF established by support measure action documents, allowing Delegations to plan and execute multiannual strategic communication and public diplomacy actions with sufficient critical mass to be effective on a national scale.

The year 2021 marks 45 years of diplomatic relations and cooperation between the EU and Guinea-Bissau. Simultaneously, new global players are strengthening their position in the country and the President is keen to normalise and enhance the country's standing by projecting the image of a newly-found stability that nevertheless remains fragile and volatile. It is therefore of the utmost importance to develop a comprehensive EU public diplomacy strategy that will enhance the visibility of the EU and its action, so as to contribute to the development of Guinea-Bissau in a sustainable and equitable fashion.

To that effect, the EU Delegation has started developing a comprehensive public diplomacy strategy, based on an integrated approach, which will encompass the Cooperation Communication Plan and the Press & Information Plan. Within the scope of the MIP 2021-2027, the current communication strategy will be upgraded with the support of a local technical assistance.

Target **audiences** are manifold, from the grass-root civil society, the wider population and media, to the political authorities and academia. Particular attention is given to establishing sustainable and reliable networks that can be activated in the context of specific campaigns. For example, it is foreseen that the European Year of greener cities will provide the overall framework for the EU Delegation's activities in 2022.

A technical assistance will be contracted for monitoring the impact of Public Diplomacy efforts *inter alia* through the setting up of focus groups.

The core narrative, particularly in the context of the 45th anniversary, will be that the EU is a long-standing and reliable partner for Guinea-Bissau. EU foreign policy and action is based on universal values and a rules-based international order, with the UN at its core. The EU seeks to address global challenges, such as peace and security, climate change and sustainable development through cooperation with its partners. The principal **communication objective** will be different for each audience:

At the political level the core of the message will emphasize the new role of EU as partner, and not merely donor, the key EU values and the general strategic orientation for the next years, as settled in the MIP rationale.

For the high institutional level the focus will be on the sectors (agricultural, education, etc.) strategic orientation, specified in the MIP priorities. That same sectoral focus will guide our communication with the TFPs. For the general public the messages will address the EU values and EU achievements in Guinea-Bissau.

As a partner of Guinea-Bissau, the EU aims at areas of mutual interest for collaboration in line with the SDGs, the EU strategic priorities – notably Green Deal and Partnership for Jobs and Growth, in a nexus with security and stability.

Some preliminary suggestions for content (messages, straplines, hashtags), partnerships (influencers) and channels may include:

- Content (messages, straplines, hashtags): Leave no one behind, Build Back Better, Women's empowerment;
- Partnerships (influencers): CSOs, UN family, Government;
- Channels: events, media (radio, press, TV), Facebook.

Concerning the timeline efforts will be more intense in the first 2 years (in particular the first year) because of the first steps to be taken in the MIP's implementation and also to reach a level of visibility proportional to the relevance of EU cooperation efforts (in relation to other TPF) in the country.

The Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy Plan will be implemented in close coordination between the Communication Coordinator of the Cooperation section and the Political section.

It is envisaged that a contract for communication and visibility may be contracted under a framework contract and/or a call for proposals.