

**RWANDA NETWORK OF PEOPLE  
LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS – RRP+**

**COMMUNICATION  
POLICY**



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## Contents

LIST OF ACCRONYMS.....	2
FORWARD BY THE CHAIRPERSON.....	3
FORWARD BY THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY.....	4
I. INTRODUCTION.....	5
II. PURPOSE.....	5
III. MISSION.....	6
IV. VISION.....	6
V. OVERALL OBJECTIVE.....	6
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES.....	6
I. INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS.....	7
II. EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS.....	7
III. TARGET GROUPS.....	8
IV. CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION.....	9
1. Internal Communication mix:.....	9
2. External Communications Mix:.....	10
V. KEY ACTIVITIES.....	10
VI. EVALUATION.....	11
Annex 1.....	12





## LIST OF ACCRONYMS

RRP+	Rwanda Network of people Living with HIV
RBC	Rwanda Biomedical Center
MOH	Ministry of Health
PMTCT	Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission (of HIV)
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus,
PLHIV	People Living with HIV
PR	Public Relations
PMTCT	Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission
STIs	Sexually Transmitted Infections
PWID	People Who Inject Drugs
MSM	Men who have Sex with Men





## FORWARD BY THE CHAIRPERSON



It gives me great pleasure and pride to introduce the RRP+ Communication Policy on HIV/TB Prevention and Response, a strategic guide that strengthens our collective voice in advancing an HIV-free generation.

Communication has always been at the heart of our response to HIV. As we continue to empower People Living with HIV (PLHIV) and communities across Rwanda, this policy provides a clear framework to ensure that our messages are consistent, evidence-based, inclusive, and aligned with the national HIV and AIDS strategic priorities.

This Communication Policy reflects RRP+'s renewed commitment to fostering open dialogue, reducing stigma and discrimination, and amplifying the voices of PLHIV through innovative and people-centered approaches. It also emphasizes the effective use of digital platforms and community media to reach diverse audiences, especially young people, women, and key populations.

I extend my sincere appreciation to all our partners, members, and stakeholders who contributed to the development of this important document. Your collaboration and dedication continue to inspire our efforts to build an informed, compassionate, and resilient society.

As we implement this policy, I call upon all members and partners to embrace its principles and use them as a roadmap for impactful communication that promotes dignity, inclusion, and shared responsibility in the HIV response. Together, we can ensure that every message we share becomes a step toward ending HIV as a public health threat.

**Sylvie MUNEZA**

**Chairperson,**

**Rwanda Network of People Living with HIV /RRP+**





## FORWARD BY THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

It is with great pleasure and a deep sense of commitment that I extend my heartfelt greetings to all the readers of this communication policy. As the Executive Secretary of the Rwanda Network of People Living with HIV (RRP+), dedicated to raising awareness about HIV/AIDS, it is an honor to introduce this comprehensive guide on promoting awareness about HIV/TB prevention, care treatment, economic and social impact mitigation.



In our collective pursuit to combat the HIV epidemic, knowledge becomes a powerful tool. This publication serves as a beacon of information, offering insights into the latest developments in HIV awareness, prevention strategies, and the importance of fostering a supportive community.

The challenges posed by HIV/AIDS require a united front, and education is at the forefront of our battle. Through the pages of this policy, we hope to empower individuals with the knowledge needed to protect themselves and others, challenge stigma and discrimination, and create a world where everyone can live free from the threat of HIV.

I encourage you to delve into the contents of this communication policy document, share the information within your communities, and actively contribute to the ongoing conversation surrounding HIV/AIDS. By working together, we can make strides towards a future where HIV is no longer a public health threat.

Thank you for your support, engagement, and commitment to the cause.

Sincerely,

**Dr Deo MUTAMBUKA (PhD)**

**Executive Secretary**

**Rwanda Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS /RRP+**



## I. INTRODUCTION

Rwanda Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS - RRP+ is a Rwandan civil society organization whose members and beneficiaries are People infected and affected by HIV. It was founded in March 2003 when representatives of 175 associations of People Living with HIV (PLHIV) from across the country came together and formed RRP+ to serve as a coordinating organ for activities supporting people infected and affected by HIV as well as to promote Greater Involvement of PLHIV(GIPA) in the national HIV response.

RRP+ continued to grow by becoming an umbrella of NGOs, Cooperatives and Associations which are active across the country. The organisation (RRP+) was officially recognized in Rwanda as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) under Registration N<sup>o</sup> 54/RGB/NGO/2016.

The vision of RRP+ is that “Rwandans infected and affected by HIV are healthy, live in a socio-economic environment free from stigma and discrimination and are fully engaged in the HIV response.

## II. PURPOSE

This communication policy for RRP+ on HIV response serves as a strategic framework for guiding the organization's approach to addressing HIV-related matters, through clear and effective communication.

Effective communication is the cornerstone of a thriving and collaborative workplace. This Communication Policy is fashioned to establish clear guidelines and standards for communication within RRP+. The policy outlines the principles, channels, and expectations that guide our internal and external communication efforts. By adhering to these guidelines, RRP+ aims to promote clarity, professionalism, and inclusivity, fostering an environment where every beneficiary, a staff member and stakeholder feels heard, valued, and well-informed.

The PR & Communications policy will:

- Support the achievement of the goals of RRP+.
- Enable a coherent view within RRP+
- This view should relate to all aspects of communication, both internal and external.
- Raise awareness about RRP+ and its function in the Rwandan society

The PR & Communication Policy is linked to the mission and vision of the Strategic Plan of RRP+.



### III. MISSION

The PR & Communications Policy is to facilitate the mission of RRP+, which is to contribute to the process of preventing HIV, improve adherence to continuity of care and treatment for HIV infected patients, restoring hope and improving the quality of life of persons, families and communities affected by HIV.

### IV. VISION

RRP+'s vision is to see that Rwandans infected and affected by HIV are healthy, live in a socio-economic environment free from stigma and discrimination and are fully engaged in the HIV response. The PR & Communications policy will support the achievement of this vision.

### V. OVERALL OBJECTIVE

This communication policy is designed to create awareness and foster an informed and supportive workplace environment regarding HIV/AIDS. The goal is to educate beneficiaries and the general population on HIV prevention, care and treatment, reduce stigma, creating impact mitigation and encourage a culture of empathy and understanding towards People Living with HIV.

### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To raise awareness and understanding of HIV/AIDS among beneficiaries and the general public and dispel misconceptions related to HIV transmission and prevention.
2. To reduce stigma and discrimination associated with HIV/AIDS by fostering a culture of empathy and understanding, encouraging open conversations to reduce fear and discrimination surrounding HIV status.
3. To promote and encourage regular prevention and testing awareness of available testing facilities, with information on preventive measures, safe practices, and access to resources for maintaining overall health.
4. Community engagement to extend the reach of the HIV awareness campaign beyond the workplace by engaging with the local community: Participating in community events, partner with local organizations, and contribute to broader efforts in HIV prevention and support.





5. To establish transparent and accessible communication channels for disseminating information related to HIV: Ensuring that beneficiaries easily access resources, support networks, and information through various communication platforms.
6. Measurement and Evaluation: To implement mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of the communication policy regularly and using feedback from the target audience to refine and improve the communication strategy over time.
7. Legal Compliance: To ensure that all communication efforts related to HIV/AIDS comply with relevant laws and regulations governing health-related information.

## I. INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Communication among managers and employees must be open and collaborative to achieve RRP+ goals and missions, and to ensure quality information services for the public must be a two-way dialogue. Through the following ways:

- **Internal Channels:** RRP+ strives to utilize the organization's web emails, Staff meetings and internal newsletters to disseminate information on HIV awareness.
- **Workshops and Training:** Conduct periodic workshops and training sessions to educate beneficiaries about HIV prevention, transmission, and dispel misconceptions
- **Professionalism and Sensitivity: Respectful language:** To Communicate using respectful and non-stigmatizing language. Avoiding discriminatory or judgmental terms when discussing HIV/AIDS.
- **Confidentiality:** Emphasizing the importance of maintaining the confidentiality of beneficiaries' health information. Discourage gossip and unauthorized disclosure of personal health details.
- **Regular Updates:** Provide regular updates on the progress of the HIV awareness campaign and share success stories to educate society, motivate and engage beneficiaries.
- **Inclusive Messaging:** Ensure that messaging by RPP+ is inclusive and emphasizes that HIV affects individuals from all walks of life, hence important to highlight the importance of solidarity and support.

## II. EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

RRP+ is directly attached to community, and channels of external communications are paramount in reaching target audiences for informative and educative messages in the following ways:

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- **Community Engagement:** Encourage RRP+ employees to participate in external HIV awareness events and collaborate with local organizations to support community initiatives.
- **Public Statements:** RRP+ shall issue public statements or press releases to showcase the organization's commitment to HIV awareness and community support.
- **Use of Technology: Social Media Guidelines:** RRP+ shall establish guidelines for employees on social media use to promote the campaign positively and responsibly.
- **Technology Tools:** Leverage technology tools such as webinars, zoom meetings or online forums shall be used by RRP+ for remote Staff, to ensure broad participation.
- **Monitoring and Compliance with Laws:** To ensure that all communication from RRP+ aligns with relevant laws and regulations governing health-related information, under the Ministry of Health (MoH) through the Rwanda Biomedical Center (RBC)
- **Feedback Mechanism:** RRP+ shall establish a feedback mechanism for beneficiaries and the entire target audience to express concerns, suggestions, or provide feedback on the effectiveness of any HIV campaign the organization is engaged in or has carried out.
- **Crisis Communication (Emergency Protocols):** In the same way, RRP+ shall establish communication protocols in the event of a crisis related to HIV, ensuring timely and accurate information dissemination to the general public or targeted beneficiaries.
- **Evaluation:** RRP+ shall carry out regular/periodical Assessment to measure the effectiveness of its communication strategy through surveys, focus groups, or other feedback mechanisms. Then the organization shall also adjust the strategy, based on the feedback received.

### III. TARGET GROUPS

Various target groups have different information needs and can be reached by various channels. For example, people living with HIV and those affected: they need information about HIV prevention, care and treatment, peer educators need enough information in their engagement and the general public as well, because they need more training, guidance and training manuals for example.

Below is the division of the target groups.

- People Living with HIV (PLHIV)
- People affected by HIV

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- Young Adults and Adolescents (in and out of school)
- High-Prevalence Areas
- Pregnant women (PMTCT)
- Educational Institutions
- Healthcare Providers
- People Living with Disabilities (PWDs)
- Religious and Community Leaders
- General Population
- Sex Workers
- Peer Educators
- People Who Inject Drugs (PWID)
- Men who have Sex with Men (MSM)
- Adolescents, Girls and Young Women (AGYW)

#### IV. CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

In this policy are the mediums or tools through which information from RRP+ shall be conveyed to beneficiary's/ target groups (PLHIV) or the general public. In the context of RRP+, communication channels shall play a crucial role in facilitating the flow of information among employees, beneficiaries, and stakeholders. Here are some common communication channels that shall be used under RRP+ organizational settings:

##### 1. Internal Communication mix:

In this Communication policy, this will be the way essential information shall be shared within the organization (RRP+). It is intended to enable employees to better perform in their roles, being engaged and well-informed; facilitating a unified flow of information to reach across different departments and among colleagues at all levels of RRP+ hierarchy. This is to be achieved through the following platforms:

- Staff meetings
- Departmental meetings
- Face-to-face meetings
- Staff Email: Formal and official communication within and outside RRP+, for detailed information
- Internal social media platforms (WhatsApp groups)
- Internal Newsletters
- Employee events





## 2. External Communications Mix:

This will be the transfer or exchange of information with external audiences such as beneficiary's/target audience, implementing partners, the general public, public and private institutions. It shall also be used by the communication team to share the marketing mix with the world outside the RRP+ through the following channels below

- Press releases
- Radio and Features
- Online: Social Media, RRP+ homepage/website, Photo galleries and Newsletter
- Television: News and features, Interviews, Advert clips/spots and Long-format programs/Talk shows
- Print: Brochures, Posters, Leaflets, Scientific reports
- Public Relations: Events, Telephone calls/Call center station, Conferences/workshops

## V. KEY ACTIVITIES

The key activities to be implemented are:

- Approval of the communications policy
- Education and Training for employees to increase awareness about HIV transmission, prevention, care, treatment and impact mitigation
- Promotion of Safe sexual practices like condoms and encouraging regular testing for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- Non-Discrimination and Stigma Reduction by developing strategies to reduce stigma associated with HIV and promoting a supportive environment for PLHIV
- Clearly communicate the RRP+'s commitment to maintaining confidentiality regarding an individual's HIV status.
  
- Providing information on available healthcare resources and support services for PLHIV and others, including access to HIV testing and counseling services.
- Establishing regular communication channels (newsletters, workshops, etc.) to share information on HIV prevention, treatment, and support services.





- Highlighting success stories and testimonials from beneficiaries who have overcome HIV-related challenges.
- Community Engagement in events and initiatives related to HIV awareness.
- Collaborating with local healthcare centers and NGOs working on HIV issues.
- Implementing mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of communication strategies and adjusting them based on feedback and results.
- Regularly review and updating the communication policy to ensure relevance and accuracy.
- Ensuring that the communication policy adheres to relevant local, national, and international laws and regulations related to HIV disclosure and discrimination.

## VI. EVALUATION

This Public Relations & Communication policy shall be revised each third year after adoption. The activity plans for external and internal communication, should be revised every year and these plans shall be seen as operational tools only.





## Annex 1

### Activity Plan for internal and external communication

To reach the objectives in the PR & Communications Policy satisfactorily, the following operational activities are proposed. This plan has to be updated every year according to this format (activity, deadline, responsibility)

Activity	Deadline	Responsibility
Approval of Communication policy	16 <sup>th</sup> October 2025	RRP+ Board
Training RRP+ Staff	27 <sup>th</sup> October 2025	Communication team
Quarterly Newsletter	15 November 2025	Communication team
Training RRP+ Staff on use of social media platforms	24 <sup>th</sup> November 2025	Communication team
Training in communication for RRP+ Staff	Progressive	Communication team
Regular update on interpersonal communication skills	Progressive	Communication team

### Activity plan for external communication

Activity	Deadline	Responsible
Regular update of RRP+ website	Progressive	Communication team
Social media update	progressive	Communication team
Print publication	progressive	Communication team
Writing Press release	On event or situational basis	Communication team
Press conference	On event or situational basis	Communication team
Radio and TV talk shows	Monthly and progressive	Communication team
Compiling success and impact stories	Progressive	Communication team

