

GAMBIA POLICE FORCE COMMUNITY POLICING DISSEMINATION PLAN



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List of Abbreviations

CPCs	-	Community Policing Coordinators
CPFP	-	Community Policing Focal Points
CPU	-	Community Policing Unit
CPVFPs	-	Community Policing Volunteers Focal Points
CPVs	-	Community Policing Volunteers
CUG	-	Close User Group
GPF	-	Gambia Police Force
N/A	-	Not Applicable

Overview

The Gambia Police Force (GPF) is committed to a safer and more secure Gambia communities with the adoption of Community Policing. There are however challenges. The Force is struggling with image deficit after 20 years of neglect. Majority of the personnel are used to the traditional system of policing and are yet to imbibe Community Policing philosophy. Members of the community are equally apathetic towards police-community partnership and joint problem solving due to lack of trust and confidence. This is compounded by poor infrastructure and dearth of logistics to adequately provide police services to fulfil their constitutional functions thereby making community policing approach a veritable option.

In spite of these challenges, the police leadership is determined to ensure the success of the programme to enhance public safety and security. It therefore becomes imperative that the GPF must use a multi-faceted information dissemination media strategy to widely inform the public on the refreshed approach to community policing. This Community Policing Dissemination Plan is geared to achieve this goal.

Successful and effective communication begins with a plan that takes full advantage of the knowledge and the tools that are now available at a relatively low cost. In doing this, consideration will be given to the way people access, use, and disseminate information, and the resulting implications for community policing. The focus is on developing strategic, proactive, and multi-dimensional information dissemination plan about Community Policing in The Gambia.

Vision

To project the GPF to a highly successful and accountable police organisation dedicated to the delivery of security services in tandem with the principles of good governance, rule of law and respect for human rights.

Mission

To mobilize police personnel and members of the community in support of GPF to deliver professional police services of crime prevention, detection, apprehension and prosecution of offenders to ensure public safety and improved quality of life for Gambians

Goal

To disseminate GPF Community Policing programmes and practices aimed at transforming the organization into a highly professional, motivated and client centered workforce that is able to reassure and protect the public from all forms of crime.

GPF Core Values

The GPF seeks to uphold the following core values:

- professionalism
- Neutrality
- Integrity
- respect for diversity
- Accountability

Methodology and Scope

The dissemination plan is based on the goals and objectives of the GPF Community Policing Strategy, Community Policing Implementation Plan, Report of the Pilot Scheme and best practices based on literature review.

The Ward is the smallest unit of The Gambia political structure and Community Policing structures have been patterned after to Government structure. The scope of this plan is the Ward level but can be adapted to suit District and Regional levels.

Goals and Objectives

1. To increase police and community **participation** in community policing in The Gambia especially in the selected areas of Barra, Kerewon, Janjanbure, Basse and Mansakonko.
2. To bridge existing gap and sustain **positive relationships** between the GPF and the communities they serve.
3. To improve on the use of traditional **media channels** to disseminate community policing to police personnel and members of the community, mostly in rural areas.
4. To take advantage of **social media** to disseminate and engage police personnel and members of community in community policing in the selected areas and reach wider audience.
5. To adopt appropriate **communication strategies** for effective information dissemination to the various segments, stakeholders and interests in the communities.
6. To engender police **transparency and accountability** to the communities they serve to improve community trust and support.

Dissemination Materials

The next step is to prepare the materials that will be used for the dissemination. The items that would be used are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Items for Dissemination

• Flyers, hand-outs
• Official presentations with key messages (adjusted presentations for various conferences, trainings, workshops or meetings)
• Posters at conferences, meetings and during training
• Press releases
• Social medial posts-WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube
• Webpage
• Videos on community policing activities
• Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
• Short communications in GPF newsletters

Communication Channels

Although the communication channels are very much interconnected with materials to be disseminated, it is useful to also consider communication channels for dissemination. This becomes necessary as avenues for communication and information dissemination have multiplied with steady increase in usage. This has its drawback as it makes it difficult to

effectively communicate with communities segmented across the many platforms they have to obtain news and information. The GPF will therefore focus on dissemination channels that are accessible, cost effective and popular with the Gambia communities. The traditional news media still enjoys patronage from thousands of viewers, listeners and readers and remains an essential channel of communication for the police. These include:

- News conferences
- Press releases
- Newspapers
- Radio (including existing Poliso Radio Station of the GPF)
- Television
- Telephones (including existing GPF personnel-to-personnel Close User Group (CUG))
- E-mails – especially newsletter service

The audience of these traditional avenues have gradually shifted to emerging modes of information dissemination. The Internet has given birth, not only to new platforms, but to whole new ways of creating, interacting with and sharing information, debating issues, and developing common ground. The GPF acknowledges these profound changes and the need to engage them in information dissemination. In view of this, the GPF will continue to improve on the traditional modes to reach the local communities and the elderly but master and take advantage of the social media channels that are cost effective, accessible and widely used by the citizens especially the youths. These include:

- Internet - GPF website and link with other websites
- Social media:
 - Facebook (Including existing Poliso Facebook page for GPF)
 - Twitter
 - Instagram
 - Google+
 - YouTube

Target Audiences

Effective information dissemination of community policing programmes, activities and practices requires that community policing officers recognise its wide range of audiences and the various interest groups in the communities they serve. It is helpful to understand who they are and spend some thoughts on where and how to reach them. An in-depth understanding of the stakeholder's lifestyles, preferences, and opinions helps to sharpen objectives, develop an appropriate strategy, craft specific messages, and choose the best ways to reach them. The list of stakeholders that should be reached are many but most essential ones are:

- Victims of crime (family, friends)
- Criminals
- Elected officials
- Community leadership (Alkalos)
- Government agencies
- Justice officials

- Lawyers
- Youths
- Parents
- Business community
- Religious community
- Non-profit community
- Education leaders (public, private, higher education institutions)
- Private security companies
- GPF personnel both uniformed and civilian staff.
- Unions
- Media (traditional and social)

Their perceptions and opinions about the GPF carries weight within their circles of influence. They exercise considerable informal and formal influence on public opinion and behaviour and personnel of GPF will spend quality time and energy developing relationships with them.

Communication Strategies

This deals with packaging, what will help GPF move from specific objectives to specific recommended action. To achieve this, GPF will ensure that key messages and materials to be disseminated to the various stakeholders differ taking into cognisance their varying interests. For example, the general public or rural communities will require the most simple and straightforward communication messages in a non-offensive way to enable them to understand and communicate about it to others. Other communication strategies to be explored include:

Style of communication. What's the best style to be adopted to communicate the message? Would face-to-face meetings be best or would a multi-media method be preferable?

Tone – what type of language or rights approach does the situation calls for; humour, gravity, emotional appeals, fear appeals, or straightforward informational messages?

Spokespeople. We would be selecting the right person to speak on the right issue.

Credibility – Every effort will be made to check and cross-check that facts and information to the public are credible.

Timing - When to communicate is a strategic decision. Some issues have obvious timing considerations and this will be factored into every information dissemination. For instance, sending messages out about bush burning would be most appropriate when dry season approaches.

Messages

Whatever the situation, it is critical that the message is positive. Emphasis will be on what we believe people need to know or what people say they want to know. This plan aims at developing a dissemination of information that not only takes a strategic approach to the job, but takes full advantage of the range of tactics, and ensures consistency of purpose and message, identifying and tailoring information to specific audiences.

To achieve this, it is important that key messages are clearly articulated, simple, and easy to understand, worded in appropriate language and tailored to suit different audiences, situations and environment.

There is no specific way a message is crafted but the following questions could help shape the focus.

- What should people think when the GPF comes to mind?
- What images of the GPF do we want people to have?
- What is the GPF reputation?
- How does the GPF approach its work?
- How can the GPF demonstrate commitment to transparency, openness, and honesty in its dealings with members of the public and the communities they serve?

In addition messages will consider what can legally be disclosed and balancing the various interests concerned. For instance, the name of victim of sexual based violence cannot be disclosed. At the same time careful consideration will be given to political, social and cultural sensitivity in drafting of messages.

Careful use of graphics to convey messages will be embraced as one picture can be worth a thousand words.

Messages must also be consistent with the actual vision, mission and values of the GPF. Consequently concerted efforts will be made to ensure GPF personnel ethics and standards are consistent with the overall goal of sending positive message across to the public. For example, sloppily dressed officers, patrol vehicles that are chronically dirty, unreturned phone calls from victims or their families, lack of attendance at community meetings, and how people feel they are treated when interacting with the police matters.

Stories of good policing would feature prominently using the various dissemination tools. So, too would stories of community engagement and the work of residents that contribute to public safety.

At the base of all communication and dissemination is whether there is a feeling of safety and security in the communities without unreasonable fear of crime.

Time Factor

Right timing is essential and will be well considered for the different activities related to dissemination. In doing this, additional time needs to be planned for thorough quality control, especially double-checking the messages to avoid any embarrassment due to error. Another question is when should dissemination start? Dissemination itself would be observed throughout the project circle.

Planning of Resources

Human and budgetary resources need to be planned carefully. It is important to have very committed people, agree on who will do what and how it will be funded. It is important to consider all the possible costs. For example, travel related to the dissemination, layout and printing of flyers, its possible translation, equipment and space rental costs and other

miscellaneous expenses. Costs could be generated on estimates pending formal approval based on previous experience as demonstrated the example in Table 2.

Table 2: Example of Costs for Planning of Resources

Task	Lead	Deadline	Budget
Secure date and send IGP invitation letters to Police Commissioners of North Bank Region, Central River Region, Upper River Region and Lower River Region	Lamin Jaiteh	10/10/21	Not Applicable (N/A)
Locations-Public schools/community halls	Community Policing Coordinators (CPCs) in Police Divisions at locations	16/10/21	N/A
Compile mailing lists	CPCs – Barra, Kerewon, Janjanbure, Basse, Mansakonko Police Divisions	14/10/21	N/A
Rent public address system	Gina-UNDP	14/10/21	D600
WhatsApp messages and phone calls	Fanta – Community Policing Unit (CPU), HQ	14/10/21	N/A
Design posters and messages	Jaiteh – CPU		
Jiggles on Poliso Radio	PIO GPF	10-25/10/21	N/A
Coordination with CPCs and Community Policing Volunteers Focal Points (CPVFPs) in selected areas	Bajje – CPU	15/10/21	N/A
Follow-up calls	Divisions – CPCs	15/10/21	N/A
Order refreshments /pay for posters/transport/stipends/Feeding allowance	Gina – UNDP	15/10/21	D80,000
Radio talk shows	Stations & anchors -Poliso Radio-Jaiteh -GRTS FM & TAXE FM-Basse -Eizabeth -Bansang Community Radio – Janjanbure-Jallow -Mansakonko Community Radio-Fatoumata	16/10/21 – 25/10/21	N/A
Vehicles for transportation	Procurement officer - UNDP	18/10/21	60,000
Provision of hand-outs, pens and paper, name tags	Gina	20/10/21	D40,000

Hall set up	Fanta/CPCs Divisions in locations	25/10/21	N/A
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The table shows breakdown of an implementation plan-what has to be done, who will take the lead on accomplishing the work, when it is to be completed and cost implication, if any. The more comprehensive the implementation plan, the better.

Engaging personnel from the GPF Public Relations Unit is very critical. Brining on board other personnel of various ranks and from different units, divisions/stations of the GPF will also help to reduce cost and it is a viable way to temporarily assemble the people needed to do the work. This would in turn develop their skills, galvanise their interests in CP and ensure buy-in and support.

Tactics and Implementation

This is where we determine what methods to use to encourage the involvement of the police, Community Policing Volunteers (CPVs), the various stakeholders and the community at large. There are a varieties of information dissemination outlets and the GPF will avail itself of the opportunities. The overall idea has been set out in the objectives. The implementation plan will now address tactics to achieve them showing what has to be done, who will take the lead on accomplishing the work, when it is to be completed and how much money, if any, is earmarked for the task. The various tactics in terms of reach and impact are categorized as follows:

Interpersonal communication- includes face-to-face interactions.

Organizational media - are the materials the department publishes or produces itself.

Advertising media - include paid (or donated) advertising in print; magazines, newspapers, electronic; television, radio, online, and outdoor advertising; billboards, posters, car stickers and other signage.

Promotional media - refers to items imprinted with organizational messages or logos such as mugs, clothing, T-shirts, Face caps and folders.

Once all of the elements are identified, organizing them for implementation requires three parts: **Assigning Responsibility, Detailing Budget Needs, and Developing the Schedule.** Using objective one as an example, the implementation outline is explained in **Table 3.**

Table 3: Flow of the Plan Outline how Each Element Works Together

Communication Opportunity	Five (5) Selected Gambia Communities
Objective:	To increase police and community participation in community policing programmes in five selected areas of Barra, Kerewan, Janjanbure, Basse and Mansakonko by the end of 2021.
Public	A minimum of 50 persons to become active CPV member in each selected area with representation of the various interest groups including youths, women, house owners, crime victims, business community and others, to partner with the police to secure their communities
Strategy:	GPF headquarters' Community Policing Unit to attract residents including opinion leaders in their communities to a face-to-face meeting

	with their assigned Ward CPCs and get in-person commitments from a minimum of 50 attendees to be part of CPVs.
Tactics:	Invite community leaders and residents to community forum. Use invitation letters from the IGP to be hand-delivered by Officer Commanding District, follow up with phone calls, WhatsApp messages, posters, jingles on Poliso Radio to inform members of those communities. Provide refreshments and transport stipends to incentivize attendance. Provide transport and feeding allowance for officers from GPF headquarters' Community Policing Unit (CPU), Community Policing Focal Point (CPFP) Officer at GPF headquarters to coordinate the meetings together with Ward CPVFPs and sensitise participants on community policing. Community Policing Focal Point officers, CPC officers and community leaders to feature on radio talk shows.
Budget:	\$1,500
Evaluation:	Attendance figures, number of those who join CPV, follow up by communities to organise programs, number of communities that complete the process.

Evaluation of the Actual Dissemination

Evaluation of the dissemination exercise is not something to be done solely after the completion of the dissemination process. The main purpose is to learn from experience which will in turn improve future dissemination exercises. The main questions to be answered will be: Did the dissemination reach the intended audiences? What is the evidence on how many people it reached? One can work with qualitative and quantitative data to answer these questions. Qualitative data can be collected by talking to colleagues and members of the communities. Both qualitative and quantitative data can be obtained from number of attendees, numbers of CPVs, monitoring press releases, social media chats on WhatsApp or Facebook. Evaluation will continue throughout the lifespan of this project.

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