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FOR ANIMAL RESOURCES

GUIDELINE ON KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT, COMMUNICATIONS & VISIBILITY FOR THE FEED AND FODDER SECTOR



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Executive Summary

These guidelines provide a comprehensive framework for Knowledge Management, Communications, Visibility, and Advocacy aimed at supporting Member States in developing and transforming their Feed and Fodder subsectors into thriving agro-industries. The advancement of this sector requires the creation and dissemination of new or expanded narratives, systematic knowledge generation and sharing, and enhanced capacity to produce content that elevates the sector's policy visibility and relevance. By showcasing the Feed and Fodder subsector's potential contributions, the guidelines aim to attract investment and effectively address feed shortages, thereby mitigating risks associated with feed crises and related disasters.

Designed as a practical reference tool, these guidelines ensure that evidence-based solutions and innovations in the Feed and Fodder sector are captured, communicated, and amplified to inform decision-making, strengthen stakeholder engagement, and promote sustainable impact. This initiative also supports countries in building their agro-industrial capacities, a priority emphasized in the Kampala Declaration.

The critical role of robust Knowledge Management, Communications, Visibility, and Advocacy is underscored and mandated by key strategic frameworks such as Agenda 2063, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Ten-Year Strategy and Action Plan, the Kampala Declaration, Livestock Development for Sustainable Agriculture (LiDeSA), and the African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) New Strategy (2024-2028).

This is inherently a multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder effort, involving the Feed and Fodder subsector, livestock health, human nutrition, as well as public sector institutions, private enterprises, non-governmental organizations, and strategic partners. Hence, the messaging and narrative must promote coordination and foster collaboration across these diverse actors.

To enable effective operationalization of these guidelines, a detailed implementation plan is proposed to be developed. This plan will ensure coherence, adaptability, and measurable outcomes across the life cycle of projects and programs within the Feed and Fodder sector.

1. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of these guidelines is to highlight the key narratives within the Feed and Fodder subsector, demonstrating the collective ambition to promote agro-industrialisation through the practical application of a comprehensive framework for knowledge management, communication, and visibility. These guidelines highlight the crucial role of multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral engagement, emphasising coordination, collaboration, open dialogue, the incorporation of diverse perspectives, and shared values. Together, these elements drive meaningful change and support sustained growth in policy development, practical implementation, and investment.

Specifically, the guidelines set out standardized approaches to the following:

Knowledge Generation, Organization, and Management: Develop and manage knowledge assets in a systematic and organized manner to ensure they are easily accessible, shareable, and usable by all relevant stakeholders across the subsector.

Targeted Messaging: Create clear and tailored messages that resonate with diverse audience groups. These messages should integrate robust data, compelling investment stories, and incorporate gender-responsive insights to promote inclusivity and equity.

Enhancing Visibility: Increase the presence and prominence of the subsector on public agendas and within relevant domains by highlighting sectoral issues, fostering stakeholder inclusion and representation, and showcasing achievements. This is achieved through consistent communication efforts and the use of strategic channels to amplify reach.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Regularly monitor and assess the effectiveness and reach of all communications and knowledge dissemination activities. This enables continuous learning, informs strategic adjustments, and improves overall impact over time.

These guidelines serve as a practical roadmap to support stakeholders in advancing the Feed and Fodder subsector, ensuring that knowledge-driven communication and visibility efforts contribute effectively to agro-industrialization goals.

2. Key Components of a Robust Knowledge Management, Communications, and Visibility (KMVC) Framework for the Feed and Fodder Subsector and Agro-Industry

To establish a coherent and integrated approach that supports the development of the Feed and Fodder subsector and its evolution into a dynamic agro-industry, the following four interdependent components are proposed.

Each of these components complements and reinforces the others to create a comprehensive KMVC framework:

Knowledge Management

- Facilitate active engagement, knowledge sharing, learning, and collaboration among all relevant stakeholders. This includes producing and curating a diverse range of knowledge products designed to address evolving sector needs and promote adaptability.
- Ensure that knowledge assets are systematically organized and made accessible to enable informed decision-making and innovation across the subsector.

Communications Strategy

- Develop clear, compelling key messages and new narratives that deepen understanding of the subsector's importance, stimulate public dialogue and policy debate, support shifts in practice, and attract increased investment.
- Promote a shift in the flow of information by delivering precise, timely, and audience-specific messaging that bridges the gap between technical knowledge and actionable insights. This includes translating complex scientific and technical information into accessible formats to support behavior change and evidence-based decisions.
- Establish and nurture strategic partnerships with a network of skilled and consistent content creators, including media houses, journalists, and social media influencers, to expand reach and impact.
- Strengthen collaboration between Feed and Fodder subsector stakeholders and media institutions to build their capacity in accurate reporting and effective communication of sector issues and achievements.
- Promote brand coherence and build stakeholder trust by maintaining consistent messaging and positioning across communication channels and member states. This includes linking a strong data infrastructure and disaster preparedness systems to ensure a reliable supply of quality Feed and Fodder.

Visibility and Branding

- Enhance the subsector's visibility on public agendas by consistently highlighting critical sector issues, stakeholder inclusion, diverse perspectives, and key achievements through strategic communication platforms.
- Develop and maintain a strong and positive brand identity for the Feed and Fodder subsector that conveys its status as a multi-billion-dollar industry contributing significantly to economic growth, sustainable development, and investment opportunities. This branding should emphasize themes such as inclusivity, innovation, recovery from underinvestment, and adoption of best practices and technologies.
- Ensure a consistent, professional, and recognizable visual identity across all communications to build credibility, enhance recognition, and foster trust among stakeholders.

Advocacy

- Influence policymakers and shape public discourse to promote supportive policy environments that enable sector growth, sustainability, and investment.
- Advocate for the integration of Feed and Fodder priorities into broader agendas related to agriculture, resilience, and economic development at national, regional, and continental levels.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL)

- Implement a MEL framework with core indicators to track progress. These indicators include the growth and utilization of knowledge assets, the quantity and quality of communication content, shifts in narratives and behaviors, media reach, the diversity of perspectives represented, and the expansion of the cadre of content creators and reporters.
- Evaluate the performance and impact of different communication and knowledge management channels, including traditional media and digital platforms.
- Institute a quarterly MEL cycle consisting of planning, data collection, analysis, and adaptation to continuously monitor results, assess impact, and inform strategic adjustments.
- Support transparent reporting, peer review, and accountability mechanisms aligned with continental initiatives such as the Biennial Business Review (BBR), Regional Agricultural Investment Plans (RASIPs), and National Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIPs). These efforts enhance evidence-based decision-making and continuous improvement in communication and knowledge management.

3. Guiding Principles

The effectiveness and integrity of the Knowledge Management, Communications, Visibility, and Advocacy framework for the Feed and Fodder subsector rely on a set of core guiding principles. These principles serve as foundational values and standards to ensure that all activities are purpose-driven, credible, inclusive, and responsive to the diverse needs of stakeholders. By adhering to these principles, the framework aligns with broader policy agendas, fosters trust through evidence-based information, enhances capacity, and promotes ethical, sustainable, and culturally relevant communication. Collectively, these guiding principles provide a roadmap to support coordinated, adaptable, and impactful engagement across member states and sectors.

- **Alignment with Policies and Strategies:** Ensure all activities are consistent with overarching continental and domestic policy frameworks and strategic plans.
- **Evidence-Based:** Ground all communications and knowledge products in validated data and peer-reviewed research to maintain credibility and trust.
- **Capacity Building:** Continuously develop the skills and capabilities of a broad range of content creators, including photographers, writers, and digital media specialists.

- **Real-Time Responsiveness and Agility:** Maintain the ability to rapidly report and respond to emerging crises such as droughts or market shocks, providing timely and accurate information.
- **Localization:** Tailor content to align with national policies, languages, and media cultures specific to each member state, ensuring relevance and cultural appropriateness.
- **Audience-Centric Approach:** Design messaging and select communication channels based on the unique needs, preferences, and capacities of different stakeholder groups.
- **Inclusivity:** Incorporate diverse perspectives with particular emphasis on recognizing women's leadership and viewpoints, and produce accessible materials for rural and marginalized populations.
- **Sustainability and Ethics:** Promote environmentally sustainable practices and ensure all storytelling respects cultural sensitivities, fairness, and ethical standards.

4. Alignment of Knowledge Management, Communications, and Visibility to an Effective Communications Strategy

An effective communications strategy is essential to maximise the impact of knowledge management, communication, and visibility efforts within the Feed and Fodder subsector and the agro-industry. The KMCV framework aligns these elements to support resilience, sustainability, and growth at local, national, regional, and continental levels. By raising awareness of critical Feed and Fodder challenges, the framework mobilises diverse stakeholders, including policymakers, private sector actors, farmers, women's and youth groups, development partners, media professionals, and researchers, to engage in coordinated action and investment.

Central to this alignment is the design of tailored messages and narratives that resonate with specific stakeholder groups, emphasising the strategic importance of Feed and Fodder in securing food systems, the urgency of addressing feed shortages, and the opportunities that arise from investment, innovation, and inclusive participation. The communications approach uses a multi-channel mix, including traditional media, digital platforms, direct stakeholder engagement, policy briefs, and multimedia content, to ensure broad and sustained reach.

Strategic partnerships with media houses, influencers, and communication experts play a critical role in amplifying key messages and enhancing the subsector's visibility. Building the capacity of these partners ensures accurate, timely, and consistent reporting that supports informed decision-making and fosters trust. Additionally, the framework links strong data infrastructure and disaster preparedness systems within its narrative, underscoring their importance for ensuring a stable and quality supply of Feed and Fodder.

Continuous monitoring and evaluation of communication activities, through tracking media coverage, collecting stakeholder feedback, assessing outreach impact, and capturing lessons learned, facilitate an iterative process of improvement. This approach strengthens accountability,

ensures evidence-based adjustments, and sustains momentum toward long-term sector resilience and development.

The integration of knowledge management, communications, and visibility into a cohesive communications strategy forms the backbone for informing, engaging, and empowering all actors within the Feed and Fodder ecosystem, accelerating progress toward agro-industrial transformation.

4.1 The Main Steps of a Communications Strategy

An effective communications strategy is vital for successfully conveying key messages, engaging stakeholders, and achieving defined objectives within any sector or initiative. The development and implementation of such a strategy involves a series of deliberate, structured steps designed to ensure clarity, relevance, and sustained impact. The main steps in crafting a comprehensive communications strategy include the following:

Define Objectives

Begin by clearly articulating the goals that the communications strategy aims to achieve. Objectives should be specific, measurable, and aligned with broader organizational or project goals. They often focus on increasing awareness, influencing attitudes, stimulating behavior change, mobilizing resources, or supporting policy shifts. Defining clear objectives provides a roadmap to guide all subsequent communications efforts.

Identify Target Audiences

Segmenting stakeholders into specific groups based on their roles, interests, influence, and information needs is crucial. This allows for tailored messaging that resonates with each audience's priorities and capacities. Target audiences might include policymakers, private sector actors, farmers, community groups, researchers, media professionals, or development partners. Understanding these groups ensures communications are relevant and engaging.

Develop Key Messages

Craft clear, compelling, and consistent messages that directly reflect the strategy's objectives and address the concerns and motivations of each target audience. Key messages should be concise and easily understood, highlighting the value proposition, urgency, or benefits related to the issue or sector at hand. They serve as the foundation for all communication materials and channels.

Select Communication Channels

Select the most suitable platforms and tools to reach each target audience effectively. This could include traditional media (radio, newspapers, television), digital platforms (social media, websites, email newsletters), direct engagement (workshops, community meetings, policy dialogues), or multimedia content (videos, infographics, podcasts). Channel selection should consider audience preferences, accessibility, and resource availability to maximise outreach and achieve the most significant impact.

Plan Implementation Actions

Outline specific activities that will bring the communication strategy to life. This includes creating content, organizing events, developing partnerships, conducting media outreach, and deploying advocacy campaigns. A detailed work plan with timelines and responsibilities ensures systematic execution and coordination among all involved parties.

Mobilize Resources and Stakeholders

Secure the necessary financial, human, and technical resources to support implementation. Engage contributors across sectors, including communication specialists, knowledge managers, media partners, and stakeholder networks. This collaboration fosters ownership, expands reach, and enhances the quality and credibility of communication efforts.

Execute the Strategy

Carry out the planned activities according to the established schedule, ensuring quality, consistency, and responsiveness to emerging needs. Effective execution also involves proactive management of communication flows, timely dissemination of information, and adapting messages as required.

Monitor and Evaluate

Continuously track the performance of communication activities against predefined indicators, such as audience reach, engagement levels, message retention, behavior change, and impact on policy or practice. Collect feedback from stakeholders and analyze media coverage and digital analytics to assess effectiveness. Use these insights to refine messaging, optimize channels, and improve overall strategy responsiveness and relevance.



Figure 2: An overview of a Continental Communications Strategy

4.2 Key Messages

The strategy revolves around clear, consistent messages that resonate with diverse audiences:

- **Importance of Feed and Fodder for Food Security and Nutrition:** Emphasizing how quality feed underpins livestock health, productivity, and the availability of nutritious animal-sourced foods.
- **Urgency of Addressing Feed Shortages and Building Resilience:** Highlighting the immediate and long-term risks of feed deficits and the need for proactive, coordinated responses.
- **Benefits of Investment, Innovation, and Partnerships:** Showcasing success stories and opportunities that demonstrate how collaborative efforts and new technologies drive sector growth.
- **Inclusion and Empowerment of Women and Youth:** Promoting social equity as a foundation for sustainable development and improved livelihoods.
- **Evidence-Based Approaches for Sustainable Impact:** Advocating for decisions and interventions grounded in robust data and research.
- **Industrialization of the Feed and Fodder Sector:** Scaling up the scope of the activities in the Feed and Fodder value chain to reach industrial scale through investments, tailored financing, mechanization and technological advancements to match production with market requirements in both volumes and quality
- **The Feed and Fodder Data Ecosystem** is crucial for providing data and sharing insights on opportunities for investment, markets that drive the growth and development of feed and fodder businesses, as well as opportunities for de-risking feed and fodder sector investments.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) form a critical pillar within the continental Knowledge Management, Communications, and Visibility (KMCV) framework designed to transform the Feed and Fodder sector across Africa. The MEL framework offers a comprehensive and systematic approach to evaluating the effectiveness, reach, and impact of knowledge management, communication, and visibility activities. It ensures these efforts are aligned with overarching strategic goals and stakeholder expectations, enabling continuous improvement and adaptive management across diverse contexts and member states.

5.1 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of the MEL framework within the KMCV system is to track progress and measure outcomes related to the management of knowledge assets, the implementation of communication

campaigns, stakeholder engagement, and the enhancement of sector visibility. This monitoring enables governments, partners, and implementing agencies to assess the effectiveness of knowledge capture, structuring, sharing, and application in influencing awareness, policies, investments, and practices across the Feed and Fodder subsector. By providing timely and accurate data on communication and knowledge dissemination performance, the framework supports evidence-based decision-making and stakeholder collaboration across regional and national levels.

5.2 Core Indicators

To capture progress and impact, the MEL framework employs a set of tailored key performance indicators (KPIs) reflecting the objectives of the KMCV framework, such as:

- **Knowledge Asset Management:** Percentage of knowledge products uploaded, catalogued, and made accessible in knowledge repositories (with targets to ensure comprehensive and user-friendly databases).
- **Media and Outreach Reach:** Number of audience impressions generated per communication campaign across traditional and digital platforms, measuring visibility and engagement levels.
- **Policy Influence:** Number of policy documents, strategies, or investment plans referencing knowledge produced or disseminated through the framework, demonstrating evidence-based advocacy success.
- **Inclusivity Metrics:** Proportion of communication outputs highlighting women's leadership, marginalized groups' voices, and gender-responsive content, ensuring equitable representation in sector narratives.
- **User Experience and Satisfaction:** Feedback scores regarding the usefulness, accessibility, and relevance of digital knowledge portals and communication tools, guiding continuous enhancements.

5.3 MEL Cycle: Plan → Collect → Analyze → Adapt (Quarterly)

The framework adopts an iterative and dynamic MEL cycle conducted quarterly to foster ongoing learning and responsiveness:

1. **Plan:** Define MEL objectives and information needs aligned with strategic communications and knowledge management goals, specifying data sources and collection methods.
2. **Collect:** Systematically gather quantitative and qualitative data from diverse channels, including website analytics, media monitoring, stakeholder surveys, policy reviews, and usage statistics.

3. **Analyze:** Evaluate data against targets and benchmarks to identify achievements, challenges, emerging trends, and the influence of knowledge and communication initiatives on stakeholder awareness and behaviors.

4. **Adapt:** Apply insights to refine communication strategies, enhance content and engagement approaches, improve knowledge management systems, and inform future planning cycles.

5.4 Strategic Importance

The MEL framework plays several vital roles within the continental KMCV structure:

- **Accountability:** It provides transparent reporting mechanisms to stakeholders and funders, demonstrating progress and responsible use of resources in communication and knowledge management interventions.
- **Evidence-Based Decision-Making:** By delivering reliable, timely data, the MEL framework informs strategic adjustments, resource allocations, and policy recommendations grounded in demonstrated impact.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Feedback loops established through MEL activities enable refinement of messaging, content quality, and stakeholder targeting, ensuring relevance and effectiveness over time.
- **Demonstrating Sectoral Impact:** The framework highlights how knowledge sharing and strategic communication contribute to increased policy influence, gender inclusion, investment mobilization, and overall subsector growth.
- **Enhanced Stakeholder Engagement:** Monitoring user satisfaction and responsiveness enables the fostering of inclusive and participatory knowledge ecosystems that promote ownership and collaborative action.

Integrating a robust MEL approach within the KMCV framework is crucial for tracking progress, validating impact, and sustaining momentum in transforming Africa's feed and Fodder sector through knowledge-driven communications and visibility initiatives.

6. Annexe & Resources

- RAFFS communications strategy: https://www.au-ibar.org/resources/knowledge-management-advocacy-visibility-and-communication-strategy
- AU IBAR E-platforms:
  - Website: www.au-ibar.org
  - AU IBAR knowledge sharing networks: https://networks.au-ibar.org/
  - Access our publications: http://repository.au-ibar.org/