



H2N Conflict Sensitivity and Communication & Policy Dialogue

The purpose of this H2N is to give orientations to SDC's staff on key elements to take into consideration when integrating conflict sensitivity in communication and policy dialogue. Quality-conscious and strategic communication underlies the work of international cooperation and makes it better and more effective. Especially in fragile contexts, communication is at the heart of CSPM, as it analyses delicate issues of the context, anticipates risk impacts and helps to prevent possible tensions and conflicts.

1. CSPM and Communication

For SDC, institutional communication has to be quality-conscious, strategic and conflict-sensitive.

SDC's work consists of communication: political dialogues, negotiations with partners and authorities in the partner country, awareness raising, capacity building, knowledge transfer and intercultural communication are all important building blocks of SDC's engagement. Quality-conscious and outcome-oriented communication increases our impact: speaking a language understood by the target audiences - from the grass root community to top officials at ministerial level.

Communication needs to be planned strategically: communication has to be outcome-oriented. For specific communication measures, communication action plans are elaborated and implemented. In this way, communication supports the effectiveness of SDC's operational and policy work.

Conflict-sensitive communication is key for working in fragile and conflict-affected contexts (FCAS). Conflict-sensitive wording and behaviour have an influence on how SDC is perceived and accepted.

References

SDC's interactive tool "CSPM & Communication" (FCHR shareweb, CSPM toolbox)

[SDC's Communication for Development – C4D](#)

H2N Human Rights and Communication (FCHR shareweb, CSPM toolbox)

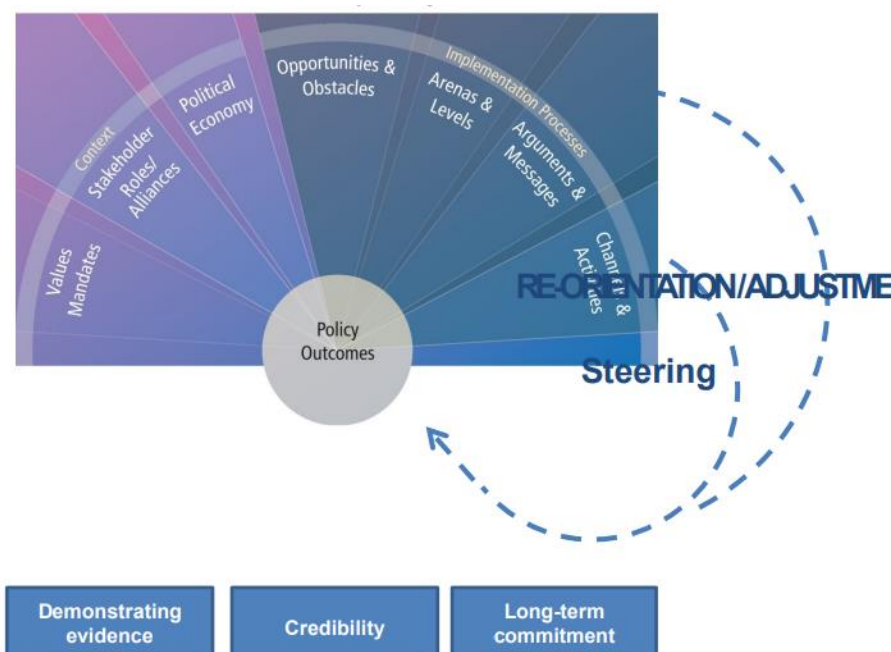
2. CSPM and Policy dialogue

Policy dialogue is the epitome of conflict-sensitive communication: policy dialogue is a key communication type in international cooperation and is used for diplomacy, negotiations and work on policy level in general. Policy dialogue takes place not only on the level of Head of Mission or Head of Cooperation but on all working levels. Every project or program has a policy dialogue dimension.

Policy dialogue follows the rules of efficient and strategic communication: it has to be outcome-oriented and therefore be planned and implemented with the help of a communication strategy or by using the radar (see illustrating below) for policy influencing to organize the work systematically. The radar has been designed to help plan and organize the policy dialogue. It supports SDC's staff in their communications and policy dialogue work in different sectors (sensitization, convincing arguments and key messages, diversity of communication channels).

Radar for Policy Dialogue (PD): parameters to be taken into account for a systematic approach to result-oriented PD

H2N [SDC How-to Note Result-oriented Policy Dialogue](#)



The PD implementation processes shown on the right hand side of the radar cover a manifold set of activities. They can be applied in different arenas and various levels, via specific arguments and messages delivered through a variety of channels, e.g. formal meetings, participation in conferences and public meetings, provision of advisory support and the use of diplomatic “démarches” or interventions by the Swiss Representative, which can facilitate and even be decisive in the PD implementation process. It is often not foreseeable which activity and channel is the most suitable. In order to increase the probability of success, it is thus advisable to:

- use different arenas, simultaneously or sequentially (eg. donor platforms; multi-stakeholder think tanks -academia, media, civil society- and workshops; diplomatic, government and civil society arenas; support campaigns of civil society)
- enter in the process at expert level as early as possible;
- be active on various levels (national, regional and local);
- use and include arguments/messages of other development actors (provide evidence-based know-how and proven experience; feed multilateral PD processes and achievements into bilateral PD)
- Diversify communication channels (media, internet) and activities