

RWANDA PUBLIC PROCUREMENT AUTHORITY



Information, Education and Communication Strategy for RPPA

Abbreviations and acronyms

1. **ASA:** As soon as
2. **RPPA:** Rwanda Public Procurement Authority
3. **SP:** Strategic plan
4. **SBD:** Standard Bidding Document
5. **MINECOFIN:** Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Abbreviations and acronyms | 2 |
| 1. Introduction | 5 |
| 1.1-Background..... | 5 |
| 1.2 Vision goal of RPPA..... | 6 |
| 1.3 Mission of RPPA | 6 |
| 1.4 Goal of RPPA..... | 7 |
| 1.5 Communication principles | 7 |
| 1.6 Desired Outcomes | 8 |
| 2. Vision, Mission, goals and Objectives of the Communication Strategy | 9 |
| 2.1. Vision of the Communication Strategy | 9 |
| 2.2. Mission of the Communication Strategy..... | 9 |
| 2.3. Goals of the Communication Strategy | 9 |
| 2.4. Objectives of the Communication Strategy | 9 |
| 3. RPPA Stakeholders (Target Audiences) | 11 |
| 3.1 MINECOFIN and RPPA Board of Directors | 11 |
| 3.2 Service Providers (bidders) and potential service providers | 11 |
| 3.3 Procuring entities and Capacity building partners | 11 |
| 3.4 Partners in fighting corruption and promoting accountability..... | 12 |
| 3.5 Development Partners | 12 |
| 3.6 General Public | 12 |
| 3.7 The staff of RPPA | 12 |
| 4. Channels of Communication | 13 |
| 4.1 Meetings, workshops, Conferences and Press Conference..... | 13 |
| 4.2 Telephones | 13 |
| 4.3 Radio and television..... | 13 |
| 4.4 Internet..... | 13 |
| 4.5 Newspapers and brochures | 14 |
| 4.6 Events | 14 |
| 5. Key Messages..... | 14 |
| 6. Ways of obtaining Feedback from Stakeholders | 16 |

| | |
|--|----|
| 6.1. RPPA website, suggestion box and toll free line | 16 |
| 6.2. Rapid appraisal methods | 16 |
| 6.3. Appreciative Inquiry..... | 17 |
| 6.4. Horizontal Evaluation | 17 |
| 6.5. Annual Review Workshop | 17 |
| 7. Monitoring and evaluation framework..... | 17 |
| 8. Conclusion | 18 |

1- Introduction

1.1-Background

The Rwanda Public Procurement Authority was established on 30/12/2007 by the law no 63/2007 establishing and determining organization, functioning and responsibilities of the Rwanda Public procurement Authority. In accordance with the organic law No.06/2009/OL of 21/12/2009 establishing general provisions governing public institutions, this law was replaced by No. 25/2001 of 30/06/2011 establishing RPPA and determining its organization and functioning. The RPPA replaced the National Tender Board and unlike the latter whose role was to award and monitor proceedings of public procurement, the RPPA mainly focuses on regulatory measures, monitoring and building capacity in public procuring entities.

Despite many achievements by RPPA and its many and rich documents, a weakness in communication has been observed. This why developing an information education and communication strategy or simply a **communication strategy** is one of the activities in its 2009-2012 strategic plan. Moreover, in November 2010 two officers in charge of information dissemination were recruited and their duties are the following:

- Disseminating all procurement information, including current laws and regulations
- Publishing all opportunities, notices of contract award, information on training
- Ensuring that a web site for all procurement information is maintained
- Organizing meetings, conference and workshops for awareness and sensitization in public procurement procedures and best practices
- Preparing and disseminating newsletters, brochures and leaflets on public procurement in Rwanda.

This communication strategy, therefore, comes as a way of elaborating how RPPA should network, participate, and interact with the public. This will facilitate the RPPA to create a roadmap of how information on public procurement procedures will be shared, communicated, who is supposed to communicate what, when, and how is information flowed internally and externally. This strategy communication would also clarify how to

disseminate what we have done, what we are doing and what we plan to do; with different publics.

1.2 Vision goal of RPPA

According to the strategic plan (SP) of RPPA adopted by the Board of Directors of RPPA in June 2009, its vision is:

“RPPA, the centre of regional excellence in public procurement”

1.3 Mission of RPPA

According to law n° 25/2011 of 30th June 2011 establishing Rwanda Public Procurement Authority (RPPA) and determining its mission, organization and functioning; the mission of RPPA consists of the following:

- 1° to ensure organization, analysis and supervision in public procurement matters;
- 2° to advise the government and other public procurement organs on the policies, strategies and organization of public procurement;
- 3° to control activities of public contract award and execution;
- 4° to develop professionalism of staff involved in public procurement;
- 5° to provide technical support as needed and develop teaching material, organize training and lay down requirements which must be met by public procurement officers;
- 6° to collect and disseminate on a regular basis information on public procurement;
- 7° to put in place standard bidding documents, bid evaluation reports and other standard documents for use by public procuring entities;
- 8° to sensitize the public on matters related to public procurement;

9° to draw up and publish a list of bidders suspended or debarred from participating in public procurement;

10° to establish cooperation and collaboration with other regional and international agencies whose mission is similar to that of RPPA;

11° to perform such as duties as may be assigned by law and which are not contrary to its main mission.

1.4 Goal of RPPA

According to the strategic plan (SP) of RPPA adopted by the Board of Directors of RPPA in June 2009, its goal is given below (In the SP, the word mission is used for goal. We changed this terminology because it is used in the current law establishing RPPA to refer to what used to be termed as responsibilities in the old law)

Goal of RPPA: “To achieve the best value for money for the government of Rwanda under efficient, transparent and fair conditions”

1.5 Communication principles

RPPA’s communication strategy is based on the following Principles:

- Effective and result oriented communication with clearly defined information flow channels to improve audience knowledge and awareness
- Empowering stakeholders with the necessary knowledge and information for them to take informed decisions by using multiple communication techniques;
- Encouraging the use of different strategic interventions (such as proximity services, advocacy), combined with a range of channels and tools to enhance extension services promotion activities among different key audiences;
- Coordination, information sharing and building partnerships
- Develop and support guidance and protocols to support consistent communication across service areas
- Increase stakeholders involvement and exchange of information in public procurement

- Fostering knowledge and dissemination of reliable and relevant information to the stakeholders;
- Establish a network of communication both internally and externally

Multi-channelled, for example incorporating interpersonal communication with mass media approaches and focus group discussions;

1.6 Desired Outcomes

It is desired that this communication strategy creates the following outcomes:

- A positive image of Rwanda Public procurement Authority
- Excellent exchange of information between the RPPA and its different partners
- Increased visibility, credibility, and accurate understanding by its stakeholders of the RPPA
- Increased knowledge and awareness of existing and new interventions and policies among RPPA partners
- Existence of a unified “*voice*” that links diverse activities and goals of RPPA
- Good understanding among all audiences about the role of RPPA and the rationale for the transformation;
- Customer satisfaction;
- A sense of dignity and respect to all employees, whether they leave or stay;
- To build confidence among all audiences about RPPA and its business

2. Vision, Mission, goals and Objectives of the Communication Strategy

2.1. Vision of the Communication Strategy

To be a responsive and proactive multi-media, Information and Communication service that gives expression to the Mission, Goals and Initiatives of RPPA

2.2. Mission of the Communication Strategy

The mission of the communication strategy is to provide a framework for exchanging information, establishing a climate of trust between the RPPA staff as well as its partners and expanded public access of information about Rwanda Public Procurement policy and activities

2.3. Goals of the Communication Strategy

1. Build a positive image of RPPA
2. Establish channels of communication and interaction between RPPA and the public;
3. Put in place a mechanism for the identification of needs in communication
4. Enhance the flow of information on public procurement
5. Contribute to the exchange of information between different stakeholders in the area of procurement;
6. To maintain an efficient Communications Section to convey information with positive conviction, sensitivity and enthusiasm while promoting RPPA

2.4. Objectives of the Communication Strategy

General Objective

To contribute to the achievement of the vision, mission and goals of RPPA through timely dissemination of necessary information to RPPA stakeholders

Specific Objectives

- To build regular Communication channels between RPPA and its stakeholders
- To determine information needed by each category of stakeholders and ensure its timely dissemination to them
- To solicit feedback from stakeholders on RPPA activities and make use of it

3. RPPA Stakeholders (Target Audiences)

RPPA stakeholders can be put in the following categories according to the kind of information they need from RPPA for them to be able to contribute to the attainment of its vision, mission and goals:

- i) MINECOFIN and RPPA Board of Directors: policy and supervisory roles
- ii) Service providers (bidders) and potential service providers
- iii) Procuring entities and capacity building partners
- iv) Partners in fighting corruption and promoting accountability
- v) Development Partners
- vi) General public
- vii) RPPA staff

3.1 MINECOFIN and RPPA Board of Directors

The ministry of Finance and Economic Planning is the supervising ministry of RPPA. It is responsible for putting in place necessary policies governing public procurement and submitting draft laws concerning public procurement to both Cabinet and Parliament. Likewise the board of Directors of RPPA is the main decision making body and supervises its day to day activities. Therefore the two organs must be given necessary information to enable them perform their roles properly.

3.2 Service Providers (bidders) and potential service providers

These are mainly from the private sector, the suppliers of goods and services: contractors, suppliers of various goods and services, consultants etc. In terms of actual acquisition of goods and services these are the most important partners to the beneficiaries who are the procuring entities. This makes it imperative to ensure that they get the necessary information that will make them reliable suppliers of goods and services.

3.3 Procuring entities and Capacity building partners

Procuring entities are government institutions which engage in the procurement of goods and services. They need information that will enable them to conduct value for money from public procurement and at the same time insure that there is transparency

and fairness in the process. In order for this to happen, they must build the capacity of their staff involved in public procurement in collaboration capacity building organizations such as training institutions. This is why the provision of relevant information to procuring entities and their capacity building partners is very important.

3.4 Partners in fighting corruption and promoting accountability

These include the Office of the Ombudsman, the Auditor General, the judiciary and the civil society. They need information about the legal and regulatory framework because most of them play a leading role in its enforcement.

3.5 Development Partners

Development Partners provide funding for capacity development in public procurement as well as technical knowhow that contributes to building a strong public procurement system. It is therefore important that they are informed of RPPA programmes.

3.6 General Public

The general public encompasses all taxpayers whose money is spent on goods and services through public procurement. At the same time it includes potential service providers. Consequently it needs information about public procurement for better understanding of the use of their money and in case some of them in future become suppliers of goods and services to government.

3.7 The staff of RPPA

RPPA staff needs information that helps them to understand its vision, mission, goals, values, and procedures. This will facilitate the establishment of a healthy organizational culture that is held in common by most employees in the organization.

4. Channels of Communication

RPPA shall use but not limit itself to the following channels to communicate with its stakeholders

- i) Meetings, workshops, conferences and press conferences
- ii) Telephones
- iii) Radio and Television
- iv) Internet
- v) Newspapers and brochures
- vi) Events

4.1 Meetings, workshops, Conferences and Press Conference

Meetings, workshops or conferences will be used to bring together RPPA and its stakeholders to consider issues that need discussion, clarification and/or debate. Press conferences will be used to announce important events or new working procedures and clarify misconceptions.

4.2 Telephones

Telephone calls and text messages will be used to convey quick important messages. Although this is a very effective way of communication, care must be taken to remember that it is not a good way to convey official messages.

4.3 Radio and television

Radio and television will be used to inform the public of new policy initiatives, laws and regulations as well as soliciting views from the public and providing answers to questions during live talk shows.

4.4 Internet

The RPPA website will be used to provide information on laws, regulations and guidelines governing public procurement. E-mail communication will also be extensively used between RPPA and its stakeholders. Face book, Twitter and U-tube will also used after examining their suitability and usefulness.

4.5 Newspapers and brochures

Newspapers will be used to issue press releases and announcements on new issues that need to be communicated to the public. Brochures will be produced from time to disseminate special pieces of information.

4.6 Events

RPPA will always take advantage of events that bring together any of its stakeholders to communicate to them relevant information. Examples of such events are meetings of chief budget managers, meetings of district mayors etc

5. Key Messages

The table below shows key messages destined to different stakeholders over the next three years. The list is not exhaustive and any useful information will always be given to the relevant stakeholders as it becomes available and/or necessary.

| Message | Stakeholders (target Audience) | Methodology | Timing | Tools |
|--|--------------------------------|---|--|---|
| 1 -RPPA Strategic Plan and communication strategy -RPPA Annual Reports -RPPA semester Reports | -All -All -MINECOFIN | -Post on website -Post on website -send by mail | -ASA approved -ASA approved -ASA approved | -RPPA website -RPPA website -Ordinary mail system |
| 2 – Dissemination of revised law on Public Procurement, Revised Procurement Regulations, Revised Standard Bidding Documents, | All | -Meetings -radio and TV shows -posting on website | -meetings to discuss code of ethics and user guide in March 2012 and the amended law, SBDs and regulations as soon as they are amended | RPPA website |

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| Code of Ethics, Procurement User Guide and Circulars | | | | |
| 3 –Importance of internal control and audit -Internal control and Audit Manual -Important audit findings | Procuring entities | -Workshops -meetings -pre and post audit meetings -reports to Procuring entities | Depends on when a place can be secured in workshops/meetings organized for senior/middle level managers and when audits take place | -Internal Control and Audit Manual -Audit reports |
| 4-Avoiding being black listed -Publishing black listed bidders | Bidders -Procuring entities, Public | -Meetings with bidders -Post on RPPA website | -Meetings at least once a year -Update black list continuously | - Meetings -RPPA website |
| 5-Success stories | -All | | | |
| 6-Problems and weaknesses | -Procuring entities -Bidders | Inter-correspondences, workshops -Meetings | | |
| 7-Important events | All | Radio and TV shows -posting on website | At least once a year | RPPA website |
| 8-Training Opportunities | Procuring entities, Bidders | Communicate by ordinary mail, email, radio announcements | ASA they are known | Ordinary mail system, internet |
| 9-Regional and international cooperation | MINECOFIN, Board of Directors, staff | Communicate by ordinary mail, email | When RPPA is engaged in regional/international cooperation activities | Ordinary mail system, internet |
| 10-General information | All | Posting on RPPA website | As need arises | RPPA website |
| 11-Frequently asked questions | All | Posting on RPPA website | As need arises | RPPA website |

6. Ways of obtaining Feedback from Stakeholders

RPPA will need to obtain feedback from its stakeholders for three reasons. First to prove that the messages reached the targeted stakeholders, second to get advice and criticism from them and third to gauge the impact the messages had on the stakeholders. The following are some of the ways that RPPA will use to obtain the necessary feedback:

- (i) RPPA website, suggestion box and toll free line
- (ii) Rapid appraisal methods
- (ii) Appreciative inquiry
- (iii) Horizontal evaluation
- (iv) Annual review workshop

6.1. RPPA website, suggestion box and toll free line

The communication strategy will be posted on RPPA website. People who visit the website will be asked if they have received the messages contained in the communication strategy and what changes have the messages made. The website will provide an easy way, for those willing, to provide the answer to this question. In addition a suggestion box and a toll free telephone line will be put in place to enable stakeholders to give information to RPPA in a timely manner.

6.2. Rapid appraisal methods

RPPA will use quick appraisal methods to obtain information from targeted groups or individuals from different stakeholders. Some of the rapid appraisal methods that will be used include key informant interviews, focus groups, community group interviews and min surveys (see www.researchmatters.Net Chapter 5 Evaluative Thinking).

6.3. Appreciative Inquiry

RPPA will ask its stakeholders to reflect on past performance and mention a time when its performance was at its best and the factors that were behind the success. Such factors may then be nurtured for future success.

6.4. Horizontal Evaluation

RPPA will invite one peer organization in Rwanda to assess the impact of its communication strategy. This assessment will include discussions of the communication strategy between RPPA staff and representative of the peer organization, assessment of the implementation of the communication strategy by the representatives of the peer organization and finally a workshop to discuss the findings.

6.5. Annual Review Workshop

RPPA will hold an annual workshop bringing together representatives of its stakeholders to review progress of the implementation of the communication strategy and to gather lessons that contribute to the enrichment of the strategy.

7. Monitoring and evaluation framework

Monitoring progress towards achieving the objectives of this communication strategy shall be done at staff, management and board levels. During RPPA staff general meeting, this progress will be discussed. The Director of Capacity Development will monitor the implementation of the strategy on a daily basis and produce a report on its status which will be presented to the management meeting every quarter. This status will in turn be presented to the board of directors by the Director General of RPPA every quarter. The status of implementation of the strategy and progress towards achieving its objectives will always be included in the quarterly and annual reports. The Director of Capacity Development Unit will play a coordinating role in this monitoring and evaluation process. Progress of activities will be regularly evaluated by comparing activities and indicators against the proposed timeframe.

8. Conclusion

This communication strategy cannot be implemented without the involvement of everyone who is concerned. The strategies will be reviewed to provide decision makers with detailed assessment of the achievements, failures, weaknesses, challenges, opportunities, lessons learnt and the way forward arising from the implementation of the proposed plan. The activities will be modified to ensure that the target group understand the key messages and have access to further information feedback will be gathered continuously through toll free calls and suggestion box.