

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Communications Strategy sets out the framework for all communications, visibility, and knowledge management activities of the EMPOWER Programme over its 48-month implementation period (2026–2029). It defines the programme's communications objectives, target audiences, core messages, channel strategy, content plan, and key performance indicators. The strategy is aligned with EU visibility requirements, ITC corporate communications standards, and EWB's Green Enterprise Network communications framework.

The EMPOWER Programme operates in a complex communications environment: it must simultaneously demonstrate results to a European Union donor, build trust with Kenyan women entrepreneurs, engage national government partners, and generate media coverage that amplifies the programme's impact. This strategy provides a coherent, audience-centred framework for navigating these competing demands.

1. SITUATION ANALYSIS

1.1 Programme Context

The EMPOWER Programme is a EUR 5.5 million, 48-month initiative implemented by ITC and EWB, funded by the European Union. It targets 2,000 women-led MSMEs in Kenya's agro-processing and light manufacturing sectors across five counties. The programme's communications function must support three distinct but interrelated goals: donor accountability and visibility, beneficiary engagement and behaviour change, and public advocacy for women's economic empowerment.

1.2 Communications Landscape

Kenya has a dynamic and competitive media landscape, with over 100 active television channels, 400+ radio stations, and rapidly growing social media penetration (38% of the population, concentrated in urban areas). Women entrepreneurs in rural and peri-urban areas are primarily reached through community radio, SMS, and peer networks. The EU Delegation in Nairobi has an active communications team and expects regular content contributions from EU-funded programmes.

1.3 SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS • Strong human interest stories from women beneficiaries • ITC and EWB brand recognition • EU Delegation's active media network • Dedicated communications officer on team	WEAKNESSES • Limited digital literacy among rural beneficiaries • No pre-existing programme social media presence • EU visibility requirements can constrain creative messaging • Communications budget represents only 4% of total budget
OPPORTUNITIES • Growing media interest in women's economic empowerment • Kenya's active civil society and women's rights movement • EWB Green Enterprise Network global platform for amplification • SDG decade of action narrative resonates with media	THREATS • Competing development programmes with larger comms budgets • Political sensitivity around EU-funded programming • Misinformation on social media about MSME support schemes • Staff turnover affecting institutional communications memory

2. COMMUNICATIONS OBJECTIVES

Objective	Target Audience	Key Metric
CO1: Ensure EU visibility and donor accountability	EU Delegation, DEVCO, Kenyan government, general public	100% compliance with EU visibility guidelines; ≥4 positive media mentions per quarter
CO2: Engage and mobilise women entrepreneurs	Women-led MSMEs in 5 target counties	≥80% of target beneficiaries aware of EMPOWER services; ≥2,000 enrolled
CO3: Advocate for policy change	Ministry of Industrialisation, Parliament, County Governments, private sector	≥2 policy briefs cited in official documents; ≥1 policy change attributable to EMPOWER advocacy
CO4: Build EMPOWER's digital presence and knowledge platform	Development community, researchers, media, potential partners	≥5,000 website visitors/month by Year 2; ≥2,000 social media followers

3. TARGET AUDIENCES AND KEY MESSAGES

Audience	Profile	Core Message	Tone
EU Delegation & DEVCO	Senior diplomats and programme officers; results-oriented	EMPOWER is delivering measurable, cost-effective results that demonstrate the EU's commitment to gender equality in Kenya	Formal, evidence-based
Women Entrepreneurs	Women aged 25–50; agro-processing; semi-urban and rural; Swahili-speaking	EMPOWER is here to help your business grow — training, connections, and funding support are available to you, for free	Warm, empowering, practical
Kenyan Government	Ministry officials, County Executive Committee members	EMPOWER is a partnership that strengthens Kenya's own institutions and contributes to the Big Four Agenda	Respectful, partnership-oriented
Media	Journalists and editors; seek human interest and data	EMPOWER is transforming the lives of Kenyan women — here are the stories and data to prove it	Newsworthy, story-driven
Development Community	UN agencies, NGOs, academics; value evidence	EMPOWER is generating new evidence on what works for women's economic empowerment in East Africa	Technical, evidence-based

4. CHANNEL STRATEGY

Channel	Primary Audience	Content Type	Frequency
EMPOWER Website (empower.intracen.org)	All audiences	Programme news, results, publications, success stories	Updated weekly
Twitter/X & LinkedIn	EU, government, development community,	Programme milestones, data visualisations,	3–5 posts/week

	media	policy content	
Facebook & WhatsApp	Women entrepreneurs, community leaders	Training opportunities, success stories, practical tips (in Swahili)	Daily (WhatsApp); 5 posts/week (Facebook)
Community Radio (5 partner stations)	Women entrepreneurs in rural/peri-urban areas	Programme information, testimonials, training schedules	Weekly 30-min programme slot
EU Delegation Newsletter & Website	EU institutions, European public	Quarterly results updates, success stories	Quarterly contribution
Print Media (Nation, Standard)	General public, government, private sector	Press releases, op-eds, feature stories	Monthly; 6 features/year target

5. ANNUAL CONTENT PLAN AND PRODUCTION CALENDAR

Content Type	Quantity/Year	Primary Channel	Responsible
Success Stories / Human Interest Features	8	Website, EU Newsletter, print media	Comms Officer
Press Releases	12 (1/month)	All media channels	Comms Officer + PM
Programme Newsletter (digital)	4 (quarterly)	Email list, website, social media	Comms Officer
Policy Briefs	2	Website, government stakeholders	Technical team + Comms Officer
Photo Essays / Visual Stories	6	Social media, website, EU Delegation	Comms Officer
Video Testimonials (2–3 min)	4	Social media, website, events	Comms Officer + external videographer
Annual Report	1	All audiences; print and digital	Comms Officer + PM + technical team
Radio Programme (30 min)	52 (weekly)	5 partner community radio stations	Comms Officer + radio producers

6. EU VISIBILITY AND BRANDING REQUIREMENTS

All EMPOWER communications materials must comply with the European Union's visibility and communication guidelines for external actions. The following requirements are mandatory:

- The EU flag and the statement 'Funded by the European Union' must appear prominently on all printed and digital materials, event banners, and programme vehicles
- The EU logo must be displayed at the same size as or larger than the ITC and EWB logos on all co-branded materials
- All press releases and media statements must include the standard EU boilerplate: 'The European Union is the world's largest donor of development aid...'
- All events funded by the EU must display EU branding and acknowledge EU funding in opening remarks
- A dedicated EU visibility section will be maintained on the EMPOWER website, documenting all EU-funded activities and results
- The Communications Officer will submit a quarterly EU Visibility Report to the EU Delegation, documenting all visibility activities and media coverage

7. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK

KPI	Year 1 Target	Year 2 Target	End-of-Programme Target
# media mentions (print, TV, radio, digital)	24	36	≥120 over programme life
# positive social media posts about EMPOWER	200	500	≥2,000
Social media followers (Twitter + LinkedIn + Facebook)	500	2,000	≥5,000
Website unique visitors per month	1,000	3,000	≥5,000
# success stories published	8	8	≥32
# press releases issued	12	12	≥48
EU Visibility compliance score (EU audit)	100%	100%	100%
% of beneficiaries aware of EMPOWER services (survey)	40%	65%	≥80%

8. COMMUNICATIONS BUDGET

Budget Line	Amount (EUR)	% of Comms Budget
Communications Officer (48 months, 0.5 FTE)	96,000	43.6%
Video production and photography	40,000	18.2%
Print materials (brochures, banners, reports)	25,000	11.4%
Website design, hosting, and maintenance	20,000	9.1%
Community radio programme production	24,000	10.9%
Events and media relations	15,000	6.8%
TOTAL COMMUNICATIONS BUDGET	220,000	100%