

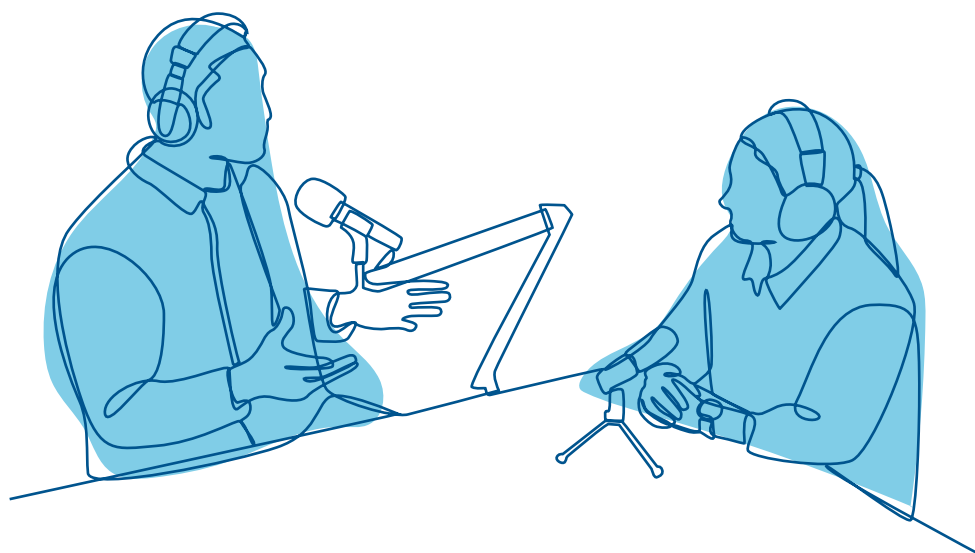
EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

March 2024

The **purpose** of IDI's External Communications Policy is to support the implementation of IDI's Strategic Plan by establishing guidelines and best practices for communicating IDI material via general media including newspapers (online and print), publications, TV, radio and other media communications platforms.

This policy aims to ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities when using these platforms. IDI's management team is responsible for leading and upholding the External Communications Policy, but every staff member has a part to play in this. All IDI communications policies reflect the Communications Principles contained in the IDI Communications Strategy.

Scope: This policy applies to all employees, associates, contractors, and third parties working on IDI's behalf.



IDI'S MEDIA CONNECTIONS

IDI's connections with external mainstream media may include online and print newspapers and magazines, TV, radio, podcasts and other forms of interview such as livestreaming on social media channels.

IDI may wish to generate mainstream media engagement for advocacy purposes, to promote SAIs and generate support for capacity building, SAI independence and an effective environment, among others.

Some of these activities may be shared with IDI's partners and stakeholders. This may include co-authored op-eds, journal articles, joint appearances on relevant media platforms and so on.

At other times, IDI may wish to issue a press release or media statement. Alternatively, IDI may be contacted for comment or response by media outlets, either directly via the communications or management team, or indirectly by media outlets approaching other staff members.

It is very important that all engagement with external media is carefully managed so that IDI can:

- maximise opportunities to meet the three communications objectives of
 - raising awareness on the role, benefits and challenges of SAIs
 - advocating for better SAI environment and support and
 - communicating IDI's value
- help ensure that responses (if any) are correct, fair and balanced, and thereby manage the reputation of the organisation and any related organisations or individuals who might also be involved
- reduce risk and avoid potential transgression of any information and related laws including copyright, defamation and guidance for acceptable language

ESCALATING MEDIA REQUESTS

All incoming media requests* and outbound contact with journalists and media should be channelled through IDI's communications and management teams, or in the case of a SIRAM request, through IDI's SAI Independence team.

The management/communications teams will make the following decisions:

- Does IDI or the related organisation involved have something to gain or lose from doing the interview?
- Does IDI's message stand a chance of being heard?
- Is the media in question an effective vehicle for reaching IDI's target audience (eg, women, Civil Society Organisations, donors and decision makers, etc.)?
- Is comment necessary, or will making a statement imply culpability?
- Is there a better or different message to be conveyed through this channel?
- Does the article, journalist, media outlet or related organisation pose any kind of threat or risk to IDI and associated organisations?

They will then consult with all involved parties, formulate a specific strategy, and roll it out in accordance with the IDI Communications Strategy and overall IDI Strategic Plan. From time to time, IDI may choose to appoint a PR or Reputation Management consultant to support the media management process.

IF A REPORTER CONTACTS YOU

If a journalist, reporter or spokesperson from an external media organisation contacts you, it may be by email, social media, social media direct message or phone, or direct approach in person.

They may contact you or your organisation for background information or to request an interview on an issue of interest.

(Requests via social media should be handled as below, while also ensuring that IDI's Digital Media Policy is followed.)

If you are contacted, please don't:

- Automatically grant or refuse an interview (unless previously agreed through the appropriate channel including the SAI Head, regional secretariat or IDI management and/or communications team)
- Say things "off the record" or reply "no comment"
- Say anything that you would not want to see in print, online, on television or repeated on the radio
- Get drawn into an interview prematurely

This is to avoid undue risks such as:

- Having insufficient knowledge of the issue and potentially saying the wrong thing
- It could be premature to discuss the issue
- The journalist wants you to comment on rumours or unfounded evidence
- The journalist wants you to answer hypothetical questions
- You could damage the credibility of IDI or the person/organisation they are asking about
- You could hinder an ongoing but confidential process.

In all cases of external media requests, please do:

- provide a neutral comment that all media requests are managed by the communications and management team
- refer the journalist to IDI's Director General, IDI's Communications Manager, or the appointed IDI spokesperson on that particular issue (if known)
- provide their details to the journalist or agree to forward the request to the right person
- ask for the journalist's name, title and the media channel they represent
- direct them to the Press Centre on IDI's website for information packs including the Strategic Plan and recent Performance and Accountability Report.

STAFF AT EVENTS OR WORKSHOPS

*On occasion, a TV crew or journalist may come to an event or workshop and ask for an interview with IDI staff. As there may be no time for clearance from the Communications Team or Director General, the relevant Deputy Director General or relevant SAI Head may decide whether the interview falls within IDI guidelines as below as well as the SAI's media policies, and give their direction for it to go ahead.

COMMUNICATING ON BEHALF OF AND JOINTLY WITH STAKEHOLDERS

To maintain consistent standards across all partner and donor communications and advocacy as according to IDI's Communications and Advocacy Strategy and all IDI's communications policies, IDI's communications team will be responsible for overall design and dissemination of stakeholder and partner communications, other than where it is specifically agreed with the management team (eg in certain bilateral circumstances).

IDI's communications team may also use tools such as sanctions lists, GDPR, copyright licensing, plagiarism software, web safety mechanisms and all IDI communications policies and strategies to ensure effective communications standards are maintained. Please note that these policies apply to all staff, not only to the communications team, so any knowledge or awareness of possible breaches of any of these standards and policies must be declared as soon as possible.

Parties in receipt of IDI communications must respect confidentiality of the information and not share it with any other party in an unauthorised manner. Special care must be taken with respect to third parties like consultants, printers, designers, translators, etc. who are involved with IDI products in their professional capacity. Suitable confidentiality clauses should be incorporated into agreements with these entities.

Similarly, IDI staff members need to maintain confidentiality of any information received by them in the course of their activities from any source including SAIs.

Given the fast-changing nature of news and information technology and approaches to communications, this policy will be reviewed regularly and agreed with HR as an employee-related policy.

