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Communication and Advocacy Strategy

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Abbreviations

AusAID	Australian Government Aid Agency
C&A	Communication & Advocacy
CASS	Centre for Applied Social Sciences (University of Zimbabwe)
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CC	Country Coordinator
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CI	Corporate Identity
COMESA	Common Market of East and Southern Africa
CMT	Central Management Team
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
FANRPAN	Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation (UN)
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council (South Africa)
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IDS	Institute for Development Studies (University of Sussex, UK)
KGRA	Knowledge Review and Gap Analysis
NAG	National Advisory Group
NEPAD	New Economic Partnership for African Development (African Union)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NR	Natural Resources
OCHA	Organisation for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (UN)
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
ODG	Overseas Development Group (University of East Anglia, UK)
PAC	Programme Advisory Committee
REBA	Regional Evidence Building Agenda
RHVP	Regional Hunger and Vulnerability Programme
RVAC	Regional Vulnerability Assessment Committee
SACU	Southern African Commercial Union
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SARPN	Southern Africa Relief and Poverty Network
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
USAID	United States Aid Agency



VAA Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis
VAC Vulnerability Assessment Committee
WFP World Food Programme (UN)



Executive summary

This document presents the Regional Hunger and Vulnerability Programme's (RHVP) Communication and Advocacy Strategy. The strategy is the primary focus of the Programme's Learning Network, and is the medium through which much of the engagement between the Programme and its target audience takes place. Although referred to as distinct strategies within this paper, the intent of this document is to present an overview of a combined and integrated approach to RHVP's communication and advocacy activities.

The **Communication** section defines who we are communicating to (our target audience), what we are going to produce to communicate our messages (the methods we employ) and how communication activity will be implemented.

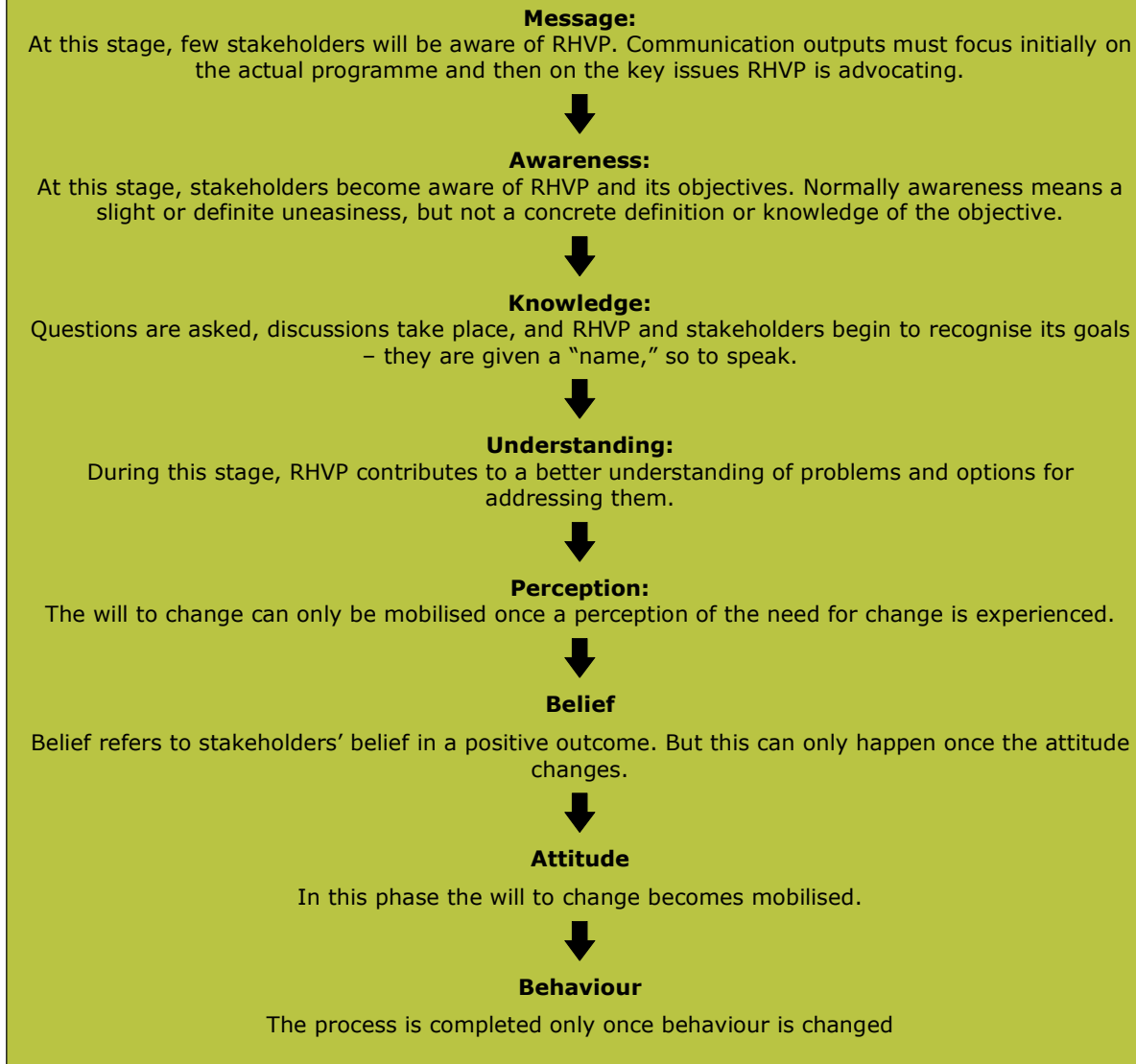
The **Advocacy** section is more specific and sets out what messages are specifically targeted at which stakeholders and in which ways in order to achieve both attitude and behavioural changes.

The monitoring and evaluation framework for the communication and advocacy activity is then outlined.

Before getting into a detailed description of each element, it is important to understand the context of RHVP itself, as this provides the basis for defining the particular approach adopted by the Programme with regards to communication and advocacy.

Communication and advocacy are linked processes that entail a number of sequential stages (see Box 1) and while different audiences may start out from different stages, it is essential that the Communication and Advocacy Strategy is integrated and covers all stages from the inception of 'the message' to the eventual change in behaviour. In this framework, the point of crossover between communication and advocacy is the 'perception' stage, when the target audience becomes the focus of advocacy work rather than more generic communication activity. Creating a fertile ground for advocacy work is an important element of the communication strategy.


Box 1 - Steps in effective communication and advocacy



In terms of a general timeframe for the implementation of the Communication and Advocacy Strategy, three broad phases can be identified.

Short-term objective (to mid 2006) - Communication activity will ensure effective positioning of RHVP within the region. In effect, this has already begun with the initial website and leaflet. However, this phase should be extended into Quarter 2 of 2006 and relevant communication mechanisms used to ensure that RHVP has begun to establish a presence in the region and stakeholders are aware the programme is operating.

Medium-term objectives (to mid 2007) - The focus is very much on delivering well-packaged information to stakeholders.



Long-term objectives (to mid 2008) – The focus is on behavioural and policy change promoted by advocacy work that contributes to changes in people’s knowledge and perception of alternatives to food aid and helps to move them to a position of commitment and action through a change in belief, attitude and – where relevant – behaviour. In this way, the advocacy strategy is supported by good communication through the programme products



1 An introduction to RHVP

RHVP was launched in mid-2005 in response to growing awareness - primarily amongst a number of donors and NGOs but also some governments in southern Africa - of the increasing prevalence of chronic vulnerability in the region and the inability of traditional humanitarian responses, notably food aid, to address the underlying causes.


Critics have extended the debate regarding the impact of food aid in protracted crisis situations to argue that food aid has not simply had a neutral impact but has actually exacerbated the problem and contributed to the increased caseload of the chronically vulnerable in the region.

Until recently there were few, if any, scaled up alternatives for addressing vulnerability to hunger other than food aid. Today, however, there is a growing body of experience within Africa in the utilisation of social protection, and more specifically safety nets, to address the short- and longer-term needs of those vulnerable to hunger. This evidence points to the particular merits of predictable transfers in meeting the needs of the chronically vulnerable, and of cash transfers as a more economically productive form of support where a conducive environment exists. Such evidence, however, remains largely piecemeal and large-scale social protection programmes in Africa remain the exception rather than the norm.

In parallel to the debate regarding the appropriate role of food aid and the potential for alternative types of interventions, there exists a longstanding concern regarding the quality (in terms of accuracy, reliability and timeliness) of information upon which decisions regarding food aid and other humanitarian resource allocations are made. Despite considerable investments in vulnerability assessment and analysis (VAA) systems, agencies funding food aid and other humanitarian operations generally express little trust or confidence in the outputs of these systems.

With the growing interest in social protection has also come the realisation that vulnerability assessment and analysis systems are primarily food aid prescriptive, and that they currently do not provide the type of information needed to plan and implement a social protection programme such as a cash transfer scheme. Thus in addition to the need to make the outputs of vulnerability assessment and analysis systems more accurate, reliable and timely, there is now an emphasis on making them more relevant and appropriate to the changing demands for information.

RHVP was specifically set up to respond to these concerns: on the one hand, to provide the evidence to support the adoption of social protection as an instrument to redress the increasing caseload of chronic vulnerability and, on the other, to support improvements in the quality and relevance of the outputs of vulnerability assessment and analysis systems.



RHVP does not pursue an anti food aid agenda but rather argues for a more responsible and more appropriate role for food aid within a social protection framework. While food aid has a crucial role to play in acute humanitarian crises, it has over-extended its usefulness in many protracted situations where vulnerability is chronic in nature. This is not a direct criticism of food aid but rather of a failure to explore and exploit alternatives.



2 RHVP's learning network

The Network is the platform through which these arguments are packaged and presented to stakeholders, and the principle mechanism for implementing the Communication and Advocacy Strategy. In this context, the Network will be the main channel for the dissemination of information for the purpose of building awareness on hunger and vulnerability issues and advocating changes in policy, programmes and systems. If the Network is successful with respect to these two objectives it will also serve its third purpose of providing credibility to the Programme. The network is facilitated by a small team based in Johannesburg that is responsible for a range of communication products including reports, comments, briefs, media liaison and newsletters.

As the visible face of the Programme's Communication Strategy, the Network will portray the characteristics that have been defined within the Strategy. In particular, the following considerations have helped to define the approach and the style of the Network:

- First, RHVP targets a broad range of stakeholders from decision makers in bilateral and multi lateral donor agencies, through regional bodies such as NEPAD and SADC, to decision makers at national and sub national levels. As one would expect within such a diverse target group, levels of interest and exposure to the issues which form the focus of RHVP will vary considerably. For this reason, the Network must be able to provide a variety of products which not only meet the needs of stakeholders but also strike a chord with them. The Network must therefore provide something for everybody.
- Second, RHVP was set up with the clear intention of questioning conventional thinking and of stimulating debate on new approaches to addressing hunger and vulnerability. This has important implications for the character of the Network. In particular, the Network has to be able to get people thinking about what is wrong with the way things are done today and how they can be improved in the future. There are three clear steps involved:
 - Directing the target audience to the Network – which involves marketing and building awareness.
 - Gaining their attention – which concerns issues of visual presentation but also the content and style of the initial message that is being conveyed.
 - Getting them to delve deeper into the issues – which means having accessible substance to back up the initial message.

The following sections provide detail on how, through effective communication and targeted

advocacy activities, RHVP intends to have an impact on policy issues relevant to vulnerability and alternatives to food aid in southern Africa.





3 Communication strategy

3.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Communication Strategy is to ensure that the Programme's target audience is aware of RHVP, its activities and the findings and lessons emerging from these activities. This awareness should extend over all three output components (evidence building, capacity building and influencing policy).

An effective Communication Strategy requires a clear definition of the target audience (who), the content of the information (what) and the methods to be employed to convey the information (how).

The RHVP Communication and Advocacy Strategy services the whole programme although distinct activity may occur in specific countries at specific times.

3.2 Who? - The target audience

The success of RHVP will be partially gauged by its ability to create great awareness of issues related to hunger and vulnerability. Increased awareness is, however, not a means in itself but rather a stepping stone towards advocacy and, ultimately, the adoption of change.

Nevertheless, the Programme needs to cast a wide net in terms of building awareness and, as such, the Communication Strategy should not limit its focus only to those that can directly influence change (these are the more specific focus of the Advocacy Strategy). Building greater awareness and understanding amongst the wider population is as important as building awareness amongst policy makers themselves. Policy change always involves adjustment and often necessitates sacrifice at the individual or household level. Without popular support and commitment for change, reforms stand little chance of success. Support and commitment for change requires awareness and understanding.

Awareness building is not an immediate process; it not only requires time but also involves a number of intermediaries to channel and disseminate information. Thus, for example, the media is clearly an important target of the Programme, but its importance lies in the fact that it is an effective conduit for targeting the general population, who in turn can influence officials further up the decision making ladder.

When defining the target audience the communications must be a two way process and there is a need to ensure that different members of the target audience have a means of engaging with the Programme.

Table 1 identifies broad groups of the target audience and indicates the composition of each:

Table 1: Target audience for RHVP Communication Strategy

Stakeholder group	Members
General public & civil society	Individuals (voters/taxpayers/affected populations) CSO & CBOs (farmers assoc, consumers assoc, faith-based organisations, local level NGOs) Secondary and tertiary education institutions (the 'leaders of tomorrow')
Media	National broadcasters/press International press
Practitioners (technical staff)	Programme and project staff in: National governments (including VACs) Regional agencies (RVAC, SADC, COMESA, NEPAD) INGOs and NGOs Donor agency programmes (EC, AfDB, NEPAD, World Bank)
Advocacy based organisations	National (eg CASS Zimbabwe) Regional (eg HSRC, SARPN) International (eg ODI, IFPRI) Academic institutions
Policy-makers	Parliamentarians Governments & senior civil servants (Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, Directors, members of policy task forces/ committees) Local government authorities Decentralised Government authorities Traditional authorities
Donors (funding agencies)	Bilateral - DFID (London/DFIDSA/ country offices), AusAID, USAID
Implementing agencies	UN agencies WFP, FAO, OCHA, ILO, IFAD, UNICEF INGOs (CARE, Oxfam, SC, etc) National NGOs
Regional economic bodies	SADC, SACU, COMESA, NEPAD

3.3 What? – Range and content of information

The intended audience for RHVP is both large and diverse; as a result, existing levels of awareness of issues around hunger and vulnerability will vary considerably.

Under such circumstances, an effective Communication Strategy requires:

1. A range of products that serve the particular needs of different sections of the target audience.
2. A range of writing styles that attract different sections of the target audience.
3. A range of approaches to communicate with different sections of the target audience.

The Programme employs a diversity of communication mechanisms including a website, printed publications, mass media and learning events using popular media forms. While each is distinct and serves an individual purpose, they are inter-related and together they form an integral system whose sum is greater than that of its individual parts. The complete range of awareness building products and their targets is summarised in Annex 2.

Website

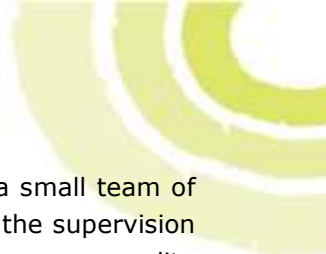
wahenga.net is the name of RHVP's hunger and vulnerability website, the hub of the Network. **wahenga** is a Swahili word that means "*people you can rely upon to give you good advice*".

In developing this website, we have tried to create something that is a little different from other sites that also deal with issues of hunger and vulnerability, and that will reach a wide and diverse audience of policy-makers, practitioners and the general public through the varied range of material it will present.

The original intention was to establish a website focusing solely on social protection and to identify a regional institution to house and manage the site.

Concerns regarding the identification of a suitable "home" and the desire of the Programme to maintain a strong influence over the direction of the site led to a reconsideration of this approach and the development of a more ambitious proposal. This involved the creation of a wider website encompassing a range of hunger and vulnerability issues, with the Programme maintaining control over its development and evolution, at least for the first twelve to eighteen months.

As a result, the Programme commissioned the design and establishment of a dynamic and interactive website.



The Programme maintains and manages the now operational website through a small team of skilled experts who can call on external technical support when needed. Under the supervision of the Programme Manager, the team maintains and updates the site and ensures quality control.

Well before the end of the Programme, once the website has become properly established, it will be relocated to a permanent “home”. This will allow time for the website to evolve a specific character and to develop into a recognised (and recognisable) asset, and will also provide the time to undertake a more critical investigate into relocation options.

The website has an open access external section and a restricted access internal section.

As the point of entry into the website, the home page is deliberately attention grabbing with an option to respond to some of the online publications produced by RHVP. Further interactive features such as online discussion groups will be introduced in the second stage of the site’s development.

The external section of the website will be updated on a continual basis. New RHVP publications (reports, newsletter, briefs, comments, etc) will be uploaded in PDF format as soon as they have been quality checked. A library will direct users to a wide range of related information about hunger and vulnerability.

An internal section serves primarily as a management tool for the Programme. Access is restricted to staff who can keep informed of current programme developments and access relevant administrative material.

Learning publications


The Programme will produce a number of different publications that will be accessible in web and PDF formats from the website. Limited print runs will also be made for selective distribution at events and by country coordinators.

wahenga.news, the quarterly Newsletter, will provide up-to-date and current information on emerging RHVP lessons to a range of stakeholders in an interesting and accessible manner.

The Network team will be responsible for compiling the Newsletter, although specialist staff will contribute specific articles or features.

The newsletter will be 6-8 pages and comprise:

- Brief editorial,
- Update on RHVP ongoing activities (with boxes on studies completed),
- Reviews of new publications and findings (with an interpretation of their relevance for



the Programme and the region),

- Notification of upcoming events, training etc,
- Sources of information - documents and internet sources, and useful contacts.

wahenga.briefs will be produced regularly (at least one per month) on the basis of available material. They will provide in-depth analysis of policy implications/lessons from evidence covering the four themes of investigation. Briefs will be available in web and PDF formats. A limited print run will also be made for selective distribution within countries and at key events.

The Briefs will be 4 pages and comprise an extensive article on a specific theme arising out of ongoing RHVP investigative studies and other pertinent research. The writer/s will provide a theoretical context of the issue with some practical/case study examples.

The Briefs will be an important flagship for the project and aim to make a significant contribution to policy dialogue on VAA and SP nationally, regionally and internationally.

The Network team will produce the Briefs, and they will be authored by a range of specialists. These may be RHVP staff or guest authors.


wahenga.comments are editorial pieces on topical and/or controversial issues. They are intended for a wider audience than the more technical Briefs and are intended to stimulate interest and build awareness on issues around hunger and vulnerability. Comment pieces will serve the function of drawing attention to the Programme and the issues. They will be based on sound experience and/or evidence but invited authors (from within the Programme and outside) will be encouraged to express their views. Comment pieces will be issued as editorials and the originating author will not be identified.

Comment pieces will be brief and their production will be managed by the Network.

One section of the Programme's target audience is "tomorrow's leaders". While much of the policy and analytical material prepared by the Programme will be accessible to university level students, most will be too sophisticated for use at secondary school level.

The Programme will therefore produce a briefing kit on hunger and vulnerability issues for secondary schools containing topic sheets and suggested learner activities within defined curriculum areas. A CD-ROM could be a particularly useful resource for teachers. Country Co-ordinators will advise on developing this area within each country with regard to specific educational contexts. This work could evolve in different ways. RHVP could try and engage a sponsor to support production of educational material, but could also usefully work with some INGOs already engaged with educational activity in both northern and southern countries – for example, the education departments of Save the Children UK and OXFAM.

RHVP will commission a range of studies during the course of the Programme that will



establish a knowledge base concerning hunger and vulnerability, and possible technical and policy responses. This component will be co-ordinated by ODG who will provide guidance and quality control of the outputs. The Network team will liaise closely with ODG to ensure study reports are used in an optimal way for communication and advocacy activity.

Learning events using popular media forms

RHVP will explore the use of popular media forms (road shows, folk media and drama/theatre) as a mechanism for broad communication activity with targeted general public groups. Such initiatives will be more effective if they can build on local level activity in these arenas rather than be imposed externally. The Network may consider developing pilot activity in one or two countries to explore this further.

3.4 How? – ensuring effective implementation

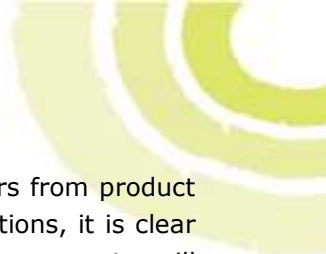
The Network team will ensure oversight of the roles and responsibilities between partners to guarantee the production and dissemination of communication mechanisms and monitoring their quality. These roles are outlined in the table in Annex 2.

In general terms, any mechanisms utilised for implementing the Communication and Advocacy Strategy have to meet the following criteria:

- be dynamic and responsive to the evolving hunger and vulnerability situation and debate,
- be effective in terms of engaging the target audience in dialogue,
- be effective in terms of conveying the debate and building awareness amongst the target audience,
- be linked with the external environment¹ and be able to regularly monitor, review and interpret (for the region and the Programme) the developing debate around hunger and vulnerability,
- be cost effective and sustainable.

¹ This includes:

- Government policy and relevant food security activity in each of the six RHVP countries;
- Ongoing WFP policy and practice;
- Policy development in international/regional organisations;
- Operational programme activity by international NGOs working in the six RHVP countries;
- International academic research addressing food security issue in the six RHVP countries; and
- Media coverage in-country, regionally and internationally relevant to RHVP objectives.



The style of communication (whether it be written or in another medium) differs from product to product, depending primarily on whom the target is. In terms of the publications, it is clear that certain products intended for broad dissemination, such as pamphlets and comments, will be written in a style that will enable widespread understanding. Other products, such as briefs and study reports, are intended for an audience that already has a good level of understanding of the issues and who desire more substantive and sophisticated analysis. As a general principle, however, all RHVP publications will be written using a plain and straightforward style. This is especially important as English may not be the preferred language of many readers.

However all communication vehicles will follow the house-style as laid out in the RHVP Corporate Identity document provided by TwoTone design. It is important that all public documents accord with RHVP's image and branding to ensure consistency in presentation and layout and a high level of professionalism in our products. The Learning Network has a critical role in ensuring consistency of presentation in all communication vehicles.


As emphasised in Section 2 above, RHVP was set up with the specific intent to question the traditional way of addressing hunger and vulnerability to hunger and to propose new approaches which will have greater impact. If this Programme is to succeed in achieving this, it will have to employ tactics that are designed to gain and hold the attention of the target audience. Some of these tactics include:

- A willingness to openly question normal convention,
- Expressing ideas that are "outside the box",
- Stimulating debate grounded on experience and/or evidence),
- Packaging key messages in succinct and communicable ways,
- Enabling the target audience to engage with the Programme.

In this respect, certain products of the Communication Strategy, notably the use of theatre but also the website and the comments, will employ a deliberately questioning/provocative approach. In all cases, however, these products will be based on solid experience and/or evidence. The intention here is not to criticise or point the finger but to raise awareness and stimulate interest as an essential precursor for change.

RHVP will be pro-active about working with the media to disseminate messages to the wider public. A Media Briefing Kit will be developed and made available on www.wahenga.net. The mass media will be used to disseminate relevant information to a wider audience within the six countries and more broadly when appropriate, so ensuring that messages reach the general public and not just a narrow audience. An initial study will be commissioned to assist the Programme to plan how to utilise mass media opportunities across the six countries.

Building on existing structures is an underlying principle of RHVP's approach. In terms of



communications, the Strategy encourages an integrative approach to communication about RHVP. At both regional and country levels, communication activity will, where appropriate, be developed with or through other agencies – for example both SARPN and SANGONeT can support information dissemination at a regional level through mechanisms they have already established. At country levels we can contribute to communication paths that are already established (eg DFID Social Protection Newsletter or Dept of Agriculture’s Food Security newsletter in Mozambique).

A database of contacts is being developed based on website hits and information gathering by Country Coordinators. This database will be used to inform contacts of new publications available on the website. It is important that new contacts are regularly referred to the Network team and a system established to ensure this. By the end of the Programme all communication and advocacy activity will be securely located within an appropriate regional advocacy body.



4 Advocacy strategy

4.1 Definition of advocacy for RHVP

Advocacy is the mechanism through which the programme intends to achieve both attitude and behaviour change – the later steps of effective communication and advocacy. Within RHVP advocacy is defined as: “the deliberate process of influencing those who make both technical and policy decisions towards improving both policy and practice related to hunger and vulnerability”.

The advocacy strategy builds on the platform created by the communication process, but is a targeted process intended to influence the attitudes and behaviour of key identified decision makers. Considering key phrases in unpacking the definition:


- **Deliberate process** - implies intentional actions to be taken, and requires clarity on who we are trying to influence (refer below). We need to be clear on what mechanisms and policies we wish to improve, influence and/or change, and hence the rationale for this strategy.
- **Influencing** - having an impact on people in changing both attitudes and behaviour.
- **Policy makers** - encompasses many types of decision makers engaged in both policy and practice. These are not just politicians but also include government, private sector, universities and NGOs. This will differ from country to country depending on the political economy and local debates concerning food aid.

4.2 The advocacy approach of RHVP

The overall advocacy approach adopted for the Programme and at the regional level is constructed around three variables. These are the content, style and *modus operandi* of advocacy.

The main options for the content of advocacy can be characterised as empirical (evidence-based) at one end of the spectrum and as polemical (or value-based) at the other. RHVP is a mix of the polemical argument and the empirical, evidence-based data.

Advocacy can adopt an **exhortational** or an **inspirational** style. In practice RHVP will combine both, for example through pointing to the damaging nature of some food aid, while also appealing to the “better self” of the policy makers, especially parliamentarians, to aim for higher standards and adopt longer-term development policies and approaches.



The *modus operandi* of advocacy can be delivery through diplomatic or “insider” channels, or “outsider” channels - via mass media. RHVP will use combinations of both private lobbying and public campaigning.

RHVP will adopt different roles at different times as part of its advocacy strategy including:

- **Specialist informant** - Providing technical advice and information to decision makers, with the emphasis on informing, not persuading. This is mainly the role of the communication strategy, but with time RHVP staff should be perceived as specialist informants. In addition, through its partnership with ODG (and IDS), RHVP has access to a range of internationally, regionally and nationally renowned specialists who will inform the development of advocacy work at appropriate times. The evidence generated through Output 1 will be critical in ensuring the Programme further develops this information, evidence and capacity.
- **Capacity builder** - Providing support to other groups participating in both technical and policy advocacy processes; providing resources, technical support, or policy analyses to others (eg VACs); playing a convening role and potentially participating in direct advocacy. This will be carried out through the capacity building under Output 2, especially in partnership with a centre of excellence, as well as the other active learning processes created by the Programme (Output 3).
- **Player/Lobbyist** - Directly attempting to influence policy as a full participant; formulating and presenting positions in public situations or meetings with policy makers eg. members of parliament, as well as through the communication and advocacy strategy of Output 3.
- **Honest broker** – participating in policy making processes as an objective specialist and fair broker of competing interests. The attempts to influence processes are transparent, and based on facts and analysis (arising from Output 1). In much of the work through the active learning of the regional network, seminars, study tours and exchange visits, RHVP will assume this role.

It may become increasingly difficult to play the “Honest Broker” role as RHVP has an agenda and specific messages and is more of a player/lobbyist, but hopes to be able to create the platforms for joint learning among stakeholders.

Whilst RHVP advocacy may vary its content, style and mode of delivery according to advocacy targets and circumstances, it has a corporate “centre of gravity” which finds its expression in a particular combination of content, style and delivery – a blend which best fits the nature of the Programme.

One way of assessing the appropriateness of content, style and delivery is to look at this through the lens of risk.

Table 2: Dimensions of advocacy

Three dimensions of advocacy	Low risk	< - >	High risk
Content	Empirical	< - >	Polemical
Style	Inspirational	< - >	Exhortational
Mode of delivery	Insider	< - >	Outsider

At one end of the spectrum the empirical, inspirational, insider approach can be said to be the least risky, while a combination of exhortational polemics with outsider delivery strategies is the most risky. Between these two boundaries there are an additional seven possible combinations as outlined below:


Table 3: Types of advocacy

No	8 advocacy types			Risk quotient ²	Examples
1	Insider (0)	Empirical (0)	Inspirational (0)	0	International Committee of the Red Cross
2	Insider (0)	Polemical (1)	Inspirational (0)	1	
3	Insider (0)	Empirical (0)	Exhortational (1)	1	
4	Insider (0)	Polemical (1)	Exhortational (1)	2	
5	Outsider (1)	Empirical (0)	Inspirational (0)	1	RHVP
6	Outsider (1)	Polemical (1)	Inspirational (0)	2	RHVP
7	Outsider (1)	Empirical (0)	Condemnatory (1)	2	
8	Outsider (1)	Polemical (1)	Condemnatory (1)	3	Greenpeace

RHVP will fall in categories 5 and 6 as it values its independence, but appeals to shared values and principles to promote consensual change. RHVP makes up for what it loses from its outsider status by making the insiders “feel good” about supporting their objectives – ie working with “drivers of change”. The value-based argument of RHVP increases its risk quotient, but with time this will be backed with empirical evidence from Output 1, thus substantially decreasing the risk. A number of structures and processes help to decrease the outsider image of the Programme including:

- Regional and national partners as part of the Programme consortium (eg Khanya and Atiku Associates),

² The ‘risk quotient’ is calculated on the basis of polemical=1, empirical=0, exhortational=1, inspirational=0, outsider=1, insider=0

- 
- Country Co-ordinators in the six focus countries,
 - VAA adviser in SADC, Gaborone,
 - National Advisory Groups,
 - In-country working and advocacy partners (such as CASS in Zimbabwe),
 - A participatory, needs-based approach (e.g. the way in which REBA has been developed using national inputs).

As RHVP begins to invest more time, effort and resources into advocacy work in the next phase, its ability to influence will ultimately be dependant on its ability to take donors (DFID, AusAID and possibly others) with them.

As a regional programme focusing on the six countries of Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe, RHVP will develop REBA and evidence from these countries. Although the products and messages of the programme will be advocated at the regional level, they will also be advocated in each of the focus countries to ensure policy influence and uptake in the form of improved practice. This may well mean that a different approach is adopted in the different countries depending on the particular national circumstances. To this end both the CMT and CCs have developed political analyses of the region and the focus countries respectively (see Annex 1). These will be critical in refining and specifying the advocacy activities appropriate for the different RHVP messages and the region/countries.


In addition to questions of content, style and mode of advocacy, there is the issue of structure. The responsibility for developing and managing the implementation of the advocacy strategy lies with Output 3. However implementation will be carried out by the CMT at the regional level and the CCs at the country level. In this manner, all RHVP staff (and its partners and sub-contractors) will be expected to play a role in advocating the specific messages of the Programme as part of deliberate processes, but also as part of their everyday activities on the Programme.

4.3 Building the foundations for effective advocacy

During both the Design and Establishment Phases of the Programme, foundations have been laid upon which to base the advocacy strategy. These will continue to be built throughout the Programme and include:

Gathering policy and political information

The CMT and CCs have identified the main decision makers and organisations both at the regional level and in the six focus countries. This has been done through:

- 
- The development of the national inventories including current policies,
 - The Knowledge Reviews and Gap Analyses (KRGAs),
 - Regional and political analyses.

Establishing credibility

RHVP staff are recognised as being specialists and respected food security spokespeople. This is being achieved through:

- Establishing the physical presence of the Country Co-ordinators, as well as the CMT,
- Capacity building and “learning by doing” on the Programme,
- Developing the RHVP website and house style reflected in business cards, the leaflet, stationery, etc,
- Evidence and reports emerging from the work in Output 1.

Grounding in evidence and current realities

So far, the following approach has ensured the Programme is rooted in current realities:

- Inventories and the KRGAs have captured the current realities,
- Local CCs represent the Programme in the focus countries,
- Output 1 will build on current realities and develop local evidence.

Building strategic relationships

These have been developed in the following ways:

- “Drivers of change” have been identified in the region and focus countries,
- Staff have met with the relevant government ministries/departments,
- A Programme Advisory Committee has been established at a regional level,
- National Advisory Groups are being established in Lesotho, Malawi and Swaziland,
- Strategic partnerships are being developed with in-country organisations such as CASS in Zimbabwe and RuralNet in Zambia.



Assessing the political and institutional context for policy influencing

It would be a mistake to assume that stakeholders, once they understand RHVP objectives, will willingly change their behaviour in such a way as to make them realizable. The communications and advocacy strategy must recognise that the “stake” that some powerful stakeholders have may be vested in the status quo, or in change incompatible with that which we would like to advocate, so that awareness, knowledge and understanding of RHVP leads to changes in attitudes and behaviour that frustrate rather than further Programme objectives. This means that the strategy must be implemented with a good understanding of incentive structures associated with the political and institutional context in which stakeholders operate and of where synergies might or might not exist. These will be assessed through evidence-building activities related to Theme 4: Political and governance factors determining policy uptake.

Maintaining focus

The Programme’s website contains literature outlining what RHVP is all about – ie the key messages. This will be complemented by evidence developed under the four RHVP themes, as well as the regional evidence building priorities as outlined in the REBA.

4.4 The target audience for the advocacy strategy

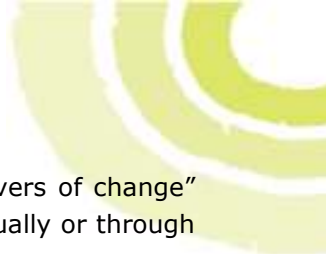
Those targeted for the advocacy component of RHVP are a sub-set of those targeted by the communication strategy as outlined in Table 1. Those targeted by the advocacy messages are more specific and focus on the following:

Practitioners (technical staff)

RHVP acknowledges that this is the client group through which it is likely to have the most impact and is therefore the primary target group of the advocacy strategy. These include practitioners in regional agencies, national governments, NGOs, community-based organisations, donor agencies and academic institutions involved in food security and social protection. Practitioners from organisations involved in VAA and different social protection mechanisms will be the focus. Once the REBA has been developed, it will determine the focus areas of RHVP evidence building work and hence the specific people and organisations both at regional and national level to be targeted.

Policymakers

Policy makers include those in regional organisations (SADC & NEPAD-CAADP) and national governments, as well as parliamentarians and senior civil servants. The Programme will focus on those directly involved in food security issues, as well as social protection measures. The relevant parliamentary standing committees will be engaged as well as the local and traditional authorities linked to particular case studies or mechanisms the Programme will engage with. In



both the region and the focus countries, RHVP has taken time to identify “drivers of change” that the Programme will use as its focus for advocacy purposes – either individually or through the PAC/NAGs.

Donors (funding agencies)

RHVP is aware that the food aid arena is dominated by Northern interests, in particular the public and their governments. Many of these governments act as international donors directly supporting relief, rehabilitation and development efforts in the RHVP focus countries, often through UN agencies such as WFP and FAO. These organisations tend to be very influential in how and for what donor funding is used and can be (as DFID has been) strong advocates for RHVP messages among regional stakeholders and national governments.

The UN agencies

The UN agencies have a vested interest in the continuation of food aid (e.g. WFP) and in the development of agricultural schemes (eg FAO) to deal with food insecurity. Whilst these agencies are seeking alternatives they tend to be slow in changing the Programme and its evidence building agenda should positively engage with them.

The general public and civil society

As previously mentioned, RHVP will not carry out mass popular activist campaigning through the general public and civil society. It recognises the importance of this client category as public opinion obviously influences government policy, but with the time available for the Programme, this will be carried out through communication using the mass media specifically to reach the poor and marginalised.

4.5 RHVP advocacy activities

Table 2 below shows the types of advocacy activities the Programme intends carrying out against the various target audiences:

Table 4: Advocacy audience and activities

Target audience	Advocacy activities										
	One-on-one interactions	PAC (Regional)	NAG	Partners (eg CASS)	Study tours	Exchange visits	Seminars	Presenting at conferences	Present to policy forums	Training sessions	Regional conference
Practitioners (technical staff)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Policymakers	X	X SADC	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Donors (funding agencies)	X	X					X	X	X		X
UN agencies (WFP, FAO)	X	X					X	X		X	X

One-on-one meetings with key decision makers and drivers of change

One-on-one meetings include initial meetings of the Programme management with key personnel in the region and in-country that would be interested in the outcomes of the Programme and would be looking to use the outputs of the Programme to further their aims. This includes meetings with RHVP key partners (SADC), as well as key in-country government ministries and departments. These may be formalised in the future through the PAC & NAGs, but also *ad hoc* when necessary and when the opportunity arises.


Establish and engage with the Programme Advisory Committee (PAC)

The PAC will guide and advise the Programme at the regional level. This activity involves DFID (with support from RHVP) refining the PAC scope and terms of reference, and identifying and inviting individuals to become PAC members. The first meeting of the PAC took place in April 2006, before the regional workshop, and such meetings will in future be held on a quarterly basis.

Establish and engage with National Advisory Groups (NAG)

NAGs initially will be established in three of the six focus countries to:

- Act as a conduit for ensuring that national policy needs determine the requirements for evidence-building activities, and the findings from RHVP evidence-building work are adopted in national policy formulation,

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- Orient the national process for taking forward the social protection and hunger and vulnerability debate, Programme activities and policy development,
 - Assist in coordinating the country's participation in RHVP.

Arrange study tours

Study tours comprise a structured learning event involving a number of RHVP partners travelling to a country (eg Ethiopia) for a specific purpose relevant to RHVP. These may involve travel within the continent, or to Asia or Latin America. Such tours would last about ten days each, and comprise a maximum of ten participants. Participants will include RHVP stakeholders, as well as specific policy makers that may be the focus of specific policy interventions or changes. Study tours will be combined with RHVP events where possible, enhancing the learning benefits.

Arrange exchange visits


Exchange visits will be organised between and among RHVP countries. These will encourage cross-country learning among RHVP participants, partners and policy makers. These will be linked to specific events taking place in country, eg the joint development of a methodological toolkit or for policy makers in one country to attend the launch of a social protection approach/mechanism in another. Exchange visits will involve two to four people at a time and will be *ad hoc*, one-on-one country activities. These will depend largely on REBA and what evidence building activities are embarked upon.

Hold national and regional seminars

Policy workshops and seminars will involve the organised gathering of stakeholders and interested parties for a morning or afternoon. These will be focused on different stakeholders, and therefore the type of function will vary depending on the audience – eg it will be different if targeted at academics or members of parliament/politicians. Such events, linked to existing events organised by SADC, the national VACs and other stakeholders wherever possible, could take on different forms to promote sharing and learning, and could be organised by RHVP partners such as the regional network or the centre of excellence, or stakeholders with some support from RHVP. Such events will be organised through RHVP advocacy partners – eg SARPN at the regional level and CASS in Zimbabwe.

Hold a regional conference

RHVP will organise a major regional conference on hunger and vulnerability during the second half of 2007. This will provide an opportunity to disseminate results of the 'fast-track' studies and first main agenda of evidence-building work. It will also enable the Programme to tap into the work of prominent non-RHVP researchers in this field both from the region and internationally, who will be invited to submit papers on related policy-relevant issues. Other invited participants will include politicians and policy makers from the region, and



representatives of AU, SADC and other regional bodies, donor and international agencies and civil society. A conference report will be prepared for dissemination on the RHVP network, and will feed into the design of subsequent RHVP activities and of further research. Consideration will also be given to publishing selected conference papers as a special issue of a leading international journal.

Carry out training in VAA and social protection mechanisms

Although primarily part of capacity building, training done through the centre of excellence will also be used with the intention of influencing and advocating specific improvements, methodologies and mechanisms. It is important that trainees will be able to advocate the learnings back in their workplaces.

Attending & presenting at national and regional conferences/ policy forums

RHVP staff and partners (PAC members, NAG members, 'drivers of change') will be encouraged to present on RHVP products/messages at national, regional and international conferences, as well as policy forums (eg parliamentary standing committees). Criteria will be established in order to get the maximum advocacy mileage from these events

Establish and work with regional and in-country advocacy partners

Advocacy partners will be sought and worked with at the regional and national levels. Regionally these may include SARPAN, FANRPAN, NEPAD and in-country partners may include advocacy organisations such as CASS and others. These partners will be able to carry out specific events (eg seminars, one-on-one meetings/briefings, etc) on behalf of, or in partnership with, RHVP.



5 Monitoring and evaluation

The RHVP has developed an M&E system outlining what will be monitored (ie log frame indicators and other important 'learning questions'), by whom, when and how.

During the development of the M&E system the team felt that aspects of this C&A Strategy must be monitored and evaluated. The results will help the Programme understand its impact, and adapt its approach if necessary.

Key tools to monitor the implementation and impact of the C&A strategy will include:

- Quarterly planning/reporting – to inform whether the strategy is being implemented as stated,
- Website monitoring tools – to identify who is accessing the website, and what information they are sourcing,
- Small scale stakeholder surveys (eg policy makers and practitioners) – to understand whether the strategy is having the intended impacts (Table 3).


Table 5: Proposed mechanisms and impact

Target group	Impact Short term design, Q4-05, Q1-06 & Q2-06	Impact Medium term Q3-06 to Q2-07	Impact Long term Q3-07 to Q2-08	Key communication mechanisms
General public and civil society	Aware of importance of alternatives to food aid in addressing hunger and vulnerability	Aware of importance of alternatives to food aid in addressing hunger and vulnerability	Aware of how to engage with alternative social protection approaches at a local level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radio, national and community • Television • Newspapers • School essay competitions • Poster series • Drama/theatre activity • Road shows

Target group	Impact Short term design, Q4-05, Q1-06 & Q2-06	Impact Medium term Q3-06 to Q2-07	Impact Long term Q3-07 to Q2-08	Key communication mechanisms
Media	Knowledge both about the programme itself and the issues RHVP is advocating	Aware of importance of alternatives to food aid in addressing hunger and vulnerability as a key media message RHVP partners/staff recognised by media as key spokespeople on alternatives to food aid etc.	Features/items of alternatives to food aid appearing regularly in media VACs recognised by media as key spokespeople on social protection/ alternatives to food aid etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press releases • Photo library • Bank of case study/ testimonial resource material • DVD news clip • Documentaries
Practitioners (technical staff)	Enhanced knowledge both about both the programme itself and the issues RHVP is advocating		Evidence of change in mindset/practice (link to advocacy strategy) ie enhanced capability/ capacity of VAA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website • Email newsletter • Press releases • Toolkits/manuals • Features that contribute to in-country or internal publications eg Dept of Agriculture's Food Security newsletter in Mozambique • Exchange visits • Research papers (university practitioners)

Target group	Impact Short term design, Q4-05, Q1-06 & Q2-06	Impact Medium term Q3-06 to Q2-07	Impact Long term Q3-07 to Q2-08	Key communication mechanisms
Advocacy based organisations	Enhanced knowledge both about the programme itself and the issues RHVP is advocating Aware of importance of alternatives to food aid in addressing hunger and vulnerability, including social protection	Aware of different approaches to addressing hunger and vulnerability and the implications for advocacy	Evidence of advocacy on different approaches to hunger and vulnerability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy briefings • Email newsletter • Donor publications eg DFID SP newsletter, Developments • National and regional workshops • Positive media coverage around RHVP issues/outputs • Recognised publications used by practitioners such as NR Perspectives • Website • Media coverage
Policy makers at national and regional levels	Enhanced knowledge both about the programme itself and the issues RHVP is advocating.	Increased understanding about the programme, the issues RHVP is advocating and implications for policy.	Evidence of change in mindset/policy (link to advocacy strategy) ie social protection policies in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy briefings • Articles in key national publications eg Delivery Magazine • National and regional workshops • Translation into Portuguese for Mozambique • Media coverage • Study tours

Target group	Impact Short term design, Q4-05, Q1-06 & Q2-06	Impact Medium term Q3-06 to Q2-07	Impact Long term Q3-07 to Q2-08	Key communication mechanisms
Donors (funding agencies)	Enhanced knowledge both about the programme itself and the issues RHVP is advocating Aware of importance of alternatives to food aid in addressing hunger and vulnerability, including social protection	Aware of different approaches to addressing hunger and vulnerability and the implications for donor/relations with national/regional stakeholders	Evidence of change in mindset/policy (link to advocacy strategy) ie social protection features within donor guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy briefings • Email newsletter • Donor publications eg DFID SP newsletter, Developments • National and regional workshops • Positive media coverage around RHVP issues/outputs • Recognised publications, such as NR Perspectives, used by practitioners • Website • Media coverage
Implementing agencies	Enhanced knowledge both about the programme itself and the issues RHVP is advocating Aware of importance of alternatives to food aid in addressing hunger and vulnerability, including social protection	Aware of different approaches to addressing hunger and vulnerability and the implications for implementing agencies with national/regional stakeholders	Evidence of change in practice by implementing agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy briefings • Email newsletter • Donor publications eg DFID SP newsletter, Developments • National and regional workshops • Positive media coverage around RHVP issues/outputs • Recognised publications, such as NR Perspectives, used by practitioners • Website • Media coverage



Target group	Impact Short term design, Q4-05, Q1-06 & Q2-06	Impact Medium term Q3-06 to Q2-07	Impact Long term Q3-07 to Q2-08	Key communication mechanisms
Regional economic bodies		Aware of importance of alternatives to food aid in addressing hunger and vulnerability, including social protection and different SP approaches/ mechanisms and how to implement them	Evidence of change in mindset/policy (link to advocacy strategy) ie social protection policies in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy briefings • Abstracts/ articles to contribute to sector publications • Web site/portal • Media coverage
