19. COMMUNICATION TOOLKIT

19.1 Background
The government uses communications to help deliver its policy priorities, based on its strategic plans and other commitments. Communication plays an important role in helping deliver public benefit, working together with policy and operational parts of government, and is often the most effective and efficient tool available.

Government has a responsibility to communicate with the public and does so in a number of ways to fulfil a specific legal or statutory requirement to provide public information about its operation.

19.2 Introduction
A functioning democracy needs an informed citizenry. Providing citizens with adequate information on priorities, programmes and activities ensures not only the legitimacy of a government, but also institutes regimes of transparency and accountability.

Government communication performs three basic functions:
a. Informing the citizens
b. Advocating/persuading (for policies and reforms)
c. Engaging the citizens.

A well-conceived government communication programme will build broad support and legitimacy for programmes; will be responsive to citizen's needs and provide mechanisms to hold governments accountable.

In practice, government communication entails consulting for policy making, achieving consensus, raising awareness, changing behaviour, fostering transparency and civic education, as well as listening to/feeling the pulse of society.

19.3 Communication campaigns/programmes/projects/activities
A campaign uses a planned series of activities to educate people or, when the intent is advocacy, persuade them to change their minds or their actions.

Some of the examples are as follows:
• National Days
• Theme months (e.g, Youth Month, Tourism Month, Transport Month, Women's Month, Heritage Month, etc).
• Launch of projects
• Major events (IAWP, CAN, etc)
• Major programmes.
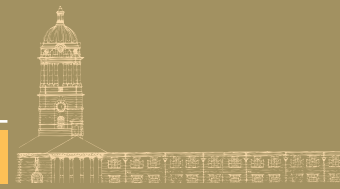
19.4 Toolkit
The term "toolkit" is applied to many forms of information and content. A toolkit is information that is grouped in categories in order to provide targeted direction to specific audiences.

19.5 The aim of the toolkit
The aim of the toolkit is to provide communicators or any government official with information on the issue or question at hand, government policies/legislations/government position on the matter, current government trends, knowledge gained from past experiences, etc.

Part of the documents within the toolkit have to enable readers to identify problems or challenges, opportunities for communications, facts locating the issues within the broader government legislations, answer key questions and draw up a strategy for addressing these issues.

19.6 Basis of information
The toolkit is based on information gathered over several processes that also includes research. The developed toolkit can be updated over time building on experience and knowledge generated through various activities and developments.

19.7 What is in the toolkit?
Thes toolkit contains draft materials to provide key audiences with information on a particular programme or campaign. Some of this information will clarify government position and sometimes even encourage a particular action.

19.8 Types of material that form a toolkit
Prototype material contained in this toolkit provide a hierarchy of information ranging from the concise messages in the flyers and posters and the simple information set out in the factsheets to more complete data and explanations in the leaflets. These multiple tools are designed to:
- Ensure that the priority audience have access to all necessary information
- Repeat key messages to ensure that they are registered.

The materials (Contents of a toolkit) are:
a. Theme/Message
b. Communication strategy
c. Key messages
d. Look-and-feel of the campaign
e. Products (posters, leaflets, brochures)
f. Fact sheets
g. Web banners and buttons
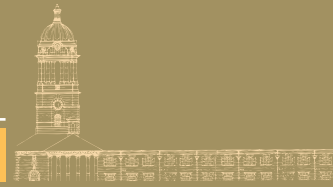
h. Designs of pull-ups/Backdrops
i. Media Engagement plan (including interview schedule)
j. Advertising
k. Briefing/Concept document
l. Calendar of events.

19.9 Timelines
Communications is about management of time. The communication toolkit has to be compiled timorously (at least one month) before the programme/campaign/activity begins.

19.10 Role of communicators
All government communicators should plan for their events as early as possible and ensure that in their planning a Communication Toolkit is developed. Through the GCIS, this toolkit will be shared with communicators in all the three spheres of government to help inform their communication going forward on a specific activity.