



# Guidelines

# Visibility & Communication

## *When working with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

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**The Dutch government actively pursues international partnerships in a variety of areas, including development cooperation, and provides emergency aid in the event of international conflicts and disasters. In this context, it works with partner and implementing organisations. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs provides funding for these programmes, projects and activities. It also makes agreements with the organisations in question on ensuring optimal visibility for the government's role and the support it provides, and on working together on communication.**

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the financial and planning instruments for agreed programmes, projects and activities.

The guidelines are intended for:

- organisations that receive financial support within the framework of Dutch foreign and development policy: NGOs (in the Netherlands and abroad); knowledge institutions and businesses; multilateral and other international partners; and partner countries of the Netherlands;
- foreign ministry staff tasked with implementing programmes and projects run by third parties, at the ministry in The Hague and at Dutch missions.

## Shaping visibility

The foreign ministry interprets 'public visibility' broadly. It can refer to a recognisable visual or textual style. It can also mean a spoken and written acknowledgement of the foreign ministry and the Netherlands' contribution. It's about fostering visibility in all relevant situations, which is more than just adding a logo.

Public visibility can be boosted by:

- including the foreign ministry logo in communication products;
- including a brief statement (tagline) in publications, reports and annual reports, with or without an emblem;
- mentioning the support provided by the Netherlands on information boards for projects;
- including a short standard text ('boilerplate') summarising Dutch policy in publications and reports;
- including references to the foreign ministry's involvement in news items and social media posts (e.g. in hashtags);
- mentioning the foreign ministry's involvement on websites, in speeches and interviews, and in marketing and promotion materials etc.;

- referring in public to the foreign ministry's involvement in communication concerning regional, national and international meetings, or prominent visits to the Netherlands and abroad;
- cooperation/coordinating with the foreign ministry on communication and media (including social media) activities;
- engaging in strategic coordination with the foreign ministry on specific themes.

## Communication plans, identifying opportunities

The foreign ministry expects partner and implementing organisations to determine at the outset of joint programmes, projects and activities any opportunities for public visibility and other communication activities. To this end, it engages in dialogue with partners and bodies responsible for implementing existing arrangements.

Relevant questions in this connection include:

- What agreements on communication are in place for the duration of the programme? These can involve for example, communication in pursuit of policy objectives, or media and other outreach activities.
- Who is the target audience for the communication?
- What agreements have been made about communication relating to the partnership with the foreign ministry?
- Do the proposed activities offer an opportunity to refer directly to the support received from and partnership with the Netherlands/the foreign ministry?
- Do the activities in question offer any opportunities for strategic/substantive cooperation with the foreign ministry and, by extension, for communication?
- Are multiple partners involved? If so, should similar arrangements be made with them?
- Are there plans to publish reports, brochures etc.?
- How can visibility be achieved on websites and on social media platforms?
- Does the programme include any substantive/strategic activities that have communication potential?

- Are there operational or other reasons that make public recognition impossible or inappropriate?

## Incorporating the foreign ministry's visibility into regular communication

It is practical to integrate public visibility into regular communication planning. This makes it easier to identify opportunities, and limits additional costs and the likelihood of misunderstandings.

Some tips to consider:

- Flag opportunities and risks as early as possible.
- See if any opportunities arise during meetings and travel/working visits.
- If that is the case, inform the foreign ministry dossier holder early on and check opportunities for cooperation/coordination.
- Where relevant, use standard foreign ministry/foreign trade and development cooperation Twitter handles.
- In cases where a coordinated, strong message is important, agree #hashtags with the foreign ministry.
- Share examples of results/progress that have been achieved with the foreign ministry's help and that demonstrate the importance of Dutch policy.
- Share them on social media platforms/channels, websites; by outreach to regular media; via events etc. and foreign ministry counterparts.

## Coordination

Depending on the agreements in place between the organisation in question and the foreign ministry, the level of contact and coordination can vary. In all cases, it is a good idea to keep in touch with the relevant dossier holder.

Dit is een publicatie van:

**Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken**

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