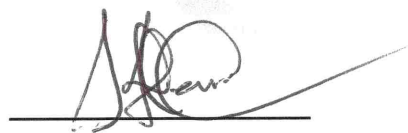




COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

JOHN TAOLO GAETSEWE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

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MUNICIPAL MANAGER


SPEAKER

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JOHN TAOLO GAETSEWE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY



COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY 2025-2026

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1. BACKGROUND

The John Taolo Gaetsewe District Municipality (JTGDM) is situated in the Northern Cape Province and is bordered by (1) The Siyanda and Francis Baard District Municipalities to the south and west; (2) The North West Province (Dr. Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District Municipality) to the east and northeast; and (3) Botswana to the northwest.

Administratively, the JTGDM comprises of three Local Municipalities: (1) The Gamagara Local Municipality; (2) The Ga-Segonyana Local Municipality; and (3) The Joe Morolong Local Municipality, which encapsulates the geographical area covered by the former District Management Area and the former Moshaweng Local Municipality. (Source: JT Gaetsewe 2011-12 SDF Review).

JT Gaetsewe is the second smallest district in the Northern Cape, occupying only 6% of the Province (27 293 km²). The largest area within JT Gaetsewe is the former District Management Area (DMA) with over 10 000 km². Joe Morolong covers the next largest area of 9 477 km² (KDM, IDP 2006). The JT Gaetsewe District comprises of 186 towns and settlements of which the majority (80%) are villages in the Joe Morolong Municipality.

2. INTRODUCTION

This strategy is a guideline for communication in the current term of local government on how to communicate with various stakeholders. It will become a blueprint for our communication to ensure synergy, coherence and consistency of messages.

This communication strategy is flexible and will be reviewed annually, also as and when the need arises to align with developments in the communication environment. The District Municipality is guided by the Integrated Development Plan which is the product of the strategic planning process in our Municipality. The IDP considers the 5 key performance areas of local government which are:

- ✓ Basic service delivery and infrastructure
- ✓ Local economic development

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- ✓ Financial Viability and management
- ✓ Good governance and Community participation
- ✓ Municipal Transformation and institutional Development

What informs the strategy

- Government Programme of Action as articulated by the Government of National Unity
- State of the Nation Address (SONA)
- National Communication Strategy



The objective of this strategy therefore, is to give guidance to all communications related activities around the IDP, as the overall function of the municipality.

3. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS COMMUNICATION STRATEGY / PLAN

Lessons learnt from previous communication plan

- Everyone has a communication function and it will make it easier for the communications unit to function effectively if every unit in the municipality contributed to content;
- The strategy was not fully implemented to insufficient budget;
- Participation of local municipalities has improved;
- Communication is still not regarded as a strategic function, making it difficult for the unit to function optimally;
- The municipality does not have a good footprint in the community radio space
- Changes in communication trends that the municipality is still struggling to keep up with, e.g latest technologies

Proposed Improvements based on analysis of previous plan

- Make communication an inclusive functionary in the municipality
- To improve the support given to local municipalities
- Revive the internal communications forum

- Management to make communications a strategic function by allowing communication to sit in all strategic meetings.
- Budget atleast 1%-5% of the total municipal budget for communications.

4. COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES

Considering the environment within which government communication takes place, there are a number of opportunities. These opportunities can assist us to change the negative narratives about our municipality and even change negative perceptions. Thus, it is important that government should utilise every opportunity it receives to put their messages to change such perceptions through the following:

- SONA
- SOPA
- SODA
- SOLA
- National and Commemorative Days and Theme Months:
- Outreach Programmes such as Council Meets the People:
- Council Meetings:
- IDP & Budget meetings:
- Community meetings:
- Public Participation Programmes
- Elections

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5. STRATEGIC EMPHASIS

For the next five years communication will be focus on the following programmes

Water and sanitation

Roads & transport

Local Economic Development

Integrated Human Settlements

Sustainable Development Orientated municipality
Environmental Climate change & Municipal Health
Disaster Management
Promotion of Health in the district

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6. CONTEXT

- We are into the third decade of freedom, transition of economy and seventh national elections,
- National elections give us an overwhelming mandate from the electorates to continue implementing our policies and programmes aimed at changing the lives of our people aligned to the National Development Plan. The NDP: Vision 2030 highlights that “access to information through print, broadcasting and the internet are vital for building an informed citizenry.” The media play a core role in nation-building and are critical for democracy to function.
- New resolve by government to utilise the District Development Model (DDM) in which communication was also emphasised as a tool to ensure that South Africans participate in the affairs of local government; the resolve of government to provide better and quality services to the people by narrowing the distance between the communities and government and by timely communicating important information to improve understanding of a sustainable long-term development, raise awareness on the importance of service delivery and the difficulties communities face and most importantly to raise awareness on the positive impact of the DDM.
- Government’s resolve on improving government communication (information and publicity; internationally & nationally);
- The district municipality has resolved to revive the Public Participation Programme, which will also enhance communication with the communities.

7. COMMUNICATION ENVIRONMENT

An assessment of both the internal and external environments shows some pockets of negativity in how local government is covered by the media (E.g. Mandate, media agenda, mood / perception, community surveys, politics,). This can only be achieved when using the DDM to address the issues.

8. COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES

- After having considered the communication environment assessment and the challenges, this strategy outlines the following objectives for communication. The successful implementation of these communication objectives will assist us to better inform our communities.
- To ensure coherence, consistency, synergy and coordination in communicating municipal programmes
- To be responsible for communications during disasters in the district and head the Rapid Response Team in the District.
- To provide a platform for communicating municipal plans, actions, priorities and challenges
- To enhance stakeholder engagement within the municipality and promote alignment of activities with local municipalities in the district.

9. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The strategy departs from the premise that messages will have greater impact when delivered by political principals instead of officials. We need to know who are stakeholders are and what their information needs entail. This will assist the district to address the concerns of our communities.

Defining communication language imperatives and media of transmission of information is a challenge in the district. The following were identified as challenges:

- Literacy level
- Spatial distribution of communities with their diverse needs

- Appropriate media to be used to reach out to all citizens

Key messengers

Although we acknowledge that everyone is a communicator, there are three (3) primary messengers who can speak on behalf of the municipality namely; the Executive Mayor, Municipal Manager. (refer to policy)

The Communications Officer, HODS and MMCS are secondary messengers.

10. MESSAGES

Messages will be driven under the vision and mission statement of the municipality

Vision: "Economic hub of excellence for a sustainable, innovative and competitive district".

Mission: "to drive inclusive economic growth and sustainable development Through transparent, effective service delivery, and coordinated support to Local municipalities. We are committed to empowering communities, Fostering partnerships and enhancing infrastructure to ensure a prosperous and resilient district that benefits all its residents".

12. STRATEGIC APPROACH

Communication Strategy is an organic approach to managing information capturing, analysis and dissemination within the municipality and externally which will be guided by environmental scanning.

The approach would include understanding the current mood of the communities/public and different stakeholders within the community especially those directly affected by such information.

Dissemination of information will be conducted in a manner that addresses the specific needs of the communities.

It will be inclusive of all the inputs and recommendations of all the stakeholders in the district.

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Language

Setswana, Afrikaans and English are the most dominant languages used in the district. It is imperative that Setswana, Afrikaans and English be the official languages of the John Taolo Gaetsewe District Municipality. English would be used as the official language of correspondence, whilst the other two can be used in communities when conducting community meetings or engagements..

13. STRUCTURES & PROCESSES

The Strategy will be developed by the Communications unit. It will be presented for recommendations to the District Communicators Forum.

A presentation will then be made to staff members, to the Councillors and Management. It will then be taken to Council for approval and allocation of funding. It will then become an official document of council.

The strategy will be forwarded to the Provincial Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs and the Office of the Premier for notification, SALGA and the Department of Communications for notification.

The Communications unit will be responsible to develop feedback pamphlets to outline the decisions taken and the progress.

Identified Communication Fora

- Intergovernmental Relations Forum
- Integrated Development Plan forum
- Local Economic Development forum
- District Communications forum
- Management forum at the district
- Mayoral Committee
- Traditional authorities
- Municipal Employees
- Business Community
- Youth and youth organizations
- People with disabilities

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- Vulnerable groups
- Religious leaders
- Political leaders
- Non-Government Organizations
- Sector Departments
- Media
- Women Organizations and,
- The broader community

Types of Events and Channels

- Council Meetings
- IDP & Budget meetings
- Community meetings
- Public Participation Programmes
- All National Theme months (Womens' Day, Youth, Freedom, Human rights, 16 Days of Activism, etc.)

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Media

Print Media

The District has two (2) community newspapers, with the availability of the Provincial newspapers and National papers (Sunday Times, City Press, etc).

Electronic Media

Motsweding FM, Kurara FM, SAFM and OFM, have full broadcast in the district and issues are communicated via these channels when a need arises.

The District Municipality also makes use of the external newsletter, the notice boards, the website, the facebook page and to disseminate information.

- **Communication programme**
- **Implementation plan**

Item	Projected Budget	Time frame
Council Outreach programmes (Public participation programmes (PPP), Imbizo) In collaboration with Communications unit	R70 000	Quarterly
State of the District Address	Budget from Mayor's office R100 000	Annually
Develop, printing and distribution of Quarterly newspaper	R50 000	Quarterly
Newspaper notices or adverts	R 70 000 annually	Monthly
Promotional materials Pens, keyholders, cooler bags, USB, t-shirts, etc All branded with municipal logo	R55 000	August
Community radio programmes	R 75 000 per annum	Monthly
Printing of the Annual report Including distribution at least 100 copies	R150 000	End of January
Use of other government media to communicate or disseminate information e.g. My District Today, Vukuzenzele and SALGA newsletter	n/a	Monthly or quarterly
Marketing of municipality in other publications or external newsletters and magazines.	R 20 000	Annually

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List of Abbreviations

IDP	Integrated Development Plan
SONA	State of the Nation Address
SOPA	State of the Province Address
SODA	State of the District Address
SOLA	State of the Local Municipality Address
DDM	District Development Model
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
HOD	Head of Department
MMC	Member of the Mayoral Committee

10. Review of the strategy

The strategy will be reviewed at the end of term of office of the current council.

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