

GUIDELINES

ON RESPONSIBLE, ETHICAL AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

FOR IVS ORGANIZATIONS

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MEDIA
International Voluntary Service

AFRICA



**Solidarites
JEUNESSES**
RÉVER. CONSTRUIRE. TRANSFORMER

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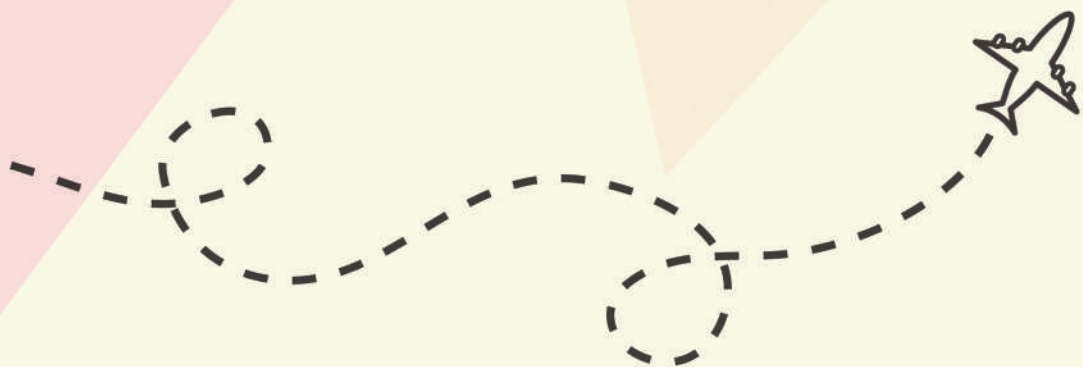
Communication tips to increase the efficiency of online communication



Tips for challenging perceptions and dismantling stereotypes



Advice for using photos and images in an ethical way



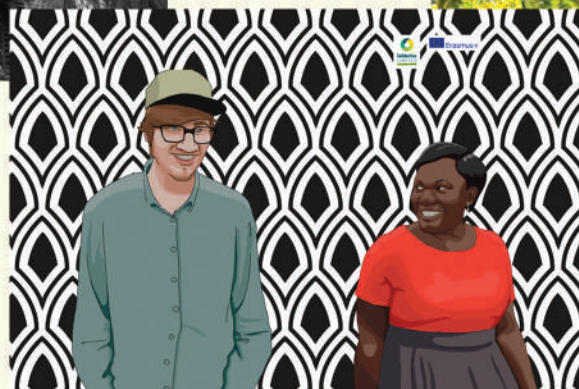
INTRODUCTION

"The project 'When Volunteering Meets Media: MediAfrica' was imagined and coordinated by Solidarités Jeunesses, with the participation of partner organisations from Africa and Europe.

Together, they have elaborated this guide based on their learning outcomes after 2 years of cooperation and reflection around stereotypes, interculturality, storytelling and communication on International Voluntary Service.

The aim of the project and this booklet was to improve the communication strategies of the organizations within the IVS movement - to dismantle stereotypes and help creating more ethical content, while also helping to increase the number of volunteers through efficient communication.

More information on <https://roundtripvolunteering.com>.



GET THE WORD OUT THERE!

Communication tips to increase the efficiency of online communication, and thus increase the number of volunteers.



The best way of getting new volunteers is through former volunteers. Use the volunteers to communicate their own experience. **Narratives of former volunteers are very good in terms of recognition.**

EXTRA TIPS

Ask volunteers to tag their organization when they publish something in social media.

Share the guidelines with camp leaders (especially the ethical standards and what to avoid), and establish recommendations on how to be efficient.

For example: set a rule to post a photo at the beginning, one in the middle, one in the end of the project.



Be transparent with volunteers about the decrease in the number of volunteers, so give them responsibility to help us find new volunteers. **Ask them what is the message they would tell** to find new volunteers, what is attractive for them - and listen to their answers!



Make a calendar of publications, **a timeline focusing on the different needs during the year**, for example plan more promotion in March if this is the time when people are looking for volunteering projects.



Try to **answer to the fears** (questions frequently asked by volunteers before departure) from time to time in your communication.

CHALLENGE THE PERCEPTIONS, BRING DOWN STEREOTYPES!

How to question the representations we can have about volunteering in order to deconstruct stereotypes.



Show interactions between locals and international volunteers, images of cooperation and common acting. Present them as **equals instead of victims and saviours**. Volunteers are there to contribute and work together with the locals, not to save them.

EXTRA TIPS

Always ask yourself: “What is my intention with sharing this content?”

Show moments from the daily lives of the volunteers (not only exotic moments), such as: the house where they stay, their work.



Don't always take the point of view of the volunteer in your communication. You can also focus on hosting families, local staff, etc.



Avoid any simplified generalizations about cultures, countries and continents, etc.



Include informative text with names, place, etc. to **give more context** if necessary.



Highlight the impact the volunteers have in the hosting organization, while staying realistic and transparent about it.

PICTURES, PICTURES, PICTURES...

Ethical basics and how to use photos consciously in online content.

EXTRA TIPS

Sometimes simpler images can serve as better illustrations - a texture, a photo of an object next to personal testimonies can have a stronger effect than trying to tell a complex story with one photo.

Extra links for more tips on pictures and social media:

<https://www.radiaid.com/social-media-guide/>

<https://www.instagram.com/barbiesavior/>



Pay attention to the images you choose: be aware that a picture tells a story, and **ask yourself if this story is the right one.**



Be conscious and reflect on the story you want to tell: **you are not a travel agency, so don't look like one!** So if you don't want to attract those who have motivation to just be tourists, don't show exotic locations, animals photos, and other similar images.



Avoid sensitive, vulnerable situations and locations such as hospitals and health clinics. **Avoid victimization and patronizing images** that only strengthen the stereotypes of volunteering.



Gain informed consent from the person in the picture. **Make sure it is understood and agreed how you plan to use that picture later.** If you can't explain why you are taking photo, find a translator.



In case of photographing children, have the consent of the caretaker. Be especially conscious with this topic - **do not use children as props**, only include them in the picture if it's relevant.

