

Council for World Mission Communications Strategy

2023 - 2025



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Introduction

Background

CWM has established a new strategic framework for the period 2020 - 2029 as the outcome of a wide consultative process involving individuals and groups from a broad cross-section of the CWM family.

The framework affirms CWM's core vision of "fullness of life, through Christ, for all creation." It invites the CWM community to boldly confess its faith and allegiance "to the God of life" and to reaffirm its commitment to follow Jesus in radical discipleship.

To engage in radical discipleship, the framework states nine missiological mandates as the expression of faith and witness to enable Life-Flourishing Communities: Life-Flourishing Creation, Life-Flourishing Economy, Life Flourishing Growth and Advancement, Life-Flourishing Societies, Life-Flourishing Spiritualities, Life-Flourishing Evangelism, Life-Flourishing Education, Life-Flourishing Church in Action, Life-Flourishing Ecumenism.

Based on the vision of a new strategic framework, CWM needs to develop and update its communications strategy in a rapidly changing media environment.

Context of the Communications Strategy

Media is not just a tool for delivering messages, but it is fundamentally changing the way of thinking, living, working, and relating to one another. In particular, digital media is dramatically changing our world and the spaces where we live.

Digital media provide both opportunities and challenges.

Digital media offers new ways to communicate and opportunities for freedom of speech, participation, encounter, education, and creativity.

There are three characteristics of digital communication.

First, it is converging between virtual(online) and real(offline) spaces. The 'online-to-offline' as well as 'offline-to-online' (O2O) is a new phenomenon in contemporary society.

Second, the way of communication is changing from text-based to visual communication through social media.

Third, the term 'platform' is not only a popular concept in digital media but has also become the key to the current social transformation. It is being used in a broader sense as a network where people could communicate, cooperate, and interact.

Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated. It has markedly increased the use of digital media, as many activities have moved online.

However, digital media also provides several challenges such as digital divide, inequality and surveillance.

First, the digital divide between individuals, households, countries and geographic areas at different socio-economic levels is increasing.

Second, a few corporations dominate and control a massive share of the digital market. The economic power and influence of these corporations have become a critical issue.

Third, surveillance is a challenge in digital spaces. There are increasing efforts by governments to regulate and conduct surveillance on digital media.

Communications Objectives

Our overall communication goal is to support and inspire our member churches, ecumenical partners, and others who are called to prophetic witness, to proclaim and live out the vision of Jesus Christ of fullness of life for all creation. Our key communication objectives towards accomplishing this goal are to:

- Enable engagement with key stakeholders with our vision, mission and the 10-year strategic agenda by maintaining the links between the CWM strategy, CWM member churches, ecumenical partners, and regional and global audiences.
- Position CWM as an active and engaged global mission organisation, and to seize opportunities for collaboration, learning, and partnerships with other mission organisations committed to sharing the good news of the gospel.
- Promote the presence and work of our member churches, and to lend voice and weight to missional issues from their contexts.
- Facilitate mutual learning, information sharing and capacity development with and among churches and partners locally and across global regions.
- Support and strengthen internal communication of our mission strategy, decisions, and developments affecting the organisation with the aim to support and resource stakeholders, governing bodies and staff in particular, with information and communication materials to carry out their duties effectively
- Communicate CWM's unique missional ethos and character and promote CWM's prophetic voice to all constituencies and the general public.

The Strategy

Purpose

CWM's purpose "to further the work of Christian mission throughout the world", is expressed through engagement in God's mission, the outcome of collective discernment.

Vision

"Life-flourishing Communities, living out God's promise of a New Heaven and a New Earth."

This vision articulates CWM's conviction that the life-giving alternative that characterised the mission of Jesus is the basis of our hope. In naming life-flourishing communities as our vision, CWM sees the unfolding of a restored and renewed creation, an experience of a different world in our lifetime, where human dignity is protected, poverty eradicated, climate catastrophe abated, ideologies of supremacy demolished and peace reigns. The vision statement captures the essence of subversive imagination of a different world, where the Earth and all that is in it serve and sustain all of God's creation; and where the people of God envision this new life for now.

Mission

"Called in Christ to radical and prophetic discipleship, working in partnership with churches and the ecumenical community to resist life-denying systems, affirm peace, do justice and enable life-flourishing communities."

In our theology statement we declare that "We seek, as an organisation and as a partnership of churches, a life rooted in obedience to God's mission focused on: Rising with the risen Jesus whose resurrection is insurrection and proclamation that Babylon is as fallen as the tomb is empty; and Responding in radical discipleship where we live out the New Heaven and New Earth in the midst of a violent, abused and grieving world as signs of transforming love."

CWM's emphasis is on naming this "violent, abused and grieving world" that ought to be replaced with life-flourishing communities, based on justice and peace. It is a clear sense of call to partnership with churches and the ecumenical community in which radical and prophetic discipleship is expressed in transformative and loving action to resist, affirm, support and enable life-flourishing alternatives.

Values

CWM's values are aspirational, describing both the way CWM does work and the way CWM desires to work (both the now and the not yet). CWM's values are relevant both to how members within CWM should relate to one another, and how the organisation of CWM (including the Secretariat, Assembly, and

other functions) should operate. The underlying core values that guided CWM since 1977 and informed its relationship with others in doing God's mission are:

- Justice in relationships
- Mutuality, equality and interdependence
- Generosity of spirit
- Unity in diversity

Communication Principle

In living out CWM's vision through communication, CWM's core communication principle is "Life-Flourishing Communication."

Communication is the essence of life. All living beings are communicating entities. Without communication, no living being can exist. In other words, dis-communication means the death of the living being. It is impossible to accomplish the goal of fullness of life without communication.

Life-flourishing communication fosters values such as harmonious relationships, peace, justice, participation and coexistence with others including all living beings. By contrast, all communication which fosters values such as confrontation, conflict, injustice, exclusion and domination threatens life-flourishing communication.

The core value of Life-Flourishing Communication is to bring mutual life to human society and the entire cosmos. It pursues the fullness of life for all creation through communication.

Audiences

CWM is intentionally member-focused and strategically ecumenical. Its audience therefore includes:

- Internal Audiences: CWM governance structures, management structures, member churches
- External Audiences: Ecumenical partners (global, regional, and local), the wider global Christian community, the general public.

Internal Audience's Communications			
Audiences (WHO)	Objectives (WHY)	Content (WHAT)	Channels (HOW)
Governance structures	• To have an understanding of CWM – its vision, mission, ethos and its approaches • Timely and relevant programme, financial and governance information	• Support induction/onboarding of new members of the Board of Directors • Support embedding understanding of CWM's mission, vision, and ethos • Establish a plan and channels for open and timely communication of key information to aid in governance decision making processes	• A Board Management electronic portal, BoardEffect, is operating. • Regular online and in-person meetings of the Board and its associated committees • Prompt and responsive email correspondence
Management structures	• To understand progress, results and challenges in implementing the mission agenda • To remain aware of channels for engagement and opportunities for meaningful contributions in relevant spheres of influence	• Support induction/onboarding of new staff in all CWM locations and embedding understanding of CWM's mission, vision, and ethos • Establish a plan and channels for open and timely communication of decisions, recommendations and other developments between governance bodies and Management; and between Management and all staff across functional and geographical teams	• Weekly devotions and staff update meetings • Bi-monthly all staff meetings • Monthly management team meetings • Staff email and instant text message groups

Member churches	• To have an understanding CWM and its strategic missional agenda, as well as member church engagement frameworks with agreed objectives, plans and evaluation processes • Timely and relevant programme information • To share stories	• Intentional approach to sharing vision and strategy of CWM to increase levels of knowledge and participation in all CWM programmes and meetings • Member Church connections – focus on the impact of CWM’s strategy of working through members to strengthen partnerships with and among churches; and build familiarity with member church mission objectives and engagements to better facilitate programmes aimed at accompanying members in mission	• Members’ Mission Forums • Annual Members’ Meetings • Face to Face engagement with staff particularly through CWM offices in the regions • Member church visits by the General Secretary and other members of the leadership team • Programme participation • Listening and relationship building • Member Church staff leaders’ Conferences • Resource development – worship and prayer materials • Electronic correspondence • Giving and receiving hospitality
External Audience’s Communications			
Audiences (WHO)	Objectives (WHY)	Content (WHAT)	Channels (HOW)
Ecumenical partners	• To have an understanding of CWM and its approach together with partnership engagement frameworks and opportunities for input and collaboration	• Sharing vision, mission and strategy of CWM to position CWM as an active and engaged global mission organisation, and to seize opportunities for collaboration and partnerships with other mission organisations committed to sharing the good news of the gospel. • Establish an ecumenical round table in communications	• Active engagement in conferences, consultations and other online and in-person meetings • Collaboration in joint programmes such as communications workshops, and other platforms such as strategic/programme planning groups, general councils/assemblies, anniversary celebrations • Collaboration of statements and publications • Exhibitions • Electronic correspondence • Website and social media
Global Christian Community	• To understand CWM’s approach to global mission engagement and be aware of the pathways for their contributions and participation	• Support initiatives that promote media literacy in all CWM contexts • Promote media monitoring and advocacy (mobilisation, awareness-building) • Encourage use of	• Public lectures • Publications • Website • Social media • Workshops • E-newsletter • Annual Reports • Theological Statement

		various communication tools to harness the power of citizen journalism • Support communication rights and digital justice awareness-raising initiatives • Provide training and on-going engagement of a network of communicators	• Resource development – worship and prayer materials
The General Public	• To learn understand who CWM is – the what, who, why, where, and how of our work and identity	• Develop CWM's strategic narrative and products for internal and external audiences in a useable concise format • Develop a comprehensive Corporate Identity manual with supporting policy guidelines to ensure consistency and effectiveness of the CWM brand. • Staff engagement on consistent use of organisation's official identities such as name, colours and logo • Continuous review and update of core sections of CWM's website. • Review and refresh electronic newsletters and address gaps in routine communication to other key external audiences	• Publications • Website • Social media • Online and in-person workshops • E-Newsletter • E-books • Annual Reports • CWM branded merchandise • Resource development – worship and prayer materials • Mobile application

Responding to a Changing Context

It has dramatically changed the communications environment over the past decade. Digital media is fundamentally changing the way we communicate. It is a great challenge for the work of Christian mission to change its communication strategy in all aspects of its activities. To respond to such a rapid change, the communication strategy will focus on four factors as follows:

Strengthen Engagement

In today's digital media environment, there is no more distinction between the sender and the receiver (audience) in the communication process. For instance, a social media user becomes both audience and content provider. CWM encourages its audiences to become content providers.

Objective (WHY)	Content (WHAT)	Channel (HOW)
To improve and strengthen engagement	• Support staffs and member churches to produce news content • Promote Ecumenical Content Creators	• Training workshop for programme staff • Communication workshop for communication staff of member churches and partner organizations • Establish an Ecumenical Content Creators Network (ECCN)

Strengthen Hybrid Communications

The significant characteristic of digital media is convergence. All forms of media, such as prints, sounds, pictures and videos, converge into digital format. It is a convergence of traditional media and new digital media, as well as offline media and online media. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated such rapid change and forced integrated hybrid communications.

Objectives (WHY)	Content (WHAT)	Channel (HOW)
To converge between online and offline communication	• Hybrid Publishing of CWM materials • Provide CWM content through a mobile application	• Book publishing in print and digital formats • CWM mobile application

Strengthen Visual Communication

The way we communicate is rapidly changing from text-based communication to visual communication. Increasingly, visual communication becomes a key element of social media. For example, Facebook has redesigned the News Feed to emphasise visual content.

Objectives (WHY)	Content (WHAT)	Channel (HOW)
To improve visual communication	• Provide various photo images • Provide CWM video content	• CWM photo archive • CWM TV on YouTube

Mission Digital Platform

CWM establishes the Mission Digital Platform (MDP) to provide the basis for member churches and ecumenical partners to communicate, share mission-related resources, cooperate, and participate in God's mission.

Objectives (WHY)	Content (WHAT)	Channel (HOW)
To provide a digital platform for sharing mission-related resources	• Provide mission-related resources in digital form, including documents, images, and video content • Create a virtual mission platform	• Digital Mission Archive • CWM Metaverse Platform

Monitoring and Evaluation

It is vital that the effectiveness of all communications is properly measured and monitored to ensure that communications objectives are being achieved.

To show progress against this specific strategy we need to track performance against indicators that show how good our key audiences think CWM is at communicating.

The success of any strategy depends on sound monitoring and measurement practices. In addition to output-related metrics collected for each objective, the Communications Team will gather the following overarching metrics from institutes, collate and assimilate the data.

Key Performance Indicators

- Number of resources produced to address the various areas
- CWM web property visits
- CWM e-newsletter subscribers
- Social media reach and engagement
- Member churches engagement
- Content Creators engagement
- Publication downloads and views
- Target audiences survey