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Best Practice Strategy: Speak with One Voice

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Public relations of the Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action (ANAMA) is managed by the Public Relations Officer, whose principal function is to ensure that information about the agency is communicated effectively to the public. The PR Officer coordinates the information flow on every aspect of ANAMA’s work, whether for an internal or external audience.

ANAMA’s policy and procedures have been in place since 2003. They have significantly improved the agency’s internal and external communication, raised public awareness and also improved the overall image of ANAMA.

In public-relations terms, ANAMA has established itself as a top organization striving for a better world. An agency ideally positioned itself to be viewed as an ethical and transparent organization, which allows ANAMA to publicize its activities and disseminate safe behavior rules and protect people from mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO).

ANAMA’s public relations is one of the main challenges of the ANAMA PR professionals. It is not only to pass information to the mass media but also to raise awareness, disseminate safe behavior rules and protect people from the threat of mines and UXO.

These endeavors are being undertaken in accordance with objectives of the government of Azerbaijan. Timely information sharing and openness of the Agency to cooperation with media and other social institutions not only allows ANAMA to publicize its activities but also serves as a sign of transparency. Transparency, in turn, is crucial to developing and maintaining an ethical image of an organization.

In public-relations terms, ANAMA has ideally positioned itself to be viewed as an ethical organization striving for a better world. Other mine-action organizations can do the same by following these best practices.

During the workshop, presentations were made on preventive mine action and mine-victim assistance, as well as on the International Standards related to mines and ERW. Journalists also had an opportunity to witness mine clearance conducted by ANAMA, as well as to visit a mine-victim reintegration project in Azerbaijan and learn about vocational rehabilitation and an association of mine survivors.

Following the media workshop, Tofiq Yusif, Chief Editor of Xən Tətər newspaper, said, ‘During this workshop I became aware that [the] mine problem is a serious problem for [the] civilian population and attention should be paid to this issue constantly. Apart from providing information to the public, which we did, it is also important to educate people about safe behavior and how to be protected. We, as journalists have a moral responsibility to support mine victims and therefore we have to present their problems to the society. As of today, I have decided that this issue should be regularly on the agenda of our newspaper bearing in mind the high level of risk existing in Tətər region.’

Communication is Key
Creativity, initiative and the ability to communicate effectively are essential goals of ANAMA’s public relations. One of the main challenges of the ANAMA PR professionals is not only to pass information to the mass media but also to raise awareness, disseminate safe behavior rules and protect people from the threat of mines and UXO.

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