

The Practice of Ethiopian Public Diplomacy in France since 2018

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Abstract

Ethiopia and France established a formal diplomatic relationship 125 years ago, during the reign of Menelik II. The people-to-people relationships between the two countries, however, date back even further. This year marks the 125th anniversary of the formal relationship between the two countries. The current study investigates the public diplomacy practices employed by the Ethiopian government and people to win the hearts and minds of the French government and people in light of the long-standing ties between the two countries and their people in terms of listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchange diplomacy and international broadcast particularly since the 2018 political reform. The study used a qualitative research design to examine the data that was gathered qualitatively through in-depth interviews and document reviews, and then categorized the data into different themes and qualitatively analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings show that Ethiopia uses soft power and public diplomacy in France. The activities are carried out by different groups, including the embassy, the Ambassador, the diaspora, and volunteers. They are sponsored by both government and citizens. They take place both inside and outside of France. Ethiopian public diplomacy in France is mostly focused on events and experiences rather than cultural exports and other forms of public diplomacy. The Embassy and officials carry out most of the advocacy work. The coffee ceremony is primarily the focus of cultural diplomacy. University exchange, parliamentary exchange, and twin city diplomacy are the main themes of exchange diplomacy. Student exchange and Media diplomacy are rarely used in Ethio-France relations. The study concludes that Ethiopia needs public diplomacy strategy in order to win the hearts and minds of the French through the power of attraction and communication.

Key Words: Public diplomacy practices, strategic communication, soft power resources

Introduction

No other subject in the social sciences has received as much attention in recent decades as public diplomacy ((Ly, 2019); (Melissen, 2011)). Most of these studies have been carried out at American universities. Not only have academics and scientists conducted numerous studies and research, but governments have also shifted their focus to public diplomacy (Yasushi and McConnell, 2008). Public diplomacy is a way for governments to get their ideas, values, institutions, culture, and national goals and priorities across to foreign audiences (Tuch, 1990). It is thus a direct communication of ideas and ideals to foreign audiences in order to influence their thinking and, as a result, their governments' thinking.

Ethiopian public diplomacy is still in its infancy. It has only been in use for a little over a decade and is limited to neighbouring countries such as Egypt, Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, and South Sudan (Irena, 2022). For the first time, the current government recognizes the importance of public diplomacy and has made it one of its key foreign policy weapons (MFA, 2021). According to the policy, public diplomacy has three main goals: responding to news events that align with our strategic goals; setting the news agenda ahead of time through activities and events that reinforce core messages; and developing long-term relationships with people all over the world to give our values and assets more credibility while learning from theirs.

Ethiopia has had to convey a variety of messages to international audiences, including the French people and government, on several occasions. Ethiopia and France have had an official diplomatic relationship for nearly as long as Ethiopia has had a formal diplomacy. It was founded 125 years ago during the reign of Menelik II, the modern Ethiopia's architect. He opened up the country to international cooperation (Bureau, 1997).

Ethiopia appreciates its friendly relationship with France as a development partner not just because France is critical to Ethiopia's growth, but also because France is now one of the world's most powerful nations. France was an important strategic partner for Ethiopia throughout Menelik's reign. It advocated for the adoption of modern technology like as transportation, printing, money, and postal service into the nation. Most crucially, during the Italian invasion, as Ethiopia celebrated Adowa's victory against the Italian invaders (Bureau, 1997), France supported and armed Ethiopia.

During the reign of Haile Selassie I, who was nurtured under the tutelage of the French priest Monseigneur André Jarrosseau, the Ethio-French relationship was remarkable (Tekletsadik, 1998). The contacts ceased under the military dictatorship and were reestablished during the EPRDF government, which vowed from the start to open the country up to world politics. The establishment of the European Union, of which France is a founding member, signaled the start of a new era in Ethiopia-France ties.

Ethiopia's new government, led by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (Ph.D.), took office in 2018 and initiated a new period of reforms. France has enthusiastically welcomed both the reform and the new prime minister, and has put aside \$100 million to aid Ethiopia's reform efforts. The two chiefs of state visited their respective nations on reciprocal visits (MEAE, 2018; MEAE, 2019). Following the visit of French officials to Ethiopia, substantial agreements on economic, military, and cultural cooperation were reached. One of these agreements was to save and restore Lalibela's rock-hewn churches. The partnerships were brief. It has been especially difficult since the commencement of the conflict in the Tigray area. Some agreed contracts have even been postponed (Al Arabiya 2021, Daily Sabah 2021, France 24, and November 2021).

Ethiopia's government has made a number of diplomatic efforts, both formal and informal, to win the hearts and minds of the French people and government. The Ethiopian Embassy, in particular, engages in a wide range of diplomatic activities. It has used soft power and public diplomacy to influence the French people's and government's opinions, with whom it has a long history. As a result, the current study will investigate how the Ethiopian government and people conduct public diplomacy in France, what practices they employ, and what strategy they use to improve the bilateral relationship through public diplomacy.

Ethiopia ought to deepen its diplomatic relations with its longtime friend France since the two countries have a long history of cooperation and France is not just one of Ethiopia's major economic partners.

The use of public diplomacy and soft power to influence foreign public opinion is relatively new in Ethiopia (Irena, 2021). So far, only a small number of public diplomacy practices have been documented, most of which have to do with the construction of the GERD.

The Egyptian public was the first notable experience in Ethiopian public diplomacy. Egypt started this practice by sending a delegation of 50 representatives from the political, media, cultural, and economic spheres to emphasize the significance of people-to-people ties between the two countries, which are bound together by history and religion. In December 2014, Ethiopia dispatched a similar delegation to Egypt's government and people to reassure them that Ethiopia has no intention of harming Egypt and is only interested in bringing development and lifting its people out of poverty (Ahmady, 2015).

Chekol and Workneh (2018) investigated public diplomacy aimed at Egyptian citizens and the Egyptian government. They investigated the role of public diplomacy in promoting mutual understanding and positive perceptions between the two peoples. They looked into how Ethiopia used major tools of public diplomacy, such as listening, advocacy, citizen exchange, cultural exchanges, and international broadcasting, to create win-win situations and calm the hostile diplomatic relationship between Ethiopia and Egypt over Nile water issues. They investigated how public diplomacy improved Egyptian-Ethiopian relations and promoted trust and understanding among the people and the government of Egypt (ibid.). Tadesse (2015) seems to have demonstrated that public diplomacy is effective at reducing Egypt's long-standing hostility toward Ethiopia and making Egypt more willing to engage in constructive dialogue.

Dereje (2015) looked into how the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the FDRE used public diplomacy with the Egyptian public. She looked at how public diplomacy can help fix the country's negative reputation and make things better between the people of Ethiopia and Egypt. Kelemu (2017) investigated Ethiopia's Foreign Affairs Ministry's use of strategic communication, which is closely related to the practice of public diplomacy, to improve Ethiopia's image in Egypt, which had been tainted by the conflict caused by Nile water use and the dam's construction.

In Ethiopia, there is a dearth of study in the subject of public diplomacy, especially with longstanding partners such France. This research is conducted to investigate how Ethiopia influences the French people and government through soft power and public diplomacy.

Despite the fact that Ethiopia and France have had diplomatic relations for more than a century and people-to-people relations are even older than formal diplomacy, no research into Ethiopia's public diplomacy practices in France has been carried out.

France plays a significant role in Ethiopia's development. Almost 60 French firms have activities in Ethiopia across a variety of industries, including manufacturing, agriculture, real estate, hotels, and tour operations as well as energy production, most notably the development of geothermal and hydropower. These businesses have been able to create nearly 4900 job opportunities for Ethiopians (diplomatie.gouv.fr). The Ethio-France ties covers beyond the economic sphere but also that of art, culture, and education. The benefits Ethiopia derives from the relationship, however, do not reflect the long-standing relationships between the two nations. Therefore, it is important to review and enhance the ties between the two nations through public diplomacy.

Therefore, the researcher wants to look into Ethiopian public diplomacy in France in light of the 125th anniversary of diplomatic ties between the two countries and recent contradictions about the Tigray War.

Therefore, the study attempts to answer the following research questions.

1. What public diplomacy trends are used in the Ethio-France relationship?
2. Which soft power resources does Ethiopia use in its engagement with France?
3. How might Ethiopian public diplomacy improve its relationship with France?

The Concept of Public Diplomacy

Numerous groups and scholars have attempted to define public diplomacy from their own perspectives, but no one, complete definition that encompasses everything has yet been found. According to the United States Information Agency (USIA), public diplomacy is an endeavor to understand, educate, and influence foreign publics while also increasing communication between a country's government, people, and institutions and their counterparts abroad. According to this definition, public diplomacy comprises both government-to-people (G2P) and people-to-people (P2P) interactions. The University of Southern California's Centre for Public Diplomacy (USC CPD) proposed a wider definition of public diplomacy. As a result, public diplomacy refers to the aspect of diplomacy that is accessible to the public and includes contact.

It is also worldwide, with several people and networks involved. As a consequence, the definition of USC CPD emphasizes actors. Public diplomacy participants are much more diverse than those in traditional diplomacy. Governments, diplomats, artists, and the diaspora, as well as the ordinary public, are all involved. Public diplomacy is defined by the United States State Department, which is in charge of foreign policy and diplomacy, as "cultural, educational, and informational programs, citizen exchanges, or broadcasts used to promote US national interests by understanding, informing, and influencing foreign audiences." In contrast, the US Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy defines public diplomacy as an open interchange of ideas and information. As a result, the main goal of public diplomacy is to assist in the implementation of foreign policy, national interests, ideas, and values outside of the country.

Melissen (2005) quoted Paul Sharp, a long-time American diplomat, who described public diplomacy as "the process of building direct relationships with people in a country to promote the interests and values of those being represented." Cull (2006), on the other hand, defines it as a process that examines how public opinion influences the formulation and implementation of foreign policy.

Cull (2006), on the other hand, defines public diplomacy as the government's public opinion cultivation, involvement with private organizations, foreign affairs reporting, and communication. According to Hans Tuch, a long-serving American diplomat, public diplomacy is the way a government communicates with foreign audiences about its ideas, institutions, culture, aims, and policies. According to Christopher Ross, another diplomat, public diplomacy is the public face of rational diplomacy. According to Ross (2002, as stated in Leonard, 2002), conventional diplomacy aims to promote the country's objectives via private meetings with foreign governments, while public diplomacy works in unison with and parallel to rational diplomatic operations.

Public Diplomacy and its Relevance in Modern Democracies

Strategic communication that targets global audiences is not a new phenomenon. National image, propaganda, and public diplomacy are very definitely as ancient as the diplomacy itself. Public diplomacy is a new name for an ancient notion. Jan Melissen (2005) describes it as "old wine in new bottles."

Many governments have employed communication to advance their foreign agendas for many years. Countries express their interests and foreign policy objectives in an effort to convince others and create an atmosphere conducive to achieving their aims and objectives. It is as much about reinforcing one's own sense of identity as it is about reflecting national ideals. Since the dawn of time, people have exploited their identity and national interests to persuade others.

Long-serving American diplomat Edmund Gullion despised the word "propaganda," which he had previously used for strategic communication, and created it in 1965 to separate the practise of public information and exchange from the term's negative connotations. The end of the Cold War and the events of September 11, 2001 marked the start of a new era of public diplomacy, but the United States commonly associated terrorism with extreme Islam, resulting in an Islamophobic and hateful view. This episode demonstrated to America that military and economic strength alone do not necessarily result in a favorable public image, and governments have turned to "soft power" (GPO, 2004; Zharna, 2010; Melissen, 005).

Public diplomacy, according to Nye (2004), is a potent weapon for increasing a country's soft power, or the capacity to influence other nations via the effective use of culture and character (Melissen, 2005). Since Edward Gullion developed the phrase "public diplomacy," it has garnered esteem and recognition as a brand-new field of diplomatic practice and academic research (Cull, 2008; Leonard, 2002). Melissen (2005) describes public diplomacy as "an essential component of a country's foreign life." This is because governments have realized that the conventional methods of diplomacy are no longer appropriate for dealing with international affairs. As a result, they are focused on a variety of initiatives, such as increasing public awareness of development assistance programs, placing advertisements in well-known international publications, and conducting "listening tours" (Fouts, 2006; Zaharna, 2010).

Public Diplomacy and Soft Power

According to Nye (2004), power is similar to love in that it is simpler to experience than to define. According to Forsberg (2011), it is difficult to discover not only a single definition that covers everything but also a single idea on which the field can agree. According to Nye (2008), "power" is the ability to persuade others to do what you want them to do. According to Lentner and Haugaard (2006), power can be described as "the ability to" or "the ability over."

There are two kinds of power: hard power, which is a dominant and unequal power, such as military power, economic sanctions, and payments, and soft power, which is the power between equals, such as attraction, communication, culture, values, philosophy, and ideology (Melissen, 2005). Nye, on the other hand, identifies another kind of power in addition to the ones discussed above: ideological or cultural power, which countries frequently overlook. This power is called "hard power", while the third is referred to as soft power (2011).

Nye (2008) says that soft power is the ability to get people to do what you want them to do through attraction instead of coercion and payment. Countries use things like culture and character to achieve their objectives in international relations. American films, television shows, music, and education are the most important sources of soft power in the United States. For some foreign audiences, American art, theater, and religious practices, as well as American sports, are significant sources of soft power. Hollywood films are popular around the world for a variety of reasons, including the high standard of production (Seib, 2009).

In Japan, POP music, manga, calligraphy, architecture, pottery, and art are all famous resources. Soft power resources in Norway include dedication to social welfare and equitable wealth division, scholarship, and inclusiveness, whereas Canada uses education, the economy, and a commitment to human rights and development as soft power influences. According to Nye (2004), soft power is drawn from three main sources: its culture (in places where it is appealing to others), its political principles (when it lives up to them at home and abroad), and its foreign policies (when they are seen as legitimate and having moral authority in its conduct abroad).

Countries such as the United Kingdom, France, and China have long used culture to influence public opinion through organizations such as the British Council, Alliance Française, and the Confucius Center (Nye, 1990; European University Institute, Hartig, 2015).

Components of Public Diplomacy

The literature on public diplomacy draws heavily from American experiences. Most of the practices that we now deem to be public diplomacy and soft power were practiced a long time ago (Melissen, 2005).

Long before American public diplomacy, France, through the Alliance Française, Britain, through the British Council, and China, through the Confucius Center, used culture to influence and engage the foreign public. According to Tush (1990), public diplomacy is neither a new term nor a new practice. However, it has changed because non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and technological advances, especially the Internet, have made it easier for different groups to reach people in other countries. He further opines that the Internet bridges the gap between domestic and international news, allowing anyone to get up-to-date news from wherever they are with just a click (ibid.).

The United States Information Agency (USIA) says that public diplomacy is the attempt to understand, inform, and influence foreign publics, as well as to broaden the dialogue between a country's government, citizens, and institutions and their counterparts abroad. Nicholas Cull (2008) argues that American public diplomacy is new and unique and that it has five components: listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchange diplomacy, and international broadcasting.

Listening, according to Cull (2008), is getting information about the target foreign environment so that a public diplomacy strategy can be made. Listening is how an actor tries to control the international environment by gathering information about the public and their opinions all over the world and putting it all together. The actor then uses this information to change policy or its overall public diplomacy approach. Zaharna (2011) argues that the fact that engagement, listening, dialogue, and even networking are all part of American diplomacy shows how important relationship building is as a way to connect with other people. Leonard (2002) says that managing the news means coming up with public diplomacy plans for all of the major issues they deal with and looking into the communication aspects of everything they do.

Cull (2008) says that advocacy is when an actor tries to control the international environment by using international communication to promote a specific policy, idea, or the actor's general interests to a foreign public. Public relations, advertising, and propaganda are all forms of advocacy. As part of public relations and advocacy, the embassy works with the press and media and spreads information.

Advocacy elements can be found in all areas of public diplomacy, and their short-term utility has historically led to a bias toward this aspect of public diplomacy and a tendency to place it at the center of any public diplomacy structure.

Cultural diplomacy is when someone tries to control the international environment by letting people know about and/or helping spread culture abroad. Cultural diplomacy has historically referred to a country's policy aimed at facilitating the export of examples of its culture. France shares its culture and values with other countries through the Alliance Francaise, the British Council, the Goethe Institute, the Italian Cultural Institute, and the Confucius Center in China.

Exchange diplomacy is when a country tries to control the international situation by sending its citizens to other countries and letting people from other countries come to its country to study and/or learn about its culture. The European Commission's Erasmus Mundus European Study, Training, and Exchange program is the best example of exchange diplomacy.

International broadcasting is a way for an actor to deal with the international scene by talking to radio, TV, and Internet audiences in other countries.

Broadcasting international news overlaps with all other types of public diplomacy, like media monitoring, research functions, advocacy and propaganda in editorials or policy broadcasts, cultural diplomacy in its cultural content, and exchange in its programming and personnel exchanges with other broadcasters.

Among other broadcasters, the BBC in the United Kingdom, VOA in the United States, DW in Germany, France 24 and RFI in France, as well as the Ethiopian Press Agency and Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporate, are all examples of international broadcasting.

Ethiopian Public Diplomacy with France

The Ethiopian French relationship has existed since time immemorial. According to history, it is thought to have begun before the formal diplomacy. France was the first European country to establish long-term and robust relationships with the Ethiopian Empire.

On June 7, 1843, it signed the trade and goodwill agreement with the King of Shoa Sahilesellassie via the King of France Louisphillipe, represented by Rochet d'Héricourt (Collombet, 1935).

The formal diplomatic relationship began 125 years ago, on January 30, 1897, with the signing of a friendship treaty by the governor of Djibouti, who was also the first Ambassador of France to Ethiopia, Léonce Lagarde, and Emperor Menelik II (Morie, 2018).

Following the signature, France established a legation on the land that Menelik II had granted (Tekletsadik, 1998). The people-to-people diplomacy between Ethiopia and France predates the formal diplomatic relationships by a long time. Trade, cultural, educational, military, and religious ties existed long before formal diplomacy. The first scripted testimony of the two countries' relationship was the coming of the French trader, exporter, and diplomat, Charles L. Xavier Rochet d'Héricourt, and then the visit of two brother explorers who came to Ethiopia in the first half of the nineteenth century (d'Abbadie, 1968). Antoine Thomson d'Abbadie and his brother Arnaud Michel d'Abbadie, were inspired by James Bruce in the early nineteenth century. At this point, the nature of the relationship between the two nations became apparent. Falling in love with the people and culture of Ethiopia, they studied the language and culture there and wrote several books.

They published books about their adventures in Ethiopia, a travel memoir, and an Amharic dictionary (*Dictionnaire de la langue amarigna*, Paris, 1881), among other things. The Capuchin Lazarist Catholic Church and the visit of the well-known French poet Arthur Rimbaud, who fell in love with Harar, were other milestones in the two countries' relationship (Flammarion, 2015).

The ties between Rimbaud and Harar/Ethiopia extend beyond commerce to include art, and poetry. Rimbaud arrived in Harar around 1880 as a coffee merchant and was quickly integrated as a respected community member. He became so engrossed in the local arts and literature that he got inspiration to write some of his finest poems. His well-known poem "Le Bateau Ivre" is claimed to have been inspired by the natural scenery of Harar (Thompson, 1984).

The establishment of Alliance Ethio-Française and Lycee Guebremariam has also played important roles in Ethio-French bilateral diplomacy. During Menelik II's reign, France fought alongside Ethiopia against the Italian occupation (Tekletsadik, 1998).

Casimir Mondon-Vidailhet, Menelik's advisor and Ethiopian lover, was Menelik's closest friend and could have helped Menelik II by translating the Wuchale Treaty and starting the war with Italy. He was the closest confidant and external relations adviser to Menelik's uncle, Ras Dargé. He was not only close to Menelik but also to several important Ethiopian men, and it appears that he gave them a positive image of France and the French people (Bureau, 1997).

The relationship between the two countries reached its epitome during the reign of Haile Selassie I, who was raised under the guardianship of a French Catholic priest, Monseigneur Taurin Cahagne. France was also instrumental in Ethiopia's admission to the League of Nations in 1956. The Ethio-French relationship regressed during the communist era, which favored relations with communist countries over those with the West, and was regained during the EPRDF. According to the EIC, French companies invested 4.7 billion Birrs in Ethiopia between 1996 and 2020 in energy production, including geothermal and hydropower development, manufacturing, agriculture, real estate, hotels, tour operations, and other sectors. Over 4000 permanent and 2700 temporary job opportunities have been created for Ethiopians. There is one international school, Lycee GuebreMariam; two language schools, Alliance Ethio-Française Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa; two cultural centers, Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa; and one international research center, The French Center for Ethiopia Studies.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (Ph.D.) took office in 2018, and the two countries' relationship reached a new milestone. During the visits of the two heads of state to each other's countries, important agreements on economic, military, and cultural cooperation were signed. However, these relationships have not produced the desired results and have occasionally become debilitating. France has proven to be one of the countries that has stood up to Ethiopia and the Ethiopian government, especially since the war in Tigray began.

Research methodology

This chapter argues for the research methodology employed in the course of this study for the purpose of transparency in terms of research design adopted, sampling informants, and preparation of instruments, procedure followed to access data and techniques used to manage and analyze data. The purpose of this research is to investigate Ethiopian public diplomacy practices toward the French public and government in order to delve deep into the rabbit hole and investigate the practices as well as the challenges that it faces. Therefore, an interpretivist or constructivist research paradigm was chosen because the goal is to accurately grasp various constructs of what is known as reality. The goal of an interpretivist is to understand how people construct meaning and interpret events in their everyday lives (Creswell, 2013). The researcher gathers data qualitatively and constructs meaning out of the data subjectively. The ontological foundation of the study is subjective, and reality is socially and inductively constructed. The inductive approach involves creating meaning from specific, subjective, and detailed descriptions of individuals and situations.

The research design chosen primarily by the researcher to be pursued is a qualitative research design. This research design was selected because the number of individuals involved in diplomacy, particularly public diplomacy, is insufficient to conduct a quantitative study. In addition, the qualitative design allows the researcher to explain life from the "inside out" perspective of those who participate, and the research focuses primarily on the practice rather than using numbers to explain the variables in the research problem.

The research adopted a non-probability sampling strategy. The researcher identified key informants who, in his judgment, exhibit the required information and understanding of the subject matter.

Results and discussions

The general objective of this research was to investigate the practice of public diplomacy used by the Ethiopian government and people to influence the hearts and minds of the French government and people.

It attempted to address three particular research questions: Ethiopian government and people's public diplomacy practices in France, Ethiopian soft power resources in France, and the strategies to be pursued by the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to influence the French people and government.

The first objective was to look into Ethiopian public diplomacy tactics in France: According to the study findings, all types of public diplomacy have been attempted but not as well structured as they should be, including listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchange diplomacy, and worldwide broadcast. Ethiopian public diplomacy is mostly focused on events and experiences rather than cultural exports and other forms of public diplomacy. The Embassy and officials conduct the majority of the advocacy work, however self-initiated groups such as the Defend Ethiopia task group have made some attempts.

The majority of exchange diplomacy is focused on parliamentary exchange, city-to-city exchange, and university-to-university exchange. Albeit the growing French public's interest in Ethiopian languages and history, educational exchange is limited to the French side. Cultural diplomacy is also used to promote Ethiopia's image and relationships with the French public, according to the research. Coffee and coffee ceremonies are frequently employed in cultural diplomacy by the people and the government. Ethiopian coffee is valued by the French; thus, the Embassy showcases coffee variety through coffee testing and the use of coffee culture. Furthermore, Ethiopia uses music, dance, clothing, and food as cultural instruments. The research also revealed that the use of international broadcast is minimal, and Ethiopian government lacks trust on the French media.

The second objective of this investigation was to identify Ethiopia's soft power resources in France. Ethiopia's status as a diplomatic center, according to the findings, is a valuable resource. The country's history as the only African nation that has not been colonized, as well as Ras Tafari's legacy, are key assets in Ethio-French public diplomacy.

Historical relationships extending back over a century and a half, as well as notable persons in these relationships, are important resources for Ethio-France public diplomacy. In this sense, Arthur Rimbaud and the d'Abbadie brothers stand out, resulting in city-to-city partnerships.

These collaborations resulted in relationships between Dire Dawa and Villeurbanne, between Château de Vincent and Gondar. Coffee, athletics, and Ethiopian airlines are other key Ethiopian resources that might be used in Ethio-France ties.

The third objective was to propose strategies for using public diplomacy in France to improve the relationship between the two countries. The findings reveal that cultural diplomacy, particularly the establishment of cultural centers, language training centers, and language diplomacy, have not been employed as effectively as they should have been. Ethiopia should choose a single official language; else, efforts will be meaningless. Ethiopia can also benefit from exchange diplomacy and digital diplomacy. Respondents also advised that Ethiopia may use athletics, coffee diplomacy, and Ethiopian Airlines to promote Ethiopia's interest in France.

Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Ethiopian public diplomacy is not intentional and is currently centered on events and exhibitions.
2. Ethiopia lacks a defined public diplomacy strategy for advancing its interests, despite the fact that the foreign policy has identified public diplomacy as an important diplomatic tool.
3. The minister of foreign affairs disregards some public diplomatic actions such as listening, education exchange and language diplomacy.
4. Cultural diplomacy is a key diplomatic instrument in Ethiopian French public diplomacy, with coffee being the most used resource.
5. Ethiopia's diplomatic status, history, coffee, athletics, and Ethiopian Airlines are public diplomacy resources used by Ethiopia in France.
6. Ethiopians are more interested to participate in public diplomacy and engage in advocacy practices in France and Europe
7. Ethiopia does not use international broadcast, both Ethiopian and French, for public diplomacy in its relationship with France.
8. The French public is more interested in studying Ethiopian history and languages; nevertheless, Ethiopia is unable to respond to the need.

Recommendations

Based on the above conclusions, the following recommendations are forwarded:

The Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs ought to develop a public diplomacy strategy since public diplomacy has been identified as one important diplomatic tool in the national policy. The strategy enables public diplomacy to be intentional and purpose driven. There are adequate attractive soft power resources in France to appeal to the French people and government. However, without a well-designed strategy, efforts are pointless.

Cultural diplomacy is an important diplomatic instrument that countries such as France use to influence foreign audiences; thus, Ethiopia's cultural diplomatic efforts should see beyond coffee and encompass gastronomy, music, traditional dance, holidays, and, most crucially, language. Ethiopia needs to settle in one official language. According to KIFE, Amharic is no longer valued in Ethiopia, let alone in France.

Establishing a cultural and language center could be beneficial to Ethiopian French diplomacy.

The French are more interested in studying ancient history, Amharic, and Ge'ez in Ethiopia. As a result, higher education institutes should look deeper into university networks for potential to provide exchange opportunities for French students, much as the French do for Ethiopians. These exchanges will provide more opportunity for Ethiopian students in France.

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