



**Critical Examination of Communication Strategy of  
Ministry of Peace**

**By  
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**Addis Ababa University**

**Graduate School of Journalism and Communications**

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the Degree  
of Master of Arts in Public Relations and Strategic Communication.**

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## **DECLARATION**

I, Firesenbet Bersunega, declare that this thesis Critical Examination of Communication Strategy of Ministry of Peace entitled my own original work. I have carried it out independently with the guidance and suggestions of the research advisor. And it has not been presented in any other University, at least to my knowledge. All the sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

**Firesenbet Bersunega**

**(The Researcher)**

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**Signature**

## LETTER OF CERTIFICATION

**Addis Ababa University**  
**School of Graduate Studies**

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Firesenbet Bersunega, entitled: Critical Examination of Communication Strategy of Ministry of Peace and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Public Relations and Strategic Communication complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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**Chair of the Graduate School**

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## Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGMENT .....	i
Table of Contents .....	ii
List of figure and tables.....	iv
Acronyms .....	v
ABSTRACT .....	vi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Background of the Study: A Brief Description of Ministry of Peace.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem .....	4
1.3 Objectives of the Study .....	5
1.4 Research Questions.....	5
1.4.1 General Objective of The Study .....	5
1.4.2 Specific Objectives of The Study .....	5
1.5 Significance of Study .....	6
1.6 Scope of the Study .....	7
1.7 Limitations of the Study.....	7
1.8 Organization of the Paper.....	8
CHAPTER TWO:REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE .....	9
2.1. Communication: Definition.....	9
2.2. Process of Communication: An Overview .....	10
2.3 Components of Communication .....	11
2.4 Strategic Communication .....	12
2.4.1. Organizational Strategic Communication .....	13
2.4.2. The Importance of Strategic Communication .....	14
2.4.3. Strategic Communication in Peace Building .....	14
2.5. Alignment in the Domain of Strategic Communication.....	16
2.5.1 Organization Stakeholder Alignment.....	17
2.5.2. Communication strategy alignment .....	18
2.5.3. Communication strategy and activities alignment.....	18
2.6. Strategic Communication Frame (Van Ruler).....	20
2.7. Strategic Communication Planning .....	22
2.7.1. Formative Research: (Phase One) .....	22
2.7.2. Strategy: (Phase Two).....	23
2.7.3 Tactics: (Phase Three).....	23

2.7.4. Evaluative Research: (Phase Four) .....	24
2.8 Tools and Channels of Communication .....	25
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....	27
3.1 Research Design .....	27
3.2 Research Approaches .....	28
3.3. A Conceptual Frame Work .....	29
3.4. Research Instruments .....	29
3.4.1. In-depth interview.....	30
3.4.2. Focus Group Discussions (FGD) .....	30
3.4.3. Document Analysis .....	31
3.5. Sampling Methodology .....	32
3.5.1 Sampling Method .....	32
3.6. Source of Data and Methods of Data Collection .....	33
3.7. Method of Data Analyses and Interpretation .....	34
3.8 Validity and Reliability of the Study .....	34
3.9. Summery .....	34
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS .....	35
4.1 Introduction .....	36
4.2.Goals and Objectives of Strategic Communication.....	36
4.2.1 The Objectives of StrategicCommunication .....	38
4.3.The Role of Strategic Communication in Building of Peace .....	38
4.4.Strategic Communication Plan of the Ministry of Peace .....	39
4.3.1. The Segment and focus Areas of Strategic Communication Plan .....	41
4.5. Evaluation of Strategic Communication in Ministry of Peace.....	45
4.6. Communication Inadequacy in Preparation of the Strategic Communication plan .....	47
4.7.Challenges of Strategic Communication of Ministry of Peace .....	49
4.7.1. Identification of challenges in the area of communication plan .....	50
4.8. Document Analysis and Presentations .....	51
CHAPTRE FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION .....	54
5.1. Conclusion .....	54
5.2. Recommendations .....	56
Appendices I .....	58
AppendicesII .....	59
References .....	60

**List of figure**

Figure 3.1 Conceptual Framework ..... 29

**List of tables**

Table 4.1. Demographic information of the respondents ..... 36

## **Acronyms and Abbreviations**

EBC- Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation

FBC- Fana Broadcasting Corporate

FGD- Focus Group Discussion

ISIS - Islamic States of Iran and Syria

MoP - Ministry of Peace

NGO- Non-Governmental Organization

PR- Public Relations

SC- Strategic Communication

TV- Television

VCI- Vision-Culture-Image

WMCC- Walta Media and Communication Corporate

## ABSTRACT

*This study critically examined the strategic communication of the Federal Ministry of Peace. The Ministry of Peace of Ethiopia has a number of tasks that need to be exercised so that it can be effective in achieving peace and stability through communication. Therefore, it is true that there is also a demand for communication. As a result, this study investigates the depth of communication practices. Data collection has been done through a deep interview. Intensive interviews, FGD and document analysis were research tools used for this study. Ten respondents have selected a purposive sample collection to collect the intended information. These samples have been taken from the Federal Peace Ministry's Public Relations Experts, and section counsel. The information collected has wisely been based on the questions raised in the study. Regarding documentary analysis, documents with different messages, the draft strategic communication plan and content has been selected based on communication content analysis. Increasing developing existing values of peace, enhancing the culture of respect and tolerance of the community, providing constructive information for peace building, were the main tools and goals of the Ministry of Peace. The study confirmed that there is a draft strategic communication plan in the organization. The Federal Ministry of Peace did not measure the activity and presentation of strategic communication. The message it delivered did not guarantee that it would be fully accessible to a community. No attempts were made to check whether the messages delivered for the target people properly or not. Generally, the practice of strategic communication of the organization is still not maintained. In the end, suggestions would be made on the recommendations of communications, planning, and accessibility tools.*

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This introductory chapter presents the general overview of the study including its background, statement of the problem, objectives, scope, significance as well as limitation of the study and the organization of the research.

#### **1.1 Background of the Study: A Brief Description of Ethiopia's Peace Ministry**

The Federal Ministry of Peace is an autonomous federal government organ, possessed its own legal personality. The Ministry is directly accountable to the Prime Minister. According to Article 76 of the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the Council of Ministers is accountable to the Prime Minister. It has branch organizations, offices, commissions, agencies and projects directly accountable to this ministry found in different areas of the country. The ministry established in 2018 under the proclamation number 1097/2018 by the FDRE/ Federal Democratic People's Republic of Ethiopia House of people's representatives. It has taken over the responsibility and authority of the former Ministry of Federal and Pastoral Development Affairs, taking full control of the ministry's responsible organizations under it.

The Ministry of Federal Affairs first established under the proclamation No. 256/2001 that defined the powers and duties of the reorganized executive organs of the FDRE; and it first organized into two main sectors called regional affairs and urban development sectors. The Ministry again reorganized under the proclamation No.471/2005 whereby the urban development excluded and other powers and duties were given instead. In order to provide assistance, to the support deserving regions the Federal Board have been established in which various ministries are evolved to deliver overall support to the regions. In 2009 by proclamation No. 641/2009, the ministry has been given additional power and duties of handling the religions and faith affairs in order to maintain sustainable peace and security by ensuring tolerance and understanding among different religions targeting the overall development of the country. Furthermore, by the proclamation No 691/2010 the Ministry again gave power to ensure the proper execution at the federal level of functions relating to the registration of charities and societies and possession or use of arms, firearms and explosives. Hence, the core processes ought to bring equitable development in the less developed regions, to prevent and resolve conflicts, to strengthen Federal system, to uphold

Federal Regional relations in the country, and to maintain good relations, peace and tolerance among different religions and beliefs.

Ethiopia's reformist government that establishing sustainable peace a long-term process established the new ministry called Federal Ministry of Peace. This ministry is unique not found anywhere else. This ministry has taken over all the responsibilities and authority of the former Ministry of Federal and Pastoral Development Affairs. The purpose for the establishment of the Ministry of Peace is to establish a government structure that can guarantee the rule of law and promote peace. The ministry established for building peace, preventing and resolving conflict, establishing contact between the federal and regional states to coordinate and supporting developing regions, (FDRE proclamation number 1097/2018). It also has given the role of facilitating and implementing the federal system political ideology that designed by the government of Ethiopia. However, this institution named Ministry of Peace after the new structure.

Ministry of Peace has a duty of serving as the secretariat of the council; prepares the national development programs of pastoral community environments and submits it for approval of the government. After that, on the basis of the recommendations of the council works for the realization of its duties. Additionally, the ministry effort on coordinate the activities of federal and regional government organs and non-governmental organizations engaged in pastoralist's development affairs. The ministry works in collaboration with the relevant federal and relevant regional bodies to ensure the protection of citizens in all parts of the country to maintain peace, a national and national peace strategy is devised. It performs awareness and mobilization activities. It works in partnership with relevant government bodies, cultural and religious institutions and others to promote peace and respect among people of different religions and nationalities and peoples. It records religious organizations and associations. Coordinate relevant bodies for national consensus on critical national issues. Provides recommendations to the government; cultural exchanges that foster national unity and mutual understanding, (FDRE proclamation number 1097/2018).

Devise strategies for awareness and movement to promote a culture of peace, respect and tolerance between individuals and groups and monitors their implementation. As it is indicated in the ministry's portal, it identifies the causes of environmental conflicts through research; and provides research that addresses the solutions to avoid getting people into conflict and uncertainty and when exercised, it shall apply.

The Ministry of Peace is a ministry that has never been established in any other country. However, it is said that Ethiopian Peace Ministry is the first ministry to be established in world. Accordingly, many have come up with this idea to comment on its importance. However, the Ministry is the first Ministry (Ministry of Peace) to be formally commissioned in the newly established Executive Offices in October 2018 under Proclamation 1097/2018.

There are parties who say that the establishment of this ministry will ensure that democratic nationalism is at peace with the construction of the federal system and that it will contribute to the country's unity. The multilateral federal states continued to exist, as they were able to build a democratic system in a geographical or anonymity, and when Ethiopia withdrew from the military, the selected federal government was based on identity. It pointed out that diversity is not an accident, but that national identity and self-government do not conflict with national construction, (By Proclamation 1097/2018)

The ministry oversees different responsible organizations. The following executive bodies are accountable to the Ministry of Peace. These are; the National Intelligence & Security Service (NISS). The Information Network Security Agency (INSA); the Federal Police Commission; and Finance Security and Information Center, the National Disaster Risk Management Commission; the Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs; Ethiopian Foreign Relations Strategic Studies Institute; and the Main Department for Immigration and Nationality Affairs,(By Proclamation 1097/2018)

The Ministry of Peace use different traditional communication approaches, strategies and patterns in order to resolve conflicts and disputes occurring in the country. Besides, it uses various kinds of communication approaches in its day-to-day life, which helps it to maintain harmonious life and coexistence. Thus, the researcher wants to explore the communication strategies, approaches, and patterns practiced in the organization under the study.

### **1.1.1 Vision, Mission and Values of Ministry of Peace**

Ministry of Peace has the vision to see Ethiopia by 2028 as a country that will achieve lasting peace, the rule of law, balanced development and the strengthened government relations on the national issues. The ministry has the mission to serve to ensuring strong and harmonious relations between the federal government and the states of regions and the intergovernmental relationship between the federal government and as well as the regions to regions. It is to strengthen the rule of law in the country, to maintain peace, tolerance, cooperation,

interaction, unity and good relations among the communities. The ministry has different values to lead the vision, professional ethics, fast response, and accessibility, trustworthy, always learn and grow.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Ministry of Peace is established to guarantee peace, to tackle a wave of ethnic violence, to promote values of peace and the rule of law in Ethiopia. Since, main problem in this country is lack of peace; Ministry of Peace will be working hard to ensure it prevails. The Ethiopian government is indeed currently undergoing a change in philosophy that is creating a paradigm shift in both the government's openness and enforcement tactics to localize the rule of law. Internal peace has become a paramount challenge to the newly established ministry. Ethnic-based violence is flaring up in different parts of the country. There has been deadly violence in Ethiopia. About 2.2 million people have been displaced by violence. Some analysts criticized the new body's composition saying it dominated by the security services and lacked civilian input. The rights of Ethiopians to live and work in different parts of Ethiopia have been in jeopardy, in contravention of constitutional rights of citizens, due to what seem to be radicalized ethnic politics.

Communication is important in day-to-day life. Through strategic communication, different social disputes and conflicts can be resolved. Properly and planned strategic communication is a demanding task for building peace. The ministry planned to achieve the vision of the institution by building the culture of peace, ensuring the rule of law and enforcing national justice through the use of social resources to engage and cooperate with its stakeholders. The ministry planned and coordinated strategic communication activities that are supposed relevant to building peace and stability. As a result of this, it was purposefully selected for the study aiming at examining its draft strategic communications plan in case of building peace and preventing conflicts among the diversified community through document analysis, and communicating with the public relations practitioners. Accordingly, the researcher focused the communication strategic issue since other researchers have not done the relevant study. So that the inquirer motivated to study setting up gaps that found in strategic communications in building peace and maintaining stability.

The implication of building peace and stability is general agreement that has been negotiated by the individuals involved, Emy (1976). Listening, trust, sharing, and respect are values

inherent in the process. Strategic communication that transmitted through different mechanisms is important in everyday life of the local communities where modern channels of communication are not fully accessible. This research is designed to examine strategic communication activities can be instrumental in achieving the mission of the ministry of peace or not. Study the suitable communication strategy, pattern, procedure, and channels and assess the practice of public relations meant to manage serious problems to maintain peace and stability among the societies. The study also aimed to investigate and pre-test at the strategic communication plan of the ministry. The study could indicate that how well-designed strategic communication plan practiced in the daily life of community solve these conflicts and foster peace. Therefore, this study explored assessed appropriate strategic communications approach and plan towards peace building in Federal Ministry of Peace.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.3.1 General Objective**

The main objective of this study is to investigate and examine the strategic communication to achieve its missions and vision in Ethiopian Ministry of Peace. In doing so, the study focuses on patterns, procedures and channels of communication strategy by framing the points of view.

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives of the study are:-

- ✓ To assess the status of the practices of communications strategies in Ethiopia's Ministry of Peace to meet its goals.
- ✓ To evaluate the role of strategic communication plan in conflict resolution and maintaining peace, sustainable development, national consensus building works of Ethiopian Peace Ministry.
- ✓ To review the experiences of creating collaboration with stakeholders to enhance access of information.
- ✓ To identify and investigate the relevant strategic communication approaches of Federal Ministry of Peace being used, to achieve its missions and vision.

## **1.4 Research Questions**

The researcher derived the research questions following the specific objective of this study and these questions would be expected to be answered at the end of the inquiry.

1. How strategic communication is helpful for building national consensus and peace?
2. How strategic communication activities can be instrumental in achieving the mission of the ministry of peace?
3. How are media positioned as a stake holder of strategic communication of the ministry of peace?
4. What approaches of strategic communication employed by the Federal Ministry of Peace?

## **1.5 Significance of Study**

In this study, the factors surrounding and shaping the role of communication strategy discussed. Thus, this study has its significance in diverse ways. It provides insights into how the strategic communication role is performing at Federal Ministry of Peace. According to Mundy (1993), Communication has many importance in different aspects including development, social and economic as well as political values. The study analyzes the strategic communication procedures and patters for peace building and conflict resolution in the study area. This study is helpful for responsible bodies that enact the communication policies and will serve as a material for studying. This study will also add to the limited research on communication strategies. It may also benefit policy makers giving them insight into the importance of strategic communication in many aspects of peace, stability and development. In line with other few researches done on related topics, it can serve as a benchmark for those who want to conduct further study on related issues. Finally, the study would used as a source of data for other scholars who work a research in similar topics.

## **1.6. Scope of the Study**

The study mainly confined and focused on activities of communication strategy utilized in Federal Ministry of Peace. Thus, the research conducted in Federal Ministry of Peace as a case. It has examined how the communication department has been handling the practice of communication strategy in order to converse target population. Moreover, the study was conducted in communication plan and strategy, communication tools employed, and their

relationship with the media in addition, will make critical examination of strategic communication of the organization practices effectively meet its goal and objectives or not.

### **1.7. Limitations of the Study**

There were some limitations in this study, which encounter the whole conducting the study. First, the subject of public relation is a new profession in the Ethiopia; most of the communication experts who were the sources of data hired from other related profession, such as journalism and language studies. In addition, most of the communication directors in communication departments were not professionals and politically assigned individuals. As a result, it may be difficult to generate the required data and professional practices from those experts and the director. Methodological limitations, during interview with the respondents the quality of data depends upon the nature of the interaction the researcher has with the interviewees. Therefore, in order to overcome this problem, the researcher prepared interview questions for the public relations experts for the result of evaluating the communication strategies in the organization. The researcher tried to give clarification on the interview questions, intentions and significance of the study. Respondents were thus given the opportunity to study the questions and respond appropriately.

### **1.8 Organization of the Research**

This study organized in to five chapters. Each chapter has also its own sub titles which a point out elements and detail thoughts of the study. Thus, their sequential arrangement presented as follow.

- The first chapter deals with the background including introduction of the study and the organization, statement of the problem, research questions, general and specific objectives, significance, scope, limitation and organization of the study.
- The second chapter compress with the literature review, including details about communication strategies and plan of the organization.
- The third chapter contains methodology, including sampling, data collection, analysis validity and reliability of the study.
- Chapter 4 is all about data presentation and discussion. All of the collected data are presented according to their validity.
- The last chapter, chapter five contains conclusion and recommendations.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with different aspects of communication in general and some related literatures regarding communication strategy practices including some details are stated. Strategic communication in particular with the research questions raised under the introductory part of this paper examined. The importance of strategic communication is widely discussed. The practice of communication strategies to achieving the organizational goals by making strong media relations assessed. The communication tools and channels identified by their function for organizational effectiveness. This chapter also has important part of the study to discuss theories, and models that has particularly on communication discipline. Theoretical models of strategic communication and planning are widely accessed. This helps to interpret and analyze the study in particular from the discussed key terms in this chapter; communication strategies, communication tools and channels, communication strategic pillars, communication model, and measurement are discussed. Different theories and concepts in communication strategy discussed based on various empirical literatures (both published and unpublished).

#### 2.1. Communication: Definition

Different scholars define communication differently. As a result, there are dozens of definitions for communication. "Communication is any act by which one person gives to or receives from another person information about that person's needs, desires, perceptions, knowledge, or affective states. Communication may be intentional or unintentional, may involve conventional or unconventional signals, may take linguistic or nonlinguistic forms, and may occur through spoken or other modes", Broni (1999:117). They said that communication is an act of exchanging ideas and thoughts, which can be done by gestures, signs, signals, speech or writing. This implies that communication is not merely face-to-face and oral conversation. Instead, it involves different mechanisms of exchanging information among individuals.

According to Richard (2000:4), "Communication is a process in which individuals employ symbols to establish and interpret meaning in their environment." Hence, communication involves both face-to-face and mediated mechanism.

In the above definition, the terms such as process, symbols, meaning and environment have gotten emphasis. Accordingly, process indicates an ongoing, ever changing (dynamics) and unique feature of communication. Process also indicates that communication is an endless and Trans boundary phenomenon. According to Richard (2000, p 9), the process nature of communication involves different happenings which occurred from the beginning to the end of a communication activity. Symbol in the above definition refers to an arbitrary label or representation of phenomena. It can be concrete which represent objects or abstract, which stands for thought or an idea.

The third concept in the definition is *meaning*. Meaning is what the people or the receiver extracts from the message. As without sharing the same meaning, communicators will have a challenging time getting their messages across to one another, Adler and Towne (1978). Communication achieved when the sender and the receiver hold meaning in common. That means, when the meaning the sender wanted to share is identical to the meaning the audience receives. Effective communications to takes place when two parties who have common understanding of the message have to participate in the process, Albrecht (1977). Environment is the last concept, which got emphasis in the previous definition of communication. It is the context or situation in which the communication occurs. Environment involves time, place, historical period, relationship, speakers and listeners cultural background (2000, p 13). Stone et al (1999) also shared the above concepts in their definition for communication. They define communication as a two-way process by which one person stimulates meaning in the mind of another person(s) through verbal and /or nonverbal messages. Their definition acknowledges that, human communication is an ongoing, dynamic process and not simply a one-way transmission of message.

## **2.2. Process of Communication: An Overview**

Most scholars argued that, the completion of a communication process requires the message to be received and responded by the receiver. They argue that sending message by itself is not sufficient to create an act of communication; there needs to be some response to a message as well. Richard (2000, p11) stated that, the communication process is complete once the receiver has understood the message of the sender. They also said that, understanding the meaning of another person's message does not occur unless the two communicators can elicit common meanings for words, phrases and nonverbal codes. From the above extracts, one can perceive that, effective communication to occur; the speaker and the listener have to have

similar meaning of the message. According to Stone et al (1999), the selectivity processes within communication includes; usually affect the act of receiving and responding messages;

**Selective Exposure:** is referred to as a person's conscious or unconscious choice to receive messages from a specific source (1999, p 94).

**Selective Attention:** occurs when receivers cannot avoid exposure but simply select not to pay attention to the message. Receiver's attention span and message novelty, concreteness, size and length mentioned as factors that affect selective attention.

**Selective Perception:** Selective perception is the process of attributing meaning to messages as the meanings behind the messages are in the minds of the receivers. The meaning that is stimulated by a source depends on both the message and the receiver.

**Selective Retention:** is the decision to save or not to save information in long-term memory. Short-term memory is 'in one ear and out the other.' Thus, source and receivers must work to share information in long-term memory, so it can be recalled when needed.

**Selective Recall:** is the successful retrieval of information and it depends on whether the source has been able to overcome all of the previous selection barriers.

### **2.3. Components of Communication**

Morton Deutsch (2006:8) said that, "Faulty communication engenders (being cause) misunderstanding, which may lead to conflict, and conflict often leads to breakdown of communication." This tried to identify elements/ components of good communication as well as characteristics of effective communication in terms of the speaker and the listener. Components or elements of communication are things needed for the communication process to be complete. These are what scholars highly regarded to play the major role for any communication to be effective. All forms of communication require the same basic elements: a speaker or sender of information, a message, and an audience or recipient. The sender and recipient must also share a common language or means of understanding each other for communication to be successful. According Werner and James (2001:43), people are treated as both sender/source and receiver of the message being communicated. Even though scholars as Stone et al (1999) classify the source and receiver roles of people independently, Pearson et.al (2008) claim that individuals do not performed these two roles independently. Instead, they are the sources and receivers of messages simultaneously and continually. The former argue that the source is the critical component who often determines how the receiver will react.

They identified three functions of the source deciding what should be communicated, encoding the message (put it in terms the receiver will understand); and transmitting the message to the receiver. If a source fails in any of these steps, the message the receiver acquires may be distorted and confusing.

The other basic element of communication is *message*. Different scholars defined, it as a verbal and nonverbal form of an idea, thought or feeling that the source wishes to communicate to receiver/s. As message possesses different meaning in different society with different cultural background, language, age, education level, lifestyle and other demographic factors, Stone et al (1999) suggested that, source and receiver both have to have a shared understanding of the verbal and nonverbal messages being encoded and hopefully, decoded correctly. This implies that, message to communicate correctly, the sender and receiver should have common understanding of it. If they fail to do so, miscommunication can be the result. Disagreement can be the outcome of miscommunication.

*Channel/Medium* is a means through which people send and receive information. It is another basic component of communication. TVs, Radio, newspaper, magazine, billboards, touching, hearing, seeing, air etc are treated as communication channel.

*Feedback*, which is the fourth element of communication, is the response or the reaction of a receiver to the received message. Different scholars said that, feedback is a crucial component of communication process as it helps the sender to identify how the receiver is hearing him/her. It also makes the communication process more interactive, Stone et al (1999) said that, at the absence of feedback, communication processes often results communication misunderstandings, distortions and inaccuracies.

*Noise* is the last element of communication. Noise is defined as anything that is added to communication without intended by the communicator. It can be distortions of sound in communication process (2001:53). Noise can be physical, semantic or psychological. The above writers suggest that, for communication to be effective, the communicators have to reduce the noise in the process of communication.

#### **2.4. Strategic Communication**

Several definitions of strategic communication have surfaced, and like the myriad of definitions associated with the terms “strategy” and “communication,” we do not expect that a singular definition of strategic communication will ever be agreed on.

According to Webster's new collegiate dictionary (1984) the term strategic was first used in organization theory in the 1950s. Its purpose was just to describe how organizations compete in the marketplace, obtain competitive advantage, and gain market share. The above description of a modernist approach to strategic planning is indeed accurate when one considers the original aims of strategic planning as ones of controlling the environment and maintaining the organization's autonomy. In its most negative context, the term strategic is understood as having originated in warfare and is in its strictest sense described as the art of war. The word strategy originates from the Greek word for "generalship", Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (1984). As a result, the term often has negative associations, particularly in an era in which organizations are perceived as using their resources to manipulate their environments to their own benefit without consideration of stakeholders, other constituencies, and the concerns of society in general. Associating strategic as a war metaphor in connection with communication practice can thus strengthen the existing negative perceptions of the field, Van Ruler, et al (2007).

Howell and Beck (2005p83) define strategic communication as "aligned with an organization's overall strategy, to enhance its strategic positioning". Hallahan, Holtzhausen, and Sriramesh (2007 p3) define it as "the purposeful use of communication by an organization to fulfill its mission". Grunig (2006), from the public relations domain, describes it as a "bridging activity" between organizations that should be institutionalized. The management literature speaks about the linkages between discourse and the social practice of strategizing, defining these practices as "actions, interactions, and negotiations of multiple actors and the situated practices that they draw upon in accomplishing that activity" Jarzabkowski, Balogun, and Seidl, (2007 p8). While we understand that strategic communication is an emerging area of communication. Likewise, the discursive turn in the management literature has also begun to focus on organizational strategy, Balogun and Jacobs, (2014), Jarzabkowski and Vaara (2014). From the above concepts, it is possible to understand that, communication strategies are organized and structured tactics for communicating information related to a specific issue, event, situation, or audience. They serve as the blueprints for communicating with the public, stakeholders, or even colleagues.

As conceptualized in this special issue, strategic communication sits at the intersection of management strategy and communication, and it is clear that this intersection is relatively undeveloped in the academic literature. To date, the management strategy literature persistently points to the significance of communication, Fisher (2000)

Likewise, the communication literature infrequently incorporates theory from the strategy literature, Sage (2014). Interestingly, both strategy and modern communication scholarship are relatively new in the social sciences. Business strategic planning, strategy formulation, and strategy implementation took root during the 1960s and 1970s with the work of scholars such as Chandler (1962), Ansoff (1965), Drucker (1969), and Mintzberg (1973). Modern communication frameworks are also relatively young, Babcock, (2014); Knight(1999), Nickerson, (2014), Rogers (2014).

Strategic communications are important for the effectiveness of organizations goal. The search for a common definition has often hindered rather than helped strategic communications. Indeed, the ideally flexible and adaptive nature of strategic communications means no single definition will suffice. Strategic communication essentially means sharing meaning (i.e., communicating) in support of national objectives (i.e., strategically). This involves listening as much as transmitting, and applies not only to information, but also to physical communication action that conveys meaning.

Strategic communication differs from integrated communication because its focus is how an organization communicates across organizational endeavors. The emphasis is on the strategic application of communication functions as a social actor to advance its mission. The purposeful nature of strategic communication is critical. Whereas academic research on strategic communications broadly examines the various Processes involved in how people interact in complex organizations (including interpersonal, group, and network communications), strategic communication focuses on how the organization itself presents and promotes itself through the intentional activities of its leaders, employees, and communication practitioners. Of course, this does not exclude their use of relationship building or networks in the strategic process, Van Ruler, et al., (2007).

#### **2.4.1. Organizational Strategic Communication**

Organizational strategic communication is a process along which a number of approaches, tools and products can be identified and implemented according to the circumstances. For clarity's sake, this process can be structured in three basic, broad phases. Communication strategy also includes target groups like state institutions, local authorities and public institutions; the business sector; the civil sector; the media; educational institutions; and the

international public. There is a strong emphasis on building partnerships between the public, civil and business sectors of society in the advocacy for sustain the strategy, Keyton, (2005).

It is important to stress that organizations and social and citizen movements, use strategic communication to reach their goals. Strategic communication examines organizational communication from an integrated, multidisciplinary perspective by extending ideas and issues grounded in various traditional communications disciplines. It is important to note that these disciplines were developed as specialty functions in the modernistic world of the 20th century. These disciplines function in a postmodern environment that stresses more holistic approaches to examining organizational phenomena, while having to deal with increasingly fragmented audiences and delivery platform, Van Ruler, et al, (2007). The emergence of strategic communication as a unifying paradigm for studying purposeful communications by organizations provides an important opportunity to rein vigor and refocus the study of organizational communications onto how organizations present and promote themselves and interact with their audiences.

#### **2.4.2. The Importance of Strategic Communication**

Organizational strategic communication is necessary to create a good communication environment in the organization. Usually organizational communications encompass public relations, public affairs, corporate advertising, environmental communication, and internal communication. They denote a heterogeneous group of communication activities that have characteristics in common: As Keyton, (2005) these communication activities have four common, characteristics. First Organizational communications are aimed at corporate audiences, such as shareholders, financial journalists, investment analysts, regulators, and legislators. Second organizational communications have a long-term perspective and do not directly aim at generating sales. Third organizational communications apply a different style of communication compared with marketing communication; exaggeration and puffery are limited and messages are more formalistic. Lastly, after defining organizational communication and its importance, it is good to see some of the functions of communication in organizations.

### **2.4.3. Strategic Communication in Peace Building**

Ethiopia is one of the many countries that accommodate themselves to diversity in culture, civilization and way of life. This beautiful way of life is being eroded and innocent civilians and children are being victimized. Internal peace has become a paramount challenge.

Peace is more than the absence of violence; it is the presence of social justice through equal opportunity, a fair distribution of power and resources, equal protection and impartial enforcement of law. Building peace and mutual understanding through strategic Communication for bringing stability; as well as government relations should be mandatory for any nations of this world. Studies argue that society today has seen a decrease in a sense of community. Despite technological development and the new media, and in fact partly because of these, people today have fewer interpersonal relationships than ever before. There rapid generational changes, and people have become isolated; there is no longer belong to institutions and associations those do things together, but instead they even bowl alone, Putnam (2000). This scholar argues that today, people have lost their good values and a sense of community, which makes collaboration and relationships difficult to establish and maintain.

Communication is important in day-to-day life. Through communication, development problems, different social disputes and conflicts can be resolved. Properly and planed strategic communication is a demanding task. In support to this idea, Mundy (1991 p7) argues, “Systematic communication is an important aspect of peace building and it is the means by which a peace is preserved, handed down and adapted.” From this, one can understand that strategic communication that transmitted through different mechanisms is important in day-to-day life of the local communities where modern channels of communication are not fully accessible.

Currently, the issues of diversity in culture, languages, social status and political ideology of the community are big controversial issues in Ethiopia. For developing relationships, comparable zones of meaning are to be constructed, meant as comparable social realities in order to be able to coordinate efforts, Robert (1994, p. 45). He also followed the same line, arguing that shared meaning is a vital outcome of public relations or communication and the constituting variable of relationships. Shared meaning is constructed through dialogue, Heath (2001, p. 31). It is absolutely true to say that peoples of this world are mainly focusing on and talking about their norms, promoting their culture, and giving more values to their identity. That is blameless idea and it should be encouraged positively everywhere. However, the

problem is sometimes when one group of peoples could not understand the others interests and willingness just equally with their own interests. Hence, undermining other's difference may put the peoples into conflict with other groups. As a result identity based conflict in the heterogeneity, nature of communities may happen and the peace can be endangered.

With strategic communication, different social disputes, conflicts, and development problems can be resolved. Conflict is a phenomenon that is inevitable in all human societies due to differences in interest, values and goals among people, Nigussie (2017 p63) elaborated this idea as, "Behavior change communication is a set of organized communication aimed to influence social and community norms and promoting individual behavioral change and positive behavior maintenance for a better quality of life." An inevitable feature in our society because most of the good things we cherish in life like glory, power, democracy, love, prestige, education and employment are all in scarcity, Uwazie (2003) quoted in Gebreselassie (2011, p13). Here it is safe to conclude that, as far as social interaction exists, a successful behavior change intervention uses various communications methods and tools, including face-to-face communication, training, community media, information and communication technology (ICT), life skill education, and counseling to develop the skill and capabilities of targeted audiences to manage their attitude, Nigussie (2017). The implication of building peace and stability is that there is general agreement that has been negotiated by the individuals involved, Emy (1976). Listening, trust, sharing, and respect are values inherent in the process. Most peace-building studies encourage open communication address the need for a democracy to have free media function without restriction, (Somit & Peterson, 2005). Therefore, the activities that carried out in this study would be examined the strategic communication pattern, procedure, channels and practice of public relations meant to maintain peace and stability among the societies.

## **2.5. Alignment in the Domain of Strategic Communication**

The analysis of contemporary literature in the strategic communication domain revealed that the term alignment is often used, but seldom defined. There are two monographs have elaborated explicitly upon the alignment concept: *The Alignment Factor: Leveraging the Power of Total Stakeholder Support*, Riel (2012). *How can organization Align Strategy, Culture, and Identity*, Hatch and Schultz (2008). Both works stem from the field of corporate and strategic communication; they are based on case study research. Scholars have referred to alignment in different contexts: for instance, as a mutually rewarding relationship between a company and its external and internal stakeholders, Riel (2012). In fact, three major notions

of alignment can be distinguished from the literature review: organization stakeholder alignment; communication strategy alignment; and communication strategy and activities alignment.

### **2.5.1 Organization Stakeholder Alignment**

Alignment with internal stakeholders refers to aligning all employees to the organization and towards a common goal, identity, or behavior, Invernizzi and Romenti (2015). Alignment with external stakeholders means aligning the organization to the multifaceted and changing expectations, beliefs, and demands articulated by different stakeholder groups. In this context, strategic communication is understood as a tool to create and maintain organization stakeholder alignment and/or to detect misalignment. The ultimate goal of organization stakeholder alignment is to create a favorable impression and to gain stakeholder support and an unrestricted license to operate, Riel (2012). According to Riel (2012), strategic communication plays a critical role in gaining internal stakeholder alignment, as it helps executives jointly align employees to corporate strategy through different techniques of consultation, mirroring, consensus, or power play, Riel (2012). He further highlights the need fully integrate communications with counterparts from marketing, accounting, information technology, and human resources to foster internal alignment. Once that alignment is achieved, the organization has to align itself to the expectations of external stakeholders to secure an unrestricted license to operate. The author suggests establishing external fit at three levels with issue, public opinion, and reputation through gathering intelligence based on analyses of competitors, consumer behavior, media, and scanning techniques. Invernizzi and Romenti (2015) have briefly elaborated the organization's alignment with the external environment in their recent analysis of entrepreneurial organization theory. They identified four contributions of strategic communication in their Entrepreneurial Communication Model: the aligning role, the energizing role, the visioning role, and the constituting role of strategic communication. Communication in this context is hence attributed an aligning role in supporting the organization to achieve alignment with external expectations through four different activities: boundary spanning; environmental scanning; activity of bridging; and engaging stakeholders. Regarding the first two activities boundary spanning and environmental scanning strategic communication supports monitoring and interpreting the context in which the organization operates and provides critical input for aligning strategies with ongoing external dynamics and expectations in order to guarantee long-term survival and legitimacy. Regarding the latter two activities bridging and engaging

stakeholders strategic communication helps building partnerships between the organization and its most important stakeholders, incorporating their points of view in managerial decision making and thus activating co-decisional processes, and thereby stimulating supporting behavior from stakeholders.

### **2.5.2 Communication strategy alignment**

The purpose of communication strategy alignment is to enhance the company's strategic positioning and contribute to increased performance, Argenti (2016). Many seminal definitions of strategic communication have stressed its notion as being purposeful, Hallahan et al (2007), intentional or objectives-driven, Kiouisis & Strömbäck (2015) with the purpose of fostering the achievement of overall goals and fulfilling the organization's mission. Even though, the notion strategic is inherent in the term strategic communication only a few scholars have explicitly defined the term as communication aligned with the organization's overall strategy, Argenti et al (2005). Alignment in this context emphasizes the need to formulate communication strategies that are linked to corporate strategy and mission in order to contribute to corporate success, Falkheimer et al (2017); Zerfass (2008).

Strategic communication scholars have adapted strategy and planning concepts from management research to address these challenges and proposed frameworks for deriving strategic communication goals and setting up communication plans, Bruhn, Esch, & Langner (2016) and for connecting communication strategy to corporate strategy through communication scorecards, Zerfass (2008). Although there is clarity on the necessity for well-aligned, harmonized communicative strategies, goals and plans, it is notable that the linkage and process of aligning communication and corporate strategy has received scant empirical attention in the strategic communication domain, just as has a deeper analysis of the strategy concept.

### **2.5.3 Communication strategy and activities alignment**

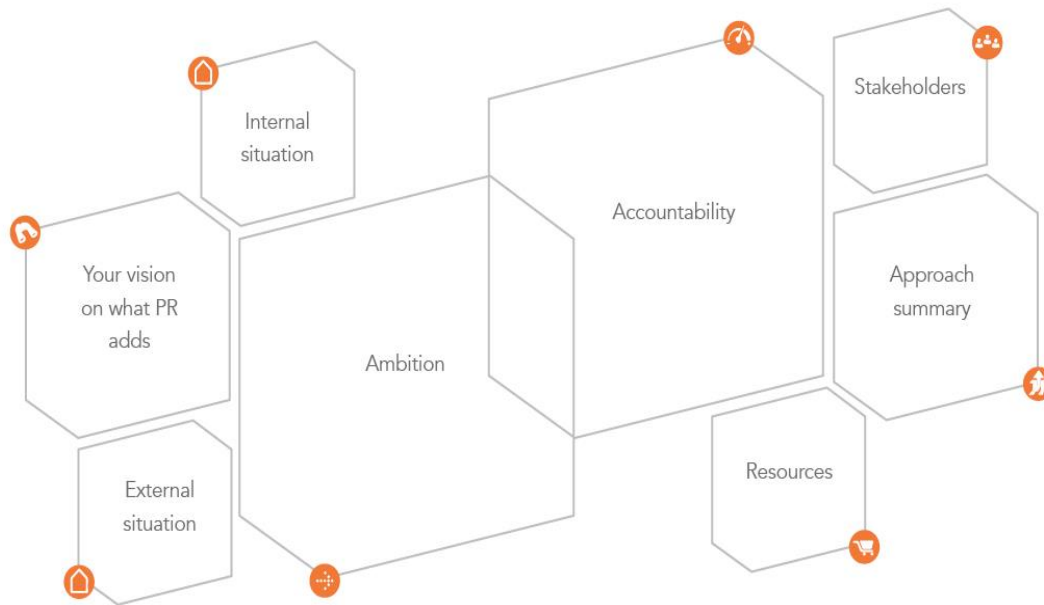
A third strand of literature emphasizes on alignment of communication strategy and to each other, Christensen et al (2008). The purpose of communication strategy and activities alignment is to achieve coherence and integration between vision, brands, identity, symbols, messages, or culture, with the goal of orchestrating all communications to appear consistent across different audiences and different media. From this perspective, strategic communication is the object to be aligned to corporate strategy and itself. In their monograph

taking brand initiative, how companies can align strategy, culture, and identity through corporate branding, Hatch and Schultz (2008) elaborate upon alignment from the viewpoint of corporate branding and image building. They conceptualize alignment as coherence between the strategic vision of the company's top management, the culture and beliefs of company employees, and the images held by external stakeholders. Building on earlier work, Hatch & Schultz (2001) they suggest the Vision-Culture-Image (VCI) Alignment Model as a tool to achieve alignment and detect misalignment based on multiple practice case studies. Following their argumentation, three sources of misalignments or gaps can be distinguished that can damage the corporate brand: a vision-culture gap, an image-culture gap, or a vision-image gap. In the corporate communications and integrated communication literature, scholars have highlighted the necessity of aligning symbols, messages, voices, and behaviors in order to achieve integration, coordination, and orchestration of an organization's strategic communications across different audiences and different media, Cornelissen (2017).

## **2.6. Strategic Communication Frame (Van Ruler)**

Based on in-depth discussions about different theories with practitioners, there are seven requirements for a good strategy development model for public relations and communication management. The first one is clear vision on communications and its added value to the mission of the organization. The next requirement for good strategy is focusing on internal and external contexts as a building block for constructing ambitions. In the good strategy development model there is no smart objective but there is inspiring ambitions based on clear choices. Explicit accountability is the other one in every building block clear choice as hypotheses for the future is necessary. Make as compatible and adjustable at any time to respond to situational dynamics. These requirements helped people in constructing a model we call the strategic communication frame, Van Ruler, et al., (2007).

Figure. 2.1. Strategic communication frames (van ruler).



Source: Van Ruler, et al., (2007)

## 2.7. Strategic Communication Planning

The purpose of a strategic communications plan is to integrate all the organization's programs and advocacy efforts, Grunig (1984). The strategic plan will help to deploy resources more effectively and strategically by highlighting and shared opportunities in its various programs and work areas, Broom and Yeomans (2006). Strategic communication planning for public relations practice is a model that seems a bit more logical.

This presents that strategic communication plan can be used for persuasion, because each is a strategic activity and each helps practitioners influence behavior and generate consensus. Robert Kendall (1992). The planning process also can help organizations both overcome obstacles and capitalize on opportunities. Jerry Hendrix (2000). Additionally, the process works equally well for large or small, international or grass root, richly endowed or impoverished. Grunig and Hunt (1984). There are steps and grouped phases that are both descriptive and accurate, Ronald (2002).

### 2.7.1. Formative Research: (Phase One)

Formative Research, the focus is on the preliminary work of communication planning, which is the need to gather information and analyze the situation. The planner draws on existing information available to the organization and, at the same time, creates a research program

for gaining additional information needed to drive the decisions that will come later in the planning process, Grunig (1992)

### ***Step 1: Analyzing the Situation***

Situation analysis is the crucial beginning to the process. It is imperative that all involved planner, clients, supervisors, key colleagues and the ultimate decision makers are in solid agreement about the nature of the opportunity or obstacle to be addressed in this program. The first step in any effective public relations plan is to identify carefully and accurately the situation facing the organization, Botan & Soto (1998). A situation is similar in meaning to a problem the classic definition of a question needing to be addressed. Without an early and clear statement of the situation to be addressed, it will not be able to conduct efficient research or define the goal of the communication program later in the planning process. A situation is approached in either a positive or a negative vein, Caywood (1995). That is to say, it may identified as an opportunity to be embraced because it offers a potential advantage to the organization or its publics, or it may be an obstacle to be overcome because it limits the organization in realizing its mission, Caywood (1995).

### ***Step 2: Analyzing the Organization***

This step involves a careful and candid look at three aspects of the organization: (1) its internal environment (mission, performance and resources), (2) its public perception (reputation) and (3) its external environment (competitors and opponents, as well as supporters).

The basis of effective communication is self-awareness. As such, strategists must have a thorough and factual understanding of their organization its performance, its reputation and its structure before a successful strategic communication plan can be created. They also seek to understand any factors that might limit the plan's success. It is analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the organization or client. It considers the organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis. What follows here is a more elaborate analysis that focuses on three aspects of the organization: its internal environment, its public perception and its external environment, Goldman (1984). This concept shows that, before moving on to the details situation analysis is important to point out the overall conditions of the organization. To create an effective communication program, it is must to

take an honest look at the organization, identifying its weaknesses and limitations as well as its strengths.

***Internal Environment:*** This considers all of the conditions within the organization that might limit the effectiveness of the public relations program. (Klein 1999). What people think about the organization is the key focus for the public relations review. This perception is based on both visibility and reputation, Gronstedt (2000) & Grunig (2002).

***External Environment:*** Organization concludes with an examination of its external environment. This includes a careful look around. Who are the supporters the people and groups who currently or at least potentially are likely to help the organization achieve its objectives? However, an organization's environment also may be uneven; it may be competitive with one public while cooperative with another, Grunig & Hunt (1984). An important aspect of the external analysis is to consider the nature of any rivalry that may exist.

### ***Step 3: Analyzing the Publics***

This step identifies and analyzes the key publics the various groups of people who interact with the organization on the issue at hand. And it includes an analysis of each public in terms of their wants, needs and expectations about the issue, their relationship to the organization, their involvement in communication and with various media, and a variety of social, economic, political, cultural and technological trends that may affect them, Hendrix (2000) and Hiebert (2000).

A public is a group of people that shares a common interest vis-à-vis an organization, recognizes its significance and sets out to do something about it. John Dewey in *The Public and Its Problems*: "Publics are homogeneous in that they are similar in their interests and characteristics. They usually are aware of the situation and their relationship with the organization. They think the issue is relevant, and they are at least potentially organized or energized to act on the issue", John (1927).

### **2.7.2. Strategy: (Phase Two)**

This phase deals with the heart of planning: making decisions dealing with the expected impact of the communication, as well as the nature of the communication itself.

#### ***Step 4: Establishing Goals and Objectives***

This is to develop clear, specific and measurable objectives that identify the organization has hoped for impact on the awareness, acceptance and action of each key public. A good deal of attention is given to objectives dealing with acceptance of the message, because this is the most crucial area for public relations and communication strategists, Holmes (1998). A *goal* is a statement rooted in the organization's mission or vision, and objectives are specific and measurable.

#### ***Step 5: Formulating Action and Response Strategies***

A range of actions is available to the organization and step it considered and what it might do in various situations. This section includes typologies of initiatives and responses.

#### ***Step 6: Using Effective Communication***

This deals with the various decisions about the message, such as the sources who will present the message to the key publics, the content of the message, its tone and style, verbal and nonverbal cues, and related issues, Moriarty (1998)

Having identified your publics and established objectives for what is to be achieved, and having set into motion the way the organization is preparing to act to achieve those objectives, it is time to turn your attention to how best to communicate, Grunig (2002).

### **2.7.3. Tactics: (Phase Three)**

During the Tactics phase, various communication tools are considered and the visible elements of the communication plan are created.

#### ***Step 7: Choosing Communication Tactics***

Communication tactics are the visible elements of a strategic plan. They are what people see and do web sites and news releases, tours and billboards, and so much more. Harold Lasswell (1948). This inventory deals with the various communication options. Specifically, the planner considers four categories: (1) face-to-face communication and opportunities for personal involvement, (2) organizational media (sometimes called controlled media), (3)

news media (uncontrolled media) and (4) advertising and promotional media (another form of controlled media). Media and media tactics are often divided into categories based on distinguishing features: controlled versus uncontrolled, internal versus external, mass versus targeted, popular versus trade, public versus nonpublic, and print versus electronic, Corder et al (1999)

### ***Step 8: Implementing the Strategic Plan***

These step turn the raw ingredients identified in the previous step into a recipe for successful public relations and strategic communication, Lippy (1986). It is to putting together a full plate of ways to present and to implementing the strategic plan, Bruce Vanden Bergh and Helen Katz (1999)

#### **2.7.4. Evaluative Research: (Phase Four)**

The final phase, Evaluative Research, deals with evaluation and assessment, enabling the strategic communication plan to determine the degree to which the stated objectives have been met and thus to modify or continue the communication activities, Weiner (1995)

### ***Step 9: Evaluating the Strategic Plan***

This is the final planning element, indicating specific methods for measuring the effectiveness of each recommended tactic in meeting the stated objectives; Weiner (1995). Strategic communication evaluation is the systematic measurement of the outcomes of a project, program or campaign, based on the extent to which stated objectives are achieved. As part of the strategic planning process, establishing appropriate and practical evaluation methods wraps up all the previous plans, ideas and recommendations.

## **2.8. Tools and Channels of Communication**

There is no single communication channel that is considered to be more important than others. There are different communication tools, which help organization to reach its target audience. Media is one of the most predominantly used tools of strategic communication. Strategic media communication is transferring the right message to the right people through the right medium at the appropriate time (Warrier, 2014). Being a strategic is vital; it enables the organization to deliver a consistent message that picked up by the proper people at the proper time.

Media has an interdependent relationship with the society that shapes, defines, and sets agenda to it. In turn, the media reflects and shapes the social reality, and defines the norms, values, and standards of the society, thus, influence public opinion. Therefore, public opinion that reflected and magnified in the media has a great impact on all spheres of the society. According to McQuail (2000) mass media is the most easily accessible source for people to evaluate and make their views. Individual opinions that do not concur with the prevailing opinions in the media tend to be kept still in fear of falling into isolation or reshaped to accommodate the public view.

Strategic communication can be achieved when the message delivered to the target community using appropriate and timely information through media.(COUNTIES, 2016)

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter discusses the processes and techniques used in carrying out the study; and present the design and methodology, which is used to conduct this research. The research has designed to obtain primary data from public relations practitioners, communication head, and secondary data from relevant existing documentations of the organizations. The analysis of the obtained information was used to answer the research questions. Information regarding the research design, the research approach, the population sample and the measuring instruments follows beneath.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

As Kothari (2004, p. 31) specifies, “Research design is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted; it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data”. Having a research design is necessary to do task before delving in to any kind of research. Design of this study is case study form of research design. It is a structure of research character mainly focuses on investigating single institution. This design is especially known as research in-depth rather than breath. As such, it focuses on the situation or event and aims to pinpoint the unique feature within the demanding case, Abate (2018)

Since the research topic is of case study sort, the research design that seems to be best suited for this study is of a qualitative variant. Qualitative techniques can increase a researcher’s depth of understanding of the observable fact under investigation. The methods allow a researcher to view performance in a practical setting without the artificiality that sometimes surrounds experimental or survey research, Wimmer et al (2011).

For the purpose of this study, qualitative method of research is employed. This is because it provides results that are usually rich and detailed, offering ideas and concepts to inform the study. Thus, the researcher belief qualitative data is to be essential to study the strategies of communication in the Federal Ministry of Peace.

#### **3.2 Research Approaches**

This study aimed to examine communication strategy of Ethiopian Peace Ministry. Moreover, to examine what important experience does the organization have regarding to working collaboratively with media. Therefore, in order to study their activities and

relationship, the researcher deployed the appropriate approaches that would help to study about the feeling of some targeted group of respondents.

When the data could tell about how people feel and what they think, the researcher has to use the qualitative methods, Headlam (2009). Qualitative methods are generally associated with the evaluation of social dimensions. It provides results that are usually rich and detailed, offering ideas and concepts to inform the study. Different scholars defined the qualitative research approach, as it is information rich for in-depth research. It is concerned with a quality of information, and attempt to acquire an understanding of the underlying causes and motivations for actions and demonstrate how people read their experiences and evaluations of the universe about them, Headlam (2009).

Qualitative methods also provide insights into the context of a problem, generating ideas and/or theories. It generates data about human groups in social settings and allows the meaning to be created from the eyes of the participants. It is considered as more flexible than quantitative research because it can adjust to the setting, Jensen (2004). Qualitative research strategy is chosen when a researcher wants a better understanding through real human experiences, truthful reporting and actual conversations, Kvale (2018).

Finally, the researcher believes using qualitative approach for this study would help smoothly in to analyzing navigate smoothly into analyzing strategic, communication practice, plan and evaluating media relations impact. In the researcher's perspective, qualitative research was more relevant to examine this research title. Because qualitative research is particularly good at answering the 'why', 'what' or 'how' questions. Moreover, the study examines communication strategy of Federal Ministry of Peace as well as media relations activities as a communication tool in its goals and objectives in communicating with media.

### **3.3. A Conceptual Frame Work**

Based on the above detail literature review the conceptual framework developed to examine how the strategies of communication are being practiced in the organization. This conceptual framework tries to explain the overall intent of the research. It is designed by the researcher in order to give the description of the research title in line with the model of discussion deliberate for the purpose of this study. In the title "Critical Examination of Draft Communication Strategies of Federal Ministry of Peace", that the researcher studied were, strategies of communication, by employing the suitable model. In doing so, as the researcher

critically examined the strategies of communication, there was also a chance to see the perspectives’ of selected respondents from the organization towards the disseminations of peace.

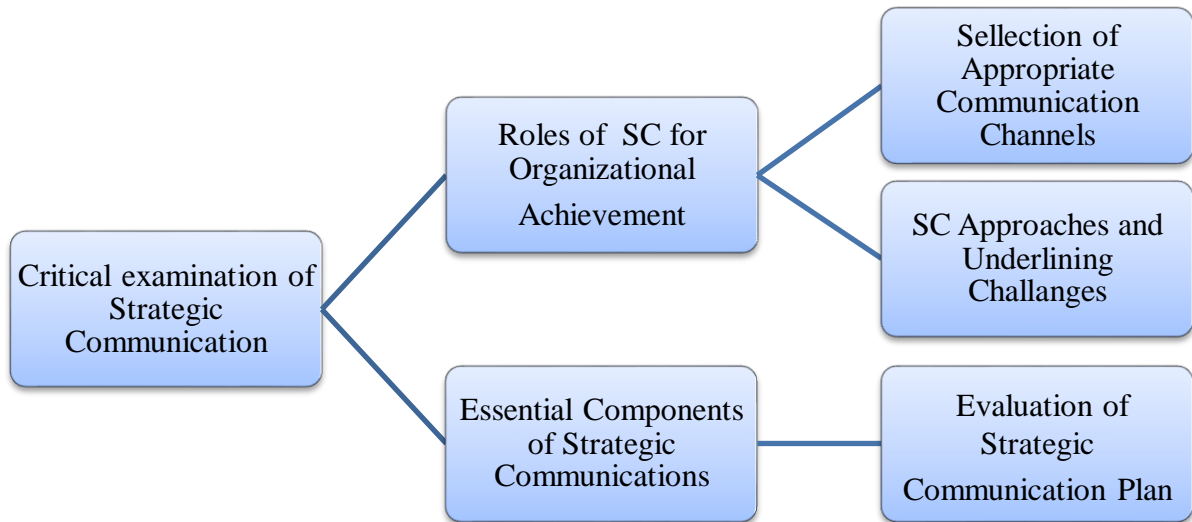


Figure 3.1 Conceptual Framework (Own Source)

### 3.4. Research Instruments

With regard to data instruments, both primary and secondary sources were considered. Accordingly, interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs) and observations were employed as primary data collection tools. As secondary source of data, data from various kinds of published and unpublished documents on the subject area were reviewed. The main instruments used in qualitative researches consist of interview, focus group discussions, document review, observation and secondary data source. These ways of gathering data can supplement each other and, hence, boost the validity and reliability of the data.

For this study, the researcher employed in-depth interview, focus group discussion (FGD) and secondary document reviews. Qualitative data collection method including document review is used. Burns (1999, p.118) contends that ‘in-depth interview is popular and widely used means of collecting qualitative data’. To this end, the researcher required to get firsthand information directly from some knowledgeable informants. The inquirer intends “to obtain a special kind of information”, Merriam (1998, p.71) and investigates for himself what is going on in the respondents’ mind. The point is that the researcher could not observe the

informants' feelings and thinking. Therefore, that interviewing is a key to understand what how people perceive and “interpret the world around them”, Ibid (p. 72).

For this study, the researcher collected and used primary and secondary data. The secondary data contribute toward the formation of background information, needed by both the researcher in order to build constructively the project and the reader to understand more thoroughly the study outcome. Primary data were collected from public relations experts, communication head, and focus group discussion.

### **3.4.1. In-depth interview**

In-depth interview is one of the most common qualitative research methods. One reason for popularity is that it is very effective in giving a human face to research problems. In addition, conducting and participating interviews can be rewarding experiences for participants and interviewers alike. The in depth interview is a technique designed to elicit a vivid picture of the participant's perspectives on the research questions in line with research objectives. A trained and experienced person can interview representatives from the different target groups. Such interviews follow a prepared questionnaire so that similar information is gathered from each person. The questions are generally open-ended, meaning that they require more than “yes” or “no” answer, Nigussie (2017 p75).

During in-depth interviews, the person being interviewed is considered the experts and the interviewer is considered the student. The researcher's interviewing techniques are motivated by the desire to learn everything the participant can share about the research topic. The researcher did not lead participants according to any preconceived notions, nor do encourage participants to provide particular answers by expressing approval or disapproval of what participants say. To this effect, in-depth interview conducted face-to-face and involved one interviewer, the researcher, and one interviewee. All interviews conducted at the organization's office.

### **3.4.2. Focus Group Discussions (FGD)**

A qualitative research technique in which a moderator leads a small homogenous group of respondents (six to ten) through a discussion of selected topic. Focus-group discussions are repeated with other groups of participants (usually two to four groups in all) until no new information is revealed, Nigussie (2017 p75). Different researchers argue that Focus Group Discussion is the most commonly used type of data generating tools in qualitative research

design. One of the advantages of FGD is that tremendous data can be collected from many people in a short period. Wimmer et al (2011 p134) observes, “FGD responses are often more complete and less inhibited than those from individual interviews. One respondent’s remarks tend to stimulate others to pursue lines of thinking that might not have been elicited in a situation involving just one individual. With a competent moderator, the discussion can have a beneficial snowball effect, as one respondent comment on the views of another.”

Unlike in conventional surveys, where interviewers work from a rigid series of questions and are instructed to follow explicit directions in asking the questions, a moderator in an FGD has flexibility in question design and follow-up. They work from a list of broad questions as well as refined probing questions. Hence, it is easy to follow up an important points raised by participants in the group. Thus, this study employed FGD as one instrument of data collection to substantiate the information collected via observation and interviews. Thus, focus group discussion was conducted with selected parties who have experience and knowledge about strategic communication.

### **3.4.3. Document Analysis**

The term ‘document’ can refer to more than just a paper, and can include photographs, works of art, and even television program. Document analysis refers to these ‘texts’ as a primary data source-or data in its own right. Document analysis does not involve document production, the steps involved somewhat differ from other methods of data collection. In order to carry out content analysis the researcher needs to plan for all contingencies; gather documents; review their credibility; interrogate their witting and unwitting evidence; reflect and refine processes; and finally analyze the data. Lass Well’s better-known statement that succinctly encapsulates what media content analysis is about, published in 1948, (as cited in Shoemaker and Reese, 1996), describes it as: Who says what, through which channel, to whom with what effect. Were the parameters in order to analyze the media document analysis. This helps to evaluate the programs disseminated in different mass media.

Lastly, the researcher analyzed the written draft strategic plan of the Federal Ministry of Peace. In this document analysis, the issue of Peace Building and applications of communication strategy had been focused in depth. The ministry includes in the plan about initiating society’s peace value to strength their unity and relationships. What kind of activities that strategic communication played in the community relations and creating peace among societies was carefully analyzed

### **3.5. Sampling Methodology**

Sampling is a procedure that uses a small number of units of a given population as a basic for drawing conclusions about the whole populations, Albaum (1997).

#### **3.5.1 Sampling Method**

Sampling helps insure credibility and validity of the study, O'Leary (2004). For this research the public relations practitioners of Peace Ministry, the director of communication department and parties' focus group discussion were involved. To ensure representativeness, the participants for the interview were selected using purposive sampling method. This kind of technique mostly used in qualitative research. Thus, for identification of information or data, that requires selecting individual or group of individuals that have deep understanding and knowledge on the profession and subject matter, Kumar (2011) states that, "to go to those people who in your opinion are likely to have the required information and be willing to share it with you." For that reason, from eight respondents were selected by their position in public relations department, the depth of information they can provide on the research topic and their capacity to impart information and according to the objectives of the study. Two respondents are the communication directors internal relations director and external relations director. Samples chose from the organization depending on their position.

Sample for focus group discussion (FGD) were selected from management depending on the core work process frequently contacted with and its priority in the media list. In addition, purposive sampling method documentary programs produced by the organization in different times took sample from documents. The researcher observed the documentaries and, then selected one documentary program based on the content and suitable to analysis for the purpose of this study for further data gathering from the organization.

### **3.6. Source of Data and Methods of Data Collection**

The study based on primary source of data and secondary source of data. Primary data gathered through structured in-depth interview questions, and focus group discussion. The secondary data obtained through document analysis to supplement primary data along with number of related journals and articles were reviewed.

To collect the required data, in-depth interview, focus group discussion (FGD) and secondary data review and observation were applied. These kinds of approach need personal connection with the respondent in face to face. By preparing the relevant in-depth interview questions,

the researcher found out the research questions and discussions made the platform to the fluent. This form of data collection method helps to read the question and gives the correct resolution, Kothari (2004).

The researcher used in-depth interview to obtain valuable data from the organization. The primary grounds for applying this method of data collection system in the research questions need more explanations and the sample size of the respondents were limited along with research objectives. The structured in-depth interview was not following strictly; the researcher as well as the interviewee asked additional remarks at any time. Later on, each set of statement, there is an open-ended discussion on the specific issue due to the factors mentioned above, there were about ten interviewees were conducted from the organization. The interview made at the office of the organization; each interviewee takes minimum one hour to one hour and twenty minutes' maximum. Every respondent was free to discuss about the interview questions.

### **3.7. Method of Data Analyses and Interpretation**

All data that collected from in-depth interviews were analyzed through qualitative research approach based on models of communication, communication tools and channels, strategic communication, communication through media and relations measurement impact. Some documents from the ministry for further information, explanations that received from FGD and obtained data from the organization were examined.

The data analyzed on thematic way of data analysis. There are themes in data presentation section and after presenting the data, the researcher gave analyzed elaborative explanation in every theme depending on the related literature.

### **3.8. Validity and Reliability of the Study**

Validity means in the broader sense refers to the ability of a research instrument to demonstrate that it is finding out what the researcher designed it, or truthfulness of the study on the perspectives of respondents. It can be understood as the extent to which the field presents the social phenomena it refers to. Reliability, on the other hand, brings up to the level of consistency with which cases are set apart to the same category by different observer or by the same observer on different functions (Kumer, 2011). In this case, for the purpose of this study the researcher used an in-depth interview, FGD and secondary source review or content analysis as a research instruments for data collection. To ensure representativeness, the participants in the interview were selected using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling

allowed the researcher to choose a case because it was interesting. However, purposive sampling also required that the researcher thought critically about the parameters of the population targeted by the study and chosen the sample carefully on that basis (Silverman, 2010).

The respondents were selected based on their position and their role in relations of their frequent interaction with communication work experiences. All of them were in public relations practitioners and managerial were in a position to formally review and approve the case organization's communication activities. In this study, the researcher does not imagine a big issue with rhetoric overtaking truth in the interviews, since the matter is not sensitive and the spot for the interviewees made secret.

### **3.9. Summery**

To conclude, the purpose of this study is to examine critically the strategies of communication activities of the ministry of peace. Lastly, the study sought how the organization communicates its target populations in order to achieve the goals and objectives of the ministry. Therefore, the validity and reliability of this method should not be overly scrutinized, the critical examination of communication strategy the main issue under consideration. Concept of communication, communication strategy, and media as communication tool examined and reviewed. Both theoretical and empirical literatures used to explain the purpose of study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

#### **4.1. Introduction**

This study is to assess the practice of strategic communication of the Ethiopian Ministry of Peace. Towards this, the study specifically focuses on finding out the draft strategic communication plan of the ministry. So, it is for the purpose of examining the strategic communication of the organization and identifying the challenges and problems in strategic communication practices. It is also to identify the best strategy of communication that this ministry has been used to learn. The study essentially combined qualitative research methodology. To achieve this, the ministry's draft strategic communication plan is deeply reviewed by the researcher, and further data were collected by in-depth interview, with purposively selected public relation experts and the directors of communication of Ministry of Peace. In addition to this, the researcher used further information from focus group discussions were undertaken.

This chapter presents and analysis the raw data obtained and gathered from Public Relations and communication directors through in-depth interview & focus group discussions. Under this chapter what strategic communication practices in the organization are put in place, how the management, staff members, employees evaluate the communication practice, how far the employees participate on the strategic communication practice in the organization and what are the existing challenges and problems of strategic communication in the organization are answered through quantitative data presentation analysis as it was indicated from the outset under the document analysis, FGD, and in-depth interview. Then, the final works of analysis were undertaken by using descriptive and exploratory method of analysis qualitatively. The gathered data from both primary and secondary sources analyzed and discussed depending on the strategic communication frames (van ruler), theories of strategic communication models.

The demographic characteristics of the respondents were almost all the respondents were from 30 to 41 years old, more of them are in between 40, and 41 years old as explained below.

**Table 4.1. Demographic information of the respondents**

Number of sampled respondents	Age				Sex		Educational level			Occupation Position	
	<25	26-30	31-40	>41	M	F	Degree	Masters	Above masters	PR	Comm. Directors
10	-	1	7	2	6	4	7	3	-	8	2
<b>Total</b>	10				10		10			10	

## **4.2. Goals and Objectives of Strategic Communication**

According to the information obtained from the interview, the ministry used communication strategies to accomplish such ends like, increasing public awareness on building peace; on conflict prevention and controlling; providing useful information in modern and improved agricultural technologies in pastoral community environment; on informing religious based tolerance; peace and mutual relations in between different communities and facilitating good values in the societies. They elaborated the specific goal of facilitating and promoting the Ministry of Peace works in collaboration with appropriate federal and regional governments including other concerned bodies to ensure and maintained that peace and stability.

### **4.2.1. The Objectives of Strategic Communication**

The goals are mainly to promote awareness raising strategies for individuals and groups working closely with cultural and religious institutions and maintaining peacekeeping practices. The ministry practices these peacekeeping works done in collaboration with various religious and denomination organizations and relevant governmental and non-governmental bodies. Communicating goals, objectives and strategies to executives and securing by another important function of the corporate public relations role, Zerfass et al (2014).

As regards the questions asked by the researcher to public relations experts and directors implicitly, it is to strengthen the awareness of citizens who are respectful of diversity, striving to resolve differences of attitudes peacefully, and to developed a morally personality.

Accordingly, the objectives of strategic communication in this organization summarized as follows: These includes

- ✚ Promoting the organizational goals and objectives, by using appropriate media outlets.
- ✚ With the establishment of a bilateral (two-ways symmetric) communication platform to engage in dialogue, discussion, consultative platforms, and social media and website utilization with the establishment of a knowledge-based information exchange system in the implementation of strategy.
- ✚ To ensure timely and transparent disclosure of relevant information and policies, based rules and actions, as well as their relevance to the public's interest, inclusiveness, fairness and effectiveness.
- ✚ Develop and distribute the message by analyzing the implications of the complex political framework, the changing dynamics of the country, and the increasing global impact and the global trend in the future.
- ✚ Harmonize different communication strategies and share the responsibility among the community with different stake holders and media houses.
- ✚ Creating public awareness and increasing the comprehensive knowledge about Peace.
- ✚ By creating lasting peace by building peace values and building trust among the citizens,
- ✚ To enable and make favorable environment for the pastoral societies by promoting good practices through strategic communication to how they become productive agro-pastoral.

Strategic communication goals and objectives are used to communicate in achieving the vision and mission of the organization. Moreover, goals have to be directional whereas objectives are specific and measurable. Goals are set in considering problem statement. Strategic communication goals of Federal Ministry of Peace is based on statement of problem analysis that is the general comprehensive knowledge on building peace, on conflict prevention and controlling, mutual relations in between different beliefs and facilitating good values in the societies are not developed.

The primary means of communication of the Ministry of Peace is to adopt different strategies in action, either individually or through a systematic approach. This strategy would create an opportunity to work in partnership with its partners and other stakeholders. Therefore, the Ministry of Peace is required to coordinate communication activities with other institutions and concerned bodies to achieve communication strategies and intent of communication

strategies. Thus, the organization's goals are increasing awareness for the people by utilizing all available channels in the country, in order to achieve this entire goal. The objectives are somehow specific and measurable coherent with the goals of communication strategies in the organization. It is an ongoing integrated communication process, which fuels government and community efforts to create everlasting peace, rule of law, and national solidarity and to create a fully nationalized citizen. According to this, the organization has laid its strategic goals on the draft strategic communication plan. It shows the organization has established good start that can make it to do more in the future.

In the introductory part of the draft strategic communication plan, the strategic mission and vision of the organization's communication was discussed clearly sketched in the documented plan. The plan described that the overall purpose to motivate and make the community to be participative in accomplishing the government policy, strategy and enable the society to take part as role players. Here as the researcher understand from this, the plan is intended to increase community participation in the country's peace formation policy and strategy as well as to sustain economic development (particularly in pastoral lands) and improve the democratic system of the country. The mission of the organization is also talking about expanding the modern, active and effective communication system to create free flow of communication between the government and communities through developing the national consensus, strengthening peace values, promoting cooperativeness, increasing the community participations, and as well as preventing conflicts in the country.

There are certain values of the organization listed in their plan, these are: Professional ethics, Fast response, Accessibility, Trustworthy, and Always learn and grow. These values are smart and ambitious in its written form, even though, the applicability of these values is under a big question as the data from the respondents of FGD and interview explained. The community has been mobilized and informed well at any time, but officials only need the peoples while they want to transmit political messages when serious issue happens.

### **4.3. The Role of Strategic Communication in Building of Peace**

It is inevitable to think about the communication when we talk about peace and consensus. Therefore, strategic communication is the best techniques that help to build peace for long-lasting time. The role of strategic communication in organization is quite central since it involves effective handling of internal and external matters of organizations. Communication is one of the most dominant and important activities in organizations because relationships

grow out of communication, and organizations function and survive based on effective relationships among individuals and groups. Communication helps individuals and groups coordinate activities to achieve goals, make decisions, solve problems, share knowledge and manage change processes.

In relations to this data were show communication has very high role for building trusts in between citizens by promoting peace values. Thus, the data indicated that the employees of the organization understand that communication brings people together, closer to each other, it bridges the gap between individual and groups through flow of information, and it is one of the basic tools available to management for accomplishing organizational objective.

According to Keyton, (2005) communication is the lifeblood of all organizations: it is the medium through which companies large and small access the vital resources they need in order to operate. It is through communication that organizations acquire the primary resources they need (such as capital, labor, and raw materials) and build up valuable stocks of secondary resources (such as “legitimacy” and “reputation”) that enable them to operate.

As it was previously described in the literature review, strategic communication just focuses on how organization communicates across organizational endeavor. While the researcher asked the respondents whether the organization conducted strategic communication planed more than half respondents those who conducted interview were responded that the organization is practicing and applying very important tasks by conducting overall inclusive plan and but, they did not planed strategic communication plan. This emphasizes that the organization is actively working to create peace and stability in their daily activities, as well developing good rapport between the government and the peoples themselves regardless of the their concerns, ethnic and different ideologies. As the informants explained, the main goal of the organization is to bring pace at nationwide.

#### **4.4. Strategic Communication Plan of the Ministry of Peace**

Document analysis was one of the tools to collect relevant data from the ministry of peace. From the very beginning, the researcher read the draft of yearly strategic plan of the ministry to give detail analysis and assess how communication plan is strategically implemented. Content analysis has become a widely used method of analysis in a variety of settings, including social psychology, sociology of knowledge, communication, and increasingly organization studies, Duriau et al (2007) and Krippendorff (2013).

Regarding the ministry's strategic communication plan, documents indicated that, they have a draft strategic communication plan. The researcher reviewed this plan deeply. In this draft of strategic communication plan, the organizations are participated as stakeholders those intended to implement the practices as well as them taken their mission. So that it can bet taken, it was a representative plan. But the ministry did not conduct isolated strategic communication action plane for the year. As part of their plan, they were working on how to work with other stakeholders, governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and media houses. Although they have no isolated strategic communication plan, but there is planned mission, vision and goals they recognize them. There is a plan that includes the entire work of the department i.e. public relations directorate. The public relations department/directorate has a jointly drafted communication plan for itself. But it is a comprehensive plan.

The Hartford Loss (2000), "Develop a written policy statement that clearly reflects the organization's dedication to an effective communication plan." However, the details of the communications process are not in their hands. On the other hand, they are trying to working important communication works. According to this list there is a program called 'Peace Media Network' in the institute. This network intended to be an important communication platform before any peace problems occurred. Written document shows that, this 'Peace Media Network' is taken as a strategic communication plan. They used it as the pointer to implement their communication works.

To achieve the mission of the Ministry of Peace, when think it as a corporate; beyond that do, something is important to build peace i.e. creating awareness in the community to keep the community's stability. As an organization, it meant to achieve the vision of the institution they have to plan what they are going to do. They did not use fully completed planned communication strategy for this functionality. One of public relations expert informed that:

“There are forums for our institutions to introduce its mission and goals in different platforms. There are trainings, exhibitions, events, announcements and brief awareness sessions to create national consensus. We have a lot of work to do even with the media that is to introduce the goals and missions of our ministry, but we did not have solely prepared strategic communication plan to do such things.”

Therefore, the explanation briefing that, it is a bit tired. Because it was not supported by properly organized strategic communication plan, it was difficult to make accessible to the community. In addition to this, another interviewee stated that, almost the entire

organizational strategic communication plan was prepared once by alarming of government communication affairs just as campaigns.

As she stated, while the organizational communication planning were based on the previously planned government communication affairs, when planning to transmit information only in one block, it would have a distinct problem. Attitudes of officials toward organizational communication strategy have not been improved in any ways. In this scenario, the plan is a seasoned plan. Even if it is said, it is not a plan. She indicated also that the planning style was simply adopting from one another. "It is a practice to copy from one institution to another, and to work with issues that are compatible (matched) with its own specific circumstances."

As the document indicates, the strategic communication plan is a consortium that plays a key role in linking the institution with the key players in the implementation of the mission. Therefore, the relevant plan needs to strengthen the communication system with the Ministry of Peace, in order to facilitate the transmission of communication activities. They required operating efficiently through planed strategic communication.

Accordingly, this ministry is responsible for coordinating the activities of high-level communication team in the context of the implementation of the strategy, with its close proximity to other relevant agencies, and facilitating dialogue on peace building and law enforcement. Peace is for all. Peace is not only one organization's concern. To that end, the ministry does not facilitate the peace communication strategy, a medium airtime, does not organize and distribute various programs, outline current issues and appropriately utilizes media, including social media and transmitting short text messages and uploading information on the web site. So that, it was unquestionable that the ministry has to communicate with these organizations deliberately by developing well organized strategic communication plan.

#### **4.4.1. The Segment and focus Areas of Strategic Communication Plan**

According to Alas (1997), there are five stages of organizing strategic communication plan, which starts with a situation or problem analysis and research. The research provides a strong program for understanding the organization's external and internal environment and features of each stakeholder group such as public habits, lifestyles, behavior, and attitudes towards the constitution and its field of bodily function. Upon research, strategic goals and objectives will be constructed. Goals and objectives must be specific and measurable. The strategic planning

cycle ends with measurement and evaluation process and takes up a new research. Measurement and evaluation helps this cycle to check its success and failure.

Concerning the Federal Ministry of Peace the way of preparing communication strategic plan, the document indicated that, an earlier plan included those known agendas. It is to work with all concerned bodies including media connectively. The researcher examined that the ministry's strength according to representative collaboration with appropriate federal and regional governments to ensure that public peace is maintained. Promote awareness raising strategies for individuals and groups between individuals and groups, working closely with cultural and religious institutions and maintaining peacekeeping practices. Peacekeeping works in collaboration with various religious, denomination organizations, and relevant governmental bodies can help the ministry to be fruitful.

This draft strategic communication plan also clearly stated that; the plan is designed to support the development strategies and programs with the help of advanced communications technology, in line with the above key concepts. In particular, it provides accurate and up-to-date information about the law enforcement, the development of peace and good governance and the respect for religion and the federalism. Designed activities carried out based on the effective work that will be created to create peace and national consensus on major national issues.

From the perspective of the country's public relations and media, in the process of forming a face-to-face discussion forum to provide the government and the public with links to internal and external communication between local and foreign consumers. So, to carry out the two fundamental tasks of the institution, to achieve peace and to preserve the rule of law, the ministry did not finalized the Strategic Communication Plan to effectively and efficiently implement communications and public relations work.

The document is divided into five sections: a breakdown of the nature, characteristics, and principles of the protocol, and a comprehensive analysis of the overall strategy.

As the Ministry of Peace, strategic communication plan is important to play a leading role in peace building practices. Therefore, at the federal and regional levels, public institutions are required to provide trainings to enable them to be part of communications activities in order to set peace and stability and they should delegate their parts.

A recent definition of strategic communication speaks to tactical function and strategic segments, Supa and Zoch (2009) state that “strategic communication is the systematic, planned, purposeful and mutually beneficial relationship between a public relations practitioner and media.” Hence, as it is stated on the data, they forecasted whatever issues such as national interests, peace and development issues. It is good attempt as the documents shown. They have based on so many backgrounds to establish their strategic communication plan. One of the interviewee of public relations practitioners explained that the loss of social values is the main point. The informant explained some persuasive points according to preservation of social values. This gave the country in to various social crises.

The community’s values have been the basis of peace for all Ethiopian diversified people. So that there were no different kinds of conflicts in the country; there are now seeing a whole lot of brutalities. In the country where foreign and domestic scholars have proven that, it is a sovereign state of peace and prosperity. There were values those many countries have oppressed and ignored. They have not been left out of existence in Ethiopia now. Nevertheless, because of the history of conflict, this problem is now seen in greater depth than ISIS. This is because lack of the communication. Human beings burn, blown and murdered in their own homelands, pregnant mothers raped; women are beaten and then sexually abused, and so forth as it is stated in the data.

The reason was the problem of communication. There was no public relations works collaboratively with media houses concerning do their social responsibilities by making two-way mutual communication collaboratively with such institutions. Therefore, social values are not discriminated against by ideals, intentions, nationalities or any other differences that are perceived in peace. It is the principle of communication that builds on feedback and puts solutions to the social problems, encourages them to freely express their opinions. To improve the quality and accessibility of the work, it is necessary to improve the communication skills by analyzing audience feedback periodically. This organization did not pass farther steps to such things.

There are many social values, which are helpful to keep peace and stability in Ethiopia but now are going to be disappeared. It is lack of communication strategy in terms of promoting social peace values that carried over in communities. The organization has not promote social values those help to keep peace in between communities. The reason for this is weakness of public relations works. In this concern, it is known that the cooperation of the Christian

community in mosque building and the Muslim community in church builds. These social values are going to be collapsed quickly. The country might lose its social wealth with its community in result of lack of communication. The values are crashed, and under question. So, Ethiopia's peace ministry has mandatory power to plan strategic communication to return such social value. It may need for a social analysis of how fast this type of cruelty is happen, we have lost these things to the bottom, thus the cause of the loss of our values is another indicator for the failure of the communication. But Ethiopian Ministry of Peace did not include in its draft strategic communication plan how it can retrieve these social peace values in to survive.

The organization has tried to conduct this draft strategic communication plan to perform communication internally and externally. This plan is prepared mainly by focusing on the issues of multilateral issues such as peace building, law enforcement, security issues and proportionate works in the four developing regions. Expanding good attitudes is one of the most focuses of the institution. But, they didn't give opportunity for media houses to participate in most of the programs organized. It is supposed to promote social values, which are supportive to build peace and stability in between communities.

However, as the points discussed with focus group discussion, the Ministry of Peace did not use the opportunities because the organization engaged in increasing number of incidents and seasonal works. In result to these problems, there are duties that should be done to retrieve the lost social values in the community. As the researcher's belief, the organization missed the mark to plan strategic communication plan. The data shows public relations practitioners are blocked to do communist/primitive projects of the party in the traditional way. Let examine the next idea of the interviewee.

“You have to make plans to meet the political needs, you must meet the needs of the top management, and if you have external financial fund, you will have to meet the needs of that institution and you will need to base your annual celebrations, visits, workshops and training boards. But in my opinion strategic communication plan should be based on the baseline studies that were to be undertaken, in the context of the overall needs of the community, with respect to the needs of the community, it was consistent with the philosophy of communication science. I believe that the communication plan will work more efficiently if these centers are planned.”

This indicated that communicators have to develop and distribute messages by analyzing the implications of the political framework and needs of politicians. They do not give emphasis for the changing dynamics of the country, and the increasing global impact. With the trust of the researcher, this will be a barrier to achieving the key issues mentioned above, or may clash to assist in the successful communication of the planed strategies and programs within the institution.

#### **4.5. Evaluation of Strategic Communication in Ministry of Peace**

In this section, we will look at how Ministry of Peace evaluates the activities of strategic communication. What efforts the ministry uses to measure its communication activities with target community. It is known that a two-way symmetrical communication approach is important for effective communication for the organizations, Doorley and Garcia (2007, 74). The communication strategy of this organization is both two ways and one-way symmetrical communication strategies applied in most cases.

It is important to find out what actually happened with the messages. Sometimes organizations do not do a formal evaluation, choosing to save their funds, stuff time, other resources for other project activities. However, evaluation is important to both the organization and the strategic communication campaign, Nigussie (2017 p 81). Evaluation of strategic communication is important to find out whether the information is achieving its goal, to identify what needs to be changed in the overall strategies or in the specific messages in order to be more efficient and effective the next time. It is essential to demonstrate the resources used for the communication strategies and for the information campaign can have an impact, and that the activities were effective. In this regard, Ministry of Peace in its draft strategic communication plan did not indicated depending on how often and how good the monitoring is, and how much time was allotted for the evaluation should be carried out.

According to the interview, even though it is essential there was no communication measurement in the organization. Here an idea of my face-to-face respondent clarified that, “What we achieved needs to evaluate whether the communication strategy is effective or not. But we did not have an effect analysis. There were no documents that would be used, as guiding principle to measure the performance of strategic communication activities in the organization.”

This informant told that they did not have communication measurement in the organization instead they used their own potential. These potentials were; conducted survey on how the organization selected communication channels and tools, knowing the target groups and selecting appropriate tools in line with channels. Due to lack of measurement, though the organization did not have an experience to measure the feedback of what they had already planned, they had set organizational goals and objectives of strategic relations based on the theoretical framework that the organization had to achieve. They have done these surveys by collecting data from awareness creation programs, workshops and public meetings. Concerning one-way communication, the organization disseminates information through community discussion programs, through surveys, in workshops programs. So that the researcher did not get any surveys in workshop programs, which is fully practiced audience analysis. Researches were not conducted in order to evaluate the attitudes of target community as well as the level of understanding. There is no any plat form to get public feedback and response as an institute. It can make peace-building practices difficult. Feedback from the public sought in order to analyze the results of communication.

The interviewee told that, it was very interesting to think that the Ministry of Peace came up with an unusual ministry. The Ministry of Peace, which is not around the globe, has been established in Ethiopia for the first time in its history. Security and peace clustering facilities were created as a whole. It received more attention. That focus been used well by the media. The community watched well. There were many comments on the ministry's social media pages. However, it is not deliberate to consider seeing the comments of the organization's social media site indicated enough information about the achievement of their communication strategy. It is necessary doing studies to consider something that they have done was enough or not. It does not show as they have done enough. They did not have made an audience analysis and did not do measurements communication strategies.

Data shows that, the organization has well awareness regarding importance and usefulness of strategic communication measurement. Interviewees stated that too many things have to be improved. To list some points of these things; strategies have to be updated; new practices were needed to meet competing standards; conducting researches as to how to measure communication strategy and tools; government reforms need to be improved, support should be provided to expand the capacity of the media; tax levied on communication tools be fixed. Licensing of media must be tested. Editorial policy must be clear. Government should have give the right attention for public relations profession. These points are the belief of all the

respondents. One of the respondents assured this idea by expressing the following briefing. “Work would have no effect when communication strategies not involved. If you do not advertise your work, the way of your mission and the way of the people’s understanding may go in different contradicting dimensions. What if you have done a job can be hid, what it would do if you did not make it public. It is communication, so it is possible to tell. If you do not, you cannot go one-step forward. Regardless of strategic communication, the work you have been doing will not be recognized. What I have to remind beside this is that strategic communication performance must be evaluated.”

Written documents also show that, the organization’s focus was mostly emphasized on media coverage. It needs to consider whether the organization was able to get their key target community across, and whether or not the intended audience received the message. The organization did not frame the reachable audience by this method. Even though the organization has a good relationship with media public relations directorate do not use the relationship as advantage to evaluate the communication. Even they do not make collaboration with communication tools and media houses to evaluate the impact by asking channels to know when a story is scheduled to go.

Generally, as it was indicated by the researcher in chapter two the literature review of this study, the importance of evaluation and tracking organizational strategic communication was explained briefly. However, this study, investigated that the organization did not use any kind of communication performance measurement and evaluation method. They have not done either quantitative or qualitative measures for evaluating their communication practices, flow for print or audience for broadcast, to know how many people it reached. Qualitative measures, on the other hand, evaluate the quality of the coverage and quantitative for evaluate quantity. Finally, it can fail in achieving its organizational goals and objective because there is no way to confirm whether the message fully addressed and understood by the public.

#### **4.6. Communication Inadequacy in Preparation of the Strategic Communication plan**

The ministry’s office of communication by itself listed some of their weakness that makes them incompetent in their daily work. Incapable of using all available opportunities in creating peace on the most determinant and common issues and building the good image of the organization. Lack of decision making with the targeted costumer is another problem.

Absence of scientific research and analysis of broadcasted information through channels and making suffice feedback towards the opposite propaganda about the ministry.

Generalizing the trends that emphasized above, though there were some prospects to set peace and stability in the country, the organization could not use the opportunities supposed to build peace properly. Among the planned activities of the communication practices, considering on the work of peace building, correcting the negative attitudes, solving and rectifying the perceptions of the practitioners.

It is possible to recognize from the data that there is a problem of attitudinal change between the practitioners and managers, even if the reason is explicitly exposed; there is a conflict of interest and attitude with the communicators. Therefore, if there is conflict interest it unpredictable to build the peace between the peoples. Consequently, the organization couldn't accomplish the work assigned to them, servicing the community also jammed to be fulfilled. Additionally, according to the central part of their plan explained the planners tried to put some solutions that need to be improved. Some studies also showed that direct communication from line managers was far more effective than communication from internal media in determining favorable attitudes regarding strategic initiatives. The flow of communication between departments influenced attitudes regarding strategic issues, but its influence proved less important than that of management communication, Josephine Dixon (2007).

In this regard, one of the participants said, "In our activities we were working on government policy and strategy, disseminating information on current issues to inform the peoples, preparing newsletters, government releases, brochures, documentary films and delivering the information about the situations. However, we need to collect the necessary feedback concerning the work done to improve the future social satisfaction". It is possible to forward conclusion from the view of above paragraph that practitioners as well as the managers were mainly focusing on delivering the news about the government, persuading the peoples about the policies, and urgent release of the political propaganda. In other hands, there were few opportunities to take a feedback from the community.

This shows that the communication was vertical system and almost two-way asymmetric models. Peoples can bother if the communication focus on one way persuasive communication as well as the society also needs to react with the immediate issue they want be heard. Otherwise the communication style will become crumbled and the relations also

paralyzed. In the same way, the drafted plan of the ministry also justified that the heads and experts have been doing good works on behalf of reporting new trends from the government and trying to create trust and transparency between government and community through various media platforms.

As uniquely the drafted plan is specifically considered about the core issue of that strategic plan; in this part the best saying is used which says. This country was under a fear of disintegration in the previous time, this is also told us that there is some hope visibly and changes which shows the relations and unity of the country. Accordingly many important messages were discussed in organization's strategic plan of under this sayings: such as peace and stability, fair division of resource, economic development, social development, building trusts in between citizens and conflict prevention were the most essential topics included in the drafted plan to be accomplished. The plan is okay, but if professionally analyzed and evaluated there is no clear-cut strategies for the application the plan. Because plan needs to be SMART (specific, measureable, applicable or attainable, reliable, and time-bound), therefore there is clear idea in white and black when and how it should be take place.

The table shows the frame of strategic plan of Ministry of Peace. As the researcher has seen from the draft plan structure, every activity that needs to be implemented in the ministry was clearly explained. It is good strategic framework and properly chained.

However, still there are most important points being neglected and have not been clearly and precisely put on the plan. The strategic communication plan did not include action plan. Not only this but also the frame didn't include about how solve crisis, maintain peace and bring social change so the communication need to be focused more. The plan was mainly managerial and directorial centered, economic revolutions, increasing experiences of managers and practitioners focused and communication was out concentration as it is seen in the above frame.

Professionally, this framework or plan was well designed and it is really emphasized about economic development as well. As well as it is stick to reduce conflict in the country by mobilizing the community and organizing the peoples creating awareness and building peace values of communities to sustain peace and stability

#### **4.7. Challenges of Strategic Communication of Ministry of Peace**

The major challenges of strategic communication of the ministry were discussed with key informants and respondents. The respondents shared idea on the factors that affects communication strategies starting from their personal experiences. In mean time there are different things that are very difficult. Relationship, attitudes, works, politics, government, global economy, connections with other nation are complicated, Miller (2012) in this complicated world it is difficult to find a challenge in organizations. According to Miller (2012), there are different challenges for the organization. These are globalization, terrorism, climate change, changing demographics. These all things are the main challenge in today's organizations strategic communication. In this study organization, have different communication challenges that face in every day internally and externally. As the interviewee said, the main problem in the organization is the integration in terms of communication. The departments are not integrated. The problems and the challenges strategic communication as the informant profession is that "In our organization communication section is not structured with professionals, and there was a head who do not understand enough about the profession of communication. In this case, the researcher does not think someone who found from other area of profession can lead communication strategy properly. There are also misconceived attitudes in communication works from different departments. So, sometimes there is a problem in integration but the problem of integration is not only in communication departments it includes all of the departments". The challenge of organizational strategic communication is giving low place for communication. It is indicated, "The organization didn't give attention for the communication directorate they believe that communication work is protocol or it is for organizing some events only. Of course, there is integration problem and a lot of problems in ministry of peace as it explained in the data.

##### **2.7.1 Identification of challenges in the area of communication plan**

During the process of the preparation of strategic communication document, which included a wide circle of actors that deal with the concept of lasting peace, the following basic challenges and problems have been identified. The researcher tried to identify these challenges as listed below under this sub-title.

- Dominant practice of the separation of the different segments of the strategic communication concept while communicating, no general framework of the concept, no clear understanding of its scope and meaning.

- Information level of communication experts about strategic communication from the side of the representatives of the relevant institutions is low.
- Internal communication among the key actors of the process was insufficient.
- Coordination among the key actors/participants that deal with different aspects of strategic communication at both national and local levels is not well organized.
- The communication practices of the ministry is done partially, without clear common objectives and final preparation of strategic communication plan.
- There is a lack of a clear taking of responsibility among the main political actors for the success of the practice of the communication strategy concept.
- Many activities that are integral parts of the strategic concepts do not in any way refer to the concept of lasting peace.
- Often absence of cooperation among those non-governmental organizations that deal with promotion of peace issues, conflict prevention programs, development of the economy and social development.
- The NGOs that deal with the issues of sustainable development in most cases do not have any mechanisms for the coordination of different activities, there is no umbrella NGO for pastoralist environmental development programs.
- Budgetary limitations for the promotional activities of the organizational missions.

#### **4.8. Document Analysis and Presentations**

This section provides information on the evidence presented about communication strategies at the documents of the institute. The researcher looked at a variety of documents for further information. At the institute, it has used the resources for communication functions. The following analysis been thoroughly analyzed. In order to analyze the contents of the documents, the following discussions parameters were employed. These were the message it conveyed, by whom the document produced, to whom this message presented, in what effect that the document produced, the strength of the contents it conveyed and the weakness that the document possessed were taken in to consideration while presenting the content. Document analysis stated here organized from written documents in the organization.

- The draft strategic communication plan follows a two-way communication approach for the public to express and participate in the organization's strategies. Therefore, the communication practices is guided by a binary means of communication which provides the basis of mutual understanding with the people, and serves as an effective

means of ensuring the activities that benefit the people. But the researcher belief that peace ministry can plan to use mutual participation of community to community communication approaches in addition to two-way symmetric communication approach.

- When the communication strategy is practiced, the participation of the community should be initiated. The communication serves as a key tool for the success of strategies and plans designed to achieve the mission of the institution by ensuring the participation of the community. The foundation of effective community engagement is to actively engage in any institutional activities at all levels.
- Communication is of paramount importance as the Ministry of Peace carries out its mission of promoting peace and the rule of law. For the success of this great mission, strategic communication must be a part of the ministry's activities in all departments of the organization. While the emphasis on communication is at the core of agenda setting and feedback analysis, peace building and promoting will be the role of all peace forces.
- Considering the relationship between the government and the public, the communication of the various parts of society to the needs and demands of the government is not done in a coordinated manner.
- As the mission of the institution is national, it conceived that any end-time leader of the country and the public should realize that the ultimate goal of peace communication is to build the same political and economic community by helping each other. The mission of peacekeeping is based on the need for peace that stems from human behavior, and it is conceived as a prerequisite for maintaining the social values of the people through the government, and by promoting the pursuit of peace, democracy, good governance and sustainable development.
- Peace is not the only obstacle between humans. Rather, it is noted that the lack of information mismanagement and other factors. Because of the current rapid flow of information, the government determination be a constructive step towards the need to provide information quickly and reliably to its members.
- The purpose of strategic communication is generally to convey the appropriate message to the appropriate organ and to establish mutual understanding. Several communication models have been observed to demonstrate this. It was not favored, as the model information, flowing from one end to the other was for display. Therefore,

it is the interactive / convergence model that is chosen from the current multimedia alternative and the current multidisciplinary model of communication.

- Acquiring comprehensive knowledge in strategic communication planning is crucial. Without the knowledge of the process of collecting, organizing, and disseminating information on the various departments and functions of an institution, cannot achieve the desired level of communication across the organization. In this regard, the communication expert is expected to be capable of weighing threats, conducting negotiations to minimize conflicts, or to form a close relationship between opposing views, and to respond appropriately to community questions.
- In the process of transforming the communication, strategy into action has to follow the principle of ensuring the participation of relevant actors at all levels and clearly recognizing their responsibilities. In this regard, the draft strategic communication plan of this organization has not properly performed internal and external situation analysis. In the modern society, the strategic communication needs to use fast, up-to-date technology options. Therefore, it is important for Ethiopian Ministry of Peace to take action as one of the principles that makes the information efficient and fast access to information, with the latest technological options for faster communication to national consensus on national agendas.
- Communication works for the masses, based on the interests of different segments of the society, in a variety of contexts, in a way that promotes common understanding on key national issues. In view of this, it would be appropriate to reduce the barriers to change and the associated problems in the development process, which are constantly challenging the peacemaking process.
- At the institutional level, the main purpose of practicing strategic communication is to build a good feature, to promote organizational culture, to create common understanding on the objectives of the institution and to relay the necessary information. In this case, issues are addressed in collaboration with stakeholders to enhance the transfer of ideas, knowledge and skills, promote best practice, ensure effective access to information, and so on. This is one of encouraged experience of the ministry as it is indicated in the draft strategic communication plan.

## **CHAPTRE FIVE**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

#### **5.1. Conclusion**

The purpose of the organization's communication strategy is to combat conflict and maintain lasting peace, linking the pastoral community to modernization and technology, and adapting to the changing trends in the regions, and promoting public awareness about peace, stability and security. Providing all relevant the most up-to-date, in-depth information from the latest credible sources; by using reliable communications tools to achieve organizational goals. Additionally, the organization is working to raise awareness of the values of tolerance and respect in between people and to transfer it for generation. It has redefined its strategies to achieve these goals. The organization operated the draft strategic communication plan to achieve these goals. The organization has set up strategies to get commitment from the organizations, target groups, relevant civic societies, and media channels that would make it easier for its communication strategy.

Although information sharing on the plan differs from the planned strategic communication, the organization did not conduct a complete specific strategic communication plan. Nor did they have a clear strategic communication plan of action. From this background, the researcher understands that there were knowledge gaps in Ethiopian Ministry of Peace in conducting strategic communication plan. Through the provision of effective information exchange to address social security needs in Ethiopia in order to mitigate the escalation and insecurity of peace and control of conflict.

The study accomplished that the organization has attempted to develop strategic communication plan, which is not completed. It was also involved with the other co-chairmen. According to Hartford's Loss Department (2000), an organization's strategic communication plan needs to align with organizational goals and objectives. However, the literatures witnesses proven this way, conversations and interviews made with senior professionals of the Ethiopian Ministry of Peace conveyed that organizational communication did not used consensus strategy.

The study sought, the organization had experience communicating with different concerns and media outlets. But there are many gaps. The ministry has not conducted complete strategic communication plan. There were deficits in the use of appropriate communication

tools on the right side, in terms of selecting the right strategy. There was a problem with selecting the right procedure. There was a tendency to use the same channel that was TV (audio visual) as a mass media only. The ministry stated to use all the available communication tools that found in the country; however, some of the channels were not still in use. For the distinction of communication, the ministry did not select an appropriate media according to the purpose and lifestyle of the target community. The issues of peace and conflict resolution were to be the issue for all people in the country; it was mandatorily to use all media alternatives. The ministry did not include modern communication tools in its draft strategic communication plan. Hence, social media usage is near to the ground. The research has found that the use of communication channels in wide cannot be the use of effective strategic communication.

According to this study, the relationship of communicators and top management bodies was not open and transparent. The relationships of communicators and managers were not strong enough. Hence, analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis did not effectively performed when preparing their strategic communication plan, which is on the draft level. There for, there was limitations in terms of representation during the preparation of the strategic communication plan.

As the presented data the communicators witnessed that, the most commonly used communication strategies that planned is two-way communication systems to exchange information. Moreover, the communication strategies they commonly used were two-way communication strategies. There is no planed bilateral communication strategy in between different communities. This meant that the organization was planning to use and plan effectively to reach the target audience.

The study also pointed out some of the challenges of planning strategic communications. Accordingly, multipart system and issues related with religious and environmental differences are some problems recognized in the study. This was developed because of the absence of well-organized communication strategy and strong community centered liaisons through decision-making process. The study also identified that there is lack of trustworthy in the daily communication of the government officials towards society despite their orally manipulated speech many times. There is a lack of a clear taking of responsibility among the main political actors for the success of the practice of the communication strategy.

The research generally approved that the activities in relations to strategic communication was not functioned appropriately and there was a communication gap to includes all community in decision making and deciding their roles in formulating strategies to achieve overall and sector goals of the organization.

Finally, the study founded that, there was lack of clear operational procedures to assess the effectiveness of the communication within the organization. There has been no clear strategy of exploration of what has to be done, as it wanted and what has not done. There is no experience of measurement and evaluation whether the strategy of communication effective or not; and the message that delivered did arrive correctly for the intended target audience or not. There were no records of the existence of the same method used to measure and evaluate communication strategies of the ministry.

## **5.2. Recommendations**

Based on the study carried out and the data reported in this research, the researcher found some problems and tried to give tactical and operational endorsements on how to close communication gaps; that it need to be recommended to substantiate peace, stability social relationship and values as well as liaison for future generations, therefore, the researcher forwards the following recommendations:

### **Strategically**

- ❖ Well structured strategic communication which aimed at community centered approach has to be implemented between communities. Since the communication department was devalued in building peace, consensus and interaction at country level, it ought to be seen as a best weapon for peace and relationship creation. People should be given wider opportunities and invite them the stages for discussions and initiate the peoples to talk freely on their diversity, as well as two-ways symmetric communication has to be realized.
- ❖ Peace values should be encouraged by the government persistently and communication needs to be applied strategically. The government to sustain unity and long lasting relationships need initiate appropriate communications styles, which can be integrated with social norms and values of the society.

- ❖ The ministry has to develop strategic communication plan independently from the organization strategic plan. Because the communication plan, which inclusively planned, is not accessible to perform, the office should conduct independent communication strategy plan based on organization's objectives, as a whole is far better to do. Therefore, the relevant plan needs to strengthen the communication system with the Ministry of Peace, in order to facilitate the communication activities. They required operating efficiently through structured strategic communication action plan.
- ❖ The top management of the organization should play essential roles in organizational community mobilizations to re-establish peace and regenerate the unity that makes the society feeling as oneness and togetherness with all nation nationalities and variety peoples of the country.

### **Operationally**

- ❖ The strategic communication plan of the organization and its activities represented a very small part of communication function. Thus, the organizations should be given much more attention for organizational strategic communication to achieve the mission and objectives of the organization.
- ❖ It is better to include and facilitate the condition for communication and initiate concerned governmental and non-governmental organizations, civic societies, religious organizations participation from all dimensions to control conflicts, and to build peace stability, i.e. peace can not be built by a single organization.
- ❖ The communication office of Ministry of Peace should hold to develop measurement and evaluation, assessing the quality of communication strategy to get more competent and to recognize their effort whether achieved or not. Measurement may support the office to allocate resources more powerfully, to direct focused area and increase their relevance. So that, they can reach more people and change their lives more deeply.
- ❖ To accomplish organizational objective the organization should consider communication as one of central concepts of the organization thus, the organizations should conduct communication strategies such as designing message, and employing the most effective media channels.

## APPENDIX I

(An in-depth Interview for Ethiopia's Peace Ministry PR experts and head)

This study is titled as “*Critical Examination of Communication Strategy of Ministry of Peace*” to examine strategic communication of ministry of peace. These questions are prepared to collect relevant and first hand data for the purpose of the research only. And in the process of data collecting the personal privacy of the respondents should be kept secret and anonymous.

### Demographic Information of the Interviewees:

- |                |                    |
|----------------|--------------------|
| i. Name        | iv. Job position   |
| ii. Age        | v. Education level |
| iii. Residence |                    |

### Questions:

1. Is there a department for communication?
2. What is the role of the communication department?
3. Do your organization conducted organizational strategic communication plan?
4. What steps and criteria that you followed to conduct strategic communication plan?
5. What are the principles need to be considered in the process of strategic communication ?
6. What strategic communication practices are practicing in the organization?
7. How do you carry out communication in your organization vertically, horizontally and diagonally?
8. Do the communities developed awareness about communication works?
9. What are the challenges and problems of strategic communication to achieve the goal?
10. What are the tools and techniques of strategic communication?
11. How the organization evaluates and measure strategic communication practices and yoursuggestions about how to do the evaluation tasks?
12. What are the roles of manager strategic communications?

## APPENDIX II

### Focus Group Discussion Guide

This study is to “*Critical Examination of Communication Strategy of Ministry of Peace*”. These FGD questions are prepared to collect relevant and first hand data for the purpose of the research only. It is intended to conduct a focus group discussion with peoples that purposively selected from Ministry of Peace. And in the process of data collection, the personal privacy of the respondents should be kept secret and anonymous. By any means, it never exposes the individuals to be harmed for the reason of giving this information.

#### QUESTIONS:

- 1) How do you explain your communication style to create awareness and mutually understanding about organizational strategic communication?
- 2) How do you explain the situation that the leaders/managers face in strategic communication works to construct consensus unity?
- 3) How far the organization employees participate on the practices of strategic communication?
- 4) What activities did you carried out interms of communication activities to achieve organizational objectives particularly to promote peace and its values?
- 5) What are the specific roles and activities that PRs experts perform in the organizational strategic communication?
- 6) What are the roles of organizational communication department in your organization?

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