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International Government Communication Forum

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INTERNATIONAL
GOVERNMENT
COMMUNICATION
F◯RUM
2014

**FINAL
RECOMMENDATIONS
REPORT**

SharjahMediaCentre   @SharjahMedia #IGCF2014
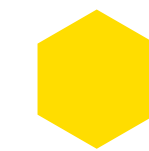
DIFFERENT ROLES..
MUTUAL INTEREST

His Highness Sheikh
Dr. Sultan bin Mohammed Al Qasimi

UAE Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah

His Highness Sheikh Sultan bin Muhammad bin Sultan Al Qasimi

Crown Prince and Deputy Ruler of Sharjah

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INTRODUCTION

Under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi, UAE Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah, Sharjah Media Centre organised the International Government Communication Forum (IGCF 2014).

Titled **'DIFFERENT ROLES...MUTUAL INTEREST'**, the forum discussed the positive impact of government communications on the relationship between governments and their audiences including citizens, government officials, private sector, public utility commissions and different media stakeholders. The IGCF 2014 also explored the role that government communications could play in improving a country's image and influencing its economic, social, and political status and future.

Among the guests who attended the forum were guest of honour Mikhail Gorbachev, last ruling President of the Soviet Union (USSR); Felipe Calderón, Former President of Mexico; James Wolfensohn, Former President of the World Bank; His Excellency Dr. Anwar Mohammed Gargash, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs/Minister of State for Federal National Council Affairs; Alastair Campbell, Director of Communications and Strategy for former British Prime Minister Tony Blair and Kathleen Carrol, Senior Vice President and Executive Editor of the Associated Press next to a number of prominent media personalities and speakers from different Arab and foreign countries.

This year, new modules were introduced to create direct communication channels between the participants and the IGCF, allowing greater thought-sharing and transfer of best practices. Participants were able to put down their queries and suggestions through a streamed video link using a booth specially constructed for this purpose. The main objective of these new initiatives was to create a direct interface and utilise innovative communication channels that can be emulated to enhance communication.

This report highlights the main topics discussed, the thoughts shared, and the executable recommendations and practical solutions articulated by the experts at the forum, to help draw a blueprint for result-oriented mechanisms in government communications for Sharjah, the wider region and the world at large.

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The International Government Communication Forum 2014 recommends the following:

1. Strengthening partnership between governments and the public to listen, understand and analyse the specificities and challenges of the community.

2. Motivating governments to develop a clear vision that strikes a balance between global and local dimensions.

3. Creating mutual/sustained dialogue and capitalising on best communication practices between different governments.

4. Formulating clear messaging for plans and government decisions towards creating a credible public perception.

5. Switching to new government models with the least delay and interruption in current operations.

6. Communicating with the public via various social networks to learn about their concerns and demands and involve them in the decision-making process.

7. Opening communication channels with the youth and including them in government strategies and policies.

8. Developing communication plans prior to expected crises.

9. A country's reputation is the responsibility of every government employee, particularly the government communication departments.

10. Keeping public information accessible to everyone with emphasis on transparency in communication to enhance mutual trust between all parties.

11. Strengthening the communication bridge between the government and the public through all available means of communication.

12. Establishing partnership between communication departments in both the public and private sectors, allowing the public sector to learn from the internal and external communication strategies of the private sector.

13. Re-building internal communication systems to adapt to the sheer volume of data sent and received by governments every day.

14. Changing the names of the media departments of government entities to government communication departments.

15. Strengthening the bonds of trust and cooperation between government entities to facilitate communication among them.

16. Strengthening the bonds of trust and cooperation between officials in the communication departments and the media.

17. Updating the communication methods used to ensure the delivery of the required messages and enhance mutual trust between the government and the public.

18. The Media to respect the privacy and confidentiality of government sources to ensure the continuity of mutual trust and the flow of information and data, which serves the interests of both parties and keep the general public informed of what is happening around them.

19. Governments to take into account the supreme interests of the country without linking decisions to the personal interests of a particular government official or employee.

20. Investing in the successes, relations network, discussions, studies and recommendations of the International Government Communication Forum to establish a new structured approach to government communications.

21. Government strategies to focus on industrial, economic and cultural development, primarily on education, health and thought leadership.

22. Not limiting the government communication concept to the media sector alone.

His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi, UAE Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah, inaugurated the International Government Communication Forum 2014 (IGCF 2014) in the presence of esteemed leaders such as Mikhail Gorbachev, the forum's guest of honour and last ruling President of the Soviet Union (USSR); Felipe Calderón, former President of Mexico; and Dr. Anwar Mohammed Gargash, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs/ Minister of State for Federal National Council Affairs, in addition to over 40 administrative, political and media leaders from the United States, United Kingdom, Austria, South Korea, China, France, Mexico, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia, Spain, Russia and the GCC countries.

His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi
UAE Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah

"A media professional must respect the reader or listener, public interest, and people's right to information. He must demonstrate ethics in reporting the truth with accuracy, integrity and fairness. On their part, media professionals have rights that should be guaranteed by the law, including the freedom of expression, the right to criticise, the freedom of access to all sources of information, and the freedom to investigate without interfering in confidential public or private affairs, unless of course, the exception is clearly justified.

It is more necessary than ever today to restore the spirit of humanity in people, and inculcate in them moral and cultural values. Media organisations must remain vigilant and approachable, uphold work and moral values, and help create a world that safeguards public harmony."

"Weak crisis management indicates lack of political initiative and courage. Leaders have been content with small steps and have failed to act in the spirit of collective leadership, which is the only workable format in today's world. The transition to a more sustainable world is imperative. If the current elite is not able to provide leadership to pioneer this change, it is time for the new race of leaders to take their place. Today, we need to look for solutions that lead and contribute to world peace. We need global governance – it is a multi-level initiative that covers the local, national, and regional levels. We have only years and not decades to resolve this problem."

Mikhail Gorbachev
Last Ruling President of the Soviet Union (USSR)

His Excellency Sheikh Sultan bin
Ahmed Al Qassimi
Chairman of Sharjah Media Centre

" Two years ago, the International Government Communication
Forum was launched at a time when governments across
the world witnessed sweeping political and social changes,
which led to a greater interest in enhancing government
communications. Recent studies conducted reveal that
listening, responsiveness, and prompt ethically correct reaction
are the first criteria for people in choosing a government to
represent them. This clearly indicates that things have changed;
we too must change. It is essential now for us to understand
the specificities of the people and their challenges – not just
deliver job, healthcare, and education opportunities. "

INSIGHTS

- The media should respect the reader, the listener and the public interest.

- The law should protect the media's right to express, criticise and conceal their source of information.

- Governments must focus on the supreme interest of the people without linking decisions to the personal interests of a particular government official/employee.

- Focus on industrial and economic development, mainly on education, health and thought leadership.

- Governments must seek transition to new models of sustainable development fast.

- Create a global dialogue to involve the public in finding solutions.

- Governments must establish a partnership with their audience, to listen to, understand, analyse and interact with them and understand the challenges they face.

Felipe Calderón
~~Former~~ President of Mexico

10:30 - 12:00 SESSION 1

Role of Government Communications and Reputation Management in Attracting Foreign Direct Investments (FDI)

The close relationship and direct link between reputation and money, and the role of communication and public relations in the management of reputation and drawing direct investments has been widely established. Recent studies have reiterated that countries that have succeeded in raising the level of their reputation by just five degrees on the international reputation index can enjoy additional tourist incomes annually as long as their reputation is maintained. A good reputation worldwide works to attract people to invest, visit and reside in the country, purchase national products, study, work, and enjoy its services and national (entertainment) activities.

Topics:

- The relation between communications and increase in the FDI

- Role of government communications in enhancing the reputation of the state to achieve growth and drive investment inflows

- Challenges and lessons learnt from the experiences of other countries

" It is important to note that improving perception through transparent communication enhances a country's attractiveness to foreign investors and leads to registering sustainable profit and revenue. There is currently an obvious lack of trust in governments, and the only way to change this and build credibility amongst the people and the media is through transparency and consistency.

Governments need to build a two-way dialogue structure. Such direct interchange with people could be established during events and forums or through social media channels. "

James Wolfensohn
~~Former~~ President of the World
Bank Group

" It is very clear to me that individual investors in the past couple of years have been highly active. They regard themselves as international citizens investing in shares rather than tangible assets. Through communication and open dialogue, you provide the investors with a sense of inclusion in the process. Such an engagement leads to continuity. "

His Excellency Dr. Anwar
Mohammed Gargash
Minister of State for Foreign Affairs/
Minister of State for Federal National
Council Affairs.

" There is an inaccurate portrayal of the UAE, and for that we mainly need to change the narrative. Government communications are a necessity because governments have multiple layers of messaging and the narrative has to be built according to the specific message you are trying to portray in a transparent and credible manner. "

Moderator

Tim Sebastian

TV Journalist ~~and~~ Founder and Chairman
of 'The Doha Debates', BBC World News

" Governments represent the people and it is their duty to convey the complete and correct message. They cannot afford to withhold information, however bad the news may be. It is the responsibility of the governments to be whiter than white; only then will the bar of transparency be raised. "

RECOMMENDATIONS

• Open communication channels with the youth and the general public to include them in public policies and strategies.

• Develop a specific government communication message to create a highly credible perception.

Jon Duschinsky
Founder and CEO, The Conversation Farm

DAY 1

14:00 - 15:15 SESSION 2

The relationship between government communication and social media activists

Social media has imposed itself strongly on the social landscape in a variety of ways - it has transcended 'being social' and emerged as an influential tool for shaping public opinion, reputation and image. In recent years, it has almost become a mirror for the society – and produced a group of bloggers that shape public opinion and, more often than not, create it. Governments have realised the importance of such media and communications tools in the hands of the public and the significant impact that social media effects on their impressions and reactions.

Topics:

• Are governments effectively leveraging social media for communicating with their audiences - listening to their voices and delivering messages to them?

• Have social media and public reaction contributed to achieving administrative changes in the region in recent months?

• Could social media serve as an effective bridge in communication between government agencies and the public?

" The power of conversation and dialogue is of extreme importance and must be used to advantage. Often, we look at social media as an end in itself. On the contrary, social media are one of the many platforms through which people can engage in conversation. It is a gateway to benefit from the knowledge that is shared. As a communication tool that is not limited by geographies or language, it eliminates borders and brings people together. "

Dr. Sulaiman Al Hattlan
Founder and CEO of Hattlan Media

"Investing in social media is no longer an option. Arab governments have no other choice but to embrace social media. The main starting point for Arab governments is to target the issues that people are concerned with and address those accordingly. The UAE has wisely invested in social media through delivering appropriate messages to its people, which has in turn positively impacted the government's services to the average UAE resident."

Fadi Salem
Director of the Governance and Innovation Programme, Mohammed bin Rashid School of Government (MBRSG)

"Until a few years ago, the sharing of information in the Arab world was highly restricted with governments controlling the channels of communication. This scenario has changed with the region boasting around 65 million social media users – and the numbers are growing every day. Of these, 70% comprise the youth – the major influencers.

The UAE continues to encourage its citizens to use technology to communicate effectively with the government. This strategy has helped the government connect with its people effectively and creatively. The synergy has also allowed the government to provide better services – an achievement not many other Arab countries have accomplished."

Parweem Habib
Media Personality, Dubai Media
Incorporated (DMI)

Moderator

Zeina Yazigi
TV host at Sky News Arabia

> " About 50 years ago, people were ~~skeptical~~ in accepting the medium ~~of~~ television. Over time, the platform gained the trust of people as a credible news medium. Social media, on the other hand, have already gained high acceptance with the average citizen. Governments need to optimise this trust to use it as a channel for engaging and connecting with their people. "

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Governments should communicate with the public via social networking tools to recognise their concerns and demands and try to achieve them.

- Governments should use social media to integrate the citizen into the decision-making process.

DAY 1

15:30 - 17:00 SESSION 3

Nik Gowing
Senior News Anchor, BBC World News

Acute vulnerabilities of power, politics and systems in the new public information space

During an interactive presentation on the second day of the International Government Communication Forum 2014 (IGCF 2014), Nik Gowing highlighted the acute vulnerability, fragility and brittleness of power, together with the new accountability and deficit of legitimacy in the dynamically evolving government communications landscape.

The session focused on how the new media landscape has highlighted the ongoing struggle by governments, public servants and high-level corporate executives to appreciate and embrace the new social realities.

Topics:

• How can government communication mechanisms be made more transparent, while remaining true to the general policy of the state?

• How far should governments go when it comes to using social media platforms to reflect their points of view?

• What should the newly evolved government communications structure look like?

"What might have happened in 5-10 years in the past may now happen in 5-10 days. Today, governments need to recognise that events are communicated in real time through platforms such as twitter. Governments cannot control the public information space; this is an important reality that cannot be ignored.

"Most governments are simply not prepared to face the enormities of what can happen. It is no longer about traditional media, but the public information space, which everyone carries in their pockets. The public information space is a nervous system of the world that we have created.

Most people in positions of power and responsibility don't realise quite how short this is. You are engaged in a race of space and a battle for credibility in real time. You have no control over it. New media and technology have created a matrix of who is where while offering hardcore evidence. "

RECOMMENDATIONS

• Governments to prepare new communication plans for the new public information space.

• People in positions of power and responsibility torealise that credibility is now directly linked to social media.

DAY 2

OPENING REMARKS

Osama Samra
Director of Sharjah Media Centre

Kathleen Carroll
Executive Editor and Senior
Vice-President of Associated Press (AP)
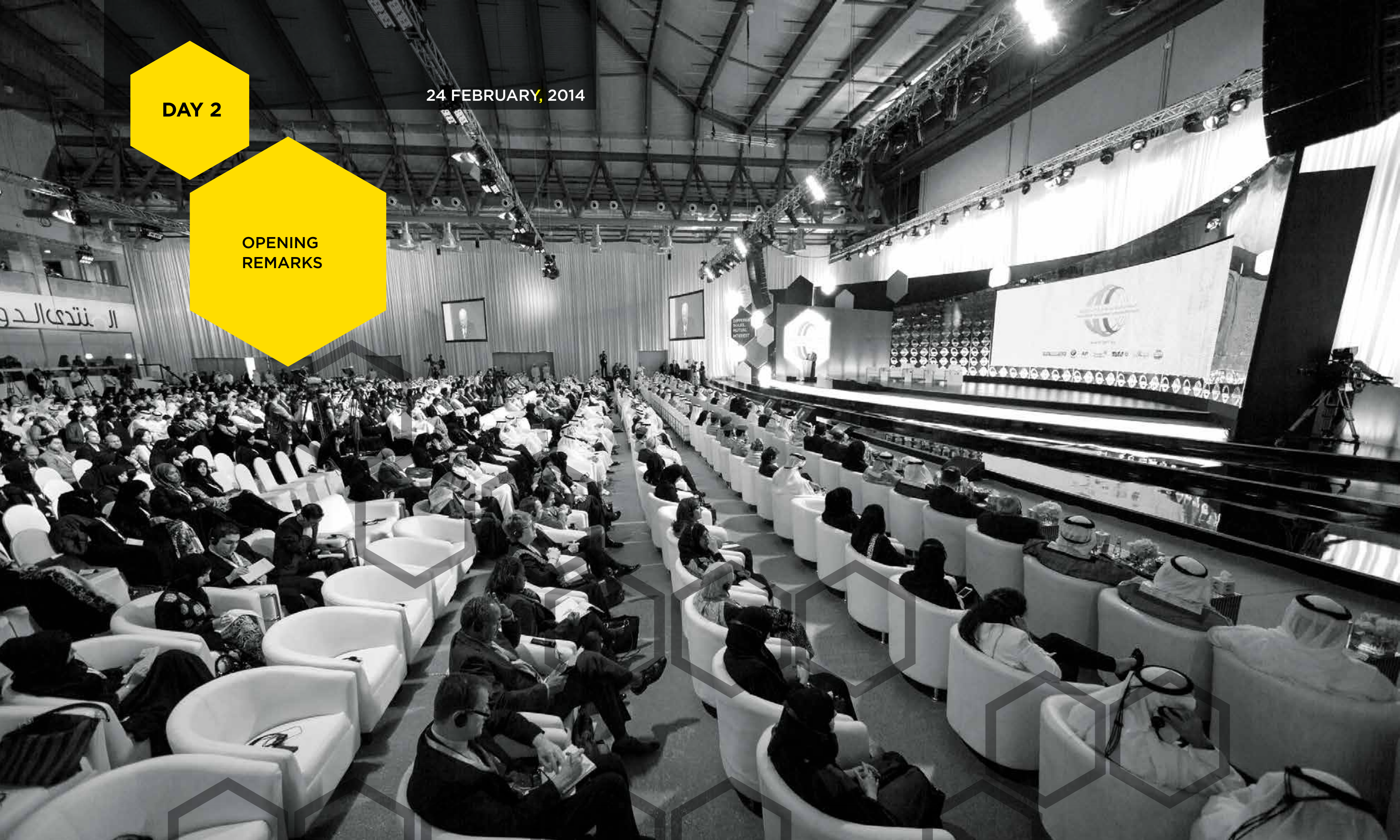
"The IGCF network will invest in its success, international relations and all discussions, studies and recommendations to turn into an integrated platform that extends throughout the year via a series of events to lay the foundations for a new organised approach in dealing with government communications. The coming period will be a dynamic one that focuses on partnerships, research, documentation, exchange of experiences and best practices – and will transform the IGCF into the primary and most reliable reference for government communications in the region. "

"Today, modern technology offers a wonderful platform for a wide range of conversations to take place between a government and its people. A free press plays a vital role in facilitating this dialogue, acting as a proxy for the ordinary people by channelling their questions and concerns to the government, and the other way around too. Such channels offer governments the chance to identify and address problems, and communicate solutions. Governments that are transparent with the press – and by extension with its people – help build a bond of trust. "

> Mona El-Shazly
> Egyptian Talk Show Host

" The satisfaction and happiness of people do not depend on good income alone, but on people's belief in the absence of corruption, presence of social support and freedom to express their views. Everyone must work together to reach the minimum level of satisfaction and on strengthening the communication bridge between the ruler and the ruled. People should always be our first priority. "

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Invest in the IGCF's network of international relations, discussions, studies and recommendations to lay the foundations for a new structured approach for government communications.

- Keep information accessible to everyone with emphasis on transparency in communication to enhance the confidence of all parties concerned.

DAY 2

10:00 - 11:15 SESSION 1

How are government visions developed?

Most governments around the world aim at developing clear visions and specific targets for at least the next two decades. These goals serve as the compass that guides the agendas in the public and private sectors. Such goals also shape the systems and procedures to which all citizens commit in their daily transactions as compliance to these services simply facilitates a smooth, hassle-free life. In the long-term, as the goals become more entrenched into visions, they also shape the destinies of future generations.

The success of a vision is measured by the extent to which it is able to meet the expectations of its citizens and keep up with local and global developments for the foreseeable future.

Topics:

- The foundations that visions are built on

- The objective methods that governments need to use to understand the aspirations of its citizens and the role media plays in achieving those methods

- The challenges facing the formation of visions and their delivery to the public on the one hand and their implementation on the other

- The scientific methods to measure the success or failure of a vision and tools used to market the vision

- The role media can play in supporting the government's vision or observing its performance and guiding it towards better results

John Kao
Chairman and Founder of the Institute for Large Scale Innovation (ILSI)

" A national vision is an expression and a reflection of a nation's purpose. It should ask the question 'What are we here for?' It also recognises that societies don't want to stay still; they want to progress and transform. Clearly, guided visions can galvanise an entire nation with solidarity, a definite sense of direction and a greater level of happiness. "

Amany El Khayat
Presenter at ON TV

Simon Anholt
Independent Policy Advisor

"Media can and must follow up on government programmes. People need a sense of legitimate participation through which they can express or address with the government. Such participation is built into a greater public need to have a voice in the global scheme of things, and to have a partnership with the world. "

"Nations aiming for a good 'global brand' image must first ask themselves: 'What do we want the world to admire us for?' A positive brand image can translate into desirable factors, such as increased foreign direct investment, greater flow of tourism, more exports and ease of attracting international events. Conclusively, there is a link between a strong national vision, a country's positive brand image and the happiness of its people. "

Ahmed Mustafa
Chief Editor of Digital Sky News Arabia

Moderator

Giselle Khoury
Host, BBC Arabic News Channel

"Media should be a link between the government and its people. Today, people around the world are participating in government through many ways. Leaders should speak as well as listen. If a national vision is something in which not all citizens can participate, then it is no vision at all. Though leaders must be the eventual decision makers, every citizen should be given the option to participate."

RECOMMENDATIONS

• Governments to think globally and not just locally when developing any plan.

• Consider the media as a communication bridge between governments and the public and not as a mere tool for improving the image of a government in the perception of its people.

Bill Daley
American Lawyer, Former Banker and
Former White House Chief of Staff and
Commerce Secretary under Bill Clinton

DAY 2

11:30 - 13:00 SESSION 2

What can the public sector learn from the communication experiences of the private sector?

While the private sector worked on improving the methods of communication with its audience and strengthening these methods to optimise efficiency, the public sector in general and governments in particular relied on unilateral messaging, targeting audiences without heeding to public opinion or citizen feedback.

The session explored how best practices from the private sector's rich experience in communicating with its stakeholders can be drawn upon to develop the nascent public sector's communication experience. The session also highlighted the media's perception of the differences between the communication strategies adopted by the public and private sectors.

Topics:

• How can the private sector that has accumulated rich experience in communication over time help develop the nascent public sector's communication experience?

• What can the public sector learn from the communication experiences of the private sector?

• How do the media see the difference between the communication of private and public sectors?

• What are the challenges that can hinder the growth of communication policies in the public sector as compared to the private sector?

"It has always been important for governments to be transparent. Now with social media, anyone can be a reporter so it is very difficult to build trust. Often times, the private sector, when confronted with a problem, has time to find the cause of that problem, whereas governments do not have the time to investigate before communicating. If in such a situation the government miscommunicates, the trust is broken and government credibility stands to be lost. "

Bryan Dumont
President, APCO Insight

"There is a lot that governments can learn about the techniques of communication from the private sector, such as truly listening to stakeholders and their expectations and the need of corporate positioning to be authentic and in the area of building emotional relationships. Human beings do not respond to communication in a rational way and governments need to have the capacity to evoke the same emotions and champion the interests of its stakeholders. And lastly, all of this has to be measured to know the true impact. "

Marwan Zawaydeh
Chief Corporate Governance
Officer, Etisalat

"The public sector is heading in the right direction and is following the footsteps of the private sector to be closer to the customer via bi-directional communication. To give you an example, a majority of telecommunication companies moved from being government entities into private companies.

The shift demanded these companies to become more customer-oriented for ensuring the continuity of customer satisfaction on one hand, and catering to evolving demands on the other. Towards this process, a strategy had to be created to develop work structures and improve customer feedback mechanisms across all available channels of communication. "

Nart Bouran
Head of Sky News Arabia

Moderator

Paula Yacoubian
Host of Prime Time Talk Show,
Future News Network

"There are two elements that dominate the relationship between the government and media: transparency and trust. This depends mainly on the government to provide accurate information and data that easily reflect the level of constructive cooperation with the media. In return, the media must respect the privacy of some government sources and maintain the confidentiality of the sources to ensure the continuity of mutual trust and the flow of information and data in a way that serves the interests of both parties and keeps the general public informed of what is happening around them."

RECOMMENDATIONS

• Develop a strategy to improve work structures and quality using the information received from all available channels of communication.

• Expose the public sector to the private sector experiences in creating internal and external communication strategies.

• Re-build internal communication systems to adapt to the sheer amount of data sent and received by governments every day.

• The media to respect the privacy and confidentiality of government sources to ensure the continuity of mutual trust and the flow of information and data, which serves the interests of both parties and keeps the general public informed of the happenings around them.

DAY 2

14:00 - 15:15 SESSION 3

Internal communication between departments/ministries of the state - a case study

The success of government communications depends to a large extent on the ability of the public to achieve effective dialogue and ensure cohesiveness between the ministries of state and the smaller departments that face the challenge of sending clear and real-time messages to the public. This inter-dependence empowers the beneficiaries of government communications services – whether they are individuals or institutions, and allows for a deeper understanding of the government›s role by its employees. This, in turn, could ensure more effective communication messages in the long-term and translate into better government performance.

The availability of the skills and strategic communication capabilities within government communications teams is a challenge, primarily because of the lack of human resources with an adequate knowledge of strategic communication, and the absence of a common goal and clear media message. Government communications teams may succeed at times in developing integrated communication programmes with professional standards, while they may end up disappointing stakeholder expectations on several other occasions. This session showcased the UK case study in terms of internal communication, from the establishment till its achievements stage.

Topics:

- How can we define strategic communication objectives in line with the vision and general policy of the state?
- How can we establish government communications teams that enjoy a consistent and balanced performance?
- How can we urge all government communication teams to speak in one language that reflects the general orientation of the State?

Alastair Campbell

Director of Communications and Strategy for Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair (1997 and 2003)

"At some point in their lives, Bill Gates, Nelson Mandela, Mahatma Gandhi and Winston Churchill were criticised by the government, the people or the media. They overcame such criticism with carefully planned strategies, and more importantly their core convictions or values. We must realise that reputation is not made in the here and now but over time. It is founded on what you say and do and not on what others say about you. Do not worry about labels that you may attract for your actions.

Previously, people expected the private sector to deliver top-notch quality as there was a price tag attached to their services. However, they were willing to be more tolerant about inefficiencies in the public sector. Today, people expect governments to deliver the same efficiency that they expect from the private sector.

When leaders are confronted with negative feedback, they must continue to engage with the community, but it is important to decide on the terms of engagement. We must understand that dialogue has to be dialogue in every sense of the term - it can no longer be one-way communication."

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Strengthen the bonds of trust and cooperation between communication departments' officials and the media.

- Change the methods of communication used to ensure the delivery of the required message to enhance mutual trust between the government and the public.

DAY 2

15:30 - 17:00 SESSION 4

Dawood Al-Shirian
Host, MBC Group

"Understanding the relationship between the government and the public is critical, given that sharing information and knowledge is a source of empowerment. People should actively engage with the government in ensuring that they get the best services from their leaders and avoid pitfalls of miscommunication and frustration.

Involving people in the crisis between governments is not a good idea. Sadly, this is the situation in the Middle East today. The government is a mediator that, with the right intent, can help people secure the best possible services for a better life. I reiterate that using transparent communication methods validates trust and helps deliver public feedback directly to the government. The freedom to express public opinion through social media has become integral to a healthy and prosperous relationship between a government and its people.

A difference of ideology between the government and the media of any country will adversely affect the relationship between the people and the state. The government's job is to service and represent the people in the best way possible - this relationship must stay strong and open through honest communication on both sides to ensure greater public good. "

General Brainstorming Session

The discussions of the forum concluded with a significant question for the audience on the relationship between the public and the government in terms of communication and interaction. The session aimed to conceptualise practical proposals on best methods of communication between the two parties.

This brainstorming segment highlighted the concept of effective government communications from the point of view of promoting a culture of listening to the public and taking on board their practical feedback and suggestions, where feasible and found viable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

• The media to take into account the supreme interests of the country.

• Officials' openness to the media and participation in programmes and interviews are evidennce of real/tangible communication between government entities,the media and the public alike.

WORKSHOPS

22 FEBRUARY, 2014

Day one of IGCF 2014 featured a specialised workshop for decision makers, senior government executives and media professionals, and two parallel training workshops for members of the media and government communication professionals. The workshops were attended by over 200 professionals from the media and government communication industry.

Predicting and Managing Crisis Effectively

The workshop highlighted a stakeholder-centric approach to manage emerging situations that threaten everyday agendas. Key elements of this approach included stakeholder risks and opportunity analysis, scenario and outcome identification and analysis, organisational set-up and operational protocols for decision-making and execution processes, and integrated stakeholder engagement plans.

Trainer:

Jennifer Millerwise Dyck
Senior Director at APCO Worldwide,
Washington D.C.

" Today, stakeholders are not only interested in an organisation's major decisions, but have the capacity to drive outcomes by directly communicating with – and influencing – one another and in real time. That's why we decided to organise this workshop to help executives and decision makers deal with emerging issues that threaten agendas by using a stakeholder centric approach to managing a crisis using scenario and outcome identification and analysis, and an integrated stakeholder engagement plan. "

Social Media in a Changing World:

Through exploration, discussion and scenario planning, the workshop helped participants seek answers to how social media is changing not only the speed of crisis communications, but the way a crisis is reported, and how scenario planning can assist in increasing the speed of response in crisis communications and in harnessing citizen concerns and turning it into positive action in the community.

Trainer:

Donald Steel
Specialist in reputation and crisis management

" Educating the public is a matter of extreme importance as it will help set boundaries of what is appropriate to be filmed and vice versa; setting these boundaries will help tackle such crisis and help people deal with such matters when needed. **"**

The Changing Role of Government Communications

The workshop highlighted the digital revolution's impact on the dissemination of information between governments to public, and the change in theories that defined the relationship between the message, the sender and the recipient. By exploring examples of other government communications plans focusing mainly on the UK Government Communication Strategy for 2014, the participants acquired insights into new theories on communication in a digital social media world, and what key modern and international approaches to government communications are.

Trainer:

Dr Zahera Har
Senior Lecturer in international journalism at the Journalism Department, City University London.

" Proper Government communications is an essential practice that has to be implemented through proper planning and should be updated frequently through a three step process that involves: initiating the launch, planning, and evaluating - in that order. These are essential tools of measurement as they will help us stay aligned with presenting a government communications strategy that is trustworthy and consistent. **"**

CLOSING
CEREMONY

CLOSING CEREMONY

His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Salem Al Qasimi, Deputy Ruler of Sharjah, brought the curtains down on the International Government Communication Forum 2014 (IGCF 2014) at a gala dinner that was organised at Expo Centre Sharjah.

His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Salem Al Qasimi and His Excellency Sheikh Sultan bin Ahmed Al Qassimi, Chairman of Sharjah Media Centre (SMC), honoured the speakers, moderators and sponsors of IGCF 2014 for their role in the success of the third Government Communication Forum, which attracted more than 1,800 participants to discussions and presentations spread across three days.

During the gala dinner, Osama Samra, Director of SMC, thanked participants and media representatives for contributing to IGCF 2014. He also acknowledged all the government departments, companies and media organisations that supported the forum as sponsors, including Sky News Arabia, AGMC (BMW), Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), Associated Press, Thomson Foundation, Al Khaleej Newspaper, Sharjah Media Corporation, and Tim Hortons.

"We close yet another successful edition of the Government Communication Forum, which began three years ago and has transformed into an international event with a truly global mandate this year. The IGCF story tells of how a local initiative launched by Sharjah Media Centre to strengthen and develop communication mechanisms between various government departments and institutions in the emirate of Sharjah has expanded in scope to become a global event of reckoning.

You have enriched the forum by sharing inspirational international communication stories. You also shared actual case studies of governments that lost out for not demonstrating the flexibility, knowledge or speed required to keep up with this rapidly changing world. The digital revolution is still forcing all sectors, without exception, to search for more responsive, transparent and open communication mechanisms. "

Gorby tells UAE forum: Globalization has become thoughtless, imbalanced

DUBAI: K.T. ABOURASB

THINKERS: Ex-Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and Sharjah Ruler Sultan bin Mohammad Al-Qasimi at the International Government Communication Forum 2014 on Sunday. (AN photo)

Media must help create a harmonious world: Sultan

Sharjah Ruler talks about role of journalists at the International Government Communication Forum

Akbar Abdulsham

> Media must remain vigilant and approachable, uphold work and moral values, and help create a world that safeguards public harmony

Journalists cannot be forced to reveal their source: Sultan

Akbar Abdulsham and Lily Chourou

'Media can be a dangerous tool'

Sharjah Ruler says Arab world is going through a difficult time and media must play its role responsibly

Restore spirit of humanity: Sultan

Sultan to open Communication Forum

SHARJAH NELIS
Staff report

Sultan formally inaugurates IGCF 2014 today

Sultan to deliver keynote address on opening day

SHARJAH
Staff report

Forum focuses on strong international standing

Jennifer Millercito Dyck | *Senior director of APCO Worldwide*

Exploring 'tense' relations

Media heads say state officials and journalists must cooperate to avoid communication gap.

× from left: Wena Al Shazly, Osama Sama and Kathleen Carroll at the forum.

Global bigwigs to speak at forum

BY A STAFF REPORTER

SHARJAH: The Sharjah Media Centre (SMC) assessment on Sunday...

FIRST SESSION

SECOND SESSION

Today's quotes

> "Communication is a team game... Politicians have an ego, footballers have an ego too. But they play together and win."
>
> **Alastair Campbell** | Former press secretary of Tony Blair

> The forum will continue to investigate its success and be the first credible reference for government communications in region."
>
> **Osama Samra** | Director of Sharjah Media Centre

SMC opens E-registration for IGCF 2014

SHARJAH: Sharjah Media Centre (SMC) has announced the opening of online registration for professionals from the government, private and media sector seeking to attend the inaugural edition of the International Government Communication Forum (IGCF 2014).

Participants are invited to log onto the forum's official website www.igcf.ae and register to benefit from the thought sessions, training workshops and interactive presentations that are a part of the forum's agenda this year.

Themed: "Different Roles…Mutual Interest", the event is being held under the patronage of Dr Sheikh Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qasimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah on Feb 22-24, at Expo Centre Sharjah. The forum seeks to highlight the positive impact of government communication on the relationship between governments and their audiences including citizens, officials from the government and different media stakeholders.

Osama Samra, director of SMC, said: "The forum's official website allows all those interested in attending the event to register their participation through a simple, time-saving process. It also provides visitors with detailed information about the agenda, names and biographies of the guests and speakers, as well as details on the thought sessions and training workshops."

He added, "Due to the overwhelming response to last year's regional government communication forum, and also to enable a larger section of the community to attend and benefit from this year's international event, we have earmarked a full day in IGCF's agenda to training workshops.

"I would advise all government and media professionals interested in attending these sessions to complete the workshops' online registration forms at the earliest to avoid disappointments due to the limited number of seats available."

The website IGCF serves as a useful community interface and will offer a slice of the action to those unable to attend the forum.

Live broadcast feeds of the forum's sessions, latest news and images from the event will be uploaded in real time over various social media channels such as Facebook (SharjahMediaCentre), YouTube (SharjahMediaCentre) and Twitter (SharjahMedia) via the hashtag #IGCF2014.

The website also includes extensive information about the previous forums and a downloadable final report.

IGCF 2014 is expected to bring together more than 2,000 senior executives, media professionals, eminent broadcast media experts and government communication professionals, as well as students of communication and media studies.

The first regional government communication event was organised by Sharjah Media Centre in 2012. The forum discussed relevant communication challenges that were triggered by the socio-political occurrences in the Arab world. IGCF 2014 is a first-of-its-kind event that articulates the SMC's efforts to develop government communication mechanisms for the benefit of government institutions in the UAE and wider region.

— WAM

Govt communication forum on Feb 22-24

Mikhail Gorbachev to be the guest of honour

Forum discusses best ways to communicate in a crisis

THREE-DAY WORKSHOP HELPS GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS DEAL WITH REAL-TIME CHALLENGES

SHARJAH
Staff Report

Sharjah forum to host renowned statesmen

Government communication event to host free thinkers, academics and leaders

SHARJAH
Staff Report

Mikhail Gorbachev

Felipe Calderon

SMC announces agenda for IGCF 2014, Gorbachev named guest of honour

BY IMRAN NOOR

SHARJAH: The International Government Communication Forum (IGCF) 2014 will be held from Feb 22-24 in Sharjah under the theme "Different Roles…Mutual Interest".

Gorbachev to attend Sharjah forum

EXPERTS TO DISCUSS GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION AT EVENT

SHARJAH
By FUMANA KHAMIS
Staff Reporter

Shaikh Sultan Bin Ahmad Al Qasimi

DISTINGUISHED LIST
Key speakers

Final stages of preparation for forum in full swing

SHARJAH

Shaikh Sultan Bin Ahmad Al Qasimi, Chairman of the Higher Organising Committee of the International Forum for Government Communication, has reviewed the final preparations for the third edition of the forum.

The forum will be held from February 22 to 24 at the Sharjah Expo Centre under the slogan Different Roles, One Vision under the patronage of His Highness Dr Shaikh Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qasimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah.

Shaikh Sultan was briefed during his visit to inspect the technical and logistical preparations for the forum. He gave directives on details regarding equipment and facilities provided for speakers, guests, and participants.

Regarding the preparations, he said that the International Forum for Government Communication has become a global event that attracts leaders and experts from around the world.

— WAM

Gorbachev among top speakers at Sharjah forum

DUBAI: K.T. ABDURABB

Turki Al Gaahil and Shaikh Sultan Bin Ahmed Al Qasimi at the media briefing.
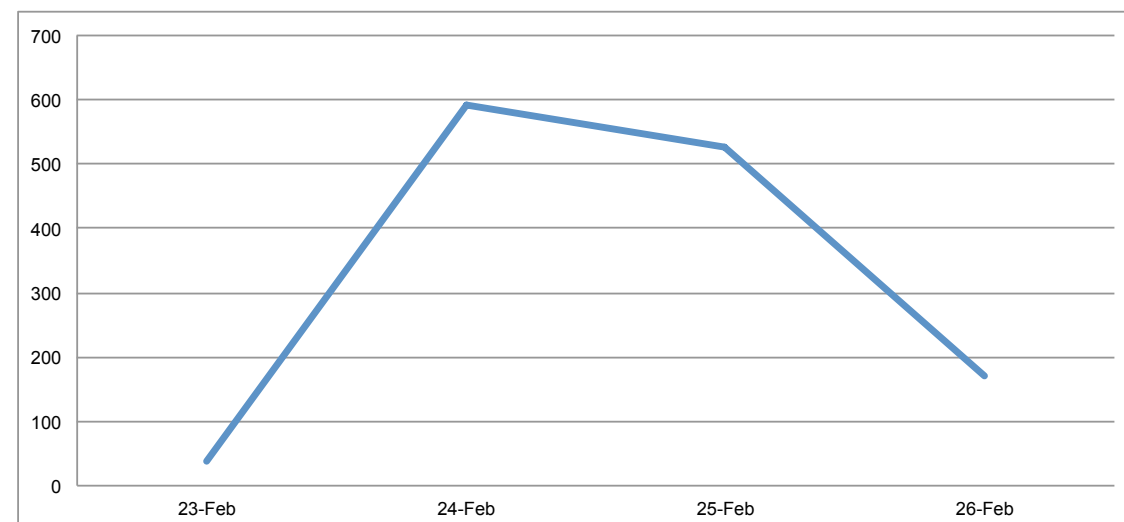
SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT
POST–EVENT

DISCLAIMER:

The contents of this document are strictly confidential and are supplied on the understanding that they will be held confidentially and not disclosed to third parties without the prior written consent of The Cheek Limited.
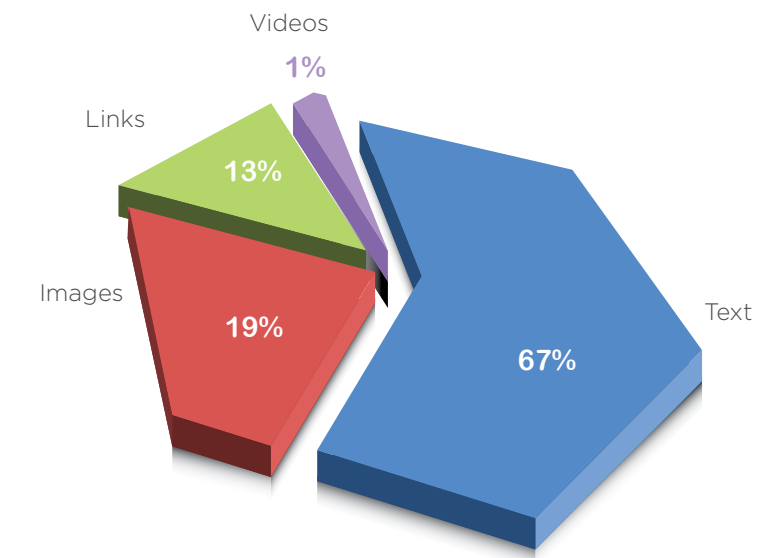
@SharjahMedia
#IGCF2014

ANALYTICS: 23.02.2014 – 25.02.2014

Tweets

Content Type

Videos
1%

Links
13%

Images
19%

Text
67%

ANALYTICS: 23.02.2014 – 25.02.2014

Common Hashtags

#igcg2014
#sharjah
#government
#uae

estimated reach
217,110
accounts reached

exposure
341,607 impressions

top contributors
highest exposure
95.7K impressions
@sharjahmedia

most retweeted
4 retweets
@alHattlan

most mentioned
22 mentions
@sharjahmedia

FACEBOOK STATS

Overview
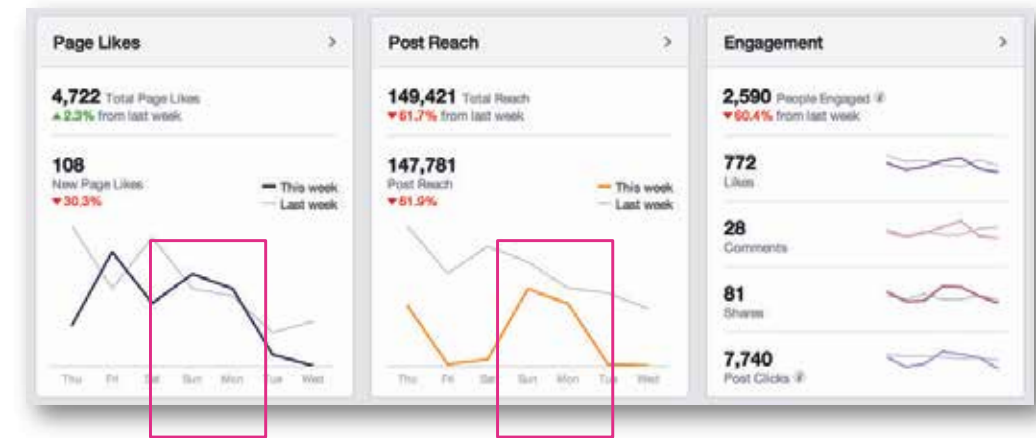
Higher Likes and Reach on event days

Likes

Significant increase in Likes as event drew closer

Reach
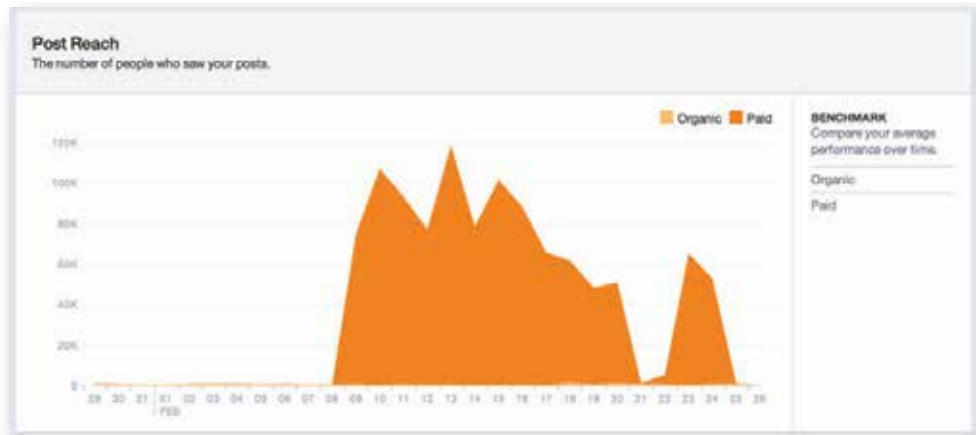
Posts reached higher number during month of event

Times to Post

Most people are reading SMC FB Posts after 3pm – good time to post!

Studio 94 JLT Mazaya business avenue Tower AA1, 1703 JLT Dubai. Studio 94 JLT is registered & licensed as a Freezone Company under the Rules & Regulations of DMCCA

STATISTICS

Photos Snapped	Emails collected	Shares on Facebook
473	**371**	**9**
237 per day	248 unique	
Videos Recorded		Shares on Twitter
24		**3**
12 per day		

Social activity of users

Twitter 25%

Facebook 75%

Social activity of users

960*	4,800*
120 friends active views per share	Active + passive views

PICTURES PER DAY

167

23rd February   24th February
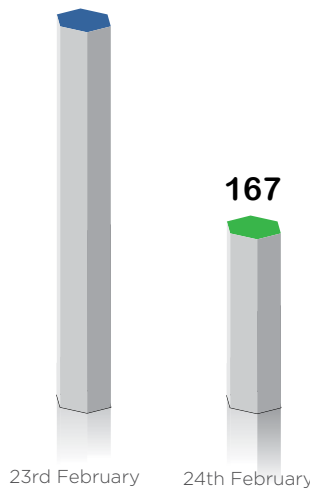
Cumulated pictures per day

167   473

23rd February   24th February
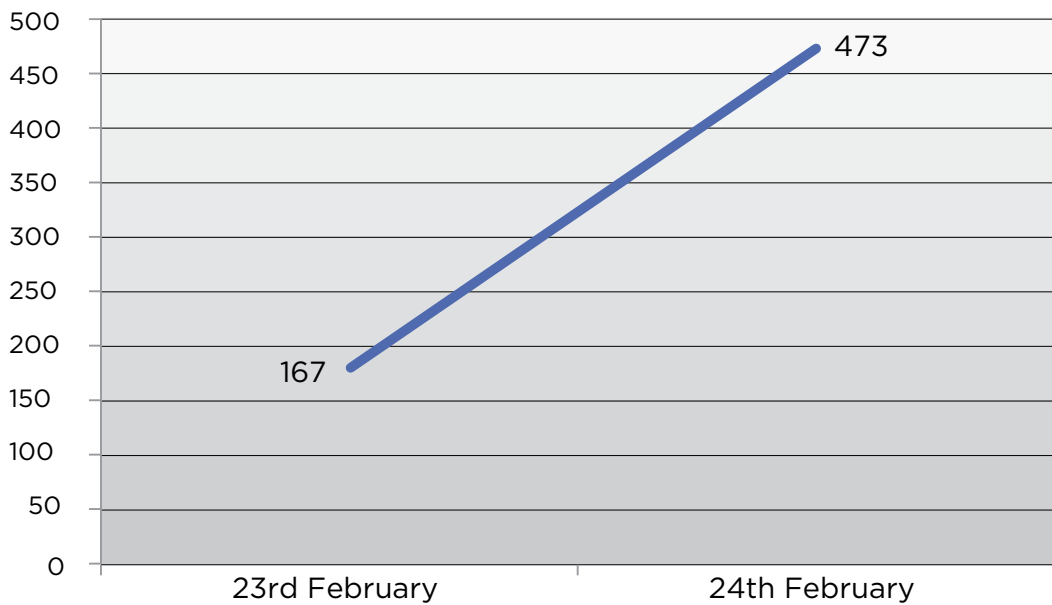
OUR COMMENTS

It was a successful event with 473 Pictures snapped and 24 Videos recorded. Total number of printouts given were above 600 in all. It was an eye catcher and a great addition to the IGCF 2014 Event!
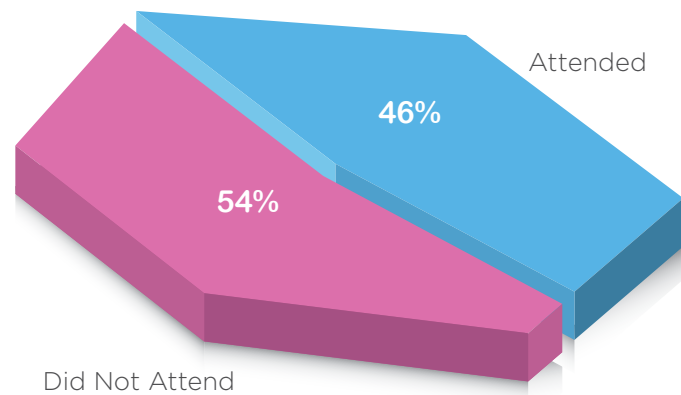

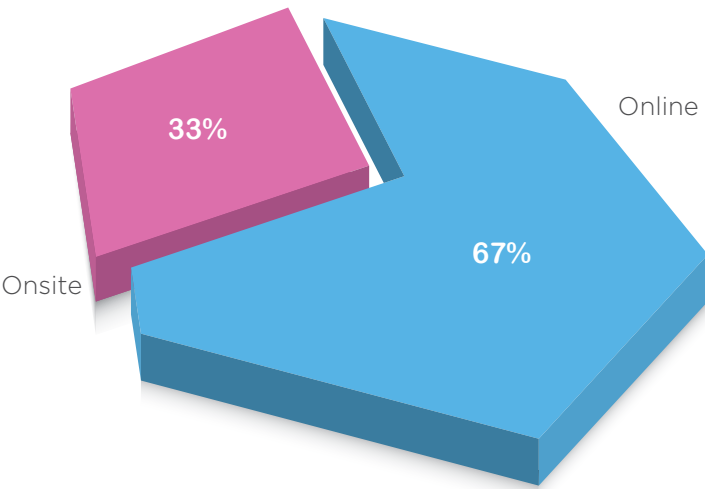## THIS COVERS THE LAST 6 MONTH PERIOD

Lebanon 18
Qatar 17
Kuwait 10
Korea 4
Jordan 68
Egypt 52
Canada 7
Bahrain 7
Australia 9
Yemen 10
Saudi Arabia 38
Singapora 3
South Africa 1
Swedan 1
Taiwan 5
Turkey 1
Ukraine 2
United States 294
United Arab Emirates 422
United Kingdom 20
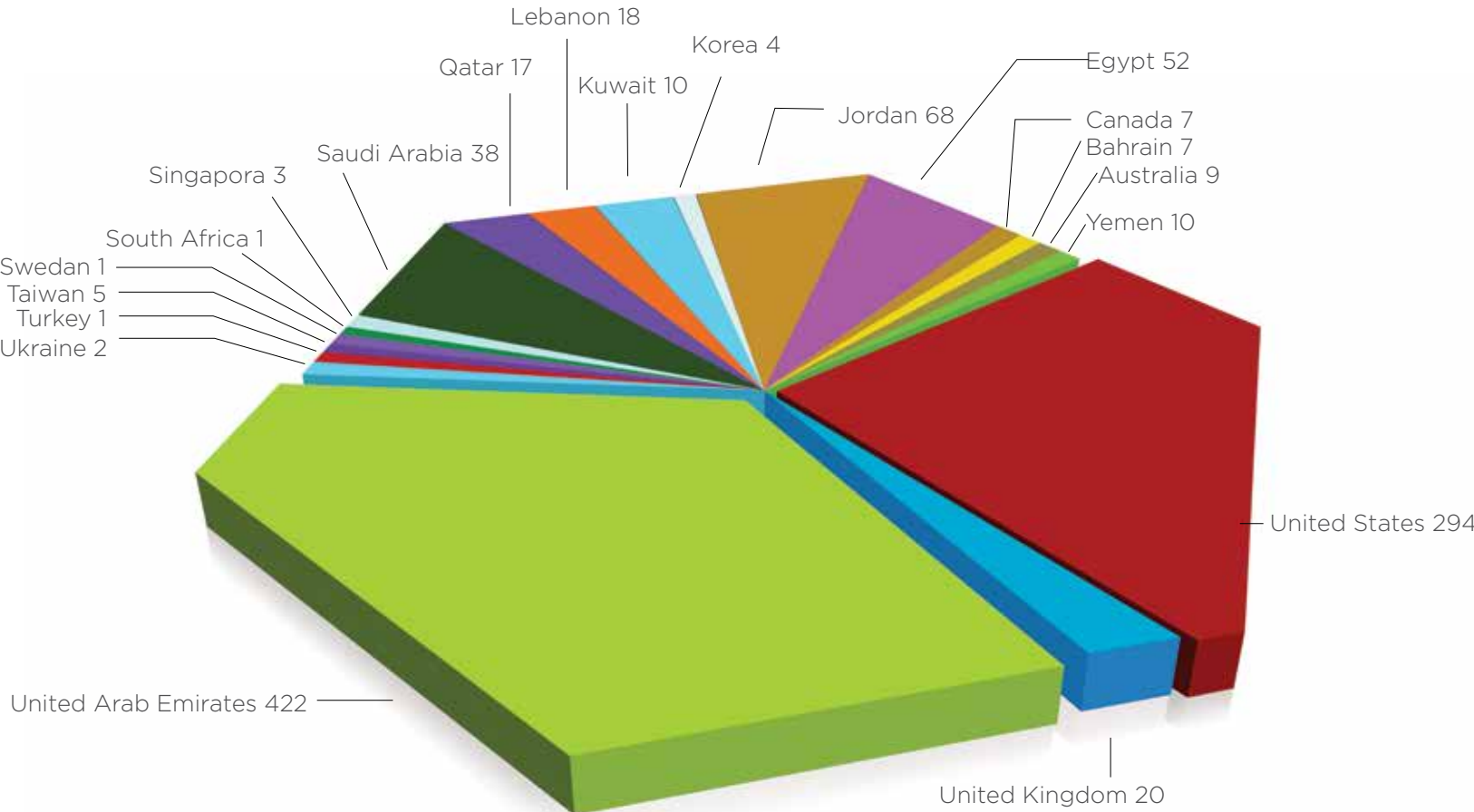
Pre-registration attendance analysis

Attendants	No. of visitors
Attended	1476
Did Not Attend	1724
Total	3200

Registration type analysis

Mode	No. of visitors
Online	1476
Onsite	737
Total	2213

Badge category type analysis

Type	No. of visitors
Visitor	1026
Media	377
Guest	91
VIP	443
Crew	28
Police	100
Organiser	221
Speaker	27
Total	2313

Day wise attendance analysis
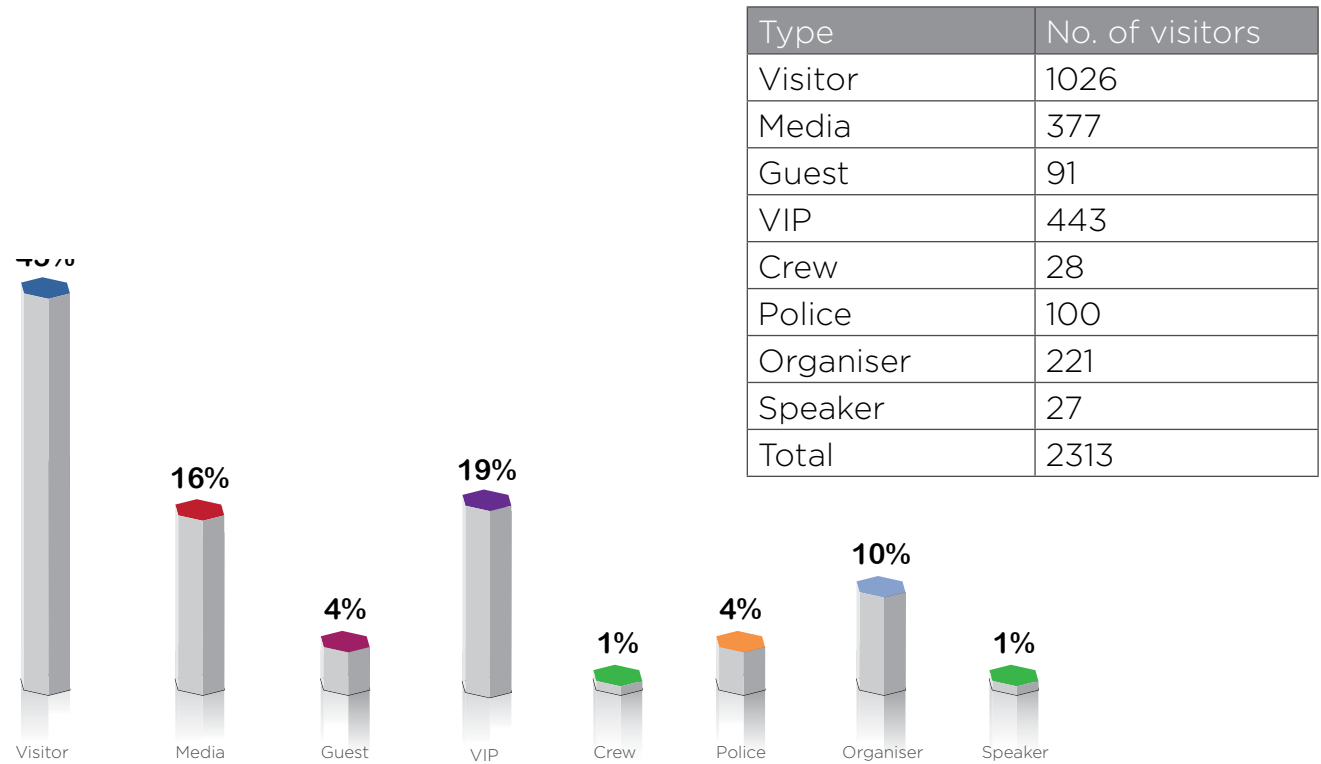
Date	Total
Preprint - 17th - 21st February	898
Day 0 - 22nd February	282
Day 1 - 23rd February	706
Day 2 - 24th February	327
Total	2213

Top 3 countries

1276

6

4

United Arab Emirates   United Kingdom   Kuwait
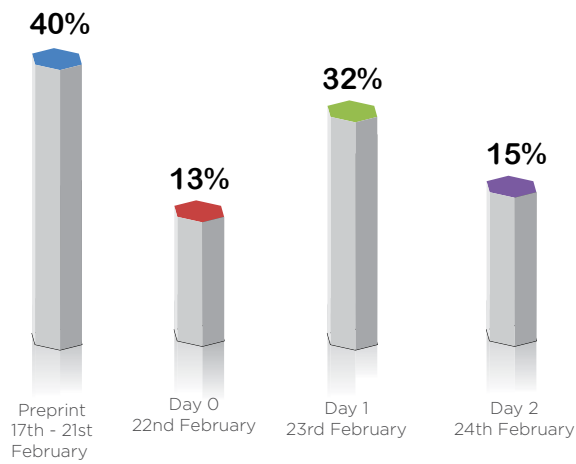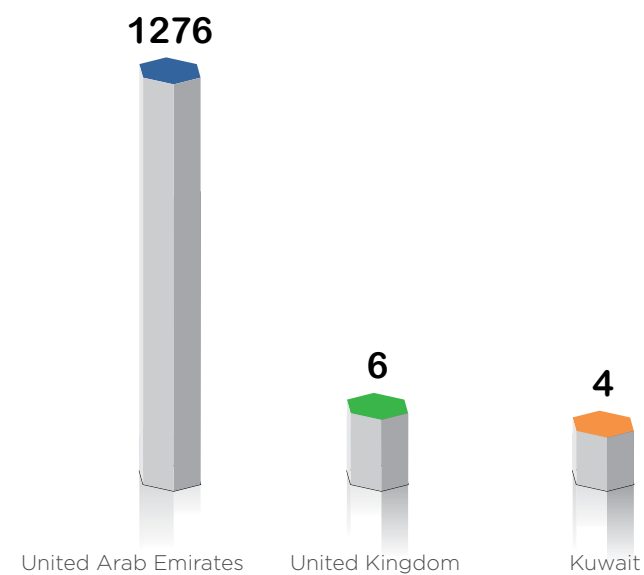
Country	No of Visitors
United Arab Emirates	1276
United Kingdom	6
Kuwait	4

National / International visitors

58%

40%

2%

National Visitors (based in UAE)   Not Avaliable   International visitors
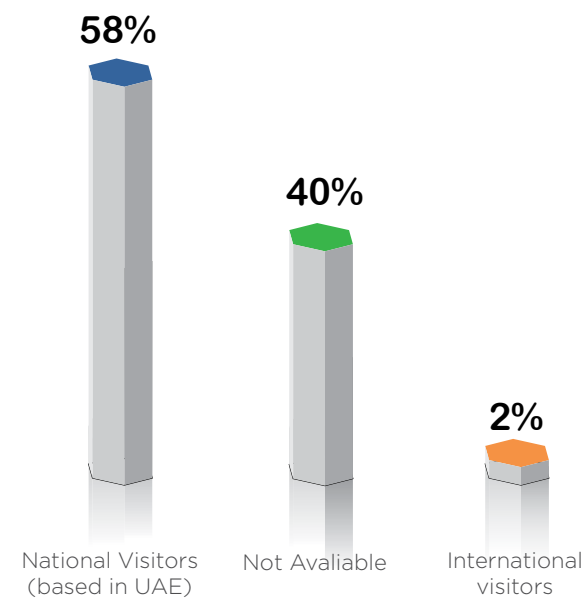
Visitors	No of Visitors
National Visitors (based in UAE)	1276
International visitors	38
Not Avaliable	899
Total	2213

Country wise report

Country	No. of visitors
Algeria	2
Bahrain	3
Bangladesh	1
Egypt	2
India	1
Jordan	2
Kuwait	4
Lebanon	3
Morocco	1
Oman	2
Qatar	1
Saudi Arabia	4
Serbia And Montenegro	1
Somalia	2
Syria	1
United Arab Emirates	1276
United Kingdom	6
United States	2
N/a	899
Total	2213

Region wise analysis

Visitors	No of Visitors
Americas	2
Asia	2
Europe	7
Middle East - GCC	1292
Africa	7
Middle East - Non GCC	4
Not Avaliable	899
Total	2213

Comparison between Media Coverage of GCF 2012- 2013 with media coverage of IGCF 2014

GCF 2014

40%

39%

21%
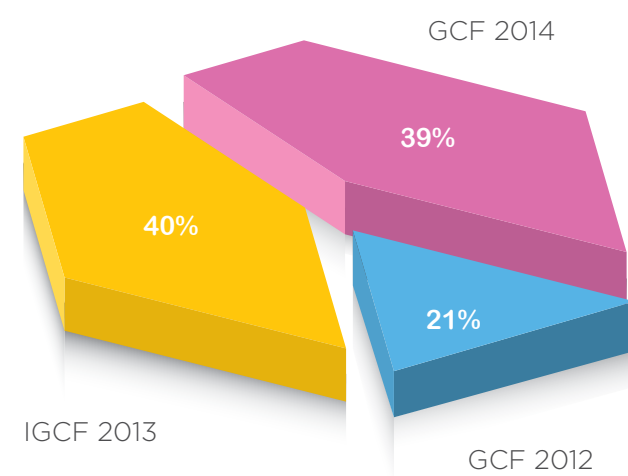
IGCF 2013

GCF 2012

Clippings	Forum
502	IGCF 2014
493	GCF 2013
264	GCF 2013

Clipping distribution by language

Arabic

99%

1%
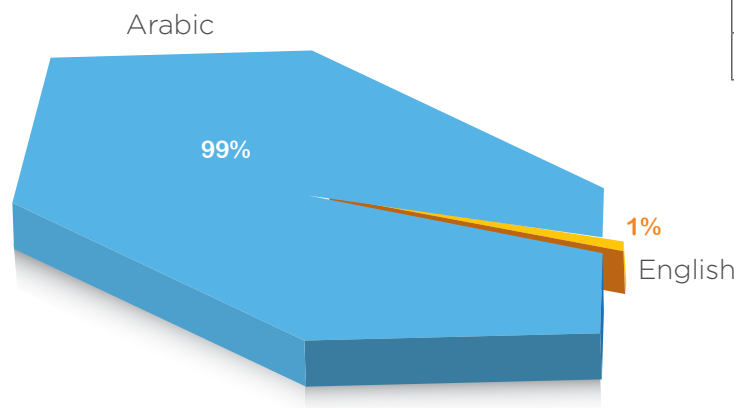
English

Language	Number of Clippings
Arabic	382
English	120

Clipping distribution by Medium

50%

21%

6%

23%

Total

Newspapers

TV & Radio
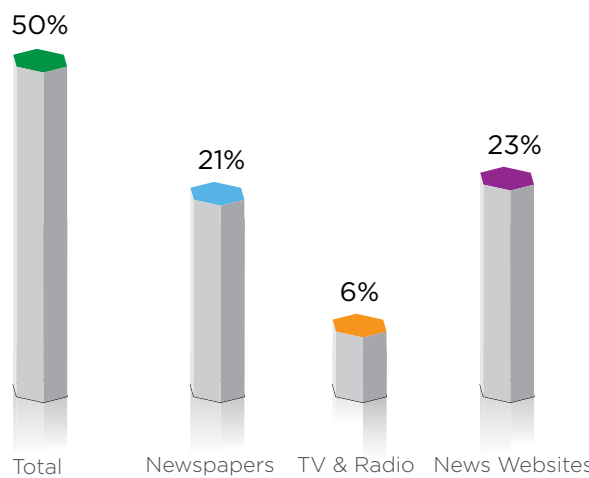
News Websites

Medium	Number of Clippings
Newspapers	215
TV & Radio	57
News Websites	230
Total	502

Clipping distribution by Geographical Region

50%

30%

10%

10%

Total

Local

Regional
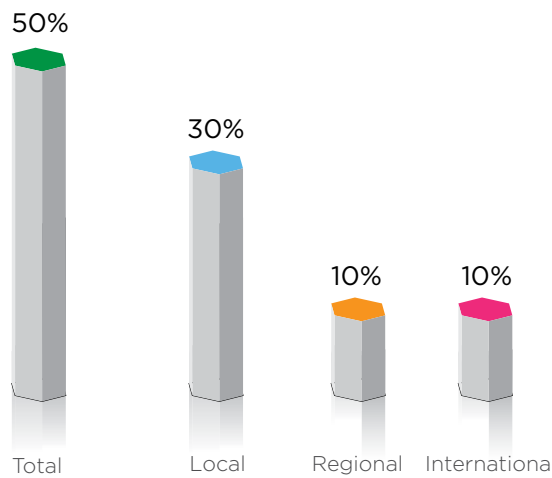
International

Geographical Region	Number of Clippings
Local	299
Regional	104
International	99
Total	502

Top 10 Media Covering IGCF

Medium	Number of Clippings
Zawya	50
WAM	47
Sharjah TV	38
Dar Al-Khaleej	35
Al-Bayan	27

Medium	Number of Clippings
Al-Ittihad	24
The Gulf Today	14
Emarat Alyoum	13
Al-Fajr	13
Al-Wihda	13

Top 10 Non-UAE Newspapers Covering IGCF

Newspaper	Number of Clippings
Alyoum Al-Sabea	10
Al-Watan (Qatar)	6
Al-Sharq Al-Awsat	5
Al-Sharq (Qatar)	4
Al-Ghad (Jordan)	4

Newspaper	Number of Clippings
Al-Jomhouria	4
Arab News	3
Al-Kuwaitia	3
Dar Al-Hayat	2
Al-Wasat (Bahrain)	2

Top 10 Websites Covering IGCF

Medium	Number of Clippings
Zawya	50
Menafn	4
Ameinfo	4
Inews	4
Swalif	4
Kalam Akhbar	3
Al-Rakoubeh	3
Al-Bawaba	3
Al-Bousalah	2
Inquirer	2

**THIS COVERS** THE ~~LAST~~
6 MONTH ~~PERIOD~~

850

62

26
54

7   11   1

10-2013   11-2013   12-2013   01-2014   02-2014   03-2014   04-2014

**DIFFERENT ROLES..
MUTUAL INTEREST**

Arabic 431

Ukrainian 1
Spanish 2
Russian 4
Korean 4

Chineae (Trad.) 3

English 566