



USAID

NGA POPULLI AMERIKAN
OD AMERIČKOG NARODA

TRANSPARENT, EFFECTIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE MUNICIPALITIES ACTIVITY IN KOSOVO

POLICY COMMUNICATIONS GUIDE

April 2020



USAID

NGA POPULLI AMERIKAN
OD AMERIČKOG NARODA

TRANSPARENT, EFFECTIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE MUNICIPALITIES ACTIVITY IN KOSOVO

POLICY COMMUNICATIONS GUIDE

This publication was produced by Platforma CiviKos, a subcontractor of the USAID Transparent, Effective and Accountable Municipalities activity in Kosovo.

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) or the Government of the United States.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

5	1. Background, Purpose and Process of Guide Development
5	a. Introduction
5	b. Purpose of the Guide
6	c. Who are the potential users?
6	2. Preparing a Communications Strategy
7	a. Context Analysis
7	b. Audience Analysis
8	c. Communication Analysis
9	3. Communications Strategy Formulation
9	a. Audiences and Social Stakeholders
9	b. Issues, Message and Barriers
9	c. Communications Objectives
10	d. Communications Strategies, Channels and Tools
10	e. Selection of Activities, Channels, Tools and Content
11	f. Finding the Right Mix
12	g. Timeline and Budget
13	4. Creating Effective Communication Materials and Activities
13	a. Message Development and Production of Materials
14	b. Effective Message and Effective Communications Guidelines
14	5. Communications Tools
14	a. Social Marketing
15	b. Social Mobilization
15	c. Media Advocacy
15	d. Citizen Journalism
15	e. Digital Media
16	f. Writing Editorials
17	g. Writing an Op-Ed?
18	h. Creating Infographics
20	i. Video Messages
21	j. Using Newsletters
22	k. Using Social Media Campaigns
24	6. Monitoring and Evaluation
24	a. Work Plan Development
24	b. What should be monitored and how?
25	c. Evaluation
26	Annexes

I. Background, Purpose and Process of Guide Development

a. Introduction

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Kosovo are increasingly able to engage citizens to participate in promoting social change, to monitor the work of institutions at local and central level to demand more accountability and transparency. However, a large number of organizations do not have clear communications strategies and lack the necessary experience to develop their own communications plans. Consequently, their engagement falls short of achieving maximum effects and resources are not used effectively. The use of communications tools, such as press releases, conferences and dissemination of materials through social media, is conducted without a communications plan to engage the target audience. A communications plan addresses aspects such as: designing a communications strategy guided by clear organizational goals, relevant data and clear evidence; public positioning of an organization; developing different messages to reach specific audiences; establishing contacts with the media and engaging in advocacy; building alliances; and formulating communications strategies.

This Guide on effective communications has been developed to address the need of CSOs for strategic communications planning, aiming to:

- Empower civil society actors to effectively articulate, represent and advance their interests in the policy-making process.
- Guide CSOs on the use of modern communications methodologies to enhance opportunities for participation in social change.
- Boost the impact of local CSOs on important public procurement processes. Create content and messages that are easily understood by the general public, in addition to policy messages that influence policy makers.

b. Purpose of the Guide

The purpose of this Guide is to assist local CSOs in developing communications plans and to be able to compile different messages for specific audiences, to select the appropriate communications tools, mechanisms and activities they will use to communicate with different groups. As a result, CSOs will have greater influence on their target audiences, with a focus on projects related to monitoring public procurement contracts.

This Guide will help CSOs develop structured collaboration and communications with citizens, policy makers, the media and the donor community. Users of this Guide should be able to assess their influence and produce reports on the impact of their work, whether through issue-based social media analysis and media reporting or policy changes, to learn how to further develop similar communications plans for each project or the entire organization.

c. Who are the potential users?

This Guide is designed for audiences including, but not limited to civil society organizations in Kosovo, informal groups, and individuals engaged in public procurement monitoring.

2. Preparing a Communications Strategy

Communications Concepts:

Communications Paradigm: An approach that suggests a specific way to look at communication practices.

Communications Strategy: An action plan that uses the most effective method to achieve a goal based on available tools and the context in which they are developed.

Communications Plan: An administrative concept; plans determine the audience, messages, communications channels, media, budget, and responsibilities.

Communications Campaign: A series of integrated activities aimed at a larger target audience, often of longer duration, and with a clear purpose.

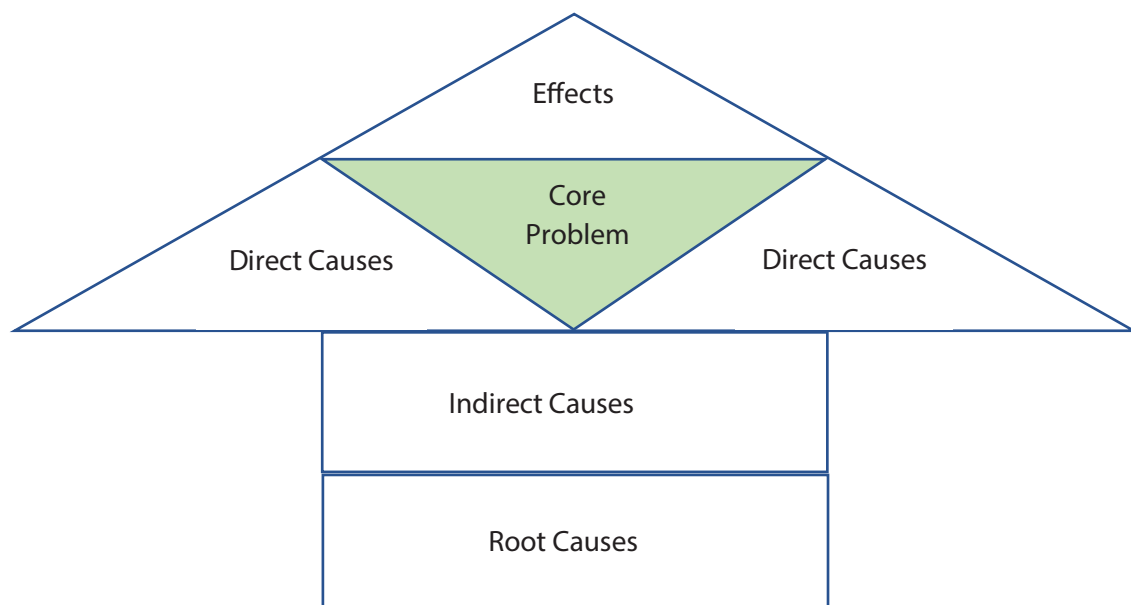
Communications Product: Usually a physical object, such as a poster or T-shirt, which promotes the message to be conveyed.

a. Context Analysis

The first step in developing a communications strategy is to probe deeper into the specific issues and problems where the strategy will be focused. A summary of how the issue has been managed in the past is needed to identify the theoretical perspectives and strategies that have been used previously, in addition to lessons learned. This review may consider people's attitudes, beliefs, capacities, abilities, recognition of their rights and existing social norms regarding political participation.

For example, if developing a communications strategy to boost political participation in discussing a public issue, it is important to understand how long this issue has been going on and why, which segments of the population are most affected by it, what solutions have been explored before, what worked, who was responsible for their implementation and what were the results.

A common technique used for this type of analysis is the "Problem Tree":



1. **Core Problem:** Refers to the key problem that needs to be addressed. Following the example of political participation, the core problem can be expressed as: official health programs and policies do not respond to the needs of the population.
2. **Effects:** Refer to consequences of the core problem on the affected population. In our example, effects can be framed as: the health needs of the population remain unresolved.
3. **Direct Causes:** Refer to causes related to the population itself and the environment where they live, which may impede the solution of the problem. For example, direct causes of the problem may include:
 - a. Young population in the area is indifferent towards participating in health related matters.
 - b. People do not know their rights in terms of political participation.
 - c. Health personnel do not consider community participation in their regular activities to be important.
4. **Indirect Causes:** Refer to causes associated with the institutional frameworks that limit problem solving. For example, an indirect cause may be: the Government lacks political will to promote public participation.
5. **Root Causes:** Refer to causes related to the broader context, such as legislation or cultural norms that impede or limit the solution of the problem. For example, a root cause may be: health and education are considered government affairs, where the population thinks they have a limited role to play.

b. Audience Analysis

This type of analysis determines the features of the target audience and social stakeholders involved in the core issue of the strategy. These characteristics may include demographic, socio-economic, cultural and educational factors, as well as the needs, barriers, and roles related to the issue at hand. It is important to understand the details about where these people live, their gender, race, socio-economic conditions, income level and education. It is equally important to understand what is their primary source of information (e.g. official channels, informal community networks, media), what are the communications facilities in their cultural and community environment (e.g. theater, sports), and what sources of information they deem reliable (e.g. community and/or religious leaders). Contingent on the issue at hand: history, political conditions, cultural characteristics, language, religion, rituals, holidays, etc. of the audience (primary, secondary and tertiary), can also represent key aspects to analyze and understand the audience.

When analyzing the audience it is necessary to check whether the issues or problems addressed by the organization really focus on the needs of the affected population. The questions below may guide your audience analysis.

In the case of directly affected people:

1. Considering the specifics of the group in question, are they more likely to be affected by the problem/issue?
2. How can the specifics of the group in question affect their view of the problem/issue?
3. Do the specifics of the group in question affect their ability to address the problem/issue?

In the case of persons who have contact with or directly influence specific groups; such as partners, family members, co-workers, and friends:

1. What is the effect of the specifics of the group in question on their partners, family members, co-workers and friends?
2. How do the specifics of the group in question affect their social relationships?

3. How can people who are close to the specific group support the desired change?

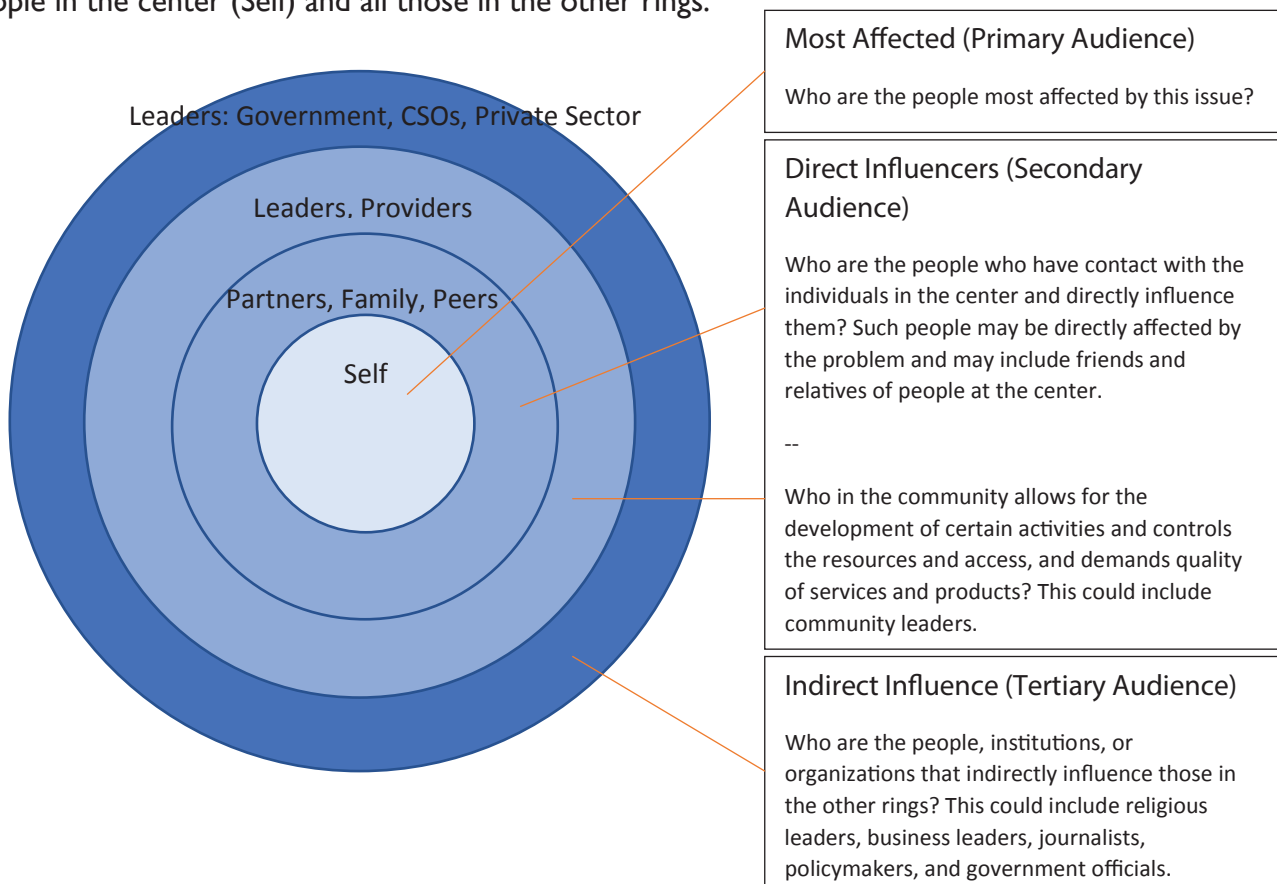
In the case of actors indirectly influencing specific groups (e.g. journalists, parliamentarians, religious leaders, health center directors, etc.):

1. How do the specifics of the group in question affect the role and impact of such actors?

2. How do the specifics of the group in question affect the perception of the problem/issue and involvement by such actors?

The Socio-Ecological Model for Change can be a useful tool for Audience Analysis. This model looks at who are the people directly affected by the problem or issue, as well as who are the people directly involved and influencing those who are directly affected.

- At the center (Self) are people most affected by the problem.
- In the two intermediate rings (Interpersonal and Community level) are people, community organizations, services or products that directly influence those most affected (Self).
- In the outer ring (Enabling Environment) are people, groups and/or institutions that indirectly influence people in the center (Self) and all those in the other rings.



c. Communications Analysis

It is important to identify the most relevant forms of communication that the strategy will employ, based on an adequate understanding of the target audience and stakeholders. This communications diagnostic will facilitate the identification of aspects such as the communication facilities known to the population, most widely used media, time and intensity of use, as well as access to information, and communications technology and resources, such as mobile phones and the Internet.

Following the thread above, when the communications strategy is intended to strengthen social participation, the communications diagnostic may include questions about access to and use of mass media, mobile devices and the Internet, as well as other sources of information (such as relatives, local leaders, community activists, government representatives, teachers, and religious leaders).

3. Communications Strategy Formulation

A communications strategy must include a clear definition of the following elements:

- a. Audiences and Social Stakeholders
- b. Issues, Message and Barriers
- c. Communications Objectives
- d. Communications Strategies, Channels and Tools, and
- e. Timeline and Budget.

a. Audiences and Social Stakeholders

It is necessary to determine the scope of the audience in a communications strategy. A communications strategy targeting a broad or very diverse audience can lead to poor results. A communications strategy can focus on one or more specific audiences and social stakeholders, as long as each is clearly defined. Most communications planning models refer to this process as audience segmentation.

b. Issues, Message and Barriers

Message reports (covering two or three major issues and respective messages) should be drafted. These are the key tools to ensure that both design and implementation teams are always clear on the messages that need to be transmitted throughout the communications strategy.

If the primary objective of communications is to increase political participation, for example, a key message may be: 'Citizen participation in decision-making helps local governments design effective actions', or 'Citizens need to be informed about the different mechanisms of participation that exist at the local level'. In this case, the communications strategy must preemptively address barriers related to such beliefs, e.g. 'Political participation of citizens is useless because it is never considered by decision makers', or 'Those types of rights are reserved for the elite'. Further, structural barriers that may limit the ability to participate should be considered. For example, low literacy rates may limit access to knowledge on certain issues. Cultural barriers can limit the participation of certain groups if they dictate, for example, that women have no place in political discussions. However, it is also necessary to consider maximizing enabling factors, such as the positive impact of certain community leaders or social organizations.

c. Communications Objectives

To formulate a communications objective, it is important to ask what kind of change is needed and what results are expected. Communications objectives can be at different levels ranging from information dissemination to participation promotion, and from empowerment processes to changes in behavior and practices. Whatever the case, defining the scope of the objective is a fundamental step in developing a communications strategy.

If the communications objective is merely focused on informing citizens and government officials about the benefits of social participation, the purpose of the strategy may be limited to disseminating information. This decision will affect the types of messages and communications channels to be used. However, if the communications objective focuses on fostering dialogue between citizens and government officials on how to strengthen social participation, the purpose of the strategy would be broader and include different types of messages and communications channels customized to target audiences. To formulate communications objectives that achieve the expected results with each target audience, it is recommended to follow the SMART criteria:

Criterion	Questions
Specific	Is the communications objective specific to the outcome you expect to achieve?
Measurable	Can the communications objective be measured?
Achievable	Can the communications objective be achieved?
Realistic	Is it possible to achieve this communications objective with the existing resources?
Time Bound	Does the communications objective establish a deadline for attainment?

d. Communications Strategies, Channels and Tools

It is recommended to use a mix of communications strategies, channels and tools focused on generating individual behavior change, social mobilization and influencing decision makers.

Each communication message, and interaction is based on the context and socio-cultural characteristics of the audience and stakeholders. For each selected message, it is necessary to research what channels and forms are most appropriate, and which form is most viable. Different audiences use different channels of communication and find different sources of information to be more reliable than others. Forms of communication may include video clips broadcast on TV or the Internet, posters distributed on the streets, school theater performances, traditional songs, neighborhood training seminars, etc. However, the decision on which format to use should be based on communications analysis. Namely, to develop such tools, it is necessary to consider the objectives of the strategy, media consumption patterns, and the preferred communications avenues of the target audience.

If the purpose of the strategy is to foster dialogue between actors to analyze local problems, for instance, rather than launch a massive campaign, it may be more important to facilitate meetings with government officials in the local neighborhoods where these actors live and have them express their concerns and perspectives. In this case, the communications channel would be meeting face-to-face. If the purpose of the strategy is to position the importance of citizen participation in local affairs and promote participatory avenues, a combination of mass media and community dialogue may be more appropriate.

e. Selection of Activities, Channels, Tools and Content

Think creatively about how to support strategies through a range of activities or interventions. What channels and materials would support them? The possibilities are endless. Regarding use of materials, the way they are used as part of an activity determines the effect they will have.

Tips:

- Use a mix of channels that are mutually connected and supported. For example, use mass media to highlight community dialogue.
- Repeat messages across different media and create opportunities for your audience to ask questions or state what they think of your activities.
- Invest wisely in sufficient repetition. Ensure materials/messages are distributed as often as possible but avoid overwhelming the audience.
- Remember, less is more - that is, quality pays in communications. It is better to do one thing well than to have many different activities that people do not remember because they were poorly implemented.

f. Finding the Right Mix

Channel Types	Examples	Potential Benefits	Cost and Effort
Interpersonal	One-on-one conversations, such as provider-to-client, peer-to-peer, partner-to-partner, social networking, training and small group skills development activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tailored communications • Interactive • You can share complex information • Provide for customized approach • Can acquire behavioral skills • Increases self-effectiveness • Can boost intent to act 	In interpersonal communications, activities are not costly, they are not just a one-time investment. They need to be continuously supported and there must be an incentive to maintain a high standard of intervention.
Community Based	Parent-teacher meetings, billboards in tenements or neighborhoods, posters, cultural events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can motivate collective solutions • Provide social support • Provide feedback to a wider community 	Community-based activities do not have to be costly, especially if the project is community-based and utilizes existing resources. Nevertheless, ensure they are well planned and linked to social media for a more effective implementation scale.
Mass Media and Social Media	TV, radio, newspapers, billboards, websites, Facebook, blogs, YouTube, video, sms, viber messaging, Instagram.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide access • Effective and consistent message repetition • Potential to mobilize youth 	Mass media are costly, but their reach means cost per person is minimal. Social media also has a low cost per person reached, should consider the issue of access.

Factors affecting the selection of communication channels:

Case Complexity: Although interpersonal communication is the most appropriate and effective form of communication for many situations, it is also the form that requires the most work.

Case Sensitivity: Highly sensitive issues may not be suitable for using the mass media.

Literacy: Low literacy rates preclude the possibility of using printed materials that are text heavy.

Desired Reach: Programs aiming for nation-wide reach often employ the mass media.

Prevalent Social Norms: Countries differ in their readiness and willingness to address specific issues and topics.

Cost: Cost of the many communication channels available and their combination varies by type and also by municipality.

g. Timeline and Budget

It is necessary to develop a timeline and budget for the implementation of the communications strategy. The timeline must determine the duration of each activity and identify key milestones in the attainment of expected results. Considering that strategies are long-term efforts, it is important to define which activities will be implemented at each stage of the process. Such decisions must be made in parallel with budget planning, both for planning each activity and its implementation.

1. When will the activity be implemented?
2. What is the consequence of the activity? How are they related?
3. If your efforts are related to providing services or training, ensure your timeline reflects this.

To develop a timeline, you must:

a. Identify Key Partners/Allies

At this stage, the roles and responsibilities of potential allies are defined. It is essential to reach out to partner institutions and organizations in advance to establish a functional relationship with your target audience. Key partners or allies may be other local or central level organizations, local and national media outlets, government institutions. Once partnerships are established, their roles must be clearly defined in the communications strategy. The success of a communications strategy often rides on the combination of partner expertise.

If you have developed your communications strategy in a small group, you can consult potential partners along the way. Refer to the SWOT analysis to see which partners can contribute the resources you need (time, expertise, funding) and be sure to include them first, so that they can feel ownership and commit to the project.

Examine the questions below:

1. What capabilities do you need to implement the following aspects of the communications strategy: creative design of concepts and materials, community mobilization, training, media advocacy, service delivery, and monitoring and evaluation? Which potential partners have the capabilities you need? Who can provide expertise in such areas?
2. Once potential partners have been identified, describe how implementation will be coordinated between partners.
3. Who will provide technical assistance to the project leader and partners?

Participation and capacity building are essential to the success of your strategy.

b. Determine the Budget

At this stage you need to determine how much funding is needed to implement your communications strategy. The list below provides the possible lines for each activity and can help you plan a preliminary budget. The budget must be in line with the activities provided in the work plan. To aid you in this process, refer to the examples of potential costs provided below:

- Salaries and Wages for Consultants
- Data Collection Training
- Travel
- Data Processing and Analysis
- Report Writing

- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Development, Distribution and Collection of Monitoring and Evaluation Questionnaires
- Data Collation and Analysis
- Evaluator Fees
- Curriculum Development
- Trainer Fees
- Training Materials
- Equipment
- Venue Fees
- Printing of Materials
- Editing Fees
- Production of Media Materials
- Communications Expenses
- Press Conferences
- Administrative Costs

4. Creating Effective Communication Materials and Activities

Messages and materials should be pre-tested with members of the target audience to ensure they meet the objectives of the communications strategy.

a. Message Development and Production of Materials

Assemble a creative team from different backgrounds to get the most effective messages and materials for each audience segment. This may include someone with development expertise (e.g. opening procurement contracts), a graphic designer, and someone with local context insights. It is also recommended to involve external actors. The creative team should work on developing a brief description of each material or activity.

The table below explains the five main features of a creative description:

Purpose and Audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General purpose and activities/materials • Target Audience
Changes, Barriers and Communications Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desired Changes • Barriers • Communications Objectives
Brief Message	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Promise • Supporting Statement • Feedback • Perception of other persons involved in change
Core Content and Tone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core content to be communicated in this activity or material • Tone to be used for this activity or material
Media and Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How this activity is supported/augmented by other activities • Time and Cost • Other Creative Considerations

b. Effective Message and Effective Communications Guidelines

The 7 Rules of Communication are a valuable reminder of what to keep in mind when developing messages and materials:

The 7 Rules of Communication Questions to ask and things to keep in mind	
1. Attention to Details	Does your message stand out? How does your audience feel about this message? Remember to think about the following details: colors and letters, images and graphics, sound effects, music, slogans.
2. Message Clarity	Is the message simple and straightforward? Stay focused on what the audience needs to know.
3. Talk about the Benefits	What will your audience benefit from taking action? Choosing an immediate benefit instead of a long-term benefit is usually more effective in bringing about immediate change.
4. Consistency is Important	Activities and materials that are produced must convey the same image and be mutually supportive. Pay attention to the use of your logo, colors, words, sounds, themes, images.
5. Call to Hearts and Minds	Is it better to address the audience with emotional or intellectual appeals, or both? Emotional impressions are often more compelling than facts.
6. Build Trust	Does your information come from reliable sources? Is the source equally reliable for both men and women, or even different age groups? Are there any celebrities that would captivate the audience?
7. Call to Action	What do you want your audience to do after seeing your messages? What is their most likely action as a result of your communication with them? The call to action should focus on concrete and realistic action and help achieve your objectives.

5. Communications Tools

a. Social Marketing

Social marketing is built around these five core elements:

1. Product What is the product being promoted?	2. Price What must be paid to obtain the product?	3. Place Where should the message and product be placed physically?	4. Promotion How will the product be promoted?	5. Psychological Positioning What is the psychological position of message recipient?
--	---	---	--	---

b. Social Mobilization

Social mobilization is the process of bringing together allies to raise awareness among others. For this to happen, three basic conditions must be met:

<p>1. Vision Formulation</p> <p>A vision is a desirable representation of the future. It must be attractive in order to mobilize others.</p>	<p>2. Scope Determination</p> <p>Efforts should focus on actions and decisions that are within your scope and capabilities.</p>	<p>3. Collective Action</p> <p>Every stakeholder involved should know that others are doing similar things and have the same goals, therefore the process is collective.</p>
---	--	---

c. Media Advocacy

Media Advocacy is the process of disseminating information through the media, aiming to promote action, change policies or change public views on an issue. The steps below are essential for the effective implementation of this strategy:

<p>1. Organizational Preparation</p> <p>Designate media focal point.</p>	<p>2. Purpose Identification</p> <p>Identify purpose of strategy and purpose of using the media.</p>	<p>3. Target Audience Selection</p> <p>Target audience will guide the type of media to be used.</p>	<p>4. Plan Development</p> <p>Draw list of media to be included and how to communicate with them.</p>	<p>5. Flexible Implementation</p> <p>Deadlines are important, but you need to be flexible.</p>
---	---	--	--	---

d. Citizen Journalism

Citizen journalism suggests that journalism is not only about informing but also getting the views of the citizens. In summary, to engage in citizen journalism you must:

1. Provide information tailored to facilitate citizen participation
2. Strengthen citizens' capacity to engage in discussion
3. Connect or reconnect citizens to public life
4. Support civic initiatives with sound coverage and critical issues with adequacy
5. Establish media as stakeholders and promoters of social dialogue, and
6. Strengthen participatory democracy.

e. Digital Media

In the process of creating a strategy that incorporates social media for a specific purpose, it is important to consider the following elements:

Identify Target Audience: The person you want to communicate with should be described. It is possible to think of more than one audience.

Determine Purpose: Think about what you want to achieve with the social media strategy, and what your audience is expected to do as a result of the communication experience.

Determine Audience Needs: Research the reasons why your target audience accesses information, at what times of the day, and how.

Message Development: Develop a series of key messages for each audience and identified purpose.

Define Resources and Capacities: Designate person or team responsible for implementing the strategy and determine the cost of the strategy.

Identify Social Media Tools: Determine which tools will be most effective to reach your audience.

Determine Activities: Based on the above, list the activities you want to perform.

Identify Allies and their responsibilities.

Determine how the strategy will be evaluated: What are the measures or indicators for the success of a particular strategy, is a question that must be asked before evaluating; it also depends on your objectives and target audience.

Evaluate: This can be determined based on expected activities and results in the short and long term.

f. Writing Editorials

An editorial is an article that presents the newspaper's opinion on an issue. It reflects the majority vote of the editorial board, the governing body of the newspaper made up of editors and business managers. This is how they build on an argument and try to persuade readers to think the same way as they do. Editorials are meant to influence public opinion, promote critical thinking, and sometimes cause people to take action on an issue. In essence, an editorial is an opinionated news story.

To have a greater impact on the topic of advocacy, it is important to have allies who support you. A good editorial by a well-known editor will achieve far greater effects than any op-ed of yours that can be perceived as biased. Talk to media outlet editors and try to convince them to write an editorial for you. Explain in detail the issue and the goals you aim to achieve. In talking to them, highlight the common good.

An editorial is comprised of the following:

1. Introduction, body and conclusion.
2. An objective explanation of the issue, especially complex issues.
3. A timely angle of news.
4. Opinions from the opposing viewpoint that refute directly the same issues the writer addresses
5. The opinions of the writer delivered in a professional manner. Refrain from naming names, focus on issues.
6. Provide alternative solutions to the problem or issues being criticized. A good editorial uses constructive criticism and offers solutions.
7. A solid and concise conclusion that powerfully summarizes the writer's opinion.

Four Types of Editorials:

1. **Explain or Interpret:** Editors often use these editorials to explain the way the newspaper covered a sensitive or controversial subject.
2. **Criticize:** These editorials constructively criticize actions, decisions or situations while providing solutions to the problem identified. Immediate purpose is to get readers to see the problem, not

the solution.

- 3. Persuade:** Editorials of persuasion aim to immediately see the solution, not the problem. From the first paragraph, readers will be encouraged to take a specific, positive action. Political endorsements are good examples of editorials of persuasion.
- 4. Praise:** These editorials commend people and organizations for something done well. They are not as common as the other three.

Writing an Editorial:

1. Pick a significant topic that would interest readers.
2. Collect information and facts, include objective reporting, and do research.
3. State your opinion briefly in the fashion of a thesis statement.
4. Explain the issue objectively as a reporter would and tell why this situation is important.
5. Give opposing viewpoint first with its quotations and facts.
6. Refute the other side and develop your case using facts, details, figures, quotations.
7. Concede a point of the opposition — they must have some good points you can acknowledge that would make you look rational.
8. Repeat key phrases to reinforce an idea into the reader's minds.
9. Give realistic solutions to the problem that go beyond common knowledge. Encourage critical thinking and pro-active reaction.
10. Wrap it up in a concluding punch that restates your opening remark (thesis statement).
11. Keep it to 500 words. Make every word count. Never use "I".

g. Writing an Op-Ed?

An Op-Ed, short for "opposite (of) editorial", is a written article usually published in a newspaper that expresses the opinion of a writer who is not usually affiliated with the editorial board. An Op-Ed is different from editorials and opinion pieces that are provided by readers.

How to Write an Effective Op-Ed?

Track the news and jump at opportunities. Timing is critical. When an issue is dominating the news - whether it's a war, a stock market surge or just the latest controversy on a TV show, that's what readers want to read and op-ed editors want to publish. Whenever possible, link your issue explicitly to something that is happening currently or covered in the news. If you're involved in fighting corruption in your municipality, for instance, start off by discussing a corruption case that was in the news.

Make a single point and do it well: You cannot solve all the world's problems in 750-1000 words. Be satisfied with making a single point clearly and persuasively. If you cannot explain your message in a sentence or two, you're trying to cover too much.

Put your main point on top: You have no more than 10 seconds to hook a busy reader. Get to the point and convince the reader that it's worth his or her valuable time to continue.

Tell readers why they should care: Put yourself in the place of the busy person looking at your article. As you write, at the end of every few paragraphs, ask yourself: So what? Who cares?

Offer specific recommendations: An op-ed is not a news story that simply describes a situation. It is your opinion about how to improve things. It needs to be personal, both in terms of having your personal voice come through and also in covering a topic that is personal to the readers. In an Op-Ed article you need to offer recommendations. How exactly should the prosecution fight corruption, or what laws should be amended to protect whistleblowers. You'll need to do more than merely call for even greater fight against corruption.

Use short sentences and paragraphs: Rely on simple declarative sentences. Cut long paragraphs into

two or more shorter ones.

Offer graphics: If you have a terrific illustration, photo, video or other asset that might accompany your article, alert the editor when you send it.

Where to submit the article?: Koha Ditore, Telegraf.com, Sbunker, Gazeta Express - as well as other national and local media and portals, accept articles from readers.

h. Creating Infographics

Presently, the use of infographics is apparently inevitable. At a time when everyone has little time available to read long reports, using infographics seems like a good way to get proper attention. Here are some tips on how to design infographics:

Create your infographic for your target audience: Coming up with an infographic idea is half the battle. The best way to succeed is to figure out what your target audience wants. The most appealing infographics are ones that meet your target audience right where they want it most. One mistake people make when creating an infographic is that they try to choose something that is generically popular rather than specifically relevant to their audience. Your goal is to create an infographic for your audience, not necessarily for the whole world. Keep it specific, relevant, and targeted.

Keep it simple: One of the advantages of infographics is that they can distill advanced ideas into a simple visual form.

Keep it focused: Simplicity is ultimately about focus. Don't just make your infographic a potpourri of facts and figures. Make it streamlined and focused on a single topic. Infographics are not attempts to randomly assemble all the data you can compile. Instead, an infographic is intended to drive a single, focused point.

Show things visually: Don't create infographics that are short on the "graphic" and long on the "info". The best infographics are ones that have a good balance of visual information with written information.

Promote it. There are many good infographics that no, or very few, people have seen. An infographic doesn't automatically go viral. Promote it like any other product.

- Ask users to share it.
- Make your infographic shareable with social plugins.

Make it easy to view: Sometimes, an infographic gets lost in its resizing. Many infographics have a variety of font sizes. Make sure that the smallest font on your infographic can be seen without too much difficulty. The infographic should be easy to read and view, whether the user clicks to enlarge or not. 600 pixels wide is a good width to aim for.

Make it a manageable length and size: Infographics are supposed to be big, but not too big. It is recommended to limit length to 8,000 pixels. Think about your user's attention span. Users might be on a slow connection, therefore keep your infographic to 1.5 MB.

Create a Killer Headline: The infographic doesn't get any attention if it doesn't have a great headline. Good headlines will have these features:

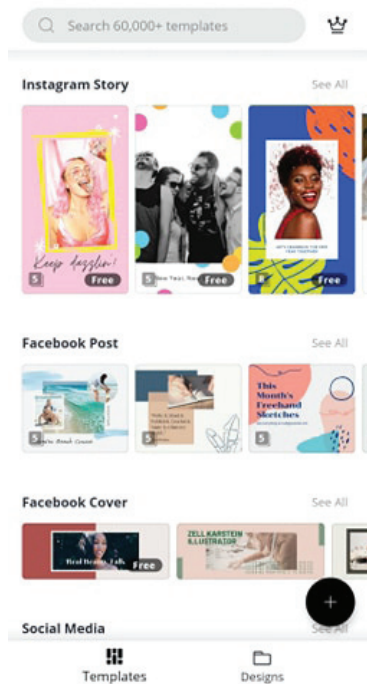
- They describe the infographic.
- They grab the user's attention.
- They are short enough to understand at a glance. 70 characters is a good length.

Focus on the flow: The greatest strength of an infographic is that it can flow both cognitively and visually. An infographic is like a good story. It has the ability to convey an idea by taking you from one phase to another, sequentially and seamlessly. The dots are all connected, and the ideas integrated.

Check your facts and figures: Many infographics focus on presenting data. It's a smart idea. Our minds can process stats and percentages way better when we see them. But make sure that you're being accurate, by focusing on these three oft-overlooked areas:

- Make sure that the statistics themselves are true.
- Make sure that your sources are reliable.
- Make sure that your graphical representation of the data lines up with the numbers.
- Double-check the data.

Cite your sources: Just because you're making an infographic doesn't mean that you're released from needing to cite your sources. Where did you get your data? Cite it. You should cite the source of infographic data at the very end of the infographic. You can also cite sources within the body of the infographic, as long as it doesn't distract from the flow and visual of the infographic.



“Canva” is a free application that offers thousands of templates for creating infographics and other materials for use on social networks.



Distanca një herë rreth tokës: 40.076 km.

Kryesia e Kuvendit për gjashtë muaj “udhëton” dy herë rreth tokës

	Kilometrat e kaluara	Derivate të harhzuara
Duda Balje	25,799.00 km	2,965.03 L
Fikrim Damka *	13,384.00 km	2,155.50 L
Kadri Veseli **	10,965.00 km	1,328.04 L
Xhavit Hasli	10,906.00 km	1,235.05 L
Sllobodan Petrovic	10,735.00 km	494.00 L
Ajda Dërgali	967.00 km	137.00 L
Sabri Hamis		
Gjithsej:	72,756.00 km	8,314.62 L

* Duda Balje dier më 15.02.2016; Fikrim Damka prej 01.03.2016 për një veturë
 ** Shpërndarjet e Kabinett të Koyetarit për dy vetura

A clever infographic title that makes it easier for the audience to understand the figures.

i. Video Messages

Presently, the sheer volume of video messaging content online is growing exponentially. According to research conducted by Cisco, by 2022, online videos will make up more than 82% of all consumer internet traffic. – 15 times higher than it was in 2017. 78% of people watch online videos every week. YouTube, an online video sharing platform, is the second most popular website after Google. If done well, video is a powerful method of communication that engages people far better than text-based messages alone. Despite the challenges and work required for video production, it is nonetheless a worthwhile investment.

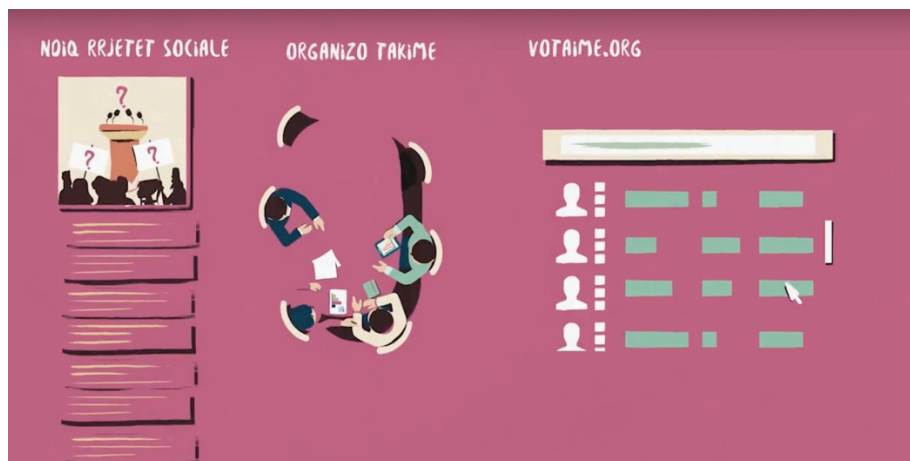
Once you have an idea for a great video project, here's what you need to do:

Figure Out Your Audience: Defining specific groups that you want to target with your video shall make your production process much more effective. Concentrate on defining your average “customer”.

Make Your Message Crystal Clear Once you have defined the people you are targeting with your video, the next step is to clarify the specific message you want to convey. While it's tempting to try and cram everything into a single video, most budgets make it difficult to achieve. Choose one objective and prepare a clear message. An important tip is to avoid explaining what it is that you do. Instead, focus on what you are trying to achieve.

Set a Budget: A vital aspect of pre-production is budget planning. When planning your budget, consider third party factors, such as the cost of interviews, use of specific locations, voice or appearance by an influential person in your video. A poorly produced video can damage the organization's campaign and image.

Write an Interesting Script: A video script should be clear. You should not focus on using formal language. Be sure to review and analyze it with a critical eye, so that you know your message is coming through clearly before completing the video. Modifying the script during the production phase will cost extra time and money.



Video message “Kërko Llogari” by KDI, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMW8j-ob_TA

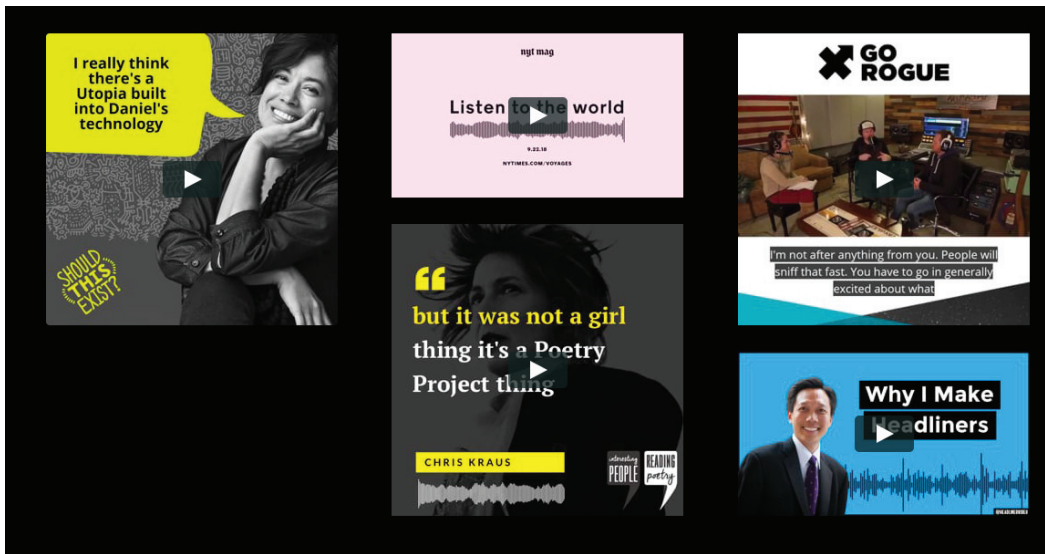
Put Your Best 8 Seconds First: It is important to know that most viewers will drop your video in 8 seconds, unless you grab their attention. According to [Statistic Brain](#)¹, the average human attention span is declining. While in 2000, the average human had an attention span of 12 seconds, in 2015 it dropped to 8 seconds.

How long should your video be: According to Wistia, a 90-second video will hold a viewer's attention as much as a 30-second video. If you're making short videos, you don't need to about the difference of a few seconds. The effect will be the same. Just keep it under 2 minutes.

Use Closed Captions: Many people will watch a short video while on the bus, in the office or even

¹ Statistic Brain is an institute/initiative dating back to 2004 that brings together experts in data generation and analysis. This initiative provides users with a wide range of basic statistics to complete research, reports, business plans.

having a coffee with friends. In such environments they will try not to disturb others while watching the video, or because of the noise they cannot hear the sound. Therefore, use closed captions so that the message can reach a larger audience. Today, there are free apps available that enable feature. [Headliner](#) is an application that enables the creation of captioned videos and can be downloaded free of charge and is easy to use.



Examples created with the “Headliner” app.

j. Using Newsletters

The use of newsletters requires special care, as once sent via email, you can't take it back. You should strive to avoid grammar mistakes, use a special format, have an up-to-date email list of persons to whom the newsletter is addressed. You should provide the opportunity for people who no longer wish to receive emails from you to be able to unsubscribe. Most importantly, you need to make sure that your email is deliverable and does not end up in their spam folder.

Figure out your newsletter's goal. Before you start drafting a single word, make sure you're fully aware of the newsletter's goal and how it fits into your larger communications strategy. Keep in mind your goal should be something beyond “how many people opened it”. Instead, it should be more closely tied to your overall organizational goals. Your email's open rate can give you an indication of the newsletter's performance, but it shouldn't be the only number you care about.

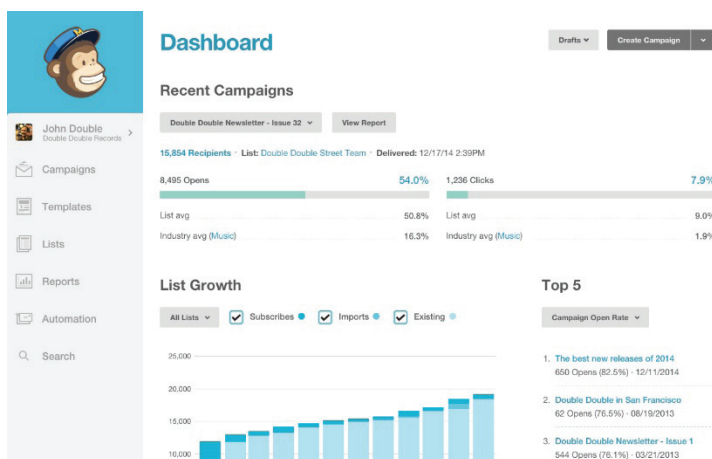
Design your template: Make sure you've got an idea of how your newsletter will look before writing copy. That way, you'll know exactly how much space you have to promote a piece of content. Your template doesn't have to be flashy or anything, even newsletters with minimal text and color formatting will look great. The design just needs to make it easy for your recipients to read, scan, and click elements of the email. This means it should be mobile-friendly, too. According to data from [Litmus](#) - one of largest online marketing development platforms - approximately 46% open their email on a mobile device (2018).

Add in your body content: filling in the template with words and pictures. Use images that can grab the reader's attention. Send it to your own email first, for a once-over.

Add in personalization: the best email newsletters are those that feel like they've been written personally for you. If you want your newsletters to feel that personal, you should do three things: 1) categorize emails based on audience preferences; 2) personalize using name and surname of email recipients. Today, there are various applications that enable such features; 3) add in smart content. This is content that shows one thing to one part of your audience and one thing to another. An example would be a Smart CTA².

² CTA is a tool used in digital marketing platforms to appeal to your visitors, guide audiences and mobilize them to take action based on platform content.

- 1. Choose your subject line and sender name:** research shows that having a sender name from a real person increased opens and clickthroughs. Additionally, an attractive subject line can arouse the reader's curiosity and improve chances of that email being opened.
- 2. Make sure you're legally compliant:** ensure that you have a footer in your email with the sender's address and an easy way to unsubscribe from your emails if they don't want to receive them anymore. The European Union has adopted laws protecting privacy, requiring that emails for marketing purposes only be sent to persons who have previously given their consent.
- 3. Analyze the statistics:** after sending the newsletter, analyze the statistics that show the number of people who opened the email, how many of them clicked on the links you placed in the newsletter.



Mailchimp is a tool that provides free plans for creating and sending newsletters, analyzing data, etc.

k. Using Social Media Campaigns

Using social media campaigns is a great advantage, as it enables you to reach your audience more easily and to convey your messages to larger audiences. To implement a successful and effective campaign, it is crucial to know your audience. The use of social networks in Kosovo is extremely widespread, where the statistics on the number of active users are as follows:

Social Network	Number of Active Users in Kosovo
Facebook	920 thousand
Instagram	680 thousand
Snapchat	480 thousand
Twitter	78 thousand
LinkedIn	58 thousand

Considering this large number of users, it is important to target only the users who are potentially interested in your content. Any audience not likely to be interested in your content is a waste of money invested in advertising campaigns. Facebook offers many targeting opportunities to help you narrow down the right audience. The easiest way to create a campaign is by installing the "Facebook Ads" app. From there you can target specific locations, including:

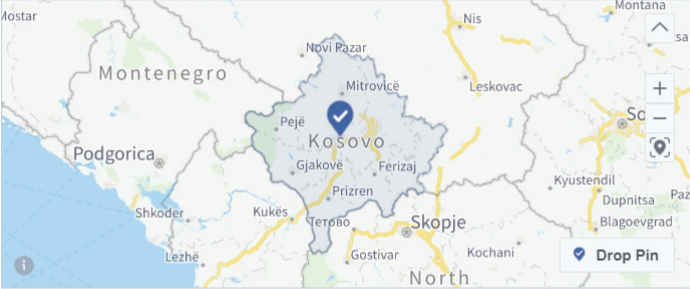
- ✓ Country
- ✓ Region
- ✓ City
- ✓ Specific Address

Locations ⓘ

Kosovo

📍 Kosovo

Add locations




Detailed Targeting ⓘ

Include people who match ⓘ

Add demographics, interests or behaviors Suggestions Browse

Exclude People

 Your audience size is **defined**. Good job!

Potential Audience Size: 890,000 people ⓘ

Delete Cancel Save

Location Based Targeting

You also use even more specific targeting options, choosing to only show your post to people who are in certain locations or who have recently been to those locations by tracking them based on the use of mobile devices in those geographic areas.

Facebook also allows targeting based on demographic data, such as age, gender and language used. Further, you can go into greater detail, such as targeting people based on their education, job titles or specific interests.

Age ⓘ -

Gender ⓘ All Men Women

Languages ⓘ

Demographic Targeting

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

a. Work Plan Development

Leading to successfully completing this step, it is important to establish advance contacts with the institutions and organizations that will be involved as partners, and establish a working relationship with target audience members. Deadlines should be respected as much as possible, adjusting them to any unforeseen circumstances that may affect the implementation of activities. Research, planning and communications need to be integrated into your work plan.

This is the framework where you plan for implementing your strategy and achieving your communications objectives. You should focus on these key activities:

1. What activities should be implemented?
2. What are the intermediate steps needed for each activity?
3. Using potential partners, assign their responsibilities for each activity.
4. Who will be responsible for implementing each activity?

b. What should be monitored and how?

Many projects do not monitor their progress and do not evaluate whether, or to what extent, they have achieved the expected results. Where there is no progress monitoring, this means no corrective actions have been taken during the implementation stage, and it is likely that optimal results shall not be achieved, even where resources are available.

To know which aspects should be monitored, a system must be developed to track the implementation of planned actions and achievement of expected results at different stages of the process. It is also necessary to set out a concrete methodology for collecting progress evaluation information, which may be through surveys, interviews and reports. It is essential to monitor the achievements under activities, in addition to the way in which the audience and stakeholders react to, or interact with, the various components of the strategy.

An example of monitoring public participation could be asking the following questions:

- Have the planned activities been completed and if not, why?
- How many community members attended the workshop?
- What was the level of understanding for the messages?
- To what extent have attitudes toward recommended practices been improved?
- Are there reports of changes in their behavior?
- What are the reasons for not undertaking certain practices?
- What is the extent of improvement in the quality of interactions with government representatives and the audience's perceptions of such interactions?

Depending on the characteristics of the public and the context, site visits can be arranged, while community members can fill out forms to give feedback after each activity, report their perceptions on social platforms, such as Facebook, participate in focus groups or in-depth interviews. Based on this data, there can be changes made to certain components of the strategy, including messaging, adding new forms of communication and interaction, or strengthening those elements that work best.

c. Evaluation

Evaluation encompasses the entire communications strategy. It starts with informational research and situational analysis, continues with monitoring and moves on to a new stage of evaluation. Findings help determine if implementation is going as planned and allow you to suggest improvements. Evaluation also provides you with evidence that the objectives of the communications strategy have been achieved. It provides you the guidance needed to design future interventions, and at the same time demonstrates accountability to partners and donors. Evaluation is used to investigate the effectiveness of the strategy to bring about the desired change for the target audience.

At this stage it is recommended to start with some key questions that may serve as guidelines. Evaluation questions relate to whether communications objectives have been achieved and the reasons for not achieving them.

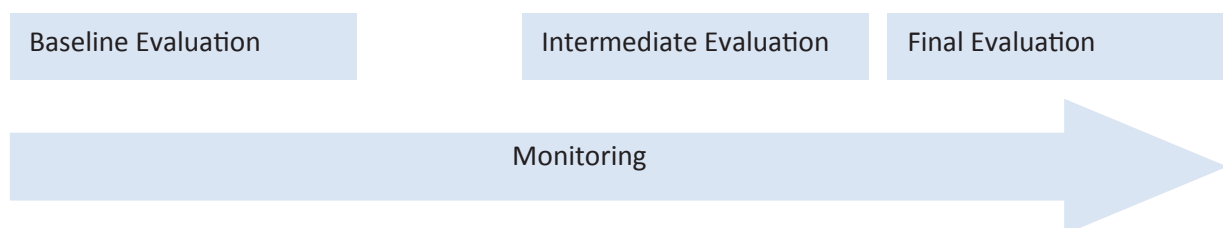
Such questions may include:

- What needs to be evaluated and how?
- What was the level of understanding for the messages?
- To what extent have attitudes toward recommended practices been improved?
- Have changes in behavior been reported?
- What were the reasons for not undertaking certain practices?
- What is the extent of improvement in the quality of interactions with government representatives and the audience's perceptions of such interactions?

A strategy that is not evaluated can miss the opportunity to be replicated and funded for another stage. Evaluation should determine whether, or the extent to which, the initially set objectives have been met and whether the expected changes have been achieved. The method of evaluation should be defined at the beginning of the strategy. A baseline evaluation can serve to compare the status of issues to be addressed, before and after the intervention. The strategy should be evaluated at intermediate points during implementation, immediately after its completion, and additionally three and six months later, to determine the sustainability of changes made in the process. Sometimes samples are taken and compared after one or two years of implementation to observe the changes achieved and whether they can be attributed to a particular element of the strategy.

Streamlined Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

- Data and results are monitored simultaneously encompassing the entire program.
- Where resources allow, large-scale monitoring and evaluation efforts go beyond results and evaluate the impact.



Monitoring	Baseline, Intermediate and Final Evaluation
Collect data over time throughout implementation on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program process (what the program did and what the target audience did) • Intervention quality 	Collect data at discrete points before, during and after implementation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare to baseline • Document results and changes in your target audience • Verify whether the data support the assumptions made in the theory of change

Annexes

Worksheet #1: Audience Segmentation

What do we know about our audience background?	Who are the most affected people	Actors and conditions that directly influence the affected people	Actors and conditions that indirectly influence the affected people
Audience (from Audience Analysis)			
Community: Organizations, Services and Activities			
Environment: Policy, Legislation, Economy, Religion, Technology, Environment			
Information (Knowledge)			
Motivation (Values, Beliefs)			
Ability to Act (Skills, Self-Efficacy, Approach)			
Norms (Social-Cultural, Gender)			
Other			

Worksheet #2: Communications Objectives Summary

Audience Segmentation	Desired Changes Motivation, Ability to Act, Social Norms, Policies, Services, Social Fabric	Obstacles to Change Context reasons and behaviors, why the audience is not engaging in the desired behavior	Communications Objectives Addressing key constraints (for communications to have an impact, objectives must address key constraints and not just reflect desired behavior)

Worksheet #3: Communications Strategy Summary

Audience Segmentation	Strategies	Justification
Most affected population		
Direct Causes		
Indirect Causes		

Worksheet #4: Activities and Channels

The following table can be used to summarize the activities, channels, tools, and content communicated by target audience segments:

Channel Types	Examples of activities and support materials	Your activities and support materials
<p>Interpersonal Peer education, communication counseling, phone conversations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Series of visits to meet leaders and politicians • Meetings to build coalitions • Peer education 	
<p>Community Based Community dialogue, rallies, community radio shows.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rallies in front of the Parliament • Community Dialogue • Radio Shows 	
<p>Mass Media and Social Media Radio and TV spots, media articles, posters, brochures, websites, Facebook, YouTube videos, sms, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sending emails or letters to relevant ministers • Newspaper calls to form civil society coalitions • Facebook page where questions are allowed 	

Worksheet #5: Choosing the Right Channel

Channel Types	Potential Benefits	Cost and Effort Estimation
Interpersonal		
Community Based		
Mass Media and Social Media		

Worksheet #6: Timeline and Budget

Activity List	Implementers: (including partners)	Resources	Time limits
Communications Objective #1			
Activity:			
Activity:			
Communications Objective #2			
Activity:			
Activity:			
Communications Objective #2			
Activity:			
Activity:			

Worksheet #7: Detailed Work Plan

Intervention	Implementers: Management staff, consultants, volunteers, partners	Resources and budget	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter
Communications Objective #1						
Activities or materials:						
Activities or materials:						
Communications Objective #2						
Activities or materials:						
Activities or materials:						
Communications Objective #3						
Activities or materials:						
Activities or materials:						

