



# A GUIDE: INTEGRATING COMMUNICATION IN EVALUATION

**DR GLENN O'NEIL**

## Table of contents

How to use this guide.....	4
1. An introduction to communication and evaluation.....	5
2. Communicating before the evaluation.....	8
3. Communicating during the evaluation.....	12
4. Communicating after the evaluation.....	15
Annex 1: Communication plan of action – template .....	19
Annex 2: Innovative tools for communication and evaluation.....	22
Annex 3: Case study – An evaluation of the International Soya Initiative .....	25
Annex 4: Extra resources.....	31

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 license.



You are free to copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format for any purpose, even commercially, as long as appropriate credit is given to the author. No prior permission is required.

## Forward

This guide has been prepared based on the author's experience as both a communicator and an evaluator.

The bulk of the material that makes up this guide was originally presented at workshops on this subject for the Swiss Evaluation Society (SEVAL) in March 2014, in Berne, Switzerland, and for the Uganda Evaluation Association in October 2014, in Kampala, Uganda.

The author would like to thank the SEVAL workshop organizer, Marlène Läubli Loud, my partner at Owl RE, Patricia Goldschmid and Alexandra T. Warner, Research Officer of ALNAP, for their suggestions and comments on the text. Thanks also go to the participants of the workshops for their contributions and comments, which have been integrated into the guide.

*Dr Glenn O'Neil*  
*September 2017*

**About the author:** Glenn O'Neil is founder of evaluation consultancy, Owl RE based in Geneva, Switzerland. For 15 years, Glenn has built up his boutique consultancy to carry out over 100 evaluations in over 50 countries for some 40 international organizations, NGOs, governments and foundations with a specialization in the communications, advocacy and humanitarian areas. Glenn is an experienced teacher, facilitator and trainer in media, communications and evaluation management and methods. Glenn has a PhD in research and evaluation methodology from the London School of Economics and Political Science and an Executive Masters in Communications Management from the University of Lugano, Switzerland. Glenn is Swiss-Australian. Glenn offers e-learning courses on Effective and Creative Evaluation Report Writing and How to be a Successful Evaluation Consultant.

Author contact: [glenn.oneil@gmail.com](mailto:glenn.oneil@gmail.com)

# How to use this guide

## Who is this guide for

This guide is designed for anyone who wants to learn how communication can more effectively support evaluation: evaluation consultants, communication consultants, evaluation commissioners and programme/project staff participating in evaluations.

## How this guide works

The guide is structured around three broad phases of the evaluation process: before, during and after. The guide aims to provide advice and practical hints on how to use communication for each of these phases. A communication plan of action template adapted for evaluation is provided at annex 1. Examples of innovative communication tools for evaluation are found at annex 2. A case study is included at annex 3 that can be used for learning purposes. Links to extra resources are found at annex 4.

The guide explains how to use communication to support evaluation and readers can adapt and use these approaches depending upon the stage of the evaluation process, their own context and available resources.

### Useful definitions and concepts for communication and evaluation

**Evaluation:** *The systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.*  
(DAC-OECD, 2002)

**Communication:** *The process through which people share thoughts, ideas and feelings with each other in commonly understood ways.*

**Organizational communication:** *Activities that are dedicated to the management of communication between an organization and its stakeholders.*

**Stakeholder:** *Individuals or group who may be affected by the evaluation or have an impact on it*

### Key terms for the communication process

*Sender:* origin of the message

*Receiver:* the person who receives the message

*Message:* the text, image or sound that comprises the information sent

*Encoding:* process that the sender goes through to prepare the message for sending

*Decoding:* process that the receiver goes through to receive the message

*Channel:* the means through which the message passes

*Noise:* anything that interferes with sending or receiving the message

*Environment:* the context within the message is sent or received

*Frame of reference:* the values, views and background by means of which an individual perceives or evaluates messages

# 1. An introduction to communication and evaluation

*“The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place”*  
*George Bernard Shaw*

As Mr Shaw so wisely summed up, most of us assume that we are already communicating – we’ve sent out emails, held a meeting, issued a report, and so on. But the main issue for evaluation is that we often fail to plan and communicate systematically – before, during and after an evaluation. Communication can reinforce key aspects of evaluation: including stakeholders in its preparation, supporting a smooth evaluation process and facilitating the use of evaluation results, among others.

What makes an effective evaluation? This question has been studied in-depth over the past decades and the responses found centre a lot on communication:

## Seven key elements of effective evaluation

1. Take into account the context of the evaluation.
2. Identify the evaluation audiences and involve them early.
3. Communicate frequently and report interim results.
4. Tailor reporting to audience needs.
5. Report results in a timely manner and to a variety of audiences.
6. Present vivid and concrete illustrations of findings.
7. Use clear and jargon-free language.

Communication is therefore an important component of the evaluation process that needs to be planned and thought through in the initial stages of the evaluation. Responsibility for communication is often shared between the commissioners and the evaluators. It is helpful in considering the role that communications can play before, during and after evaluation, for example:

### **Before:**

- Signal evaluation approach
- Create awareness
- Develop ownership
- Build relationships
- Manage expectations

### **During:**

- Communicate progress
- Maintain relationships
- Present initial findings
- Test findings
- Gather feedback from stakeholders

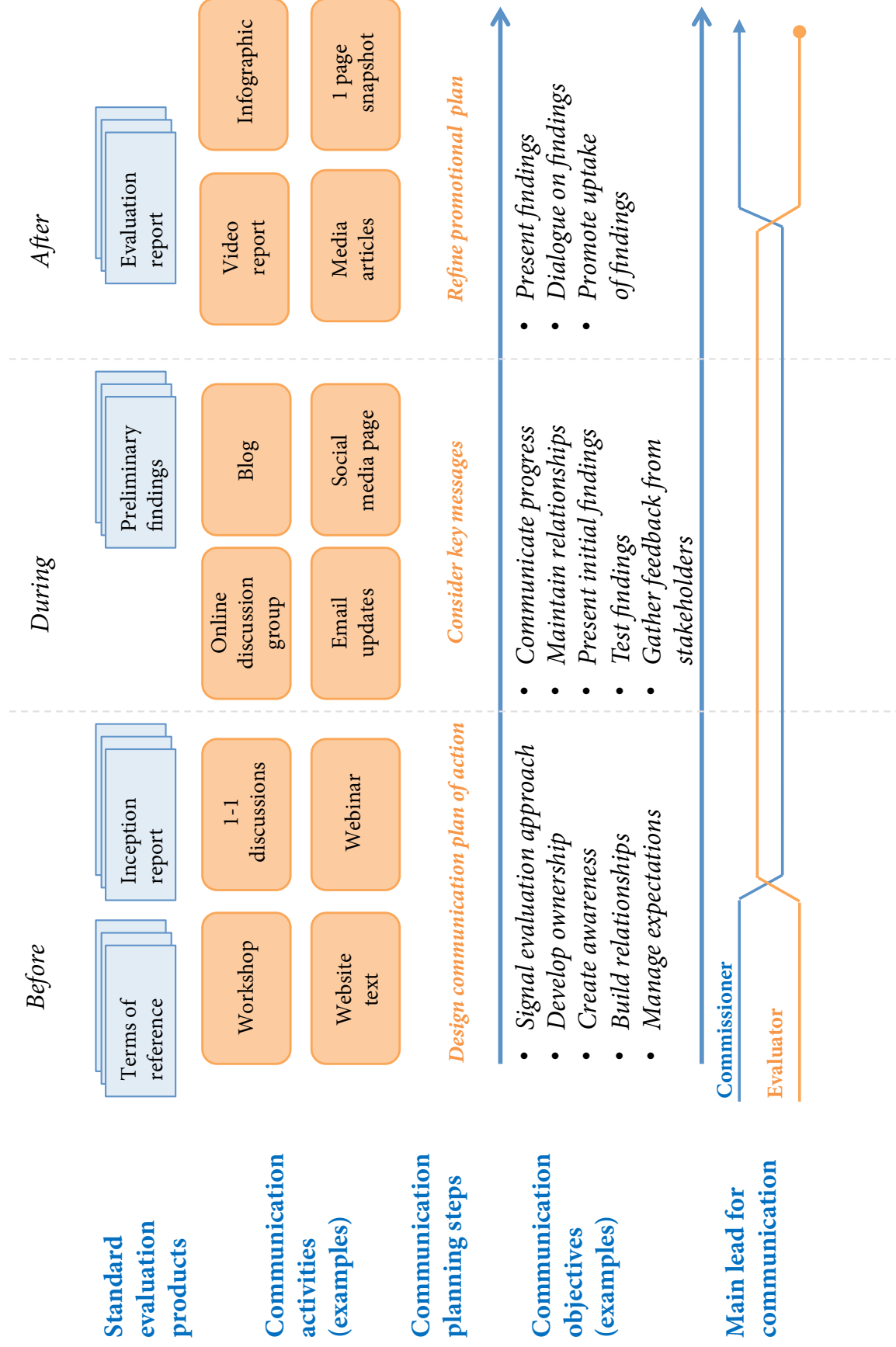
### **After:**

- Present findings
- Dialogue on findings
- Promote uptake of findings

You can test your ability to integrate by communication in evaluation by going through the case study found at annex 3 of this guide.

In summary, the diagram on the next page illustrates communication throughout the complete evaluation process that is explained in this guide:

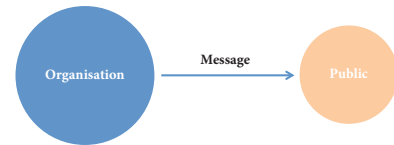
## Communication throughout the evaluation process



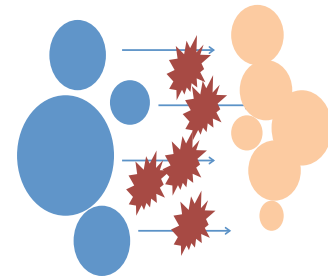
## A brief introduction to communication theory

Before we go further, it is useful to provide a short introduction to communication theory and why it matters to evaluation.

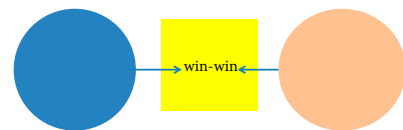
At first communication was thought to work in a simple manner: an organization prepares and sends its message to the general public, they understand and do as they are told – the so-called **“silver bullet” theory**.



However, over time, it became clear that there is no “general public” – but rather a grouping of diverse publics, some receptive to your message and others not. Additionally, many other factors apart from the message itself, influence how it is understood and acted upon. They include: who is at the origin of the message; how it is presented and how often; through which channel is it sent; how is it understood by the given public and their motivation to pay attention; what noise interferes with the message; and who else is also communicating at the same time and/or the same message. This was called the **“minimal effects” theory**.



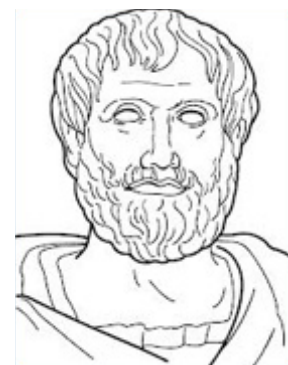
In the past 30 years, scholars have worked hard to understand how organizations can overcome these obstacles and communicate effectively. One major milestone was the research led by Professor James Grunig, who found that communication was most effective when carried out in a symmetrical two-way manner. This theory was developed into the **“two-way symmetrical model”**. The model focuses on achieving mutual understanding between an organization and its publics rather than one-way persuasion. Key to this model was the equally important need for the organization to listen to the public and find a “win-win” zone acceptable to both. This is particularly pertinent to evaluation and the trend towards evaluation being a participative process.



Nevertheless, communication remains strongly persuasive in nature – many studies have proved the ability to influence people through communication. Many theories exist on influence and persuasion. However, most of these theories have their origins in **Aristotle’s theory of rhetoric** and its three components that he found key to persuasion:

- Ethos – the credibility of the messenger
- Pathos – the use of emotional appeal
- Logos – the use of reasoning and logic

These components should be considered when considering how to communicate both the evaluation process and findings.



## 2. Communicating before the evaluation

Communicating before the evaluation both concerns planning the role communication for the whole evaluation process and starting to communicate.

### Planning to communicate

Planning the role of communication normally starts by responding to two questions:

#### 1) *What is particular about this evaluation context?*

For this point, we want to know about the project/programme being evaluated and its environment; what is the motivation for the evaluation? Is this a mid-term, final or other type of evaluation? Are staff familiar with evaluation, and at which hierarchical levels? What aspect of their culture and the political context is relevant to the evaluation? What is senior management's role in the evaluation? What are the decision-making deadlines? What is the level of willingness to discuss and share results?

#### 2) *How can communication support the evaluation?*

This may seem obvious but it is important to design communication to meet the needs of the given evaluation, its context and stakeholders. For example the communication could facilitate the following:

- building acceptance of the evaluation among those whose participation is key
- access to audiences for data collection and/or to other relevant data sources
- obtaining feedback on preliminary findings
- promoting dialogue on findings
- encouraging learning within the organization
- ensuring relevance, feasibility and thus use of recommendations.

Both points 1) and 2) should then be summarized in a simplified **communication plan of action** under the headings "Situation analysis" and "Objectives" (see annex 1).

**Stakeholder/audience analysis:** The next step in planning would be to analyse the stakeholders and audiences of the evaluation. Stakeholders are individuals and groups who may be affected by the evaluation or have an impact on it. Audiences are those who could benefit from information about an evaluation, for example, people working on a similar programme or project. It is helpful to think of audiences and stakeholders in terms of primary and secondary (stakeholders) and tertiary (broader audiences):

- Primary stakeholders would normally include those who have requested the evaluation (sponsors, donors, funders, commissioners), those managing the evaluation and staff/management of the programme/project being evaluated. Persons or groups who are beneficiaries/clients of the programme/project would also be considered a priority.

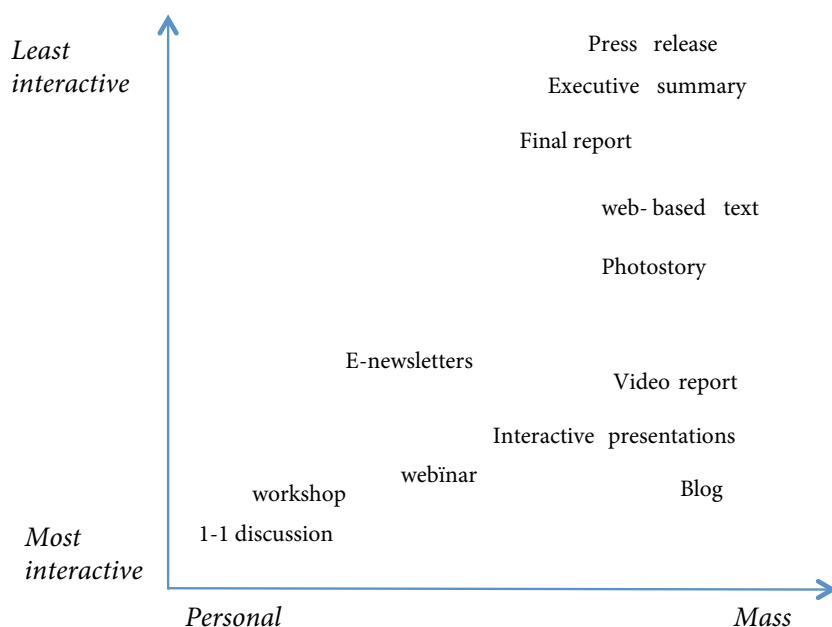


- Secondary stakeholders are those involved in the project/programme in some way and have an interest in the evaluation results. These could include related programmes, partners or entities whose work could be affected by decisions based on the evaluation results.
- Tertiary audiences are those less central to the evaluation but still may want to be informed about the evaluation, its progress and results. These could include people working in like-minded programmes or bodies, potential partners or funders, and those from the broader community of interest related to the programme/project. (For instance, if the evaluation is in the education field it may be of interest to academics, industry/employee associations and people working in education.)

Once stakeholders and audiences are identified, it is helpful to establish what their main communication need is and when it should be met. This should be summarized in the communication plan of action.

**Communication activities:**

Once stakeholders and audiences are identified, the next step would be to plan the appropriate communication activities (also called “methods”, “tools” or “tactics”). Of course, in the evaluation process, as an evaluator or commissioner, you are constantly communicating to ensure that the evaluation progresses. This we consider as standard project management. Communication activities are different



in that they are planned and implemented systematically with the aim of supporting the set communication objectives. Communication activities are many and varied. It is useful to think of such activities on two axes – from the most to the least interactive, and from the personal to mass reach. The chart (right) shows a selection of activities along these two axes.

**Choice of activities:** This depends on a number of factors, notably, suitability for audiences, the level of interactivity desired, the “depth” of the information being communicated, willingness to engage publicly and the budget available. Regardless, all evaluations need a combination of communication activities and tools – studies show that people will learn from an evaluation through different tools and media. When we think of communication activities, we may naturally think that we will be communicating publicly. But this doesn’t have to be the case. Many activities can be carried out internally or with a limited number of partners, depending upon the sensitivity of the evaluation and its findings.

**Cost of activities:** Many activities can be carried out at low cost – or at the cost necessary for the staff to prepare and carry them out, for example workshops, presentations and blogging. However, at this stage of the planning, the commissioning organization needs to determine the budget and staff time, especially if it foresees more ambitious communication activities.

**Responsibility for activities:** It is also important to determine who will be carrying out the communication; who will be drafting the materials, organizing the events, etc. Often it will be a combination of the commissioner and the evaluator(s) and with the support of communication staff, if available.

Within the communication plan of action, the main activities should be listed indicating the *audience* for whom the communication is intended, *which objective* it is supporting, *who* is responsible for it and *when* it should be deployed (see annex 1 for a plan of action template). Some activities will also need an additional *promotional plan* – for example, there is no point in producing a stand-alone executive summary if you have not thought how it will be disseminated.

**Range of activities:** The table below lists a range of communication activities and tools (non-exhaustive) that can be used in evaluation, when they can be used and the level of interactivity/reach. See annex 2 for a list of

<i>Communication activity/tool</i>	<i>Before</i>	<i>During</i>	<i>After</i>	<i>Interactivity</i>	<i>Reach</i>
1-1 discussion	X	X	X	High	Personal
Workshop	X	X	X	High	Personal
Presentation	X	X	X	High	Personal
Email update	X	X	X	High	Personal
Online discussion group	X	X	X	High	Medium
Webinar	X	X	X	High	Medium
Social media page	X	X	X	High	Mass
E-newsletter	X	X	X	Medium	Medium
Web-based text	X	X	X	Medium	Mass
Press release	X		X	Low	Mass
Brochure and flyer	X	X	X	Low	Medium
Blog		X	X	High	Mass
Broadcast media (e.g. radio programme)		X	X	Low	Mass
Interim report		X		Low	Medium
Interactive web page			X	High	Mass
Drama/theatre			X	High	Medium
Photo story			X	Medium	Medium
Video report			X	Medium	Mass
Final report			X	Low	Mass
Executive summary			X	Low	Mass
1 page Snapshot (of findings)			X	Low	Mass
Infographics/scorecards			X	Low	Mass
Opinion editorial (media article)			X	Low	Mass

## Starting to communicate

Aside from planning to communicate, you will start to communicate as you prepare and launch the evaluation. How you communicate at this early stage sends clear messages to stakeholders: What will you evaluate? How will you evaluate? How participative will the evaluation be? How the organization manages the evaluation process will also influence communication at this stage. For example, some organizations involve stakeholders in drafting the evaluation scope and questions. This can be a way of developing awareness and ownership of the evaluation at an early stage. Regardless, the evaluation needs to communicate clearly and effectively to stakeholders.

*The Terms of Reference:* This will normally be the first public document available on the evaluation and how most stakeholders will learn of the evaluation. Therefore, its content should be considered from a communication perspective. For example, if the Terms of Reference emphasises the limited resources available for the evaluation, the short time available to carry it out and the unavailability of staff to support, it will send the wrong message, i.e. that the evaluation appears to be merely a “box to be ticked”. On the other hand, if the Terms of Reference describes the range of stakeholders to be consulted, the level of participation desired and how the results will be used, it will send the *right* message, i.e. that the evaluation is of value and will be used. Of note, all these *right* messages are still possible with limited resources!

*The Inception Report:* This will normally be the first substantial input of the evaluators into the design of the evaluation. The Inception Report is usually distributed to a limited number of stakeholders and is an opportunity to set out the evaluation approach in more detail and is the place to describe the communication aspects of the evaluation, ideally using a communication plan of action, as described above. If a plan of action is not used, then elements of the intended communication approach should at least be described, such as level of consultation that will be carried out and when, how and to whom the evaluation findings will be communicated.

As an evaluation commissioner or evaluation consultant, many of your actions prior to the evaluation commencing will contain a strong communication element: meeting and briefing stakeholders; asking for feedback; and disseminating information of the evaluation. As described above, you can reinforce these actions with communication activities, for example by holding a workshop with stakeholders to discuss the evaluation scope or including a brief update on the evaluation in your regular e-newsletter to stakeholders.

### Who is responsible for communicating?

When an evaluation is in its conceptual phases with the terms of reference being put together, the commissioner normally takes the lead on communication. Once engaged, an evaluator often contributes ideas concerning aspects of communication in their inception report and takes the lead in putting together a communication plan of action. During the evaluation, the evaluator is often in the forefront, communicating to facilitate their access and to share preliminary findings, while the commissioner and the programme/project staff provide support. Once the evaluation report has been published, the commissioner normally takes the lead in disseminating evaluation findings, with the support of the evaluator. After this promotional phase, the communication role winds down as the organization focuses on the implementation of the findings and recommendations and broader learning implications for future projects and programmes.

### 3. Communicating during the evaluation

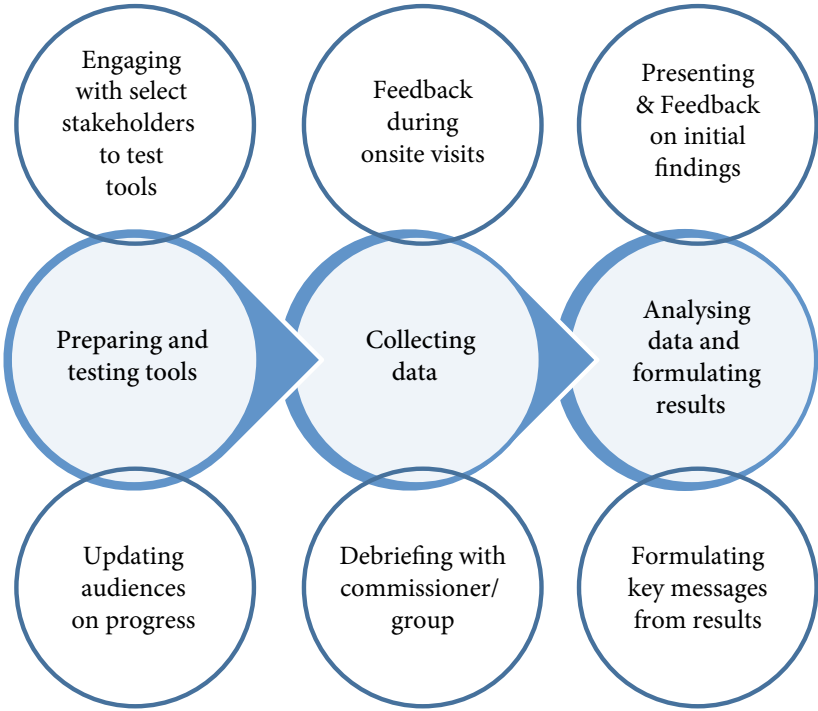
Communication needs to continue during the evaluation: it is about conveying information on progress to stakeholders, maintaining relationships, getting feedback from stakeholders on initial results and their presentation and formulating key messages from the evaluation.

The level of communication will vary from evaluation to evaluation – the more participative the evaluation the more frequent the communication will be. It will also depend on what milestones you have established during the evaluation to give and receive feedback. As part of your overall planning, you may have established a working/advisory group to support the evaluation.

If so, this group will be an important relay to communicate with and through. The diagram above illustrates some of the key opportunities you will typically have to communicate during the steps of this phase.

*Learning during the evaluation:* In the lead-up to the analysis of data and the formulation of results, the evaluator should consider how much of their initial results they want to present, and discuss the matter with the commissioner and the project/programme concerned. Often the projects/programmes appreciate being alerted to any major potential problems so that they can take corrective action in advance.

*Flexibility in communications:* Despite the best planning, communications will often need adjusting during the evaluation – this could be the result of several issues, for example: the emergence of conflicting findings could mean more communication with the project/programme, and; a delay in delivering results could mean more need to present regular updates.



## An interim report or no interim report?

In evaluations, there may be an expectation to produce an interim report presenting partial findings. The risk of producing an interim report is that once the initial findings are “on paper”, people could understand them as being conclusive, which could create confusion if final results differ. In addition, drafting an interim report may distract evaluators from finalizing their data collection and analysis. One option to consider is to make a presentation of interim findings rather than producing a formal report.

## Communicating during on-site visits

Many evaluations involve carrying out on-site visits as part of data collection – to institutions, regions, rural areas or a series of offices in different countries. During these visits, the evaluators are advised to consider the following:

- Start a visit with a briefing for senior management on the purpose of your mission to allay any concerns.
- A similar briefing is recommended to introduce you and the evaluation to the individuals/groups from whom you collect data.
- If appropriate, provide feedback to people taking part.
- Finish a visit with a debriefing with the senior management and staff (if appropriate). You may want to convey some initial impressions because your final report may not contain such a level of detail.

The commissioner also has a role to play in facilitating and supporting such visits.

## From data to key message

*“Commissioners of evaluations complain that the messages from evaluations are not useful, while evaluators complain that the messages are not used.”*

*Professor Lee Cronbach*

Normally in communication planning, we would consider a messaging strategy in the initial plan of action. However, when communicating evaluation results, we have to wait until initial findings start emerging. The reason is that key messages are normally on the findings rather than on the evaluation itself.

As the results are being formulated, this is the moment to consider what key messages to communicate from the evaluation. As Professor Cronbach said, messages are often neither *useful* nor *used* – but neither are they properly thought through.

The challenge of communicating evaluation results is to determine what are the key messages you want to convey from the (often) significant body of findings, conclusions and recommendations. Often it helps to do this in a systematic way – **a messaging strategy**:

- What is the most significant message coming out of the evaluation findings?
- What are the secondary messages (maximum four) coming out of the evaluation findings?
- What is the supporting information for these messages?

The following is an example of a messaging strategy from an evaluation:

### **Key message**

*The most significant achievement of Oxfam’s GROW campaign was persuading governments and corporations to revise food and land policies.*

#### **Secondary message 1**

*Oxfam was able to influence global land policy by lobbying the World Bank and, to a lesser extent, governments.*

#### **Secondary message 2**

*The biggest challenge for Oxfam has been to engage with 50 million people, with only 10 % of this target reached.*

#### **Secondary message 3**

*Oxfam needs to consider where it has successfully built support and coalitions and merge these into a global movement on food.*

#### **Supportive information**

*Public commitment secured from the World Bank; policy changes seen in 20 countries.*

#### **Supportive information**

*Five million people were reached mainly through social media actions on specific issues.*

#### **Supportive information**

*Findings show that Oxfam has yet to harness and coordinate the support built through different initiatives.*

Messaging strategies are all about making choices and determining the most important points you want to get across. Evaluation, like reporting from many other technical fields, is rich in details but needs to be condensed for broader consumption.

It is also useful in some evaluations to determine messages for each specific audience, for example, senior management, politicians, funders, project managers and staff. Messages are high-level summaries and not designed necessarily to be distributed directly to audiences. Above all, they provide the template for all communication activities.

### **Communicating negative results**

At this point of the evaluation, it may emerge that some results are not positive – the evaluation finds it necessary to recommend minor modifications, substantial changes or even discontinuation. And there is a dilemma: people naturally prefer to communicate good news, and to downplay any “bad” news. But evaluation has to communicate the “full picture” and there is no easy solution. As a consequence, various approaches have been used to communicate negative findings, including:

- ***Involving stakeholders and project/programme staff throughout the evaluation:*** By involving the people concerned before and during the evaluation, you build up relationships with them



and discuss progress of the evaluation constantly. In this way, a more constructive relationship will hopefully prepare for any difficult discussions and findings.

- ***Keeping stakeholders' perspectives in mind:*** When putting together critical findings, it is helpful for the evaluator to consider the perspective of the stakeholders, notably the staff managing the project under evaluation. It is difficult for people to accept criticism even if it is logically set out. There is a need to find a balance between a critical tone and respect for all involved.
- ***Communicating early with project/programme staff on negative findings:*** Presuming you have an ongoing dialogue with the commissioner and the project/programme staff, it is wise to discuss early in the evaluation as negative findings emerge. This allows staff to digest these findings and provide extra information if needed.
- ***Presenting positive findings first:*** When presenting negative findings, it is important to first mention positive aspects the project/programme, making reference to where it is doing well. This can help ease acceptance of an evaluation's findings.
- ***Using the voice of the beneficiaries:*** Often negative findings can be interpreted as the views of the evaluator that are not founded on any evidence base. The strongest voice to support findings is often the voice of beneficiaries – quoting or referring to their feedback strengthens the evaluation's credibility.
- ***Placing the emphasis on the future:*** Most evaluations do have a summative role, such as looking at the changes brought about by the project/programme. But, in addition, virtually all have a forward-looking view in that they recommend how the project/programme could be improved for the future. Ideally, negative findings should be coupled with suggested solutions for improvements.
- ***Being careful in the use of negative language:*** In writing up evaluating findings, it is important to guard against the overuse of negative language. In English, phrases such as “objectives still in progress”, “needs improvement” or “partially achieved” are more acceptable in evaluation writing than direct negative descriptions.

*Points adapted from Torres et al (2005) and Sinclair (2013).*

## 4. Communicating after the evaluation

Before and during the evaluation, hopefully communication has already played a key role and elements of the communication plan of action have been implemented. With the issuing of the evaluation report, communication efforts are usually reoriented to focus on disseminating the evaluation findings and encouraging their use.

At this point, with the findings in hand, it is necessary to review the communication plan of action and pose the following questions:

- How widely do you want to disseminate the evaluation findings?
- What level of dialogue do you want to have on the results?
- Have you foreseen the communication tools required?

The communication plan can be adjusted and if the intent is to disseminate results broadly, it is important to consider a *promotional* plan.

A promotional plan would build on the communication plan and determine strategies and tactics for disseminating evaluation findings. The strategies and tactics would include how to use the various tools and activities to ensure that your audiences view and digest the evaluation findings. Depending upon your response to the above three questions, you can think about promotional actions in terms of “reach”: internal (“inreach”), to identified stakeholders (“outreach”) and to wider audiences (“dissemination”) – with examples:

Inreach	Outreach	Dissemination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feature in intranet/staff news</li> <li>• Results workshops for staff working on project</li> <li>• Hold briefing sessions for general staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold public launch of findings</li> <li>• Prepare a stock presentation for use by staff</li> <li>• Conduct telephone conference to brief stakeholders</li> <li>• One-to-one meetings with key stakeholders to brief them on findings</li> <li>• Visits to field locations to discuss findings with beneficiaries/clients</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out a social media campaign to publicize results</li> <li>• Organize webinar with relevant network/institution</li> <li>• Link up with relevant communities of practice to disseminate results.</li> </ul>

*Promoting uptake of findings:* An important aspect of the “after” phase of evaluation is the follow-up of the evaluation’s conclusions and recommendations – to what extent they will be implemented, how they will be implemented and by whom. Organizations have in place various mechanisms to monitor and encourage the follow-up of recommendations. Additionally, many organizations have a focus on learning and actively encourage staff and management to consider the implications of the broader findings of evaluation for their current and future projects. Further, communicating evaluation findings is a key way organizations support their accountability to clients and/or beneficiaries. However, these “after” aspects go beyond the role of communication and need particular attention from organizations.

**The evaluation report – best practices**

The final evaluation report remains a key communication tool for most evaluations – it also serves as a source from which other summaries and tools will be drawn. A lot has been written about best practices for the evaluation report (see resources list) and here I summarize the key points that most agree on.



**Structure:** There is no set structure for an evaluation report, but a review shows that most evaluation reports have the components listed below.

### Components of an evaluation report

- Executive summary
- Introduction
- Short description/background of project/programme
- Description of methodology
- Findings
- Conclusions and recommendations (lessons learned – optional)
- Annexes

Findings can be organized on the basis of different frameworks: the evaluation questions; the theory of change or logical model; the major programme activities/sites; or themes that emerge during the evaluation. Regardless of the framework chosen, what is important is that the report responds to the original evaluation questions or explains why, if unable to do so.

Annexes usually found in most evaluation reports include lists of persons interviewed, documents consulted, research tools used (such as survey or interview guides), more detailed explanation on the methodology and terms of reference and/or inception report. It is worthwhile to review the main body of your report and consider what could be put into an annex, for example additional demographic data or case studies.

**Content:** Regardless of the language, all advise to write clearly and concisely. Professor Cronbach lamented that evaluation reports are written with a “self-defeating thoroughness”. Often the findings contain a level of detail that would be better found in an annex. Some advice:

- **Write in a logical manner:** When writing findings, if you are responding to an evaluation question – use the “tell – show” approach. First state a direct response to the question – “Tell” – and then provide a summary of the evidence to back up the statement – “show”. Some would argue that the next logical step would be to add what the consequences are – but then you are moving into conclusions (this author favours a clear separation between findings and conclusions).
- **Avoid compartmentalizing your results:** Results shouldn’t be reported on the basis of the data collection tools, such as a section on survey results followed by interview feedback. When presenting findings, it necessary to combine information from various data collection sources for the reader.
- **Linking findings to conclusions to recommendations:** A frequent complaint about evaluation findings is the weakness in the links to conclusions and recommendations. Avoid including any action steps or conclusions that are not clearly developed from your findings.

**Design:** Elements of layout and graphic design can enhance readability and make the report more appealing to readers. Design should not be overdone and distract the reader unnecessarily – it is important to find a balance between “flashy” and “dry”. Some advice:

- **Use design principles such as contrast, repetition, proximity and alignment:** Highlight boxes, graphics and bullet point lists are recommended to break up the text and facilitate readability, as seen in the example on the right.
- **Use headings, sub-headings and signposts to help readers navigate a report:** Particularly for long reports, consider using more headings and sub-headings and even summary texts (signposts) that introduce brief chapters.
- **Use tables, charts and illustrations to supplement findings:** Tables are good for summarizing and comparing; illustrations such as flow charts are useful for explaining a process; charts are good for any statistical data (but use sparingly – put extra graphs in an annex if necessary).

**Report process:** The evaluator is normally responsible for leading the report process and producing the report. The level of participation in this process depends upon the collaborative approach of the evaluation and the organizational policy. At the minimum, the commissioner and the project/programme manager review a draft of the report and provide feedback. At the maximum, a broader range of stakeholders will be asked to review the report and provide feedback. Different approaches are also taken in finalizing conclusions and recommendations. Some evaluations are drafted without conclusions and recommendations, which are then added after the findings have been discussed with the commissioner and stakeholders. The solution found will largely depend on the organization and its evaluation approach.

**Tailored products:** Once the evaluation report is finalized, other products can be produced largely using its content, such as: stand-alone executive summary, infographics, summary sheet, lessons-learned sheet, video reports, social media pages, blog posts, etc. (see annex 2 for some examples).

**The most significant outcomes to date were identified as:**

- The commitments to change policies from companies targeted by the Behind the Brand (BB) initiative;
- The media exposure and access to decisions makers for the Female Food Heroes (FFH) as “voices” on food in over 15 countries;
- Changes to World Bank policies as a result of the Land Freeze initiative;
- Changes to national agricultural and food security processes/policies, local “wins” on securing land for women and vulnerable groups in some 20 countries;
- Progress made in South-South collaboration within Oxfam.

---

**“GROW HAS HELPED US IN GAINING THE KNOWLEDGE AND CONFIDENCE TO STAND UP FOR OUR RIGHTS”**

Woman farmer

**In helping GROW movements build a better future (objective 1),** Oxfam was successful in constructing strong networks on local levels mainly in the South, but still only reached an estimated 10% of its targets for global mobilisation, which were more aspirational than realistic according to Oxfam. Key achievements on mobilisation included the “Stop the African Hunger Games” petition on the Sahel crisis (333,000 signatures), the Polochic (Guatemala) land grab petition (107,000), the actions on the BtB websites (110,000), the World Bank Land Freeze petition (50,000) and online interactions around food - the GROW Method (30,000). GROW was able to influence decision makers in government with positive initial results seen in at least five countries, as was the set target. Influencing consumers’ choice was also achieved but more on a local level, rather than global.

**In stopping land and water grabs (objective 2),** Oxfam was able to influence global policy through its Land Freeze initiative with the World Bank. However, it was less successful on a local level in influencing national policies. While direct action on land and water grabbing did bring results in some countries, it was less effective in others due to the sensitivity of the topic.

**Reaching a global deal on climate change (objective 3)** was not a major focus for GROW in the first 21 months given the lack of progress on climate change negotiations. However, some progress was seen on mitigation and finance issues, in addition to the support provided to national priorities and projects in many Southern countries.

**Concerning investing in small-scale food producers, particularly women (objective 4),** Oxfam was successful in ensuring that producers and women participated in decision-making processes and consequent policies in some 15 countries. Examples were seen where GROW was effective in initiatives concerning gender and women’s rights, particularly with the FFH approach and by supporting rural women in their access to policy-makers and markets.

4

*Contrast between highlight box & text*

*Alignment of information*

*Use of lists & boxes to break up text*

*Repetition of colours & fonts*

# Annex 1: Communication plan of action – template

<i>Situation analysis/opportunities</i>				
<i>Objectives</i>				
<i>Stakeholders/audiences</i>				
<i>Primary Stakeholders:</i>	<i>Main needs:</i>	<i>Before</i>	<i>During</i>	<i>After</i>
<i>Secondary stakeholders:</i>	<i>Main needs:</i>	<i>Before</i>	<i>During</i>	<i>After</i>
<i>Tertiary audiences:</i>	<i>Main needs:</i>	<i>Before</i>	<i>During</i>	<i>After</i>
<i>Communication activities</i>				
<i>When:</i>	<i>Activity/tool:</i>	<i>Audience(s):</i>	<i>Which Objective:</i>	<i>By whom?</i>

Following is an example of a completed plan of action, based on the case study found at annex 3.

<b>Situation analysis (summary points):</b> diversity of activities and audiences to consider; different levels of participation in evaluation desired/perceived; limited to considerable knowledge of key audiences; opportunity with publication of report to communicate; very 'rich' content to communicate; how to deal with 'sensitive' findings (if found to be the case).				
<b>Objectives</b>				
1. Create awareness of the evaluation amongst primary stakeholders prior to the evaluation;				
2. Build relations with primary stakeholders prior to the evaluation;				
3. Facilitate the evaluation process during the evaluation with primary and secondary stakeholders;				
4. Disseminate evaluation findings widely amongst all stakeholders to encourage use and learning.				
<b>Stakeholders/audiences</b>				
<b>Primary:</b>	<b>Main communication needs:</b>	<b>Before</b>	<b>During</b>	<b>After</b>
ISI secretariat	Be informed, facilitate, use findings	X	X	X
ISI Board	Be informed, facilitate, see evaluation value	X	X	X
Soya industry	Be informed, facilitate, supportive	X	X	X
Government ministries	Be informed, see value of ISI	X		X
<b>Secondary:</b>	<b>Main communication needs:</b>	<b>Before</b>	<b>During</b>	<b>After</b>
Axe Steering Committees	Understand implications for axe(s), advocate		X	X
ISI field staff	Be informed, see evaluation value/supportive	X	X	X
National Soya Boards	See evaluation value, collaborative		X	X
Trade unions	See evaluation value, collaborative		X	X
Beneficiaries – Brazil/China	Their input valued; supportive		X	<u>X</u>



<i>Tertiary:</i>	<i>Main communication needs:</i>	<i>Before</i>	<i>During</i>	<i>After</i>
Media – USA/Europe	Interesting & engaging story			X
Other primary sectors	Learn from similar industry			X
UN technical agencies	Learn for consideration to other industries			X
Evaluation community	Be informed-evaluation methods/challenges			X
University research depts.	Their input considered, implications for work		X	X
Consumers	Be informed of role of ISI in soya products			<u>X</u>

**Communication activities (non-exhaustive)**

<i>Activity/tool:</i>	<i>Audience(s):</i>	<i>When:</i>	<i>Which Objective:</i>	<i>By whom?</i>
Briefing meetings	All primary audiences	Before	1	Evaluation team
Webinar – briefing on evaluation	All primary & secondary audiences	Before	1	Evaluation team & commissioner
Website page – briefing on evaluation	All audiences	Before	1	Commissioner
Blog posts – updates on evaluation progress	Primary & secondary audiences	During	1, 2, 3	Evaluation team
Feedback workshops – during field visits	Primary & secondary audiences – Brazil/ China	During	2,3	Evaluation team
Online discussion group	Primary & secondary audiences	During	3	Evaluation team & commissioner
Video report	<u>Secondary audiences</u>	After	4	Evaluation team & commissioner
Press release	Tertiary audiences	After	4	Commissioner
1 page snapshot	All audiences	After	4	Commissioner
Workshops on findings	ISI Board & Secretariat	After	4	Commissioner (support of evaluation team)


## Annex 2: Innovative tools for communication and evaluation

New communication tools are emerging constantly – what is “innovative” today may be “old news” tomorrow. And it shouldn’t be forgotten that some classic century-old tools, such as the press release, are still very much in use. Mobile communications, communicating via mobile telephones and tablets is the next frontier, although to date, this medium has mainly been used for data collection (for example surveying through text messages) rather than for communication. In the next pages, the latest communication tools are presented, listing advantages and disadvantages.

<i>Tool</i>	<i>Description/use</i>	<i>Disadvantages/advantages</i>
1 page snapshot	<p>Illustrates findings in one or two pages; usually using images and graphics</p> <p>Useful in communicating main evaluation results quickly to a wide audience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Visually attractive</li> <li>✓ Messages summarized succinctly</li> <li>✓ Accessible to many audiences</li> <li>✗ Doesn’t provide “full picture”</li> <li>✗ Not always suitable for complex evaluations</li> <li>✗ Challenge to get agreement internally on what to include</li> </ul>
<p>Infographic</p> 	<p>Graphically illustrates key findings in one image</p> <p>Useful in spreading key findings online, notably through social media</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Visually attractive</li> <li>✓ Understood rapidly</li> <li>✓ Potential to reach many audiences</li> <li>✗ Biased towards quantitative data</li> <li>✗ May group unrelated data</li> <li>✗ Challenge to get agreement internally on what to include</li> </ul>
<p>Video report</p> 	<p>Explains main findings using a combination of animations, interviews and texts</p> <p>Can be used in various forums to stimulate discussion on findings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Can tell a compelling story</li> <li>✓ Can reach diverse audiences</li> <li>✓ Visuals facilitate understanding</li> <li>✗ Requires preparation during the evaluation (i.e. interviews)</li> <li>✗ Requires video editing and animation skills (budget also)</li> </ul>



<p><b>Photostory</b></p>	<p>Findings (or process) are told in a story illustrated by captions and photos</p> <p>Useful for communicating key messages and the process of evaluation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Can tell a compelling story</li> <li>✓ Beneficiaries' voices strong</li> <li>✓ Accessible for audiences</li> <li>✗ Not suitable for all evaluations</li> <li>✗ Cannot substitute more in-depth reports</li> </ul>
<p><b>Interactive web page</b></p>	<p>An animated web page displays evaluation results</p> <p>Can be used to show different results in an interactive format.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Visually attractive/interactive</li> <li>✓ Creative way of displaying data</li> <li>✗ Bias towards quantitative data</li> <li>✗ Not suitable for all types of evaluation</li> <li>✗ Can only display limited results</li> </ul>
<p><b>Blog</b></p> <p><b>Snapshot from the JSI Consultation - Cairo, Egypt</b> 21 February 2013</p> <p>To keep stakeholders updated on the progress of the JSI consultative process, the consultation team will provide regular blog posts containing snapshots of the process. This post comes from Inji El Abd, member of the consultation team.</p> <p>The Cairo Focus Group Discussion, hosted by the <a href="#">Humanitarian Forum</a>, was attended by a diverse group of humanitarian workers from international humanitarian organizations and local community development initiatives. Though many were not familiar with the standards they had their own personal views and organizational principles for ensuring quality and accountability in humanitarian work. The participants were asked to express those principles using collage, working in groups, and later shared those principles with the rest of the group.</p> <p>After this process of collective reflection the groups each discussed one of the three standards and their applicability to their work. They were asked to briefly present the essence of the standard, as well as what they thought of it, to the rest of the group. Though there were some recommendations around the format and ease of use of the Standards, it was evident that the Standards resonated well with the majority of attendees who had never used them. The closing session focused on comparing the participants' own "standards" and the three JSI initiatives' standards; there appeared to be many overlaps.</p> <p>The standards also seemed to resonate well with Egyptian proverbs, as one participant explained a HAP principles to another saying "it is not just about giving aid but the way we treat people, this is like the [hospitality] proverb 'I'd rather have you greet me well than feed me'".</p> <p>Participants were very pleased to "have a say" through this consultation yet felt that the region is too often abandoned when it comes to communication of accountability standards.</p> <p><b>Inji El Abd, JSI Consultant</b></p>	<p>An evaluation blog contains regular updates on an evaluation's progress and/or results</p> <p>Useful in updating stakeholders and providing insights into the evaluation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ News approach facilitates interest</li> <li>✓ Can relay voice of beneficiaries</li> <li>✓ Potential to reach diverse audiences</li> <li>✗ Only provides "snapshot" on evaluation</li> <li>✗ Usually does not provoke substantial interaction (i.e. comments)</li> <li>✗ Post may need vetting, which could delay publication</li> </ul>

<p>Webinar</p> 	<p>Useful for holding online presentation and discussion</p> <p>Useful in presenting evaluation findings and soliciting feedback</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Interactive format that promotes learning</li> <li>✓ Can reach diverse audiences globally</li> <li>✓ Can receive instant feedback</li> <li>✗ Limited to fewer than 100 persons</li> <li>✗ Requires reasonable internet connection</li> <li>✗ More successful as a presentation tool rather than for a discussion</li> </ul>
<p>Social media</p> 	<p>Social media are not one tool - but a variety of tools and networks.</p> <p>Social media are useful both as a location for content (i.e. Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube) but also as a channel for the promotion of existing content (i.e. Twitter).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Can solicit feedback</li> <li>✓ Reaches diverse audiences</li> <li>✗ Organization must be ready to interact</li> <li>✗ Feedback is public and can be negative</li> <li>✗ Social media need constant “feeding” to build audiences.</li> </ul>

**Sources of examples used:**

**1 page snapshot:**

<http://myvisualvoice.com/>

**Video report:**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WJteTOYB2eI>

**Infographic:**

[http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/blog/infographics to make your eval results go viral](http://www.betterevaluation.org/en/blog/infographics%20to%20make%20your%20eval%20results%20go%20viral)

**Blog**

<http://www.alnap.org/resource/20753.aspx>

**Photostory:**

<http://insightshare.org/>

**Webinars:**

<http://www.seachangecop.org/webinars/>



## Annex 3: Case study – An evaluation of the International Soya Initiative

This case study has been prepared to allow individuals and groups to reflect and practise communicating in evaluation. All information is fictional – with the exception of the soya facts below – those are true!

### Part 1 – An introduction to the International Soya Initiative (ISI)

The International Soya Initiative is a unique partnership set up by soya-producers, labour unions, national and international technical agencies to encourage the sustainable production of soya and its promotion to consumers as a healthy and nutritious product.

The ISI has a small secretariat based in Geneva and focuses on four strategic axes:

- Knowledge-management: ensuring that evidence is collected and disseminated on soya production, marketing and scientific facts
- Advocacy: for appropriate changes to the policy and practices of governments and the soya industry
- Promotion: active marketing of the benefits of soya products
- Convening: establishing synergies and networks among the different components of the soya industry.

#### Soya

The main producers of soya beans are the United States of America (USA), Brazil, Argentina, China and India (some 240 million tons per year are produced). The main consumers of soya are China, the USA, Brazil, Argentina and European Union (EU) countries. Most soya beans are processed for their oil and protein for the animal-feed industry. A smaller percentage is processed for human consumption and made into products including soya milk, soya sauce, soya flour, soya protein, tofu and many retail food products. Soya beans are also used in many non-food (industrial) products.



You are an evaluation team that has been mandated to carry out an evaluation for the ISI. You are working directly with the Knowledge Management officer of the ISI (there is no evaluation unit). The main objective of the evaluation is to review progress on the four axes as set out in the 2010-2014 strategy. This evaluation was planned at the inception of the strategy in 2010 and is seen as a major accountability exercise for the ISI board. It has a timeline of six months. There is an agreement to publish the final evaluation report publicly.

Based on an initial review of the project documentation and discussions with the ISI team, you have discovered the following about the ISI:

- The ISI involves a broad range of stakeholders including large soya producers, small-scale farmers and their associations, government bodies (mainly ministries of trade, promotion and primary industries), trade unions representing farm workers, national soya bodies (often semi-government bodies), university research departments and companies involved in bringing soya products to the market.
- The Secretariat has to manage different expectations of its members; some expect a very pro-active approach whereas others expect the Secretariat to be largely guided by the ISI Board.
- The ISI axes are quite distinct in their activities, notably: advocacy focuses on improving farming practices in soya-producing countries through micro-projects and policy influence (focus on Brazil and China), whereas; promotion concentrates on supporting marketing efforts in the main soya markets (particularly in China and the USA).
- ISI activities have attracted some attention in the media in the USA and EU, for example the profiling of its activities on sustainable farming in Brazil.
- The ISI has created a general consensus among its members on the nutritious benefits of soya, which have featured strongly in its promotional work in consumer markets. However, there has been some backlash from the media, questioning the benefits of soya consumption.
- As a relatively new organization, the ISI faces challenges in project management, mostly in its ability to monitor progress and assess results. This is compounded by difficulties in isolating its influence in some areas, such as soya promotion.
- The ISI relies on funding from its members. It also provides limited funding for its partners, for example in their promotional activities at the national level.

### ISI structure

Established in 2004, the ISI is governed by a Foundation Board and its work is implemented and supervised by a secretariat based in Geneva, Switzerland (some 15 staff). The ISI is primarily funded by contributions from Board members. For each strategic axis, a steering committee supports the strategy and oversees implementation. In 2009, the ISI established a local office in Brazil and a similar facility was established in China in 2010. Both offices are working closely with the relevant government departments, international agencies, local civil society representatives and industry members. In each of the five major soya markets, the ISI has local partners (often national soya bodies) to support promotional and advocacy activities.

- *Task 1: After reading the case study introduction, your task is to identify:*
  - *Three opportunities for communications in this evaluation*
  - *Three challenges for communications in this evaluation*
  - *Please summarize your six points in keywords.*

## Part 2 – Planning for communication for the ISI evaluation

As the evaluation team, you have now conducted some initial interviews with ISI staff and Board members. The following are initial observations and your plans on the evaluation:

- The methodology you have decided upon includes on-site visits to Brazil, China and the USA, in addition to regular discussions with the Secretariat in Geneva. The methods to be used will include semi-structured interviews (on-site and remotely), group discussions and analyses of market data, policy and the media.
- The evaluation team's challenges include the need for distinct methods for the two axes of the ISI: promotion and advocacy. On one hand, to assess the promotional axis, the team needs to consider capacity building with national partners and their marketing efforts in soya consumer markets. On the other hand, to assess the advocacy axis, they need to consider influences on policy and the outcomes of micro-projects at the grassroots level.
- Mixed messages have been received about the level of participation desired for the evaluation; discussions with ISI field staff in Brazil and China indicate that they would like a highly participative evaluation, particularly involving small-scale farmers that they are working with. ISI Board members are more reserved and some see evaluation more as an audit approach.
- National partners (non-governmental organizations, soya bodies, trade unions and government agencies) vary in their links with the ISI; some have developed close ties whereas others have only limited knowledge of ISI activities, despite their governments contributing significant funding.
- The 15-member ISI Board, which meets every six months, consists of people with different levels of commitment to the ISI – some have proved key for introductions and access to stakeholders at the national level.
- UN technical agencies, such as the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the International Trade Centre have expressed interest in the ISI model for potential adaptation to other primary sectors/products, such as sesame, oats.
- *Task 2: Using the communication plan of action template (see annex 1), please complete the following:*
  - Note keywords for situation analysis
  - Create communication objectives for the evaluation (maximum four)
  - Determine primary, secondary and tertiary audiences; list “main needs” for primary audiences
  - List some suggested communication activities for the audience allocated to your group.

*N.B. Annex 1 contains a response to this task – a suggested plan of action.*

## Part 3 – Communication during the ISI evaluation

*The following are four different scenarios that occur during the evaluation:*

### Scenario 1 – the advisory board

You have just concluded the inception report and are starting to work on the evaluation tools. Your team suggested to the ISI Secretariat to set up an advisory board to support the evaluation,

which has been accepted. The advisory board is made up of some board members, members of the four steering committees (strategic axes), field staff and national- and international-level stakeholders. As it was your idea (!), the Secretariat has asked you to determine how you can work with the advisory board, notably how the board will facilitate access and communications for you and promote a participatory evaluation approach.

### **Scenario 2 – the Brazil visit**

Your team is carrying out an on-site visit in Brazil. You are looking especially at the promotion and advocacy axes. The Brazil field office (three staff members) has organized meetings for you with national partners (non-governmental organizations, national soya boards, a consumers' association, a farmers' union and government agencies) and field visits to two rural ISI micro-projects. There is also a Brazilian board member, chairman of a large soya processing company to meet. The head of the ISI office is keen to hear how you will communicate your impressions to stakeholders in Brazil. The ISI Secretariat is also keen to hear your impressions after the visit.

### **Scenario 3 – dispersed data collection**

Owing to budget and time constraints, your team has been split into sub-teams: one sub-team is in Brazil, another is in China and a third is in Geneva. Your sub-team in Geneva reports that the board members and the broader stakeholders are not really aware that an evaluation is under way – some even act surprised when contacted for an interview. You've also learned that a major meeting going on in London, and bringing together soya companies, has quite some overlap with your audiences. The Secretariat seems willing to support the evaluation but staff are overwhelmed, as a major quality certification exercise is under way at the same time as the evaluation.

### **Scenario 4 – interim reporting**

Your team has concluded the two on-site visits to Brazil and China. You have also interviewed most key stakeholders in Geneva and elsewhere. There is a Board meeting coming up in the next weeks and the Secretariat has asked you to present some initial findings. On one hand, you have just finished data collection and have not yet had the time to analyse it all – you have interview notes, market data, short video clips of projects and beneficiaries and policy documents – all to review and analyse. On the other hand, the Secretariat is very keen that you speak to the Board and inform them of your progress.

- *Task 3: Read each scenario. Determine what will be your communication response to the situation described in each scenario. N.B. As the evaluation team, you are now busy carrying out the evaluation, preparing tools, collecting data and formulating results.*

## **Part 4 – from data to key messages**

*The text below summarizes some of the evaluation's key findings.*

Creating effective child protection systems in soya production is an aspect of micro-project programme design that is not being sufficiently implemented at this stage, notably in Brazil. Such

systems are needed to ensure the protection of children, particularly the most vulnerable, and the team will make recommendations in this regard. (This is a sensitive point as it potentially involves practices of ISI members, such as companies.)

The overall implementation of the four axes needed improvements owing to inconsistencies in the relationship between the steering committees and the management of the axes. Additionally, no reporting system was evident between these committees and the board. There was little evidence of successful synergies among the different actors in the soya industry, except at the national level, and this could not be attributed to the ISI.

Initiatives with national bodies to promote soya produced mixed results. While six countries benefitted from capacity building, often in the form of training, there was no follow-up or assessment of it. Two countries, China and the USA, saw the launch of new marketing campaigns on soya, with a significant input from the ISI and its partners. Market data indicate increased sales in these countries for consumer products.

The ISI's community-based approach proved to be both relevant to the communities concerned and effective in promoting more sustainable soya production practices. The projects in Brazil and China were similar in that they positively involved small-scale farmers who reported direct benefits. However, Brazil was more successful than China in facilitating access to markets for producers.

The evaluation identified four national policies created in the past two years that were favourable to soybean farming in Argentina, Brazil, the USA and the EU. An analysis of these policies and interviews with policy-makers indicated different levels of the ISI's influence on the policies, for example the EU policy was partially drafted by ISI Board members.

Working with select Board members, the Secretariat has managed to produce a significant body of scientific knowledge on the benefits of soya. The evaluation found that all of the top five consumer markets have taken on board this knowledge in their marketing efforts. Consumer surveys (third party) in the EU and the USA show substantial rises in awareness of soya as a healthy product (20% and 15% increases respectively). Media analysis indicates positive coverage on soya in most markets, with messages of national soya boards reflected in some 60% of media coverage. Only Canada was found to be a major dissenter in public opinion on soya, although research indicates this was due to the “soya-sauce-found-to-contain-squirrel-oil” scandal that dominated Canadian media coverage.

- *Task 4: Determine what you would see as the key message and the three – four secondary messages from the above text.*

## **Part 5 – implementing the communication plan**

Your evaluation report has now been finalized and approved by the ISI advisory board (established for the evaluation). Overall, the feedback you have received to date was positive, with only some concern from select board members about the potential implications of certain recom-

mendations (notably for their own companies). Government agencies, civil society and ISI staff are largely supportive of the findings.

The ISI Secretariat has asked you to prepare a brief promotional plan for communicating the evaluation findings. The Secretariat has set aside a small budget for translation and some tools, anticipating a need for some material in Portuguese (for Brazil) and Chinese. The evaluation team will be responsible for the promotion because the Secretariat has very limited resources (staff). Remember, the evaluation team has a lot of raw data from its field work, such as videos of micro-projects, video interviews with stakeholders, quotes from stakeholders and examples of promotional material.

The Secretariat proposes that dissemination of results be organized at three levels:

- **Inreach:** ISI staff, members of the board and steering committees
  - **Outreach:** All stakeholder groups; large soya producers, small-scale farmers and their associations, government bodies (mainly ministries of trade, promotion and primary industries), trade unions representing farm workers, national soya bodies (often semi-government bodies), university research departments and companies involved in bringing soya products to market
  - **Dissemination:** wider audiences that could be interested in results, other similar primary sectors (such as oats, sesame, wheat), UN technical agencies (the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the United Nations International Trade Centre), evaluation practitioners, consumers (of soya products)
- *Task 5: Review the situation and propose some promotional ideas/tactics for the given level:*
- *Inreach*
  - *Outreach*
  - *Dissemination*



## Annex 4: Extra resources

*This guide has been prepared from the author's own experience and from many sources, with the main resources consulted listed here.*

ALNAP (2016). *Evaluation of Humanitarian Action Guide (chapter 17: Reporting and communicating evaluation findings with a utilisation focus)*:

<http://www.alnap.org/resource/23592>

Asian Development Bank (2012). *Communicating Evaluation Results*. (Presentation by the Asian Development Bank, 12th Meeting of the DAC Evaluation Network, June 2011).

<http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/ADBCommsPrez.pdf>

Better Evaluation (2013), *Report and Support use of findings*.

<http://betterevaluation.org/sites/default/files/Report%20-%20Compact.pdf>

Bruner Foundation (2008). *Using Evaluation Findings*.

<http://www.evaluativethinking.org/docs/EvaluativeThinking.bulletin.6.pdf>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, (2013). *Evaluation Reporting: A Guide to Help Ensure Use of Evaluation Findings*.

[http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsr/docs/Evaluation\\_Reporting\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsr/docs/Evaluation_Reporting_Guide.pdf)

da Costa, P (2012). *Study on Communicating Evaluation Results*. Prepared for the OECD Informal Network of DAC Development Communicators.

[http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/StudyonCommunicatingEvaluationResults\\_FINAL\\_091112.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/StudyonCommunicatingEvaluationResults_FINAL_091112.pdf)

Evergreen, S. (2013). *Evaluation Executive Summaries & Reports (blog post)*.

<http://stephanieevergreen.com/evaluation-executive-summaries-reports/>

ILO (2014). *Stakeholder participation*. Guidance note 7.

[http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS\\_165982/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165982/lang--en/index.htm)

Miron, G. (2004). *Evaluation report checklist*. Western Michigan University Evaluation Center.

[http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/archive\\_checklists/reports.xls](http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/archive_checklists/reports.xls)

O'Neil, G. (2012). *7 new ways to present evaluation findings* (Presentation at the 10th EES Conference, Helsinki, October 2012).

<http://www.slideshare.net/goneil/seven-new-ways-to-present-evaluation-findings>

Pell Institute (2014). *Evaluation guide – developing a communications plan* (website).

<http://toolkit.pellinstitute.org/evaluation-guide/communicate-improve/develop-a-communications-plan/>

Sinclair, J. (2013). *Tips for delivering negative results* (blog post).  
<http://betterevaluation.org/blog/delivering-bad-news>

Steston, V. (2008) *Communicating and Reporting on an Evaluation*. American Red Cross, CRS.  
<http://www.alnap.org/resource/9888>

Torres, R. T., Preskill, H. S. & Piontek, M. E. (2005). *Evaluation strategies for communicating and reporting: Enhancing learning in organizations*. Sage Publications.

(Links validated in September 2017)