# Communication and Marketing for Environmental Funds

6

RedLAC Capacity Building Project for Environmental Funds

Latin American and Caribbean Network of Environmental Funds

# Scaling up Conservation Finance

The Latin America and Caribbean Network of Environmental Funds – RedLAC – was created in 1999 and congregates currently 25 funds from 15 countries. Its mission is to set up an effective system of learning, strengthening, training, and cooperation through a Network of Environmental Funds (EFs) aimed at contributing to the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources in the region.

RedLAC, with the support of the Gordon & Betty Moore Foundation and the French Fund for the Global Environment (FFEM, for its name in French), implements a capacity building project with the objective of strengthening the capacity of EFs to develop innovative financial mechanisms for biodiversity conservation, reducing their dependence on donations, and also to support the establishment of new EFs, by systematizing and sharing proven best practices in funds day to day operation.

This project, coordinated by the Brazilian Biodiversity Fund – Funbio - on behalf of the RedLAC membership, has the goal of promoting the implementation of new revenue streams in the Funds' portfolios, creating financially sustainable sources of funding for these institutions to invest in conservation. Having knowledge management as its core, the project will systematize the existing information on different topics of interest for EFs and build new content based on the collective experience of the Funds' community.

This textbook was prepared to support the sixth workshop of the capacity building initiative, focusing on communication and marketing for environmental funds. Funds from Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean presented their cases, covering experiences with institutional communication, events, photo contests and engagement with local communities and protected areas' stakeholders. Funbio organized this workshop in collaboration with the Bwindi Mgahinga Conservation Trust, in the city of Entebbe, Uganda on September 25 to 26, 2012.


Organization: FUNDO BRASILEIRO PARA A BIODIVERSIDADE FUNBIO; BMCT

Funded by: GORDON AND BETTY MOORE FOUNDATION; FFEM Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial


# Table of Contents

**Authors:** João Gonçalves and Daniela Lerda, ©2012 PADMA - www.apadma.com


**Authors of the cases:**
Funbio – Camila Monteiro and Fernanda Barbosa
Fundesnap – Valeria Dorado
Environmental Foundation of Jamaica – Karen Gayle
Mount Mulanje Conservation Trust – Carl Bruessow
Profonanpe – Humberto Cabrera

Communication and Marketing for Environmental Funds. RedLAC Capacity Building Project/ Authors: João Gonçalves and Daniela Lerda – Rio de Janeiro: RedLAC, 2012.

Authors of the cases:
Funbio – Camila Monteiro and Fernanda Barbosa
Fundesnap – Valeria Dorado
Environmental Foundation of Jamaica – Karen Gayle
Mount Mulanje Conservation Trust – Carl Bruessow
Profonanpe – Humberto Cabrera

93p.: il; 29cm.

1. Environmental Funds. 2. Capacity Building. 3.Communication. 4. Marketing. 5. Communication strategies. 6. Institutional communication. 7. Innovation and intangible value.

CDD 658.8

# Introduction

## Strengthening Conservation Finance through communication

Communication is a powerful tool for any organization, including those involved in conservation finance. But often, environmental funds (EFs) have to focus their efforts on strengthening programmatic areas of their operations, such as those that deal with financial management, project support, and procurement, leaving less focus on communication. In other words, although fund Directors recognize the importance of communication to an organization's success, in practice, this often does not translate to adequate resources in terms of budget and staff being dedicated to communication.

This course aims to reinforce understanding that an effective communication program can contribute to EF's strategic objectives, improve institutional relationship with stakeholders, and help raise the profile of conservation finance issues ultimately supporting the EFs mission. Using communication in a more strategic way will help EFs to develop trust with their stakeholders, harness commitment from partners, and ultimately contribute towards the long-term success of the organization.

Above all, an effective communication program must improve how EFs are perceived by target audiences. But how can an EF project a positive image to those who are not yet familiar with their work? How can they provide concrete examples of how they are being effective in delivering on their mission? How will they set their organization apart from others that are also involved in conservation? Communication should walk hand in hand with the programmatic areas of the EF, helping to build up its legitimacy and to raise the profile of conservation finance mechanisms and their role in environmental protection.

Communication is particularly important when it comes to securing new funding. As fundraising becomes increasingly challenging due to the global economic crisis, EFs must learn to innovate in the way that they communicate with different donor audiences. Traditional donor sources are becoming increasingly difficult to access and there are a growing number of organizations competing for the same resources. EFs must therefore adapt to this change in context and find new and effective ways to communicate with donors, as well as to leverage innovative sources of funding. When working with the private sector in particular, communication can help to minimize risks and maximize the benefits of accepting resources from companies, by providing transparency and clarity on the objectives of the partnership. Communication can also help to design attractive fundraising campaigns targeting individuals and other major donors.

In the end, developing communication as a core area of work within an EF is all about building institutional value. An effective communication strategy should demonstrate the unique selling proposition of the organization setting it apart from others working on similar issues. What sets an organization apart from another could be its unique approach, its mission, or the way that it has dedicated itself to a particular project. Previous success with a well-known project, excellence in transparency and financial management, or a win-win partnership between an EF and other organizations could all be highlighted through communication to reinforce an EF's uniqueness. Communication can also be a key aspect of project implementation, local community and general stakeholder engagement, and accountability and reporting. Communication adds intangible value to a fund improving its overall success, enhancing credibility and transparency - values that should be associated with any EF wishing to position itself as the best option for receiving donor resources.



# Module 1
# What is Communication?

This is the first of six modules in the Communication and Marketing for Environmental Funds Course. It introduces the basic principles of communication and focuses on some marketing and communication strategies.

After completing this module you will be able to:

- Define the basic elements of communication and the communication process;
- State the characteristics of effective communication;
- Integrate marketing and communication into your EF's work to achieve results.

## What is Communication?

We were born to communicate. Even if we are not speaking, we are communicating through non-verbal forms of communication. To communicate we use a series of symbols that comprise our messages and that help us to share meaning with others. Symbols are learned codes, created to give meaning for actions, objects and feelings. Language, visuals, gestures, body movements or facial expressions are all examples of symbols. And symbols can be both verbal and non-verbal (see box below). Because of that, communication styles are linked to culture - a socially constructed way of thinking and behaving in the world.

Communication is a two-way process. And the process is a moving and evolving set of experiences that influence our present and future interactions. As a process, the exchange of messages is ongoing and dynamic. Our internal communication and our exchange with others are continuously changing and adapting. Communication interactions occur during specific social situations, in different physical environments and for a variety reasons and purposes.

During the current course, we will work with the definition of communication as the exchange of information, thoughts and ideas between different audiences. It is important to understand some basics principles of communication theory before going further, as these concepts will be the very first step in developing a solid communication program for your environmental fund.

### Communication types

We communicate through the exchange of symbols to describe ideas and experiences. Language is a common symbol system, but there are several other symbols like pictures, colors, signs, sounds which are also used in the way that we communicate with others. We also communicate through facial expressions, movements, the clothes we wear and so on; whether we use spoken language or not. In this way, different types of communication can be classified as: verbal and non-verbal.

**Verbal Communication** can be oral and/or written. It consists of speaking, listening, writing, reading and thinking. It encompasses the use of both spoken and written language to accomplish message goals. There are several forms of verbal communication: face-to-face and telephone conversations, presentations, public speaking, interviews, meetings, letter, emails, reports, notifications, meeting minutes, etc...

**Non-Verbal Communication** can be everything that uses a wordless message to communicate an idea. It includes the use of pictures, signs, gestures and facial expressions. It also consists of action language (body movements) or object language, such as photos, paintings and design. Even your personal appearance and the clothes you wear can be considered non-verbal communication types.

## Basic Elements of Communication

Becoming a skilled communicator requires learning the basic elements of communication and how to apply these through a variety of activities such as public speaking, interpersonal relationships, media relations, events, producing communications products, etc.

The communication process begins with a sender and ends with a receiver. This interaction is made up of five key components:

- Encoding
- Medium of transmission and channel
- The message
- Decoding
- Feedback

1. Sender/Encoding: The **sender** is an individual, group or organization that initiates the communication process (e.g. the speaker). The sender is responsible for translating information into a message in what is called the encoding process. **Encoding** involves the selection of the ideas, or the choice of images and words that will be transmitted to the receiver.

2. Message: The **message** is the encoded idea transmitted by the sender. Every message has at least two major aspects - content and treatment. Formulating the message to meet the expectations of the receiver enhances uptake and understanding.

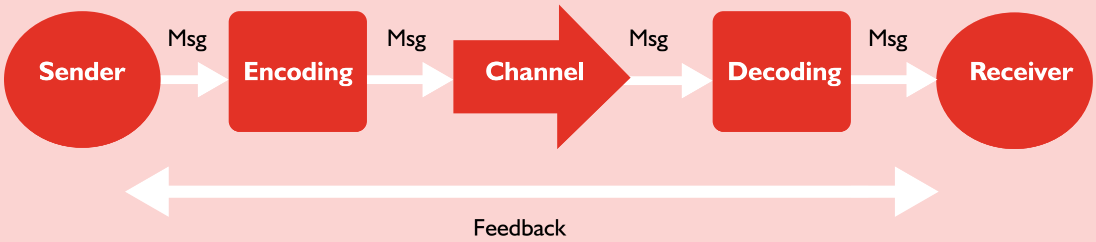
3. Medium/Channel: The **medium** is the way that the message is transmitted to the receiver. It can be oral, written or non-verbal. The **channel** is the means used to convey the message – such as e-mails, phone calls, and face-to-face meetings. Each medium or channel has its own set of rules and convention.

4. Receiver/Decoding: The **receiver** is the destination - the individual, group or organization to whom the message is directed (e.g. the listener). Once the message is received it will be decoded by the receiver. The **decoding** process involves the examination and the interpretation of the message in order to assign it with some type of meaning. Successful communication takes place when the receiver correctly interprets the sender's message.

5. Feedback: The **feedback** is the final step in the communication process. It can be a verbal or a non-verbal reaction or response. Effective communication takes place only when there is feedback. Without feedback, the sender cannot confirm that the receiver has interpreted the message correctly.

In summary, we can say that effective communication follows the following steps:

There is a **sender**.
The sender has an idea.
The sender **encodes** the idea into a message.
The message travels through a **channel**.
The receiver gets the message.
The receiver **decodes** the message.
The **receiver** gives feedback to the sender.




## Effective Communication

Broadly speaking, organizations communicate for two main reasons: to inform and to persuade. It doesn't matter if the business is a bank, a bakery or an environmental fund. An organization communicates to inform **what** they offer, **why** and **how** they offer it. The sender, in this case, expects target audiences to react to its messages with a clear action or response, be it supporting, donating, agreeing, buying, contracting, etc.

Effective communication can also be a problem-solving tool. If you don't have a problem you don't need to communicate. So, before starting any communication the question you should answer is: what problem must communication solve?

Whatever the organization's problem is - credibility, transparency, money, support, etc. – there is a way that communication can help. That is why effective communication requires understanding of the motivation behind the information that is being communicated. Your communications activity is not an end in itself but should serve as a means to deliver on your organizational objectives. Clearly any communication strategy should be built to reach your organizational goal.

**Listening is Key**

On the bestseller book "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People", Stephen R. Covey says: "Communication is the most important skill in life. You spend years learning how to read and write, and years learning how to speak. But what about listening? What training have you had that enables you to listen so you really, deeply understand another human being? Probably none, right?". This is the introductory part of the "Habit 5: Seek first to understand, then to be understood" and it has all to do with listening.

Any kind of communication cannot be effective without proper listening on the part of the receiver of the message. Poor listening may defeat the very purpose of oral communication. It is very important to improve the habit to listen. It requires serious effort on the part of the listener to absorb what he is being told. We listen carefully only if we want to listen, and listening requires serious work. Being a good sender is equally important. To be a good sender you must listen to what your target audience says to you! That is the central point of any effective communication.

## Marketing and Communication

Marketing and communication play a major role in all aspects of an organization's work. In general, we could define marketing as the action or business of promoting and selling products. Communication, on the other hand, could be defined as the use of all available tools to manage the flow of information between an organization and its audiences.

The marketing guru, Dr. Philip Kotler, defines marketing as: "the science and art of exploring, creating, and delivering value to satisfy the needs of a target market at a profit. Marketing identifies unfulfilled needs and desires. It defines, measures and quantifies the size of the identified market and the profit potential". He also defines communication as "the concept under which a company carefully integrates and coordinates its many communications channels to deliver a clear, consistent message"[1].

However, the lines between marketing and communication are often blurry. Many nonprofit organizations define their marketing strategies as their approach to raising resources, while communication works to help raise the profile of the organization and to increase public awareness catalyzing action and support towards its ultimate goals.

The marketing team is responsible for activities such as advertisement, membership, corporate relations, cause related activities, product licensing, social merchandising, sponsorship, major donor engagement and others. The communication team is responsible for public campaigns, media and public relations, branding, online communication, events, publications, reports, storytelling and others. Both teams must be multidisciplinary, and can be composed of marketers, communicators, journalists, press officers, designers, photographers, video makers and other communication related professionals.

In fact, marketing and communication must work together. From fundraising, to building relationships with stakeholders, to developing an institutional brand, marketing and communication should be integrated into your fund's strategy and budget. In this course, when we refer to communication, we are referring to traditional marketing and communication activities being integrated as complementary approaches.

### AIDA: A Guiding Principle of Communication

Marketing is guided by a fundamental question: **What's in it for me?** That means people must get something in return for whatever action they are being asked to perform. Remember that marketing is action - Buy, Conserve, Join, Save! And the benefit of acting must be laid out clearly and in a personal way in order to fully engage the receiver.

Studies of the most effective communication programs reveal a success formula for effective communication: A I D A – Awareness, Interest, Desire and Action. The idea is that awareness generates interest which in turn generates desire that leads to action.

AIDA is a timeless formula that, if followed, will lead to an action being performed by your audience. In the case of an effective advertising campaign, for example, the campaign stimulates our Awareness of a product and if the ad is effective, we become Interested in the product. The best ads then stimulate our Desire for the product. Finally, of course, the ad leads to Action – ultimately the purchase of the product.

## Communication and Marketing Strategies

The way information is consumed has drastically changed in the last fifty years. The Information Age, which is characterized by a digital revolution, is responsible for shifting the economy from a dependency on the traditional production of goods and services to one that is based on information exchange. The Information Age is also characterized by an individual's ability to transfer information freely and to access instant content.

The result is a huge number of messages that every person has to send, receive, and process every day. A 2011 research from University of Southern California[2] indicates that we receive five times more information every day as

[1] For a quick, but great, marketing overview visit the section "Dr. Philip Kotler Answers Your Questions on Marketing" at: www.kotlermarketing.com/phil_questions.shtml

[2] Mapping the dimensions and characteristics of the world's technological communication capacity during the period of digitization (2011) by Martin Hilbert. Annenberg School of Communication (ASC); University of Southern California (USC). In: www.martinhilbert.net

> **The Information Age is characterized by an individual's ability to transfer information freely and to access instant content.**

we did in 1986, because of the growth in the Internet, 24-hour television and mobile phones. On other hand, every day the average person produces six newspapers worth of information compared with just two and a half pages 24 years ago. All this information circulates through email, twitter, social networking sites, phones and text messages.

The rise of new media with several electronic channels - websites, social media, online video, radio, and emails - opens new possibilities for communicating and engaging with people. At the same time, competition between different messages has never been so high.

Although this shift in how people communicate has facilitated ways to reach people effective communication has never been so challenging. It is no longer enough to just produce information. The audience must be really targeted in the development of content and products.

The Information Age impacted much more than just the definition of marketing and communication. It also deeply changed the way these activities are planned and implemented. Communication researchers and professionals have begun to look for more effective ways to use new communications tools and methods to reach particular audiences.

Module 2 will focus on a step-by-step guide to plan a communication activity, considering target audiences, call-to-actions and tools. But before going into that, we are going to briefly introduce two of the most up-to-date marketing strategies that are used today. The 360° Marketing and the Transmedia Storytelling methods are two different approaches to address communication activities today. Both are multi-platform strategies that aim to engage target audiences through different channels.

## 360° Marketing

The 360° Marketing works to determine an audiences' journey and to multiply the number of touch points where your communication will intersect with them. The strategy is to surround your audience from every angle, using a variety of media to impact them at different points along the decision process to buy-into your message.

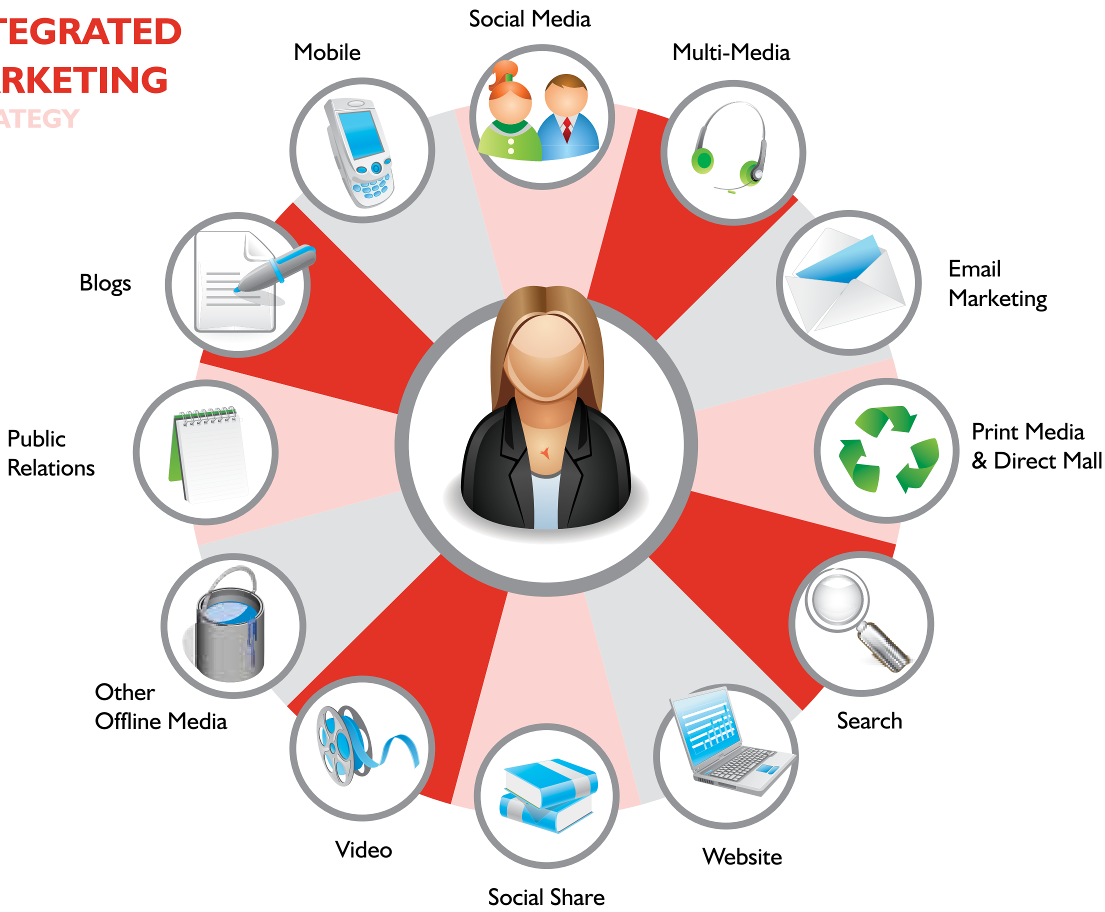
According to the 2010 Three Screen Report[3], which tracks consumption across TV, Internet and mobile media, nearly 60% of TV viewers in the United States use the Internet once a month while also watching TV. The same research found that the exposure to ads across different platforms creates a synergistic effect: when consumers were exposed to pharmaceutical ads both on television and online, they are 100% more likely to ask their doctors about these options.

This behavior change expanded the 360° approach from a media planning tool to embrace the entire process of communicating with audiences. Today, the challenge is no longer how to reach audiences, but how to connect and engage with them. The basic idea is to combine communications tools into an integrated marketing plan aimed to deliver the message through all available channels, such as advertising, sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing, etc.

The channels must work together as a unified force, rather than isolated from one another. And, if communication is coordinated in terms of timing and consistent in messaging, the synergy generated by the 360° process increases results dramatically.

[3] Tree Screen Report (March, 2010) by The Nielsen Company. In: http://blog.nielsen.com/nielsenwire/online_mobile/three-screen-report-q409
[4] Sources: Hoggan's New Media Case studies, In: www.hoggan.com/case-study-tcktcktck and Communicopia, In: communicopia.com/work/tcktcktck and www.tcktcktck.org

# INTEGRATED MARKETING
STRATEGY




**Tcktcktck.org: 360 Marketing in Action**

In 2008, global environmental and development NGO's, such as Amnesty International, Global Humanitarian Forum, Greenpeace International, Oxfam and WWF, came together in an unprecedented alliance to created TckTckTck campaign to collectively call for a fair, ambitious and binding treaty on climate change at the 2009 United Nations Climate Change Conference held in Copenhagen (Denmark).

The campaign adopted a **360º Marketing** approach to reach a broader audience, encapsulating members from all over the world. Several channels were used such as advertisement (printed, video and radio), online tools (website, social media, videos, mobile and social apps), media relations, promotional materials (t-shirts, stickers, banners) and events. Aligned with strong lobby and advocacy work, the communication channels delivered a unified message to global leaders: the world wants a real deal!

The campaign also proposed innovative actions such as Global Climate Action Days. These special days were opportunities for thousands of people across the globe to go to the streets to show their support for the campaign. The Fresh Air Center - a digital media hub set up in Copenhagen during the summit – also served to connect civil society with the top online journalists and web 2.0 activists. The result was a powerful network of supporters who shared campaign content, and a private community of leading bloggers, green editors, and digital campaigners that served as invaluable partners.

Although Copenhagen did not deliver the expected results, TckTckTck and its partners registered 15.5 million names worldwide in an online petition. TckTckTck campaign events were also covered into thousands of social media outlets, such as blogs, online forums, Facebook groups and Twitter helping to "get the message out" about climate change.

Site: www.tcktcktck.org

## Transmedia Storytelling

Transmedia Storytelling techniques will soon become the core of every successful branding campaign. Created in 2006, based on the entertainment industry, Transmedia Storytelling was officially defined by Henry Jenkins[5] as a story that "unfolds across multiple media platforms, with each new text making a distinctive and valuable contribution to the whole."

Different from the 360° Marketing strategy, which repeats the same story to different audiences through diverse channels, Transmedia Storytelling goes beyond that and combines a great on-going story with strategic distribution to create loyal participants. It uses different channels to complete the story, taking advantage of collective creation and interaction. More specifically, Jenkins describes it as incorporating different means to disperse content and tell a story that creates collective action rather than passive consumption.

Transmedia storytelling plays into the reality that today's consumers are hunters and gathers of information. In order to be successful, each platform must be utilized to do what it does best. Whether it's sharing video content, engaging users in a conversation, crowd-sourcing material or working in teams to solve a complex puzzle or mystery, each piece of highly customized content is created specifically for that platform and not repackaged or repurposed for distribution. By seeking out content, Transmedia stories create a deeper and richer experience for audiences and reveals new information and insight into the story universe.


[5] JENKINS, Henry (2006) Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide, Editora Aleph (Brazilian Edition)


**EVOKE – A crash course in changing the world**[6]

Developed by the World Bank Institute, the learning and knowledge arm of the World Bank Group, EVOKE is a free-to-play online social network game created in 2010. It was designed to empower young people all over the world, but especially in Africa, to start solving urgent social problems (e.g. hunger, poverty, disease, conflict, climate change, sustainable energy, lack of health care and education.)

By combining design, a sturdy social network and worthy causes, EVOKE became an example of **Transmedia Storytelling** communication. Set in the year 2020, the game's story follows the efforts of a mysterious network of Africa's best problem-solvers. Each week, as players unravel the mystery of the Evoke network, they will form their own innovation networks: brainstorming creative solutions to real-world development challenges, learning more about what it takes to be a successful social innovator, and finding ways to make a difference in the world.

EVOKE is an ARG (alternate reality game) for learning, which integrates real life and online game play through a storyline that seeks to engage the audience. Playing the game requires interacting with characters, other players, and storyline elements that might be online, but may also be found in aspects of your "real" life. Websites, social media tools, media broadcasts, phone calls, text messages, and sometimes person-to-person interactions are all potential elements that move the storyline along.

Top EVOKE players earned real-world honors and rewards, namely mentorships with experienced social innovators and business leaders. They also won scholarships to share their vision for the future at an EVOKE Summit held September 2010, in Washington DC (United States). A EVOKE evaluation concluded that the game made players in Africa think differently, inspired them to "Think big" and "act" and to connect young innovators to one another.

Site: urgentevoke.com

[6] EVOKE Reflections: Results from the World Bank's on-line educational game, World Bank Blog. In: http://blogs.worldbank.org/edutech/evoke-reflections-results-from-the-world-banks-on-line-educational-game-part-2


# Module 2
# Communication Planning

Now that we have covered the difference between communication and marketing, it is time to figure out how to plan communication activities. This module goes over the necessary steps to develop an effective communication strategy. Here, you will find an example of how the theory presented in the previous module can be put into practice.

After completing this module you will be able to:

- Define the basic components of a communication plan;
- Target communication for different audiences;
- Prioritize different communication products and activities according to your communication goals and target audiences;
- Organize a participatory process for developing a communication plan.

## Communication Planning

Planning is a crucial step in any kind of communication. Before developing products or activities, it is key that strategic topics are defined to make your communication efforts more effective. Planning saves time and money, helps to put a team together, and to define responsibilities. Finally, planning makes it easier to reach communication goals.

Whether you are planning to launch a new publication, promote an event, or engage the media, your organization will need to consider different steps in planning, implementation and evaluation. In other words, communication is a dynamic process. It is linked to real life facts and external factors. It changes with new realities and decisions.

Considering that a communication plan is not a static document, as we gather more information and meet objectives, the communication plan will also need to change and grow. It is a living process!

A communication plan is a written document that will help guide the implementation of your strategy. It describes what you want to accomplish **(objectives),** whom you want to target **(audiences),** what you are going to say **(key messages)** and how you want your public to react **(call-to-action).** It also describes proposed activities, players and resources, and how these components will come together. A plan should also include a budget, timeline, responsibilities and evaluation methods.

There are lots of ways of drawing up a communication plan. The advice below offers a framework to help guide you in thinking strategically when considering communication issues in your organization.

### A step-by-step guide

We divided the planning guide in three basic steps: strategic planning, implementation and evaluation. All of these must be covered during a planning session.

## Strategic Planning Steps

### 1. Gathering Background Information

A lot of communication work is based upon assumptions. Generally, people believe they 'know' what is the best information and method to communicate something. It is so simple: let's just produce a leaflet! Video! Website! The problem is that the things we 'know' are often projections of our own worldviews. And probably, a leaflet, a video, or even a website, is not the best way to deliver your message.

Research or gathering background information is at the core of any effective communication. In order to be successful, it is important to gather background information, and to ensure that you have your facts straight about your audiences. Background research is necessary to identify different aspects of the issue you are communicating, different worldviews, and specifically what your audiences already know and think about your issue. Putting together all information that could be considered for your communication strategy - statistics, data, research reports, papers, media reports, opinion polls, previous communications activities, etc. is an important first step when planning your communication strategy.

Information could be available both inside as well as outside your organization. It is important to consider whether it is necessary to interview internal and or external stakeholders. You should consider gathering information from technical staff, directors, partners, community, media and other relevant stakeholders to check how the communication issue resonates with them.

**Keep it behind the scenes**

Research should inform your communication plans and help provide a solid foundation for your content. As a behind the scenes tool, good background can be used beyond planning, to influence decision making about what you say, how you say it, where and when you say it and to whom. Research will also help inform how you brief an agency or other communication partner, communicate with target audiences, and defend your communication plan to external and internal stakeholders.

But, pay attention! Don't let too much of your background information spill over into your communications materials. In this hyper-competitive world, where thousands of messages and thousands of communication approaches are competing for attention every day and every hour, we cannot afford to lose the target audience's attention. So get to the point! Remember: "Less is more!"

### Example 1: Adopt a Park – Background

An environmental fund is implementing a new program called "Adopt a Park". The goal of the program is to raise private voluntary funds to help structure and maintain a mosaic of protected areas.

The mosaic is made up of six different parks created by the national government. For the purpose of conserving biological diversity each park needs to raise U$ 100,000 to develop its management plan.

The mosaic of protected areas is also home to a rare species of primate – the Brown Monkey. A local NGO manages a conservation program to protect the endemic primate. The management plans that are to be developed for the parks that make up the mosaic are vital to the NGO's work and success.

Donors interested in "Adopt a Park", will be able to enjoy public recognition of their sponsorship and gain increased visibility as part of the environmental fund's communication initiatives. But the environmental fund has to draw up a communication plan to promote the program, attract donors, and define how they are going to benefit from participating in the program.

### Assignment 1: Adopt a Park – Background Research

Guidance Questions:

- What information should you gather as background research for the Adopt a Park communication strategy?
- What are the key questions that you should answer to get the right facts?
- Who should you interview in order to gather more information?

## 2. Who is Leading the Communication?

Each activity needs a leader. It is important to be clear from the very start on the roles and responsibilities of different players. You need to be clear about who is leading the communication plan, as this professional will be responsible for the entire process: strategic planning, implementation and evaluation. An organization may also decide to work in partnership with other organizations. In this case, it is important to be clear on whether the partners are equal or if they hold different roles and responsibilities in the plan (e.g. one organization is the lead, while the other is a technical resource).

### Managing communication as a project

In many cases, communication needs a combination of expertise and contributions from different areas in order to be implemented effectively. Some organizations run communications activities as projects. This means that a special team is temporarily assembled to implement a specific plan and set of activities. By approaching communication as a project, a team composed of different types of professionals from different departments and levels, work together for a set amount of time until the desired communication outcome is reached.

### Assignment 2: Adopt a Park – Leadership

Consider the following question bellow:

- What kind of skills will you need represented in your communication team in order to implement the Adopt a Park communication plan?
- What departments of the environmental fund would you need to involve?
- Should the activity be run as a project? Why?

## 3. Objectives

All environmental funds need to set objectives. Objectives should reflect the mission of the fund leaving it clear what it is trying to achieve. Objectives can be set in all areas of the fund e.g. conservation, finance, marketing and communication.

That is because communication should lead to results. In other words, the objectives of a communication plan are the outcomes that you expect to accomplish after implementing the plan. In order to define your communication objectives, you should answer the following questions first: Why are you communicating? Or, what problem is the communication strategy meant to solve or address?

Having clear objectives is the most important part of any planning process. Objectives are both key to the success of your communication strategy, as well as the best way to measure your success. In other words, your communication succeeds only if you accomplish your ultimate outcome. That's why your desired outcome must be defined in a measurable way.

An effective way to set objectives is to follow the well-known acronym **SMART**. A SMART objective is:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Realistic
- Time bound

An objective that follows SMART is more likely to succeed because it is clear (specific) so you know exactly what needs to be achieved. You can tell when it has been achieved (measurable) because you have a way to measure completion. A SMART objective is likely to happen because it is an event that is achievable. Before setting a SMART objective relevant factors such as resources and time were taken into account to ensure that it is realistic. Finally the timescale element provides a deadline which helps people focus on the tasks required to achieve the objective. The timescale element stops people postponing task completion.

**Be practical!**

Your desired outcome should be stated in the most practical way possible. "Save the gorillas" could work as an organizational mission but it is too general as a communication objective. When developing your communication plan, framing your objective as "Raise local community awareness about the benefits of protecting gorillas" might work better.

But, how do you measure 'awareness raising'? You define what you mean by awareness and you carry out surveys before, during and after your planned activities. A measurable desired outcome will also make monitoring and evaluation a much more straightforward task for your organization and help you demonstrate the benefit of communication for your organization's ultimate mission.

## 4. Target Audiences

One of the most important aspects of effective communication is realizing that there is no such thing as a general audience. To be effective, communication must specify the audience that it is trying to reach and target communication efforts towards them.

Listing target audiences is one of the first steps in planning your communication strategy. A target audience could not be defined too broadly. The Government, Civil Society or the Corporate Sector are not target audiences. The Environmental Minister, the consumers from Uganda who buys fish, and the buyers of a supermarket chain, are. The more specifically you define your target audience, the more effectively you will be in reaching them in ways that are appealing and persuasive. Using the results of audience research will allow you to develop the right tools and approaches to make your organization's communication more effective.

### Example 2: Adopt a Park – Objectives

In our Adopt a Park example, our desired outcome may be something like: "U$ 600,000 raised" and/or "... an increase of 25% in the population of the Brown Monkey..."

So the desired objective of your communication strategy may be:

"To raise U$ 600,000 in resources to help structure and maintain a mosaic of protected areas in order to ensure conservation of the Brown Monkey."

### Assignment 3: Adopt a Park – Objectives

Considering the communication objective included in Example 2 above "Raise U$ 600,000 in resources to help structure and maintain a mosaic of protected areas in order to ensure conservation of the Brown Monkey", answer the following questions:

- Is the objective practical and measurable?
- Can you improve on the objective by adding any other information?

In most of cases, we list more target audiences then our resources will allow us to reach. We need to then prioritize audiences both in time as well as in order of importance. In fact, we must decide where our time, money and creativity will be best spent in order to reach our desired outcome.

### Audience Research: Who are they?

There are certain factors which help define target audiences. The better defined your target audience is, the more you will be able to understand and reach them:

1. The Target Audience's involvement in the issue (How relevant it is to them? How engaged are they?)
2. Their awareness of the issue (We determine this by asking them about the issue.)
3. Their attitude about the issue (Again, we can get an idea by doing research.)
4. Their demographics (The characteristics of the audience based on socio-economic factors such as age, sex, religion, social status, family status, income, sexual orientation, educational level and social class.)
5. Their psychographics (The characteristics based on personality, ideology, values, beliefs, and general attitudes. This includes aspects such as the newspapers they read, radio they listen to, TV they watch, etc.).
6. Their lifestyle (Do they go to the cinema? Eat vegetarian food? Have cars or prefer other types of transportation? Read newspapers? etc.)

**"Your communication messages should be concise, strong and easy to understand. It should be clear to the target audience what is expected of them. Key messages are strategic tools."**

**Example 3: Adopt a Park – Audiences**

Continuing with the Adopt a Park example, we could list several target audiences, such as:

- Potential Donors
- Local communities surrounding the protected area
- NGO - Brown Monkey Conservation
- Environmental Fund partners

**Assignment 4: Adopt a Park – Audiences**

Considering the proposed target audiences above, answer the following questions:

- Can you list five more target audiences that might be useful in order to reach the desired outcome?
- Can you better define the target audience "potential donors"? Who could they be?
- Can you explain why the NGO - Brown Monkey Conservation is listed as a target audience?

## 5. Key Messages

Now that you have defined your target audience it is time to think about what you are going to say to them. Imagine that they were standing right in front of you and saying: "OK, tell us all what you want in 30 seconds" (check out the "elevator speech" example listed in RedLAC's Capacity Building Handbook on Fundraising for EFs – available at www.redlac.org).

Your communication messages should be concise, strong and easy to understand. It should be clear to the target audience what is expected of them. Key messages are strategic tools. A key message should always include a benefit for the target audience to best attract them. That is why sometimes we need to draw up multiple key messages targeting different audiences.

You may not repeat a key message exactly as you have defined it, but having clarity on what you are trying to say is critical. You can always adapt messages to suit different situations. What is important to keep in mind is what information is key to each particular target audience.

**A message is not a slogan**

It is important to write down the official key message in order to guide other members of your organizational team, helping them become empowered to put the issue into their own words. But, a key message is not a slogan! When you write down your key message don't worry about how it sounds.

Someone might extract key points from a key message and use for a website or media interview. You might create a slogan from it for a poster, or use it in a press release or technical report to Government.

Considering the Adopt a Park example we can say:

- To raise support for the conservation of the Brown Monkey by raising 1000 signatures for the establishment of Brown Monkey mosaic. = Outcome

- Save the Brown Monkey! = Slogan

**Example 4: Adopt a Park – Key Messages**

Given your desired outcome and the target audience Potential Donors, the key message may be something like:

"Your company can be part of a great conservation effort. Adopt a park and help to protect the Brown Monkey. This rare species lives in a park that you can help to maintain. The government recently created a mosaic of six protected areas to conserve the main habitat of the Brown Monkey. We are raising funds to make sure that these protected areas are efficient. By supporting our program you will gain public recognition of your sponsorship and visibility through our communication efforts."

Notice that the messages above start with the word "Your" – this is a good way to make sure you are talking to the target audience. You don't have to put "Your" (or "You") right at the start, but including it somewhere is a good idea.

## 6. Call-to-Action

The call-to-action is what we want a particular target audience to do after the communication positively impacts them. In other words, it is the reaction that you would like to promote in alignment with your desired outcome. It is also a way for the target audience to participate and interact with your communication activity.

Calls-to-action work more like a slogan, but have implicit action implied in the message. In business marketing it would be the "BUY THIS NOW" message. A recent WWF environmental campaign to raise awareness of climate change issues had the following call-to-action: "Turn off your lights". The global "Earth Hour" campaign had a very clear call-to-action.

Although calls-to-action are very oriented towards doing something, several messages can suggest doing something introspective, generating reflection or behavior change. Some examples are: "Think about your daily actions", "Learn more about desertification in Africa", etc.

There is often a process between the target audience hearing the key message and their agreeing to perform the call-to-action. During this time they are listening to the communication, but may not be fully persuaded. They may ask you for more information, to show them the benefits of the action, to build their skills to change, or to remove other barriers to behavior change.

**Target Audience vs. Call-to-Action**

During the planning process, it is a very good idea to ask your target audience what are the barriers to their buying into the call-to-action: Is it a lack of understanding? Is it a lack of credibility in the organization? Do they oppose the issue on political grounds? Would they accept the call-to-action if somebody they respected supported it? Is it a matter of money? Or do they need additional incentives?

The best way to answer these questions is to ask your target audience directly or at the very least to engage representatives of your target audience. The interaction with your target audience helps you to better understand them, and makes implementation of the communication plan easier. When the target audience is very small, it will be possible for you to ask them directly. And when it is large, you will need to work with a representative sample

### Assignment 5: Adopt a Park – Call-to-Action

Rather than providing you with an example of a call-to-action for our Adopt a Park communication strategy, we would like to hear from you what could be the best call-to-action to deliver the key message to the "Potential Donors" category.

An example of a call-to-action related to fundraising from visitors to the Brown Monkey Protected Area may be:

"You may not have heard about Brown Monkeys, but they need you. There are only 2,000 of them left in the wild. And all of them are right here in these forests in front of you. The current population of Brown Monkeys is so small, that if left unattended it will go extinct. For generations, we have prided ourselves in having this unique species that occurs in no other place on earth, right here in our backyard. Travelers have come great distances to appreciate the fine beauty of this place, and to see the Brown Monkey and its curious habits.

But unfortunately, habitat change, due to growing land use pressures, as well as illegal hunting have placed the Brown Monkey under great threat.

You can help turn this tide, by supporting the conservation of the last remaining forest of the Brown Monkey and our research efforts to support its conservation. Join us today. Become a friend of the Brown Monkey.

I want to be a friend of the Brown Monkey and donate:

______US$100
______US$250
______US$500
______US$1,000 — Diamond Sponsor*

*By becoming a diamond sponsor you will have free access to the park and a free night stay at our luxury lodge, receive progress reports on all of our research projects and be part of our contest to name newborn Brown Monkeys in our protected area.

### K.I.S.S. - Keep it simple, stupid!

When developing calls-to-action it is important to keep in mind that motivation and action require a clear and simple message. Short words, attractive graphics, compelling stories are more effective and easy to understand.

However, we tend to be complicated, because it takes time to develop short and simple things. KISS stands for "Keep it Simple, Stupid!" (or "Keep it Short and Simple" if you prefer) and is a good way to remember that.

The KISS principle was suggested by a North-American engineer to emphasize that most systems work best if they are kept simple rather than made complex. Therefore simplicity should be a key goal in design and unnecessary complexity should be avoided. This same concept can be applied to message development.

Effective communication needs simplicity in message and purpose. A good example is a regular message instruction for fire cases:

If you find a fire:

1. Raise the alarm.
2. Go immediately to a place of safety.
3. Call the fire brigade.

So remember to keep it simple, stupid!

**Example 5: Adopt a Park – Overall Planning**

Find bellow the planning step of the communication plan for the Adopt a Park activity:

**BACKGROUND**

An environmental fund is implementing a new program called "Adopt a Park". The goal of the program is to raise private voluntary funds to help structure and maintain a mosaic of protected areas.

The mosaic is made up of six different parks created by the national government. For the purpose of conserving biological diversity each park needs to raise U$ 100,000 to develop its management plan.

The mosaic of protected areas is also home to a rare species of primate – the Brown Monkey. A local NGO manages a conservation program to protect the endemic primate. The management plans that are to be developed for the parks that make up the mosaic are vital to the NGO's work and success.

Donors interested in "Adopt a Park", will be able to enjoy public recognition of their sponsorship and gain increased visibility in the fund's communication initiatives. But environmental fund has to draw up a communication plan to promote the program, attract donors, and define how they are going to benefit from participating in the program.

**WHO'S LEADING THE COMMUNICATION?**

The communication department of the environmental fund is leading the activity.

**DESIRED OUTCOME**

To raise U$ 600,000 in resources to help structure and maintain a mosaic of protected areas in order to ensure conservation of the Brown Monkey.

**“Calls-to-action work more like a slogan, but have implicit action implied in the message.”**

### TARGET AUDIENCE

1. Potential Donors
2. Local communities surrounding the protected areas
3. NGO - Brown Monkey Conservation
4. Trust Fund partners

### KEY MESSAGE

Your company can be part of a great conservation effort. Adopt a park and help to protect the Brown Monkey. This rare species lives in a park that you can help to maintain. The government recently created a mosaic of six protected areas covering the main habitat of the Brown Monkey. We are raising funds to make sure that these protected areas are efficient. By supporting our program you will gain public recognition of your sponsorship and gain visibility through our communication efforts.

### CALL-TO-ACTION

You may not have heard about Brown Monkeys, but they need you. There are only 2,000 of them left in the wild. And all of them are right here in these forests in front of you. The current population of Brown Monkeys is so small, that if left unattended it will go extinct. For generations, we have prided ourselves in having this unique species that occurs in no other place on earth, right here in our backyard. Travelers have come great distances to appreciate the fine beauty of this place, and to see the Brown Monkey and its curious habits.

But unfortunately, habitat change, due to growing land use pressures, as well as illegal hunting have placed the Brown Monkey under great threat.

You can help turn this tide, by supporting the conservation of the last remaining forest of the Brown Monkey and our research efforts to support its conservation. Join us today. Become a friend of the Brown Monkey.

I want to be a friend of the Brown Monkey and donate:

______US$100
______US$250
______US$500
______US$1,000 — Diamond Sponsor*

*By becoming a diamond sponsor you will have free access to the park and a free night stay at our luxury lodge, receive progress reports on all of our research projects and be part of our contest to name newborn Brown Monkeys in our protected area.

**Assignment 6: Your Communication Plan**

It is now time to plan a communication strategy for your environmental fund.

First, imagine a real issue that you would like to address using communication. It could be a fundraising program, a media relations strategy, the design of an annual report, the launch of a publication, or whatever you believe is important in the context of your organization.

Think through the following topics when developing your plan:

What background research do you need or already have that can be informative?
Who is leading the communication plan?
What is the desired outcome?
Who are the target audiences?
What are the key messages?

## 7. Implementation

**Remember the PARTs – Players, Activities, Resources and Tone of Voice when implementing your communications plan.** After completing the strategic planning step, you should have all the information needed to start planning for implementation. At this stage, you will focus on how to deliver the key message to priority target audiences, and get them to respond to your call-to-action. In order to do so you have to decide on the Players, Activities, Resources and Tones of Voice (PARTs) necessary to deliver your outcome.

### a) Players

Players are people outside the leading communication team who can have a positive effect on the communication activity by raising credibility around your issue. Players are not formally involved with communication, but support it voluntarily, associating with the cause because they want to, not because they have to!

Celebrities or famous people are the classical example of players. Several other examples can also be interesting to explore, such as community leaders, teachers, opinion makers, politicians, even a member of your executive team or board of trusties. The important thing is to get a player that is respected by your target audience and who can bring credibility to your issue.

### b) Activities

Activities and/or products are the interventions that your communication plan will use to deliver key messages to priority target audiences. They may include meetings, events, presentations, protests, email petitions, advertisements - you can probably think of many more examples of communication activities.

It is important to think strategically when planning your activities. For example, if you are planning how to develop an annual report you should consider not just the publication itself but the entire process (description of the activities) that is involved from planning to evaluation. That means the preparation (interviews, texts, data gathering, photos, graphs, etc.) and the dissemination (the means to deliver messages to key audiences — Will it be made available on-line? Do you need to develop a presentation about it? Will it be in multiple languages? Etc.)

When developing a communication product it is essential to include a title. Once you named a publication, a game, a website, or whatever your communication product is, people can talk about it, refer to it and publicize it. Essentially it becomes a real thing in the world. But don't confuse titles and slogans. Slogans are resources, to add an effect and to be used as part of your communication strategy.

### List of Potential Communication Activities and Products

There are many different ways to reach target audiences that go beyond the traditional vehicles of TV and newspaper, a video, or a website. The list below was put together as a result of multiple communication planning processes (4-P Workshops) and it may help inspire you as you start planning your communication and outreach.

**Promotional Tools**
Billboards
Posters
Community gatherings
Music (message through lyrics)
T-shirts
Caps
Bags
Stickers
Calendars
Newsletters
Pens/Pencils
Key Chains/Badges
Brochures
Banners
Internet/ Websites

**Print Media**
Newspapers
Magazines
Feature stories
Editorials
Opinion editorials
Supplements
Advertisements

**Events**
Festivals
Contests (photo, essay)
Religious events
Community gatherings
Conferences, workshops, seminars
Concerts
Theater/drama
Photo exhibitions
Video screenings
Booths at events
Journalist training

**Television News**
Feature stories
Documentaries
Talk shows
Locally produced drama
Soap operas

**Radio**
Talk shows
News
Drama, Plays
Religious programs
Forums for specific audiences
Advertisements
Entertainment

**Schools**
Teacher's manuals
Teacher training
National curriculum development Library collections
School field trips
Cartoons and storybooks
Eco clubs
Parades
Children's contests
Experiments and research
Drama (puppet shows, skits)
Mobile exhibits
Newspaper inserts for kids
Murals
School gardens
Games
Conservation projects
Music (festivals, songs)

## c) The Resources

Time, money and people are probably the main resources you will have to worry about when implementing your communication plan. It is often useful to include a timetable and a budget estimate of the costs of implementing your plan. If responsibilities are to be shared among a core team, roles and responsibilities need to be clearly laid out as part of the plan, specifying who will carry out each individual task.

It is also important to consider existing tools and resources already in use by your organization and partners, and that could be adapted or used as part of your communication plan. This includes websites, social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn), regular publications (annual reports, magazine, newsletters), internal meetings, participation in international events, etc.

**Don’t jump straight to activities!**

Very often people start to think about communication by listing activities or products. It is much easier to say that you need a website, a publication or a video, than to go through the thorough analysis to come up with an effective communication plan. In fact, when planning communication, we don’t know what needs to happen until we are done collecting and analyzing our background research. Only once we have carried out the preparatory work, will we be able to judge what the necessary activities are for reaching our priority audiences.

### d) The Tone of Voice

The tone of voice is the “language” that will be used in your communication. Setting the tone is important in order to connect with the language of your target audience. If you are talking with business people you cannot use the same “tone of voice” as when you speak with government people. In fact, when you consider the most appropriate “tone of voice” you have to also pay attention to two key issues:

I. The way your target audience speaks. You have to research their style, vocabulary and behavior – remember that communication goes beyond words. Whether communicating verbally or orally, you have to set the appropriate tone and message to reach your different target audiences.

II. Understand the most powerful means for reaching target audiences. What is the best way to impact them? You can use some description words, such as urgent, committed, reasonable, concerned, professional, conscientious, etc. to qualify the main characteristic of your target audiences.

**Assignment 7: Implementation**

Considering the Adopt a Park strategic planning step, completed on example 5, think about the players, activities, resources and tone of voice (PART’s) that you must use to achieve your desired outcome.

Then, do the same for your real life issue from assignment 6. What PART’s should your environmental fund access to implement your communication strategy?

## 8. Evaluation Steps

### 1. Monitoring, Evaluation and Evolution

Considering that communication activities are influenced by external events, it is important to measure and evaluate progress from time-to-time. As the communication plan progresses you should analyze partial results, in order to identify what is working and what is not.

Measurement and monitoring will help you to adapt your strategy and make it increasingly effective in reaching desired outcomes. The only way to tell if the communication work will deliver the right results is by going out and actually trying it. And once you try something, you need to be able to assess whether it is working or whether you need to change your approach.

What is working well? What’s working less well? What should be changed? What should be kept the same? These are some of the questions you should ask when evaluating your work. You may not be able to determine precisely how much each communication activity has contributed to your success, but measurement and monitoring will give you a good idea of what is working well and what is not - and hence where to focus your resources and activities as the plan evolves and progresses.

Accordingly, once your evaluation tells you something about your communication plan, you will need to review and adapt it. This is a natural step in the process and one that is necessary for the evolution of your work. Of course, if a process is working well it is not necessary to change it. Evolution only comes into play if our evaluation tells you that the strategy isn’t working, or that it needs to be adapted in order to deliver on the desired outcome.

## 2. Results and Lessons Learned

At the end of any communication process you will be able to gauge the results from your work. Ultimately, your results should make a direct link to your desired outcome. It is important to communicate results back to all of those who were involved in the task. It is also a good time to thank everyone who took part in the process – from those who signed a petition, made a financial contribution, to those who shared your message through social media.

At the end of the communication process it is good to promote a closing meeting. This occasion should be used to review the results, evaluate the process and list the lessons learned. These may be useful when developing and implementing future strategies, so it is worth recording them for future reference.

---

**Participatory Planning: The 4-P Process (Problems, People, Products, and Plan)[7]**

Creating a communication strategy using a workshop format instead of writing it yourself is a good option for gathering a richer set of inputs and creative thinking from various stakeholders. The resulting enthusiasm for the plan is always greater when it is created in a participatory way. Stakeholders, partners, and even internal staff have a greater sense of involvement and "buy-in" to the plan if it has not just been created by a single individual or a small team.

The 4-P Process is one of the most popular methodologies used by organizations to develop a participatory communications plan. Created by Conservation International (CI), the methodology offers a step-by-step process for organizations interested in facilitating a participatory communication campaign and plan.

A 4-P Workshop ideally gathers between thirty and forty participants (a mix of technical staff, communicators, educators, marketing specialists, members of the national and local media, business people, local community representatives, government representatives, etc...) in a two-day meeting to discuss challenges and identify priorities for conservation awareness.

The name 4-P derives from the four main components of the workshop: Problems, Publics, Products and Plan. Individually, these sessions make up the workshop framework:

- Assess the conservation problems to be addressed by communication
- Identify and analyze the public/audiences that the strategy will target
- Determine the most appropriate products to reach these publics/audiences
- Design an action plan

The workshop has been used to develop communications strategies in many different contexts, from communities to national processes. However, the more focused the scope of the workshop, the more targeted the resulting strategy will be.

---

[7] The 4-P Workshop: Designing Communications and Education Strategies for Conservation Projects
Fourth Edition: Conservation International, August 2003.


©Camila Monteiro

# Module 3
# Institutional Communication

This is the third module in the Communication and Marketing for Environmental Funds course. Here, we will go over some of the essential tools to improve the effectiveness of your institutional communication.

After completing this module you will be able to:

- Describe methods for building an institutional brand;
- Engage your team using internal communication;
- Outline the contents of a basic institutional communication toolkit;
- Develop case studies to illustrate your work more effectively;
- Assess how to use communication to support fundraising goals.

## Brand and Institutional Identity

Imagine you are going to buy a car. You got the specifications for three cars of roughly similar price, engine size, power and color. Which features would influence your decision? If you learn that the three cars were a BMW, a Toyota and a Fiat – would that influence your decision? Most likely yes! That is how branding can work for your organization.

Generally, we can say that a brand is the image of your business. It stands for a whole pack of values and objectives that together make up what people think about your organization. It is best described as the values that an organization is perceived to have by its audiences. It is also the way that people relate an organization to its mission.

The fundamental idea and core concept behind building this corporate image is that everything an organization does, everything it owns and everything it produces should reflect the values and aims of its business as a whole. A logo is not your brand, nor is it your identity. Identity is who you are; brand is how you are perceived. Logo design, identity and branding all have different roles, which together, form the image of an organization, business or product:

**Brand** –The perceived emotional corporate image as a whole;
**Identity** – The visual aspects that form part of the overall brand;
**Logo** – Identifies an organization in its simplest form via the use of a mark or icon.

No successful branding can be developed without a clear understanding of the mission, values, and strategy of your organization (the identity of your environmental fund). These elements are projected through actions, concepts, words and design. That is the way that you project your identity through brand definition. Brand communication is associated with numerous things both **tangible** and **intangible**.

**Tangible** characteristics of a brand could include: corporate identity, shape, packaging, colors, visuals, descriptor, and slogans.

**Intangible** characteristics of a brand could include: promise, values, behavior, reputation, consistency, attitude, and tone of voice.

But how do you build an effective brand concept for your organization? It is not a simple task. Branding is not made up by facts, but by opinions and beliefs, reputation and behavior. The tangible characteristics are probably the easier ones to get right. However it is the intangible characteristics that have the greatest influence. These elements compose what branding specialists named as a brand's DNA. The Nigerian branding researcher, Uche Nworah attests that "every brand must be able to communicate its origins and history, as well as its culture, knowledge and awareness of the DNA of the brand, and successful communication of all related brand distinctions, novelty and attributes can help the brand live long, if not for ever."[8]

In this way, to get to the DNA of a brand you need to deeply research what exists in the minds of customers, supporters and staff regarding what differentiates your organization from others. Answering the follow questions could help you to find out more about the DNA of your organization:

Difference – What makes your organization different?
Relevance – What makes your organization relevant?
Familiarity – Does a particular key audience know what your organization has done?
Interest – Why should they be interested in your organization?
Image – What image does your organization want them to form?
Commitments – What is your organization committed to?
Values – What values are most important to your organization?

### SWOT Analysis

Conducting a SWOT analysis can be a helpful way to determine an organization's DNA. The purpose of a SWOT analysis is to lead to specific actions at each level of the analysis: to reinforce your strengths; to eliminate your weaknesses; to take advantage of your opportunities and to address your threats. SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats:

Strengths: What things does your organization do really well?
Weaknesses: What are your organization's major weaknesses?
Opportunities: What opportunities exist for your organization to develop your strengths, eliminate your weaknesses and take advantage of new developments?
Threats: What threats exist for your organization either at the present time or in the future?

Strengths and weaknesses are often **internal** while opportunities and threats are **external**. A SWOT analysis could be conduct in any level of an organization. You can have it at a more general level to define branding items, or at a more detailed level for a specific communication activity.

Once an organization is clear about its brand, it is essential that all communication, education and fundraising activities reinforce it. The brand identity should be clear and easily identifiable; this can be achieved through a combination of elements such as corporate communication, advertising, public relations, corporate social responsibility

[8] Decoding a brand's DNA - White Paper by Uche Nworah
In: http://www.brandchannel.com/papers_review.asp?sp_id=1254

commitments, events, word-of-mouth, design, packaging, labeling, logos etc. It is important to keep your organization's messages consistent; otherwise your audiences will get confused.

Most nonprofit organizations cannot afford a brand specialist in your team, what usually works is to indicate someone from the communication or marketing team to act as a **Brand Keeper**. This person will be responsible for ensuring that everything produced by the organization reflects the institutional brand. It is not just for communication products, but also for programmatic activities, fundraising proposals, institutional speeches, meetings, office design and everything else.

**Organizational Communications Kit**

An important way to reinforce and to promote your brand is to develop an organizational communication kit. It could be described as a package of materials that introduces your organization to interested parties, including staff, and answers questions about it.

A basic kit should reinforce your brand as well as point out all the good you do, and the ways you are unique or different from all the other similar organizations. A kit must be divided in content and visual materials.

**Content -** The content part has to do with how you describe organization's mission, values and objectives. It should carry the key organizational message. Materials may include a "backgrounder" or profile document that offers a brief look at your organization. This fact sheet should include a bit about the history of your Environmental Trust Fund, its mission, what it does, who it serves, who its staff is, and other interesting facts about it. The content provided in this document can also be used in other institutional publications such as monthly magazines, annual reports, power point presentations, leaflets and brochures. It is also helpful to align the organization's brand and key message to staff.

**Visual -** The visual materials will also complement the organization's brand and message. The most important part of it is the organization's logo and its rules of use (how to use the logo, colors, sizes, associated fonts, etc). Visual materials also include organizational templates for presentations, documents and on-line materials, the selection of core images (photos), institutional advertisement pieces (print and on-line), pop-up banners and others.

## Internal Communication

Although communicating and sharing information with colleagues is often overlooked due to heavy workloads, internal communication is vitally important. Internal communication is the building block of an organization's culture, or the atmosphere created as a result of its values, mission and work processes.

When an organization is communicating effectively with its internal stakeholders, whether they are employees, management or board, it develops a cohesive culture where everyone is focused on the same goals and has the same objectives.

The *Internal Communication Toolkit* prepared by CIVICUS - World Alliance for Citizen Participatory[9] lists the specific benefits that can result from effective internal communication. They specifically mention that:

- Employees can make more independent decisions since they have the tools and knowledge to know what is "right" according to the organization's goals;
- Staff can better identify with the goals, mission and procedures of the organization, which can result in a sense of "making a difference" and increased effort and efficiency;
- Programs and departments share more resources and information resulting in less duplication of work and stronger impact as a whole;
- Day-to-day conflict can be reduced since a lot of conflict is the result of different ideas regarding what is important to the organization.

[9] Internal Communication Toolkit - CIVICUS - World Alliance for Citizen by Jessica Hume
In: https://www.civicus.org/en/news-and-resources/toolkits/265-internal-communication-toolkit

Internal communication is not a process that goes from the top boss to the intern. Rather, internal communication refers to the almost constant interactions that take place within your organization that convey meaning about what the organization does. It not only refers to "official" channels of communication, such as internal newsletters, notice boards and or staff meetings but also takes place in corridors, social events, and day-to-day interactions Therefore, internal communication encompasses both overt communication through meetings, memos, etc., and more casual forms of communication such as awards, gossip and "happy hours".

To improve internal communication at your organization, you can use the following tools:

| Internal Communication Toolkit | |
|---|---|
| In-Person Communication - personal, direct and conducive to two-way communication. | Staff Meetings<br>Individual Meetings<br>Award Programs<br>Social Events (birthday celebrations, shared lunches, social outings) |
| Printed Communication - an easy way to communicate a large amount of information that your audience can access in their own time; long lasting communication. | Internal Newsletter<br>Staff Handbook<br>Central resource library<br>Notice board |
| On-line based Communication – fast, cheap and global. | Email<br>Listserves<br>Tele/Video conferencing<br>Intranet |

## Events and Networking

Besides all the communication tools that we have nowadays, face-to-face meetings are still one of the most powerful ways to do business and to promote your organization. Meeting people in person and building a relationship is essential to get new business.

Participating in key events in your field will keep you up to date with the latest research and connect you with experts who can strengthen your organization's core mission and activities. Environmental funds have much to gain in terms of promoting their work at key international events, such as the Conferences of the Parties (COPs) of environmental conventions like those that deal with Climate, Desertification, and Biological Diversity. IUCN Conferences, International Foundation Association meetings, Regional Policy Forums, and etc. will also help you to stay connected to a broader conservation and donor community.

Your organization's participation in strategic events can be enhanced through organizing exhibits of your work, thematic side events, announcing new findings, launching studies and ensuring that you maximize the networking potential of connecting to a broader community of conservation and finance practitioners.

The main international events can be followed through their official websites. It is important to plan in advance your fund's participation in such meetings, to stick to the events' deadlines (for application, for side events submission, etc.) and to include the costs of this participation in your annual budget (or in your fundraising plan).

In the Conventions' meeting of the parties (COPs) it is worth trying to be part of your country's official delegation, to have full access and privilege to official discussions, documents and negotiations. This can usually be arranged by contacting your country's Ministry of External Relations or Ministry of Environment and requesting participation.

We highlight a few of the Convention websites for your information, where you can access more information about the agenda and ways to participate:

Convention on Biological Diversity - www.cbd.int – The Biodiversity COP happens every two years and discusses advances made in the implementation of the program of work of the convention.

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change - www.unfccc.int — The climate convention takes place on an annual basis.

United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification - www.unccd.int — The Convention to Combat Desertification meets every two years.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) also holds a major meeting every four years. This is a wonderful forum to share and learn about advances made in the environmental agenda, as well as to network with key scientists and partners working globally on similar issues to those of your environmental fund. Visit www.iucn.org for more details and information.

As part of a network of Environmental Trust Funds you should check in with your peers to coordinate common strategies. The Latin America and Caribbean Network of Environmental Funds (RedLAC) has been historically very engaged in consolidating a presence at international forums. As part of RedLAC or CAFÉ, you can ensure that your fund is engaged in cutting edge discussions about conservation finance issues and best practices, and that you present your work to broader audiences, taking the opportunity to also network and engage with future clients, donors, and partners.

There are several tips about how to take full advantage of major events. As Susan RoAne, author of How to Work a Room, suggests in her article, Learn to Talk to Anyone in 10 Minutes or Less, "Before your next event, ask yourself the following questions: What is the purpose of the event? What does your company hope to gain from the event, and what role are you expected to play in achieving that goal? Your answers will give you a clear understanding of your professional objectives at the meeting and help you focus on what you want to accomplish."[10]

### Promoting Events

Promoting your own organizational events is also a unique opportunity to put the spotlight on your work. Events are a great way to build an organization's reputation, to engage people, to disseminate knowledge, to attract media attention, to promote services, to increase networks and much more.

Events can cover a wide range of activities, from formal dinners to field trips, expert talks, publications launches, etc. An evening with a mix of existing and potential donors where a member of staff shares their experiences around a key theme can be an invaluable way of engaging people with your organizational mission.

To ensure the ongoing success of your events you must put effort into organizing and promoting them well. Bear in mind that a poorly organized or less attended event can really damage your reputation. So irrespective of its size, an event has to be a success.

If you are considering producing a large-scale event, it is wise to hire a professional events agency to produce it. If you are planning to organize an event yourself, here are some tips to help you:

- Make sure that you have a clear desired outcome, target audience and key message;
- Have clear which resources you have available to organize your event or fundraise for it if necessary (check out Funbio's Sustainable Dialogues case study at the end of this handbook);
- Choose the venue carefully. If it is going to be in-house be sure that the room is ready by the time the guests arrive;
- Start promoting your event as early as possible. Remember that professionals today have a time-stressed agenda;
- Develop a title for the event that will help capture the attention of your audience and convey its relevance to them;
- Focus on the benefits of your event to guests, providing relevant information that they will take away in terms of new knowledge or networking opportunities;
- Be a good host and make sure your guests are comfortable and happy during the event.

[10] Learn to Talk to Anyone in 10 Minutes or Less by Suan RoAne and Linda Armstrong. Exhibitor Magazine. IN: http://www.exhibitoronline.com/exhibitormagazine/article.asp?ID=516

## Developing Case studies

Case studies are a very useful way to illustrate the type of work that is done by your environmental fund. Case studies provide an analysis of the relationship between a challenge and a solution. A case study should therefore begin with an introduction that presents an analysis of an issue or situation that the reader can evaluate and learn about. Case studies can be extremely complex, or very simple. There are approximately four types of case studies: illustrative (description of events), exploratory (investigative), cumulative (collective information/comparisons) and critical (examine a particular subject with cause and effect outcomes). While there are no hard and fast rules to writing a case study, it should have enough information in it that readers can understand what the issue is about and, after thinking about it and analyzing the information, be able to come up with a proposed solution. Writing an interesting case study is a bit like writing a detective story. You want to keep your readers interested in the subject while also getting your point across.

There are three basic steps to writing case studies: research, analysis, and the actual writing. You start with research, but even when you reach the writing stage you may find you need to go back to gather additional information.

## The Research Phase

1. **Library and Internet research.** Find out what has been written before, and read the important articles about your issue. For example, your case study might be about a national park that needs to increase visitation in order to raise more funds from ticket revenues. In this case, the case study problem would be to figure out how to increase tourism revenues without increasing threats to the park. You might find that your selected site doesn't have many tourists because there are no facilities. So your case study problem might be how to attract the right kind of businesses to come and build a restaurant or even a hotel near or in the park. Once you have decided on the situation or issue you would like to cover in your case study (and you might have several issues, not just one), then you need to talk to experts.

2. **Interview people who know the place or the situation.** Find knowledgeable people to interview – in our example they may be at the park itself or work in a tourism agency, or a government office that deals with tourism to national parks. In addition to people who work in the site, talk to tourists too.

   When you are interviewing people, ask them questions that will help you understand their opinions about the issue, questions like:

   Do you think tourists know that they are the only source of revenue for the national park?
   What would it take to get them to visit this national park?
   What is your impression of the park?
   How do you feel about the fact that tourism fees raised today are too low to pay for the park's maintenance costs?
   What do you think should be different, if anything?
   What kind of facilities do you think are needed in the park?
   How much do you think the facilities would cost to build and to run?

## The Analysis Phase

1. **Put all the information in one place.** Now that you collected information from people, articles, books, etc. you can't include it all. So, you need to think about how to sort through it, take out the excess, and arrange it so that the situation will be understandable to your readers. Before you can do this, you have to put all the information together where you can see it and analyze what is going on. You will be looking for the best angle to take on the story, considering the audience that you are hoping to reach.

2. **Try to formulate the case problem in a few sentences.** When you do this, you may find that you need more information. Once you are satisfied with the way you have defined the problem you want your readers to think about, break the problem down into different parts, each representing a piece of the puzzle that needs to be understood before the problem can be solved.

## Writing the Case Study

1. **Describe the problem or case question you want the reader to solve.** In a detective story, the crime happens right at the beginning and the detective has to put together the information to discover

what happened. A case study can take a similar approach and start by raising a question or a quote of someone interviewed. For example, suppose you interviewed an official and he told you he thought more people should be interested in visiting the park and he can't understand why they don't. Then you could write something like this:

*The historic town of XX is located in the mountains of country X. The town tourism supervisor, Mr. Jim Smith, said that he thought "many more people should visit this national park and help to protect this special place, but they just don't. I don't know why – maybe we don't have the right kind of facilities for them to enjoy, so they prefer going to other places where they can eat, sleep, buy things…and not just visit waterfalls". This case explores what has to happen to encourage more visitors to visit the National Park.*

2. **Add additional sections to the case.** You will probably need to organize your information under topics such as the following:

**Introduction** — lay out the issue.

**Background on the park** — where is it, how big, what climate, or any other details that will help illustrate the situation – this part should be a brief and general description. Think about having 2 pages of written material, photos, or even a video, so that your readers can really get a feel for what the park is about. Summarize the main features of the park. What makes it special enough about it to make it a case study?

**Visitors to the park** – you want to make the reader do some work, so you can say that the number of visitors are shown on a table or chart you have compiled. You might want to include a chart that shows the number of visitors that visit other parks in your country that do have facilities. You may compare the entrance fees in the different parks. This will let your readers draw their own conclusions. If possible, include information you received when you talked to visitors - what did they like, dislike? What did visitors think should happen to make the park more attractive?

**Government Policy** – include information about what government policy is with respect to the park. What is allowed, what is not allowed? Can policy be changed, and by whom?

**Business Opportunities** – you have already said there are not enough facilities for tourists. Well, now you need to provide information on what it might cost to build a nice restaurant, hotel, or a visitors shop. Suppose in one of your interviews, you talked to a businessperson who said that it would cost $25,000 to put a snack bar in the park. You need to give your reader that information, but that's not all. You also have to provide context about what kind of a restaurant or hotel you would need, how much the food or overnight stay would cost, and what sorts of things would be sold at gift shop. Your reader has to figure out how many people would have to eat there in order to recover the costs of running the facilities. This is where the statistics come in. Are there enough people who visit the park today to make it worthwhile to invest in building the facilities? How many more people could the park support if tourism increases due to the new facilities? What other services would also have to increase? Can you consider raising the park's entrance fees to get more revenue without adding too many more people to the park?

**Potential employees -** You can't add facilities without adding people to staff them. Are there enough people in the local community to fill the new jobs that would be created? Do they have the right kind of education and training to fill the jobs, or would the restaurant owner, or the new hotel owner, have to train people, or bring people in from other locations? Could the local school system provide the necessary training?

**Other sections of the case -** Depending on the case you are researching and writing, the sections of the case will need to be organized so that each type of information is in its own section and understandable to the reader. You might not use all the sections described above, but certainly your case study will need to consider the business and economic implications of tourists coming to your area, and equally important, the implications for conservation of the park. Tourism has economic implications and environmental implications. Good planning must take both into account.

**Conclusion -** Your case will need a conclusion. Rather than putting in your answer in the case, leave the reader with some open questions. For example, you might have learned that there is a government policy that says "No *private enterprise is allowed to change any part of the park."* So you might conclude with a paragraph like this:

*The environmental fund and tourism minister are discussing the possibility of investing in concession models for operating the facilities of the park but to do so it will be necessary to have special approval from the national environmental agency. Together, they are putting together a plan to show the government that a policy change that allows private enterprise to make money off of national parks would be a good idea. "Why should we prevent tourists from enjoying a comfortable* *experience when visiting our national protected areas? Think of the jobs that would be created with the new concessions. And having more people involved in making money off of the park means, that there will be more people involved in ensuring that this park is maintained in good health for future generations to come."*

By ending your case with a question or open issue like this, you let your readers discuss the situation themselves. If you have written a good case, they will have enough information to understand the situation and to be able to raise the issue with other key audiences.

**Make sure you have a story to tell**

When developing a case study, the most important thing to remember is that you need to have a good story to talk about. Identify the person, group, organization, or project which you would like to write a case study about. Generally, you want to write a case study because you have already identified or have in mind a story you would like to tell. It is important to ensure that you think through the following questions before developing your case studies:

- Will this story offer something unique?
- Will it help exemplify the work that your environmental fund does?
- Does the story highlight a solution or service that needs more visibility?

Once someone suggests an idea for a case study, find out whether or not there's really a story worth sharing. The fact is, not all situations translate into interesting stories (or one that will be interesting to your audience). One suggestion is to create a template form to be filled out by anyone who has a case study in mind. Doing so ensures that you collect all the information you need to develop a series of organizational case studies, which can in turn, be used as showpieces for your environmental fund's work.

## Communications for Fundraising

Environmental funds rely heavily on donations as their main resource pool. Their capacity to secure funding is directly tied to their ability to implement effective programs and manage partnerships with key donors. In addition, EFs must be able to "sell themselves". This is one of the ways communication can play a key role to support broader organizational objectives.

Fundraising is all about getting support. When donating money to an organization, the donor is essentially buying into an organization's mission and beliefs. More than that, the donor wishes to contribute to the ultimate success of the organization's mission. But finding donors is a competitive business. According to the National Center for Charitable Statistics (NCCS)[11] in the United States, there are more than 1.5 million nonprofit organizations registered. And all of them are looking for allies - or donors.

That is why a good fundraising program must be donor centered. Fundraisers must constantly look at things from the perspective of the donor. Effective fundraising can only happen when donors are ready for it. It is key to understand the reasons why donors support environmental funds and also why they don't.

## Funding your communication efforts

Communication is not usually a core area of an environmental fund. Yet, you will need to invest resources in communication in order to really benefit from all that it has to offer. Having a staff person or team designated as responsible for communication in your environmental fund is a first step. But you will also need to set aside a budget that covers the cost of institutional as well as programmatic communication activities. **Institutional** activities (and or products) are those involved in promoting what you do (websites, press kits, annual reports, organizational meetings and events), while **programmatic** communication is directly involved in delivering the ultimate conservation outcomes that your fund supports (local stakeholder engagement activities, posters, flyers, videos, etc.)

[11] Quick facts about nonprofits - National Center for Charitable Statistics (NCCS) In: nccs.urban.org/statistics/quickfacts.cfm

Partnerships are a good way to raise support for your marketing and communication needs while also helping to save resources. You can turn to a public relations and or marketing firm, to see if they want to join forces with your organization to help promote environmental issues in your country. These partnerships can be negotiated either pro-bono (free) or at a discounted rate, since just as you need help with communication needs, firms are looking for interesting causes to support and to test creative teams' talents. Setting up a partnership with a marketing and communication firm is definitely worth exploring as a way to ensure that your communication needs are supported by experts and in the long-term.

You can try the same approach with universities, for research needs, or nature photographers as a way to build your image library, TV stations, as a means to build a video archive, and designers. When developing your EF's online strategy you should also look into free or low cost options as a way to save resources.

Another type of partnership worth considering is the association of your brand with sponsors. You can organize thematic events that are sponsored by specific companies, foundations and other types of donors. By having sponsors for your events, you can recover costs of putting together the event and raise funds for your organization, while at the same time, promoting your cause to a broader group.

**Save a Mile: A Fundraising Campaign**

On November 2010, just weeks after oil began to spill into the Mexican Gulf, Conservation International (CI) launched "Save a Mile: It's Our Ocean" - a fundraising campaign to support global conservation efforts.

According to Threespot[12], the agency responsible for the concept, design, and development of the campaign, the idea was to create a sense of stewardship over the oceans by emphasizing how important and vulnerable they are. The campaign combined the launch of a movie with an interactive online tool that encouraged users to explore the threats to ocean habitats - open ocean, coral reef, coastal areas and mangroves, and to take action by donating US$75,00 to save one mile of ocean.

Although the miles were symbolic, donors' names featured on the tool and they could even look up the mile that they helped to save, further personalizing the cause. The figure of US$75,00 is definitely not a small amount for an individual donation, and CI explained that it reflected specific and quantifiable experiences in the Galápagos Islands (where $4 million are spent annually to protect 33 million acres) and Abrolhos/Brazil (where $1.37 million are spent per year to successfully manage a protected area network that supports 13,840,000 acres of coastal and marine areas).

The campaign was also transparent about how donations could be spent and offers easy ways for supporters to join. The result was that it raised awareness and funds at a critical time, using the devastation from the oil spill to make the call-to-action more urgent.

To learn more, visit: www.conservation.org/saveamile

In general, there are two key ways that communication can contribute to a fundraising program: getting new donors, and keeping existing donors happy.

## Getting new donors

When getting new donors, communication works to build the organization's profile and to support fundraising according to the donor's point of view. The organizational profile involves ensuring that there is alignment in how the organization's mission, programs and accomplishments are presented. Everything that makes up the organization's image – the brand — is coordinated to present cohesiveness and to ensure that successes are communicated consistently.

[12] Threespot Case Studies, In: www.threespot.com/portfolio/case_studies/ci/

Communication also helps to define the “USP”, or “unique selling proposition” of your environmental fund. USP is a marketing concept that represents the factors that set an organization apart from its competitors. In the competitive world of fundraising, it is important to take advantage of and to strengthen USPs to maximize opportunities for your environmental fund.

All this must be reflected in your fundraising products, starting with fundraising proposals. Of course, products depend on different targets. Some techniques include: direct mail, newspaper and magazine ads or inserts, radio and television ads, radio and television specials, direct dialogue, internet invitations, phone calls, member-to-member outreach, special events and corporate partnerships.

## Keeping donors happy

Environmental funds receive donations from foundations, national governments, corporations, multilateral and bilateral organizations and others. One of the greatest concerns of any fundraising program is to build the trust and confidence of its donors. Donors must feel like partners. They must sense that your organization cares about them. Keeping donors is about keeping them happy. After all, if your organization doesn’t create the best experience possible for existing donors, they probably should not spend more money on you.

Cultivating existing donors is vital to the future sustainability of any organization. It is about the maintenance of long-term donations and relationships. Reporting on your activities is key to building a donor relationship, whether this is done formally through progress or annual reports, or informally through your organization’s communications tools, such as a website, e-newsletter, or external media clippings.

Another obvious point is to remember to thank and to recognize new and existing donors. There are several ways to do this depending on you contractual obligations, such as logo exposure.

### Developing an Annual Report

An Annual Report is a basic communication tool for any environmental fund that is looking to add legitimacy and transparency to its work. An Annual Report is a way to let donors know that the funds trusted to your organization have been used in the most efficient manner and that they comply with donors’ wishes. You have to keep donors informed about your main activities, results and related financial information.

A good Annual Report captures the essence of how the donation is being used. It invites interaction and loyalty and makes donors feel good. Besides that, an Annual Report can also work as a fundraising tool, helping to improve donor relations and to raise new funds.

The Annual Report must present financial figures, such as operating income and expenditures, as well as a balance sheet. It is also a good idea to include any review from professional auditors, as well as regular financial and technical reports on activities and projects.

Remembering to thank and recognize the contributions of all of your donors in your annual report is key. Without them you won’t be able to achieve your results!

You can check out real examples of EF’s annual reports by visiting the Conservation Finance Alliance’s (CFA) Toolkit, available at: www.conservationfinance.org/toolkit

©Camila Monteiro

# Module 4
# Online Communication

This is the fourth module in the Communication and Marketing for Environmental Funds Workshop. Here we will take a look at the importance of online communication for any communication strategy. We are going to focus our discussion on developing an online presence through websites and social media.

After completing this module you will be able to:

- Know how to build a successful organizational website;
- Maximize the effectiveness of your social media channels;
- Understand the uses of technology platforms for communication.

## Be Online

Technology completely changed the way people communicate. The use of digital communications platforms, such as mobile phones and internet, enables and provides many different forms of communication, making it possible to share interests and connect people across geographic, economic and political barriers.

An online presence is a key part of any communication strategy today. Learning to explore appropriate language and tools for being online is a must in today's technologically savvy society. Although there are still barriers to online communication for all, any reputable environmental fund will need to connect to communities beyond its immediate context, such as donors and other civil society partners. It is highly likely that these audiences will be looking for easy ways to reach and obtain information about your organization and that they will look for this online.

Although online communication does not replace other forms of personal communication, it allows stakeholders to learn and to keep up with progress in the organization. For many nonprofit organizations a lack of money and time is generally cited as a barrier to actively move into the online arena. But with planning, good ideas and a smart team you can easily use the Internet to reach thousands of people and make a tremendous difference to raising your environmental fund's profile.

There are several ways to be online: through a website, blog, social media, games, online advertisement and others. Here we list some of these methods and share good practice guidelines that can significantly increase your online impact, as well as save you money and time.

## Website: Your organization's face to the world

An organizational website is one of the most important ways to enhance your online presence. Actually, we can say that nowadays a website is the main public face of any organization. Searching online is the easiest and most useful way for anyone to get to know more about your environmental fund's work, and you may not have another chance to make a positive first impression.

Websites should add value to your organization. A good website offers a direct and quick route for making information available, providing background information and updates. A good website also reflects your organization's brand in both design and appearance.

Like any other communication tool, a website must be planned before it is implemented. The first step is to identify its purpose and main target audience. Most nonprofit websites work to increase awareness, engage people and raise funds for the organization. It sounds easy, but developing an institutional website can be quite complex. It is particularly challenging to try to figure out ways to reflect all of the activities and areas covered by the organization while avoiding overloading the website with information. This can be addressed by the way that the information is presented online (information architecture), design elements, and by developing the right type of content. Most importantly, a website should not be a static tool. It can be changed and updated according to the most recent or pressing messages of your organization.

A good website also takes up resources and time to develop and maintain, whether the investment in time or money depends on your level of in-house skills and your ability to "do it yourself." Start small, and be flexible by growing with your success. Below we highlight some of the key points to keep in mind when building a successful website:

### Purpose

As with any other communication activity, the website must present a defined purpose for its target audience, whether you want them to sign up for a newsletter, to download a publication, to donate money or to contact you. The purpose of your website can also change from time to time depending on your main objective.

### Design

Institutional websites should feature design elements that are consistent with the organization's message and culture; websites are after all, a key vehicle for communicating with visitors and to reinforce the organization's brand. In many cases you can tell a lot about an organization's culture by the style of website it chooses. It is important to have the support of a good designer who can guide you in ensuring that your website has good design elements.

### Usability

A successful website also has a lot to do with its usability. It must be usable, not by you, but by online users. In other words, the visitor shouldn't find any difficulty navigating, or finding what he/she is looking for. Unlike with a book, when it comes to websites you cannot determine the path that a visitor will take to get to the information that they are looking for. So every page should be presented like a first a page, allowing the user to get back to the original start up screen – the homepage.

### Relevancy

Websites must also be relevant to visitors. It must provide the information that they are looking for or at least ways to contact you for more information. To encourage your visitors to return regularly to your website, you can offer fresh, compelling content and get them involved in your cause in a meaningful way. Incorporating an E-newsletter into your website, which visitors sign up to receive, is also a good strategy for getting visitors to come back to read new content available on your website.

## Dynamic

You have just a few seconds to make a positive impression and to communicate your core values to online visitors. A good website should be updated regularly to attract new attention, it is therefore key that it is built in a way that it is easy to manage. However, if your website has a restricted number of pages and the linking (architecture) is not well done, it will be much harder for you to go back and to fix it. So think carefully before you finalize the information architecture.

Websites are built on a platform, which is also called a Content Management Systems (CMS). CMS platforms vary in complexity and there are free versions available online which can help build a low-budget website. These CMS platforms allow EF's communication staff to update the website without a webmaster or an IT person. The main examples of free CMSs are:

Joomla – www.joomla.org
Wordpress – www.wordpress.com
Google sites – www.google.com/sites/help/intl/en/overview.html

But please know that even if you are using a free platform, it still takes time and design skills to customize a system for your Fund's website. The advantage of using these types of systems is their low cost and the relatively easy way to update content. If you prefer not to go with a free platform, you will need to hire a professional website developer to support you with a customized platform that fits your needs. Either way, you should ensure that you are adequately trained to update content as needed, and that your receive support with general maintenance.

**Basic Website Content**

Many of the visitors to your website will not be familiar with your organization and some may not even know what an environmental fund is to begin with. They may reach your website via a search engine or an external link. Having smart content is a must to keep your user on your page and to provide them with a good experience during their visit.

Upon arriving on your home page, they should be able to quickly get an idea of why your organization exists and what it does. Websites should also provide four pieces of key information:

**1. Mission Statement**

The full mission statement must be there. Normally, it is part of an "About Us" page, but it should also be reflected in other pages throughout your website. Visitors should have an idea of why the organization exists no matter what page they visit. The "About Us" page should provide more details, but visitors should not need to navigate through the site in order to understand the basic purpose of your organization. There are a number of different ways to help convey your mission or purpose on your home page. In some cases there will be a brief one or two sentence statement that is located in a prominent location.

**2. Institutional Content**

Once new visitors have arrived at the site and understood your mission or purpose, they may want to learn more details about you. Providing information about the history of the organization can be a great help for connecting on a deeper level with visitors. You may want to include details about when and why the organization was founded, and by whom. Important dates, milestones, achievements, evidence of growth and impact, and contact information should also be included.

**3. News and Activities**

It is good practice nowadays to add a Blog, and Events Calendar or a News Room to provide dynamic content. This content must be updated frequently and allows people to check the website to see what is coming up. News could be displayed through a blog on the site, or through a separate blog that can be used for interacting with visitors. Having case studies, photographs and interactive content is also a way to bring design elements into the website, making it generally a more positive experience.

**4. Contact Information**

Some website visitors may wish to get in contact with the organization about volunteering, receiving assistance, employment opportunities, donations, or any number of things. Your website should at least provide a contact form or email address, and in most cases, a phone number and mailing address.

Environmental funds' websites should also include a section on transparency and **information for donors**. It must include the organization's fundraising goals and progress, and details about how the money has been spent. It is good practice to make it possible for visitors to download financial reports, audit results or annual report. You should also inform prospective donors about how they can support your fund, or specific programs or objectives. If tax deductions are a possibility, this information should be highlighted.

If your Fund is targeting international donors, it is important to have at least the basic institutional information available in English in your website (if English is not the main language in your country).

## Social Media

Social media includes online-based technologies that are used to turn communication into interactive dialogue among organizations, communities, and individuals. An online community can operate on an internal social network as an intranet, listserv and email lists, or through a commercial social network platform such as Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn. A key characteristic of a social network is the large, publicly shared base of users assembled by the platform provider.

**Social media includes online-based technologies that are used to turn communication into interactive dialogue among organizations, communities, and individuals.**

If your website is your main public face, your social media channels are the best way to show your face to online communities. Social media networks must be considered in your overall communication strategy. Social media gives you more ways to brand your organization, spread your message and cultivate supporters.

The use of commercial social media networks had rapidly increased in recent years. Today Facebook is the fifth-most trafficked site in the United States. And their statistics are really impressive[13]:

- 955 million monthly active users at the end of June 2012, with approximately 81% being from outside the U.S. and Canada;
- 552 million daily active users on average in June 2012.
- 543 million monthly active users who used Facebook mobile products in June 2012.

The 2012 Nonprofit Social Networking Survey[14] confirmed that 93% of nonprofit organizations are present at any top commercial social network, being Facebook the most popular one with 98% of respondents reporting a presence on this network.

According to the same survey, the Top 3 factors for success on social networks are strategy, prioritization, and dedicated staff. That formula looks right – get a plan, get buy-in and get an experienced team member to lead the new initiative. To get the most of your social media channels can be a long learning journey. Here are some pointers to drive you in the process of exploring social media as part of your communication strategy:

### 1. Build Your Community

Imagine your organization is running a Twitter campaign to acquire more followers to your initial base of 100 followers. Now imagine 10 of your supporters participated and re-tweeted your message – let's say that each one of them has 130 friends. Your supporters have exposed your message over 1,000 people, or 10 times your initial baseline!

Social networking is about building your community – a base of supporters – that you can easily access to engage in your cause, to promote your organization, and, why not, to raise funds.

### 2. Engagement is Key

Ask your "members/friends" to share their opinions and have them post their responses online. Respond to their comments so that they know someone is reading their posts.

### 3. Freshen Up Profiles

Update user profiles every couple of days with new stories, interesting facts, new videos, blog entries, photos, etc.

### 4. Make It Interesting

Don't bore your community with unnecessary status updates or tweets. You are competing with thousands and thousands of messages. So your blog should be filled with interesting and compelling news, not boring press releases.

### 5. Two-way process

Remember that social media network is a two-way process. Don't treat it as a one-way communication tool to just blast out your latest press releases and action alerts. Consider it as an interactive 24-hour news cycle. It's where people go to gather news, resources and discuss issues. And you have to provide them with feedback!

[13] Facebook Statistics. In: newsroom.fb.com
[14] 2012 Nonprofit Social Networking Benchmark Report. In: www.nonprofitsocialnetworksurvey.com

**Social Networking Definitions**[15]

There are countless terms used in the social networking world. Here are a few of the most used:

**Blog:** The word "blog" is short for "web log," and can be thought of as an on-line diary. The popular movie *Julie and Julia* highlighted the blog of Julie Powell, an amateur writer who documented her attempt to cook an entire Julia Child cookbook's worth of recipes within a year. That popular blog is a good example of a personal application of blogging.

Blogging professionally (e.g. for advocacy) can be similarly informal. Although a blog still has to be credible since it represents the writer and the cause, it is usually more conversational than other forms of communication, such as a press release.

You can create a free blog at www.blogger.com, www.wordpress.com, www.blogspot.com, or a multitude of other sites.

**Podcast:** A podcast is an audio or video program made available on the Internet for downloading to a personal audio or video player. The term "podcast" was originally derived from two terms: "broadcasting" and "iPod."

**Social Networking:** Social networking is an on-line activity that connects people who share similar interests or activities. Typically, a participant has a profile on each site that identifies him or her to the rest of the community. Facebook, YouTube, and LinkedIn are examples of different social networking websites.

**Video/Photography:** Video and photography are powerful ways to communicate with your networks, and websites such as YouTube or Vimeo allow you to post your videos for free. In addition, you can often get reporters interested in covering your work if they see a video or pictures of your work. If you have an interesting (and short) video that highlights your work, you can send reporters a link to the video.  You can also link these videos back to your website. The same can be done with photography sites like Picasa or Flickr. These online platforms allow users to view photo albums, which you can enhance with legends that tell a story about your work.

©FUNDESNAP ABOLAC 2008

[15] Reproduced from *Media an Messaging Training Handbook*. Copyright ©2010 Phillips Media Relations, LLC

**Benchmarking: What are nonprofits doing?**

The Nonprofit Social Network Report[16] is a valuable resource to benchmarking how nonprofit organizations are using social media. Since 2009, NTEN (Nonprofit Technology Network), Common Knowledge and Blackbaud have been presenting annual surveys reports to point emerging trends about nonprofits and their use of social networking in North America.

The last edition, launched in 2012, confirmed that social networking continues to grow in importance. Considering Facebook and Twitter as the leading social sites, the survey attested that:

Average Community Size

Facebook: 8,317 members
Twitter: 3,290 followers
A 30% and 81% increase in community size respectively compared to 2011's results.

Average Number of Pages
Facebook: 2.1
Twitter: 1.2
The consolidated strategy is to focus most or your entire branding and marketing around one Page or account in each one of the leading social outlets. Just a very small number of charities are opting for approach of using individual Pages or accounts for each department, campaign, or initiative.

Average Cost

Facebook: US$3.50 per Like
Twitter: US$2.05 per Follower

Although, the main purpose of a presence in a social network is marketing, in 2012 the survey also noted a growing trend in fundraising using Facebook: 46% of the respondents indicated they were raising money on Facebook, while the top category (33% of all responders) were prioritizing Individual Giving – soliciting Facebook supporters for individual donations (e.g. one-time gifts, memberships, monthly gifts).

[16] Idem 7; 2012 Nonprofit Social Networking Benchmark Report. In: www.nonprofitsocialnetworksurvey.com

## Exploring online tools

Today we can find online tools for almost everything. Learning how to make a good use of some of these great online resources could drastically improve your organization's online presence. Here we present a selection of online resources for five different purposes: promoting, monitoring, engaging, communicating and fundraising.

### 1. Promoting: Web Search Engines

Once your website is online you have to start to think about how to promote it. A good rank on the web search engines, such as Google, Yahoo and Bing (MSN), are definitely the best way to generate traffic to your page.

Web search engines are programmed to automated rank websites based on their popularity and relevancy. This means, that the more links and traffic a website has, the higher it goes and the more prominently it is listed in relevant search engine queries. Being on the first page of a search (or even second or third) increases your credibility and visibility.

There are several tips about how to improve your website rank on the web search engines. Keywords, tags and titles are something to consider, but you also have to build your online partnerships and networks. Make sure your organization is listed in all relevant directories and professional membership associations with a direct link back to your website wherever possible. Exchange links with partners and ask donors to link to your organization pages. Use social network channels to expand your exposure into the vast network of bloggers and activists.

Every link and visit to your website counts to make it relevant to a web search engine!

### 2. Monitoring: Google Analytics

It is vital to know who is visiting your website and how they are getting there. Google Analytics is a free and powerful website statistic software. It provides powerful tracking for anyone with a web presence, being one of the most powerful web analytics solutions today. Its resources are used to monitor your website's "hits" and to build your social media community. Using Google Analytics you can generate weekly or monthly reports to keep close tabs on what is and isn't driving traffic to your site. Over time you'll discover which topics peak your audience's interest, and which strategies generate the most impact. These lessons learned over time will become invaluable, helping you to continually refine your strategies into a solid formula of success.

To learn more visit Google Analytics: www.google.com/analytics

### 3. Engaging: NING

Ning calls itself as The World's Largest Platform for Creating Social Websites. It appeals to people and organizations that want to create their own communities and social networks around specific interests. It works really well when you need to create a close community that could be shared just for invited participants. You can also keep it limited to specific membership and community needs. Different from Facebook, it is a customized tool where you create your own visual design, choice of features and member data – which can reflect much more of your brand. People joining a Ning Network can also have their own profile pages within the community.

Ning: www.ning.com

### 4. Communicating: E-Newsletters

E-Newsletters, or E-mail Marketing is still a valuable form of communication for most organizations. Sending emails to an online list is the best way to leverage time and resources. E-mail marketing to existing contacts is one of the most cost-effective ways to reach your target audience, to build relationships with new constituents, to increase engagement, and to educate supporters about your organization's mission.

When creating an e-mail marketing campaign keep in mind that the main purpose of it will be to generate traffic to your website. Readers should be able to click on highlighted news and read that same content online on your website. The newsletter should present initial content and gather reader's attention bringing them to your website. It is a strategy for them to learn more about your work.


## 5. Fundraising: Crowd funding

Crowd funding describes the collective effort of individuals who network and pool their resources to support activities initiated by other people or organizations. It is a collective fundraising system to collect money and support several activities and projects. It has been used to support a wide variety of initiatives including disaster relief, citizen journalism, artists, political campaigns, startup funding, etc.

Nonprofit organizations are using crowd funding to create viral campaigns, produce publications, videos and other communication products. Crowd funding campaigns are creative and adaptable, yet specific and quantifiable. Because everything happens in "real-time," campaign's progress and return on investment are immediately evident.

To build your own crowd funding online platform is complex and expensive. It is only worth it if you expect to raise a significant amount of resources. Normally, the best way to use crowd funding for your project or organization is to take part in an existing platform, which will charge a fee or a percentage of the donations raised (or both).

There are several crowd funding websites. The following ones are focused on nonprofit causes[17]:

Causes: www.causes.com
Crowd Rise: www.crowdrise.com
Firstgiving: www.firstgiving.com

[17] For a more detailed list access 13 Crowd Funding Sites for Social-Cause Entrepreneurs by SIG UELAND In Practical Ecommerce: http://www.practicalecommerce.com/articles/3140-13-Crowdfunding-Sites-for-Social-Cause-Entrepreneurs

**Greenpeace: Love Letters to the Future**

In November 2009, Greenpeace International launched a cross-media campaign to address climate change in a personal and creative way. People from all over the world were requested to upload a picture or a video or a text message addressed to their grand grandchildren about their fears regarding global warming.

The best 100 letters as voted on by the public were sealed in a time capsule, along with a selection of objects related to climate change, such as an energy efficient light bulb. The time capsule is shockproof, waterproof and designed to last above ground for 500 years.

Greenpeace used the social network media for engaging and involving people. Targeting real "Green Ambassadors" or influential hubs and supporting them in spreading the initiative to their environment, thus creating incremental engagement with the project. Celebrities, green bloggers, environment correspondents and green organizations, those social ambassadors went around different newly created social spaces, requesting supporters to upload their Love Letter.

During the one month, the campaign[18]:

- Built a fan base of 4,845 Facebook fans;
- Generated support from 21 countries;
- Generated 62,544 website visits, being 20% of website traffic generated from social networks, the remaining from the ambassadors strategy;
- Letters submitted: 2,315;
- Top ranking love letters were voted on around 1000 times each.

Site: www.greenpeace.org

[18] Online Ambassador and Social Media Strategy Increases Online Engagement for Love Letters to the Future; Eastline Marketing. In: http://www.eastlinemarketing.com/online-ambassador-and-social-media-strategy-increases-online-engagement-for-love-letters-to-the-future



# Module 5
# Media Relations

This is the fifth module in the Communication and Marketing for Environmental Funds course. Here we focus on the importance of media relations to strengthen the public image of your organization. We are going to give you an overview of how media works and how you can communicate effectively with a variety of media vehicles.

After completing this module you will be able to:

- Understand the difference between media mediums;
- Transform your stories into news;
- Assess the steps for pitching stories to the right journalists;
- Describe the basic contents of a successful press release;
- Identify different ways to communicate using the media.

## Developing Media Relations

Through positive, accurate and timely media relations you can raise the visibility of your environmental fund's work. Media relations can help disseminate and multiply information in a coordinated and consistent way, build positive awareness of your work, and serve as a central point of contact for covering conservation issues in your country.

Building media relations is a very important means to strengthen your organization's core mission, as well as to demonstrate the effectiveness of your fund to donors. Donors are one of the primary audiences for media coverage of your fund, since it allows them to see their work being recognized.

It is also part of being transparent. Sharing information on your organization's progress is a way to recognize the results of your team and partners and to highlight the effectiveness of your fund in managing resources well. Engaging the media in understanding what you do is also a powerful means of ensuring that you are constantly building awareness of conservation finance issues.

Each medium (newspapers, magazines, radio, television, the Internet, etc.) is different, and so they require different things from you. For example, television needs a compelling video to tell a story, whereas newspapers might only need a black and white photo.

However, there are a few common elements to each form of media: you can "pitch" any medium by phone or e-mail. You should contact journalists during their least busy times, and you should make sure that you communicate the most relevant and interesting parts of your story first.

**Introducing Media**

***Newspapers****:* Traditionally, newspapers were a "print-only" medium, requiring great stories, and sometimes other supporting materials such as charts, maps, graphs, and photographs. Increasingly, newspapers need your photos and video for their websites, as well.

You should always "pitch" to a newspaper reporter directly; it's occasionally okay to contact the editor. Mornings are usually the best time to contact them, since their deadlines are typically in the late afternoon. If you are contacting a weekly paper, contact them early in their week – they will get busier closer to publication.

**Magazines**: It's appropriate to pitch reporters directly; it's also often okay to approach magazine editors. Try timing your pitch at the beginning of their week since they get busier closer to publication.

***Radio****:* Radio requires great stories and sound – either in the form of an interview, background noises (such as nature sounds, a train rolling down the tracks, etc.), or both. Visuals such as photos and video are generally not important for radio, although some larger stations could ask for photos for their website.

Larger radio stations: These stations usually have on-air announcers and off-air editors/producers; it is best to pitch the off-air editors/producers instead of the on-air talent. If you know who you're trying to reach, contact him/her prior to the on-air portion of his/her shift. If you do not know the person you're trying to reach, contact the station earlier in the day and ask to speak to the news editor.

Smaller radio stations: These stations often have the same person serving as on-air announcer and editor/producer. Pitch to that person directly. Otherwise, ask to speak to the person responsible for news.

***Television***: TV requires compelling video. You might shoot video yourself and provide it to a station, or you might ask reporters to come to your site and shoot their own video. Visualize a "cool" shot for a television reporter telling your story. For example, perhaps the reporter could be standing outside a cave with bats, or at an observation tower in the forest!

Larger television stations: You should contact off-air producers, not on-air reporters and anchors. If you know who you're trying to reach, contact him/her prior to airtime (the beginning of a producer's shift is usually better than later). If you do not know the person you're trying to reach, speak to the "news desk."

Smaller television stations: Although it's still a good practice to pitch a producer, it is also acceptable to pitch a specific on-air reporter directly. This is especially true if you're familiar with the reporter's work, and have a story similar to the reporter's typical work. Contact the producer or reporter well before airtime (the beginning of a reporter's or producer's shift is usually better than later). If you do not know the person you're trying to reach, contact the station and ask to speak to the news desk.

***News Websites and Blogs***: News websites and blogs work fast – they need information quickly, and they need it in every form – print, photos, and video. For news websites, pitch to the reporter or web editor. For bloggers, pitch to the blogger directly, using a slightly more casual tone.

Getting news coverage for your cause is not always easy and advocates can get frustrated by journalists who don't want to cover their work. Sure, journalists like to cover important stories. But even more importantly, they have to consider whether the story is "newsworthy."

Attracting news coverage is about taking your stories and transforming them into ones that journalists consider newsworthy. You will significantly increase your chances of getting a "yes" from news organizations if you think first about what will be the most interesting angle to take on a particular story.

Below are 12 types of stories reporters consider newsworthy. Each time you prepare to "pitch" a story to the media, consider which of these elements you can include to make your information more newsworthy to the press. Every story you pitch should have at least one of these elements, but the best stories usually contain several.

1. **Something new.** Note that the word "news" has the word "new" in it. Think hard about what's truly new about your story. Examples include the results of a new study, a new piece of legislation, and a new approach to an old problem.

2. **Something extreme.** Superlatives of any kind tend to get a lot of media attention – world's first, area's biggest, first-ever, community's best, neighborhood's worst, etc. Any superlatives that apply to your work could help you attract more media attention.

3. **Something different, surprising, or counterintuitive.** Journalists love stories with a twist. Is there something different – or even a bit weird – about your story?

4. **Something that advances the story.** Journalists often report on an "advancement" of a story they've already reported. For example, a reporter may have written about a controversial environmental proposal four months ago. If the local government is going to make a decision two weeks from today about that proposal, the reporter might be willing to write a follow-up.

5. **Something that impacts many lives.** For example, stories about a protected area that would change the way local loggers do their work would impact many families and communities.

6. **Something gone wrong.** You may have heard the old newsroom adage, "if it bleeds, it leads." Bad news sells – whether it's in the form of an untimely death, crime, a political scandal, a tainted product, or anything else that went wrong. Often times, these stories feature someone or something to blame.

7. **Something with drama.** For better or worse, conflict sells. It makes sense, really – journalists are professional storytellers, and drama is essential to a good story. Think about the people or groups who oppose your issue. Why are they opposed? Why are they wrong? What are the urgent or unexpected threats if swift action isn't taken? Don't be afraid to use conflict to your advantage – especially if you're a David taking on Goliath.

8. **Something fascinating to profile.** Journalists often tell "feature" stories about a fascinating person, group, place, or thing. You might encounter a journalist who declines to cover your issue, but is open to profiling you. If a journalist declines your first idea, try offering a profile.

9. **Something local.** Just as all politics is local, so too is news. If you're pitching a story to a local publication, highlight the parts of the story that are in the news organization's coverage area. Use local examples, local statistics, and local people in your pitch.

10. **Something remembered.** Journalists often consider anniversaries, memorials, or tributes newsworthy. For example, let's say a family of six became homeless a year ago when their house burnt down. The story likely attracted media attention when it happened, and the one-year anniversary offers a chance for reporters to do a follow-up piece.

11. **Something timely.** Are you hosting an outdoor protest for your cause next Tuesday? Are two dozen volunteers gathering to replant trees that were almost destroyed by a recent tornado? Certain scheduled events (the bigger, the better) can attract the media's attention.

12. **Something with celebrities.** Sure, having Angelina Jolie involved in your cause would help you garner more press. But celebrities can mean a lot of things, including a local politician, a local hero, or a local business leader. If a high-profile person is involved with your cause, the media are often more interested in the story.

## Engaging with the Media

Reporters need you as much as you need them. Without sources like you – thoughtful, passionate advocates working toward the public good – reporters would have little to talk about.

Journalists usually want to do a good job. But they're underpaid and overworked. Therefore, they may sound busy on the phone (they are!), but they still need you. By keeping the following ten tips in mind when pitching the media, you will significantly increase the chances of respecting the journalist's time and receiving a "yes" to your story:

1. Regardless of how you pitch (e-mail or phone are both acceptable), make sure the most important, relevant, and interesting parts of your story are the first things in your pitch. If the reporter likes your initial pitch, you can add additional details later.
2. Don't be discouraged if they say no. Instead, ask what they might need from you to make it more "newsworthy" to them. Solicit their advice and turn them into an ally. If they still say no, thank them for their time. Then, think of less obvious angles and other reporters within the news organization who might be able to do a story with slightly different angles. Be "politely persistent".
3. Be available and respond to a journalist's request promptly! You're only useful to them when they're working on the story – if you miss their deadline, you won't be included.
4. Offer the reporter several ways to reach you: home, cell and work phones, personal and work e-mail addresses.
5. When pitching by phone, briefly introduce yourself and ask the journalist, "Are you on deadline, or can you speak for a couple of minutes?"
6. When pitching by phone, be passionate. No one wants to hear a pitch from a monotone source who isn't excited about his/her topic.
7. When pitching by e-mail, make sure the subject line is as compelling as possible. A subject line that says, "Press Release" will likely remain unopened. A subject line that says, "World's Smallest Amphibian Discovered in Brazil" will be opened immediately.
8. When pitching by e-mail, personalize your note to the journalist. Like most of us, journalists like to feel special – if they think your note is a form letter that is being sent to 20 other reporters, they won't pay as much attention. At the very least, include his/her name. Better yet, refer to or compliment a recent article to indicate familiarity with his/her work, or say something like, "I've been listening to your radio station for eight years, and believe this story would fit right in."
9. When pitching by e-mail, do not send your release as an attachment, since many news organizations use spam filters to prevent viruses. Instead, cut and paste your release into the body of your e-mail.
10. Little annoys reporters more than sources who call and ask something like, "Did you receive the e-mail?" Instead, offer new information when you call them. For example, you might say, "I sent you a press release yesterday about the discovery of the world's smallest amphibian. I wanted to let you know that we just found where they live – so far, we've seen ten of them."

**Mailing List**

A targeted mailing list is one of the main tools of media relations professionals. It is a list of key journalists to your organization, who cover issues related to your work. This mailing list may include local, state and national media. The list may also feature specific trade or industry publications.

It is also good provide a sign-up form in your website for journalist that would like to receive regularly information from your organization. Remember to update your press mailing list periodically, because journalists frequently change.

**Locating the Right Journalists**

In the previous pages, you've learned the best ways to "pitch" reporters. Below are a few tips for how to find the best reporters to tell your stories and compose your press mailing list.

Identify media organizations in your area. If you want to know which news organizations operate in Calgary, for example, a simple Google search often turns up valuable information. Try searching keywords such as "Calgary radio stations," "Calgary newspapers," or "Calgary media list." Yahoo also offers a wonderful (if not totally complete) media guide. You can begin your search at http://dir.yahoo.com/News_and_Media/By_Region/Countries/.

Read, listen to, and/or watch target news organizations. There is no better way to get familiar with the "right" reporters than following their work and getting a sense of which reporters cover which types of stories. Some news organizations have journalists who cover a specific topic. For example, you may notice a newspaper reporter who tends to cover local business, a radio reporter who covers local politics, and a television reporter who covers crime and the courts. Keep a keen eye (or ear!) out for reporters who cover topics similar to yours. Relevant topics for your advocacy may include local, state, or national government, environment, agriculture, education, health, politics, and many others.

Visit a news organization's website. Look for "bylines" (reporters' names), who wrote stories on topics similar to yours. Many news organizations are making it easier than ever to find contact information for their journalists. Many newspapers, for example, publish the reporter's name, e-mail address, and phone number at the end of every story. At other times, a Google search for the reporter will turn up contact information. If you're looking for reporter Jack Murphy's phone number, for example, try searching "Jack Murphy" and "phone number."

Ask friends, colleagues, or the nonprofit organizations you work with for media contacts. Reporters often have deep ties to the communities they cover, and your friends and colleagues may have a connection to reporters in your area. Although it's certainly not necessary, having an "in" never hurts.

Use the main switchboard. If all else fails, call the media organization's main number and ask for the news desk. Although it may be tempting to try this first, operators often pass callers to a recorded message or voice mail. You have a greater chance of reaching someone who can help you if you know who you're calling and ask for that person directly.

You can also convene journalist training seminars around key issues. Journalists can't be experts on every topic, so helping them cover your issue more effectively is a win-win situation. They get to learn new content, make new contacts, and improve their Professional skills, and you get to make sure your issue is being reported on properly – even becoming a reference on your issue.

## How to Write a Press Release

A press release is a one- or two-page document that is best used when:

- Your news is time-sensitive;
- Your story deals with a specific piece of news;
- You are going to send the release to numerous journalists; and
- Your story is directly relevant to the audience of the news organization.

The following story would be appropriate for a press release:

*"Local Government to Hold Hearing on Proposed Crocodile Protected Area Next Thursday"*

That headline is time-sensitive, deals with a specific piece of news, is perfect for any media organization that covers news in that local area, and is appropriate for mailing to numerous journalists in the area.

On the other hand, the following story would not be as good for a press release:

*"It Is Important to Save the Florida Crocodile"*

That headline is not time-sensitive and doesn't deal with a specific piece of news. Some other tools, such as a pitch letter, letter-to-the-editor, or op-ed (described later), might be more effective to earn news coverage for such a story.

Since reporters receive hundreds of news releases each week, it is critical to get their attention immediately.

Press releases should be written as "inverted pyramids," with the most important part of your story at the top, followed by the "who, what, when, where, why" parts of your story, followed by a quote. You can complete the release with additional background information that supports your headline, and with your contact information appearing at the end.

The five most important parts of a press release are:

1. The headline (often also used as the subject line of your e-mail)
2. The subhead
3. The first sentence
4. The first paragraph
5. Your contact information

When writing your press release, keep the following ten tips in mind:

1. Make sure your headline is time-sensitive, specific, relevant to the reporter and news organization, and compelling. Many reporters won't open the press release if the headline bores them.
2. Stick to the facts. Reporters will view your news with more credibility if it contains straightforward, factual information. Exclamation points and emotional words or phrases will diminish your credibility.
3. Keep the release short, preferably a single page, but no longer than two pages.
4. Don't include any industry jargon! Make sure the average 12-year-old can understand your release.
5. Make clear who is issuing the press release. Are you speaking for an organization? A community group? Yourself?
6. Vary the length of paragraphs. It's best to have a variety of short and long paragraphs.
7. When e-mailing the press release to reporters, use your headline in the subject line.
8. Since many news organizations use spam filters, do not attach your document to the e-mail. It is better to cut and paste your text directly into the e-mail.
9. At the end of the "official" release, mention other resources available to the reporter, such as fact sheets, photos, video, interviews, etc.
10. Make sure your contact information is included in the release, usually at the end.

**Amphibians in Catastrophic Decline; Up To 129 Extinct Since 1980**

*Study Finds Nearly One-Third of Species Threatened With Extinction*

**October 12, 2004 (Washington, DC/Gland, Switzerland)** – The world's amphibian species are under unprecedented assault and are going extinct at rates approaching one thousand times higher than normal, according to the most comprehensive study ever conducted. More than 520 scientists from over 100 nations contributed to the Global Amphibian Assessment, the key findings of which were published today by the journal *Science*.

Over the past three years, scientists analyzed the distribution and conservation status of all 5,743 known amphibian species – which include frogs and toads, salamanders, and caecilians. Of these, 1,856 – or 32 percent – are now considered threatened with extinction. In addition, sufficient data are lacking to accurately assess the status of nearly 1,300 other species, most of which scientists believe are also threatened.

Amphibians are widely regarded as "canaries in the coal mine," since their highly permeable skin is more immediately sensitive to changes in the environment, including changes to freshwater and air quality.

"Amphibians are one of nature's best indicators of overall environmental health," said Russell A. Mittermeier, president of Conservation International (CI). "Their catastrophic decline serves as a warning that we are in a period of significant environmental degradation."

Key findings of the study include:

- According to the *IUCN Red List of Threatened Species*, at least 1,856 amphibian species are threatened with extinction, representing 32 percent of all species. By comparison, only 12 percent of all bird species and 23 percent of all mammal species are threatened.

- At least nine species have gone extinct since 1980, when the most dramatic declines began. Another 120 species have not been reported from the wild in recent years and are considered to be possibly extinct.

- 43 percent of all species are in population decline; less than one percent is increasing. Twenty seven percent are stable, and the rest are unknown.

- 427 species are considered Critically Endangered (CR), 761 are Endangered (EN), and 668 are Vulnerable (VU). Since 1980, 435 species have moved into a higher risk category on the *IUCN Red List of Threatened Species*, while only five have improved.

- Colombia has 208 threatened amphibian species – the most in the world – followed by Mexico with 191, Ecuador with 163, Brazil with 110, and China with 86. Haiti has the highest percentage of threatened amphibians, with 92 percent of its species at risk of extinction.

"After birds and mammals, amphibians are the third group of species to be completely evaluated on a global scale. This study significantly expands our current knowledge and provides a baseline from which we can monitor our impact on the environment over time," said Achim Steiner, Director General of IUCN-The World Conservation Union. "The fact that one third of amphibians are in a precipitous decline tells us that we are rapidly moving towards a potentially epidemic number of extinctions."

In the Americas, the Caribbean and Australia, a highly infectious disease called chytridiomycosis has hit amphibians especially hard. New research is showing that in some regions, outbreaks of the disease may be linked to drought years, which scientists are increasingly attributing to the effects of climate change.

But in most parts of the world – including Europe, Asia and Africa – chytridiomycosis is currently less of a problem. Other threats, such as habitat destruction, air and water pollution and consumer demand are leading causes of amphibian decline.

Still, scientists are confident that an immediate commitment of resources and effort could reverse many of the present negative trends. Creating new protected areas, captive breeding programs, better community engagement and protection of freshwater systems would enhance amphibians' chances of survival.

Scientists from CI, IUCN, and NatureServe collaborated on the Global Amphibian Assessment. They analyzed data contributed by more than 520 of the world's leading amphibian specialists, and assessed each species for its level of threat, determined the distribution of each species, and gathered other essential ecological information.

###

Photos, B-roll, Interviews, Fact Sheets, and Region-Specific information available upon request.

Complete data about each species, as well as country and regional breakdowns, are available in a searchable database at www.globalamphibians.org.

MEDIA CONTACT:

John Smith, jsmith@conservation.org, 202-555-1532

## Developing a Press Kit

Creating press kits can give you free media coverage but many organizations often overlook the power of a solid press kit. They think a press release is good enough to do the job. There's no cookie cutter recipe for creating press kits. What you include depends on what your purpose is.

A sample press kit might include:

- A press release
- Information on programs or services
- A quote sheet from those involved with projects
- High resolution photos of programs
- Brochure on the organization
- A contact person's business card
- Executive profiles with bios and pictures
- DVD with videos
- Maps

It is also good to take the opportunity to distribute press kits at events, fairs or market places that your environmental fund is involved with. Whether receiving visitors, visiting a partner organization for the first time, promoting an event, or contacting a potential donor, it's good practice to provide a press kit with more information about your work. Reporters also look to press kits to enrich their story lines with content and photos/videos.

### Other Media Tools

Besides the press release there are other ways to communicate through the news media. This section reviews a few of the *other* media tools also available to you: an "op-ed," or news article, a pitch letter, a media advisory, and a letter-to-the-editor.

### OP-ED (or News Article)

An op-ed is an "article" that includes your opinion. Many newspapers publish op-eds, or "articles with an opinion" written by members of the public. Many websites will also use your op-eds.

Op-eds are a good opportunity to educate the public about your issue and encourage them to join your cause. Op-eds usually run between 400-800 words, a lot of space in newspapers terms.

When writing an op-ed, keep the following ten tips in mind:

1. Before writing, find a topic and develop a point-of-view. A contrary point-of-view or unique angle is okay – don't be scared of being provocative or controversial.
2. Highlight the issue's relevance – why is it newsworthy?
3. Discuss only one issue, and make no more than three points about that issue.
4. Use short sentences and paragraphs. Make sure your op-ed could be understood by a 12-year-old.
5. Provide solutions.
6. Close strong, perhaps by summarizing your argument.
7. Don't be afraid to be personal – if you have a personal experience with the topic, say so.
8. Use an anecdote – stories of actual people help abstract topics come to life.
9. Localize. Most newspapers are local (not regional or national), so your op-ed should be relevant to the local area.
10. Familiarize yourself with the news organizations' rules. Many news organizations have information about writing op-eds, including word count, on their websites. If not, call and ask to speak with the opinion editor.

## Example: Op-Ed

The New York Times

May 14, 2010
An Oil Spill Grows in Brooklyn

By ALEX PRUD'HOMME

WITH an estimated 210,000 gallons of oil spilling from the Deepwater Horizon site every day — for a total of some 3.3 million gallons, so far — the disaster in the Gulf of Mexico may eventually prove to be the largest oil spill in American history.

But New Yorkers forget, or don't know, that a much larger oil spill sits in our own backyard: an estimated 17 million to 30 million gallons of oil, benzene, naptha and other carcinogenic chemicals pollute Newtown Creek and a 55-acre, 25-foot-deep swath of soil in Greenpoint, Brooklyn.

People don't often think of urban creeks as biodiverse waterways, but Newtown Creek was once a rich tidal estuary popular among hunters and fishermen. Starting in the 1870s, however, Standard Oil and other refineries began spilling or dumping excess fuels and toxic chemicals into the water or onto the soil, slowly poisoning the ecosystem. For years, people who hung their clothes out to dry found them darkened by chemical fumes. Today, Newtown Creek is a dead zone: when a dolphin was spotted in the creek in March, experts did not rejoice. They worried about its health.

Despite an underground explosion fed by accumulated oil and gas in 1950, as well as persistent health problems among the creek's neighbors, it wasn't until 1978 that officials recognized the problem. That summer a Coast Guard helicopter on a routine patrol noticed a huge black oil plume spewing from the side of Newtown Creek, heading into the East River and New York Harbor. A containment boom was set out, and workers collected 200,000 gallons of degraded gasoline, fuel oil and chemicals, some of which dated to 1948.

Today a viscous rainbow sheen floats on its surface, and the area around it is redolent of hydrocarbons. Although Greenpoint has a lower overall cancer rate than much of the city, it has one of the highest incidences of certain cancers, like leukemia in children and stomach cancer in adults. The creek was designated a Superfund site in 2009.

The spill has also rendered the Brooklyn-Queens Aquifer, once a valuable store of freshwater, undrinkable. The aquifer serves as a recharge zone for the groundwater stores in southeastern Queens that could provide an important backup supply for the city in a drought.

Documents unearthed by local activists show a history of regulators looking the other way to protect oil companies from liability for poisoning the creek. Fortunately, pressure from citizens' groups and city and state lawsuits have wrung a certain amount of compensation from BP, ExxonMobil and other companies accused of being behind the spill. In 2009, a federal jury found ExxonMobil liable for contaminating the groundwater near the creek, awarding the city $104.7 million.

Yet that's nowhere near enough to clean up the site or compensate Greenpoint residents. Nor is the Superfund designation likely to bring immediate improvement in the creek: years of study will be needed before any action can be taken, and the Superfund money can be used only to remove toxic material from the shore and sediments; other water-quality problems aren't eligible. In the long run, the only real solution may be to excavate the entire polluted zone and replace it with clean fill.

As President Obama condemns the "cozy relationship" between federal regulators and Big Oil, we might question why New York regulators and the companies charged with polluting Newtown Creek took so long to acknowledge the problem.

We tend to think of oil spills as dramatic events — a sinking ship, a burning rig. So it's easy to forget that across the country, hundreds of spills, many left over from a less regulated time, continue to poison groundwater and leak toxic fumes. Instead of letting the Gulf spill divert our attention yet again from slow-moving disasters like Newtown Creek, we should take it as an impetus to address problems much closer to home.

Alex Prud'homme is writing a book about the future of the use of freshwater.



## Pitch Letter

A pitch letter is a short (three or four paragraph) personalized note to a reporter, usually sent by e-mail, which tells them about a project you're working on. Pitch letters are best used when:

- Your story deals with a specific issue, person, or thing;
- You are going to send the release to a specific reporter or just a few journalists;
- Your story is directly relevant to the audience of the news organization.

Pitch letters are less formal than press releases. When writing a pitch letter, try to include at least one or two of the below elements:

1. A "Wow" Factor – Compelling statistics often create a "wow" factor. For example, has 80% of the forest you're working in been cut down over the past 10 years? Has a local woman volunteered 50 hours a week every week for the past five years to help save a species?
2. Feature – Often times, you can pitch a "feature" story of a compelling person or group. You, your local community, or your organization may be perfect for a profile piece in the local media. Your life may be more interesting than you realize – and reporters are always looking for interesting people to profile.
3. Exclusivity – You can offer the story to one reporter, which often allows them to put together a more in-depth piece.
4. Novelty – Is there something truly odd or unusual about your story? Pitch letters can include something quirky or slightly weird. Don't be afraid to include your personality in the letter if it is relevant to your story!

## Example: Pitch Letter

Dear Reporter:

Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge, the largest contiguous space in the Denver metropolitan area, is using satellites to kill plants. We'd like to show you how. Please join us on Tuesday, August 9 at 8 AM.

Diffuse knapweed, a plant native to north-central Ukraine through southern Europe that dominates whatever landscape the wind sends its seeds to, is starting to form a foothold in parts of the refuge. Biologists at the refuge don't yet know how bad the problem is. They do know they keep spotting it in new locations.

On August 9, volunteers will learn how to use handheld GPS devices to track diffuse knapweed, as well as other invasive species. They will walk through the refuge looking for the foreign invaders – when they encounter one, they will push a button. The device will note the precise location of the invasive, which will ultimately be used to start removing the species.

We'll meet at the refuge visitor center, accessed through the 56th Ave and Havana Street entrance, about 11 miles northeast of Denver. We'll then head into the field to track the invasives with the GPS devices. Please note that the time is subject to slight change.

We have a fact sheet available, and would be happy to arrange an interview. Since this project lends itself nicely to a photo op, we'd also welcome your photographer.

Please e-mail me for more information, or call me at 202-555-0640. Thanks very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Todd Holmes

## Media Advisory

A media advisory is used to promote an event. It is usually formatted as a "what, when, where, who" document.

If you are having a community meeting to announce your action plan, for example, you might consider inviting a reporter(s) by sending a media advisory to a community newspaper or local radio station. If you are having a "forest clean-up" day in which 100 volunteers are picking up garbage, send a media advisory to a local television reporter.

In addition to including what, when, where, and who in your media advisory, consider adding a section called "video/audio elements." Since radio is dependent on good sound and television is dependent on good video, mention what video and audio elements might be available for taping. For example, mention if interviews are available, if all attendees will be wearing a bright red shirt, or if the group will be huddled on the floor painting a giant banner. All of those sounds and images are excellent for radio and television, and can make your story more interesting to the reporter.

**"A media advisory is used to promote an event. It is usually formatted as a "what, when, where, who" document."**


## Example: Media Advisory

LOCAL PROGRAM TO MARK KING HOLIDAY BY RENOVATING SCHOOL

January 10, 2010

To make Martin Luther King Day a "day on, not a day off," the Neighborhood Service Alliance will mark the holiday by restoring Lakeview Elementary School. The project will bring together students, parents, teachers, AmeriCorps members, and senior volunteers to paint hallways, design a mural honoring Dr. King, and stock the school library with books about Dr. King.

WHO:
AmeriCorps members with the Neighborhood Service Alliance
Students from Lakeview Elementary School
Foster Grandparents, parents, and other community volunteers

WHERE:
Lakeview Elementary School
10th and Gordon Streets

WHAT:
Service project honoring Dr. King

WHEN:
January 20, 2010
10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

This service project is one of hundreds of activities that cities are organizing to honor the legacy of Dr. King. In 1994, Congress passed the King Holiday and Service Act, directing the King Center and the Corporation for National and Community Service to carry out a day of service reflecting Dr. King's life and teachings.

For more information about the national day of service, please visit www.mlkday.gov

Media Contact: Jane Doe, (555) 555-1234

**Letter-to-the-Editor**

People love reading what other people in their community think. That's why the letters-to-the-editor section of the newspaper is one of the most widely read parts!

You should consider writing a letter-to-the-editor to:

- Voice your views about something in the news;
- React to, praise, or criticize a recently published story;
- Introduce a new idea;
- Correct wrong information or misperceptions contained in an article; or
- Explain the connection between news and your advocacy work.

When writing a letter-to-the-editor, keep the following ten tips in mind:

1. React quickly. Write and send your letter-to-the-editor within two days of the news or article you're responding to.
2. Be concise. Look at the letters section for the news organization to get an idea of length. Generally, three or four paragraphs (about 200 words) are enough.
3. Keep it simple. Stick to a single subject, and make sure a 12-year-old could understand it.
4. Keep it self-contained. Even if a reader missed the original article, he should be able to understand what your letter is about.
5. Don't be afraid to be provocative or controversial.
6. Localize. Most newspapers are local (not regional or national), so your letter should be relevant to the local area.
7. Personalize. If you have a personal experience in the area you're writing about, say so.
8. Use your credentials. If you have professional experience in the area you're writing about, say so.
9. Include personal information. At the end of your letter, include your name, street address, phone number, and e-mail address. Although they will only print your name and city, many news organizations refuse to publish a letter without verifying all of your other personal information.
10. Send via e-mail. Many news organizations have information on their website about where to send a letter-to-the-editor. They usually offer an e-mail address or a web form in which you can submit your letter. Both are preferable to mailing a hard copy, since it reaches editors soonest.

Example: Letter-to-the-Editor

The Washington Post

## The Price of 'So Much Shrimp'

Your recent article "So Much Shrimp" [Food, Feb. 25] failed to mention the tremendous environmental costs associated with shrimp fishing. Each pound of wild shrimp caught causes the death of 10 or more pounds of other marine life. This "by-catch" is simply tossed back into the ocean. Shrimp fisheries are responsible for more than 11 million tons of by-catch deaths annually. When shrimp trawlers drag their heavy nets across the ocean floor, they destroy coral reefs, sea grasses and other marine life; flatten terrain; and kill numerous fish, turtles, starfish and crabs, among other creatures.

New techniques for farming shrimp are beginning to resolve issues relating to pollution, genetic contamination, disease, and destruction of natural coastal mangroves and wetlands that have long plagued aquaculture operations. Consumers can help by learning about the economic and environmental costs of destructive fishing and fish farming.

SYLVIA EARLE
Executive Director
Global Marine Program
Conservation International

Washington


# Module 6
# Media Relations

Now that you are more informed about how media relation works, it is time to learn how to talk with them properly. This sixth and last module of the Communication and Marketing for Environmental Funds Workshop, will provide you with tips for interviews and other ways of approaching the media.

After complete this module you will be able to:

- Improve your media interviewing skills;
- Define the basic topics of an interview;
- "Bridge" from a reporter's questions to your answers;
- Evaluate your media performance.

## Practice to be a spokesperson

We've all seen a television segment with someone, advocating for some cause, who is so eloquent, so passionate and genuine, that you immediately want to help their cause. You may call their organization, visit their website, or tell your friends about the cause.

Why was that spokesperson so effective? How were they able to reach through the television and affect you so deeply?

The spokesperson may have certain natural abilities. But odds are, they practiced their interviewing skills and may have even received media training.

Nothing helps improve your media interviewing skills more than practice. If you have a video camera, it's a good idea to practice by recording yourself. Here are a few tips for recording yourself and analyzing your performance:

1. Write down a few questions that you think would likely be asked of you during a media interview.
2. Ask a friend or family member to "interview" you. Ask the interviewer to stand/sit just next to the camera, and maintain eye contact with your interviewer.
3. Watch the tape back. Critique yourself first, then ask for constructive feedback from your friends and family. A good practice is to ask them to begin by telling you the good parts of your performance before moving on to constructive criticism.
4. Do it again. And again.
5. Finally, remember that most people are *much* more critical of their own performance than others. There's a reason that many Academy Award-winning actors refuse to watch their own movies – they are painfully self-critical and see only the flaws in their performance. The reality, however, is that their performances were brilliant, and your performance is likely better than you think, as well.

A little nervousness is normal, and maybe even helpful, since the adrenaline boost will help ensure an energetic performance. Just remember that you're a person *worthy* of being interviewed – and that your cause is counting on you. You can do it. Really!


©Camila Monteiro

### Five Things Great Media Spokespersons Know

Great media spokespersons – whether conservative or liberal, an environmentalist or an oil executive – all have a few things in common. This section will focus on the top five things great spokespersons know.

#### 1. The Audience Will Forget Almost Everything You Say

Studies of human memory prove that people remember only a small portion of the information they've heard, especially if they've only heard it one time.

Therefore, it is critical that you repeatedly transition back to your main messages. If you stay focused on only the most important points you want to make, you will greatly increase the chances that the audience will remember your most important points.

#### 2. The Reporter Is Not Your Audience – The Audience Is

Journalists are simply the liaison between you and your audience. As you speak to a reporter, visualize a member of the audience – and answer the reporter's questions in a manner that would best help that audience member understand your points.

For example, a reporter may understand the jargon related to your project, but don't assume the audience does. If such terminology prevents a member of your audience from understanding your point, find an easier way to say it.

#### 3. Get Your Headline Out First – Don't Speak in Chronologies

In virtually every type of communication, you'll speak in this order: beginning, middle, end. But when answering media questions, start with the headline, or the "end." Why? The first thing you say is the most memorable, and sets the stage for the rest of your answer. Plus, getting your headline out first means it's no problem if the reporter interjects (and changes topics) during your answer.

#### 4. Repeat, Repeat, Repeat

If you're asked ten different questions during a media interview, you might think you did a great job by including a main message or message support (e.g. a statistic or story) in seven of your answers.

But what happens if a reporter chooses to quote from one of your other three answers? It means that your one quote that appears in tomorrow morning's newspaper – that one critical chance to influence or educate the public – will *not* contain one of your most important points.

*Every answer you give should contain a message or message support.*

#### 5. Don't Open Doors!

Reporters are storytellers by trade – and good stories contain conflict. They will often look to create drama by challenging you on a past controversy, asking you to speculate on future events, or encouraging you to speak ill of an opponent.

No matter how many times the reporter tries to get a more provocative answer, avoid saying anything that could "open a door" to an unwanted or unhelpful controversy.

## Bridging to your answers

Reporters almost never ask the "perfect" question that allows you to state your message(s), anecdotes and data. Rather, it is your job as a spokesperson to take virtually *any* question and make it an opportunity to state your message(s), anecdotes, and data.

"Bridges" are transition phrases, designed to help you get from a reporter's question to your answer.

Examples of commonly-used bridge lines:

- "If I could only say one thing about this, it would be..."
- "The most important thing to remember is..."

- “Let’s look at it from a broader perspective...”
- “There is another important concern...”
- “What’s important to remember is...”
- “Even more importantly...”
- “You should also remember...”
- “There is more to the story, specifically that...”
- “What I want to make sure you understand here is...”
- “If you remember only one thing I say...”
- “The most important point is...”
- “The key issue is...”
- “Our first concern is...”
- “What that means is...”

The example below illustrates how bridge lines can be used:

Your Message:

> *“Protecting the American crocodile will help local residents and their families earn a better living, as the increase in ecotourism will significantly help local business.”*

Reporter’s Question:

> *“I spoke to one member of a local community who said he thinks that you are more concerned with the crocodiles than you are with people. What is your response?”*

Your Answer (Using a **Bridge**):

> *“Actually, this is very good for people. (Bridge)* ***It’s important to remember that*** *protecting the American crocodile will help local residents and their families earn a better living, as the increase in ecotourism will help significantly help local business.”*

Your Answer (Using a Bridge and an Anecdote):

> *“Actually, this is very good for people. (Bridge)* ***It’s important to remember that*** *protecting the American crocodile will help local residents and their families earn a better living. For example, three years ago, residents in Miami were also nervous about a new protected area. But we now know that on average, people living next to the protected area actually saw an increase in income.”*

## Performing During Media Interviews

The way you answer questions during media interviews is critical. In fact, some studies suggest that your performance (the way you use your voice and your body) is more important that your words!

One study, conducted by a UCLA professor in the 1960s, showed that *just seven percent* of the way people derive meaning from communications comes from words. A surprising 38 percent of the way people take meaning from communications comes from vocal cues (pitch, pace, tone, and volume). And the remaining 55 percent? That belongs to the winner’s performance.

Below are five tips to help improve your performance during media interviews:

### 1. Express Passion

If there’s one quality that separates great interviewees from mediocre ones, it’s that they know they need to inject passion into their delivery.

So how can you do it? Ensure that the passion of your words is matched by the passion of your delivery.

Just imagine you’re at dinner on a Saturday night with a group of friends. You’re totally engaged in the conversation. You’re animated – leaning forward, gesturing and speaking a bit louder than usual. *That* is the version of you that will capture the audience’s attention and get invited back on talk shows.

> **“Rather, it is your job as a spokesperson to take virtually any question and make it an opportunity to state your message, anecdotes, and data.”**

### 2. Eye Contact

In person, your eyeballs may appear small – but on a 27” television set, they’re huge. If they shift during your interview, you will appear nervous at best and untrustworthy at worst.

There are usually three places you will look during television interviews: directly at the host, directly into the camera’s lens, and slightly off camera. Whichever format it is, fix your gaze, and don’t let go until the interview ends. It may feel strange, but it looks great on television.

### 3. Posture

One of the remarkable things about media training is watching the impact the small things can have – and posture is chief among them. Simply by leaning forward a bit, the spokesperson automatically has more energy, speaks louder, gestures more naturally, and becomes a more effective spokesperson.

### 4. Gestures

Recent studies suggest that we humans are hard wired to gesture when we speak – so why do so many spokespersons resist their natural tendency to gesture during media interviews? During interviews, you should gesture almost exactly the same as you would in your regular life.

### 5. One-on-One Delivery

Remember that you are having a conversation with one radio listener or television viewer at a time, not making an announcement with a “big radio voice” to thousands of people simultaneously. It often helps to visualize your perfect target – a man sitting on his couch reading the Sunday paper, or the woman driving to work listening to the radio. Talk to that one person, and ignore the overall size of the audience.

## Evaluating Your Performance After An Interview

After each interview, evaluate your performance by asking yourself the following 18 questions. Over time, you’ll likely notice there are certain areas in which you excel and others in which you need more practice.

This evaluation can also be useful *before* each interview. Identify a couple of specific points you want to be mindful of during the interview, such as, “During this interview I want to make sure I remember to share an anecdote and avoid sounding monotone.”

### MESSAGE

1. Did you insert at least one message, story, or statistic in *every* answer?
2. Did you ensure that every answer was concise, usually 30 seconds or less?
3. Did you avoid insider jargon?
4. Did you incorporate stories to illustrate your messages?
5. Did you use statistics to support your messages?
6. Did you begin your answers with the headline?
7. Did you bridge back to a message, regardless of the question?
8. Did you avoid using negative language, answering hypothetical questions, answering unfair yes/no questions, and falling into other journalist traps?

## VOICE

9. Did you vary your vocal inflections to avoid sounding monotone?
10. Did you get louder and softer at certain points?
11. Did you alter your pace during the interview?
12. Did you emphasize key words and phrases with your voice?

## PERFORMANCE

13. Did you express passion?
14. Did you come across as warm, likeable and approachable?
15. Did you appear confident?
16. Did you maintain strong eye contact?
17. Did you use natural hand and arm gestures?
18. Did you maintain an upbeat posture?



# Closing Remarks

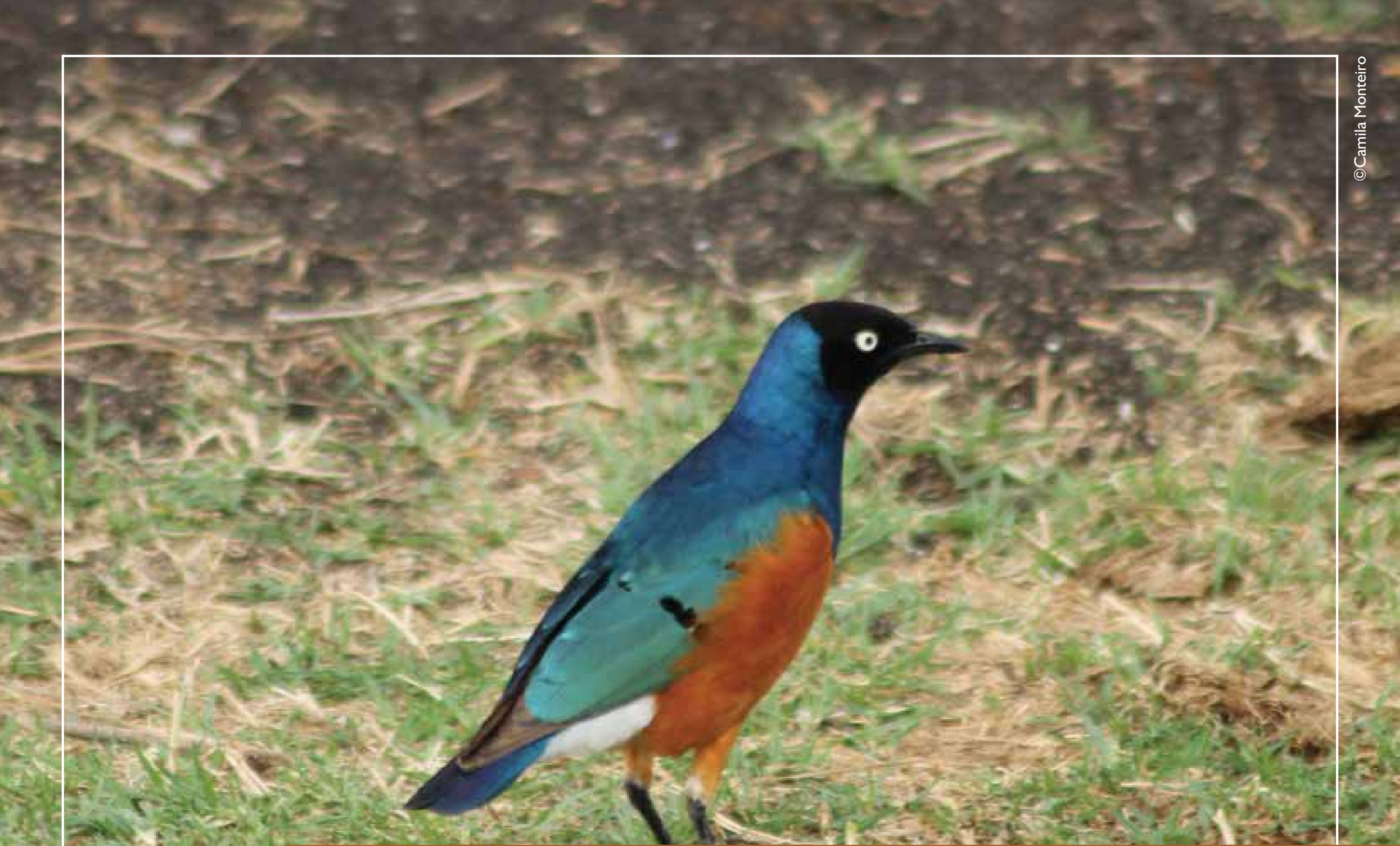
When RedLAC chose marketing and communication as one of the topics of its training program for environmental funds, it recognized the following: 1. that there is a need to strengthen the communication component of conservation finance organizations; and 2. having a solid communication strategy is key to an EF's success.

The Communication and Marketing for Environmental Funds workshop and this training guide were designed to provide environmental fund managers and staff with a basic overview of ways to integrate communication into EF's work. Whether a fund is only just beginning to get set up, wishing to develop a campaign or fundraising strategy, wanting to reach out to the media, document its successes better, or simply to innovate, investing in communication is likely to pay back and yield positive results.

It is especially important, that as environmental funds implement some of the tips and suggestions given here, they consider ways to strengthen communication capacity in staff and teams. Every member of an organization is a potential communication channel with an extended network that could become involved in supporting the organization's cause. Managers and employees need to be able to communicate what an environmental fund does, why it is important, what have been its major accomplishments, the services that it offers, and what sets it apart and makes it unique in the world. Though this can be done through institutional tools and activities such as websites and publications, it is important to develop the internal capacity of staff to communicate about their work.

As you read through these modules and reflect on your EF's communication goals, remember that communication is a two way process, and that you must to listen to stakeholders in order to develop strategies that are effective at reaching and involving them in your cause.

Remember also that the framework for thinking about communication that is provided in this training workshop can be applied at any scale – whether you are creating a website or publication, developing a campaign, or rethinking the way to position your environmental fund as a leader in the field of conservation finance. You will always need to be clear about what it is that you are trying to do (objective, or the problem you want to address), who needs to be involved (audience or publics), the methods (activities or products), the messages, and how to bring it all together into a plan. And last but not least, you have to research your audience before you begin, and to check in with them after you are done to make sure that you were effective. Thinking in this structured way about communication will help you plan, prioritize, and ultimately make better decisions that enhance conservation impacts and save you precious resources over time.



©Camila Monteiro

Case Studies

# Institutional communication – Environmental Foundation of Jamaica's experience

## Introduction

The Environmental Foundation of Jamaica was established in 1993 through a Debt-for-Nature swap between the US and Jamaican Governments. The Environmental Foundation of Jamaica (EFJ) provides funding to Non-Governmental and Community based Organisations, Academic Institutions throughout the length and breadth of the island in the areas of Child Development and Environmental Management in a ratio of 40:60 respectively. By the end of 2012, the Foundation would have managed over US$20million dollars and over 1,200 grant awards. The maximum amount awarded in a single project is US$100,000.

Payments associated with the 1993 Debt Swap arrangement end in September 2012 and the EFJ has been investigating alternative opportunities to continue its grant-making work, both for itself and in support of its members, through other sources of funding such as sub-grant awards, regional and local network support, particularly in capacity building, climate change adaptation and conservation (biodiversity, protected areas, etc.). Funding opportunities require a number of things, many of which in the case of the EFJ required a communication focus, including increased public events, improved public image, and a portfolio of multimedia products that represented the EFJ and its capabilities.

In addition to improved local publicity and awareness of the EFJ through increased visibility of staff and grants, this process was catalysed in 2010 with support from the students and faculty of the University of the West Indies' Institute of Media and Communication (CARIMAC) who designed and assisted in implementing a communication strategy.

The increased knowledge about the EFJ has had a variety of results:

- Increased invitations to both social and technical meetings
- Increased media and other public interest in our work and grantees
- Discussion on the value of the EFJ and the need for its continuation and support to another US-Jamaica Debt Swap as well as a consolidation with an existing one

The consolidation did begin after the start of the communication campaign but will only strengthen it as the campaign focuses on the EFJ's excellent track record in a variety of management strategies from fund management, grant management, sub-granting and even National Hosting Institution for the GEF Small Grants Programme. The communication strategy for the consolidation has been discussed but has not been clarified to this point.

The EFJ communication strategy targets a range of audiences:

- local 'decision-makers', who it always helps to keep informed of our work but also to make sure that the EFJ stays in the forefront of what they are seeing
- potential donors, who need to be impressed enough with our work to trust us with funds to spend in Jamaica
- applicants, who need to understand what EFJ does and if we can assist them
- Jamaican public

In addition, the EFJ has a NGO membership base, currently with 22 members who help to select a majority of seats, including the Chairman on the EFJ Board of Directors. The strategy was designed to showcase their projects as well as those of other strong EFJ grantees throughout Jamaica.

## Specific Outputs

- Improved Website (www.efj.org.jm – undergoing its second transformation)
- Fact Sheets
- FB page (facebook.com/EnFnJa) (476 friends)


- Videos – You Tube Channel: EFJtv (439 video views)
  - Grantee "testimonials" http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLF19055D3FBDAD542&feature=plcp
  - Public Service Announcements (PSAs) http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL023142A4D765C2C7&feature=plcp
- Improved Media Exposure for EFJ Work AND mentioning EFJ
  - http://m.jamaicaobserver.com/mobile/career/Trashables-to-Useables_11568543


  - http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/environment/Sandals--nine-others-on-environment-honour-roll_11302954
  - http://m.jamaicaobserver.com/mobile/career/RISE-Kidz-get--green--education_10511988
  - http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/environment/Communities-trained-in-sea-turtle-monitoring_10559015
  - http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/environment/-Jamaica-uses-1-million-plastic-bottles-per-week-_8275278
  - http://jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20120427/lead/lead2.html
  - http://jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20120616/lead/lead5.html
  - http://jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20120415/news/news4.html
  - http://jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20120317/western/western3.html
- Speaking engagements – at project launches and awards, graduations, handover of equipment etc. and closing, etc. – showcased either in the media or on FaceBook

The Communication Strategy was developed and designed to showcase the work of EFJ grantees, and in return, the EFJ. Funding was given to CARIMAC through 2 grants with EAI resources. CARIMAC, as an academic institution was able not only to access the funds from the EFJ Grant process, but also to further student development in the process – a very useful "side effect". Communication students in videography, communication, script-writing etc. benefitted from the EFJ projects. The budget for this work with CARIMAC, which includes a new website with GPS capabilities and a documentary on the EFJ is ~US$135,000 over 3.5 years.

The two grants were conceived as a group/collective grant that would benefit a group of EFJ grantees in a more cost-effective manner through the volume discount as well as co-funding and counterpart contribution, such as the use of students. In addition the outputs were balanced in their usefulness in communication strategies for both the Foundation and the grantees.

Much innovation was also put in place to maximize the impact of the EFJ communication strategy – with no additional costs to the EFJ. For example, the Foundation has for the last 7 years hosted a humble showcase of its work through a public lecture geared mainly at sharing with the public one of the many research or other projects underway with EFJ support in Jamaica.  For the last 3 years, these have been much more PR-type events with ensured media spots (free and paid), newspaper spreads, etc.  The event itself attracted a record 400 members of the public to hear about Jamaica's endangered reptiles and other species and also see live animals.  It received much free media spots.

In addition, free sharing of grantee events with media contacts and also over facebook has also increased exposure of EFJ work.  Grantees also have some facebook pages mentioning the EFJ.

## Team work

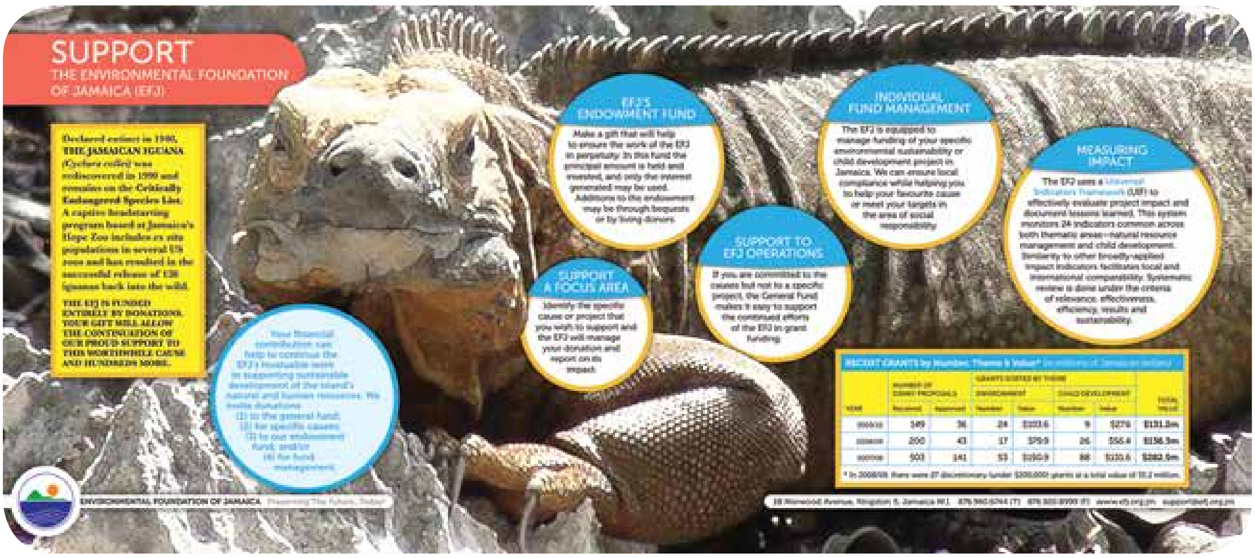
The communication strategy was not coordinated by any one person.  It was a change in culture throughout the Foundation staff to ensuring due recognition to the EFJ for grantee successes (as opposed to complaining after when it was not done) – if we could not make an event, we sent a message, reviewing agendas for grantee project events to ensure EFJ was included, ensuring our logo on project products or signs, etc.  Press relations and events consultants were only hired for major events (EFJ annual earth day expo, EFJ Public Lecture).

The initial aim of the project/venture was to raise the profile of the EFJ, locally and regionally.  Indicators and goals focused on completing the products and having them ready – not on their impact.  There were no indicators set in this regard, however, we can record the following:

- Invitation to sit on 3 national level environmental committee
- On average 2 national level invitations per week, compared to 2 per month previously
- On average, 2 references from partners to the EFJ for interviews or co-funding opportunities
- 469 Facebook likes
- 439 video views on Youtube

It was suggested that the raised profile and portfolio of materials should precede the fundraising campaign.  So that our reputation would, in theory, precede us.

We actually hope to gain from the workshop for the process of monitoring and recording impact.  This was an amateur effort on the part of the EFJ secretariat – a solution to not hiring a PR staff member or consultant, but we are still learning.



©FUNDESNAP ABOLAC 2008

Case Studies

# El "Click" FUNDESNAP - Photography Contest

## Introduction

The Foundation for the Development of the National System of Protected Areas of Bolivia -FUNDESNAP- decided to undertake a photography contest called "el Click FUNDESNAP" to promote the National System of Protected Areas (SNAP) as a Bolivian heritage from the point of view of park guards. The first contest was launched the year 2007 in coordination with the Bolivian Association of Conservation Agents –ABOLAC- and the National Service of Protected Areas –SERNAP.

The contest is aimed at park guards from national, departmental and municipal protected areas as competitors, seeking to obtain images from protected areas that are usually never seen and, most importantly, images that reflect their point of view.

The photographs compete in three main categories: enhance nature, raise awareness and show people way of living and working inside protected areas. They must also comply with aesthetics parameters such as composition, lighting and focus.

## Activities

The following activities were carried out to launch the contest:

- An agreement was signed with the Bolivian Association of Conservation Agents (park guards) - ABOLAC-.
- Coordination with the National Service of Protected Areas of Bolivia -SERNAP- for spreading the official announcement and selecting winning photographs.


©FUNDESNAP ABOLAC 2008

It was important to involve ABOLAC since it is the entity that represents park guards at the national level, and SERNAP as the head of the state sector in charge of protected areas in the country.

For the first pilot photography contest (2007) the following activities were part of the process:

- FUNDESNAP financed disposable cameras with three film rolls that were given to the park guards.
- FUNDESNAP coordinated the distribution and logistics with each protected area and park guards that registered for the contest.
- Park guards were given a three month period to take photographs before returning the cameras to FUNDESNAP.
- FUNDESNAP, ABOLAC and SERNAP invited the Training Center for Filmmaking (CEFREC), FAMA Producciones and the Journalists Association for acting as jurors. These six (6) institutions were in charge of picking the wining photographs.
- La Prensa, a national newspaper, supported the contest with an advertising campaign in their newspaper during nine (9) days with an estimated value of $US 770.

Nine (9) protected areas took part of the first contest with a total of sixty four (64) park guards who participated with disposable cameras, making possible to have more than 1.000 photos that responded to theme, concept and esthetics parameters. As a result, nine (9) park guards won the contest, each with one winning photograph in three categories: nature, awareness and people on protected areas and each category with three places (1st, 2nd, and 3rd).

This first pilot photography contest was mainly financed by FUNDESNAP who covered the cost of the disposable cameras, film rolls, costs of delivering the cameras to each park guard registered, printing of the photographs, award ceremony and awards with an approximately cost of $US 7.000

The awards given at the ceremony consisted in three camcorders for the park guards who obtained the first place in each category; three digital cameras for the park guards that obtained the second place in each category and finally three analog cameras for those park guards who obtained the third place in each category.

In 2008, a second version of the contest was launched. For this version the following activities were carried out:

- FUNDESNAP, with support of The Nature Conservancy, bought 30 digital cameras.

- FUNDESNAP along with ABOLAC and SERNAP made the official announcement inviting park guards to register for the contest. This time, due to a short supply of digital cameras (30), each protected area could register only up to two park guards.
- FUNDESNAP coordinated the distribution of the cameras with each protected area and park guards.
- Park guards were given a three month period to take photographs before returning the cameras to FUNDESNAP. This time, park guards had a 2GB memory on the camera for taking photographs.
- FUNDESNAP, ABOLAC and SERNAP invited partner institutions to participate as jurors. This time, the National Film Academy, Reciprocity Foundation and The Nature Conservancy were part of the panel.

In this second version of the contest twenty seven (27) park guards participated from fourteen (14) national protected areas.

This second version of photography had the support of The Nature Conservancy who donated 30 digital cameras (Samsung 7.1 megapixels, 2GB memory card) with a total cost of $US 4.500. This time, FUNDESNAP financed the costs of delivering the cameras to each park guard registered, printing and framing of the wining photographs for public exhibition the night of the award ceremony, award ceremony and awards with an approximately cost of $US 8.000.

The awards given at the ceremony consisted in three camcorders for the park guards who obtained the first place in each category; three digital cameras for the park guards that obtained the second place in each category and finally three analog cameras for those park guards who obtained the third place in each category.

As a result of these two versions of the contest, FUNDESNAP had more than 2.000 photographs that are part of our institutional communication materials such as annual reports, website and several bulletins.

In 2011, a third version of the contest was launched, this time the activities were the following:

- FUNDESNAP, along with ABOLAC and SERNAP, made the official announcement inviting park guards to register for the contest. Due to a limited amount of cameras, each protected area could register a maximum of two park guards.
- FUNDESNAP coordinated the distribution of cameras with each protected area and park guards.
- Once again, park guards were given a three month period to take photographs before returning the digital cameras to FUNDESNAP.
- The jury was composed by FUNDESNAP, ABOLAC, SERNAP and the National Film Academy.
- FUNDESNAP contacted private and public institutions for supporting the contest, important institutions have agreed to cooperate in different items: ENTEL (National Communications Agency) will provide the salon for the ceremony, BOA (National Airline) will transport winner park guards, ABC Color will donate a camcorder and Delizia will support the printing and framing of the wining pictures for exhibition.
- At the time, the winners of the contest have been identified and the awards ceremony is pending.

This third version had the participation of eighteen (18) park guards from eleven (11) national protected areas.

This version was initially financed by FUNDESNAP, who covered de costs related to delivering the cameras to each park guard registered. The costs for food and drinks for the award ceremony, lodging for the winner park guards and remaining awards (2 camcorders and 6 digital cameras) will be also covered by FUNDESNAP; these items have an approximately cost of $US 7.500.

## Results

As outcomes of the contest experience, FUNDESNAP is about to launch a line of products for commercialization that includes the editing and annual commercialization of an Exclusive Photography Book from Bolivia's protected areas, an online commerce platform (for image commercialization) and the supply of printed images to different users on demand. For achieving this, the costs of printing of the first Photography Book will be covered with the income generated from the sales, this is possible since FUNDESNAP generated an understanding with the printing company that allows paying for the product with the earnings obtained from the sale. The surplus will help launch the commercialization line (website, other products like calendars and postcards and commercialization costs).

The sustainability of the contest lies in the commercialization of the images and also relies on the commitment from sponsoring companies and organizations, both are considered the main challenges.

The funds to be raised with the commercialization of products will benefit the Bolivian Association of Conservation Agents (ABOLAC) and the development and sustainability of the contest.

On the other hand, the contest viewed as a communication effort allows to raise public awareness of and opinion about our cultural and natural heritage, in addition to the enhancement of the appreciation and dissemination of information on the work of the park guards in protected areas in Bolivia. So far, it is possible to appreciate that this kind of initiatives are attractive to private entities which become interested in promoting their corporate social responsibility program through this kind of activities; with their support, it is possible to get public attention for promoting the line of products nationally.

At present, the success of the contest can be measured in the response to and the expectation of continuity that was generated in the park guards. Their interest in participating shows the importance of these kinds of initiatives related to the appreciation of their work.

An unexpected result was the quality of the photographs since the jury came to realize that the content of the photographs taken by the park guards is not easily available. Moreover, the quality of the produced material is very rich, both in photographic technique and in the variety of images.

A video of the contest is available on line:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0XLHIL02Ufg (Spanish)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7VJXkW7tBB0 (English)

Case Studies

# Funbio's Sustainable Dialogues - Communication and partnerships with the private sector

## Context and main objectives

Funbio – the Brazilian Biodiversity Fund – was created in 1995, with a 20 million grant from the GEF, in response to the international agreements that arose from the Earth Summit (also known as Rio 92) under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). It was created as a financial mechanism for efficient, long-term funding that would attract the private sector as a partner.

Although Funbio's vocation was to work with the private sector, it has promoted the engagement of diverse sectors of the Brazilian society towards biodiversity conservation. In 2006, when Funbio celebrated its 10th anniversary, an institutional evaluation was carried out and the Executive Secretariat concluded that Funbio was mainly working with NGOs, bi and multilateral institutions and the Brazilian government, not exactly achieving its original target audience that was the private sector

In this context, the Sustainable Dialogues Program was designed to focus on the engagement of the private sector with biodiversity conservation. The program is based on a series of meetings between leaders in the private, academic, environmental and public sectors, offering a chance to listen, learn and create opportunities around sustainability.

The meetings are organized in a way speakers and the audience are in a dialogue, with no technical presentations (no power point presentations are allowed) and an informal environment to promote discussion. Panelists have only


20 to 30 minutes to give their initial statements and the rest of the event's time is dedicated to give the audience the chance to comment and make questions and listen to the panelists' answers. Funbio always chose a special venue for the event, avoiding regular hotel conference rooms, to attract business leaders to a differentiated meeting.

By encouraging dialogue and relationships, the program aims to promote positive incentives, practices and results from companies that have incorporated socio environmental management in their business portfolio and, on the contrary, the risks and potential losses perceived when biodiversity is not put into the business account.

The program has counted on the participation of relevant national and international speakers and participants since its creation in 2006. The program also managed to secure space in the specialized business media, including newspapers and websites.

**“By becoming a sustainability reference for representatives within the business sector, Funbio positions itself as the preferred partner for private sustainability actions.”**

The first cycle of debates (2006-2009) was funded by the mining company Alcoa. This cycle promoted 5 meetings in São Paulo, the Brazilian city considered the business capital, and mobilized 500 people in total. The audience included business from large companies, directors from Sustainability Departments, government representatives, civil society representatives, financial market executives, environmentalists, academics and press. Several important companies sent representatives to attend the events. The most relevant factor to ensure the private sector participation was to always have a business leader as speaker, thus creating the dynamic of business people talking to business people.

In 2010, Funbio carried out 2 more meetings as part of the activities planned in the Focus|Vision Brazil project, counting on the sponsorship of the NGO Arapyaú Institute for Education and Sustainable Development. These meetings were based on the theme Transition to a Low Carbon Economy and Sustainable Agribusiness. The first meeting was held in Rio de Janeiro, and the second in Brasilia, the Brazilian political capital. In total, 200 representatives of private sector, government and environmental institutions participated in the event.

In 2011, to celebrate Funbio's 15th anniversary, the 8th edition of the Sustainable Dialogues was carried out in Rio de Janeiro to debate the valuation of environmental services and the study TEEB – The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity. There were 80 participants present in the event, which was followed by a commemorative anniversary lunch.

In 2012, Funbio organized 3 Sustainable Dialogues editions, sponsored again by Arapyaú Institute and with co-sponsor of the Climate Works Foundation. The theme of these 3 events was Green Economy, in coordination with the main debates around Rio+20. The first and second events were held in the beginning of the year, as a dialogue in preparation for the world conference in June. The third event was carried out during Rio+20, in the Forum of Social Entrepreneurship in the New Economy, held in the iconic Forte de Copacabana.

In total, Funbio has gathered 1.150 participants and 71 panelists in 11 editions of the Sustainable Dialogues. Over the years, Funbio has managed to attract a growing number of key participants, improving its outreach.

The Sustainable Dialogues allows Funbio to communicate and strengthen its brand in Brazil, associating it to organized high level events, relevant updated content, and innovative dynamic approach to business. By becoming a sustainability reference for representatives within the business sector, Funbio positions itself as the preferred partner for private sustainability actions.

## Sources of funds and amount spent

Funbio has been able to secure sponsorships to fund the Sustainable Dialogues. No resources from Funbio's institutional budget were invested in these events, since the grants were sufficient to cover all expenses, including the team's working hours. Funbio contributed with its experience in organizing and hosting events, leadership in defining agendas and speakers, contact with key participants and overall management of the program.

| Sustainable Dialogues Edition | Source of Funds | Approximated Amount in US Dollars |
|---|---|---|
| 1st edition | Alcoa | 30.000,00 |
| 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th editions | Alcoa | 220.000,00 |
| 6th and 7th editions | Focus \| Vision Brazil Program | 25.000,00[1] |
| 8th edition | Private Foundation | 60.000,00 |
| 9th, 10th and 11th editions | Arapyau and Climate Works | 178.000,00 |

[1] Amount estimated as these two events were part of a larger project and the budget was not exclusive for the events.


## Involved partners, audiences, channels

To promote the event, Funbio uses its webpage and invitation list (electronic invitations only - in the previous editions paper invitations were produced, but since 2012 only electronic invitations were sent). After the event, Funbio seeks to communicate the event in local newspapers, and websites, focusing on business platforms. It also provides summaries of the discussions held in each event and brief videos in its webpage (check www.funbio.org.br/dialogos) to increase the impact of the events.

## Main challenges and factors of success

One of the main challenges proposed by the Sustainable Dialogues is the invitation of private sector representatives. Funbio has gathered, over the years, a large list of contacts from local and international companies and has thus been able to build a relevant invitation list. The focus is on the CEOs and Heads of Sustainability Departments of large industries and companies.

Even with a strong invitation list, it is important to invite business representatives with great antecedence, follow up via e-mail and phone and also engage project managers that have a solid relationship with these key business individuals in the process. The invitation process is also a good opportunity to update your mailing list and contact directory.

A factor of success is the panel. Strong speakers, including representatives from the private sector, attract more participants. Funbio often combines academics, environmentalists and business people in the same panel to allow for a balanced, and exciting, debate. Also, it is enriching to present real cases, with figures, examples and results.

The Sustainable Dialogues program has proven to be a good way to position Funbio as a partner to the main companies operating in Brazil and to maintain a consistent networking with leaders from all sectors. After some editions, it was consolidated as a high level event in the Brazilian sustainability scene, facilitating fundraising efforts for the next editions.

Case Studies

# Mulanje Electricity Generation Agency - Bondo Hydro-Power Scheme Development: Communication for Community Engagement in Project Implementation

## Context

The Mulanje Mountain Conservation Trust (MMCT) is an environmental endowment trust based in Mulanje originally funded by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) through the World Bank. The Trust works in collaboration with Department of Forestry and other stakeholders in facilitating the raising of people's awareness, involvement and understanding of the importance of the conservation and responsible management of the biodiversity and natural resources in the Mulanje Mountain Forest Reserve and to ensure equitable sharing of benefits. MMCT's mission is to facilitate conservation, research, management and increased understanding of Mulanje Mountain and its resources in a transparent, professional, committed and collaborative manner.

Mount Mulanje Global Biosphere Reserve is located in the south-east Malawi, a country in south-eastern Africa. Mount Mulanje is a mountain with a 640km$^2$ intrusion rising to 3,002m and is possibly the world's largest inselberg (massif). Most of the surrounding plains at 500m - 700m above sea level have rich fertile soils and the high rainfall in the region (2,000mm - 4,000mm) enables a high smallholder village population density. Nevertheless, there are many competing water demands. Economic activity is limited to tea estates, but poverty prevails and provides a conservation challenge.

The Mulanje Mountain Forest Reserve was set-up in 1927, and is managed by the Department of Forestry. The low capacity and protectionist approach of the managing authority has caused conflicts with community. The reserve provides multiple resources for livelihood improvement such as water, tourism, timber, energy, biodiversity and current users include the 300,000 village residents, mainly smallholder farmers within 7km of the Protected Area.

It is important to note that poverty prevails, although the mountain is rich in resources and biodiversity. Payment for eco-system services, a key aspect of the power generation project here described, could benefit conservation efforts and local communities.

Energy is a local dilemma, since biomass is used for household and institutional cooking, which presents a threat to forest cover. There are opportunities for electricity generation in many rivers, according to an assessment carried out for micro-power. Electricity could provide incentive and stimulation to commercial opportunities, and enable households to be connected directly through cabling & indirectly by battery systems. This requires involvement from important partners, such as investors, technical experts, developers, micro-financers and management partners.

## Developing a pilot scheme

The developmental approach was adaptable and external expert assistance was very important. There was also a careful work with the community, involving them from outset and understanding their needs. This was reflected in a flexible multidisciplinary approach, within a process of constant adaptation, leading to the proper functioning of the pilot project. It was also important to seek investment confidence and capital, as a way to enable scaling-up for conservation.

A comprehensive institutional arrangement was required for the project's success. This means engaging local communities, as they are consumers, part-owners and implementation partners; engaging development partners to financially assist the project, carry out studies, and assess the business development potential; come together with technical partners for design, implementation guidance, operational instructions and maintenance and with the Malawi Energy Regulatory Authority for licensing and oversight. Finally, it is also important to involve the Department of Energy to provide national leadership, policy guidance and donor confidence.

MMCT /MuREA facilitated the project, and the community determined the way in which they wished to communicate for operational modalities of implementation. MMCT tried not to arrange the community to its own designs but rather build the community leadership capacity where they wanted it for effective implementation. The communication is all through governance and incentives as this is how these close-knit village communities work.

The project was to build a hydro-power pilot scheme to serve as a power source to the communities and create development opportunities. The river, land for the site of the canal and the powerhouse are based on communal areas. Community acted as scheme guardians and electricity consumers on an agreeable basis, and acted also as responsible for supplying labour and building materials such as sand and quarry stones. Due to the scale of the scheme, labour and basic supplies were a huge requirement.

## Communication

Understanding the local setting was crucial to determine the best communication and interaction models. The low education level and literacy skills, as well as limited access to TV and radio limited the use of written communication, and made oral communication the best choice for the project. The use of typical environmental awareness billboards was also a way to raise community attention.

> **“The project showed that communication does not represent a high financial cost, but rather a time-consuming and necessary commitment”**


It was also important to respect the traditional leaderships and guidance that were customary to the village culture. For instance, there are committees to lead and oversee local projects, so interaction with these groups was the ideal modus operandi, including meetings with chiefs and committees members for project oversight and feedback to the community. In the end, the project showed that communication does not represent a high financial cost, but rather a time-consuming and necessary commitment.

In Malawi, the involvement of the local community in development activities is a fairly long-standing approach to local improvement as it does enable a consensus approach to determining priorities, generates individual labour and giving in-kind, and creates local ownership for future care and maintenance.

In order to keep the high community involvement, some motivational aspects were considered. The project promoted learning visits to similar schemes in Zimbabwe & Mozambique and, by enabling access to electricity for households, business opportunities, clinics and schools, the project was able to present new life opportunities to the community. It was also necessary to keep constant construction progress, which proven to be difficult due to the political/economic context, such as the president becoming increasingly dictatorial, international ostracising, building supplies and fuel very restricted.

It is noteworthy that efforts to maintain commitment of labour and supplies represented large part of project, as well as individual motivation, since there was a need for individual time efforts to earn electricity credits. Also, communication materials were produced for the national context: a video, press releases, journalist awareness days, etc., to ensure that the national context was positive.

## Evaluation

An evaluation process has been carried out recently to analyse local community involvement and it was carried out by a local independent consultant. The consultant was in charge of analysing the experiences and role of the committee to date and outlining improvements and most suitable models for community involvement for future schemes. The main target group were the committees, chiefs and the communities with few other informants.

### 1. Formation of the Committees and its Operation.

Over the period of project implementation, there were two committees formed one after the other to guide the work on the Bondo micro-hydro power scheme. Both committees were formed of the seven villages under

Group Village Headman Bondo, each bringing together three trusted representatives, with at least one woman from each village. A criterion for village representative selection as provided by Mulanje Renewable Energy Agency (MuREA) was that they could write and speak English. Villagers added that the persons selected should not hold other voluntary positions in the village to ensure focused commitment, a criterion dropped with the second committee. The result was persons considered youthful and inexperienced in coordinating communal work by some chiefs or very educated by others were elected. Both the chair and vice were educated with secondary school level and aged in their mid-30s. According to the chiefs, the criteria for selection included personal traits of being humane, tolerant of people's criticisms, the ability to listen and constructively contribute, and previous experience in leading community work.

After a seven member committee was drawn from the 21 representatives, the villages were requested to add one more committee member each to keep the number of 21. During training sessions carried out at the beginning of the project, the community understood that these two groups would be central to an overall management model; the 21 formed the General Assembly in the management model and the 7 member committee would form the Electricity User Board after construction.

The second committee was originally formed the same old way, a selection of 7 from the 21 representatives who elected their own office bearers; the only difference was that chiefs were now asked by MuREA to reconfigure the committee by replacing some persons in key positions especially the chair and secretary; according to the first committee chairman the office individuals did not see each other eye to eye.

Issues during Implementation - In the Chief's view, the first committee & office came into conflict for two key reasons:

- the committee felt that the office did not share with the committee financial information on the project
- the committee felt that the office did not hand over responsibility for procurement of construction materials as it had anticipated would be the case in the traditional community projects of bridges, school blocks and boreholes. What is clear is that there was insufficient clarification from the office to the committee as to their responsibilities and remittance on the project.

In the view of the office, the committee was changed because the term of office for the first committee had expired and that the committee became childish, inefficient and could not garner the support of the community.

Community Committee Representation - There were changes in the committee representation numbers. At about midway, the membership of the committee increased from 7 to 23 because it was observed that the participation of sub-villages under the same Group Village Headman Bondo had been excluded from the selection of the initial seven full villages. There was a total of 12 full and sub villages so each village's representation was modified to two in the committee, realising nine women and fifteen men.

Adequate Guidance - The committee expressed that it did not have formal guidelines for operation. The informants explained that it was advised during the training sessions, that rules would be addressed to guide the construction phase for the committee, this was an opportunity missed. On the other hand, there was a draft constitution that was not being used, that was attempted during the training which was done for the first committee. In my opinion the draft constitution needed to be done near the end of the construction to reflect issues that might concern stakeholders during the construction and operation since this was the first experience for the community.

### 2. Interaction of committee with other structures and participation in the project.

The process of cooperation for implementation:

- Initially, MuREA and the chief decided on a plan, and then this was communicated to the committee and with other chiefs to bring people to carry sand and stones to work site.
- The trend changed with the second committee where messages then moved from office to committee first, and then to chiefs and finally to the community.

One important cooperation rule was the joint planning meetings held every Monday by the committee and fortnightly between chiefs and the committee to share tasks and review progress. The joint meetings between chiefs and the committee had changed back to every week on Mondays to speed up things. The second, though not a rule as such but had a direct bearing on participation, was the opening of an account toward a pocket allowance that was used for food after meetings a thing the committee thought contributed to good attendance of chiefs. The weekly meetings, with a minimum structure such as food for the participants, were key for the project partners to communicate and keep engaged.

Contrary to expectation that the village representatives in the scheme would mobilise the villagers to work, this differed, where in one village the chief himself went round his village to call people out to the scheme, while in others call messengers announced this call. The role of the village development committee (VDC) in this project was not determined properly as this would normally have a big role of planning and implementing development initiatives at community level. The Group Village Headman and the rest of the informants alleged that VDC did not play any part in the scheme neither did any of such office bearers appear working alongside other villagers; they think the cause is simply the inactiveness of the VDC reps, but it is possible that another cause would be the lack of coordination of stake holder institutions by MuREA. All chiefs and committee members alleged the VDC was mostly active during the subsidized fertilizer coupon distribution. If involved the VDC members could have strengthened the messages on development affecting the rest of the villages under GVH Bondo if on inviting GVH included VDC representative.

There were differences in numbers of willing people from villages coming to work which might indicate how differently the scheme might affect the various villages and the people. The village whose people had the highest stakes because they donated land and crops were destroyed without compensation, had highest participation. The second village with high participation was the next closest village to the scheme, where the chief himself goes round to call people to work. As a community both men and women mention the need of a maize mill as their number one motivation followed by connecting the dispensary and schools. Individuals who participated had another incentive apart from lighting their homes, their cost of connection will be reduced as opposed to those who did not contribute labour. For future community engagement, there is a need for careful assessment of the willingness and leadership qualities of the key traditional leaders and local development committee members.

### 3. Strategies Used for People to Participate

Part-time work without food - Community participation was high at project start with most people contributing 2 to 3 hours per day. Attendance dropped down as the period to complete the project was taking long.

Committee fed chiefs and committee members - Committee opened a contributory social account where committee members and chiefs put in MK100 (30 US Cents) each. The account assisted the participating committee members and chiefs to get meals after meetings. This improved the attendance for both chiefs and committee members. Committee tried to extend the same to cover the participating communities by asking MuREA to fund them

with a bag of maize and beans but MuREA said that was a community contribution. According to MuREA food was considered part of the community contribution. In addition MuREA observed that the project had already taken over some costs like buying of bricks, transporting sand and stones because such could neither be produced in the area nor locally collected a thing which was not in the project budget.

Bring Plate and Cup (school feeding program) - Practical Action Zimbabwe brought this in April 2012 on pretext that they were to do training on the job for the communities in two weeks after which the Bondo scheme should be switched on and commissioned. Great numbers indeed turned up for two weeks but the work was not completed due to the hand to mouth kind of supply of the purchased materials by the office; this arrangement of materials had hindered progress since the beginning of the scheme and in the opinion of others that 2 weeks was an unrealistic / impossible estimation of the time needed to complete the outstanding civil works. Use of the numbers of people to work improved when they were divided into task groups led by skilled and knowledgeable individuals either from office or community. Period of work also increased to about 4 to 5 hours as people discussed and agreed to work from 6 am to 14 hours pm, taking tea/sobo at 8am, lunch at 12 noon and knock off at 2pm. This was done at a cost of about MK 35,000 per day during the first 2 and half weeks of April 2012.

## Success and Challenges

First of all, it is important to highlight that almost no money was spent in the project meetings. The key to local development projects is always to motivate community-based approaches that don't benefit individuals; otherwise each project gets hijacked by demands for allowances, food, etc. This is a typical African dilemma for most development projects and can reveal different organisational successes and failures across Africa. Nevertheless, a sum of US$5,000 was invested to take the committee to a similar project in the Eastern Highlands of Zimbabwe on a study visit, so that the group had a very real sense of the positive change to come and to motivate their leadership locally to ensure the community involvement until completion.

Successes

- Fortnightly meetings of chiefs and committee were key to community planning and contribution;
- Meetings had clear agendas & action oriented minutes of the resolutions in their local language;
- Group formation around tasks brought a new work impetus as people dispersed the previous day knowing what to do next even where office people were absent;
- Free food during and after work tended to improve participation comparable only to the school feeding program. More discussion needs to be done on the food issue in the future as it had impact on attendance across all the community, committee members and the chiefs themselves.

Challenges

- Entry into the community, there could have been more project awareness;
- Information about transparency on finances could have been more clear based on the expected roles of the community and MuREA during construction and operations;
- Lack of realistic bill of quantities greatly hindered the planning process both for community contribution and stocking of purchased materials.
- Perceived absence of accommodating some ideas from villagers on the design and construction by employees brought ill feelings to community as last minute reversals were taken.
- The inadequate flow of purchased materials is greatly criticized on the office, and is viewed as the most significant cause of low participation and delays leading to the protracted period of the project.
- Innovations implemented without first discussing with leaders like rewards of t-shirts and introduction of food on communal work were viewed very negatively by community leaders in the scheme. Lack of proper communication in this case was a relevant issue.
- Finally, rules of the committee during construction should have among other things included the expected cooperation between the community and the implementing agency which were generally absent.

Case Studies

# Communication Strategies as a central process to enable participative management of the Natural Protected Areas of Peru

## Context and main objectives

Profonanpe, the Peruvian Trust Fund for National Parks and Protected Areas[1], is a private non-profit organization created in December 1992 in order to provide stable funding and long-term conservation, protection and management of protected areas and buffer zones. Its mission is to raise, manage and direct financial resources for the conservation of biological diversity of protected areas in Peru. Profonanpe is the first private environmental fund created in Peru, an institution catalyst of change through innovation-oriented interventions in Peru's PA and their buffer zones.

According to its intervention strategy in the National Protected Areas System (SINANPE, for its name in Spanish), Profonanpe supported the National Service of Protected Areas (SERNANP[2]) in creating conditions for a participative management of protected areas to enhance their management effectiveness, within the project named Participative Management of Natural Protected Areas (GPAN[3]). The project intervention was carried out considering that the viability and sustainability of conservation in protected areas (PAs) depend on the engagement of local players in the PAs management and on the necessity to align them with a common vision on the PAs development in order to turn them into partners for the areas' conservation. This process of mobilizing local players towards conservation commitments requires that benefits generated by conservation are shared and, on the other hand, that strategic communication tools for social inclusion are applied in the different processes of the participative management.

[1] www.profonanpe.org.pe
[2] www.sernanp.gob.pe
[3] www.profonanpe.org.pe/gpan/

The implementation of communication strategies was a central process to enable the participative management of PAs, in particular in the Salinas y Aguada Blanca National Reserve (RNSAB) in Arequipa, Peru. With this communication strategy, the PAs intended to address these challenges:

- Contribute positioning of the PA, its Manager, the Management Committee and the Management Plan in the subnational level
- Reduce the false perception of the protected areas authority as a land expropriator and the Administration Contracts[4] as a way of privatization of the PA
- Engage new social actors in the PA conservation activities

The audiences targeted by this communication strategy were the stakeholders in the subnational level with related activities.

## Activities

Given the complexity of the objectives, the GPAN Project defined the following action lines and had as a transversal theme the positioning of participative management:

- Communication to position the value of Participative Management;
- Communication to position the PA, its Manager and its Management Committee;
- Communication to follow the updating process of the Management Plan;
- Communication to launch the Sustainable Economic Activities Program, its scope and benefits;
- Communication to generate favorable conditions for the Administration Contracts.

According to the objectives of each action line, several strategies, culturally adequate to each PA, were considered, and the communication mix appealed to various resources and communication media such as:

**Entertainment**: community theater was a communication resource applied to raise awareness on the PAs, the Management Plans objectives, as well as the scope of the Administration Contracts.

**Advocacy:** advocacy actions, conducted by the PAs Managers and Presidents of the Management Committees, were fundamental to include the PA in the agenda of the regional and local governments and private companies. In order to achieve this, each PA defined the key messages and elaborated relevant materials such as PAs brochures, videos, webpages, among others.

**Media advocacy:** this strategy allowed to include the benefits of PAs Participative Management, the value of PAs and the benefits of the Administration Contracts in the agenda of the communication media vehicles in a subnational level (regional and local). The advocacy actions developed with the journalists were key to engage them as positive opinion makers. Workshops for journalists and guided visits to the PAs were some of the developed activities.

**Group and inter personal communication:** educative sessions were implemented to communicate the value and benefits of the PAs, the roles of the involved actors in their conservation, the benefits of Participative Management, the value and benefits of the Administration Contracts, their expected results, among other topics. The sessions were developed by mixed teams composed of PA personnel, Management Committee members, park rangers and even the PA Manager.

**Mass communication:** the radio was a key element to the process of positioning the PA, the value of Participative Management and the understanding of the Management Plan. Promotional spots were produced and distributed to main radio broadcasters in the subnational level (regional and local). Micro radio programs about the meaning and scope of the Administration Contracts were also produced by the PAs.

**Electronic:** the PAs developed their webpage, as well as newsletters to reinforce their positioning to some key actors, especially national and regional ones.

## Sources of funding and invested resources

The GPAN Project started its activities in 2003 and was financed with resources from the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), through the World Bank, in a total of US$14,8 million. The project included a simultaneous intervention in 5 PAs, organized in 4 components. The Component 1 of Participative Management counted on a budget of US$5,5 million, out of which US$500,000 were earmarked for Communication (US$120,000 to the Salinas y Aguada Blanca National Reserve).

[4] www.sernanp.gob.pe/sernanp/contratosanps/index.html

> **The implementation of communication strategies was a central process to enable the participative management of PAs**

## Partners and suppliers

Firstly, a communication specialist was hired to develop a general strategy for the project. Later, PAs received the support of a communication staff, which designed specific strategies for each intervention site. These strategies involved the participation of PA personnel and Management Committees.

## Monitoring and evaluation

During the project implementation, the progress of the participative management was evaluated using mainly the participative management radar and the map of actors. Both instruments were also applied to evaluate the PAs' communication strategy. The radar accounts for the progress of the participative management by qualifying the different aspects of the participative management from 0 to 3 (3 as the optimal situation) and highlighting the aspects that need to be strengthened. The map of actors enables the visualization and measurement of changes in the commitment of each strategic group of actors with the PA management. It monitors the position taken by each actor and formulates individual strategies to engage them in the collaboration process. It is necessary to highlight that the application of both instruments are carried out with the participation of the PA Manager and Management Committee.

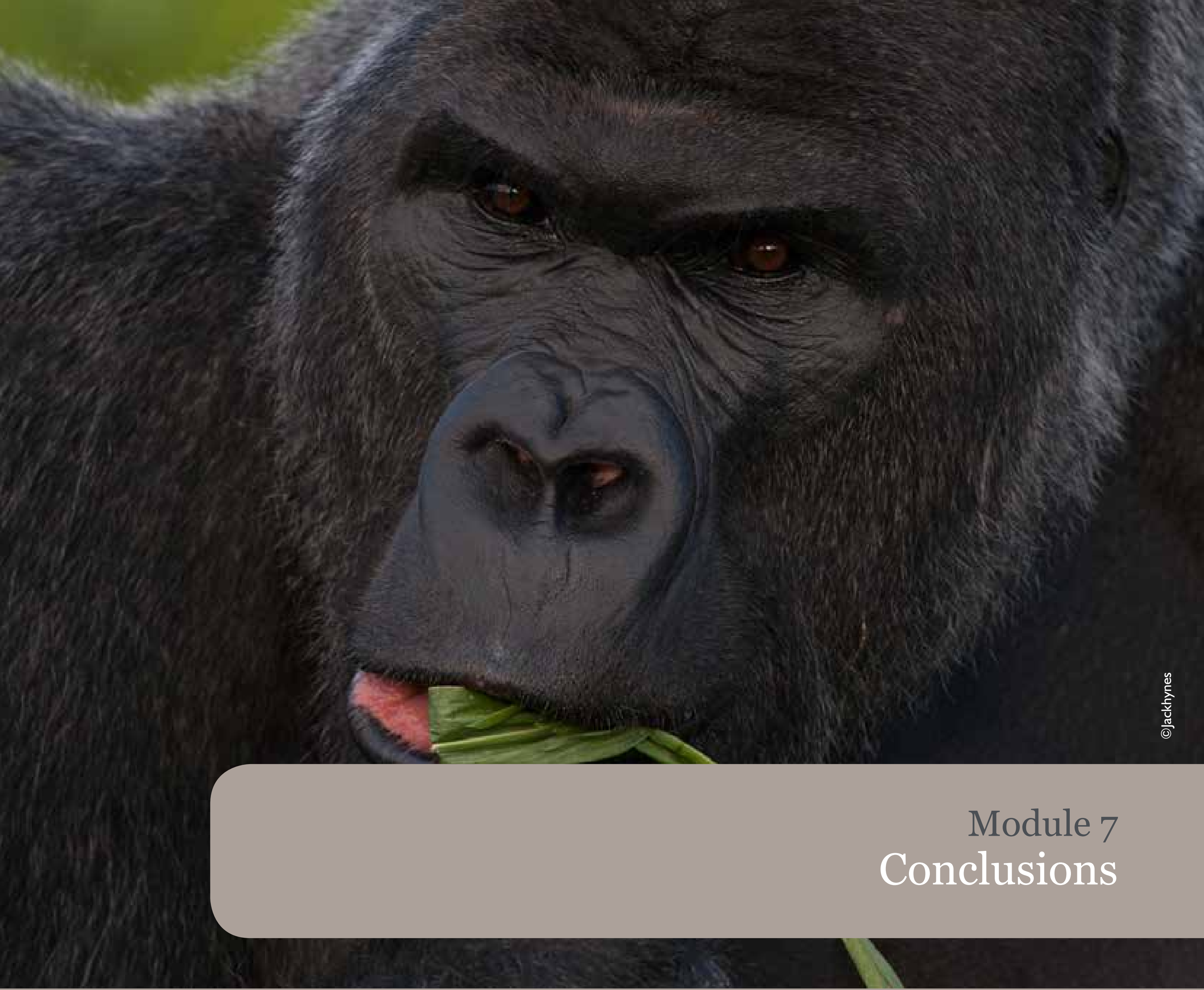
In the particular case of the Salinas and Aguada Blanca National Reserve, the results were positive. Nevertheless, it is hard to evaluate such efforts, since there are large difficulties in attributing the general success of the project to the implementation of one single intervention, such as the communication strategy, while not taking into account all other actions.

## Conclusions

The communication strategy developed by the GPAN project, applied in a transversal manner across different components of the participative management, allowed social actors to engage and build trust. It also enabled the sum of higher capacities and the establishment of commitments around the complex task of biodiversity conservation in natural protected areas.


The beginning of the project implementation faced an adverse context. Nevertheless, the implementation of the communication strategy in the Salinas y Aguada Blanca National Reserve made it possible to reach the expected results, change the perception of a majority of the local population and engage a higher number of collaborators in the PA management. However, in the Huascarán National Park, due to local conflicts related to the perception that an administration contract meant the privatization of the PA, there was limited intervention. Although the same communication strategy of the RNSAB and three other areas was applied, in the Huscarán National Park the conflict was of such magnitude that it could not be addressed in the short term by the authorities, and even less so by the project.

From this and other developed experiences, it is clear that the good social management in processes that involve human activity is unquestionable and that conservation activities in countries such as Peru depend largely on communication.




# Module 7
# Conclusions

## Introduction

The workshop "Communication and Marketing for Environmental Funds" took place in Entebbe, Uganda from September 25-26, 2012. Its main objectives were:

- Define the basic elements of communication and the communication process
- Define the basic components of a communication plan
- Create a draft communication strategy for CAFE, using a participatory approach.

The workshop was organized to address the basic theoretical concepts of communications through a practical approach. All discussions and presentations were focused on modules 1 and 2 of the course materials which can be found at: http://www.redlac.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=346&Itemid=263&lang=en.

This report provides a summary of the presentations and discussions during the workshop. It also summarizes the main questions raised and workshop results. The workshop included a total of 21 participants, representing 17 trust funds – 14 participants were from CAFE member funds and 3 were from RedLAC.

Prior to attending the workshop, all participants were contacted by the workshop organizers and asked to answer a survey on current communication practices and expectations for the workshop. Only 8 participants responded, nevertheless the workshop agenda was adjusted to reflect feedback provided on the survey forms.

The questions asked in the survey, provide interesting information on where trust funds currently find themselves regarding communications activities. A summary of results is provided below:

### 1. How would you rate the following aspects of your fund's current communication activities?

Most respondents considered their efforts to communicate with donors good (75% of respondents), as well as their print materials (63%) and engagement with communities (50%). On the other hand, the use of social media was considered particularly poor by 50% of respondents (Fig. 1).

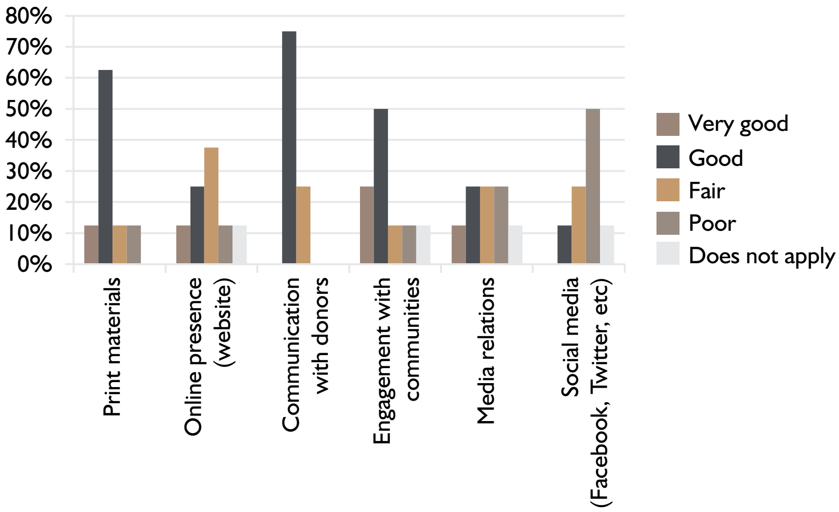



Figure 1. Rating of funds current communication activities.

These results show the need for EFs to explore communication beyond donor engagement. In this sense, an effective communication programme can contribute to EF's strategic objectives broadly, improving relationship with stakeholders, and helping to raise the profile of conservation finance issues. Above all, an effective communication program must improve how target audiences perceive the value of EFs and help them deliver on their missions.

### 2. Is communication a core activity of your environmental fund?

When asked if communication was a core activity of the environmental fund, 87% of respondents said yes.

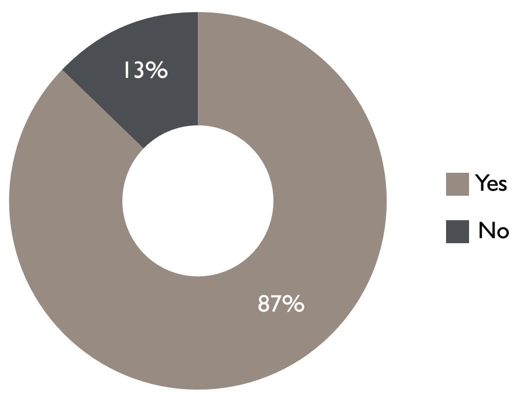



Figure 2. Communication as a core activity of EFs

However, during the workshop funds were asked if they had enough financial and personnel resources dedicated to communication matters. Most participants stated that they didn't have a budget to develop a communication strategy, nor staff to lead the process. Some participants affirmed that, although they had unrestricted resources, they didn't dedicate resources to communication staff or to developing a strategy. When survey results were shown (fig. 2 above) participants observed that even though communication is a core issue for their organizations, not enough resources are dedicated to staff or programs. Some funds shared that administrative staff and or interns usually end up accumulating communication functions or that program staff conduct communication activities as part of their work load. Workshop organizers reflected on this, emphasizing that in order to make communication a core part of EFs programs, that it must be treated as a technical area, with an adequate structure of professional staff and resources.

### 3. In which ways do you expect to use the skills and knowledge obtained from the training course?

Respondents expressed that they hoped to improve their media engagement (100%), donor outreach (88%), communication strategies (75%), and online communication (75%). Participants gave less importance to acquiring knowledge on how to facilitate or provide training courses.

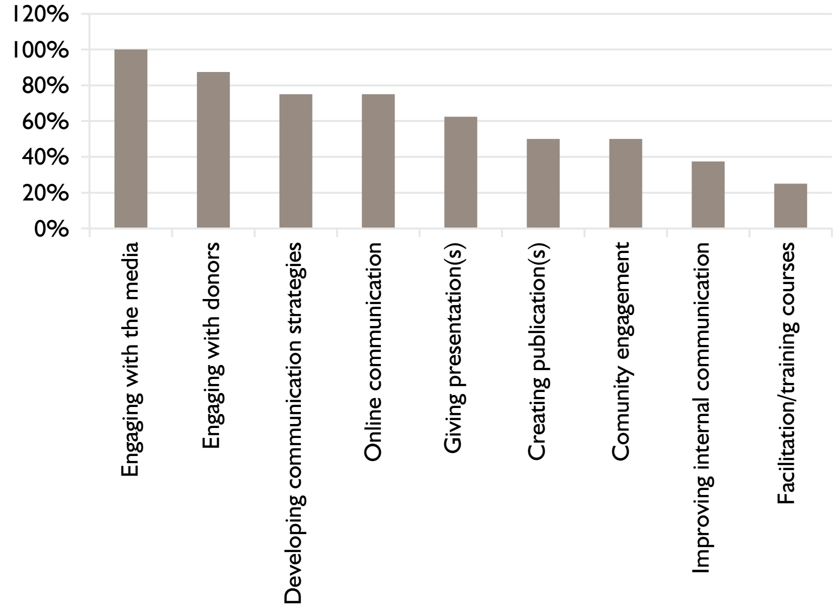



Figure 3. Expectations on the training course

Although media relations was selected as the top expectation for the workshop, the organizers clarified that it would require a workshop of its own and that this workshop needed to deliver on a communication strategy for the CAFE network, as per what had been agreed with the funders. For more information on media relations, participants were referred back to the course materials, specifically to modules 5 and 6 that focus on the topic in depth.

## II. What is communication?

In this session workshop facilitators outlined the basics concepts that EFs should have in mind when beginning to put together a communication strategy and design process.

> *"Communication is a process. You have to plan, define what it is that you want to communicate, and identify who you want to communicate it to (your target audience). Defining key messages and products should always be done according to audience preferences which requires research. Strategies also need to be thought of over a set period of time. Communication is not only about developing products. Products are one of the steps in a broader plan that should be well defined and represent the objectives of your organization." Daniela Lerda – facilitator.*

The following topics were covered in the session:

### 1. How do we communicate?

We communicate with the external world all time and in many different ways. 90% of our communication is non-verbal, composed mainly of images (50%) and sounds (40%). **Communication is a two way process of sending and receiving messages.**

### 2. Why do we communicate?

Through communication we can express different points of view. We can improve relationships with other people. We can engage different audiences to support our objectives. A well-designed strategy can help EFs achieve their objectives, raise awareness about their mission, and ensure the continuity of their activities.

### 3. Who is your audience?

It is important to have in mind that one of the main barriers to effective communication is not **knowing your audience** properly: language, literacy and culture, interests, skills and disabilities, access to technology. Knowing your audiences is key to figuring out what to say, how to say it and when, as well as how to relate to different target groups.

Communication cannot be seen as a medium only to reach donors or to help EFs fundraise. If asked by your board how a communication strategy will help you to bring more money to your organization, you will have to help them understand that communication will help with your organization's overall objectives and strategy implementation.

Communication is also important for promoting an EF's mission and value proposition to particular groups. You can engage people to support your cause through communication and, in many cases you will need to reach communities to promote conservation goals. Communication is a key component of any community engagement activity.

### 4. Don't know your target audience?

Research! Learn as much as you can about your audience. Research is key to understanding a specific audience. By specific audience we mean that the more specific you define your audience, the more effective, successful you will be when developing an effective communication strategy. There is no such thing as "a general audience". Within a group of people, you will have youth, public workers, farmers, etc.

- Who is your audience?
- What are your audiences' interests?
- What does the audience want?
- What does the audience already know and what do they need to know?
- What are their needs and expectations?
- How will the audience benefit from your organization or the activities that you are promoting?

It is also important to know your audiences' **attitudes** about an issue, their **skills**, as well as to identify the **barriers** to behaviour change, and the **incentives** that might help them to act.

Effective communication uses appropriate language best fit to the levels of understanding of specific groups. <u>The general public is not an audience</u>, but "women between the ages of 20-40" is. Make sure you segment audiences as much as possible, and cater messages intended for them. This will help you to develop relationships, facilitate openness, honesty and cooperation as well as provide you with useful feedback.

### 5. Myths about communication

Some people are natural communicators. But not everyone has that talent. If you are not a natural communicator there are skills you can learn. You have to plan, and learn by observing and practicing, even if it means breaking out of your comfort zone!

There are basic myths that must be overcome if you want to improve the communication capacity of your EF:

- **Communication can be improvised anytime** –communication can be improvised, but planning it will provide more effective results.
- **Communication is the same as medium** – communication is not the same as producing products or activities. What do you want to get out of your video, or your website? You have to think about your ultimate objective first, and who will help you to achieve it more efficiently. Medium must be targeted to specific groups.
- **Communication units have a clear mandate within organizations** – most EFs don't have a communication unit, staff, budget or a strategy. In this case, EFs will need to hire a mentor or professional to guide communication planning and implementation.
- **Communication is simply about sending messages** – one-way communication is not the same as exchanging ideas and dialogue. You must plan ways to "listen" as well as "talk" when planning your communication approaches.
- **Providing information will do the job** – having information is not enough for driving behaviour change. People need to learn new skills, or overcome other barriers, as well as be provided with alternatives and

incentives to change. You have to look at **attitudes, skills, barriers, and incentives** when promoting behavior change.

- **Anyone can do communication** – everyone communicates, but not everyone can do it effectively. Having a skilled professional is key to your communication success.
- **The most important reason for EFs to invest in communication is to support fundraising** – the best time to invest in institutional communication is when things are going well and funds are plentiful. Organizations have natural ups and downs, and it takes a while for communication to yield results. Communication should be a continuous effort that helps implement programs, deliver on an organization's mission and support fundraising.
- **It is impossible to monitor the contribution and impact of communication** – there are tools to check if your audience is being reached appropriately. You can use surveys, indicators, or hire impact assessment groups. You can also use *Google analytics* to track the number of hits to your website, as well as downloads of electronic reports and materials. Tracking this type of information will help you gauge the kind of information that your audience is after.

### 6. How can one approach negative themes like poaching and logging and turn them into positive messages?

The first thing you have to ask is: who is your target audience? There is no such thing as "the general public". If you are talking about donors, you can structure a campaign showing them how they can help, how much a particular activity will cost, and how they can benefit from contributing. If you are talking to community groups, you have to provide them with alternatives; it is not sufficient to tell them that particular behaviours are "bad" or "wrong". It is important to show people why they have to protect nature, how they can do it, and why.

### 7. How can emotions be used to sensitize audiences?

Again, the first thing you have to ask: who is your target audience? Which emotions turn them on? Dealing with emotions can give you a great opportunity to engage with people, but you have to know which emotions actually motivate your particular audience. When talking about conservation issues it is common to see campaigns that use guilt as the engagement factor. But guilt does not always lead people to action. Using pictures of animals being killed, for example, will not necessarily cause your audience to stop poaching. If you don't know your audience well this can be seen as an offense and actually work against mobilizing them towards conservation.

### 8. How should audience surveys be conducted?

There are several methods for collecting information from audiences, including questionnaire surveys, self-fill-out-forms, semi-structured interviews, etc. The simplest method is through *Observation*.

People do not always know what they want but they always show you what they do. When engaging community groups, rather than asking open questions, it is better to provide concrete examples and see how they react.

### 9. How can communication help to engage donors and the private sector?

There are two main motivating factors for companies to support conservation projects: the first, is seen as a way to enhance their brand exposure, the second, is more related to obtaining and securing their operational license. Small budgets usually mean small initiatives, with limited impact and potential for brand exposure. When approaching companies EFs should be bold and ask for a significant amounts of resources. If companies associate their brands with a trust fund, they will expect that the EF will help raise the brand's profile to important consumer groups or stakeholders.

Companies have a second pool of resources in addition to philanthropic funds - operational budgets. While philanthropic funds are usually small, and serve to promote brands through communications and exposure, operational funds are embedded in the implementation of core activities. Trust funds may want to explore ways to align their programmatic activities with changing company practices. Companies can help to implement biodiversity conservation strategies, something that they don't usually have enough staff or knowledge to do on their own This is where EFs can help, while at the same time, create a new revenue stream. Communicating your EF's value proposition to companies is a key component of engaging the private sector in fundraising.

Companies generate many impacts on natural resources and are looking for ways to both mitigate them and improve their image. Sponsoring and or partnering with EFs can be a win-win situation for both. A company can support an EF, while at the same time improve the quality of natural ecosystems and make productive practices more sustainable.

## III. General tips for Improving Communication in EFs

### 1. Presentations

- Make sure that when preparing a presentation, the most important messages are in the beginning and at the end. People tend to remember those parts best.
- Don't memorize.
- Use note cards with bullet points, but don't read.
- Grab attention immediately: ask a question, tell a story, use humour, quotes, dramatic statistics, music, video.
- Make it memorable.
- Use silence. It's a powerful tool in communication.
- Encourage participation. Make sure you make people feel comfortable so that they share and ask questions.
- Make recommendations at the end of your presentation.
- If you are presenting something it is because you are the most suitable person for that. Remember that and be confident!

### 2. Online communication

During the workshop, participants took part in an exercise to assess EFs' websites. A print screen of each EF's website was shown to participants, who were asked to react by describing in one word what their first impression of the organization was. The results of this exercise are available on RedLAC's website at: http://redlac.org/images/PDFs/workshopmaterials/PPTs/6%20funds%20websites%20evaluation.pdf

In general, participants pointed out that there was lots of information in many of the websites and that EF's objectives were not always clear. When dealing with online audiences, who can land on a website randomly, it is key to be able to explain activities quickly and in simple terms.

Online users tend not to read extensive texts, preferring instead to make connections to specific fields of interest. For example: a user may be looking for information on how to visit protected areas, or information about particular threatened wildlife, or even funding opportunities. Ultimately, an organization's website must address the needs of the organization's key audiences.

**When making a website keep in mind the following:**

- Online users don't read, they scan.
- Online users want to get information quickly. They usually only read the first sentence in a block of text.
- Begin with your conclusions, your findings. This will draw people's attention.
- Keep it simple!
- The less technical and the less formal, the better.
- Websites can be very good channels for providing information, but also for offering services. Take advantage of it!
- It is better if people don't have to scroll down the page to read all the information.
- Always make contact information available.

### 3. Videos

- Don't make videos longer than 8 minutes, ever! Short videos are best, 3-4 minutes is all you need.
- Videos are expensive to make. You should guarantee (preferably free) media placement, in order to disseminate it more broadly.

- In order to get your video on television you will need a really good story, as well as high quality images and the right media contacts.
- As online dissemination is becoming more popular, many videos are being placed on the web, and some are even “going viral” – guaranteeing wide distribution through social media networks. You should explore these types of dissemination approaches in addition to traditional TV outlets.
- Online videos are an alternative, as are slide shows with legends, which can be a very cost effective means to tell a story using images.

### 4. Print materials

- Be careful when placing text over pictures as it makes it difficult to read.
- Readers find monochromatic pictures less attractive.
- After looking at a photo, most readers tend to look down. Text placements should consider these natural visual tendencies.
- The recognizable face of a celebrity can add drawing power to an ad campaign.
- Readers tend to scan pages from left to right
- An ad’s headline is often its best chance to grab a reader’s attention.
- Don’t segment text as it will stop the reader’s eyes and keep them from reading the full message.
- Print materials have to send direct, clever and visually striking messages.

### Key points to remember:

- Communication is not about products, but processes!
- Get to know your audience.
- Plan!
- Invest in communication when things are going well.
- Hire communication professionals.
- Be creative and unique.
- Keep it simple.
- Remember that feedback is part of the process.
- Communication is not only about fundraising!
- Communicate your results, your objectives, as well as your achievements.
- Educate your board so they understand the importance of communication to helping your EF reach its objectives!

## IV. Case studies

### Environmental Foundation of Jamaican (EFJ)

EFJ is one of the oldest EFs set up through a debt for nature swap. After 20 years of operations, most resources were spent on programmatic support rather than being partially allocated for communication staff and activities. Although projects supported by EFJ have been in large part successful, the organization found itself struggling to define ways to continue to support conservation and child development in Jamaica and sought support in communication outreach.

Through a grant to a university, EFJ developed communication materials, a new website, fact sheets, and activities focused at media profiling. Partnerships with local artists were explored along with media outreach and participation in public events. All these approaches have been used to promote the types of projects that EFJ supports.

Although communication activities are now being widely explored and have raised the profile of the organization, it is too soon to expect that in the short term, the investment in promotional tools and events will yield new sources of revenue and funding for the organization. It takes time to raise awareness and build brand equity (the association with a brand that ensures customer loyalty).

Grant making has been the key activity for EFJ. But now, the organization must find ways to both raise the profile of successful programs and to communicate the fact that additional financial support is necessary to keep its activities going. EFJ is in the process of revisiting their positioning, using communication as a more central component of their overall mission and organizational strategy.

### Fundesnap – Bolivia

Fundesnap developed a photo contest focused on park rangers of national, municipal and departmental protected areas. The contest is a way to value park rangers' work as well as to raise pride in the work that they already do.

Cameras were provided to rangers, who were asked to submit pictures in any of the following categories:

- Improving nature
- Raising awareness
- Communities

In the pilot phase of the contest, Fundesnap invested US$7,000 in disposable cameras, film rolls, distribution, printing, and award ceremonies. An additional US$770 was raised with support of a local television channel.

In the second year of the contest, Fundesnap was able to harness support from the NGO The Nature Conservancy (TNC), which provided 30 digital cameras to train park rangers in nature photography. With an initial investment of U$8,000, Fundesnap raised an additional U$4,500 from TNC through cameras donated to the 9 finalists of the contest.

The success of the initiative was demonstrated by the time Fundesnap repeated the activity for the third time. Fundesnap invested US$8,000 and got several additional sponsors for the awards. Contest organizers recognized the importance of involving park rangers in the long term as well as in developing an image library database for promoting protected areas (PA). Fundesnap offered contest sponsors the use of images of the parks. A book is also being produced with the winning photographs, which Fundesnap is hoping to sell online along with an e-commerce platform for the pictures.

### Profonanpe – Peru

The participatory management of protected areas project was created to promote the viability and sustainability of protected areas in Peru.

The project inclued five protected areas: Los Manglares de Tumbes National Sanctuary, Huascarán National Park, Tambopata National Reserve, Bahuaja Sonene National Park, Salinas and Aguada Blanca National Reserve (RNSAB).

Recognizing that PAs' conservation depends largely on aligning stakeholders around a common vision, a communication strategy was developed to reach across multiple social groups and engage them in PA management support.

With the assistance of a communication specialist, Profonanpe developed an outreach strategy for each protected area. As an example, the communication strategy implemented in the Salinas y Aguada Blanca National Reserves, yielded positive results by changing the local populations' perception of the benefits of PAs and of the need to improve their management. Although the same communication approach was used in Huascarán National Park, conflict between local communities and park authorities were too difficult to overcome by using just communication.

Profonanpe emphasize that this project made them realize the value of communication for raising support for protected areas in general. This has made the organization shift towards providing ongoing support for communication activities as part of a broader set of investments on PAs.

### Mulanje Mountain Conservation Trust (MMCT) – Malawi

The focus of Mulanje Mountain Conservation Trust's case study was to use communication to strengthen community outreach and engagement, and indirectly raise support for conservation of Mulanje Mountain.

Through meetings and interviews, MCCT was able to engage communities that use biomass from forests for fuel. Community engagement helped to explain that using wood from Mulanje Mountain's forests presents a threat to its delicate. These community dialogues also helped MMCT's staff realize communities' need for energy and a particular concern for the health of their farms. Water was particularly emphasized as a priority resource for community livelihoods as well as for food security.

Taking advantage of the concern for water, as well as the expressed need for energy, and reflecting on growing pressures on Mulanje Mountain's forests, MCCT proposed building a hydropower plant that could be managed through community support. The main idea was to promote water conservation as a key theme and provide an alternative source of energy, while relieving pressure on forests.

"We understood very quickly that water was a valuable resource, and that energy can be a catalyst for development. Communities were willing to work for energy, and this acted as a proxy for conserving Mulanje Mountain's forests. Community interest was strong, and initially MCCT was able to gather major support."

The hydro plant took two years to build. With more than 2,000 meetings held, the project identified and mobilized volunteers, and provided information to communities throughout the process. Having volunteers in different villages helped to keep an open channel of communication between communities and MCCT. Volunteers were tasked with multiplying information about the project, and informing MCCT about progress. Communication through community dialogue was an integral component of the project's success.

## V. Communication Planning Overview

One of the key objectives of the workshop was to develop a communication plan for CAFE – the Consortium of African Funds for the Environment. The results of this process are presented as a final section of this report. The following topics were discussed during the workshop as key components of a communication strategy planning exercise.

### 1. Defining objectives: What does CAFE want from its communication strategy?

Participants were asked to brainstorm and think about the main objectives that CAFE would like to address when conducting a communication planning process. The objectives were written out in note cards and grouped into categories. After grouping participants' suggestions, three objectives were selected as priorities:

- Promote the exchange of experiences among individual funds EFs (16 votes).
- Raise awareness of the existence of the CAFE network (14 votes).
- Ensure financial sustainability of the CAFE network (10 votes).

According to these objectives, participants were divided into 3 groups, each representing a specific objective. The groups were instructed to follow a communication-planning framework, answering specific question about audiences, key messages, the main call-to-action for each audience, and the most suitable activities or products to reach priority audiences.

### 2. Selecting audiences: Who does CAFE want to reach?

Each group was then asked to answer the following question to help define the most suitable audiences for each objective:

*What are the most important audiences for reaching CAFE'S objectives?*

To achieve objective number 1 – *Promote the exchange of experiences among EF members*, participants pointed out that the main audiences would be the members of CAFE themselves, other EFs outside of CAFE, as well as donors and environmental actors (experts, agencies, and public institutions).

For objective number 2 – *Raise awareness of the existence of the CAFE network*, participants selected donors, environmental funds, other EF networks and government agencies.

For objective number 3 – *Ensure financial sustainability of the CAFE network*, participants pointed out that donors and CAFE's members themselves would be the most important audiences to be involved.

### 3. Key messages: What information about CAFE do you want your target audience to know?

Once the objectives and key audiences were defined, groups were instructed to think about the main messages for each audience. Facilitators pointed out that after the workshop, it would be wise to conduct research on these particular audience groups in order to ensure that the messages selected actually resonate with them. Research would also likely reveal particular attitudes about EFs that should be reflected back in the final communication strategy rollout.

> **The creation and adoption of a strategic communications plan represents a significant step for any organization, or in CAFE's case, for a network**

In general, for the objective of promoting the "opportunity of sharing experiences" among EFs, participants defined that they wanted to promote CAFE as a clearinghouse for knowledge and experience of conservation finance in Africa. Messages will therefore need to enhance the achievements of individual member funds, as well as select key areas of knowledge where CAFE can contribute with particular expertise.

In terms of targeting donors, key messages were meant to emphasize the CAFE network's ability to promote conservation in Africa, and to the high standards, coordination, integrity and adherence to responsible finance principles that are present in CAFE member funds.

In order to promote the financial sustainability of the network, it was determined that key messages should emphasize "the responsibilities of individual member funds to contribute with annual membership dues" as well as the benefits to donors who "wish to support conservation in Africa by strengthening local conservation finance institutions".

### 4. Call-to-action: What do you want your key audiences to do?

Next, groups were asked to think about what would motivate their audiences to act and contribute towards CAFE's objectives.

The group that worked with objective number 1 pointed out that a good motivating factor for CAFE's members and other EFs would be to **join the network** as a way to identify solutions for common issues.

As far as donors were concerned, the group indicated that the main motivation for **supporting CAFE** would be the opportunity **to leverage resources for promoting conservation in Africa.** Other environmental actors should **contribute to CAFE** as a means of supporting sustainable development in Africa.

The second group, which was addressing the objective of raising awareness of the existence of the CAFE network, pointed out that donors needed to think of CAFE as a way to harness large scale conservation initiatives through a network that has a continental approach. The group also pointed out that accessing CAFE's best practices and capacity building opportunities would be the best motivation for new EFs to become involved in CAFÉ. Government agencies, which were defined as often having too few resources and staff, should see CAFE as a partner that can help them develop transboundary initiatives, build capacity and share technical knowledge about conservation finance.

Regarding the sustainability of the network, participants pointed out that donors must be sensitized if they are to understand that their support will help CAFE to scale up conservation initiatives in Africa. For members, the motivation to pay their fees must be tied to the continuity of their individual initiatives – by strengthening CAFE, all conservation finance is enhanced.

### 5. Money, staff, time: What resources will you need to implement your strategy?

In order to consolidate the objectives and strategic approach outlined above, participants were asked to systematise the results generated during the group discussions into a structured communication plan, including a budget, timeline, roles and responsibilities. One of the key issues raised during the workshop was the need for participants to list all non-CAFE member EFs and key donors, and to structure a database of Africa's conservation finance community.

It was also pointed out that it is necessary that the communication strategy consider hiring expert support to guide the implementation and further refinement of the draft strategy generated during the workshop. Activities and products such as Newsletters, a website, webinars, etc, will require particular skills that none of the EFs seemed to have. Translation help was also pointed out as key, given that member EFs include English, French, and Portuguese speakers.

The results of the group exercises are synthesized in the table below. The framework may be used as a reference document to support the development of a full communication plan for CAFE.

| Objectives | Audiences | Key messages | Call-to-action | Activities + products (Money, staff, time) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Promote the exchange of experiences among EF members** | CAFE members | working together to deal with main issues,<br>we are a world class network,<br>identify your best practices,<br>share experiences in a common approach. | Let's work together to identify common main issues and solve them through experience sharing, guidelines/best practices development | Training needs assessment - Hire consultant<br>Training plan<br>Strengthen capacity in priority areas by developing newsletters, website, webinars - Web designer, expert firm<br>Sharing our management tools (CAFE tools kit) - Translators |
| | Other EFs | Come, join us;<br>share your experience;<br>contribute, pay the membership. | Come join us to share your experiences and learn from other EFs to build an association of effective conservation finance institutions in Africa.<br>Key players: CAFE and donor community | Identify non-CAFE members<br>DB of EFs<br>Contact them to introduce CAFE (and convince them of the benefits of being a member)<br>Conduct joint activities<br>Communicate through letters, e-mail, attendance at events… - Executive Secretariat |
| | Donors | we have a good reputation and add value,<br>we have the critical mass, but we lack some skills,<br>we are your entry point to conservation financing in Africa,<br>tell us what you are doing,<br>partner with us | Partner with us to leverage conservation finance impact in Africa | Bilateral meetings and international events - financial resources<br>Nomination of a CAFE representative to contact donors - president<br>Annual report shared with donors (include financial rep) - Executive secretariat<br>Send proposals for capacity building programmes<br>Identify priority donors (who?) - Executive Committee |
| | Environmental actors (experts, agencies, public institutions) | Let's work together,<br>we should align agendas,<br>our work benefits the nation,<br>we make development sustainable,<br>provide more info,<br>let's identity common interests. | Let's work together to make development sustainable<br>Key players: CAFE ExCo | Invite to the CAFE assembly and get their feedback<br>Identify common interests – develop surveys, search for publications (rapid review of ETF, CFA), list of areas or categories relevant to find out the common interests<br>CAFE members participate in local, regional and international fora to influence policy making - money (tickets, lodging)<br>identify priority actors - CFA directory |
| **2. Raise awareness of the existence of the CAFE network** | Donors | CAFE is a network of standards, values, coordination, practices, integrity. | Key players: CAFE, OUCIL, AU, CFA, RedLAC, IUCN, UNEP, EU, Regional Blocks (Ecowas, SADC, EAC)<br>We can help you develop a continental network that improves standards, values and practices for better integrity and coordination of conservation initiatives in Africa.<br>Support us!!! | Identify and map the principal donors interested in endowment funds and identify what their main priorities are (consultancy)<br>Prepare letters, with CAFE's profile, principles, achievements to-day - secretariat and president<br>Consolidate the relationship with our principle donors by CAFE's president communicating with donor contact<br>Organise round-tables within assembly and side-events (take advantage on international meetings) - financial resources, find out who is going to meetings<br>Advocate that CAFE serve as a gateway to include EFs in the international meetings' agendas, especially the COPs - all EFs and secretariat<br>Produce and distribute promotional materials - chatter, copy editor<br>Create a DB of African EFs and activities - CFA list (executive secretariat) |

| Objectives | Audiences | Key messages | Call-to-action | Activities + products (Money, staff, time) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **2. Raise awareness of the existence of the CAFE network** | EF and other EF networks | Benefits of being a member, exchanging ideas and information, sharing with peers, add value from adherence to principles | Players: CAFE members, RedLAC, IUCN members, national regional, donors, (B)INGOs, CFAContact/ join CAFE for: Access capacity building/ best practices, Statement of integrity, Learning / sharing with peers. Become a member! | Develop an attractive website with CAFE's documents, database, links to members, activities, assembly materials, links to CFA, RedLAC, donors - web designer, expert firm<br>Produce flash disks with the same information on the website for those without internet connection - executive secretariat<br>Well organised assemblies - host fund<br>Develop a calendar to combine CAFE's programme of work and individual EFs programs and integrate them in the web - executive secretariat + web designer<br>Participate in African conservation events and present case studies - EF representatives<br>CAFE's programmes that address environmental funds priorities |
| | Government agencies | CAFE can support transboundary initiatives,<br>Capacity building and technical knowledge,<br>Promote national initiatives | Players: Africa Union, CAFE council, UNEP, Peace parks FDN, IUCN Africa<br>We can help you develop transboundary initiatives, build capacity and share technical knowledge. We are your partners! | Prepare letters with CAFE's profile, principles, achievements to-day - secretary and president<br>Research on environmental priorities of regional and continental orgs in order to target CAFE's intervention (consultancy)<br>Ask for registration in all AU and regional blocks + UNEP - executive secretariat |
| **3. To ensure financial sustainability of the CAFE network** | Donors | Responsibilities<br>Obligation<br>One network, one voice<br>Value the network then contribute | Players: ambassadors, RedLAC, Eto, Drogba, GEF, FEBA, KFW<br>By supporting CAFE financially you will be helping us to share our experiences, allowing members to be more productive and helping to standardize information about conservation finance in Africa. Support us! | To develop fundraising tools (brochure, webpage, logo, power point presentation)<br>Identification of potential donors<br>To develop a database (contacts, region, internet, average donation past grantees, process, deadlines)<br>To take advantages of international conferences<br>Endorsement letter by past donors - president<br>To develop specific proposals or fundraising - executive committee<br>To keep present donors updates on use of their funds and progress<br>To acknowledge donor's support (webpage, newsletter) - executive secretariat |
| | Members | Protect natural heritage, support EFs,<br>Be more efficient working together for conservation,<br>We can help you support conservation in Africa<br>We are a good way to capture your interests in the region | Please pay your membership fees so we can support conservation in Africa | To develop a fundraising strategy<br>to ask members to pay their annual fees (secretariat task) - executive secretariat<br>Send a letter /e-mail asking to pay fees (bi-annual) - executive committee and secretariat<br>To have conference call by January and July (fundraising update)<br>Organise and update the list of the members - executive secretariat<br>Develop a portfolio of common CAFE needs<br>Potential members: have a database and get some information from CFA, contact and invite new EFs to meetings - executive secretariat<br>Ambassadors = all CAFE members help identify new members and donors - ALLEF |

## VI. Conclusion

The creation and adoption of a strategic communications plan represents a significant step for any organization, or in CAFE's case, for a network.

The purpose of a strategic communications and marketing plan is to integrate all of the organization's programs, public education, fundraising and advocacy efforts under a common plan. By crafting a long-term strategy, an EF will be positioned to be more proactive and strategic, rather than consistently reacting to the existing environment, or deploying resources towards products that do not yield the right returns for its efforts. A strategic plan will help an EF deploy resources more effectively and strategically by highlighting synergies and shared opportunities in various programs and work areas.

For many organizations, the adoption of such a plan represents a cultural shift and a recognition that all of the organization's efforts include a communication element. Education, grassroots mobilization, research, public advocacy, direct service, and even fundraising are all, at their core, activities driven by communication.

During the workshop, facilitators emphasized that a strategic communications plan has the power to transform an organization: both in terms of building its credibility and status in the conservation community, as well as in terms of helping them accomplish their mission.

The communication plan for CAFE that resulted from the workshop was put together through a participatory planning exercise involving participants in answering the basic set of questions that any organization embarking on communication planning should address before moving towards implementation:

1. What are the objectives?
2. Who are the target audiences and what do you know about them?
3. What are the right messages for each audience? What do you want them to do?
4. What are the best activities or products for reaching specific audiences?
5. What is the plan? To answer this last question, EFs should consider the existing communication infrastructure, including financial resources, time staff, and partnerships.

Whether designing a communication plan for a network, organization, or project, going through these questions will ensure that the most effective and efficient strategy is developed in alignment with the EF's mission and vision.

# Bibliography


ABADIA, Robin; CASTRO, Flavia; CASTRO Haroldo; (2006) *Designing a Communication Strategy: The 4-P Workshop.* Conservation International and Commission on Education and Communications / IUCN – The World Conservation Union.

BELTRAND, Marcello Vernet de (ORG); (2004) *Manual de Comunicação e Meio Ambiente (Communication and Environmental Booklet).* WWF-Brasil / IEB – Instituto Brasileiro de Educação do Brasil / Editora Peirópolis

COVEY, Stephen R.; (2004) *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People.* Free Press.

DEBASISH, Sathya Swaroop; DAS, Bhagaban; (2009) *Business Communication.* PHI Learning Private Limited.

HARE, Tony (2007) Campaign Module, WWF College; WWF International

HILBERT, Martin (2011) Mapping the dimensions and characteristics of the world's technological communication capacity during the period of digitization. Working paper presented at the 9th World Telecommunication/Ict Indicators Meeting - Mauritius, December 2011

KOTLER, Philip (2003) *Strategic Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations.* Prentice Hall.

LOVE, David (2007) Marketing Module, WWF College; WWF International


## ON-LINE RESOURCES


Branding Channel – Always branding. Always on: www.brandchannel.com

*Decoding a brand's DNA - White Paper* by Uche Nworah

In: http://www.brandchannel.com/papers_review.asp?sp_id=1254

Campaign Strategy – modest suggestions for anyone trying to save the world: www.campaignstrategy.org

CIVICUS - World Alliance for Citizen on: www.civicus.org

Internal Communication Toolkit by Jessica Hume

In: https://www.civicus.org/en/news-and-resources/toolkits/265-internal-communication-toolkit

Exhibitor Magazine Online: www.exhibitoronline.com

Learn to Talk to Anyone in 10 Minutes or Less by Suan RoAne and Linda Armstrong.

In: http://www.exhibitoronline.com/exhibitormagazine/article.asp?ID=516

Kotler Marketing: www.kotlermarketing.com

Dr. Philip Kotler Answers Your Questions on Marketing

In: www.kotlermarketing.com/phil_questions.shtml

National Center for Charitable Statistics (NCCS): www.nccs.urban.org

Quick facts about nonprofits

In: nccs.urban.org/statistics/quickfacts.cfm

The Nielsen Company: blog.nielsen.com

Tree Screen Report (March, 2010)

In: http://blog.nielsen.com/nielsenwire/online_mobile/three-screen-report-q409/

Practical Ecommerce: www.practicalecommerce.com

13 Crowdfunding Sites for Social-Cause Entrepreneurs by Sig Ueland In: http://www.practicalecommerce.com/articles/3140-13-Crowdfunding-Sites-for-Social-Cause-Entrepreneurs

Upleaf Blog - Strategic Online Communication for Nonprofits – www.upleaf.com

2012 Nonprofit Social Networking Benchmark Report.

In: www.nonprofitsocialnetworksurvey.com