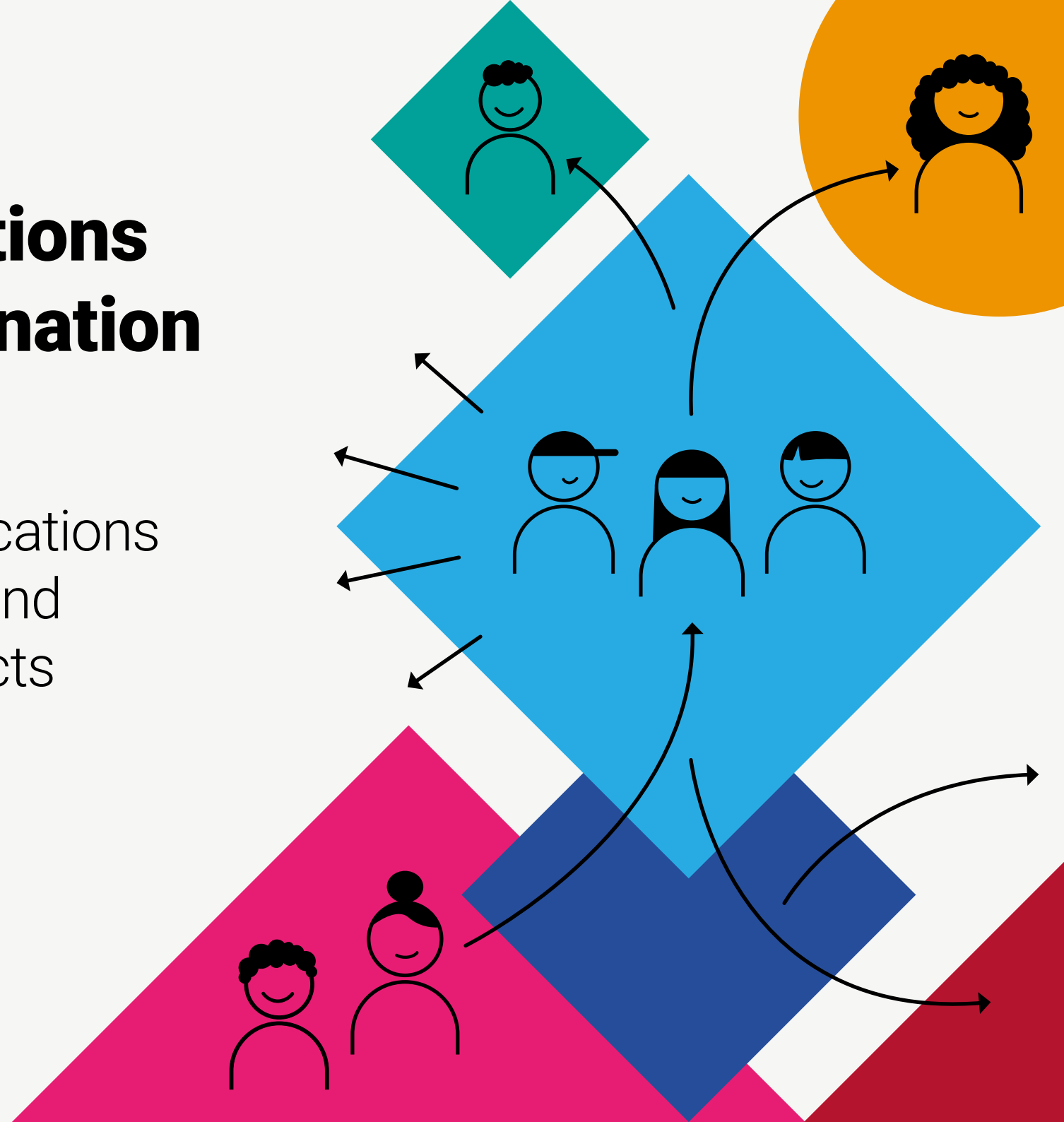


Communications and Dissemination Toolkit

Global Communications for International and Grassroots Projects



Introduction

This toolkit is a combination of learning and communication strategies which have been developed based on the experience of the Global Communications Team for the Gender Responsive Resilience and Intersectionality in Policy and Practice (GRRIPP) Project.

We have designed this Toolkit to be used by a wide audience from small grassroots organisations to large international research projects who work with smaller and more localised organisations and communications teams. The **aim of this toolkit** is to support projects and organisations in embedding global communications and dissemination from the start of their project planning, to resource it effectively (particularly in low-resource environments), and **to support projects and organisations to attain a greater reach and impact of activities.**

GRRIPP is a 4-year global collaboration and knowledge-exchange project implemented by seven universities based in Bangladesh, Peru, South Africa and the UK, and is a Network Plus project funded by UKRI's Global Challenges Research Fund. The project aims to bring together theory, policy and practice to promote a gender-responsive approach to disaster management and development. It has provided funding to over 30 projects across South Asia, Africa and Latin America & the Caribbean (LAC). For more information on GRRIPP and the projects, visit www.gripp.net

In this toolkit, you will find:

- [A glossary](#)
- [Guidance on developing inclusive language and content](#)
- [Tips on how to develop a communication and dissemination strategy](#)
- [Identifying useful resources to aid dissemination](#)
- [Pros and cons of different media platforms, including examples from the field](#)
- [A timeline for communication and Dissemination](#)
- [Access to resource templates](#)

Resources

We want to make this Toolkit as useful as possible which is why we have developed **templates** to accompany the Toolkit and the exercises within it. By scanning the QR below, you will be directed to a [webpage](#) where you can download a Communication and Dissemination Strategy Template, a Fact Sheet Template, and a Newsletter Template.

Get scanning!



1. Glossary

Before you dive into this toolkit, we have compiled some terms which we think will be useful to you. These are words we use in our day to day discussions and you will see them appear throughout the guide.

Audience

The group of individuals or entities for whom the communication materials are created and shared.

Communications planning

Strategic process used to develop and implement effective communication strategies to achieve specific goals, objectives and reach targets.

Content

The information, messages, or media materials created for dissemination through various channels.

Disseminate

To share something to multiple audiences across multiple channels.

Engagement

The degree of interaction, participation, or connection between individuals or groups when communicating.

External communications

Exchanging information, messages, and interactions between an organisation, project or individual and entities outside their immediate environment.

Impact

The significance or consequence of a message, technology, or communication approach on its targeted audience, the communication industry, or society at large.

Internal communications

The process of exchanging information, ideas, and messages within an organisation's or project's team.

Outputs

Anything produced or carried out by your, or within your, project i.e. a book, a workshop, a seminar, a policy brief etc.

Reach

The total count of distinct individuals who view a specific post or content shared by a social media account or web page. Reach can be either organic or paid. It stands as a fundamental metric for assessing the influence and visibility of content on social media platforms.

Resources

The various elements, assets, products and factors used to create and manage an effective online presence and engage with audiences.

Social media

Online platforms and websites that enable users to create, share, and exchange content in various forms, such as text, images, videos, and links, in a virtual social environment.

Stakeholder mapping

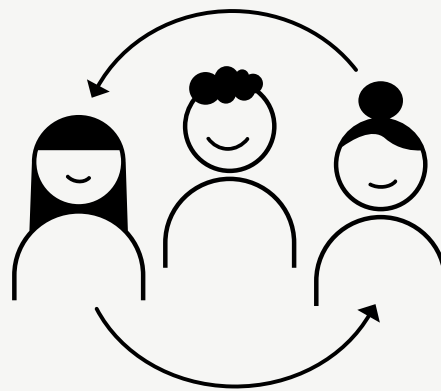
A process or a strategic tool used to identify and analyse the various individuals, groups, or entities that have an interest in or are affected by other organisations' activities, projects, or decisions.

2. Inclusive Language and Inclusive Content

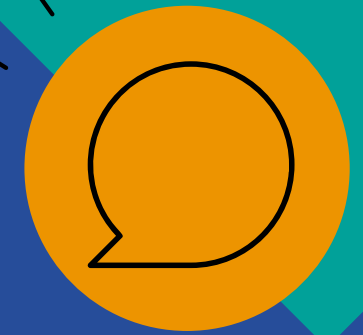
An essential part of communications and dissemination work is the language we use and the power it holds. Language not only reflects behaviours, attitudes and norms within a society, it can also shape a society's attitude of what is acceptable. In GRRIPP, we are committed to working in a **feminist, flat management style** and are guided by a **decolonial** approach: we critically reassess power relations between and within countries, communities and social relations more generally. This is reflected in the language we use in our social media posts, our outputs, the resources we share and our work in the wider context.

Gender and intersectionality are core aspects of GRRIPP. When working for a project in international development, humanitarianism, or climate change – to name a few – it is essential that you not only consider gender, but embed gender and intersectionality throughout your communications and your organisation. A useful resource on **inclusive language** is the Inclusive Language Guide by Oxfam which you can access [here](#).

Similarly, when you create content, you have the power to make it as inclusive as possible. You can lead by example and ensure your content is accessible for people with disabilities. For example, when using hashtags you can **#CapitaliseEachWord** to make it easier to read. A useful **dyslexia-friendly** style guide by the British Dyslexia Association can be found [here](#). The charity Scope also has a range of resources on **digital accessibility**, like [this one](#) on alt-text. Creating clear, accessible content in a range of audio and visual formats will aid those who speak your language as a second one and help you reach a wider audience.



3. Developing a Communication and Dissemination Strategy



A Communications and Dissemination Strategy is a planning tool that assists the structuring of your communication objectives and in identifying the audiences you want to reach. In developing a strategy, not only are you able to effectively disseminate your learning or outputs, you are also able to develop a system which allows you to monitor impact, and to reach new audiences. The objectives you choose to develop can be achieved through tools you may already have access to, or by developing a strategy where new opportunities and resources may be more useful. In this section, you will find examples of how the GRRIPP programme has developed and incorporated a Communication and Dissemination Strategy across South Asia, Latin America & the Caribbean, and Africa. You will also find a step by step on how to develop your own strategy.

To download a **ready-made template**, scan the QR code on page 2 or click [here](#).

3.1 Strategising Communication and Dissemination Across the GRRIPP Regions

Within the GRRIPP Programme, each Regional Communications Lead took a similar approach, but adapted their strategy according to the context of the region and also the content that their projects were producing.

📍 SOUTH ASIA

GRRIPP South Asia developed their strategy around Research, Policy and Practice. Their key objective is to 'widen the dissemination of GRRIPP South Asia activities, promote the project's work and make visible the impact of the project's work to relevant audiences'. Typical to the region, key audience members for the South Asia team include policy makers, government officials, donor organisations, the public-private sector, and NGOs/INGOs who are working in the gender, intersectionality, and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) field. Other audiences include the media/journalists, local organisations, community leaders and youth groups. Both Communication and Dissemination have been adapted to effectively reach and speak to the wide reaching and very different audiences mentioned.

This region also utilised physical tactics to share and disseminate, including the printing of reports, books etc., billboards and posters. They have also developed an online presence across all GRRIPP online platforms.

📍 LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN

The GRRIPP Latin America & the Caribbean (LAC) team developed their communications strategy across three thematic lines, with objectives developed for each line. These include Research, Policies and Practice, and an example of an objective included 'highlighting the advocacy, public policies and management instruments developed by the projects'. For dissemination, the LAC team wanted to utilise multiple forms of media and sharing techniques, including physical outputs i.e. printed books and reports, posters, and interactive workshops. The team also incorporated online dissemination into their strategy in order to reach a wider audience. This included frequent posting on social media platforms, contributing to GRRIPP's blog page and YouTube Channel, as well as featuring in GRRIPP's **Monthly Newsletter**.

A key aspect of GRRIPP LACs strategy has been centred around translation. As the region consists mainly of Spanish and Portuguese speaking audiences, an effort to translate all posts and outputs into the two languages as well as in English has proved successful in generating cross-regional knowledge exchange.

Scan the QR or click [here](#) to access a newsletter template!



📍 AFRICA

GRRIPP Africa's communications strategy was developed with a two-pronged approach – the first being in accordance with the regional university unit supporting GRRIPP Africa whose aim is gender justice. This entails finding opportunities to highlight how the projects working with GRRIPP Africa possess a shared vision with the university's strategic objectives. An example of this is the webinar co-hosted by Durban University of Technology Gender Justice, Health and Human Development and GRRIPP Africa titled *(Wo)men's Equality: youth participation & leadership for better social outcomes* hosted in June 2023. This was held to commemorate Youth Day, which is observed by citizens, government, and institutions across diverse spectra in South Africa's calendar. Audience members included scholars, youth leaders, women leaders, activists, and government officials.

The second approach was predicated on contextual and decolonial application of thematic areas, namely Gender, Resilience, and Intersectionality. From a regional perspective, meanings of these concepts remain contested terrain, with ongoing discussion on their relevance to communities outside the academic sphere. However, the work produced by the projects have given new meanings and understandings to these themes, as a result of unique approaches in grassroots settings. To showcase these diverse views, GRRIPP Africa integrated social media (LinkedIn and Twitter) into their strategy.

Tip!

Adapt your strategy according to:

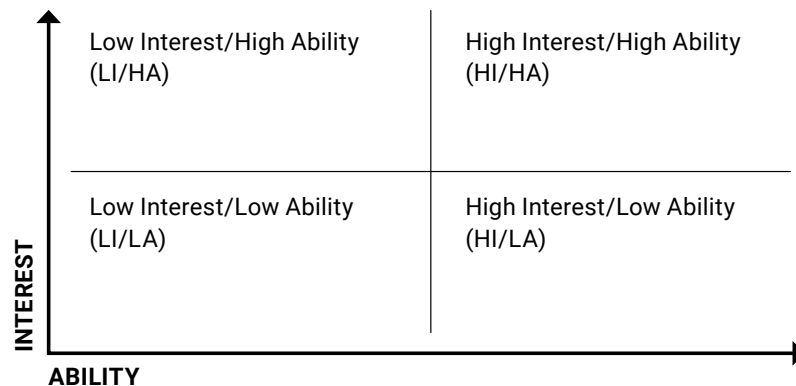
- Your geographic context
- The content you are producing
- Your targeted audience(s)

3.2 How Do You Design a Communications and Dissemination Strategy?

So, where do you start in designing your own strategy? Firstly, you need to identify the audience(s) you are trying to reach. Often audiences are selected due to the spaces in which they work and the spaces they can influence – do you want to target grassroots policy makers? National level policy makers? Academics? Community leaders? The communities themselves?

EXERCISE: ACTOR AND INFLUENCE MAPPING

For this, you must begin by asking yourself, *who are we speaking to and what do we want them to do?* For the GRRIPP programme, we completed this exercise twice: **Round 1** with a focus on policy and **Round 2** with a focus on practice. Copy the illustration below onto a large piece of paper (preferably A2). You'll need sticky notes and some marker pens:



Begin to add audience members onto sticky notes and place them in the square you think is most appropriate – who has a high ability to influence an audience? Who has high interest in the work you are producing? Or who has little interest and should be avoided in your strategy? It is also important to be specific! Name organisations, politicians, regional advisors etc.

By the end of the exercise you should have determined the audiences that you *need* to target and incorporate that information (including the best way to reach them) into your Communication and Dissemination Strategy using the template provided with this Toolkit.

4. Identifying Useful Resources and Channels

Scan the QR code on page 2 or [click here to download a Fact Sheet template to get started!](#)

Resources are fundamental tools for the dissemination of messages. They must be adapted according to the audiences you are trying to reach and the platform(s) on which you are aiming to share the resource. For example, poster images work great as “content pills” on Instagram as they show little written information and highlight more visual themes. Other resources allow for more text, such as ‘**Fact Sheets**’ which succinctly bring together all the relevant information, including more technical content or figures in an accessible and readable format. It is also important to look for synergy between the available channels. For instance, content uploaded onto a web page can also be disseminated via Twitter or Instagram, which can be directly linked through a web link or QR code.

Diversifying and creating inclusive content is also an essential aspect of communications and disseminations. This may mean translating your content in multiple languages, making sure that any outputs and visuals you share meet international accessibility standards, and also creating audio content such as YouTube videos or podcasts.

Tip!

Adapt your resources according to:

- Your audience
- The platform used to share them
- Accessibility
- Geographical context

5. Utilising Media Platforms

Pro's and con's

Media platforms are an incredibly useful tool in creating not only a public image of your organisation, but also in encouraging advocacy, communicating your objectives and sharing your progress with your audience(s). As we've already mentioned, audience reach and engagement can be diverse and context dependent. Communication practitioners must put on their thinking-hats and ask themselves the following questions: what do I want the audience to do with my message? Which platform will enable me to get the best reach, the best engagement to spark interest in the organisation, and impact? Drawing from our experiences across the GRRIPP regions and in the UK, we have compiled a list of pros and cons. We hope this helps!

Tip!

To ensure clear, concise and impactful communications via these channels and to your selected audiences, we recommend using the SMART method:

Specific Measurable Attainable Relevant Time-bound

Website



- Serves as a dedicated location for the audience to access all information and updates about the organisation and its work. Any uploaded resources can remain there for long periods of time.
- A simple yet effective way to visually display your work and organisation, without bombarding the viewer.



- Information doesn't always get updated frequently, compared to social media platforms. Websites require a lot of maintenance and updating the website can be time consuming.
- Websites are not always accessible due to location and protection sites and affordability, websites are expensive to create.

LinkedIn

Has been very effective in the UK

- Free to use and a targeted platform useful for addressing professionals and scholars in your chosen field.
- Main 'pro' of LinkedIn is its networking facilities, it is the ideal place to share your work with relevant stakeholders and maintain connections.
- Posts have long visibility and activity.

- Low frequency use of the platform by users (i.e. weekly, not daily) compared to other platforms. High engagement depends largely on the account having a high followership (+300).
- It takes a long time to build up a followers and expand network.

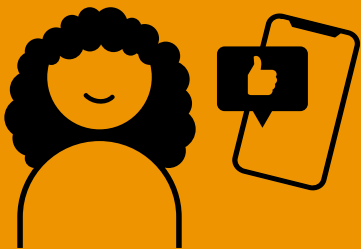
Very effective for the Africa region. Posting to groups with intersecting interests has given us audience engagement as professionals connect with us and engage with our posts.

X (Formally Twitter)

- Free to use and a useful tool for audience feedback and engagement through comments, quote tweets, and retweets. This makes it easier to measure impact.
- Can be used as a tool to establish and sustain brand identity through tweets, following and engaging with accounts of shared interest, and hashtags.

- High engagement requires immediate responses to tweets. This is not always possible as followers on the account respond from different time zones from that of the tweet originator. Also time consuming.
- Spam accounts may target the account for negative comments and trolling.

Has been very effective in the UK and for our Global Account



This is the most effective way to communicate with people in **South Asia** due to the large and diverse user base across many South Asian countries. Facebook has become a primary source of information for many people, especially in areas with limited access to traditional media.

Facebook



- Free to use.
- The platform is positioned as a community of friends and trusted networks – via connections and mutual friends. Engagement is expansive, even though the content remains within a community of friends and groups.

Has been very effective in the **LAC** due to the dynamic and organic nature of the communications within the region. A more accessible and horizontal approach to communications is often used to connect a wide audience to information and publications across Latin America and the Caribbean.

Instagram

- Free to use and a highly visual platform which is great for sharing images and posters (anything with a low word count).
- Creating a hashtag is a good way to gain following from like-minded accounts and individuals who search according to their interests. This includes hashtags that can appear on the explore page for wider exposure and reach.

YouTube

- Free to use and accessible in terms of providing audio for persons with little or no vision. Likewise, videos can be shared with subtitles which means that those with auditory challenges can also view the outputs.



Not effective in the **UK** where Facebook is primarily a non-professional site.

- Facebook is primarily a non-professional site which means it may not be the most appropriate place to share your organisation's content as engagement and impact may be low.
- Accounts are exposed to the risk of being reported and placed in "Facebook jail" where reach and engagement of posts is curtailed by Facebook, without any control of the account owner/communicator.
- Requires a good understanding of the platform's algorithm, which determines high or low engagement of posts. Developing copyright-free infographics and poster images to share on the platform is also time consuming.
- Engagement with posting requires a lot of consistency.

This has not been massively effective from a **global** perspective as we are inconsistent with uploading videos.

- High quality videos require editing and the use of high quality equipment, this can become costly.
- Videos typically require a couple of minutes to view, if you are trying to convey a quick message to the viewer then this might not be the best option.
- It is difficult to increase subscribers and views.

6. Communication and Dissemination

Examples from the field

We asked one GRRIPP project from each region to share with us their experience with communicating and disseminating their work and organisation in order to gain an insight on the challenges they face, their successes and how smaller, grassroots projects can utilise social media to enhance the impact of their work.



Mwanasikana Wanhasi
📍 Zimbabwe

What communication strategies do you use within your project?

"We ensure that at least 3 posts are made every week. This is helpful in making sure that the audience/followers are informed of the projects. The organisation creates fliers with messaging and pictures of the relevant projects for information dissemination and fliers are enticing and they usually get the most likes. There is consideration of the target audience as they differ from platform to platform. For example, on Twitter there are many intellectuals hence, the posts should be somewhat intellectual. Whereas, Facebook allows flexibility in the sense that people can be engaged freely without much to consider"

What strategies have you found most effective?

"Using vernacular language is very effective especially to the local community. This is because some of them do not understand English, this is especially the case with projects' beneficiaries. Hosting Twitter Spaces has helped our Twitter following to grow, especially on issues that will be trending at the time. Tagging strategic partners is one of the strategies which has worked."

Have you tried anything that hasn't worked?

"The YouTube Channel is currently dormant. The reason being that MW has not figured the best way to grow the channel and engage more people. The organisation is currently strategizing on how best the channel can improve."

🖱️ Visit Mwanasikana Wanhasi [here](#)



Shamim Kabir, IEDS
 📍 **Bangladesh**

 [Visit IEDS here](#)

What communication strategies do you use within your project?

“The colourful billboards in the project area were one of the major communication strategies of the project. Posters and leaflets were also made to disseminate the project activities mostly used as the medium of awareness campaigns. In-person audience-focused campaigns were also organised under the project to build awareness among high school students and their parents to educate them on human rights with emphasis on women and children’s rights through lectures and video shows.”

What strategies have you found most effective?

“Among the offline/in-person communication strategies – erecting a number of colourful billboards in strategic places of the project area was one of the effective strategies as most of the people could know about the projects through this. A huge number of audiences were targeted through the newspaper coverage to disseminate within a larger population. Facebook, in Bangladesh, is one of the most powerful mediums to gather a huge number of audiences. For the dissemination of the project activities and outcomes, this social media platform was used.”

Have you tried anything that hasn’t worked?

“We have tried to disseminate the activities and outcomes through some recognised national newspapers, but could not make it. If we could reach those newspapers, it would be a great advantage for the project and GRRIPP also.”



Claudia Cárdenas, GRID Chile
 📍 **Chile**

What communication strategies do you use within your project?

“GRID uses mainly LinkedIn; Whatsapp for dissemination in various thematic networks, Instagram. The GRID website is currently being updated and a special site will be set up for the GRRIPP project.”

What strategies have you found most effective?

“Sending GRRIPP information through thematic Whatsapp groups. I have several of these networks both by Whatsapp and by email, and through a single message the dissemination is done. Another massive dissemination is done through my LinkedIn profile where I have several followers as well as mass mailing groups.”

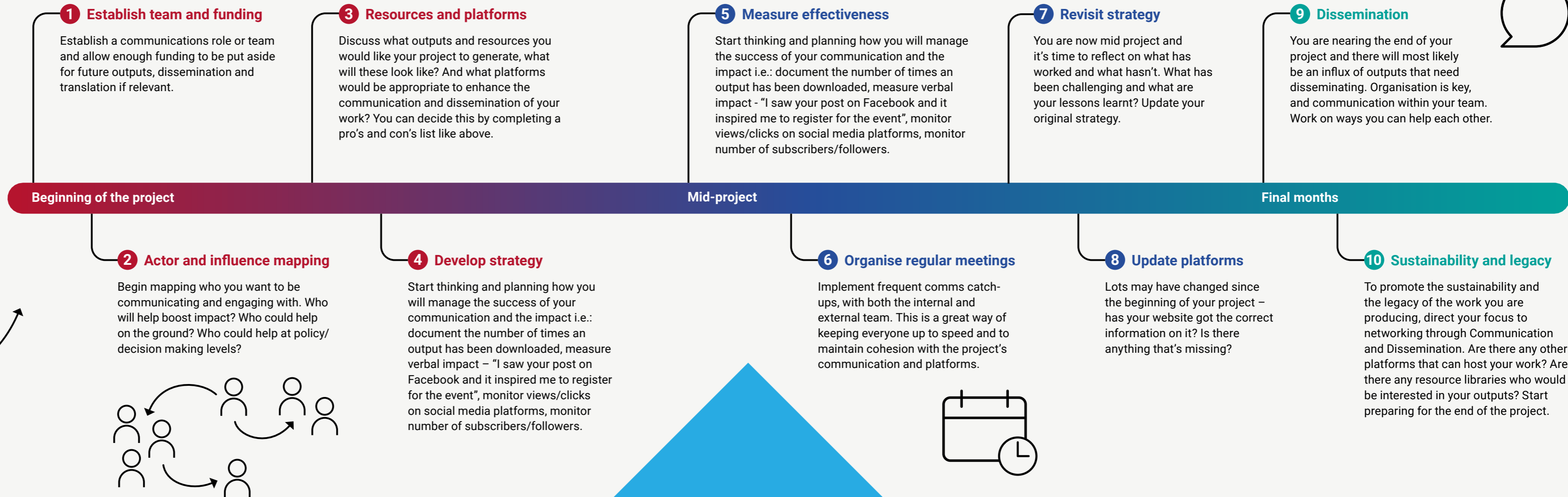
Have you tried anything that hasn’t worked?

“We cannot highlight something that has not worked. All our actions have had positive results in the dissemination of our activities or in the reach of our stakeholders. Perhaps updating the GRID website will allow us to have greater visibility and visits.”

 [Visit GRID Chile here](#)

7. Timeline for Communication and Dissemination

You have just received funding for your project and you've finally been given the go ahead! But when should you start thinking about Communication and Dissemination? The answer is immediately. We get it, it's hard to imagine what you'll be communicating and who you will be communicating to before the work has even begun, but before you know it your project will be in full swing and communications will become a second thought. Based on our experiences with developing a Global Communications Team and Strategy mid-project, we have developed a timeline so you don't have to.



This toolkit was written by (in alphabetical order) Mariapía Garaycochea from GRRIPP LAC, Masuma Moriom from GRRIPP South Asia, Omogolo Taunyane from GRRIPP Africa and Olivia Walmsley from GRRIPP Global.

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@GRRIPP, 2023
<https://www.gripp.net>



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