

Tool: Evaluation of your communication project



What can I do with this tool?

Evaluating your communication interventions helps you assess whether you have reached your goals. It also helps you to learn what works, what could be improved, and to know what you have to do differently a next time you plan your communication. It provides you with information about how much time or money certain interventions cost. This will help you to make more realistic budgets in the future. Finally an evaluation will give you building bricks for promoting the success of your project.

For whom is this tool meant?

For professionals who help implement international agreements on biodiversity, climate change and sustainable development

What knowledge is presumed for using this tool?

To effectively use this tool, it is required to understand Key subjects 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the [course Strategic communication](#) on [Frogleaps.org](#).

When can I use it?

Evaluating should be done after each phase and in close relation to planning and organization of the next phases. In any case it should be done at the end of a project and it is wise to make sure in the beginning of a project that you have time and budget for evaluation.

How can I evaluate my communication project?

The best way to evaluate your communication strategy is to do so with your colleagues, your partners and if possible representatives of the target audience. To help you, we propose you take the following steps.

Step 1

Prepare the (joint) evaluation process.

Step 2

Think about the goals you wanted to achieve and select evaluation methods.

Step 3

Measure results and impact: did you realize what you set out to do?

Step 4

Identify learning: what would you do differently a next time?

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Now you and your partners have learned and strengthened your team so you will even be more successful in your next Communication project!

Step 1. Prepare joint evaluation process

The first step is to plan the joint evaluation process: do you need one or do you need a few meetings? E.g. one meeting to select tools and divide tasks. And another meeting to discuss results of the evaluation and reflect on learning.

In this first step you also collect all materials that will help you with the evaluation. The more you have invested in thinking about evaluation in the understanding, designing and executing phase, the easier evaluating will be.

You the have basic materials with SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound) definitions of that what you wanted to achieve. These basic materials include:

- The project planning, organization, briefing notes, meeting reports etc.
- The budget: the estimates and the real costs
- An overview of the communication strategy
- All communication products that were developed
- All examples of free publicity linked to your project
- Questions you identified in earlier phases that should be answered in an evaluation.

Step 2. Think about the goals you wanted to achieve and select evaluation methods

When you evaluate with colleagues and partners, it is best to go to a quiet room. Hang the products and visuals of your Communication project on the walls. You provide the participants in the evaluation with an overview of the Communication strategy on a flip chart.

The **template on the next page** helps you to brainstorm about the result of your communication project. It provides the Communication strategy in a nutshell. Try to use only key words. Leave out all details. You can also print it and give it to participants.

Discuss with the group which evaluation methods you will use to assess effects. For this purpose, you can use the the matrix of methods on page 4. You can print it and distribute it among your team members. Then you jointly plan the evaluation methods.

Step 3. Measure results and impact: did you realize what you set out to do?

In this step you apply the various methods selected and gather information for a next meeting to draw conclusions from the evaluation.

Step 4. Identify learning: what would you do differently a next time?

In a next meeting - that you can organize as a round table with colleagues, partners and stakeholders - the information gathered through the various evaluation methods can be presented. Make sure the presentations are concise and to the point. Details can be provided in online or written documents. The presentations can be followed by discussions in pairs and plenary about the various aspects of the communication strategy. Important element will be to identify the learning: what went well and what should we do differently a next time. The results of the evaluation often can be used for reporting to your line manager and donors. It also can provide useful elements for public relations of the project to share your successes and learning in a wider community.

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Evaluation template for Step 2: Your communication strategy in a nutshell

Your Big Goal and first doable sub goal:

Your target audiences:

Current Knowledge:	Desired Knowledge:	Message elements: words:	Supporting visuals:
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Current Attitude:	Desired Attitude:	Message elements:	Supporting visuals:
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Current behavior:	Desired Behavior:	Message elements:	Supporting visuals:
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Message:

Communication means:

Original Milestones:	Planning Realized Milestones:
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Original Costs:	Budget Real Costs:
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Organization:

Other questions:

Matrix to help select Evaluation methods		
Methods	Advantages	Disadvantages
Analyzing	Good for evaluating budget, planning etc. Relative easy and fast	Is not a tool to evaluate all aspects of the communication strategy
Observing	Good for assessing behavior change. Important to document changes by taking photographs during the different phases.	Is not a tool to evaluate all aspects of the communication strategy.
Interviewing	Good for assessing change in knowledge, attitudes and what went well in organization and planning	Time consuming, you need to invest in the right questions and in the skills for semi-structured interviews
Surveying	Easy way to get feedback of a large group on change in knowledge, attitudes and behavior	Designing good questionnaires is difficult, as well as interpreting the results. You often need external expertise
Storytelling	Stories about positive change are a powerful tool to assess in which way your project has contributed to your big goal	This is a time consuming intervention, that needs careful planning and facilitation.
Focus groups	Good tool to 'listen' to target audiences and stakeholders and identify their experiences and their advice to improve planning, design and follow-up	You mostly will need external expertise to facilitate a focus group
Measuring media attention	Tool to identify the frequency and tone of voice	This only gives you quantitative information, no qualitative information