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INTRODUCTION

As cities face increasing economic and non-economic losses and damages from climate impacts (flooding, droughts, extreme weather conditions, rising sea levels among others), compelling communication on city action has proven invaluable to sustain the delivery and benefits of inclusive climate action. Within cities, frontline communities such as informal workers and informal settlement dwellers, migrants, women and youth, and people living with disabilities among others are the most impacted due to the higher levels of vulnerability that they experience.

At C40 we have observed that limited awareness or understanding of the need for equity perspectives in climate policy and programmes amongst city residents, local partners and national leaders can undermine cities’ efforts to develop ambitious climate plans and strategies. Similarly, limited engagement and understanding of citizens’ everyday needs and preoccupations can generate a disconnection between city climate action and citizens’ priorities. To implement inclusive climate action that leaves no one behind, cities must garner political and public support. Strategic communication can help cities secure this support.

Building on C40’s experience supporting cities to implement Inclusive Climate Action (ICA) programmes and policies hand-in-hand with communities, and the first-ever C40 ICA Communications Training delivered in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 11th – 12th March 2024 with African cities, this Toolkit has been developed with communications experts as a repository of resources, strategies and tools to support cities to communicate their ICA work effectively.

It provides insights into community engagement as a foundational principle of ICA communications, strategies to develop communications plans, approaches for developing key messages, building communications channels, audience analysis, guidance for storytelling and media engagement, and measuring the effectiveness of city ICA communications. It also includes templates cities can adapt and tailor to their local context and the needs of their communities and media context.

We hope this Toolkit will provide city officials with the thought-provoking ideas and tools needed to work collaboratively amongst city departments and deepen engagement and trust with local communities, increase the visibility and understanding of cities’ ICA policies and programmes, increase public and political support for city climate action, and build a network of cities that demonstrates leadership in delivering critical inclusive climate action in Africa. Ultimately, we hope it will inspire other cities to take action through best-practice advocacy.

Jazmin Burgess
Director, Inclusive Climate Action
C40 Cities.
TOOLKIT SECTIONS

**Part 1:** INCLUSIVE CLIMATE ACTION – Gives an overview of the concept of Inclusive Climate Action and its relevance for climate action delivery in African cities.

**Part 2:** COMMUNICATIONS PLAN - Explains how to create a communications plan.

**Part 3:** TOOLS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS – Explains storytelling and eliminating jargon as tools for more effective ICA communication.

**Part 4:** MEDIA ENGAGEMENT - Explains how to engage with media through press releases and interviews.
PART 01

Inclusive Climate Action
PART 1: INCLUSIVE CLIMATE ACTION

Climate change is unfair. It disproportionately affects society’s most marginalised and vulnerable, exacerbating poverty and widening the inequality gap. Climate action must consider this and strive to reduce the impact of climate change on vulnerable populations, hence solutions should address social inequities.

This means “ensuring that the benefits and burdens of climate action are equitably distributed”.

ICA work is guided by the principles of equity and inclusion.

**EQUITY**

Equity means that the benefits of climate action are distributed equally to all regardless of their age, gender, employment status, social class, nationality.

**INCLUSION**

Inclusion involves engaging relevant stakeholders and communities, especially marginalised groups, in developing climate action, policymaking, and governance. This ensures a fair policy process with equitable outcomes.
Equity and inclusion are the cornerstones of inclusive climate action. To deliver equity and inclusion in climate action, it is important to consider these foundational principles:

**Bias:** According to experts, ‘our subconscious influences the way we make sense of the world around us’. This means our subconscious, if biased, may influence the nature of our interactions with other people - family, community, co-workers etc. Negative biases may lead us to interact negatively with some groups of people. This has roll-on effects, especially when we interact from a position of authority.

**Empathy:** It is crucial to understand and respect the thoughts and feelings of others, even when there is disagreement. This is especially important when serving low-income or front-line communities, which are often underrepresented or marginalised when designing solutions for their problems.

**Transparency:** In building relationships with communities, cities need to communicate regularly and be transparent about their data, processes, and decisions.

**Accountability:** ICA will not be effective if cities do not demonstrate accountability towards their constituencies and show commitment to standards of accountability.

**Intersectionality:** Often, people from marginalised communities experience inequality arising from multiple intersections, rather than from a single issue. This may include a combination of inequalities arising from gender, race, nationality, economic status, age, and so on. To be inclusive and equitable, the design and implementation of local climate policies must reduce structural vulnerabilities and address the different inequities that communities face. For effective and climate-resilient development in cities, inclusive and equitable climate policies should be informed by the knowledge, needs, and lived experiences of historically marginalised groups, including women, youth, Indigenous Peoples, and ethnic minorities.
To support effective communication on ICA, city actions must be grounded in community engagement and the inclusion of communities in city climate processes. The foundational principles above will provide a great basis for genuine engagement with a broad and diverse set of stakeholders, particularly those who are most affected by the impacts of climate change in the city as well as the impacts of climate transition. It will lead to development of policies supported by communities.
1. PROCESSES

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is among the most effective approaches to ensure that the processes cities undertake to deliver climate action are equitable and inclusive. Failing to genuinely engage with at-risk communities in climate mitigation and adaptation processes increases the likelihood of excluding them from the benefits of those actions. This can result in the benefits not adequately meeting their needs or further marginalising them.

Genuine community engagement requires a bottom-up approach where communities are involved at every stage of the process as relevant and have decision-making power in line with city approaches.

Remember that engagement is relationship building and not a means to an end. These are some principles that will help with effective community engagement:

- **Biakoye/Ubuntu/Utu**: Seeing the humanity in everyone and treating them as one would like to be treated. This is a common principle in African cultures and can be useful as part of how cities engage with communities.

- **Transparency**: Clear, consistent communication at every stage.

- **Accountability**: Clear structures and processes instill confidence in communities that they can hold the city and its officials accountable.

- **Feedback**: Ensuring that there are clear mechanisms through which communities can be seen, heard and understood, even after climate action has been implemented.
FRAMING THE CLIMATE ACTION NARRATIVE AS A SOLUTION TO SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

When engaging with communities, especially those already facing numerous overwhelming challenges in their daily lives, it is crucial to present climate action as a solution to their problems rather than an additional burden. If climate change is addressing the issues that people already care about, that will increase levels of engagement.

The impacts of climate change, including losses and damages such as floods, insecurity, loss of life, income impacts, unemployment, health risks, and threats to livelihoods, can be severe. These are the issues that people care about. Hence, it is beneficial if cities can frame climate action work as responding to these issues.

The following are tips for framing climate change narratives in a way that is more engaging for communities and other stakeholders:

01 **Make it about what people care about already:** People may not care about fossil fuel, but they do care about being able to provide for their families and being healthy. If the city wants communities to move from stoves that use fossil fuel to ones that are more environmentally friendly, cost effective and healthier, then it must frame their communication around the cost and health benefits of behavioral change.

02 **Emphasise the solution, not the problem:** While it is crucial to clearly describe the problem, the focus should remain on the solution. People tend to disengage from situations that only present more problems.

03 **Make emotional connections:** Emotion is a powerful motivator for action. Instead of talking just about saving costs, include description of what that savings in cost can do for the children and their future to tap into the emotion of love and subconsciously associating the emotion of love and climate action.

04 **Use storytelling:** Use anecdotes that people can relate to, this will also create an emotional connection.

05 **Give hope:** Never leave people with fear, leave them with a sense of feeling empowered to act and change the future.
CITY INTERDEPARTMENTAL COLLABORATIONS

Another crucial factor influencing the city’s ability to deliver ICA and enhance communication regarding its efforts is the level of collaboration between various city departments. Here are several reasons why interdepartmental collaboration is essential for delivering inclusive and equitable climate action:

01. Climate change should not be framed as an isolated issue, it is a health issue, an economic issue, migration issue. Collaborating with departments tasked with solving these issues, especially when engaging communities, will reinforce the thinking that climate action is a solution to socio-economic ills.

02. Collaborating will help different departments understand each other’s visions and goals and work together to attain these.

03. Some departments have a wealth of knowledge about communities, and excellent relationships with them. The climate change department can leverage those relationships and data for more effective community engagement.

04. Other departments may be allocated a bigger share of the municipal budget and have more staff members, collaborating with them means the climate change department can tap into other departments’ resources.

05. Collaboration will create a growing understanding of climate change from colleagues in other departments, and help build internal capacities for climate action and shared understanding of the city’s climate and socio-economic goals.
Although it is important, collaborating with other departments is not always easy. These are some tips to help foster an environment for collaboration:

- The goals and values should be clear to everyone.
- Do climate change advocacy within the city.
- Conduct regular meetings between department leaders.
- Conduct regular meetings between department staff members.
- Have formal and informal ways of connecting.
- In meetings, foster an inclusive, enabling process where everyone’s voice and perspectives are heard and valued.
- Create a culture that acknowledges and expresses gratitude when others offer help.
- Assign a few officials as ICA champions who would then become advocates for ICA inside and outside the city.

Suggestions from other cities on fostering a culture of collaboration include:

- Having a digital dashboard where all departments can share relevant information.
- Having a community engagement strategy to build relationships with other departments.
2. POLICIES

Policies where the process was transparent and inclusive, where communities and other stakeholders were part of every stage of the process and understand how they benefit will have higher levels of support. In inclusive Climate Action, frontline communities are part of the policy development process in a meaningful way. This means they also have decision-making power when it matters, ideally in the preparation, implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation stages of policies and projects.

The Mukuru Story

Through community engagement, the local government adopted a policy designating Mukuru, an informal settlement in Nairobi, Kenya, as a Special Planning Area. This upgrade not only helps the city move towards meeting its Inclusive Climate Action (ICA) goals, but also significantly improves the lives of residents. They can now live in a cleaner, healthier, and safer environment.

The Mukuru SPA project was initiated by women in the community who were concerned about living conditions and safety in the informal settlement. Through engagement with the community and partnerships with civil society, private sector and academia, the city of Nairobi was able to develop an inclusive approach to upgrading the informal settlement. Thousands of community members participated in the policymaking process and gave input into how they want their informal settlement to be improved.

The story of Mukuru shows what is possible if policy is developed with meaningful community engagement and collaboration with other stakeholders.
3. IMPACT

It is important to measure the impact of climate change and climate action on communities, particularly at-risk communities, that are often overlooked when it comes to resource distribution. Having data-based information about the effects of the problem and the solution, including disaggregated data (e.g. by gender, income, or class where possible), is essential for tracking how impacts are distributed. This information will inform city actions, programmes and policies to continuously improve their equitable distribution.
PART 02
Communications Plan
Communications plans are tools cities can use to meet their city communication goals. But communications plans are only a part of a broader city strategic communication which must be developed after some preliminary research has been conducted.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

Strategic communication is purposeful and well thought through communications that takes place over some time to change perceptions, attitudes, and behaviour of communities to meet the city's long-term ICA goals. Thinking about ICA communication as a long-term process is key to sustainably changing attitudes, behaviour and implementing policy. It is important to always keep in mind that communication is not the end goal, it is a means to an end. For ICA, that end goal is ensuring that climate action closes the inequality gap instead of widening it and that marginalised or vulnerable communities consistently share the benefits of climate action equitably. This process will take time and requires raising awareness among city departments and local stakeholders about both climate and socio-economic challenges faced by communities.

When thinking about strategic communications, it is important to remember the core principles of effective communication:

01. A clear understanding of who the receiver (communities and policy makers) is and their needs, interests, and behaviour.
02. The sender (the city) communicates with the receiver (communities and policy makers).
03. The communications have messages that the senders want the receiver to understand (key messages).
04. The messages reach the intended receiver by going through the right channel.
05. They are understood as intended.
06. The receiver sends feedback to the sender.
COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

These are the core principles of strategic communications. One of the tools that cities can use to help them meet their strategic communications goals is a communications plan which outlines why the city wants to communicate (goals and objective), what it wants to communicate (key messages, to whom it wants to communicate - audiences), how it wants to communicate (channels), how often it wants to communicate (frequency), how the city will measure if its communications efforts were successful or not and who is responsible for doing all this work.

- Why the city wants to communicate? (Goals and Objective)
- What it wants to communicate? (Key messages, to whom it wants to communicate - Audiences)
- How it wants to communicate (Channels)
- How often it wants to communicate (Frequency)
- How the city will measure if its communications efforts were successful or not?
- Who is responsible for doing all this work?

A communications plan is the road map that will be used to achieve the long-term strategic goals. It can be updated and reviewed as often as needed to ensure it is keeping up with changes and developments in society and the city. An ICA communications plan will be centered around the principles of equity and inclusion. This means considering these principles as discussed in the first section of the toolkit and collaboration with communities through meaningful and long-term engagement.
PRELIMINARY RESEARCH

An effective communications plan will be relevant, practical, and easy to understand.

To create this kind of communications plan, there is preliminary research that must be done beforehand.

This research is developed in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, including the departments that will be involved or affected in the planning and delivery stages. The purpose of the preliminary research is to help the city understand factors that will impact ICA communication efforts and how to make the communications plan relevant. The research could vary in duration from hours to days, depending on whether the communications plan is for a small project within the city’s ICA project the city is implementing or if it is the primary ICA communications plan, as well as the amount of existing information available at the time. Although the research will involve a number of stakeholders and departments – such as the city’s Climate Change, Finance, Social Affairs, and Communications, Health, Women and Children’s departments – it is usually driven by the person or the team whose core duty is communication. Ideally, this would be a person or team that understands both the technical and communication aspects. If the climate change team does not have a communications person, it might be useful to reach out to the city’s communications department as they may already have most of the information required.
These are the elements that the preliminary research should include:

- Community Engagement insights
- Stakeholder Mapping
- Reports and data on socio-economic issues faced by marginalised and under-represented groups in the city
- Reports and data on ICA implementation processes
- Current media trends
- Available resources (financial and human resources)
- SWOT Analysis
- City’s climate change plans
- The city’s overall goals as can be found in annual action plans and budgets.
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The key element of an ICA communications plan, setting it apart from others, is its focus on ensuring the city’s response to climate change is inclusive and equitable, aiming to narrow the inequality gap rather than widen it. This cannot happen without the input of marginalised and underrepresented communities. Through community engagements the city can gather audience information that will make its communications plan more effective.
STAKEHOLDER MAPPING

Stakeholder Mapping is a visual representation of the different stakeholders whose actions can positively or negatively influence the city’s ICA policy or programme. These are the stakeholders the city must consider when developing the communications plan. The stakeholder map involves outlining all the stakeholders and assessing the scope of their interest and influence on the ICA policy or programme. As shown in the figure below, stakeholders will be categorised into four quadrants that are on an y-axis (influence/power) and x-axis (interest). The y-axis indicates the amount of influence the stakeholder has over the success of ICA. The x-axis indicates the amount of interest the stakeholder will have over the development and implementation of ICA.

Quadrant 1: Low influence, low interest
Quadrant 2: Low influence, high interest
Quadrant 3: High influence, low interest
Quadrant 4: High influence, high power

Stakeholder mapping can assist in segmenting audiences and allocating resources appropriately to each group.
REPORTS/INFORMATION ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC ISSUES FACED BY MARGINALISED AND UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS IN THE COUNTRY

Every city has different communities that have unique circumstances and challenges. Work done by other departments and organisations can help give insights on these communities. These may be in reports from other city departments (social affairs, housing, health department, water, sanitation, waste management, emergency response and so on), news reports, official statistics, police records, civil society resources, and any other credible source of information.

The main purpose of this information is to create the ICA communications plan based on credible information and a deep understanding of the audience.

CURRENT MEDIA TRENDS

The latest trends with which audiences are communicating on different channels will assist in prioritising specific channels, saving the city time and giving you an accurate sense of direction to take when analysing the audience or choosing communications channels. Some organisations like Hootsuite, HubSpot and Reuters Institute produce annual reports on global media trends. Individual countries will have organisations that specifically focus on media trends in that country. Although this information is likely to be country-specific and not organisation-specific, it gives useful insights into:

- Which communications channels are popular.
- Statistics on viewership, listenership or page visit of certain platforms.
- The kind of content people consume on those channels.
- Which media outlets have the biggest impact on audiences or are the most trusted.
- Prevailing narratives and attitudes on topics of interest (not just climate change but socioeconomic issues that can be linked to climate change).
- Influential voices in the media sphere (this includes journalists, academics and activists).
CITY’S CLIMATE ACTION PLANS AND OTHER PLANS (E.G. DEVELOPMENTAL OR SECTORAL)

ICA communications should be aligned with the city’s overall goals, policies and climate change plans. The research should review all relevant city plans, particularly those addressing developmental and socioeconomic goals that inclusive climate action can help achieve. This will help the team to collaborate with other departments and share resources to meet shared goals.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Part of the research should be a SWOT analysis. A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis, is a process of understanding the internal and external factors that can impact the city’s ICA communications efforts. Creating one in the context of communications means considering factors that can impact communications, like design skills in the team or access to the internet among community members.

A SWOT analysis ensures that the city understands the environment or context in which the communications goals must be met, what will work in favour of the city and what will work against it. It provides a comprehensive idea of the internal and external factors that could affect ICA communications.

The SWOT analysis has internal and external components, which the city must take into consideration before putting together a communications plan.
Internal components are those the team has control over or can influence. These are the strengths and the weaknesses.

**Strengths:** This is what the city does well or has working in its favour and will help with ICA. For example, if the climate change department has a good relationship with other departments and collaborates with them on projects, this is a strength.

**Weakness:** This is what is not doing well or does not have that will work against it. If the climate change department has no existing relationship with communities, and is, therefore, not trusted by communities. This would make it difficult to have meaningful engagements with communities at first. Being aware of this means that the climate change department can make plans to mitigate this weakness.

**Opportunities:** An example of an opportunity that the city can take advantage of to effectively communicate ICA is a community’s love for or cultural attachment to a river located nearby. This affinity can be used to motivate the community to collaborate with the city on ICA initiatives.

**Threats:** For example, having respected community leaders who are opposed to an ICA policy from the city because of their political allegiances could be a threat to ICA communication. The city would need a plan to address this. If not, the city’s communications efforts might yield limited results.

The graphic in the next page shows how the SWOT analysis is commonly represented (with examples of what could go into each box).
Here are some tips for developing a useful situation analysis:

- Deploy a diverse team that can bring different perspectives. This might mean including people from different departments or different life experiences.
- Be simple, do not overthink or overanalyse the situation.
- Everyone involved should prepare beforehand. This means people should know what contribution they are expected to make and have applied their minds to that before the session.
- A SWOT session can be completed within an hour or a few hours if the team is a big one. It is always better to be concise and simple, keeping to the main points, rather than dragging it out and losing focus.
SETTING COMMUNICATIONS GOALS AND MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

COMMUNICATION GOALS

Once the preliminary research has been completed and the information has been taken into consideration, the first step in putting together an ICA Communications plan is to set clear goals. As mentioned before, communication is only a tool to achieve the real goal.

In this case, the communications plan must help to achieve the ICA policy targets. It is important to note that making climate action equitable and inclusive does not start at the communication component, it starts when the city is deciding on its climate response and targets. Communication is only a tool to help reach the policy targets already set using a participatory approach to ensure that they meet residents’ needs. The example below illustrates this point.

City A has been experiencing heavy rains due to climate change. Because drains throughout the city are blocked by waste, when it rains, water does not move adequately, and this leads to flooding. Inclusive Climate Action in this case would start at the point where the city decides how it will address this issue and which communities will take priority. The city would have to consider which communities are frontline and how they ensure that their response addresses inequalities. It would set its ICA goals based on who is most at risk and how the benefits of climate action can be shared equitably and reach those who are impacted the most first. If the ICA goal is to prevent loss of life caused by flooding and save livelihoods, then the city would focus on poor communities that have higher chances of losing lives because they do not have resources to escape, or they would be plunged deeper into poverty because they do not have insurance against such disasters. Once the city sets its targets on resolving the issue, only then can communications come into play. The ICA communications plan would focus mainly on reaching the most at-risk communities and other stakeholders who can support addressing the needs of these communities (policymakers and community-based organisations for example).
Communication goals are broad communication targets that the city sets to help meet the climate action targets. It is important to have clear communications goals because they provide clear direction and focus for communication efforts. They also make it easy to collaborate with other departments as everyone will understand what they are working towards and can incorporate that into their own programmes.

ICA Communication goals should be:

- Linked to the city’s ICA goals.
- Directed at mainly targeting and benefiting frontline and marginalised communities.
- Simple and clear.

Once goals have been set, the team can now define their objectives.

**OBJECTIVES**

Whereas communications goals are broad and long-term, objectives are targets that are more specific, actionable and measurable within a limited period. Objectives should fall under the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) framework.

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<th>ICA Goal</th>
<th>ICA Communication Goals</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
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<td>Zero deaths caused by flooding in the city.</td>
<td>Raise awareness in all the city’s informal settlements on the dangers of dumping waste in drains or where it can flow into drains.</td>
<td>Reach 80% of the city’s informal settlement population with educational and informative ICA messaging through broadcast media, by 31 Dec 2025. Conduct weekly community engagement sessions for all the informal settlements until 31 October 2025.</td>
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Cities could also add an activity column to their communications plan to break down the objectives into more detailed action.
MEASURING AND EVALUATING IMPACT

Measuring and evaluation starts when setting goals. We need to answer this question: **How will we know if the work is done and if it was effective in helping reach the goal?** This question can be answered by first measuring certain indicators related to the communications goal/s and then evaluating if the work done helped meet the goal. Measuring and evaluation allow for easy tracking of the communication activities and provide valuable learnings for future work.

The main elements and metrics to measure can include:

- A number of community members represented at a meeting.
- Diversity of community members at a meeting.
- Local radio show listenership numbers.
- Opportunities to see any out-of-home advertising.
- Media coverage by readership.
- Views on YouTube.
- Social media likes, follows and shares.

**Measuring only tells us that the work that needed to be done was done, it does not tell us if it was effective.** This is where evaluation comes in. In the evaluation phase, the city will review the effectiveness of the communication elements to determine whether they were helpful in reaching the goal. Elements to be reviewed include the objectives, key messages, audience targeted, and channels. The evaluation must outline what was successful and why, what failed and why, and considerations and/or recommendations for future projects.

When reviewing the different elements of the communications plan, consider:

- Quality
- Quantity
- Impact
- Relevance
WHEN TO EVALUATE

There can be multiple evaluation stages in a project or campaign, which will allow the city to make amendments to its ICA communications activities for better effectiveness and to avoid wasting money and time on efforts that will not yield results.

The evaluation process can take place in these stages of the project:

- **Early stages:** soon after the start, it could be beneficial to assess whether the city is moving in the right direction with its communications plan. *When evaluating at this stage, it is important to remember that sometimes it is not that the activities are ineffective but that they need time to start yielding results.*

- **Mid-course:** this is when there has been enough time to measure and assess effectiveness. The city can either decide it is moving in the right direction or make changes to the initial plan.

- **At completion:** this is at the end of the project where the purpose of an evaluation is to add value to future work.
The table below shows examples of goals, objectives, metrics for measurement.

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<th>Communication Goals</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>KPI/Metrics</th>
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<td>Raise awareness in all the city’s informal settlements on the dangers of dumping waste in drains or where it can flow into drains.</td>
<td>Reach 80% of the city’s informal settlement population with educational and informative ICA contact through broadcast media, by 31 Dec 2025. Conduct weekly community engagement sessions for all the informal settlements until 31 October 2025.</td>
<td>Radio show listenership numbers, TV viewership numbers – if possible the demographics of the listers and viewers. Number of community engagements sessions conducted, how many people attended, demographics of the people.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**KPI/Metrics**

The radio show was very popular but only among women over 50. The radio show was not effective in reaching young community members.

Settlement A saw a significant impact from the community engagement sessions, as attendees began conducting door-to-door visits to inform their neighbours about the dangers of dumping waste into drains. They said they did this because they not only understood what the city officials had told them, but they could see that the officials genuinely cared about them and wanted to work with them. All the drains in the settlement have now been cleared of waste.
UNDERSTANDING THE AUDIENCE

Once the communication goals and objectives have been determined, it is easier to identify the exact audience that needs to be reached to meet those goals. This answers the question, who do I need to communicate with to reach my ICA goals? The audience identified must be as diverse as possible, taking into consideration all groups that make up the city’s communities. This includes taking into consideration age, location, employment status, social class, nationality, gender, race, and so on. To identify the audience and have a profile of who makes up the community members, the city will need to use available data from official statistics or surveys such as the latest census. This data will shed light on who lives in the community.

When this is done, the audiences must be analysed. Information that helps determine the audience’s needs, interests, values, aspirations, and attitudes is gathered. Knowing this will help the city communicate with the audience more effectively and the data collected in the preliminary research stages comes in handy at this point. The more details known about the audience, the more targeted the communication can be. It increases the likelihood of the communication efforts being effective. Effective communications are audience-centered.

Understanding the audience will help determine:

• What key messages to prioritise.
• How to best frame the message.
• Which societal issues to focus on.
• The best channels to use.
• Tone and language to use.
AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

Audience segmentation is the process of breaking down a wider audience into smaller, specific groups or clusters of groups that have a similar set of demographic factors such as age, affluence, educational attainment, ethnicity, gender, or attitudes. In ICA, it is important to remember intersectionality. Segmentation should take into account the fact that people have multiple identities and some people experience multiple disadvantages and forms of discrimination as a result. This means that instead of having one audience group that is just women, the city might consider other factors affecting women in the community and have different women groups as their target audiences.

One group could be middle-aged, migrant, single mothers. Another could be young, school-going girls. These two groups may be the same gender, but they face different challenges and could be impacted differently by climate change and experience inequalities differently. Communication channels and messages to both groups would not be the same and should be tailored to what is most relevant to them.

Along with community engagement sessions and reports from other departments and organisations, these are some of the other tools the city can use to gather information on the audience.

Audience research tools:

- **Polls:** Short multiple-choice questions that often deal with opinions.
- **Surveys:** Longer questionnaires to get better insight into your audience.
- **Focus groups:** Facilitated group discussions around a specific topic. They allow for in-depth discussion on a topic but are more expensive than surveys or poll.
- **Analytics:** Data from your website or social media account can give you insights into your audience.
- **Academic research:** Peer-reviewed research from reputable academics and institutions can provide in-depth insights on a specific audience.
- **Statistics:** These must be current and from a reputable statistics agency.
KEY MESSAGES

Every communications plan should articulate key messages that resonate with the audience, ensuring they are not only heard and understood but also remembered and acted upon. In essence, if people were to forget everything they hear about the project, what is the most important thing for them to remember? These are called key messages, and they are a critical part of an effective communications plan. A communications plan can have three or four key messages. They must be simple, clear, easy to remember, relatable and relevant to the target groups.

ICA Comunications should aim for key messages that are relevant to marginalised communities or address the issues faced by these communities.

CHECKLIST FOR EFFECTIVE ICA KEY MESSAGES

- Short, simple, specific, and clear.
- Aligned to communications goals.
- Focusing on what the audience relates to and cares about.
- Persuasive.
- Factual/true or promises that can be kept.
- Without jargon.
HOW TO CREATE KEY MESSAGES

Cities can use the three steps below to create key messages. The example given is for developing key messages for the city’s campaign to eliminate deaths by flooding due to blocked drains, as a consequence of climate change-exacerbated rainfall patterns.

How to create key messages:

**STEP 1**
What is the main message you want to communicate?
- What is your topic? Loss of lives due to flooding.
- What do you want people to know or do? We can stop it.

**STEP 2**
Identify your audience and what they are interested in.
- Who is the audience? Residents in informal settlements.
- What are their interests/needs? Safety (for themselves, their loved ones and their belongings)

**STEP 3**
To write the key message, combine what you have in steps 1 and 2 in headline-like sentences.

**OUR KEY MESSAGES:**

Stop the floods from killing our brothers and sisters, making us homeless. Waste belongs in the bin, not the drain.

When our drains are clean, no one will die, our homes will stand. Stop dumping waste in drains.

Strengthen climate action communications for inclusive outcomes.
USING KEY MESSAGES

Key messages should be part of all the communications activities (interviews, press releases, opinion pieces, community engagement, posters, ads, and so on) related to the project. Because they are messages that audiences need to remember, they should be repeated as often as possible. This means that when communicating they should be used in the beginning, the middle, and end at the very end. It is important to end with key messages because people often only remember the last thing they hear.

Example:

Watch the video of a speech delivered at the United Nations. At least three key messages can be identified from the speech. He repeats these in different ways throughout his speech.

1. What are the key messages? At least three.
2. Can you identify the different ways he repeats the same key message?
COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS

Once the target audience has been identified and analysed, the next step in compiling a communications plan is to select appropriate channels through which the messages will be delivered. The channels chosen will depend on the budget, who the audience is and the objectives.

THE BUDGET

Communications channels vary in how much they cost. While some are available at no cost to the city, others cost a lot of money. The city must use available funds wisely to choose the most effective channels to reach the intended audience.

THE AUDIENCE

The audience’s identity is pivotal in selecting effective communications channels. Considering the target audience for ICA communications, the following points may be useful to consider.

- **Radio**: This is a very popular channel of communication on the African continent.
- **Social media platforms** like WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram and TikTok can be effective for young people who have access to the internet.
- **Thinking out of the box**: The city is not limited to traditional communication channels. It can also consider theater (or drama in general), poetry, music, sports, posters on city buses, collaborations with restaurants and so on.

Regardless of the chosen channel, the city should ensure that communities can give feedback or respond and that there is a two-way conversation instead of a monologue from one party. If it is a radio show, do communities get to call in and respond or is there a way they can respond? Will this cost them money? If it is social media, does the city have a member of staff responsible for monitoring comments and, if necessary, documenting them so they can be part of the city’s official data collection and responding to them? Does the city make its contact details readily available and when people get in touch, is there someone to listen to them?
THE OBJECTIVE

When choosing a channel, consider what is more important – that you reach as many people as possible or that you reach very specific people?

**One-on-one communication** is more impactful for building trust and getting specific action from certain groups. This kind of communication can include community walkabouts, in-person meetings between city officials and communities or telephone calls from the city to individuals.

**Large-scale public communications** like broadcasting or billboards is more impactful when trying to raise awareness or create excitement over a campaign among a broader audience.

**Organic or unpaid social media** can be effective for reaching a broad audience. If cities want to reach a specific community through social media, they might have to pay. Paid social media gives the city the option to be specific about demographics like location, gender, age and interests.
Below are communications channels that cities may use for their Inclusive Climate Action work highlighting benefits and considerations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHANNEL</th>
<th>BENEFITS</th>
<th>CONSIDERATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Media</td>
<td>• Easier to build trust.</td>
<td>• Might involve complicated logistics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Things might get out of hand if tempers flare.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Uncertainty associated with attendance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Can be costly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Be intentional about collecting data during these meeting, including collecting personal stories of community members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>• Engagement can be more meaningful and personalised.</td>
<td>• It is often difficult to get engagement if the topic is not entertainment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Requires a lot of time, money and creativity to meet the unique demands of each platform.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Some people might not have access to online content due to the digital divide.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV</td>
<td>• Feedback is immediate and more nuanced.</td>
<td>• Uncertainty associated with attendance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print</td>
<td>• Can be highly targeted (if paid).</td>
<td>• Can be costly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of home advertising</td>
<td>• Can track engagements, shares etc.</td>
<td>• Be intentional about collecting data during these meeting, including collecting personal stories of community members.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OTHER COMPONENTS OF A COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

A communications plan is meant to be a tool that can be used to understand what is being communicated, why, to who, how. This is the goals (and objectives), the key message, the audience and the channels. These are the main elements that must be present in any communications plan. But the plan can also contain other elements that outline details of what must happen in more detail. tell us who is responsible for ensuring that tasks are completed, how often certain communications activities are meant to happen, where the content will come from, which departments will be collaborated with to meet those goals and so on.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ICA Goal</th>
<th>• Have zero deaths caused by flooding in the city.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communications goals</td>
<td>• Raise awareness in all the city’s informal settlements on the dangers of dumping waste in drains or where it can flow into drains.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Objectives                    | • Reach 80% of the city’s informal settlement population with educational and informative ICA contact through broadcast media, by 31 Dec 2025.  
  • Conduct weekly community engagement sessions for all the informal settlements until 31 October 2025. |
| Audience                      | • Unemployed young migrant men.  
  • Wastes pickers.  
  • Single mothers above 50 years.  
  • School going girls/boys |
| Key messages                  | • Stop the floods from killing our brothers and sisters, making us homeless. Waste belongs in the bin, not the drain.  
  • When our drains are clean, no one will die, our homes will stand. Stop dumping waste in drains. |
| Channels                      | • Radio  
  • Tv  
  • Social media  
  • In person community engagement |
| Content and source            | • Radio and TV ad to be produced by 123 ad agency.  
  • Interviews to be conducted by comms officer and department head.  
  • Social media content to be produced by comms intern.  
  • Presentations for community engagement sessions to be produced by comms officer and stakeholder manager. |
| Frequency                     | • Radio ads one a day every day for three months.  
  • Radio interviews once a week.  
  • Tv interview once a week. |
### Person responsible
- Communications officer to lead and coordinate all activities related to broadcast/social media.
- Stakeholder manager to coordinate and lead all community engagement activities.

### KPIs
- Radio show listenership numbers, TV viewership numbers - if possible the demographics of the listers and viewers.
- Number of community engagements sessions conducted, how many people attended, demographics of the people.

### Evaluation
- The radio show was very popular but only among women over 50. The radio show was not effective in reaching young community members.
- The community engagement sessions were extremely effective, settlement A, the people who attended started doing door visits to tell their neighbors about the dangers of dumping waste into drains. They said they did this because they not only understood what the city officials had told them, but they could see that the officials genuinely cared about them and wanted to work with them. All the drains in the settlement have now been cleared of waste.
PART 03

Tools for Effective Communications
PART 3: TOOLS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

STORYTELLING

Stories are a big part of human life. From birth, information is relayed to us through stories. This triggers our imagination, allows us to empathise and interact with information in a way that makes it easier to remember. When one engages with information in the form of a story, it is easier to remember it and increases the likelihood of taking action.

Storytelling can help cities communicate about ICA in a way that makes complex issues simple and makes what may seem like an abstract issue feel relevant and personal. It is a particularly important and effective tool for people-centered messaging that helps convey how inclusive climate action can alleviate everyday struggles, improve livelihoods and enhance resilience to climate impacts. Storytelling can be incorporated into ICA communications in two ways:

Storytelling can be incorporated into Inclusive Climate Action communications in two ways:

• Incorporating anecdotes into ICA communications. Anecdotes are short, interesting stories about people or situations.
• Structuring your information in a way that mimics the structure of a story.

ANECDOTES

Ultimately, ICA is not about meetings, numbers, facts or statistics. It is about human beings and how they are impacted. ICA communications should always include human stories, this will make it more impactful. Stories can be case studies and personal experiences of city officials or community members. They can be in the form of text, audio, video, oral presentation, images, or graphics.

Regardless of the medium, a good anecdote will evoke emotion - it will appeal to the heart more than it does to the head. Emotion is a major determinant of how people will act. Love, fear, anger, pride and hope are very powerful human emotions and generating stories that evoke these emotions will increase engagement from community members.
Here are some tips for incorporating stories into ICA communications:

- Understand the audience and use anecdotes with narratives and characters to which they can relate.
- Be clear about the kind of desired outcome you would like to achieve from a story. For example, is it created to inspire people to act or is it a way to simplify complex information? If the strategy is to motivate people to act, the call to action must be clear and come immediately after the anecdote.
- Be descriptive (show, don’t tell). Paint a vivid picture that will engage your audience’s imagination. Instead of saying “the river is now dirty because of plastic waste”, one can say: “Ten years ago, this river was a clean source of life and livelihood for animals and people. Today one cannot even see the dark green water underneath the blanket of multi-coloured plastic waste.”
- Share your own story. If a city official is speaking to a group of unemployed young men, sharing their own story of when they were unemployed will build a connection.
- Be authentic. Lying or pretending to be something one is not just to create a connection will not work. Especially when building long-term relationships with communities.
- Be mindful of how much time you have. If the story is part of a three-minute radio interview, it must be concise so there can be enough time for the main point.
STRUCTURING INFORMATION INTO A STORY FORMAT

The second way to incorporate storytelling into ICA communications is by structuring delivery of information so that it mimics a story. When information is structured like a story, they remember better and engage with it more. A story will have a clear beginning and end. It will feature heroes and villains, a problem that must be overcome, and a rewarding resolution that justifies the effort to overcome the problem.

A basic story has these components:
- Characters
- Narrative
- Problem/conflict
- Call to action/ Solutions

Your character can be a person, or it can be a thing, like climate change. You can have more than one character. Some characters can be villains (like climate change) while others like communities or policymakers are heroes who will save the day through their actions.

**Framing** refers to how you will structure your information. Do you start with the most important information first and then move to the less important (this is what you would do if you had limited time or people with limited attention spans)? You could also start with an anecdote and slowly tease your way into the heart of your message.

The **problem** is the thing that needs to be solved for everyone to “live happily ever after”. This should be something that people care about overcoming because of how it impacts them. This could be the societal ill caused by climate change or historic injustices that inclusive climate action will help address (poverty, crime, ill health, loss of livelihoods).

The **call to action** of the solution is what the heroes must do to overcome the problem. This must be clear. The heroes must know what it is they need to do to save the day and have a clear picture of what life will be like after they act, and the problem is overcome. It is important for everyone have a vision of the future, what would happen if they did their part in helping to solve the problem. This is what will help people act, even when it is not convenient.
STORYBOARDING

Storyboarding is simply a process of planning out how a particular communication activity like a speech or a webinar presentation will be delivered in a way that mimics a story. In storyboarding, one gathers all the identified elements of the story, adds any necessary information for communication, and then plans how to deliver this information. How will they begin? What comes next? How will they end, and most importantly, why? It's not just about deciding to start a speech by sharing shocking statistics; there needs to be a rationale behind choosing that approach.

City officials can use storyboarding to structure and organise:
- Speeches
- Presentation
- Press releases
- Opinion pieces

Before starting the storyboarding process, it is important to ask these 5Ws.

- What's the problem?
- Who are the characters (community members, the city - heroes) that will have to solve the problem?
- Why is it important to solve the problem?
- What do the heroes need to do to solve the problem and when? (Call to action)
- What will happen if the heroes act?
Once these questions have been answered, storyboarding can begin. How to storyboard:

**STEP 1**
Define the goal for that communication activity (presentation, press release, email, speech).

**STEP 2**
Do a quick analysis of the audience, and research the community. Where will this be taking place? How long is the speech for?

**STEP 3**
Consider the 5Ws mention in the section above.

**STEP 4**
Think about how you want the information to flow. What should come first, what should be next, and so on.

**STEP 5**
Draw different blocks that represent each stage (introduction, context, ending) of your communication. Write in each box the main points of what you will be saying (if applicable). The number of boxes or how much time is spent on each box depends on how much time there is for the speech or interview.
Below is an example of a storyboard for a speech a city official will give to a community that lives in an informal settlement. The speech will be at the beginning of a day-long community engagement meeting to discuss how the community and the city can work together to eliminate dumping of waste into drains and blocking them, causing floods that kill people and destroy homes and livelihoods, as a consequence of climate change-exacerbated rainfall patterns. This community is one of the worst affected by the floods.

Part 1: Intro

Read out the names of names of the people from the settlement who died in the floods in the last rain season. Their names and other info such as, whether they were a father/mother, what they wanted to be when they were grown.

It is good to start with something that is emotional or shocking to get people’s attention.

Part 2: Describe the problem

Link the deaths of the community members to the problem. Describe the problem of flooding clearly and how it is related to climate change as well as the impact of dumping waste into drain.

Everyone must have a good understanding of the problem and how it affects them. It is important to make the problem the same as the one people are concerned about and want to solve: Deaths, poverty, etc.

Part 3: Describe the solution

Highlight how actions from the community and the city can help solve the problem. Be clear about what exactly those actions could be and the importance of both parties working together.

Remind the heroes of the problem can overcome and what it is they need to do. Knowing what to do and the impact it will have makes people feel empowered.

Part 4: The ideal

Describe how things will change if the community and city work together and do their parts. Having a clear vision of what will be is a powerful motivator. It gives people hope.

Part 5: Conclusion

Conclude by going back to the people who died, but focus on the fact that their families will be the last to mourn a loved one because of floods in the city. End with a key message that encourages the community to act.

A good conclusion will leave people feeling emotionally attached and empowered to act.
MOVING AWAY FROM JARGON

Jargon refers to the technical terms used by professions and industries or specialised sectors but that are not necessarily understandable to the public. Using jargon for communication outside your industry is one of the quickest ways to alienate the people whom you are trying to connect with.

These are some common terms in Inclusive Climate Change communications:

- Climate action
- Climate justice
- Diversity
- Inclusion
- Equity
- Intersectionality
- Just Transition
- Marginalised
- Vulnerability

Even though these may be common in ICA communication, one cannot assume that people outside the industry will understand them or their specific meaning in relation to climate change. It is especially important avoid jargon when communicating through mainstream media (interviews, press releases, social media).

**TIPS TO HELP AVOID JARGON:**

- **After a term is mentioned, it must be explained.** For example, instead saying “we want to have a just transition” one can say “We want to minimize the impact of climate change in a way that provides people with all the support they need to adapt to changing industries and jobs, and in fact have more secure and better-paying jobs”. Sometimes you do not even have to use the technical term.

- **Use storytelling and anecdotes to help people comprehend.** For example, instead of speaking of marginalised communities, one could tell the story of a community that has been discriminated against because of their economic status and describe how they have experienced discrimination.

- **Present information in different and interesting ways.** For example, using short movies, pictures, graphics or props to support verbal communication.
PART 04

Media Engagement
Engaging with the media is one of the common ways the city can communicate with broad audiences. Press releases and interviews are part of media engagement. The former is initiated by the city and the latter often by the media house.

PRESS RELEASES

A press release is new information that the city releases to the media. A press release is one of the ways the city can communicate with its broad audiences. It can be a good way to disseminate information on a high level. Press releases are often written documents, but they can also be in the form of video and audio to accommodate multimedia platforms. Though they are usually written by the communications personnel, this must be done in collaboration with subject matter experts.

A city might want to produce an ICA press releases when:

- It has new research that it needs communicate to communities.
- It has new ICA programmes that it needs to communicate to communities.
- It wants to raise awareness on an issue.
- It wants to generate interest in an event its hosting.
- It wants to keep audiences informed at all stages of ICA process.
A good press release will have these elements:

- A release date.
- An interesting headline.
- Contact details.
- A summary of the main points at the top (max five sentences if it is a lengthy one).
- A newsy, attention-catching intro.
- Clear easy-to-follow context that is without jargon.
- Links to any research or stats referred to.
- Pictures, graphics or relevant multimedia elements.
- Have clear key messages and call to action.
- Attributed quotes are necessary.
A press release has higher chances of being picked up if the headline and intro are “newsy”. This means they contain a high news value. The more news values the press release has, the higher the chances of it being published and being front page or first in the bulletin. These are common news values:

**New:** Is the information new, not yet know to the public.
Out of the ordinary: The city doing what it usually does will not make news, but if it is doing something out of the ordinary, that could be news.

**Tragedy:** Unfortunately, tragedy has a high news value. Cities can use tragedy to highlight the climate action solutions they are implementing.

**Impact on people’s lives:** The more people an issue will impact and the worse the impact, the higher the news value.

**Timeliness:** If the information is related to a topic that is currently taking up space in the media, then there is higher chances of publication.

**Proximity:** How close is the information to home. The media will publish press releases that relate to their main audiences or the areas they are most active in.

**Educational:** Educational material that teaches people new concepts or helps them to understand topics they are curious about will have a high news value.

**Human interest:** Press releases that focus on human stories have a higher news value.
PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATE

Below is a press release template that cities could use when writing press releases:

PRESS RELEASE

**Date:** The date the press release is issued
**Contact details:** Information about the contact person who responds to interview requests. This could include email, telephone and a WhatsApp number.

HEADLINE

**Summary:** 2-3 sentences in bullet points that outline the main messages of the press release.

**Intro:** 1-3 sentences sharing the most important information that the city wants to share through the press release. If the “so what” of the information was not explicit in the introduction, this is a good place to make it clear.

**Context:** 1-2 sentences providing context to the intro.

**Quote:** If relevant, a quote from a city official or mayor.

**Context:** Any other information that is relevant in supporting the intro. Here the city can also reiterate its key message.

**Outro:** Reiterate the main message from the intro and call to action.

**Links to multimedia formats:** If the press release is also available in video, audio or there are images available for media to use, link here.

**Contact details:** The person the media can contact.
CONDUCTING MEDIA INTERVIEWS AND ENGAGING DIRECTLY WITH THE AUDIENCE

From time-to-time city officials will have to communicate ICA through the media. Preparation is key to an effective interview. Regardless of which one of these channels you will be using, here are some tips to help you communicate successfully.

PREPARATION

Preparation is the cornerstone of good interviews. The people who can sit with an interviewer sometimes in front of a camera, engage the audience by confidently, giving valuable information are able to do so because of hours and hours of preparation and practice.

When preparing, consider the following:

The topic:

Have a thorough understanding of the topic. This means you can answer unexpected questions and add value to what others already know. Think about how you will incorporate key messages and the call to action. Also, think about other potential questions that are indirectly linked to your answer that could be asked. If the interview is in relation to a particular community, ensure you research that community. Have a clear goal for what is to be achieved with the interview. Ask, why am I doing the interview? What do I need people to know, not what the interviewer needs people to know.

Know your key message(s). These are essential if the interview is going to meet your goals.

It is always best to speak in the language that the target audience uses. If the city official who is delegated with doing the interview cannot speak the language, it would be a good idea to have someone else do the interview. If this is not possible, the city official can speak to the interviewer to ask them to repeat in the local language as often as possible.
The audience:

Understand the audience - are they young, homeowners, unemployed, activists, business people, city officials? For media interviews, research the journalist you will be speaking to. Consider:

- What are their concerns? Have you addressed these?
- Can you anticipate their needs?
- Is the language used appropriately?
- Do they have expectations of you that you will need to address?

You:

How you present yourself is an important aspect of your message. Ensure that you:

- Dress appropriately. The general rule is dress like the people you will address.
- Practice in the mirror or on your phone camera. This will help you see when you are using your hands too much or speaking too softly. Recording yourself will also help you see if you are using too many “ums and ahs” while speaking.

If you find yourself using *uhms* often, try speaking a little slower and allowing yourself to think as you speak. The *umhs* come when we are struggling to find the right work quickly enough, speaking at a pace that allows the mind and mouth to be in harmony will help.
DURING THE INTERVIEW:

- Relax. Even if you are nervous. Focusing on having a conversation with the interviewer can help with this.
- Remember your body language. It communicates louder than the words you speak.
- Hand gestures: use these for emphasis but do not overdo it – they should not become a distraction.
- Your voice is one of your greatest communications tools. Have enough energy in your voice, speak loudly enough and speak clearly.
- Enunciate your words clearly.
- Speak with conviction and inspire them to want to be part of the solution.
- Use pauses to give the audience time to absorb the information.
- Start right: start with a smile. Make eye contact with the audience.
- Posture: relax but do not slouch as this may give the impression that you are not confident. Stand straight.
- Don’t rush: Breathe and speak at an appropriate pace.
- Keep time in mind: You do not want to run out of time before getting to the point.
- Leave with a strong ending (A key message or call to action).
- Never lie. It is unethical and has disastrous consequences.
- Remember to leave your contact details when appropriate.
INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES

When preparing for the interview remember these communication techniques that can be used to maintain control over the conversation and highlight key messages:

- **Bridging:** You can bridge to your key message by answering the question and then linking it to your message. Even if the interviewer does not start where you thought they would, you can answer them and bridge back your key message.

- **Flagging:** Highlight your key message by flagging it as an important statement.

- **Hooking:** This technique forces reporters or their listeners/viewers to listen to more information than they expected by creating anticipation. State upfront that you have two or three key points to share and then enumerate each point as you make it, such as “Firstly, ... secondly... thirdly”.

RESPONDING TO THE INTERVIEW AMBUSH

Most interviews are aimed at getting information that can deliver a compelling story. Sometimes a journalist will try to evoke a response from you that will be salacious or sensational. These ambush questions can include:

1. The unexpected or difficult question

Even if the interview has been crafted as friendly, always anticipate the difficult question. Review the landscape and see if there is anything that could be construed as an ambush question, identify the question you want to avoid and then prepare properly. If you really don’t know the answer or you don’t have the information at hand then say so: “I am not familiar with that issue but what I can say is …”

2. The negative question

Sometimes questions are framed so that your response reinforces an underlying premise that you may not agree with. Be careful of nodding during the framing of the question or agreeing to the premise of the question. Distance yourself from the question by making it clear – if appropriate – that you do not agree with the premise. For example, “I would not agree with your characterisation of corruption – what I can tell you is that …”

3. The hypothetical question

The hypothetical question asks you to respond to a scenario that might never happen. Avoid responding to it and feeding into rumours. If necessary, say, “I can’t respond to the hypothetical question – what I can tell you is …”

4. The “off the record” question

Sometimes when reporters are unable to get a response to a particular question, they may ask you to go “off the record”. They cannot print or broadcast these “off the record” responses. Do not agree to give off the record responses, especially if there is not existing relationship with the reporter.
Example:

Record yourself on a cellphone pretending to do a five minute video interview. You can do this by yourself or with a colleague. Then watch the video and give yourself feedback using the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUE</th>
<th>COMMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the interviewee confident?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well presented?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groomed?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If online, is the camera correctly positioned?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Articulation:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the interviewee articulate?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the words clearly pronounced?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are they too fast, too slow?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there nuance and tone?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Posture:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the posture of the interviewee good?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do they slump?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are their legs or arms crossed?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Body language:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are they using their hands well?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there too much hand movement?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there open body language?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eye contact:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the interviewee maintain eye contact?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do they have nervous tics?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do they look out of line of the camera?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Breathing:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not too loud or ragged?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RESOURCES

Please find below links to useful resource.

- Communications Plan Template: [Here](#)
- Checklist for Interviews: [Here](#)
- Press Release Template: [Here](#)
- Reuters and Hootsuite annual research for media landscape research: [Here](#) and [Here](#)
- Community Engagement: [Here](#)

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