2021 PEP annual conference

Workshop:
Best practices for policy communication

Session 3: Strategizing your communications

May 27
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PEP Communication Team

www.pep-net.org
1. Creating an effective dissemination package
   • **Tools & Channels** - choosing the right ones for your audience
   • **Adapt & Visualise** your message for your audience

2. Your PEP Policy Brief
Where you’re starting

1. Policy messages identified

2. Target audiences identified
   
   Stakeholder analysis – Consultations – Anyone else?
Objectives (where you want to go)

1. Why do you want to share your research?
   - Inform (upcoming) policymaking
   - Modify existing programme/policy

2. What do you want your audience to do about it?
How you present your information can make all the difference

- Tools & channels

Picture by Jorge Martin
Tools: what you produce to share your message

What tools can you use to share your message?

- policy brief
- press release
- conference invitation
- video
- slide presentation
- social media post
- infographic
- blog/op-ed
- speech
Tools: what you produce to share your message

What tools can you use to share your message?

- policy brief
- press release
- conference invitation
- video
- slide presentation
- social media post
- infographic
- blog/op-ed
- speech
Tools

What are they best for?

policy brief
press release
conference invitation
slide presentation
social media post
blog/op-ed
### Tools: Which is best for what?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>policy brief</strong></td>
<td>Advocate for policy recommendations and provide analysis &amp; context</td>
<td>Policymakers, stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>slide presentation</strong></td>
<td>Advocate for policy recommendations and provide analysis &amp; context</td>
<td>Policymakers, stakeholders, media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>conference invitation</strong></td>
<td>Entice people to attend your event</td>
<td>Policymakers, stakeholders, media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>press release</strong></td>
<td>Get media to share your policy recommendations</td>
<td>The media, wider public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>blog/op-ed</strong></td>
<td>Advocate for your policy recommendations</td>
<td>Your (extended) field, the media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>social media post</strong></td>
<td>Share your policy recommendations widely, engage in debate</td>
<td>Your network, the internet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Where can you share these tools?

- policy brief
- press release
- conference invitation
- slide presentation
- social media post
- blog/article
Channels

Where can you share these tools?

- policy brief
- press release
- conference invitation
- social media post
- slide presentation
- blog/article

- national policy conference
- private meetings
- social media (personal/institutional)
- media (web/print/broadcast)
Communications channels & tools

**Audience**
- Specific person/group
- Public
  - General
  - Special interest

**Channels**
- Private meetings
- National policy conference
- Media (web/print/broadcast)
- Social media (personal/institutional)

**Written tools**
- Policy brief (from paper)
- Slide presentation
- Conference invitation
- Press release
- Blog/article
- Social media post
Adapting your message

1. Your audience
   - What do they know?
   - What do they care about?

Enforcing the 2016 Land Act within communities will help more women make decisions over inputs and harvests.
### Adapting your message: **Knowledge & Interests**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ministry of Women</th>
<th>Ministry of Agriculture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Know:</strong> decision-making power is vital to empowerment</td>
<td><strong>Know:</strong> higher agricultural productivity means higher rural income and better food security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Know:</strong> empowered women = good for household productivity &amp; well-being</td>
<td><strong>Interest:</strong> boosting agricultural productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interest:</strong> promoting women’s empowerment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Adapting your message: **Knowledge & Interests**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ministry of Women</th>
<th>Ministry of Agriculture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enforcing the 2016 Land Act within communities will <strong>empower</strong> more <strong>women</strong> to <strong>make decisions</strong> over inputs and harvests.</td>
<td>Enforcing the 2016 Land Act within communities will <strong>increase agricultural productivity</strong> and <strong>improve food security</strong>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Adapting your message

2. Different tools and channels have different rules

- Choose based on:
  - Audience
  - Objective
- Look for “good” examples

Tweets and slide presentations are not interchangeable!
Adapting your message: Tools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Message</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>policy brief</td>
<td>Land reform to increase women’s access to agricultural land can improve food security in Nigeria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>slide presentation</td>
<td>Land reform to increase women’s access to agricultural land can improve food security in Nigeria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conference invitation</td>
<td>Find out how women-focused land reform can improve food security in Nigeria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>press release</td>
<td>Increasing women’s access to farmland through land reform is a vital step to reducing hunger in Nigeria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blog/op-ed</td>
<td>Land reform that really empowers women is vital for improving food security in Nigeria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social media post</td>
<td>Risk of hunger rises when Nigeria’s women are disempowered. Could land reform be the answer?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Household surveys systematically exclude or undercount vulnerable populations and these exclusions and underestimations will materially affect estimates of need such as access to clean water or adequate sanitation, writes Ronelle Burger.
Adapting your message: Tools

Where is this from?

Standalone solar home systems and solar lamps, in addition to mini grids, can increase electricity supply for women’s domestic and farm work.
Use of chemical fertilizer needs to be done gradually... also important to make sure there are organic alternatives & alternate economic activities for affected industries.
More about **Social media posts**

**Advantage**
- Broad audience

**Disadvantages**
- Lots of competition
- Limited space/text

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**ENDchildpoverty @globalcoalition • Apr 10**

NEW blog post by @oliver_fiala | COVID-19 could push 30 million African children into poverty [blogs.savethechildren.org.uk/?p=44350](http://blogs.savethechildren.org.uk/?p=44350)

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**Potential impact of Covid-19 on extreme poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa**

- Population living in extreme poverty (%)

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Save the Children International and 2 others
Help your target audience see your message

- Tag them (personally or their institution)
- Use hashtags (your keywords)
- Reply to something on their feed (that is relevant)
Adapting your message: Visually

More ways to present your message
Visual tools

• Videos
• Illustration
• Infographics
• ...and more!

Domestic workers by gender

World

Uruguay

Picture by Jorge Martín
Visualizing contents

Visual tools
- Videos
- Illustration
- Infographics
- ...and more!

Unavoidable in today’s communications..

People don’t read anymore – everything is VISUAL

Policymakers access/process information just like everyone else!
Visualizing contents - texts

Start with your written documents

Ways to make texts more “visually attractive” = more effective read

1. SHORT PARAGRAPHS – separate ideas/sub-ideas

2. Bullet lists whenever you can

3. Headlines – titles/subtitles

4. Colors, bold, CAPITAL to emphasize key words/ideas

5. Create SPACE around key ideas – make them EASY TO SPOT
In Uruguay, 99% of the people employed in the domestic sector are women and the sector represents 13% of total female employment.

The predominance of women in the sector, combined with the traditional view that domestic work (cleaning, cooking, laundry and child/elderly care) is the responsibility of women, means that this occupation is undervalued and associated with low wages and high levels of informality.

While approximately 25% of all workers in Uruguay do not have social security coverage (considered “informal” workers), this figure rises to 46% for women in the domestic sector.
Domestic sector in Uruguay:
- 99% workers are women
- Represents 13% of total female employment.

Occupation is undervalued:
- Traditionally perceived as a “women's job” (cleaning, childcare, etc.)
- Low wages and mostly informal work

Low social security coverage:
- Only 54% for female domestic workers
- Vs 80% for (all sectors) workers in Uruguay
Visualizing contents - TEXTS

**Uruguay Domestic Sector**

- 99% women workers
- 13% of total female employment
- Undervalued:
  - low wages & high informality

46% have no social security coverage
Visualizing contents - texts

Start with your written documents

Ways to make texts more “visually attractive” = more effective read

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5. **Create SPACE** around **key ideas** – make them **EASY TO SPOT**
Visualizing contents – data visualization

Improve your graphs/figures

Should be SIMPLE and CLEAR = self-explanatory, quick read

- **DATA-INK ratio:**
  - More color is not necessarily better (can confuse the brain)
  - Add colors only if it facilitates understanding

- **Not ALL data is necessary to understand**
  - Remove data that does not contribute to supporting argument

- **AVOID CLUTTERING** – the more “white space”, the better
Visualizing contents – data visualization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salesperson</th>
<th>Sales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BENJAMIN CHO</td>
<td>$23.4M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHARLIE BAY</td>
<td>$27.0M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EARL ATLAS</td>
<td>$13.4M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EARL WILL</td>
<td>$16.3M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HENRY ASTRO</td>
<td>$4.9M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JACKIE MARS</td>
<td>$6.7M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOHN GALLON</td>
<td>$16.5M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIERE TEE</td>
<td>$13.6M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RICK BEAVER</td>
<td>$4.0M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WINSTON TEXAS</td>
<td>$8.3M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The graph shows the sales by salesperson, with each salesperson represented by a different color bar. The sales values are given in millions of dollars.
Visualizing contents – data visualization
Visualizing contents – data visualization

Choose the right type for your data..

Test it!!

Web tools available!
TableauPublic, FusionCharts, Datawrapper…
Visualizing contents – infographics

Women in the domestic work sector (%)

Uruguay

Quantitative

National Institute of Statistics, NIS

World

need to invest in improving long-term health outcomes

Qualitative

in-utero care

POLICY

environmental conditions

Web tools available!
Canva, Venngage, Carto...

Improved skills-sector matching would help increase returns to skills

policies to reduce existing constraints facing entrepreneurs

skills = sectors
Visualizing contents – videos

Tell a story
- Give a human face
- Emotional appeal
- Define narrative

Web tools available!
Headliner, Clipchamp, Lumen5...

Powerful, but investment – time-consuming, costly
Your PEP Policy Brief
A good policy brief should:

- **Highlight “urgent” policy issue** that needs addressing
- **Identify recommendations** (policies) that can address the issue
- **Provide evidence/analysis** – justify why should your recommendations be applied?
- **Provide insights/roadmap to policymakers** on what they need to know to formulate sound policy
PEP Policy Brief

• A good PEP policy brief is:
  • 2 to 4 pages
  • For a non-scientific audience
  • Attractive (pictures) and accessible (infographics)
  • A starting point for more specific/tailored policy briefs (in your language, if appropriate)

• Key objective
  • To highlight need for policy change and to present a viable policy option

• Key target audience
  • For PEP: general
  • For your project: Policy actor? NGO? Media? Adapt message!
PEP Policy Brief

- **Structure** (e.g. 3 pages)
  - Title
  - Key messages
  - Background/context – 1/4 page
  - Policy Options – 1/4 page
  - Brief policy comparison/evaluation – 1/2 page
  - Recommendation & road map – 1/2 page
  - Scientific analysis & findings summary – 1/2 page

While writing, keep in mind:
- Your objective
- Your target audience

Plus photos, figures, charts, infographics
PEP Policy Brief

- **Title**
  - Not the same as your project title
  - Appeals to a more general audience

- For example, the working paper:
  - *Informal employment and labor market policies: The case of domestic workers in Uruguay*

- Becomes the policy brief:
  - *Uruguay’s domestic workers boosted by minimum wage policy*

While writing, keep in mind:
- Your objective
- Your target audience
PEP Policy Brief

• Key messages
  • 2 to 4 bullet points summarizing your key recommendations
  • The “distilled” version – the absolute essentials:
    • Solution to what problem
    • Who is affected and how
    • Call to action

While writing, keep in mind:
• Your objective
• Your target audience
PEP Policy Brief

• **Background/context**
  • About 150-200 words
  • Present and explain issue
    • who’s affected?
    • why is it a serious issue?
    • what are the risks of doing nothing?
  • Show evidence need (e.g. knowledge gap)

While writing, keep in mind:
• Your objective
• Your target audience
PEP Policy Brief

- **Outline available policy options**
  - ≈100 words
  - Suggest a bullet list

- **Policy comparison**
  - Most pertinent & interesting findings
  - Max 500 words
  - Suggest a table
  - Simple illustrations

### Policy Scenarios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect on:</th>
<th>1. Rural electricity subsidy (current REF policy)</th>
<th>2. 10% increase in productivity for household tasks</th>
<th>3. 10% increase in agricultural productivity</th>
<th>4. Combination of scenarios 1-3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural women's time spent on domestic work</td>
<td>≈ 1.0% reduction</td>
<td>≈ 0.8% reduction</td>
<td>≈ 0.14% increase</td>
<td>≈ 1.5% reduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural women’s employment</td>
<td>+0.65%</td>
<td>+0.51%</td>
<td>-0.10%</td>
<td>+1.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural women’s income</td>
<td>+0.30%</td>
<td>+0.51%</td>
<td>+0.81%</td>
<td>+1.57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Authors' analysis*
PEP Policy Brief

A graph/chart/infographic to share your findings quickly

Underemployment by sector

- 10.58% public sector
- 29.57% construction
- 25.37% agriculture
- 39.52% manufacturing
- 35.26% intellectual services
- 35.26% services
- 17.18% other services
PEP Policy Brief

• **Recommendation**
  • Identify best policy option, based on your findings
    • Clear & actionable

• **Road Map**
  • Concrete & specific
  • Steps to implement your recommendation
    • Committees that need to approve?
    • Laws need passing?
    • Which departments?

While writing, keep in mind:
• Your objective
• Your target audience
PEP Policy Brief

• **Scientific analysis summary**
  - Research objectives/questions
  - Data source (primary/secondary data)
  - Key variables
  - Key methodology (Impact evaluation/field experiment)
  - Main research findings

• To show high quality of your evidence
  - THINK! Will your audience understand it?
Orwell’s rules for writing

**BE BRIEF:**

- Never use a long word where a short one will do.
- If possible to cut a word: CUT IT!

**BE STRAIGHTFORWARD:**

- Avoid foreign phrases, scientific words, or jargon: find an **everyday** equivalent.
- **Use the active** (not the passive)
- Avoid metaphors or figures of speech.
PEP Policy Brief: Tips

WRITE FOR SCANNERS, NOT READERS

- Think “skim read” - use headings, bullets, etc.
- Give and highlight actionable contents - help them brief their own audience

USE KEYWORDS, NOT BIG WORDS:

- Plain language will benefit/attract any audience, regardless of background

ILLUSTRATE

- Examples to show what you mean
Session 3 – Strategizing your communications

1. Creating an effective dissemination package
   • **Tools & Channels** - choosing the right ones for your audience
   • **Adapt & Visualise** your message for your audience

2. Your PEP Policy Brief
References and further reading

• Communicating Research: A beginner’s guide for researchers in Vietnam (ODI)
• Tools for Policy Impact: A handbook for researchers (ODI)
• The Knowledge Translation Toolkit (IDRC)
  • https://idl-bnc-idrc.dspacedirect.org/bitstream/handle/10625/46152/IDL-46152.pdf
• A practical guide to communicating with non-scientists by Helen Pilcher
• Communicating with Policymakers (FAO)
  • http://www.fao.org/3/i2195e/i2195e02.pdf
• La recherche appliquée en économie - Méthodologie, communication scientifique et financement (Research Methodology and Scientific Communication in Applied Economics) by Abdoulaye Seck