VAKA YIKO

inasp

MODULE 4

COMMUNICATING EVIDENCE

MODULE 4

This trainer manual forms part of the VakaYiko Evidence-Informed Policy Making Toolkit. The Toolkit aims to support skills development and practical processes for evidence-informed policy making in public institutions in developing countries. It consists of a training course, a series of practical handbooks, and a range of informational and promotional materials.

This is the fourth in a four-part series of guidance notes for trainers. The complete Toolkit can be found on the INASP website here:

www.inasp.info/vytoolkit

Duration	2 days [805–1,050 mins]
Aim	To strengthen skills in communicating evidence to different audiences.
Rationale	In this module, learners practise using a variety of methods and channels to communicate evidence for policy making.
Learning objectives	By the end of the module, learners will be able to: • produce written outputs and structured presentations by taking into consideration the audience, the message and the channel; • summarize a written text; • deliver a short, structured oral presentation to their audience; • write a policy brief to their audience; • use infographics and data visualizations in their written and oral communications; • reflect on their current communication practices and how they use them in the workplace.
Key learning points	• The more that you can make your communications audience-focused, the better. Think about their needs and how you might best help. • Don't forget the importance of strong, clear and concise messages in any communications. Above all, you want your audience to retain and even act on a message. • All written outputs should be carefully selected, tailored to the audience and highlight and emphasize key information and solutions. How much information does your reader really need? • Presentations should be carefully prepared and audience-focused, with a clear objective and a strong message. They should be enhanced but not dominated by visual aids and slides. • Data visualizations and infographics should be clear and audience-focused, aiming to 'show not tell'.
Establish links	• By now they should have a list of new sources which they have assessed, which they are aiming to work into their policy brief.
Resources	• Projector and laptop for PowerPoint • Flash stick • Flipchart paper and different-coloured marker pens • Flipchart holders • Sticking tape • Small cards (exit cards) and post-it notes

OPTIONAL TOPIC B **p.175**	**INFOGRAPHICS, MULTIMEDIA AND DATA VISUALIZATIONS [135–180 MINS]** *N.B. This topic requires access to the internet and one computer per learner* ACTIVITIES: **M4-TB-A1** Reviewing infographics [15–20 mins] **M4-TB-A2** Exploring infographic web-based tools [50–70 mins] **M4-TB-A3** Creating an infographic for a policy brief [70–90 mins] **Optional Videos**
Action plan and review activities (trainer to build in)	• **Consolidation of action plans** (to be carried out at the end of the last module – i.e. Module 4 or Optional Module) [20–420 mins] • **End review** (to be carried out at the end of the last module – i.e. Module 4 or Optional Module) [40–60 mins] • **Exit cards** (to be carried out at the end of each day) [5–10 mins]

TOPIC 1

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

MODULE 4 LEARNING OBJECTIVES RELEVANT TO TOPIC 1

By the end of this topic learners will be able to:

- Produce written outputs and structured presentations by taking into consideration the audience, the message and the channel
- Reflect on their current communication practices and how they use them in the workplace

READ & REFLECT

A core part of evidence-informed policy making (EIPM) is effective communication – getting information to the right person, at the right place and the right time to inform decision-making. This can be challenging, and without good communication planning, new ideas and important evidence frequently does not reach the right audience in the right way or is even simply ignored or rejected (Young and Quinn, 2012). Good communication is critical to the way you carry out your job, and although at times it will require extra effort, by and large it should become part and parcel of what you are doing on a daily basis with colleagues, superiors and other key stakeholders. Communication does not have to be complicated, nor do you have to spend a lot of time planning, but a little bit of reflection can make an enormous difference to achieving your aims.

The three key ingredients of effective communication are **audience**, **message** and **channel**. These ingredients will be the focus throughout this module. If you keep coming back to them, you can't go too far wrong.

WHAT IS THE AIM OF THE COMMUNICATIONS?

Before you can begin to develop any communications, you need to be clear of why you are doing it. Communications, in your case, could be an individual evidence product, such as writing a report, or a longer package of communications focusing on an upcoming political decision, for instance.

Here are a few pointers to help you think more about aims:

- Is there a problem you need to address?
- Are you offering a solution or a number of solutions?
- What do you want the communications to achieve? For example, informing decisions on how to improve economic transformation.
- Is it a direct mandate (someone asked for more information) or are you suggesting this evidence to help the recipient?

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AUDIENCES

You are likely to be working with both internal stakeholders – research directors, ministers and members of parliament, committees and others – and, from time to time, external stakeholders – the general public, the media. While the process by which you develop internal and external communications doesn't differ greatly, the type of information and the channels by which you communicate will be different. **You cannot develop the same communications for all stakeholders** – internal and external audiences are different and will have different needs and understanding. It is essential that all communications should be carefully tailored and adapted to the audience.

With internal communications, it can be much easier to gauge the audience's interest and the demand for the information. They often share common points of reference and may understand technical terms and style more easily. External audiences, such as the general public, will not have the same understanding but, rather, will have different perspectives and interests. Communications with external audiences may therefore need more careful planning, and should be as accessible as possible. External audiences may also need background information or for you to tell more of the story; this might not be necessary for internal stakeholders. In all cases communications should be as clear as possible.

The information needs of public-sector officials vary based on their hierarchical position within the sector. Papadópulos (2013) distinguishes three levels of officials: political, strategic and operating actors. While political actors make decisions on the global orientation of a certain policy, strategic actors are responsible for the political design, and operating mangers are in charge of policy implementation actions.

Political actors work in a world of ideas and policy models, and their involvement in policy making is not daily. Their involvement is more intense during periods of innovation or policy change. They usually make decisions within briefer periods than strategic and operating actors, so timing is very important: certain information may be very valuable, but if it is not accessible at the right time, it may not be taken into account.

Strategic actors have a more day-to-day involvement, and their intervention is more intense during the implementation of new policies that require process innovation as well as the creation of specific programmes. These actors' knowledge is related to the innovation in administrative processes, the design of information systems, high-level management systems and assessment and monitoring processes and strategies.

Operating actors have a daily routine involvement implementing the actions designed by political actors and, mainly, by strategic actors. Their needs for knowledge vary according to their place in the policy-making and implementation process.

TABLE 1
INTERNAL AUDIENCES FOR EVIDENCE-INFORMED POLICY MAKING

Decision-making level	Type of information
Political actors	A. The results and impacts of interventions they support. They usually require indicators that account for the advances in certain areas under their influence. B. Design and implementation alternatives when approaching a new policy. Comparative evidence may be required in these cases. C. Information about budget execution. D. Trends as regards government image, their own image and that of their potential competitors among the electorate. In general, they set the boundaries within which the strategic actors work, and enable them to act within those boundaries.
Strategic actors	A. Information related to plans and programmes functioning. B. Elements that allow them to innovate as regards specific programmes. C. Elements that allow them to innovate at administrative level: monitoring and assessment, information systems etc. D. Diagnoses about different situations that allow visualizing public policy problems. E. Information to justify new courses of action before different players of the political community (political actors themselves, opposing parties, funding organizations etc.). In general, they process and communicate part of this information to political actors as well as inform the operating actors about what needs to be done.
Operating actors	A. They are in charge of collecting and systematizing the information on indicators from projects developed within their area. B. They collect information that allows justifying new courses of action. In general, they process and communicate part of this information to strategic actors.

Echt and Weyrauch, 2015.

REFLECTION POINT

Think about the main audiences you engage with through your work. How do their information needs differ?

KEY LEARNING POINT

The more audience-focused you can make your communications, the better. Think about their needs and how you might best help.

RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES

PREPARATION

- Write the learning objectives for the module on a flipchart and leave them displayed throughout to refer to at the start of each topic.
- Remind learners of the pre-workshop request to bring their own institutional guidelines/policies that govern how they write policy briefs, reports etc. Ask them to bring the documents to the training room to work on throughout Module 4.
- Print out one example per card of well and poorly written communications in **M4-T1-H1**. Make sure that there are enough for one card per group of three or four people for activity **M4-T1-H1**.
- Write up questions for review activity **Exit cards** on a flipchart and label exit cards (three per learner).

M4-T1-A1 *[OPTIONAL]*

WHAT IS MY EXPERIENCE WITH COMMUNICATIONS AT WORK?

[30–40 minutes]

1. Invite learners to brainstorm the types of communications they use at work (e.g. presentations, reports, briefs, memos etc.). Write them down on a flipchart paper.
2. Ask the learners to fold an A4 piece of paper in two and on one side of the paper to write down things that went well in their communications at work, and on the other side to write down the challenges they have experienced.
3. Invite the learners to share their experiences in pairs, including the purpose of the communications they developed, and then ask them to provide feedback in plenary on any similarities and differences they identified.
4. Note down the key experiences on flipchart paper. Ask the learners to volunteer some of the purposes of the communications they discussed. Highlight the importance of identifying one or more purposes before actually starting to develop the communications, and invite learners to explain why this is important.

M4-T1-A2

WHO ARE MY AUDIENCES?

[45–50 minutes]

1. Put up three sheets of flipchart paper on the walls of the training room. Label the first ‘Audience’, the second ‘Message’ and the third ‘Channel’ and distribute sticky notes to the learners. The flipcharts will remain on the walls until the end of Module 4.
2. Invite each learner to write on a separate sticky note their audiences in their work and to stick the notes on the flipchart paper labelled ‘Audience’. Invite a learner to cluster the post-it notes into categories and name them.
3. Now introduce three categories that distinguish three levels of EIPM actors: political, strategic and operating actors. Encourage the learners to explain in what ways they think the policy-related responsibilities of each category are different.
4. Invite another learner, with the help of the wider group, to re-cluster the sticky notes under the three categories.
5. Put the learners into groups of three or four and hand out one sheet of flipchart paper per group. Invite them to discuss what each category’s role as a communicator is, who are they communicating with, and what kind of evidence they need or are most interested in? Ask the groups to write down the different kinds of evidence each category needs or is most interested in on the flipchart paper.
6. Invite each group to look at the flipcharts of the other groups, adding anything they think is missing and/or challenging other groups on points they do not agree with.
7. If necessary display the table on PPT slide 4 in annex **M4ppt. Introduction and concepts** and invite comments from the wider group.

OPTIONAL VIDEOS

Stakeholder mapping, Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation Kenya:
www.vimeo.com/44463792

EXIT CARDS

[5–10 minutes]

1. Carry out this activity at the end of each day.
2. Hand out the pre-prepared exit cards (three per learner) and ask each learner to write answers to the following three questions:
   A. What helped you learn today?
   B. What questions of clarification do you have/ areas you are unclear on from the sessions covered today?
   C. What comments or suggestions do you have for the trainers?
3. Gather the completed cards from the learners and explain that their comments will be reviewed after today's sessions and that there will be a short summary and response at the beginning of the following day's sessions.

TOPIC 2

DESIGNING EFFECTIVE MESSAGES

MODULE 4 LEARNING OBJECTIVES RELEVANT TO TOPIC 2

By the end of this topic learners will be able to:

- Produce written outputs and structured presentations by taking into consideration the audience, the message and the channel

READ & REFLECT

It you look at a well-written report, strong oral presentation or any other type of effective communication channel or output, you will always find good messaging at its heart. A frequent mistake is to not think about messages at all. This is particularly common when synthesizing information, as it is assumed that you simply need to summarize as much as possible and then pass it on to your audience. But there should almost always be a message or a range of messages running through any communications and closely linked to the aim.

Messages are “just the tip of the iceberg” (Young and Quinn, 2012); they are what your audience most needs to know, and are supported by the main information (the rest of the iceberg) as needed. You can’t just give someone the whole lot and hope they will understand and absorb it all – the chances are that they won’t! Rather, you need to make sure they can quickly see what they most need to know and, ideally, do something as a result. Plus considering messages will help you shape and focus your communications for the better and not waste time on unnecessary information.

Example: ***International trade has been seen in many cases to help countries to integrate into global markets and global value chains. This can help reduce the burden of government to provide social protection in rural areas because some of the most vulnerable can earn greater incomes and thus alleviate poverty.***

The one-line key message here is: ***Trade can reduce rural poverty***.

Email is an interesting example. It is often very difficult to find the key message or messages because there is so much information, and you end up re-reading the whole email and only coming to the message at the end, buried in the details. Re-read an email that you have written recently (or one you have received). Did it have a key message or messages at all? If so, what was it, and do you think the reader would have found it quickly? How might it have been improved?

When planning your key messages, the single most important thing to think about is your audience. Who are they? What sort of message do you need to communicate to them, and why? Thinking through several questions can help you shape the message and then the channel for best conveying it:

- **Who are the audience?** What role do they play? Are they specialists in the topic or are they non-technical? Do you need the same messages for the same audience? Are they people you already know? Or are they the general public?
- **What might they need to know?** What are they currently working on? How can they draw on your information? Did they ask for the information? If so, are you delivering what they wanted? Do they need to know more?
- **How do they best receive information?** Do you know how they tend to prefer communications? What has worked well in the past, and what has not? Is it better to approach them for a meeting or develop a summary?

HOW TO CONSTRUCT AN EFFECTIVE MESSAGE

Heath and Heath (2007) talk about six dimensions to a good message. The ideas originate from the world of marketing but are universal to all types of messaging, including evidence into policy. They are:

Simple. Make sure you pull out the key information and don't over-elaborate your key message. Keep it concise and to the point. The best messages are always simple.

Unexpected. Critical to good messaging is getting people to sit up and listen. They are more likely to remember messages if they are counter-intuitive, surprising or put forward a different angle to a topic. Is there an important or surprising fact that you can put at the top of the paper or at the beginning of a presentation?

For example, Norway gets 98% of its electricity from hydroelectric power.

Concrete. Don't be too theoretical or abstract; make sure the message is tangible, relates to real life and the audience can identify with it. For example, rather than saying 25%, say one in four people (Martin, 2014).

Credible. Your message can be very clear, concise and well constructed, but if the message isn't credible, then the audience is unlikely to listen. Is your message backed up by good evidence? Is it believable? It is realistic? Can you back up your messages with strong facts or information that cannot be dismissed?

Emotional. We all know that emotions can provoke reactions. Is there a way you can make the audience care about the message by conveying a human story. This doesn't have to mean that you invoke strong emotions (it could be humour or surprise) but, rather, that you make the audience connect with the message in some way.

Stories. We use story telling throughout our communications in numerous ways. Can your message tell a story rather than just being cold, hard facts? What is the impact of the evidence?

Not all of these six dimensions will be appropriate for all messages all the time, but they can help.

Martin (2014) provides the following pointers:

- messages should be short, clear and concise;
- one message equals one idea. No more than three messages in any one communication, and no more than five in total;
- don't assume knowledge on the part of your audience – spell it out or clarify;
- and don't forget, each message needs evidence or key facts to support it.

RULE OF THREE

The rule of three is commonly used throughout different types of communications. There is evidence that audiences can retain three messages well, and any more and this retention declines considerably. It becomes too overwhelming, and they don't take in the information.

Gallo, 2014.

DEVELOPING KEY MESSAGES

Messages are meant to be simple, but it isn't always easy to develop them. Here are some questions to help you:

- Why is this issue or information important (or urgent)?
- How does this issue affect your target audience? Why should they care?
- What action can they take based on the situation?
- Does the audience need any background information to support the messages?
- What is the most important piece of information that my audience needs to know? Limit this to one overarching message and three key messages.

REFLECTION POINT

Think about a topic you are currently working on and think of a stakeholder who might need to know more about it. Go through each of the questions for developing key messages and try to refine yours.

CHOOSING YOUR CHANNELS

It is important not to think of communications as a one-directional process, moving from A to B, but rather as a dialogue with the stakeholder or audience. Communications should include feedback, and can move in many directions simultaneously. For example, giving a brief to a colleague may not be enough to convey the key messages on a topic, so you may want to follow up with a meeting or presentation to answer questions, or add an infographic to tell more of a story.

DON'T FORGET INFORMAL COMMUNICATIONS!

When thinking about communications it is very easy to focus on an individual publication such as a report, but what about more informal channels, such as a coffee with the stakeholder, picking up the phone to make a call or, an informal 'brown bag' lunch? It is important to not just see communications as individual actions or written documents.

CREDIBILITY OF THE MESSENGER

"People share, read and generally engage more with any type of content when it's surfaced through people they know and trust."

– Malorie Lucich, Facebook spokesperson

Without credibility, it can be very hard for your message to achieve its purpose. We can be so busy focusing on the message that we forget to think about the messenger, but the two are completely interlinked and can help build credibility. It may be that, at times, you aren't the most appropriate messenger but, rather, you need to collaborate with someone else or use indirect channels to pass on messages or information.

KEY LEARNING POINT

Don't forget the importance of strong, clear and concise messages in all communications. Above all, you want your audience to retain and even act on a message.

RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES

PREPARATION

- Print out for each learner the examples in **M4-T1-H1. Samples of written communications** for activity **M4-T2-A1**.
- Source and print for each learner two or three different texts (ranging from a half to one side of A4) on the same topic or issue for activity M4-T2-A4.
- Write up questions for review activity **Exit cards** on a flipchart and label exit cards (three per learner).

M4-T2-A1

IDENTIFYING KEY MESSAGES

[40–50 minutes]

1. Organize learners into groups of three or four people and distribute one or two handouts to each group from **M4-T1-H1. Samples of written communications**. Ask one learner in each group to count round from one to five. Invite the learners to start by working on the example number they called out and then move onto another example which interests them. Ask them to discuss and answer the following questions while reading the examples:
   - What do you think is the purpose of this document?
   - What are the key messages?
   - Who do you think the audience is for this piece of writing? Why?
2. Invite the groups, in plenary, to choose an example (not already covered in plenary) and share their answers. Invite the other groups to add any new ideas or thoughts.
3. Identify together with the learners the main characteristics of a good message and write them on the flipchart paper labelled 'Message' (e.g. simple, unexpected, concrete, credible, emotional etc.).
4. Distribute the remaining handouts with the examples to the learners who would like a copy.

M4-T2-A2

WHICH CHANNELS DO I USE TO COMMUNICATE WITH MY AUDIENCE?

[40–50 minutes]

1. Clarify with the learners what a communication channel means and invite them to brainstorm which channels they use at work. Write their answers on the flipchart.
2. Invite the learners to find examples of situations where they have used that channel and explain why they have used it.
3. Invite a learner to list the channels on the flipchart labelled 'Channel'. If needed, prompt for inclusion of informal channels (e.g. meetings) as well as formal ones (e.g. reports).
4. To pull Topics 1 and 2 together, invite two or three learners to explain in their own words how the audience, the message and the channel are interconnected.

M4-T2-A3

REVIEWING PARTNER WRITTEN PIECES

[30–40 minutes]

1. Organize learners into pairs and invite them to swap their policy documents (memo, brief, report, case study, fact sheet etc.), which they've been working on throughout the workshop.
2. Ask each learner to review their partner's policy document and: a) identify the audience and key messages; and b) come up with suggestions for channels or pathways to communicate the messages or information.
3. Invite the pairs to discuss their conclusions and suggestions with their partner.
4. Invite learners, in plenary, to share something that surprised them or was new that they learnt from their discussions with their partner.

RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

M4-T2-A4

SUMMARIZING SKILLS

[40–50 minutes]

1. Distribute to each learner two or three different texts from the *readings and samples electronic folder* (ranging from a half to one side of A4) on the same topic or issue.
2. Tell learners that they have been requested by their head to produce a one-sider (max.) summarizing and pulling together the information from each text to highlight the key points around the topic or issue.
3. Before the learners start the task, brainstorm in plenary what the main characteristics of a written summary are (do not spend too much time on this, as it will be covered in more depth in Topic 3) – for example, it does not include recommendations or implications, outlines key information and messages from longer bodies of work in a concise format, helps the reader to view key messages and points and should be enough to read if the reader needs the basic facts.
4. Explain to learners that they should keep their written summaries, as they will be working on them in the next topic.

EXIT CARDS

[5–10 minutes]

1. Carry out this activity at the end of each day.
2. Hand out the pre-prepared exit cards (three per learner) and ask each learner to write answers to the following three questions:
   A. What helped you learn today?
   B. What questions of clarification do you have/ areas you are unclear on from the sessions covered today?
   C. What comments or suggestions do you have for the trainers?
3. Gather the completed cards from the learners and explain that their comments will be reviewed after today's sessions and that there will be a short summary and response at the beginning of the following day's sessions.

TOPIC 3

DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

MODULE 4 LEARNING OBJECTIVES RELEVANT TO TOPIC 3

By the end of this topic learners will be able to:

- Write a policy brief to their audience
- Reflect on their current communication practices and how they use them in the workplace

READ & REFLECT

"Emphasise the decision...the underlying problem and the options to solve it. Minimise methodology, jargon and equations."

Verdier, 1984, in Young and Quinn, 2012.

There are a wide range of written formats for communicating evidence. These include the brief, the memo, the summary, the fact sheet and the report. They may vary in purpose and length, but they tend to follow similar structures (except for the fact sheet), they are all guided by key messages and strengthened by layout to make sure they are easy on the eye and can be read at a glance. And, above all, they should all be carefully planned.

THE OPTIONS

- **Briefs or memos** are concise, standalone documents focusing on a particular issue requiring policy attention. Typical briefs have four main functions: to explain and convey the importance of an issue or outline a problem; to present solutions and policy recommendations; to provide evidence to support the reasoning behind those recommendations; and to point the reader to additional resources on the issue. They can be particularly effective in summarizing and highlighting evidence and research for policy, providing a response to a question or making a request. In certain cases the brief may give multiple or even competing solutions for the reader.
- **Summaries** do not include recommendations or implications for the reader, but otherwise are very similar to briefs and outline key information and messages from a longer body of work or synthesis in a concise format. The most commonly used summary is the executive summary, which helps the reader to briefly see an outline of a full paper, view key messages and points and could be enough to read if you need the basic facts.
- The **fact sheet** is the most condensed of all the formats, a simple one page of critical information for the reader. Fact sheets can outline technical data or statistics, provide answers to questions (FAQS) or are simply summaries of longer reports.[1]

1. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fact_sheet

Ideally, all these formats should be between one and four pages long (and certainly no longer than six pages). If you need to write something longer, then it is probably a report or a policy paper you want to produce, rather than a brief or summary.

- The report or policy paper is the longest format, and gives much more detailed information. It expands on many of the points given in a brief, gives further background information and context, and may go into more details about the research. It is critical that you also produce shorter formats to accompany the report – such as an executive summary with one or two pages of key messages and an overview of the report or a box with a short summary of the paper.

EXAMPLE OF THE 1:3:25 RULE

The Canadian Health Services Research Foundation uses the 1:3:25 rule. This means that for every report they produce they also produce a one-page executive summary, followed by a three-page further summary with more detail and a full report that is no more than 25 pages – the 1:3:25 rule. Each one is targeted at different audiences, so a senior policymaker, for instance, may only read the one-pager.

Variations of this are also used by many organizations and government departments in other countries. It is a useful guideline, which can be adapted as needed. This is also where you can bring out your key messages that may not be so obvious in the body of a longer report.

FOCUSING YOUR WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Similar to messaging, written formats depend on the following:

- **the objectives and messages** of the communications;
- **the specific context** – how do things work in your department, setting or context? But also what about the wider context in your country or region? What background information do you need to include? What can you leave out?
- **who the audience is** – what do they need to know specifically? What do they not need to know? Is this for one person or multiple stakeholders?
- **other supporting communications activities** – do you need to have a variety of formats such as a fact sheet, a summary and a report? What is most appropriate?

REFERENCES

Any written communications should use references in some capacity. References let the reader know that there is evidence to back up what is written, acknowledge the ideas of others and help build credibility with the audience. The extent to which you use references will depend on exactly the output you use.

- There are many types of references. Harvard style is one of the most commonly used styles. In addition, make sure you reference any ideas or information from another source within the body of the text – for example, *Maxwell (2010) suggests that the findings show that there needs to be more regulation by local government*.
- For reports and longer publications, you should always include references. These can be added at the end of the document or could be referenced via footnotes, if more appropriate.
- Briefs, summaries and memos should ideally have a short section at the end with either the main reference (or seminal work) or a few key references. They can also be useful for further reading for the reader. Once again, this helps the reader understand where the evidence is coming from.
- Fact sheets do not need a reference section but should acknowledge where information has originated.

HOW TO DEVELOP A BRIEF OR MEMO

The section outlines some helpful hints for writing briefs.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THESE TWO STATEMENTS?

1

All government programmes could incorporate the use of rigorous impact evaluations to enhance evaluation

2

These findings suggest new directions for revamping assessments to provide better information and opportunities to enhance evaluation.

RECOMMENDATIONS VS. IMPLICATIONS

It is important to know the difference between recommendations and implications because in certain instances it is better to use one rather than the other. Recommendations are usually developed by the author of a written document based on evidence they have examined, to put forward what they think should happen/what is the best course of action.

Implications, on the other hand, are less direct than recommendations (in language) and can be particularly useful when advice has not been requested or is not welcomed. Implications outline what policy changes the evidence points to. So, for example – *it is better for people not to eat sugar (recommendation) versus it appears that eating too much sugar could increase your chances of diabetes and obesity* (implication).

Musandu (2013) suggests the follow ways to make your recommendations stronger:

"Whatever the type, both recommendations and implications should always be backed up by evidence (they should not be just vague ideas of what should be done, based solely on opinion); should use clear language and not use too many words; they should be actionable, so use active language like engage, use and incorporate; and you should suggest three recommendations ideally, and no more than six. Above all ask yourself the question, is this recommendation viable."

Look at an example of a policy brief, and ask yourself the following questions: Are there any recommendations or implications? How could they be improved? Are they clear and actionable? Does the author give a good line of argument to explain why they have been chosen? Are they backed up by evidence? Are they easy to find in the body of the text?

STRUCTURE OF A BRIEF

Generally, policy briefs are four pages in length (around 2,200 words, including references and tables). They are usually organized as follows:

Executive statement (10%)	Includes a brief overview of all of the parts of a policy brief Should be written last
Introduction (10–15%)	Highlights the importance of the issue, problem or situation, using entry points Gives a brief overview of the conclusions or the direction of the rest of the brief
Methodology (5–10%)	Designed to strengthen the credibility of the brief by explaining how the findings and recommendations were arrived at Not always applicable or necessary – you can sometimes omit this or restrict it to one sentence
Results and conclusions (30%)	Designed as an overview of the findings/facts Constructed around the policy recommendations
Implications or recommendations (30%)	This is the most important part of the brief Usually limited to three implications or recommendations Recommendations, which are direct and clear suggestions for action, are preferred, but less direct implications may be more appropriate, depending on the context
References and useful resources (10%)	Helps readers find out more on the issue if they require more information In a brief, keep references to a minimum, but make sure you do include them – particularly seminal work on the issue or topic

This may vary, depending on the purpose and context of your brief, but it is a good structure to aim for.

PLANNING A BRIEF

To develop the main content elements, there are four main steps:

1	2	3	4
Identify the purpose and overarching message of the brief	Determine three recommendations	Construct a logical line of argument for the recommendations (your results or conclusions)	Linked to the context of the issue, identify one or two *entry points* for the message

STEP 1

It helps to start off by identifying the purpose of the brief.

Sample objective statement:

> *"The objective for this brief is to ______________ (action verb such as convince, inform) ____________________ (target audience(s) – e.g. the Minister of Finance) that _________ (what should happen – e.g. they should increase funds for social protection programmes)."*

This will then make it much easier to think about what messages you might need.

STEPS 2 AND 3

Once you have worked on your objective statement, you can then start to determine your recommendations or implications, *but* you need to make sure that you think very carefully about what evidence you have to support them.

Example policy recommendation:

> *"Additional funds could help to support local businesses to ensure their staff have insurance."*

To back this up look at:

1. Why is this currently a problem?
2. Why is this urgent, timely or important?
3. Why should the target audience become involved?

STEP 4

Entry points or hooks are commonly used at the beginning of reports, summaries or briefs to make the reader want to read further. For example:

> *"Mental illness affects one in four people in their lifetime, and neuropsychiatric conditions now account for 13% of the global burden of disease – and 70% of that burden is in low- and middle-income countries."*

KILLER FACTS

It can make a difference to your writing if you use striking facts to back up what you are saying. Green (2012) refers to several different types of facts to consider. They include:

Big number. A statistic which highlights the size of the problem:

"It is estimated that there will be more than 150 million environmental refugees by 2050 due to the likely effects of global warming."

Juxtaposition. Put two statistics side by side for comparison:

"A woman's risk of dying from pregnancy-related causes ranges from 1 in 18 in Nigeria to 1 in 8,700 in Canada."

Surprising stats. Statistics than can surprise the reader:

"More people die of road traffic accidents than die of malaria."

Humanizing abstract issues. Turning the abstract into a concrete, real-life example:

"12 million children will go hungry by 2050 because of climate change."

Source: www.oxfamblogs.org/fp2p/how-to-write-killer-facts-and-graphics-what-are-your-best-examples.

TIPS FOR MAKING YOUR WRITTEN FORMAT MORE VISUALLY ENGAGING

As well as having strong content, reports, briefs and summaries can also be **visually engaging**. Common techniques employed to capture the reader's eye include the creative use of the following elements:

- **Titles really do matter**. Many of us may decide to read further based on the title of a publication or report, so make sure it is concise, concrete, not too long and gets to the point. For example: "*Economic losses from natural disasters.*"
- **The stand first** originated from journalism but is commonly used as a sentence or two to explain what the written document is about, underneath or near the title. It can be very useful for the reader. For example: "*This paper argues that putting employment at the centre of country policy means focusing not only on employment quantity, but also on the importance of quality and access.*"
- **An abstract** is a short summary paragraph, particularly common with reports and working papers.
- **Key messages summary.** It can make a big difference to add in a box at the beginning of a written output with the key message outlined. For example:

  "Key messages

  - *Most households don't have the education level or jobs that will pull them out of poverty, improve wealth and assets or reduce food insecurity.*
  - *Households that experienced serious crimes during the war are significantly worse off today than other war-affected households.*
  - *Livelihood and social protection services are rare and aren't targeted to those who need them most; rather, these services often go to better-off households."*
- **Sub-headings and text boxes** break up the paragraphs and sections and allow the reader to quickly find sections or key information.
- **Photographs.** Where appropriate, use photographs and reference their source. They can really liven up a written document. Flickr creative commons is a very good source of open source photos.
- **Graphs, charts and infographics.** Where appropriate, use graphs, charts or infographics (see next section).

REFLECTION POINT

Read the box 'Killer Facts' and come up with a few of your own examples for your context. Try looking through blogs and op-eds, as these usually use a number of killer facts.

KEY LEARNING POINT

All written outputs should be carefully selected, tailored to the audience and highlight and emphasize key information and solutions. How much information does your reader really need?

RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES

PREPARATION

- Prepare an overview (using PPT) of the four main steps to developing the content elements of a policy brief, drawing on the Read & Reflect section, for activity **M4-T3-A2**.
- Print out the handout for each learner in **M4-T3-H1. Structure of a brief**, for activities **M4-T3-A3**, **M4-T3-A4** and **M4-T3-A5**.
- Print out one example of a policy brief for each learner to work on in activity **M4-T3-A3**.
- Print out the table for each learner in annex **M4-T3-H2. Key principles for structured writing and presentations**, for activity **M4-T2-A5**.
- Write up questions for review activity **Exit cards** on a flipchart and label exit cards (three per learner).

M4-T3-A1

CURRENT AND FUTURE WRITTEN OUTPUTS

[15–20 minutes]

1. Ask each learner to note down the different written documents they are currently producing, what the audience is for each output and what the purpose of the different documents are. Suggest they do this in the form of a table in their notebooks.
2. Invite each learner to consider if there are any different written outputs they should be producing in the future, and if so why? For example, is there is a particular audience they are not currently reaching?
3. In pairs, ask the learners to discuss the current and future written documents they have identified. Invite learners, in plenary, to share some of the different written outputs they think they should be producing in the future and why.

M4-T3-A2

HOW TO DEVELOP THE MAIN CONTENT ELEMENTS OF A POLICY BRIEF

[30–40 minutes]

1. Ask learners in pairs to discuss and come up with a loose definition of a policy brief. Invite pairs to provide feedback on the key elements, and note them down on flipchart paper.
2. Invite learners to share in plenary what they think the first step is in developing the content elements of a policy brief and any examples they have. Display the first step in the pre-prepared PPT.
3. Continue to go through the same process step by step, asking the learners what they think the next step is and exploring together examples for each step.

M4-T3-A3

WHAT IS THE STRUCTURE OF A POLICY BRIEF?

[50–60 minutes]

1. Organize learners into groups of three or four and hand out the table in **M4-T3-H1. Structure of a brief** to each learner and ask them to read it. Invite any questions or comments the learners might have.
2. Distribute a policy brief and ask the groups to read the example policy and assess it according to the structure/key elements introduced in the table.
3. In plenary, go through and discuss each main section of the policy brief, inviting the groups to present their assessments.

M4-T3-A4

REVIEW OF WRITTEN SUMMARIES

[30–40 minutes]

1. Ask learners to retrieve the written summary papers they produced at the end of Topic 2.
2. Invite learners to pair up, and ask each learner to read out loud their written summary while their partner listens and follows how much of the summary corresponds to the structure and points in their handouts (**M4-T3-H1. Structure of a brief**).
3. Ask each learner to provide feedback to the reader and then together discuss to what degree the main points synthesized on the flipchart paper were also followed.
4. Conclude by noting that while summaries do not include recommendations or implications for the reader, they are otherwise very similar to briefs and outline key information and messages from a longer body of work or synthesis in a concise format.

M4-T2-A5

POLICY BRIEF WRITING WORKSHOP

[180–240 minutes]

1. Invite learners to refer back to the existing policy document (memo, brief, report, case study, fact sheet etc.) they have been working on throughout the workshop. If any learners did not bring a policy document with them, ask them to refer back to the work-related topic they have been working on so far.
2. Explain to learners that they have a choice of: a) further improving their policy document if they brought in a policy brief; b) developing a policy brief out of the policy document they brought in, if it is a memo, report, case study or fact sheet, for example; or c) writing a new policy brief based on the work-related topic they have been working on so far.
3. Pair up learners, where possible by the same option – i.e. learners who have selected a), b) or c) so that they work at a similar pace. Explain that they will work individually on their briefs but can confer with their partner for support and advice during the writing process. Recommend that learners write their policy briefs clearly on paper to enable immediate feedback later on in the writing workshop.
4. Email learners the full Read & Reflect section for Topic 3 or save an electronic version on their computers for them to use when writing their policy brief. Also remind them of the lists of evidence/ documents and sources they compiled (at the end of Module 2) for the subject of their policy document or their work-related topic, which they can incorporate into their briefs.
5. Invite learners to swap their draft policy briefs with their partner, once all the sections are reasonably complete. Hand out the table in **M4-T3-H2. Key principles for structured writing and presentations** to each learner and ask them to use it to assess their partner's policy brief and to provide their partner with constructive feedback.
6. Allow time for the learners to receive feedback from their partner and make revisions or not to their draft policy briefs.
7. In plenary, ask learners whether they would like to add any other principles to the key principles for structured writing and presentations table in annex **M4-T3-H2**. Then ask learners to find another person in the room from whom they would like to receive feedback on their policy paper, and ask them to swap papers.
8. Allow some time for the learners to review their partner's policy paper, provide feedback and make revisions or not to their draft policy briefs. Explain to learners that if they would like some short feedback directly from the trainer, they can type up and email their policy papers or submit a hard copy before the end of the workshop.

RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

M4-T2-A6

CHOOSING THE BEST POLICY BRIEF

[60–70 minutes]

1. Ask learners for a show of hands if their policy briefs include recommendations rather than implications. Invite learners to form groups of three, including at least one learner whose policy brief includes recommendations.
2. Invite the groups to quickly select the policy brief which they think is the most persuasive and credible, which they will share with other learners.
3. Divide the groups roughly into two sides – for example, Side A=4 x groups of three, and Side B=4 x groups of three.
4. Explain that the groups in Side A will be decision-makers who will quickly read the policy briefs one by one (they have 5–10 minutes for each brief) selected by the groups in Side B (mirroring the often short timeframes policymakers have to read these types of documents). Explain that the decision-makers' task is to decide, in their groups, which of the briefs is the most persuasive and credible, with recommendations they are most likely to pick up and take action on.
5. Allow time for the groups in Side A to quickly confer and each come to a decision. Ask for a show of hands, and choose the brief with the most votes. If it is a tie, the Trainer makes the deciding vote! Invite the decision-makers (Side A) to give their reasons for their choice.
6. Invite Side B to become the decision-makers and Side A to share their selected policy briefs, and follow the same process as detailed above.

M4-T2-A6 *[ALTERNATIVE]*

CHOOSING THE BEST POLICY BRIEF

[70–90 minutes]

1. Ask learners for a show of hands if their policy briefs include recommendations rather than implications. Invite learners to form groups of three, including at least one learner whose policy brief includes recommendations.
2. Invite them to quickly decide which one of their policy briefs they are going to present and ask them to prepare a short presentation of no more than five minutes, using one sheet of flipchart paper or one PPT slide as a visual aide (making it as engaging as possible).
3. Divide the groups roughly into two sides – for example, Side A=4 x groups of three, and Side B=4 x groups of three.
4. Explain that the groups in Side A will be decision-makers listening to four short presentations made by the groups in Side B, based on their chosen policy brief. Explain that the decision-makers' task is to decide, in their groups, which of the briefs is the most persuasive and credible, with recommendations they are most likely to pick up and take action on.
5. Invite the groups in Side B to make their presentations in turn. Be strict with the five-minute presentation slots and allow one extra minute for any questions from the decision-makers.
6. Allow time for the groups in Side A to quickly confer and each come to a decision. Ask for a show of hands, and choose the brief with the most votes. If it is a tie, the Trainer makes the deciding vote!
7. Invite Side B to become the decision-makers and Side A to make their presentations. Follow the same process as above.

EXIT CARDS

[5–10 minutes]

1. Carry out this activity at the end of each day.
2. Hand out the pre-prepared exit cards (three per learner) and ask each learner to write answers to the following three questions:
   A. What helped you learn today?
   B. What questions of clarification do you have/ areas you are unclear on from the sessions covered today?
   C. What comments or suggestions do you have for the trainers?
3. Gather the completed cards from the learners and explain that their comments will be reviewed after today's sessions and that there will be a short summary and response at the beginning of the following day's sessions.

CONSOLIDATION OF ACTION PLANS

[20–420 minutes]

1. Display the slides again, as a reminder, in annex **M1ppt. Action plans** and ask learners to retrieve their action plan templates that were handed out or emailed to them at the end of Topic 1, Module 1.
2. Explain to learners that they now have the opportunity to reflect on the notes they made throughout the course under the key headings – i.e. challenges and ideas to support the use of evidence in policy making and/or to address the challenges identified.
3. Explain that this longer action-planning session will enable learners to reflect on and consolidate their notes then transfer them into the formal action plan. Learners may choose to do this individually or by department. The trainer should proactively make themselves available during this session for any feedback or support the learners may require.
4. Once they have compiled their formal action plans, give learners the opportunity to review their action plans with their peers and/or other learners, and with the trainer if they so wish.

END REVIEW

[40–60 minutes]

1. In groups of four or five (organized by same sector, ministry or country), invite learners to discuss and then formulate six key principles that they think are necessary to facilitate EIPM in their sector, ministry or country. Ask the groups to write them down on a sheet of flipchart paper.
2. For the trainer's reference only, six example principles, from an agri-food public health policy and research study in Canada, are listed below:
   A. establish and clarify the policy objectives and context;
   B. support policy making with credible [scientific] evidence from different sources;
   C. integrate [scientific] evidence with other diverse policy inputs (e.g. economics, local applicability and stakeholder interests);
   D. ensure that [scientific] evidence is communicated by research and policy stakeholders in relevant and user-friendly formats;
   E. create and foster interdisciplinary relationships and networks across research and policy communities; and
   F. enhance organizational capacity and individual skills for EIPM.

A supportive culture was also mentioned, and additional education and training in both research and policy realms are important to facilitate EIPM [in this sector]. See ***www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24528517***.

3. Once the groups have finished, ask them to present their principles to the wider group or put their flipcharts on the wall or on a table top, and invite the groups to move round the room and read them.
4. Invite the groups to comment on what they liked and why, where there were commonalities and differences, and ideas for how they could use the six key principles document in their departments and/or beyond.
5. If useful to learners, the trainer can present the six key principles from the Canadian agri-food public health study on a PPT slide.

OPTIONAL TOPIC A

PRESENTING KEY MESSAGES TO YOUR AUDIENCE: ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

MODULE 4 LEARNING OBJECTIVES RELEVANT TO TOPIC A

By the end of this topic learners will be able to:

- Produce written outputs and structured presentations by taking into consideration the audience, the message and the channel
- Deliver a short, structured oral presentation to their audience
- Reflect on their current communication practices and how they use them in the workplace

READ & REFLECT

At some point in your work, you will need to present to an audience – either formally or informally. This section examines some of the ways you can improve your oral communications and, in particular, share messages on evidence-informed research.

TIPS FOR PRESENTING WELL

- What is the purpose of the presentation, and who is the audience? This will help you to focus on the information you most need to prioritize – and, most important, your key messages.
- Structure your presentation. Make sure you have one overarching message and three key points to share. Make sure the beginning of the presentation captures your audience (use one of the elements of a good message as outlined in the last section to do this). Quotes or surprising facts can work well. Then introduce the outline of your presentation. To close, highlight your key points, any recommendations (if you have them) or next steps.

- Plan your presentation and give yourself time to practice. Even the most experienced presenters practise, practise, practise.
- "If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand" – so goes the quote by Einstein. It's a good point; try practising what you want to say with someone who does not know very much about the topic (a relative, friend, spouse or colleague) and get them to give you honest feedback. You could also record yourself and listen back.
- What's the time limit? Find out how long you have to speak and try to prepare for less time. You will usually present for longer – unless you are a very fast speaker. Also try to keep presentations short if possible, or break it up with time for questions. Don't just speak non-stop at the audience – they will switch off.
- Find your passion. Stakeholders are more likely to listen to you if you sound confident but, above all, interested in what you are saying.
- Finally, don't start preparing a PowerPoint presentation until you have prepared properly what you are going to say.

COMMON MISTAKES WITH PRESENTATION SLIDES

You may decide that to accompany what you are saying you need to produce a PowerPoint presentation or use some type of visual aid (see Annex 4). Here are some tips on how to make sure they help and don't hinder:

- **Don't use your slides as 'crutch'**. Slides are there to enhance, not duplicate. People can't listen and read slides at the same time. If you need support to remember what you are going to say, have notes, but don't rely on your slides; they are there for the audience.
- **Less is more**. Don't put lots of information or text onto your slides. Break text up with slides with images, videos or quotes. There are lots of studies that show that people respond to visual stimuli much better than text (Gallo, 2014). Be careful with graphs and data – they can be great, but equally make sure they are clear and easy for your audience to read. Any text you do use must be 22 pts or more.
- **Rule of three**. In the previous section we explored the 'rule of three', and the same applies to your presentation and slides. Try to stick to three messages in a presentation (with one overarching message). For example, in this section of the handbook, the overarching message is: *"Make sure you use your PowerPoints carefully."* The three key messages are then: *"Don't use it as a crutch; less is more; and rule of three."*
- **Don't just use PowerPoint**. There is other software out there, including Prezi, which is more dynamic and flexible to use.

REFLECTION POINT

How might you present the key messages from your piece orally to a colleague or other stakeholder? Write a short plan to lay out the messages – the introduction and conclusion.

KEY LEARNING POINT

Presentations should be carefully prepared and audience-focused, with a clear objective and a strong message. They should be enhanced but not dominated by visual aids and slides.

RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES

PREPARATION

- Line up the video **M3-T1-V1**, or print copies of the transcript (same one as used for activity **M3-T1-A1**): ***www.ted.com/talks/markham_nolan_how_to_separate_fact_and_fiction_online/transcript?language=en*** for activity **M4-TA-A1**.
- Prepare handouts for each learner with 'Tips for presenting well' from the Read & Reflect section.
- Write up questions for review activity **Exit cards** on a flipchart and label exit cards (three per learner).

M4-TA-A1

TIPS FOR PRESENTING WELL

[40–60 minutes]

1. Play the Markham Nolan video 'How to separate fact and fiction online': ***www.ted.com/talks/markham_nolan_how_to_separate_fact_and_fiction_online#t-85824***.
2. Invite the learners, while watching the video, to use the criteria in **M4-T3-H2. Key principles for structured writing and presentations** and make notes.
3. Invite learners to share their thoughts in plenary, and encourage a discussion on how best to present key messages and information orally.
4. Distribute the pre-prepared handout to each learner with the 'Tips for presenting well' from the Read & Reflect section for learners to read. Invite learners to share their reflections and what implications this might have for them as communicators of research.

M4-TA-A2

DELIVERING A PRESENTATION

[40–60 minutes]

1. Organize the learners into groups of three and invite each learner to choose a topic on which to deliver a five-minute presentation and an audience.
2. Tell learners that they can use the tips for presenting distributed in the handout and some of the criteria listed in **M4-T3-H2. Key principles for structured writing and presentations**. Point them towards the audience, message and channel flipchart papers.
3. Invite each learner to make their presentation in turn to the rest of the group. Ask the other two members of the group to listen and provide feedback at the end of the presentation using some of the criteria in **M4-T3-H2. Key principles for structured writing and presentations**.
4. Invite two to three volunteers to deliver their presentations in plenary and then invite learners to consider and discuss what their key learning points from the experience were and what they will do as a result of this learning.

OPTIONAL VIDEOS

PowerPoint presentations:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=lpvgfmEU2Ck

EXIT CARDS

[5–10 minutes]

1. Carry out this activity at the end of each day.
2. Hand out the pre-prepared exit cards (three per learner) and ask each learner to write answers to the following three questions:
   A. What helped you learn today?
   B. What questions of clarification do you have/ areas you are unclear on from the sessions covered today?
   C. What comments or suggestions do you have for the trainers?
3. Gather the completed cards from the learners and explain that their comments will be reviewed after today's sessions and that there will be a short summary and response at the beginning of the following day's sessions.

OPTIONAL TOPIC B

INFOGRAPHICS, MULTIMEDIA AND DATA VISUALIZATIONS

MODULE 4 LEARNING OBJECTIVES RELEVANT TO TOPIC B

By the end of this topic learners will be able to:

- Use infographics and data visualizations in their written and oral communications
- Reflect on their current communication practices and how they use them in the workplace

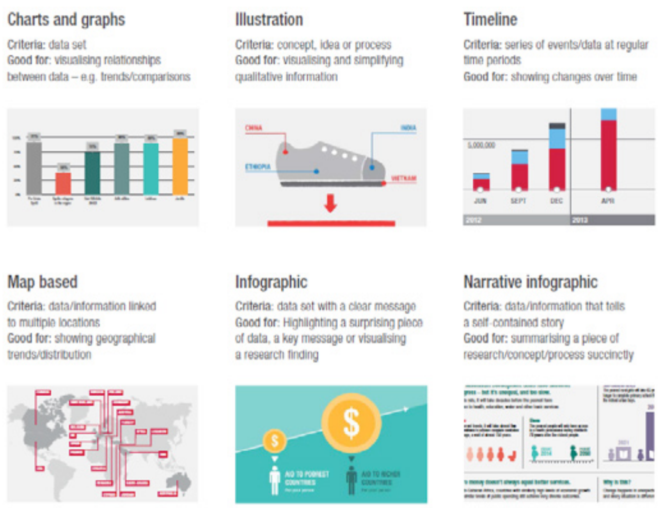
READ & REFLECT

When communicating, you should not just think about purely written or oral communications; multimedia, infographics and data visualizations are increasingly important formats to turn to and use to highlight key information and evidence.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INFOGRAPHICS AND DATA VISUALIZATIONS?

Data visualizations showcase data or information in visual form, so there are a wide variety of options that fall under this category (see illustration below). At the simplest level a data visualization could be a graph or chart, a timeline, a map or an illustration.

According the UK Office for National Statistics, an **infographic** is “a self-contained visual story presenting information, data or knowledge, with clear meaning and context and without bias. Infographics use visuals to tell a story or relay a key message.”



Source: Internal ODI infographic guide.

Data visualizations and infographics can be a great way to capture information and present it in a visual format for the target audience. They can be particularly good to enhance a report or to share in addition to a brief. Concerns are that they are both time-consuming and costly, which can be the case, but there are some simple ways to do them yourself. Rather than just putting in a table of data, it can make a huge difference to a written output or presentation to present the data in a more interesting and visual way. At a very simple level, Excel has lots of tools able to do this quickly. You can also take it one step further and visually showcase the story as an infographic

Technologies are evolving all the time, and new software and apps are appearing that can help to make your life easier. Here are a few that you may want to consider trying:

Piktochart – a free online tool to develop charts and infographics: ***http://piktochart.com***

Visual.ly – a tool that also allows you to see what others are doing and share your content: ***www.easel.ly***

Google Fusion tablets – you can use this tool to turn data into charts or maps and customize as you need: ***www.google.com/drive/apps.html#fusiontables***

Tableau public – a free tool to create more dynamic data visualizations ***www.tableau.com/public***

Datawrapper – another data visualization tool for creating maps and charts ***www.datawrapper.de***

Tiki-toki – helps you to develop timelines ***www.tiki-toki.com***

For Further reading and how-to guides, visit: ***http://onthinktanks.org/tag/data-visualisation*** and ***www.ttdatavis.onthinktanks.org/data-visualisation-resources***.

CHECKLIST

- Have you double-checked the data is correct?
- Does someone else understand the infographic without prior explanation?
- Is the design easy to follow?
- Would additional context help improve the story?
- Does the title frame the content correctly?
- Is the story presented self-contained?

Internal ODI infographic guide.

A FEW TIPS

Know your audience and purpose: What is the desired outcome? Who is the target audience? Tailor the infographic to your audience and consider which channels are appropriate for what you want to achieve (e.g. a printed report/booklet).

Add context: Think about what you can highlight or introduce to improve the story.

Check the data and its interpretation: Keep checking back with your data sources, as manipulation of data can occur throughout the developmental process. Make sure you have properly referenced sources (if the data is from an outside source, make sure you obtain permission to use it first).

Keep it simple: ‘show’ information and data, rather than ‘tell’ where possible.

Teach users something new: Will the audience learn something? Yes = success; no = time to refine or rethink.

KEY LEARNING POINT

Data visualizations and infographics should be clear and audience-focused, aiming to ‘show not tell’.

REFLECTION POINT

Looking at the data visualization and infographic options, can you identify how they could be used more in your day-to-day work? When might they be most appropriate?

RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES

PREPARATION

- **Topic B requires access to the internet and one computer per learner.**
- Print colour copies of infographics for activity M4-TB-A1, so that there are three to five copies per group.
- Consider using ***www.atlas.cid.harvard.edu/*** to download some country-specific data visualizations for your context.
- Prepare one or two examples of using web-based tools for the production of infographics, such as Tableau Public, Piktochart, Datawrapper etc. (as listed in the Read & Reflect section) for activity **M4-TB-A2**.

M4-TB-A1

REVIEWING INFOGRAPHICS

[15–20 minutes]

1. Organize the learners into groups of three or four and give each group three to five different printed infographics.
2. Ask each group to decide on its favourite infographic and explain in plenary why they made this choice.
3. Ask the learners what they think the key indicators of quality for infographics are, and note them on flipchart paper (e.g. not too much writing, clarity, use of colour etc.). Try to elicit from learners the key points in the 'A few tips' section towards the end of the Read & Reflect section and any additional indicators the learners volunteer.

OPTIONAL VIDEOS

ODI animations:
www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8sELjFjX-Up8bn3BWcaoQ8teidZaWU9tK

M4-TB-A2

EXPLORING INFOGRAPHIC WEB-BASED TOOLS

[50–70 minutes]

1. Demonstrate to learners one or two examples of using different web-based tools, such as Tableau Public, Piktochart, Datawrapper etc. (as listed in the Read & Reflect section).
2. Organize the learners into groups of three or four and ask each group to investigate one of the web-based tools and report back to the others on how it works (through demonstration and verbal explanation).
3. To conclude, ask learners to refer back to their action plan notes, and invite each learner to write down any new individual action points which have emerged during this activity.

M4-TB-A3

CREATING AN INFOGRAPHIC FOR A POLICY BRIEF

[70–90 minutes]

1. Ask learners to refer back to their revised or newly produced policy briefs which they worked on towards the end of Topic 2.
2. Invite each learner to select one of the web-based tools to create an infographic which they can include in his/her report. Display the checklist on PPT slide 5 in annex **M4ppt. Introduction and concepts** as an aide for learners while they develop their infographic.
3. Invite learners in pairs or groups of three to show each other the infographics they have produced (on their computers) and encourage their fellow learners to assess them against the checklist as well as providing their own feedback in terms of what they like and what could be improved.

RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

EXIT CARDS

[5–10 minutes]

1. Carry out this activity at the end of each day.
2. Hand out the pre-prepared exit cards (three per learner) and ask each learner to write answers to the following three questions:
   A. What helped you learn today?
   B. What questions of clarification do you have/ areas you are unclear on from the sessions covered today?
   C. What comments or suggestions do you have for the trainers?
3. Gather the completed cards from the learners and explain that their comments will be reviewed after today's sessions and that there will be a short summary and response at the beginning of the following day's sessions.

FURTHER READING

Extensive online resource on preparing evidence-based policy briefs:
http://global.evipnet.org/SURE-Guides

Hans Rosling's TED talk on data, using innovative visualizations:
www.ted.com/talks/hans_rosling_shows_the_best_stats_you_ve_ever_seen#t-286249 and see GapMinder here: www.gapminder.org

The Atlas of Economic Prosperity is a tool developed by Harvard University which allows you to view graphs of economic data for any country in the world: ***www.atlas.cid.harvard.edu***

Resources on plagiarism:
www.authoraid.info/en/resources/?q=plagiarism

How to Give a Science Flashtalk: ***www.scidev.net/global/communication/practical-guide/flash-talk-science-video-guide.html***

REFERENCES

Echt, L. and Weyrauch, V. (2015). *Leaders of Change: Developing Latin American Policymakers' Capacity to Promote the Use of Knowledge in Policy*. Politics & Ideas.

Gallo, C. (2014). *Talk like Ted*. London: Macmillan.

Green, D. (2012). How to write killer facts and graphics – what are your best examples? Retrieved 2 June 2016 from: ***www.oxfamblogs.org/fp2p/how-to-write-killer-facts-and-graphics-what-are-your-best-examples***.

Heath, C. and Heath, D. (2007). *Made to Stick*. London: Random House.

Martin, S. (2014). *Communication Strategies for Trade Negotiations: a practical guide*. Sutton: Trade Advocacy Fund. Retrieved 2 June 2016 from: ***www.tradeadvocacyfund.com/cawp/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2014/01/Vol-I-Communication-Strategy-booklet-ENGLISH-LR.pdf***.

Musandu, N. (2013). How to write actionable policy recommendations. Retrieved 2 June 2016 from: ***www.researchtoaction.org/2013/07/how-to-write-actionable-policy-recommendations***.

UK Office for National Statistics (2012) Infographics Guidelines. ***https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/infographics-guidelines.pdf***

Papadópulos, J. (2013). Paradigmas, producción, demanda y uso de la evidencia en políticas de cuidado infantil en América Latina. *Documento de Trabajo* No. 12. Buenos Aires: CIPPEC. Retrieved 2 June 2016 from: ***www.vippal.cippec.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Childhood-Paper_GDNet.pdf***.

Young, E. and Quinn, L. (2012). *Making Research Evidence Matter: A Guide to Policy Advocacy in Transition Countries*. Berlin: International Centre for Policy Advocacy. Retrieved 2 June 2016 from: ***www.advocacyguide.icpolicyadvocacy.org***.