



HOW TO
COMMUNICATE
EbA

**A communication guide for climate
adaptation projects**



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The project: Resilient Caribbean Communities (CCR)

The CCR project develops nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based adaptations to the challenges of climate change in the Caribbean Biological Corridor. The goal of Welthungerhilfe, OroVerde, and the five local partner organizations is to work with local residents to strengthen ecosystems in order to increase the resilience of people and ecosystems to the effects of climate change.

Project partners:



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INTERNATIONALE KLIMASCHUTZ INITIATIVE

aufgrund eines Beschlusses des Deutschen Bundestages

THIS IS WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT!

Have you ever wondered how you can talk about climate change without overwhelming or discouraging people?

This handbook shows you how to use solution-oriented communication to encourage people and highlight possible courses of action.

The climate is changing rapidly—storms, heavy rain, droughts, and extreme weather are becoming the new reality. But there is hope: by protecting and restoring ecosystems, we can face the consequences of climate change. Mangroves, for example, are nature's true protective shields. They slow storm surges, prevent coastal erosion, and provide a home for many animals. This not only strengthens biodiversity, but also fisheries.

Fisheries are an important source of livelihood for many coastal communities. This approach, known as ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA), shows how nature and humans can work together to withstand the effects of climate change.

What you can expect

Did this example paint a picture in your mind?

Because that is exactly what successful communication about climate adaptation is all about: making solutions visible and motivating people to take action. This handbook offers practical tips and tools to help you develop your own communication strategy. You will learn how to formulate messages that inspire and motivate your target groups to help shape a climate-resilient future.

Our recommendations are based on insights from the "Water Forest" and "Climate Forest" projects, which we are implementing

together with local partner organizations in Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Guatemala, and Haiti.

The green text bubbles contain practical tips that we have gathered from our projects. Be inspired and benefit from our experience for your own projects!

Together, we can turn the challenges of Climate change into opportunities and create a sustainable, secure future!

HOW TO GET COMMUNICATION STARTED? DEFINE GOALS?

How do you ensure that your communication is not only heard, but actually has an impact? The first step toward a successful strategy is to clearly define your goals: What do you want to achieve with your readers, followers, and listeners? Do you want to inform, persuade, or motivate them to take action?

The communication objectives of an adaptation project can be diverse, depending on the specific needs and context of the project. The objectives should also be adapted to the different phases of a project. When setting objectives, it is important to be as precise as possible in the wording and to define target groups and measurable indicators.

7 EXAMPLES

1 Raise awareness

Raise awareness among target Groups of the need for climate Change adaptation measures.

→ Increase awareness of the risks of climate change and the benefits of adaptation measures among the local population by 30% within one year.

2 Imparting knowledge

Information and education about specific adaptation strategies and Technologies.

→ Provision of information materials and training on ecosystem based adaptation measures for 100 small-scale producers in the region.

3 Initiating behavioral change

Incentives for behavioral change towards more climate-resilient practices and lifestyles.

→ Increase the number of households willing to adopt environmentally friendly practices such as creating home gardens by 15% within six months.

4 Gain acceptance and support

Creating acceptance and support for adaptation measures among key stakeholders.

→ Gaining the support of 80% of local political decision-makers for the implementation of a new adaptation project within three months.

5 Promoting cooperation

Promoting cooperation and exchange between different interest groups and communities.

→ Establish a network for cooperation between local communities, NGOs, and government agencies to coordinate adaptation measures within one year.

6 Communicate successes

Reporting on the progress and successes of the adaptation project to create transparency and trust.

→ Regular publication of project Reports and success stories in local media and on social media. Platforms every three months.

7 Mobilizing resources

Acquiring financial and human resources to support the project or your own organization.

→ Increase the willingness of private sponsors and public funders to donate by 25% within one year.

Your communication goals help address the various aspects of an adaptation project and inform and motivate stakeholders in a way that supports the success of the project. A successful communication strategy does not have to include all of these goals, but can also focus on a specific goal with further sub-goals. However, it should always be aligned with the overall strategy of an organization.



Define communication Goals together—exchange and reflection create an effective strategy.



Method tip for professionals:
SMART-method



WHO AM I? DON'T FORGET THE SENDER!

Have you ever wondered who is behind a message you have received? That's exactly what it's all about: when setting your communication goals, it should already be clear who is perceived as the Sender. Is the focus on the adaptation project, the organization as a whole or another group? It helps recipients classify the information and increases the likelihood that your message will be taken seriously. At the same time, a consistent sender presentation supports the development and maintenance of your organization's brand identity. A clear sender also has practical advantages: it facilitates queries and feedback, which is often the first step toward successful collaboration. Therefore, use logos, signatures, etc. A clearly recognizable sender is crucial for establishing trust and credibility or clear sender names to strengthen your message.

FINDING TARGET GROUPS & ESTABLISH NETWORKS

Successful communication begins with the question: Who do I want to reach, and what do I want to achieve with this target group? Defining your target groups is directly linked to your communication goals. Different target groups require different approaches. There is no such thing as bait that all fish will find tasty. Below, we outline typical target groups and provide tips on how you can address them in a targeted manner.

Specialists: Communicate clearly and factually

Skilled workers generally prefer a direct approach that clearly identifies problems and presents fact-based solutions. Excessive embellishment or emotional exaggeration often has a counterproductive effect in this context.

Nevertheless, the complexity of the content should be reduced so that it remains easy to understand without simplifying the facts. Practical examples or success stories can help to make even abstract concepts tangible.

Practical tip: Use diagrams, figures, and concrete case studies to emphasize your messages. Address challenges openly and point out realistic solutions.

Population in project regions: Creating everyday relevance

In order to effectively reach target groups in project regions, it is important to understand their perspectives and engage in dialogue. Direct conversations and questions about everyday observations can help to raise awareness of the problem. Often, the issue is already known, so lengthy explanations are unnecessary. Instead, the focus should be on presenting concrete and comprehensible solutions.

Practical tip: Ask questions to encourage dialogue and build on experiences: "What have you noticed in your environment?", "What changes do you see?", "What ideas do you have for dealing with this?"

Other target groups: Let stories and images speak for themselves

For target groups that are not directly on site, visual and illustrative representations are indispensable. Stories and images make abstract concepts such as climate adaptation more tangible and emotionally accessible. One example

is the illustration of a home garden as part of an ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) to show how individual measures can have a positive impact on the entire watershed.

Practical tip: Use photos, infographics, or short videos to explain complex relationships. A visual journey into the project area helps to connect theory and practice.

METHODS IMPULSE

Environment analysis

Involve opinion leaders and peer groups

Opinion leaders, such as local influencers or community leaders, can act as multipliers. If they recognize the

urgency of climate adaptation and support appropriate measures, many people will follow their example.

Practical tip:

Identify key individuals in your target group and actively involve them. Together, you can spread messages that reach far beyond your direct contacts.

Networking: Achieving more together

A strong network consists not only of a group of contacts, but of active relationships. Regular communication and

knowledge sharing are essential for pursuing common goals and achieving lasting impact.

Practical tip: Organize workshops, networking meetings, or online forums to promote exchange between interest groups.

In some of our project regions, committees have been set up to ensure that activities continue beyond the project period. Make sure that all participants can derive added value from the collaboration.



In Thiotte, Haiti, the most important stakeholders were identified together.

An environmental analysis is used to determine the areas (e.g., the economy or local authorities) in which potential actors operate. They are positioned on a diagram according to thematic overlaps or their influence on decisions relating to climate adaptation.

Once your target groups have been roughly defined, they can be further specified according to different interests, needs, and usage habits.

There are useful sources and methods for finding information about the various target groups, such as market research reports, scientific publications, online tools (Google Analytics, Facebook Insights), AI, or even the organization's own data.

If these resources are not available, helpful ideas about what content and formats might appeal to this group of people can also be gathered through discussions with representatives of the target groups. In doing so, it is helpful to find out what interests a

person might have in implementing climate adaptation measures.



To implement funded projects, OroVerde requires Own funds.

Your donation will help us with our project work!!



MMETHOD IMPULSE

Buyer Persona

Buyer personas, or personas for short, can be representative, fictional, realistic descriptions of people (target group) that are intended to help personalize messages or tailor them to the desired target group.

It is intended to help better imagine the needs and interests of individuals in order to use them for the formulation of messages.

Demographic characteristics such as gender, age, or occupation take a back seat. Emotional needs, behavior patterns, and personality characteristics and traits come to the fore.

Basically, you are free to decide what information you want to use about your persona.

It helps to give the persona a Name and a picture. To best imagine the persona, it can be useful to consider a person's values, interests, information behavior, possible touchpoints, goals & motivation (also written as a quote), challenges, and concerns.

Example of a persona



Name: Juan Pérez
Age: 45 years old
Place of birth: In San Juan de la Maguana, Dom. Republic
Status: Married, three children
Profession: Juan runs a medium-sized family farm that mainly produces coffee and bananas. He took over the land from his father and is continuing the tradition in the third generation.



Values

Sustainability: Juan attaches great importance to preserving natural resources for future generations..

Family: DieFamily comes first, and he works hard to give his children a better future.

Community: He is actively involved in the local community and regularly attends community Meetings..



Interests

Agricultural technology: Juanis interested in new technologies that can increase productivity and efficiency on his farm.

Environmental protection: He is interested in learning about environmentally friendly practices to mitigate the effects of climate change.

Education: He is committed to ensuring that his children receive a good education and supports educational projects in his community.



Media usage behavior and potential touchpoints

Radio and local TV: Juan gets much of his information from traditional media such as radio and local television.

Workshops: He regularly attends workshops offered by agricultural advisors to expand his knowledge..

Social networks: He uses Facebook to exchange ideas with other farmers and gather information.

Community meetings: Regular meetings with other farmers and community representatives are important sources of information for him.



Challenges and concerns

Klimatische Veränderungen: Unvorhersehbare Wetterbedingungen und zunehmende Naturkatastrophen sind eine große Sorge.

Finanzielle Mittel: Begrenzter Zugang zu finanziellen Ressourcen erschwert Investitionen in neue Technologien.

Bildung und Training: Der Bedarf an spezifischen Kenntnissen zu Klimaanpassungen ist hoch, aber entsprechende Bildungsmöglichkeiten sind begrenzt.



Goals and motivation

Adaptation to climate change: Juan wants to ensure that his farm is prepared for the negative effects of climate change.

Increasing productivity: He is motivated to increase his farm's yields by using new techniques and technologies.

Long-term stability: Juan strives for economic stability for his family and the community.

(Core) messages to the persona

TOGETHER FOR A FUTURE

→ By participating in the project, you can help secure the future of your farm and your community.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

→ Du You are not alone—we are here to support you with the resources and knowledge you need to succeed.

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

→ With new techniques and technologies, you can increase the productivity of your farm and prepare yourself for the challenges of climate change.

CHANNELS & FORMATS

Choosing the right communication channels and formats is crucial to the success of EbA measures. Depending on the target group and context, they should be combined in a targeted manner to achieve the greatest possible impact. While channels determine the reach and accessibility of content, suitable Formats ensure an appealing and understandable presentation..

CHANNELS

1 Social media

Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn, as well as messenger services such as WhatsApp, enable a broad audience to be reached. Content can be presented in various formats such as posts, stories, or videos. It is crucial to adapt the platforms to the target group.

FORMATS

Videos & Animations

Explanatory videos and animated Clips clearly illustrate the processes and advantages of EbA measures using practical examples.

Storytelling

Narrative formats such as short videos, image sequences, or text-image combinations make abstract concepts emotionally tangible.

2 Project websites

They offer space for in-depth content, success stories, and interactive Elements such as maps. Good search engine optimization (SEO) ensures that Content is easier to find.

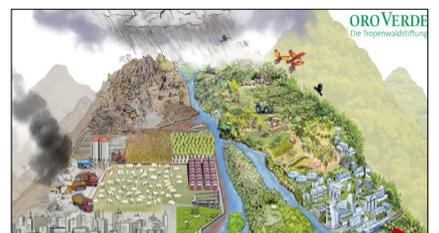
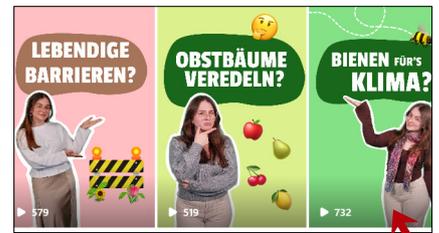
Infographics & diagrams

Graphical representations facilitate the understanding of complex interrelationships, such as the effects of climate change or EbA solutions.

Before-and-after comparisons

Interactive sliders, photo series, or Videos illustrate changes and progress.

EXAMPLES



CHANNELS

FORMATS

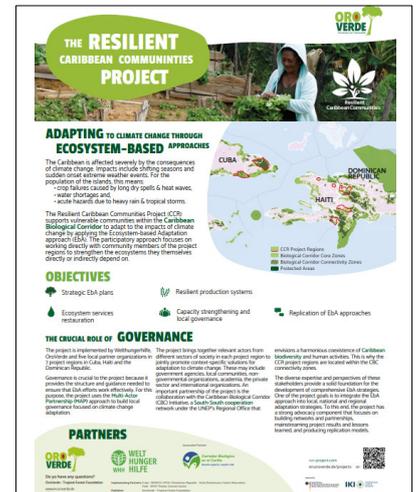
EXAMPLES

3 Trade journals, conferences, and magazines

These channels appeal to a knowledgeable audience by providing in-depth data, case studies, and analysis on EbA measures.

Specialist publications

Materials such as case studies, position papers, or project Flyers offer detailed information for an expert target group.



4 Press (newspapers, Radio, TV)

Coverage in traditional media increases public awareness and helps establish EbA as a relevant topic in society.

Press releases & guest articles

Press releases and press relations inform the media about current events, while guest articles convey specific opinions, expertise, or new perspectives.



5 Local networks & public space

Posters, flyers, or printed materials such as T-shirts and cars enable direct communication in communities. Billboards and public advertising increase visibility in everyday life.

Events & workshops

Interactive formats with visual support such as photos, maps, or Videos promote exchange and learning.



FORMULATING KEY MESSAGES

Now it's time to write the text. Here you bring together your goals and ideas about your target groups. Formulate your (core) messages clear and simple so that they are easy to understand. Avoid jargon and complicated wording to ensure that your messages are always accessible. Imagine explaining your communication content to your grandparents—even if your texts are aimed at a specialist audience. Once you have found initial formulations, it can be helpful to test your messages on a sample of your target audience or ask internal stakeholders for feedback.

You should then revise the messages based on the feedback to maximize their impact.

Storytelling

One possible method for explaining the concept of climate adaptation is storytelling, which involves recounting stories to convey information and establish an emotional connection with the audience. Instead of simply presenting facts and data, content is packaged in the form of narratives designed to appeal to and captivate people. Storytelling uses narrative techniques such as character development, suspense, and a clear structure to make messages more memorable and relatable.

A key aspect of storytelling is its ability to translate complex topics into easily understandable and accessible formats, which makes it particularly effective in communication. Stories have the power to generate empathy and reach audiences on a personal level, which can help increase engagement and deepen understanding. Storytelling is often used to strengthen brand identities, convey values, or initiate change by inspiring and motivating readers.

EXAMPLES OF MESSAGES

„Home gardens strengthen your family and nature: through environmentally friendly practices, you can improve your quality of life, promote biodiversity, and benefit from healthy soils and yields in the long term.”

Focus: Emphasis on the direct benefits for the family (e.g., healthier nutrition, income opportunities) and the environment (e.g., protection of the biological corridor).

„Working together for a green future: Every home garden initiative helps make your community more resilient to climate change and preserves the traditions of sustainable coffee farming.”

Focus: Sense of community and the connection between traditional values, sustainable agriculture, and climate protection.



Method tip for professionals:
Limbic



EXAMPLE OF STORYTELLING

The rescue of coastal village xx

In a small coastal village called xx, located on the coast of Cuba's famous Alexander von Humboldt National Park, people have been living off fishing and agriculture for generations. A young biologist named Maya also lives in the village. She is fascinated by the mangroves that grow near the village. One day, after a violent storm surge, she begins to talk to her neighbors about the importance of these special trees and explains how mangroves could protect the coastline.

Together with the villagers, Maya launches an initiative shortly afterwards and plants mangrove seedlings. They work together to protect the existing mangroves and promote their spread.

Because they know that the number of storms and extreme weather events is increasing.

After a few years, the villagers began to see the results. The mangroves had dug their roots deep into the ground and provided natural protection against the raging storms. Fish stocks recovered, and the fishermen returned with fuller nets. The village was revitalized, and the people had secured their income.

The story of the residents of the village of xx is an example of how ecosystem-based adaptation measures—the technical term—can be used not only to adapt to climate change, but also to strengthen communities. This natural solution, which works in harmony with nature, is a shining example of how people and ecosystems can work together to meet the challenges of climate change.

When should storytelling not be used?

Storytelling is a powerful tool, but it is not the best choice in every situation. It should therefore not be used in the following examples:

- In strictly scientific or technical reports: Specialist readers expect precise, fact-based information. An overly narrative presentation could be perceived as unreliable or unprofessional.
- For sensitive topics: If stories dramatize or simplify personal or social crises, they could be perceived as inappropriate.
- In time-critical situations: When messages need to be conveyed accurately in a short period of time, clear facts and directness are often more effective.
- For target groups with no connection to the story: If the audience cannot establish an emotional connection to the narrative, storytelling may fail to have the desired effect.
- For purely informative content: Technical details or quantitative data that must primarily be conveyed objectively rarely benefit from narrative packaging.
- Storytelling should therefore be used in a targeted manner to maximize its advantages. It is important to consider the target audience, the situation, and the communication goal in order to select the appropriate method.

WORDING & VISUAL

It may be useful to use alternative terms to promote broader acceptance. Instead of "climate adaptation," for example, the term "precaution" could be used to emphasize the proactive and preventive nature of the measures. This can help to highlight the urgency and responsibility associated with preparing for climate change. In addition, alternative terms can help to simplify communication and defuse emotionally charged discussions: instead of "ecosystem-based adaptations," use "green solutions." Ultimately, they make it possible to better address different target groups by taking different perspectives and priorities into account. However, it is important to note that too many different terms should not be used. To avoid confusion, internal text modules can be made available to all relevant communicators.

Before and after pictures

Images (and videos) are a central component of communicating Climate adaptation measures, as they can make complex concepts visually tangible. However, when selecting images, there are also challenges and certain criteria that should be taken into account.

1 Before and after pictures

Select images that show clearly visible changes, e.g., a degraded area before a reforestation measure and the same area after a few years with lush vegetation. Make sure that the perspective and image section are as identical as possible in both images to facilitate comparison. Changes resulting from EbA measures are often only visible after several years. Archive images regularly so that you can document the process over the long term.

2 People in action

Show people implementing EbA measures, e.g., creating terraces, planting trees, or building erosion control structures. This creates a sense of closeness and also allows people to identify with the actors behind the measures.

3 Positive changes

Present images that illustrate the positive effects of the measures, e.g., healthy plants, stable soils, abundant harvests, or clear watercourses. Many positive effects of EbA are difficult to see in pictures (e.g., improved soil quality or reduced erosion rates). It can be helpful to explain such results using simple, visually appealing infographics or supplementary Texts.

4 Context & Diversity

Show the measures in different contexts. This will make it clear that EbA can be implemented flexibly in different environments and by different people (e.g., women, men, indigenous communities).

Should the challenges be illustrated?

To illustrate the relevance of EbA measures, it can be helpful to also show the real challenges and threats posed by climate change. Especially in media reporting, where various news factors such as topicality, emotionality, threat, and negativity play a role, impacts or even damage are illustrated. Negative images should always be supplemented with positive examples and solutions in order to highlight options for action. Furthermore, it should go without saying that images should be used to inform and raise awareness without causing fear or appearing overly dramatic.

PRESENT SOLUTIONS

Texts that focus on the solution rather than the problem can help to show that climate adaptation is feasible and that humans are fundamentally capable of taking action.

To develop the solution, we have tested the following steps in practice:

1. **Starting with a solution:** Green spaces in front of buildings in urban Environments
2. **Analysis:** "What is this good for, how does it help?" - Avoid extreme heat and heat islands
3. **Understand the issues:** Extreme temperatures and weather events are increasing due to climate change.

4. **Meta-strategies:** Develop strategies to address the challenges of climate change and strengthen ecosystems. Demonstrate how ecosystem-based adaptations are linked to other areas such as sustainable development and poverty reduction, and how they can contribute to achieving multiple Goals simultaneously.

5. **Think outside the box:** These strategies must not only be found on a small scale, but supraregional/global adaptations must also take place and their financing must be secured.

SUMMARY

To conclude this handbook, we would like to emphasize that communicating climate adaptation is a dynamic. The process involves various stages—from planning and implementation to evaluation. It is important to remain flexible and to continuously review and adapt the communication strategy based on your own experience.

Successful communication requires not only careful planning, but also a willingness to respond to changes and new insights.

By learning from past experiences and refining our approaches, we can ensure that our messages remain effective and targeted. This iterative process is crucial for long-term communication success and for raising awareness of climate adaptation in a sustainable manner..

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OroVerde is committed to preserving tropical forests worldwide. For more than 30 years, the Tropical Forest Foundation has been showing how we can protect them together. Its work includes joint conservation projects with local people, as well as educational work and consumer tips in the EU. In addition, OroVerde is engaged in dialogue with politicians and business leaders to bring about long-term change.

