

Facilitating the use of evaluation evidence through effective communication

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Why is communication and engagement important?

3ie's mission is to produce quality evidence that is **useful** to development decision-makers and those who influence them.

Given this, we require that research teams:

- Address knowledge gaps,
- Involve and engage all relevant stakeholders,
- Secure buy-in and ownership for the project and its evidence.

3ie's approach: Stakeholder engagement and communication plan

Context analysis	Relevance and timeliness of issue, political, economic and social context, culture of evidence use
Risks	Risks associated with study implementation and uptake of findings and mitigating actions
Evidence uptake and use objectives	Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound
Stakeholder analysis and key influencers	Map and visualise stakeholders, their influence, their networks. Plan engagement approaches aligned with research and evidence use objectives.
Engagement and Communication plan	Identify key study milestones and plan targeted engagement activities, outputs and objectives
Monitoring and learning	Choosing relevant engagement, uptake and use indicators; laying down the protocol for capturing lessons on implementation, evaluation and engagement

Stakeholder mapping and analysis: NRLM example

Stakeholder group	Details	What interests them?	Activities to engage	How it facilitates use
Ministry of rural development (primary)	High-level government officials (Additional Secretary, Joint Secretary, etc.)	Evaluation findings can inform the effectiveness of project, show results to political leaders, inform project scale up/roll out, spark conversations about design changes	Regular meetings, Briefing notes, research summary, participation in events, closed door consultations	Secures buy-in from government, creates a collaborative environment, ensures familiarity with the study, primes them for use of results
Academics/Research organizations (secondary)	Other academics or researchers working on similar projects	Evaluation design, survey tools, data collected, response of government stakeholders, evaluation results	Share all materials publicly, social media, events, inclusion in workshops	Helps strengthen evidence culture, minimizes duplication of research, effective use of resources for donors, builds a shared community and facilitates knowledge exchange

Communication products and activities

Products/activities	Audience	Rationale
Presentations and closed-door consultations	MoRD leadership	Collaborated on questions, shared initial findings, secure buy-in, for internal communication in govt.
Research report + briefing notes on key themes	MoRD, Gates Foundation, World Bank, academics and research organizations	Briefing notes for thematic heads within MoRD on financial inclusion, institution building etc.
State-wise factsheets: summary of data and workshops	State leadership, M&E officials, district officials where relevant	Strengthening capacity of states to use the data, collect questions for further researcher, build ownership of the work
Blogs, briefs, videos, media articles	Global audiences, organizations working on livelihoods projects, other government departments	To disseminate and market the research products to a non-specialist audience
Public launch event	All stakeholders	To showcase results through a credible platform

3ie's approach: what works

Plan for early and ongoing engagement

Understand opportunities and barriers to use

Translate knowledge

Contribution Tracing

Impact

Evaluation findings were cited in response to questions in the Indian Parliament by two ministers of rural development and a minister of state.

Findings were also used by the World Bank to inform the next phases of livelihoods program



Challenges: a few reflections

- Transitions in government/project teams can affect communication and engagement plans
- Communication products and activities don't necessarily get budgeted effectively
- Projects don't always value the need to invest project time on communication and engagement
- Without a strategic approach, conveying negative or null findings might be a challenge



Additional resources

Evidence impact story of NRLM:

<https://www.3ieimpact.org/evidence-hub/Evidence-impact-summaries/strengthening-case-indias-national-livelihoods-program>

Project webpage with communication products

<https://www.3ieimpact.org/research/rural-india-livelihoods-project>

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