

**ANNEXES**



## 1. Tips for rapidly improving your writing

### 1. Use verbs instead of nouns. Avoid nominalizations.

Example:

Nominalization	Better Alternative
We had a <b>discussion</b> about the new policy.	We <b>discussed</b> the new policy.
The <b>introduction</b> of new farming techniques was a success.	We successfully <b>introduced</b> new farming techniques.

### 2. Use the active, not passive voice.

Passive voice	Better Alternative
The contract <b>was signed by</b> the manager.	The manager <b>signed</b> the contract.
The project <b>was set up</b> in 2011 by FAO.	FAO <b>set up</b> the project in 2011.

### 3. Keep the subject, verb and its object close together. Use the Subject+Verb+Object sentence construction often.

Original	Better Alternative
The publication of the report for use by decision makers will enable better food security policy making.	Decision makers will use the report to make better food security policies.
The area of communication that the focal points are interested in learning more about is along the line of technical reports used in agriculture and government.	The focal points would like to learn more about technical reports used in agriculture and government.

4. Keep your sentences short - not more than 15 to 20 words.

Too long!	Better Alternative
As in the case of Latin America, it has been shown that on average rural women have more children during their lifetime fertility age 15-49 than urban women.	In Latin America, rural women have more children than urban women.

5. Use short, rather than long words. Use simple, not fancy, words.

Original sentence	Better Alternative
The road will <b>facilitate</b> the <b>transportation</b> of goods to the village.	The road will <b>make it easier</b> to <b>bring</b> goods to the village.
He was <b>compensated opportunely</b> .	He was <b>paid on time</b> .

6. Remove all jargon and acronyms that have not been previously explained

7. Break gender stereotypes

Original sentence	Better Alternative
The doctor told <b>his</b> patient to eat more vegetables.	The doctor told <b>her</b> patient to eat more vegetables.

8. Use words that are appropriate for your audience. Tip: use non-technical language when writing for policy makers.

9. Do not provide more information than is necessary for your purpose. You are writing to communicate something clearly to your audience – not to impress them with how much you know about a certain topic. Try to understand what information is really of value to your audience before starting to write.

10. Write a first draft and *always* go back and edit your work for content and then for language. Remove as many words as possible. Unnecessary content weakens, not strengthens, your writing and is a waste of time for your reader.

**Useful resources:**

Writing guides from the Plain English Campaign

<http://www.plainenglish.co.uk/free-guides.html>

The Elements of Style by Strunk and White

Available in various editions and online at <http://www.bartleby.com/141/>

## 2. Writing for the Web

People don't read on the web, they **scan**. You should therefore:

- break the text into short paragraphs and use bullet lists
- use sub-headings and sub titles to break up the text into short sections
- highlight key words in bold
- put the most important information at the beginning - most people decide in the first few seconds whether they will read the rest of the page.
- use a lot of white space to make the text easy to scan.

Web writing is "visual writing." If something is important make it big, bold or colorful. But don't overdo it or you will confuse your readers. If a link is very important, make it into a button.

Remember that people come to your website **to do something** specific. Make it very easy for them to find the information they need. More than any other type of writing, writing for the web means **eliminating every unnecessary word**.

Give people only a little information at first and then link to more information. If your text is very long, consider writing a short summary for the web and put the rest into a printable pdf format.

### Tip

The best way of testing if your website is designed well and the writing is clear, is to observe how people use it. Gather some volunteers who are not familiar with your website, and ask them to perform specific tasks or look for a specific piece of information. If they have trouble doing this, you know you need to redesign the way you present information.

### Further reading:

Designing Web Usability: The Practice of Simplicity by Jakob Nielsen. See Nielsen's website: <http://www.useit.com/papers/webwriting/>

Information Architecture for the World Wide Web by Louis Rosenfeld.

### 3. Using the Web to Publicize your Work

*“If you want to catch a fish, go fishing where the fish are.”*

Don't wait for your readers to find your information among millions of pages on the web - post it on sites that already get a lot of traffic.

Social and professional networking sites are useful for reaching specific target audiences. Many specialised web portals allow users to post content. The web also allows you to cheaply distribute video, audio, and other multimedia formats. These formats can help you get your key messages across in a memorable way.

Be sure to get web usage statistics so that you can keep track of how well your publicity campaign is doing. Google analytics is a good source for free statistics: <http://www.google.com/analytics/>

Here are some suggested websites for posting links to your work and website:

#### Portals

##### General

Wikipedia - contribute to articles covering your field of expertise and link to relevant work

<http://en.wikipedia.org>

##### Development Portals

Eldis

<http://www.eldis.org/about/contribute.htm>

Relief Web

<http://www.reliefweb.int>

Zunia Knowledge Exchange Platform

<http://zunia.org/>

##### Portals with a Regional Focus

South African Regional Poverty Network

<http://www.sarpn.org/contribute/contribute.php>

## Networks and Communities

### General

Linked In - Professional Networking

[www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)

Facebook – Social Networking

[www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

### Food Security, Humanitarian and Development Networks

FAO's Food Security and Nutrition (FSN) Forum

<http://km.fao.org/fsn/>

Aid Workers Network

<http://www.aidworkers.net/>

Eldis Community

<http://community.eldis.org/>

## Publish and Share Your Work

### Videos

You Tube

<http://www.youtube.com/>

Vimeo

<http://vimeo.com/>

Blip

<http://blip.tv/>

### Photos

Flickr

<http://www.flickr.com/>

Picasa

<http://picasa.google.com/>

### Audio

iTunes

<http://www.apple.com/itunes/>

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### **Press releases**

PRlog – publish your press releases for free on the web

<http://www.prlog.org/>

### **PowerPoint slides**

Slide share

<http://www.slideshare.net/>

#### **Tip**

Publish your work on any of these sites and link to it from your website or blog.



## 4. Communication Strategy Plan of Action Template

Communication Plan Template (use bullet points)

Overall Communication Objectives

Audiences and Stakeholders

Key Target Audience	Info they need	Key Messages	Channels	Who will follow up?	Timing (how often) & deadlines	Budget

**QUICK TIPS****Define your target audience and what sort of information they need**

- Begin by defining broad groups and then refining them (ex. “Mothers” becomes “Breastfeeding mothers in district XYZ”)
- For your priority audience, consider their educational background, age, information needs, and time constraints
- Understand the **benefit** that they would gain from your communication.
- Define what **action** you want them to take as a result of your communication. Do you provide them with the right kind of information to take that action?

**Choosing channels**

Make sure the channel you choose is actually one that reaches your audience. Do busy policy makers read unsolicited emails and long reports? Probably not. Consider using intermediaries for hard to reach audiences.

**Timing**

- Relate press releases to important events locally, nationally, and internationally; Develop a calendar of important events.
- Make sure the information arrives in time to be of use. Consider the frequency as well.

**The only way to get it right**

- The only way to know if your strategy has been successful is to contact the people you are trying to reach. Conduct occasional surveys or interviews.
- Set priorities in terms of time and budget. Give first priority to reaching your key target audience.

**Note for projects funded by the European Union**

- The European Union has detailed guidelines which should be respected when planning a communications campaign. Logos and templates for various information products are also available. Please see the link below for more information:

[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/index_en.htm)

## 5. Press Release Template

Your Project's Name  
www.yourwebsite.com

LOGO

Press Release: Embargoed until 01/01/11

**TITLE**  
*Place, Date*

Start with an interesting opening sentence that captures your readers' curiosity. Mention the Who, When, Where and the What. (2-3 short sentences)

Explain the key challenge or problem to be solved. (2-3 sentences)

Give a few more details. (1 or 2 sentences plus a bullet list)

Get a powerful quote from a well-known person that further explains the main problem. A quote from a member of your target audience is a good strategy. Ex. "Increasing agricultural production is the true key for lasting food security," emphasized the Minister of Agriculture during his opening speech.

Conclusion - end with a key message or strong statement. (2-3 sentences)

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**Your Project Name**

A short description of your project (2-3 lines)

**Partner or Other Organization**  
Information about your partner organization (2-3 lines)  
Note: Some donors require you to acknowledge funding. For European Union funded projects, please see additional guidelines in:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/index_en.htm)

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**Contact Information:**

Name  
Title  
Phone  
Address  
Email  
Website

## FURTHER READING



## General

Free food security e-learning courses and training materials from the EC-FAO Food Security Programme. The series includes a “Communicating Food Security” e-learning Course: <http://www.foodsec.org/dl>

## Writing a Communication Strategy

European Commission. Guide to successful communications: [http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/science-communication/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/science-communication/index_en.htm)

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Ensuring a food secure future: ingredients for change. Panos Media Toolkit on Communicating Research: <http://www.panos.org.uk/?lid=29009>

News release worksheet from Knight Communications  
<http://www.knightcommunications.org/promotion-101/news-release-workshop/news-release-worksheet/>

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Pellini, A. and Serrat, O. (2010). Enriching policy with research. Knowledge Solutions 85. Asian Development Bank. <http://www.adb.org/documents/information/knowledge-solutions/enriching-policy-with-research.pdf>

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### Force field analysis

MindTools. Force field analysis: Understanding the pressures for and against change. [www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTED\\_06.htm](http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTED_06.htm)

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