WORKING GROUP SESSION: KEY ELEMENTS OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION (SCS1G)

Module
Strategic Communication (SC)

Format
Individual worksheet and small group discussion

Purpose
This activity contributes to the module learning objectives by asking participants to start identifying the key elements of strategic communication for their own data or research: policy goal, audiences, communication objectives, findings, implications, and recommendations.

Time Required
- 2 hrs.

Working Group Description
Participants are grouped into Working Groups of 3-5 participants based on their research or advocacy topics. Throughout the series of Working Group sessions, participants are asked to apply the concepts and skills taught in the workshop to their own research or data on their topic.

Activity Description
This Working Group Session focuses on identifying a policy goal, policy audiences, and communication objectives, and also on developing messages with three key components: data, implications, and recommendations. Participants will come in having filled out these sections of the Elements of Strategic Communication Worksheet. The facilitator should allow each participant to explain what they’ve done and along with other group members, provide constructive feedback.

If time is short, focus on the goal, audiences, and messages as these are most central to their preparation for the final presentation.

Encourage participants to think outside the box of a big, national-level policy, and identify policies at multiple levels and in different sectors that could be affected by their data or research. Participants who don’t know much about the political, advocacy, or program environments for their topic might struggle to identify opportunities or challenges in influencing the policy discussion; if this is the case, encourage them to think theoretically about these questions, and what challenges or opportunities might reasonably exist.
Push participants to come up with specific audiences beyond policymakers—ask them to at least name institutions or the types of people who might have the power to make the change they’re seeking (such as the Ministry of Finance, USAID), even if they’re not sure of exact processes or individuals.

Remind participants that the data, implications, and recommendations for their messages should clearly flow from and link to each other. For example, recommendations shouldn’t be made where the data doesn’t show a need for that particular type of activity.

Estimate approximately 30 minutes of discussion per participant. This session can be very dense, and covers a lot of information for each participant. Try hard to keep the group moving so that everyone has an opportunity to share and get feedback.

**Key Learning Concept(s)**

- Identifying clear goals, policy audiences, and communication objectives.
- Understanding the policy relevance of data or research, and the potential policy implications and recommendations that stem from their own data or research.
- Making a clear link between data, implications, and recommendations.

**Materials Needed**

- Elements of Strategic Communication Worksheet (SC8A)

**Required Preparation:**

- View Strategic Communication I and II Presentations