Good practices in dissemination

Sokol Vako

United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific

8 June 2023
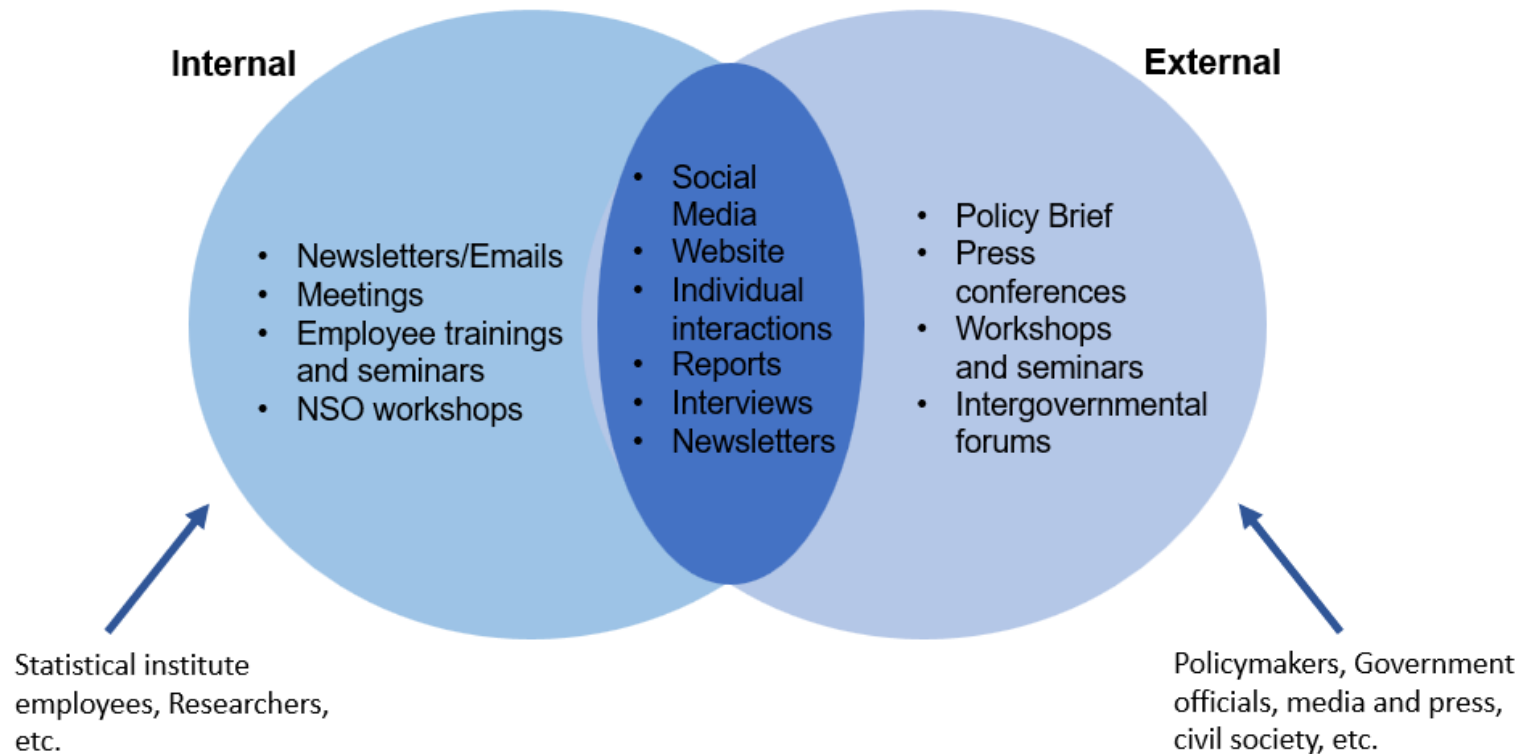
UNITED NATIONS
SIAP
Statistical Institute for
Asia and the Pacific

Some things to think about

* **WHY?** Communication goals – the desired end-results, these are typically the first step, and designed to be measurable (ex. goal is to generate awareness about a specific issue, measurement is an estimated number of people reached)

* **WHAT?** Messages/Content – the necessary information to effectively deliver the communication goal.

* **WHO?** Target audience - the people who you seek to communicate with. They need to be clearly defined, as they often determine the content of the communication strategy.

* **HOW?** Channels – the means of reach.

* **WHEN?** Timeliness of communication and outreach

Who—Target Audiences

* General public / Civil society
* Policy makers
* Government officials (policy and planning ministries)
* Statistical Institute employees / NSO and environmental agency staff
* Academics and Researchers / Scientific bodies (meteorological, geospatial, etc.)
* Media and Press
* Private Sector
* NGOs

How—Means of reaching an audience

Internal

- Newsletters/Emails
- Meetings
- Employee trainings and seminars
- NSO workshops

- Social Media
- Website
- Individual interactions
- Reports
- Interviews
- Newsletters

External

- Policy Brief
- Press conferences
- Workshops and seminars
- Intergovernmental forums

Statistical institute employees, Researchers, etc.

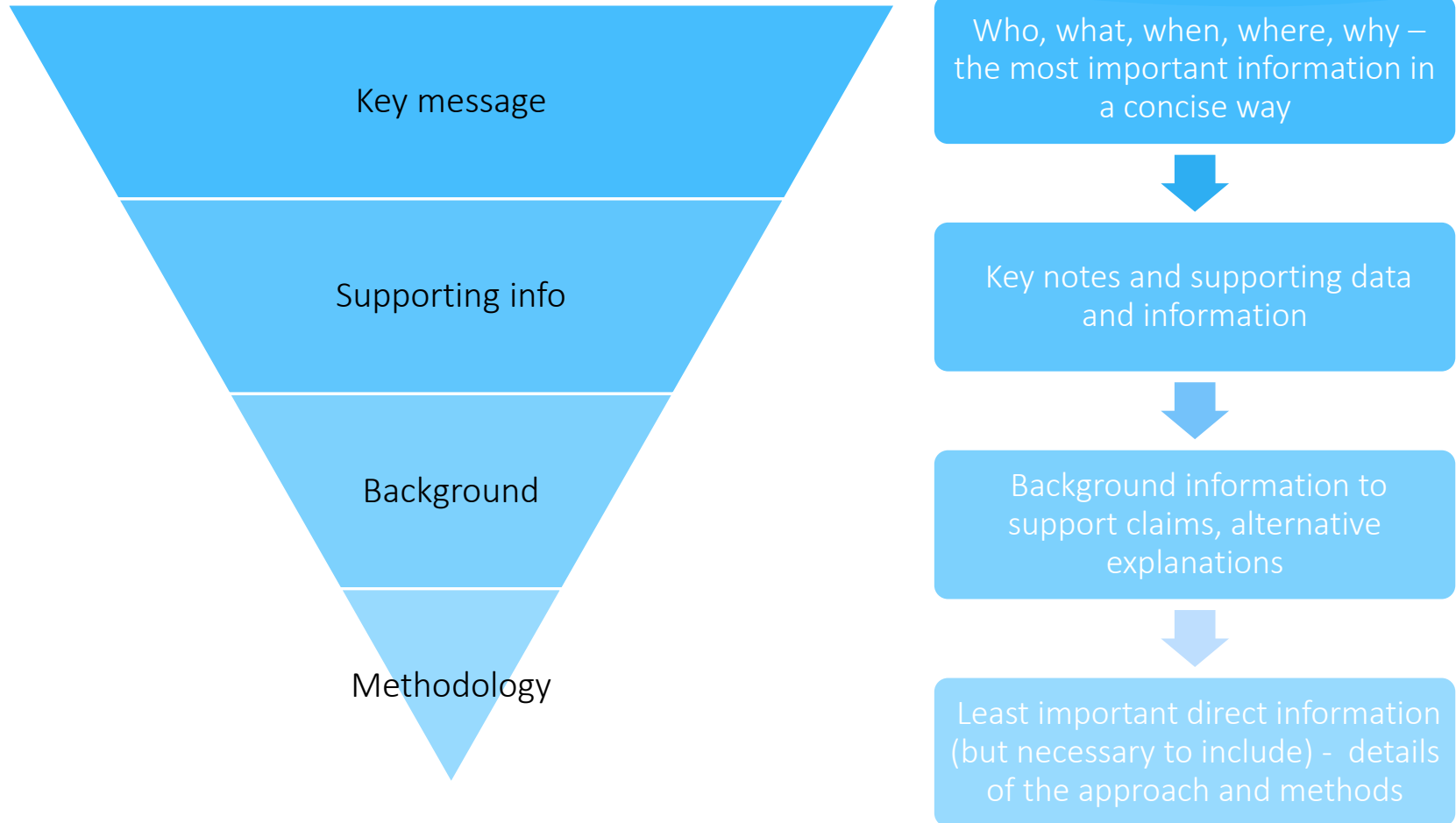Policymakers, Government officials, media and press, civil society, etc.

Bringing it all together
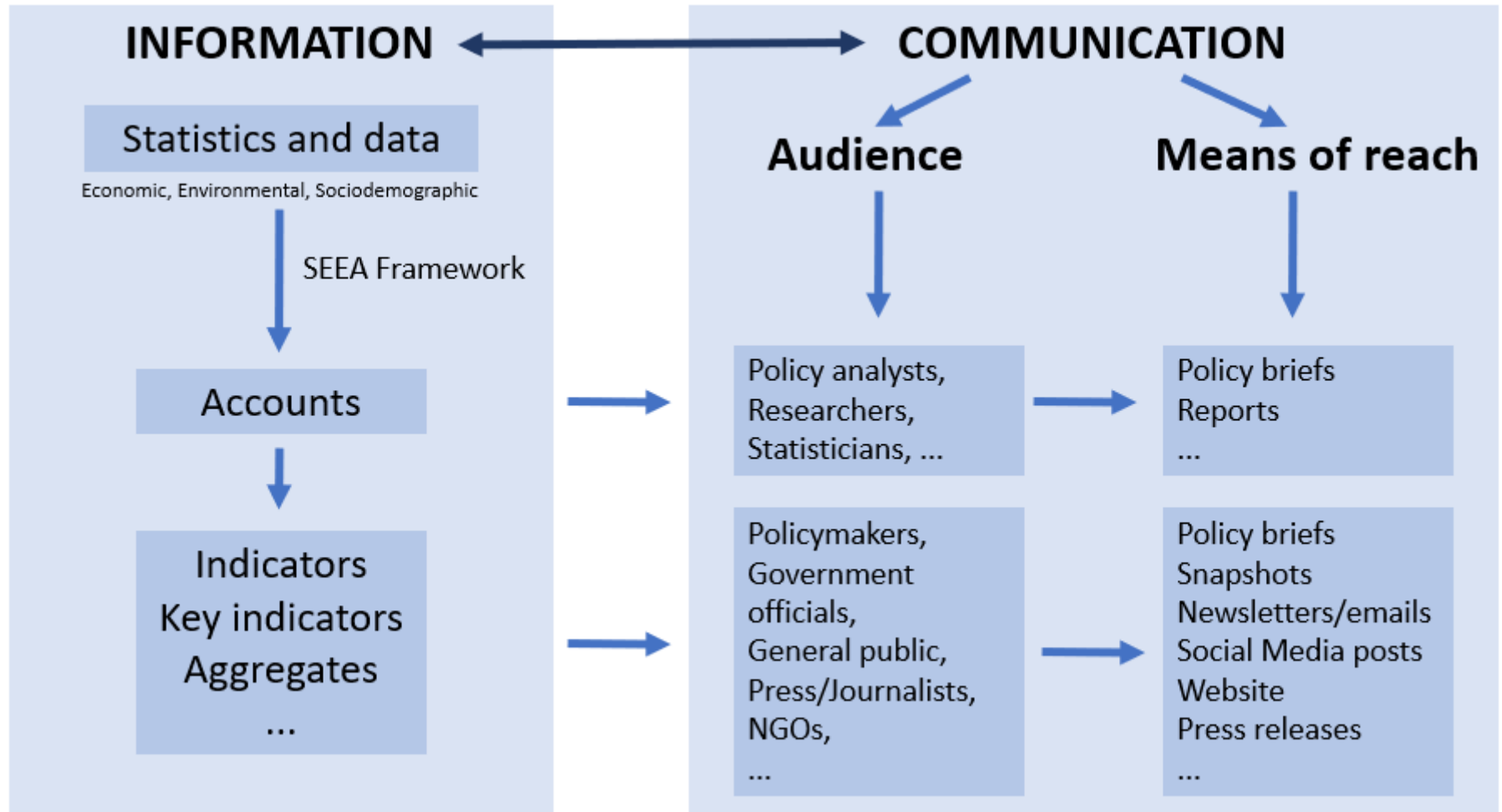
Reaching policymakers

* A policy brief presents a **concise summary of information that can help readers understand, and likely make decisions about, government policies.** Policy briefs may give objective summaries of relevant research and data, suggest possible policy options, or go even further and argue for particular courses of action. **Clear language is especially important in policy briefs.**

* Policy briefs are distinctive in their focus on **communicating the practical implications of research to a specific audience.**

* They are also distinctive in their ability to work as stand-alone documents, usually focused on a single topic.

Reaching policymakers

Key message

Supporting info

Background

Methodology

Who, what, when, where, why – the most important information in a concise way

Key notes and supporting data and information

Background information to support claims, alternative explanations

Least important direct information (but necessary to include) - details of the approach and methods

UNITED NATIONS
SIAP
Statistical Institute for
Asia and the Pacific

Template

Policy briefs often include some of these sections *(this is a non-exhaustive list, it can work as a basic structure/starting-point for writing a policy brief)***:**

- **Title:** A good title quickly communicates the contents of the brief.
- **Executive Summary:** This section is often one to two paragraphs long; it includes an overview of the problem and the proposed policy action – this is your key message.
- **Context or Scope of Problem:** This section communicates the importance of the problem and aims to convince the reader of the necessity of policy action.
- **Policy Alternatives:** This section discusses the current policy approach and explains proposed options. It should be fair and accurate while convincing the reader on why the policy action proposed in the brief is the most desirable.

Template

Policy briefs often include some of these sections *(this is a non-exhaustive list, it can work as a basic structure/starting-point for writing a policy brief)***:**

- **Methodology/Approach:** This section explains how the study was conducted, who conducted it, how the data was collected, and any other relevant background information.
- **Results/Findings/Analysis:** This section should interpret the data in a way that is accessible and clearly connected to your policy advice.
- **Policy Recommendations and implications:** This section contains the most detailed explanation of the concrete steps to be taken to address the policy issue, as well as their implications.
- **Appendices:** If some readers might need further support in order to accept your argument but doing so in the brief itself might derail the conversation for other readers, you might include the extra information in an appendix.
- **Consulted or Recommended Sources/References:** These should be reliable sources that you have used throughout your brief to guide your policy discussion and recommendations.

Reaching the press

* Press releases can be an important tool of communication to **get information out to journalists and the general public.**

* A good press release should take a **factual** tone and be **short and concise**, giving the journalists and other readers the essence of the story.

* Most press releases are made available online on websites and distributed as pdf files.

Reaching the press

* News/Press releases are usually one or two-page documents. They are typically read by journalists but can be made available to general audiences too.

* Organizations of all sizes use press releases. Some common objectives include:
  * To get media coverage - Highlighting links to policy is the most direct route to getting publicity for the SEEA from media outlets.
  * To build reputation - The SEEA would benefit from wider public recognition.
  * To market an organization - A well-written press release can help garner public attention and news coverage.

Press release template

* **Headline:** Be sure to make it clear why your story is interesting and important.

* **Press Contact:** How can the media get in touch with you?

* **City, State, Location:** Where are you, and where is your news happening?

* **Body copy:** Order information by level of importance.

* **Organization's information**: What's your organization all about? Links to additional information

A few things to consider when communicating with the public at large

Many NSOs communicate directly with the public (website, social media)

Some good practices:

* Use appropriate language;
* combine with narrative storytelling;
* contextualize through visual imagery and data visualization

Importance of storytelling

Describing the problem → Laying out the consequences → Talking about the solutions

Exercise

* In groups will be tasked with putting together a policy brief

* Please feel free to use the template (but you don't have to strictly follow it)

* Each group to present their policy brief