



Dissemination Planning Guide

for product launch



DISSEMINATION PLANNING GUIDE

A Deep Dive

December 2022

Background

The Digital Advisory Support Services for Accelerated Rural Transformation (DAS) Program is a facility funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD.) Development Gateway: an IREX Venture, Tech Change, and JengaLab comprise the IFAD-DAS consortium of partners. The goal of the program is to address the gap in digital tools and information access for smallholder farmers through rapid advisory deployments to countries across Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia.

This guide was developed in late 2022 to support the IFAD-funded Program for Rural Irrigation Development (PRIDE) in Malawi. PRIDE developed a digital platform to connect farmers and private sector partners in a digital marketplace; and this guide was intended to support the platform launch. In developing this guide, the IFAD-DAS team conducted an assessment of 240 private and public sector stakeholders, which included focus groups with 113 farmers.

This dissemination planning guide focuses on key messaging for all stakeholders and ways to inform potential users about the product and its benefits. While this guide is specific to the Malawi context, it can be adapted and scaled for use in other contexts.



Main Messaging

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From interviews and focus groups, several key themes/concepts emerged that are crucial to messaging for all user groups:

- Trust/Trustworthiness
- Timeliness
- Usefulness
- Simplicity of messaging

Usefulness

If stakeholders don't see the relevance to their lives from the start, they will not use it.

- Should be the primary dissemination messaging
- Build case studies, testimonials, word of mouth referrals
- Consider ways to ensure an even distribution of user types from the beginning
- Messaging should always include information on how to download/interact with the platform



Trust/Trustworthiness

Across all levels and types of stakeholders, trust was one of the most common themes in terms of challenges and opportunities.

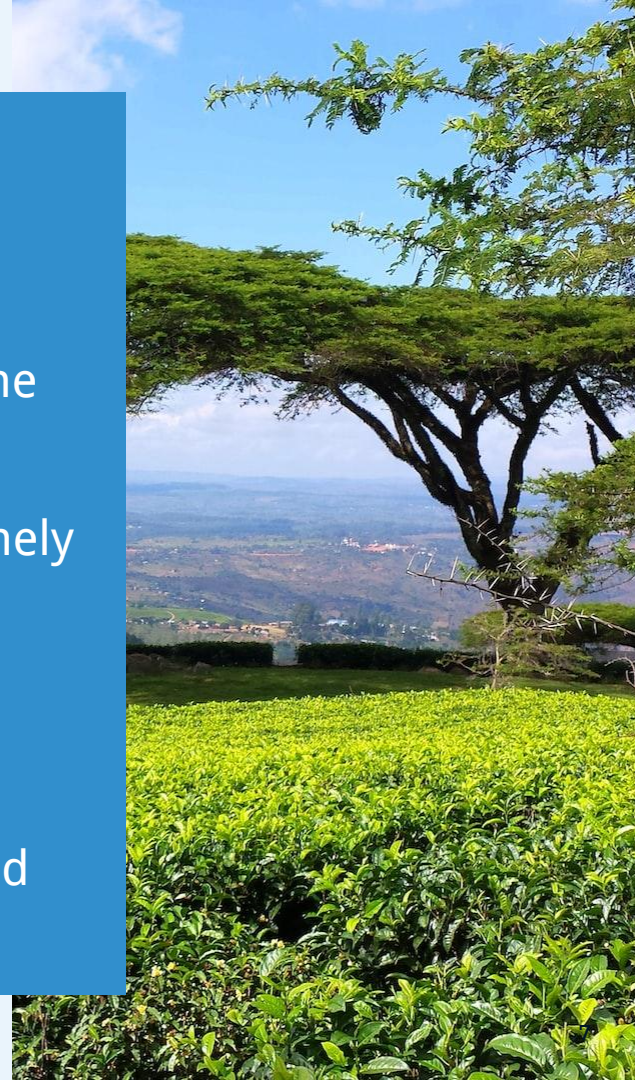
- Messaging needs to reflect the ways that the platform is equally or more trustworthy than the in person market
- Highlighting features that build trust
- Encouraging feedback and questions



Timeliness

A major benefit of the platform is the real time exchange of information currently available in the marketplace.

- Highlight ways that the app can be more timely and relevant than the current face-to-face market
- Highlight the features that keep the app/information up to date
- Highlight opportunities for businesses to add to the timeliness (warehouse services, etc.)



Simplicity

The platform will be complex, but useful. It will be crucial to find ways to explain the app in a simple and straightforward language that is easy to understand.

- Specifically for farmers who will not be interacting with the app itself
- Potentially user test messaging and concepts before dissemination starts



Methods and Examples

Traditional Media

- While television was mentioned by stakeholders, radio and newspaper were more prevalent
- Consider ways to get messaging replayed on the radio – many farmers mentioned that programs were often played while they were in the fields and not repeated.
 - Consider partnerships that could get interviews or interview clips distributed more broadly (Viamo, interactive voice response, etc.)
- YouTube, while not a traditional media is a way to grow the apps social media footprint, while also providing a way for messaging to be replayed
- Consider who from PRIDE (or partners) will speak for the app: someone who knows the app well, can explain it simply, and does not get flustered under pressure
 - Practice interviews beforehand when possible



CoP27 delegates bemoan food wastage

By Tiwonge Kampondeni
in Sharma El Sheik, Egypt

National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi (Nasfam) Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Betty Chinyamunyamu has bemoaned the level of food wastage in the world, saying more food is wasted because "consumers find it unappealing".

The Nasfam CEO, who was one of the CoP27 panelists during a discussion on how to scale up practical solutions to accelerate industrial decarbonisation by 2030, called for more partnerships in the agriculture sector.

"When working with big multi-nationals, there are some quality standards that are coming in from the consumers. Some of these [standards] contribute to food wastage on the farm. You may be aware that there are some standards



CHINYAMUNYAMU—Adverts are perpetuating food loss— File photo

that have nothing to do with safety but [have to do] with the way the product looks. That product is regarded as not good enough and is not bought by multi-national companies. Because there is no buyer, this contributes to wastage on the farm."

Chinyamunyamu said. She said due to climate change, some crops have undergone transformation, citing groundnuts.

"The size of chalmabana [a groundnut variety] grain has shrunk due to the problem of less rain," she

said.

"Adverts are also perpetuating food loss and food wastage. They [advertisers] have to show realistic images of products that are in different shapes, colour and sizes. The more the consumer gets the realistic image, the more they accept the reality," Chinyamunyamu added.

Apart from Nasfam, World Farmers Organisation is concerned that food that has been produced using limited resources such as water and land ends up being wasted

Food loss and food wastage is a serious issue and occurs at various levels of the food supply chain. Malawi's food loss is at 40 percent while the global food waste rate is at 30 percent.

As a response to food

loss and food waste, Unilever shared with Cop27 delegates how the company introduced a green tomato sauce to portray to people that tomato sauce should not only be in red colour.

Statistics indicate that over 10 percent of the global tomato crop is wasted – that is up to 8 million tomatoes – because they are not red enough to go into ketchup.

Malawi Planning Commission Development Planning Manager Siphosiphos Billiat, who is attending Cop27 activities, said farmer capacity building was key to ending some of the problems that farmers are facing.

As one way of finding solutions to the problem of food wastage, delegates observed Decarbonisation Day at the ongoing Cop27 event.

Traditional Media: Examples

- Newspaper (pictured)
 - Print media is more likely for reaching private sector and partner organizations
 - PRIDE could extend the reach by reposting print media on social media platforms
- Radio programs/interviews
 - Radio is a more likely way to reach farmers, but others as well
- Presented on Television
 - Examples from The Times YouTube Channel
 - TV was the lowest priority among stakeholders

Regional body for intellectual property rights knowledge

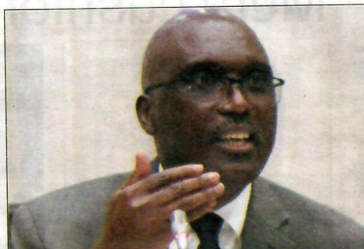
By Matilda Majawa in
Harare, Zimbabwe

The African Regional Intellectual Property Organisation (Aripo) has said poor awareness of intellectual property (IP) rights is contributing to the violation of creators' rights in Africa.

Speaking during a three-day communication training on the Aripo intellectual

held assumption in Africa that only educated people can protect an idea or use the IP system. As a result, although Africa is home to many talented creators, their works are primarily undervalued and unprotected," Twezabe said.

He said low levels of IP awareness in Africa can be addressed if IP offices inform the world about innovations recorded at



He said increased awareness on IP rights can help Africa create employment opportunities and accelerate economic growth.

"The number of IP rights filings from Africa is dismal," he said.

Malawi's Ministry of Justice spokesperson Prirami Masanjala said the training is important as it raises awareness of opportunities existing for

Social Media

Social Media is an obvious way to reach potential users. Consider the current user base as a way to prioritize PRIDE team social media efforts.

2022 Social Media Users in Malawi¹

There were 820.4 thousand social media users in Malawi in January 2022, which is approximately 4.1% of the total population. It also represents an increase of 22.4% from 2021.

- Facebook – 752,000 or 3.8% of the total population
- LinkedIn – 190,000 or 1.9% of the total population
- Twitter – 43,000 or .02% of the total population
- Instagram – 78,600 or .4% of the total population
- TikTok – Unknown

Social Media

- While each social media platform has its own quirks and specifications, many campaigns will be useful across multiple platforms
 - Similar graphics and campaigns can also be used in Whatsapp groups
- Remember the goal is not engagement (although it might provide useful feedback.) The goal is new platform users
- Graphics are a crucial component of social media
 - Specifically for lower-literacy audiences
 - Use alt-text to make it accessible for people with visual disabilities
- Not all content has to be original, reposting others' content (with attribution) while linking to the platform can be just as useful



Social Media: Examples

- Infographics (pictured)
 - Infographics provide information in a more visual format
 - Could be particularly useful for lower literacy audiences
 - Think
- User Videos/Testimonials
 - For PRIDE, this method of gathering user stories could help potential users understand *why* the platform would be useful to them
 - Videos can be made easily with a smartphone



MALAWI
GOVERNMENT

AIP DAILY UPDATE

17 JAN 2022

CUMULATIVE SALES

NPK
UREA
TOTAL BAGS
SEED
LIVESTOCK

2,420,483 BAGS

1,743,801 BAGS

4,164,284 BAGS

2,324,951 PACS

15,928 GOATS

2,082,149

TOTAL NUMBER OF FARMERS WHO
HAVE BOUGHT BOTH NPK AND UREA

FEEDBACK ,CALL
A TOLL FREE 3013



Social Media: Examples (continued)

- [Quotes with images](#)
 - One way to share user testimonials about the app
- [Using graphics for detailed information \(pictured\)](#)
 - Different than an infographic, this type of image draws the eye and can result in higher engagement rates
 - Use the “alt text” to make the image accessible to readers with visual impairments
- [Resharing related media with a link to the app](#)
 - Uses existing engagement to draw attention to the PRIDE message

YouTube

YouTube is not always considered part of the social media landscape, but was mentioned by multiple stakeholders during key informant interviews.

- Several stakeholders describe using YouTube to learn about agricultural practices specifically
- Others described YouTube as a way to learn about new products and apps
- YouTube was also noted as a pastime for those with access
 - YouTube might be a more effective way of reaching some audiences than traditional television
- The National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi (NASFAM) expressed interest in providing information in a more engaging way and noted YouTube specifically as one potential outlet



YouTube: Examples

- Videos using cartoons and graphics (pictured)
 - This types of videos can be more engaging and can feel more professional without paid performers
 - Graphics can be reused across social media
- Promotion through traditional media → Re-posted to YouTube
 - Can further engagement and reach of the platform messaging with very little associated cost



YouTube: Examples (continued)

- Information directly to camera
(pictured)
 - Can feel more authentic
 - One method for showing user stories
 - Take less production time and resources
- Product Demo
 - A demo of the platform can be used/reused, and is an important part of helping potential users picture the platform
 - Gives time to refine script and get user feedback on messaging
 - Can use the same visuals with different languages

Posters, Flyers, and Billboards

Posters, flyers, billboards, and other printed materials were mentioned by stakeholders as a common way they receive and distribute information.

- Posters/flyers were mentioned universally as a way of receiving information
- Several locations were identified as ideal locations for placing flyers
 - Community resource centers
 - Market areas
 - Transit hubs
- Printed materials should target farmers, but include information for private sector as well

Posters, Flyers, and Billboards (continued)

- This type of printed material could be particularly useful as more information can be included (along with graphics) than can be included than in other dissemination methods
- Considerations:
 - Colorful printed materials will be more engaging than the typical black/white
 - Ways to provide information for lower-literacy audiences
 - Include messaging on how the reader can become involved/sign up for the SMS list



Print: Examples

- Poster about new product
 - This example doubles as social media and can be printed
- Billboard countdown to launch
(pictured)
 - These billboards posted throughout Nairobi started a lot of conversations
 - The downside of this type of mystery is the lack of information about the product
- Flyer with informational tabs
 - Tabs could include a link to the app or Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD) code for learning more

Face-to-Face Outreach

Face-to-face outreach will be key, specifically with farmers as the PRIDE team is building trust. Face-to-face outreach can take almost any form.

- Utilize the lead farmer approach, provide sensitization and training for extension workers and lead farmers
- Host booth or table at agricultural and community fairs
- Targeted outreach to community level stakeholders
 - Community level VIPs
 - Specific private sector partners
 - Trusted community members
- Outreach through existing partnerships
- Meeting with or guest lecture for students and professors in agriculture programs

Farmers' Association of Malawi



Face-to-face: Examples

- Booth at a community event
 - This could be a particularly useful way to ensure community members see the USSD and the platform functionality
 - Also for getting user feedback
 - Having a wi-fi enabled booth could ensure user downloads in the moment

Mascot or Spokesperson

Creating or identifying a person or mascot to represent the platform is one way to build product recognition and trust with potential users

- A mascot can be developed into whatever type of “personality” will best drive users to the platform, which is not the case for a human spokesperson
- If the mascot is well received, it can be built into the app and used to “gamify” various app components, which can drive further user engagement and adoption²
- If a spokesperson is selected, consider the following questions
 - Who would be universally trusted?
 - Who would drive engagement?
 - Who could be reliable in the long term?



Mascot/Spokesperson: Examples

- World Cup Mascot (pictured)
 - A fun personified cartoon that is more engaging than a message alone
 - Becomes recognizable with the product
 - Potentially less costly than a human spokesperson
- Human spokesperson
 - NASFAM uses their CEO (see example link), but PRIDE could use anyone as long as they are trustworthy
 - Having a “young farmer” competition to find the spokesperson could be an engaging way to grow the audience

Dramatized Content

Sponsoring storylines in new or existing media that highlight the platform and demonstrate how/why to use it is a subtle way to drive new users to the app.

- Partner with organizations already engaged in dramatized content. PRIDE can expand the reach of messaging through:
 - Listening clubs
 - Video watch parties
- Partner with [youth-led programs](#) to create new dramatized content

Dramatized Content: Examples

- [Malawi Broadcasting Corporation \(MBC\)'s Development Broadcasting Unit](#)
 - This unit is dedicated to development-related issues and has worked with various partners to include educational information in MBC content
- [Soul City – South Africa \(pictured\)](#)
 - Television series that takes place in a fictionalized town in South Africa, which focuses on issues facing communities everywhere
 - Soul City created a [resource guide](#)



Other Methods

Additional methods could be used to demonstrate the platform's usefulness, drive new users, and collect user feedback

- Whatsapp – stakeholders, even those without smartphones, mentioned the centrality of Whatsapp for receiving information
 - Reusing graphics from social media could be a way to boost messaging
 - Whatsapp would also be useful for voice messaging or other audio content
- User incentives: prizes, rewards, or other methods of encouragement for users to join and use the platform
 - Creating a system of incentives for signing up, referrals, or for ongoing engagement with the app could more rapidly grow a user base

Other Methods (continued)

- Creating an official launch event for the new platform
 - Using the launch as an inflection point for media engagement
 - Invite VIPs, partners, community members, and media to an event to provide a demo, answer questions, and celebrate the launch of the platform
- Host or participate in panel events to show how the PRIDE app fits into the larger agtech ecosystem
- Use networking events as a way to share news of the PRIDE app

Final Thoughts

- Working with a media agency could be particularly helpful, specifically when it comes to traditional media and dramatized content
- Consider user feedback and testing of key messaging to ensure that it is easy to understand
- Be inventive, there is no wrong way to tell people about the PRIDE platform

Citations

1. Simon Kemp. Digital 2022: Malawi. 16 February 2022.
<https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2022-malawi>
2. Rethinking the Future. Why Mascot design plays a significant role in branding?
<https://www.re-thinkingthefuture.com/architectural-community/a4933-why-mascot-design-plan-a-significant-role-in-branding/>

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