

DEVELOPING AND PLANNING A COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY FOR THE ROER4D PROJECT

Walji, S.;

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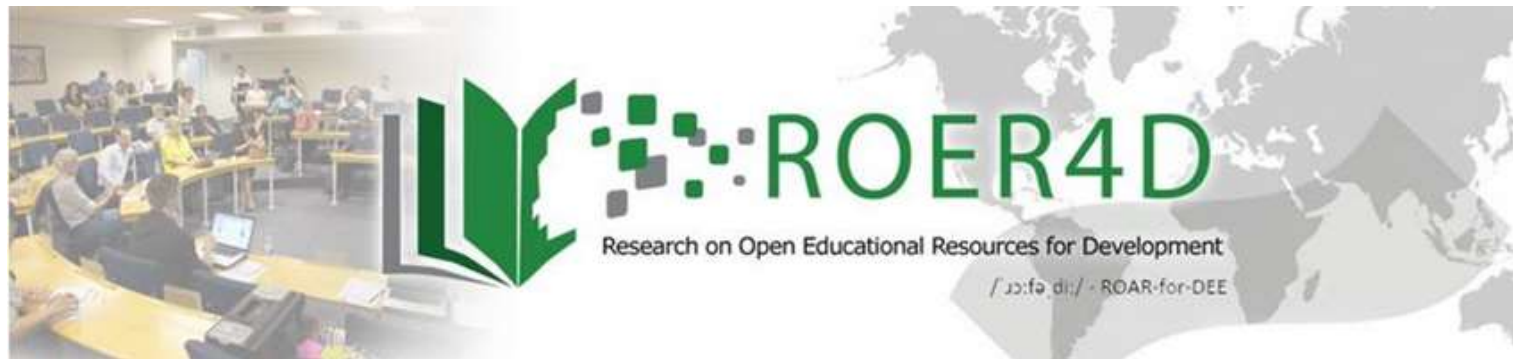
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IDRC Grant/ Subvention du CRDI: 107311-001-Research into Open Educational Resources for Development



**Developing and planning a communications strategy for the ROER4D
project - sharing insights and lessons for
South African Institute for Distance Education
22 May 2017**

Sukaina Walji, ROER4D Communications Advisor and Sub Project 10.3 researcher
Centre for Innovation in Learning & Teaching, University of Cape Town



Introductions



ROER4D Network Hub team at CILT, UCT



ROER4D Network with Lead Researchers

Please introduce yourself and say what you hope to get out of this session...

ROER4D Phases 1 & 2



ROER4D Phase 1: Adoption Studies



ROER4D Phase 2: Adoption & Impact Studies

18 independent sub-projects - 100 researchers & research assistants - 16 time zones - Aug 2013- Dec 2017
Hosted by the University of Cape Town, South Africa and Wawasan Open University, Malaysia
Funded by the IDRC & DFID

ROER4D question and objectives

Whether, how, for whom and under what circumstances can engagement with **open educational practices and resources** provide equitable access to relevant, high quality, affordable and sustainable education in the Global South?

Objectives

1. Build an empirical knowledge base on the use and impact of OER in education
2. Develop the capacity of OER researchers
3. Build a network of OER scholars
- 4. Communicate research** to inform education policy and practice
5. Curate research data and publications for dissemination.

ROER4D was mentored by DECI-2 - an IDRC project to develop research communication and evaluation capacity



DEVELOPING EVALUATION AND
COMMUNICATION CAPACITY IN
INFORMATION SOCIETY RESEARCH

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Welcome to **Evaluation & Communication in Practice**. This site contains evaluation and research communication mentoring tools and case studies. Our work is relevant to practitioners, to commissioners of evaluation & communication, and to scholars in both fields.

WHAT WE DO

WHO WE ARE

What do you mean by a “communications strategy”?

What does it look like?

A communications strategy as an **output/thing**?

A documented set of goals with targets and outcomes?

A map for what communications activities should look like?

A communications strategy as a **process or way of doing**?

An ongoing focus on doing communications throughout the lifetime of a project or set time for the life of an organisation

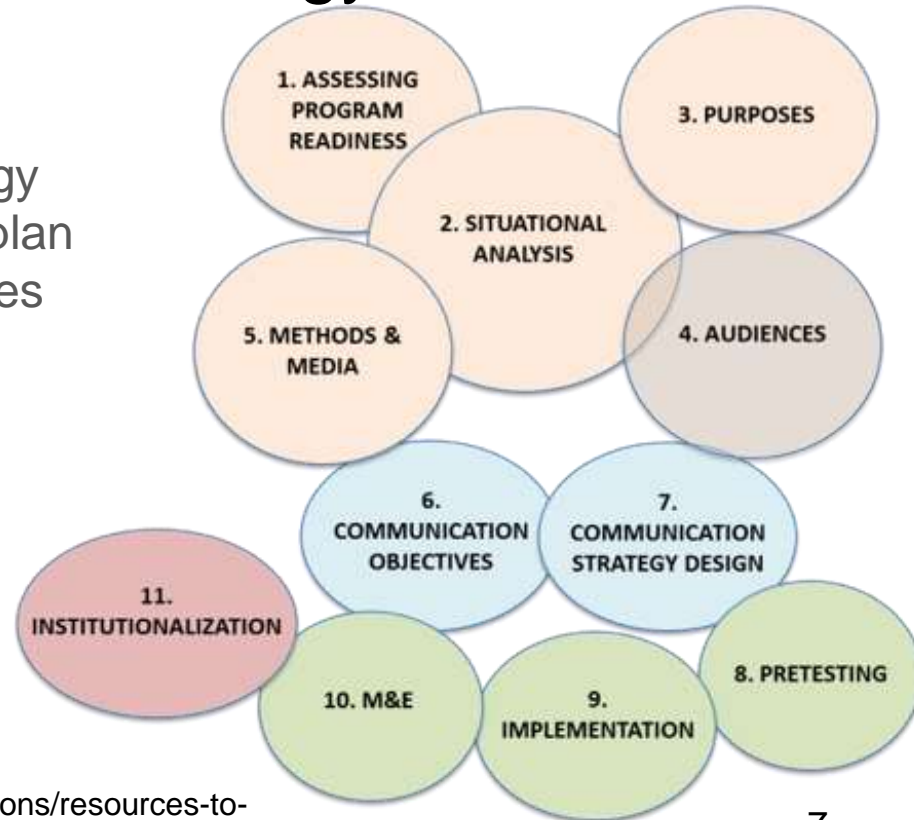
Developing a communications strategy

The ROER4D story...in 3 phases

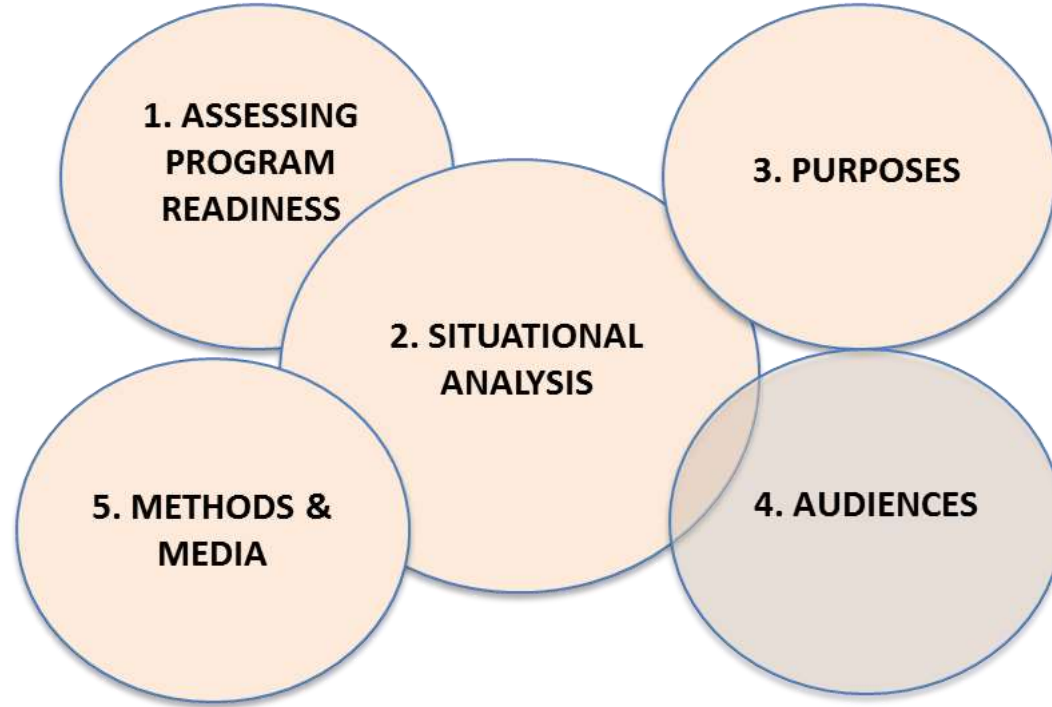
Phase 1: Designing a communications strategy

Phase 2: Implementing the communications plan

Phase 3: Iterating and responding to audiences



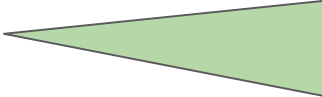
Phase 1: developing a communications strategy



Phase 1: Readiness

Project or institutional readiness?

budgets, leadership support

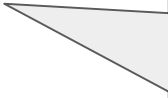
A green callout box with a triangular pointer on the left side, pointing towards the text 'budgets, leadership support'.

Need a minimum infrastructure to get going with communications work - management and individual(s) in place

Individual - who?

time, skills, resources

Build a communications mindset for a project

A grey callout box with a triangular pointer on the left side, pointing towards the text 'Build a communications mindset for a project'.

Beyond a minimum infrastructure in place the project needs people who willingness to learn and respond

Phase 1: Situational analysis

Focusses around a set of questions to see where you are...

Internal

Why do we need to communicate?

What are we already doing in terms of communications?

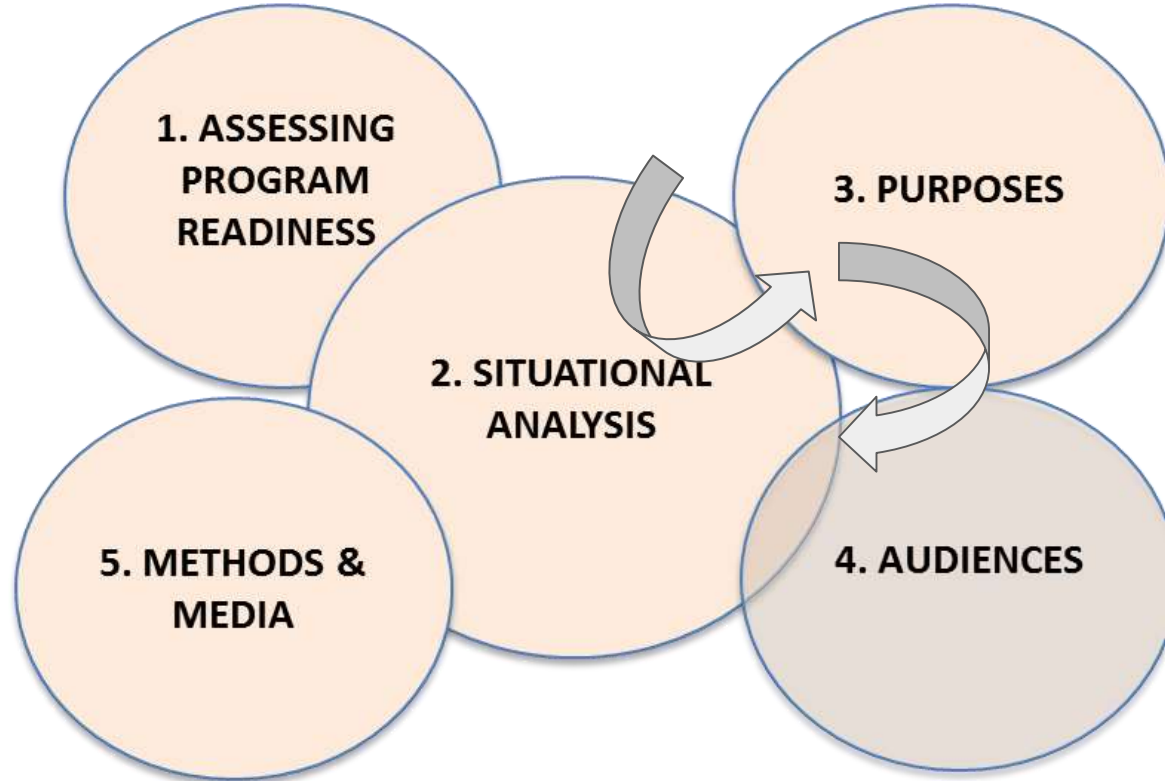
External

What's happening in our space?

Who is interested in our work?

What opportunities are there to make any impact?

Getting started with situational analysis



Phase 1: Developing your communications purposes

To what purpose are you communicating?

Write down all the purposes and objective behind that purpose

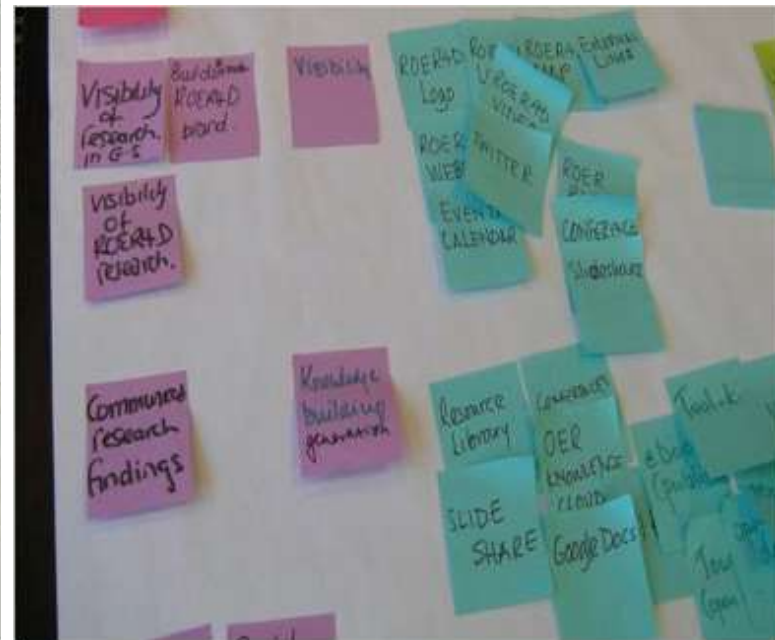
Audiences who are behind those purposes

How you might achieve that (methods and media)

Purposes (why) drive this but can't be separated from audiences (who).

Depending on how much you already know about them, you might be able to start talking about methods and media

Defining purposes, objectives, methods and media



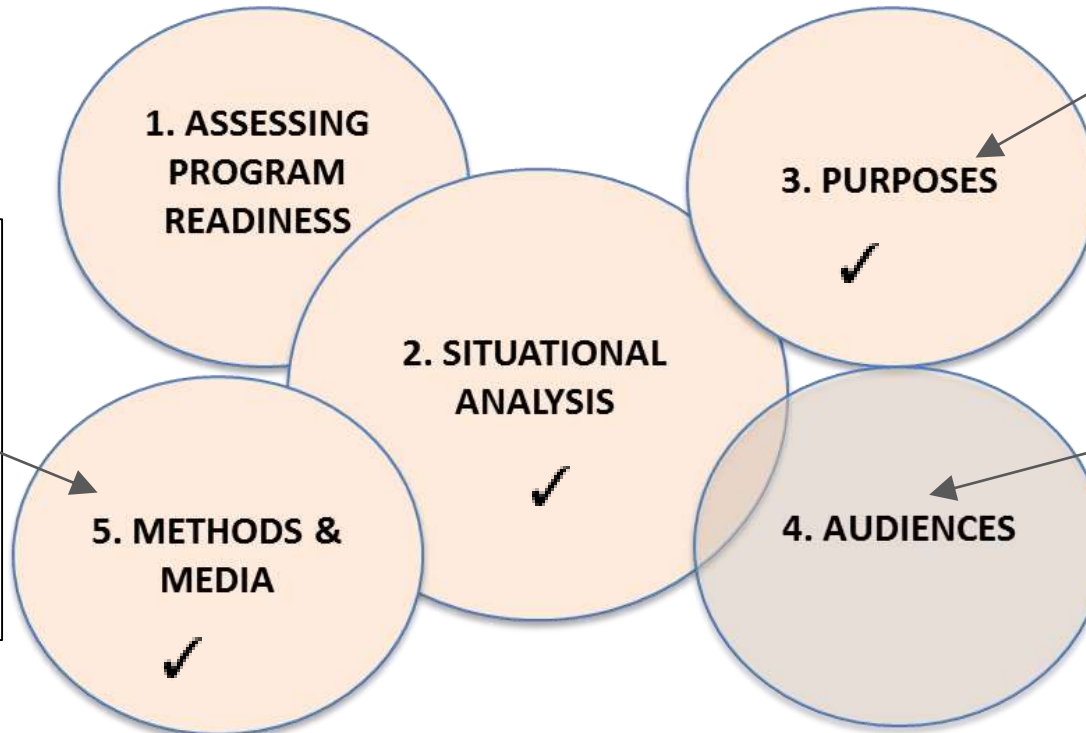
Various objectives
for
communications

Overarching
purpose for those
objectives

Visibility	Get on the academic radar	External – OER researchers	<p>Website with blog, Twitter feed, Links to events (external – e.g. ROER4D – IS Call for proposals; ROER4D Research instrument questions; ROER4D research reports)</p> <p>Conferences, seminars, workshops:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> = 10-15 Mar 2014 - Open Education Week = 23-25 Apr 2014 OCWC Conference = 28-29 Apr 2014 OER 2014? = May 2014 eLearning Africa = 24-27 Jun 2014 OERAsia conference <p>Video</p> <p>Stickers with ROER4D URL</p> <p>AG Members and researchers (e.g. Judith Pete going to eLearning Africa) as ‘ambassadors’</p>
Visibility	Build credibility around OER with academics	External – colleagues at participating institutions? WOU? Sao Paulo?	
Visibility	As above (combine)	External – UCT colleagues	<p>Conferences, seminars, workshops</p> <p>14 Mar Open Education Week</p> <p>Teaching and Learning Conference</p>
Knowledge generation	Modelling open research Minimise duplication and time efficiency	Internal researchers (whole project team)	<p>Google docs</p> <p>collaborative writing</p> <p>translation harmonisation</p>
Knowledge generation	Build a common language	Internal researchers (whole project team)	<p>Vula</p> <p>resources</p> <p>Bibliography (needs to be updated)</p> <p>Slideshare</p>

Extract from
workshop
documentation to
develop
communications
purposes

Completing initial stakeholder analysis



4 purposes established:

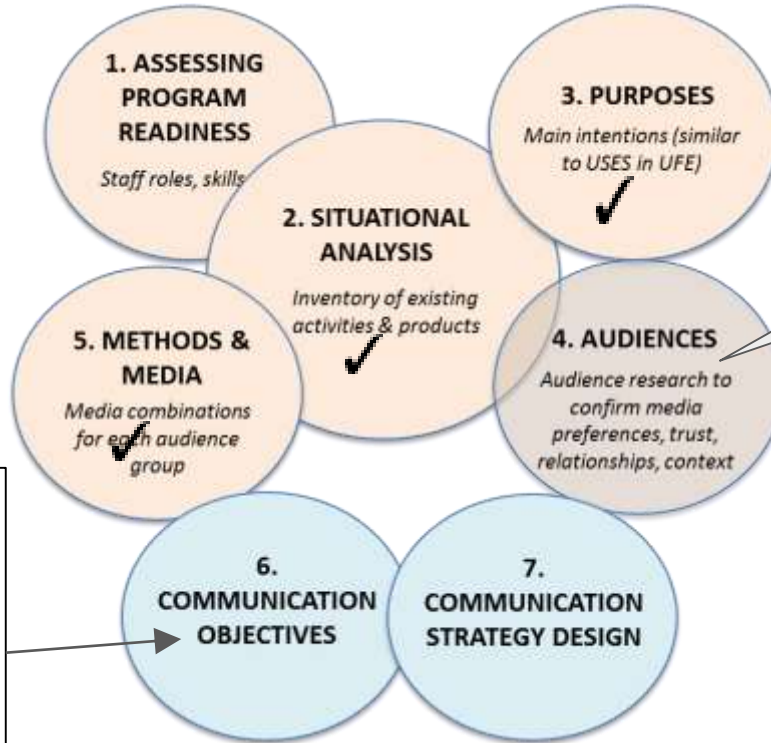
1. Visibility
2. Networking
3. Knowledge generation
4. Research capacity building

Some methods identified for communicating with audiences
-website
-social media
-outputs

Internal and external audiences established mapped to purposes
-Researchers and scholars
-'policy-makers'
-'funders'
-named individuals

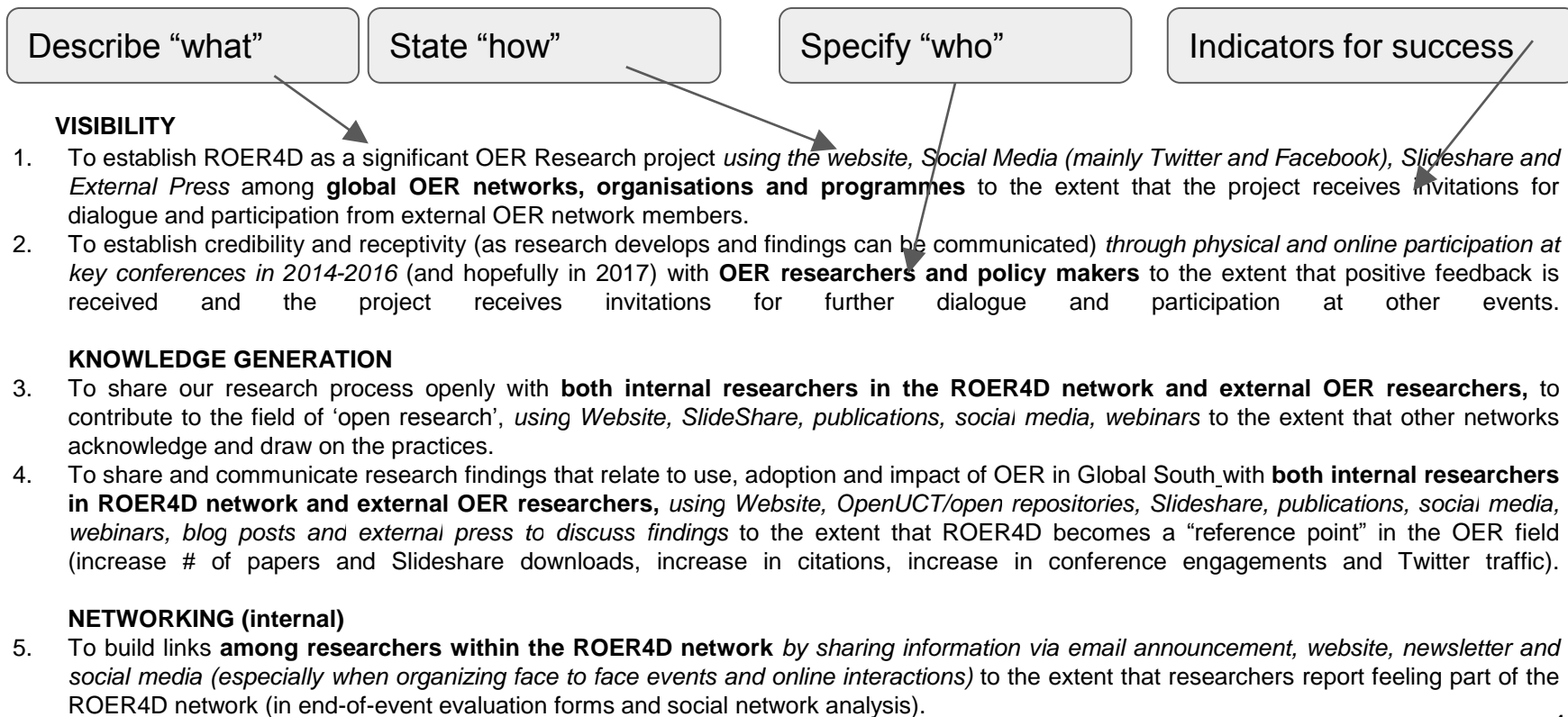
Much of this is emergent and exploratory...

Phase 1: developing a communications strategy

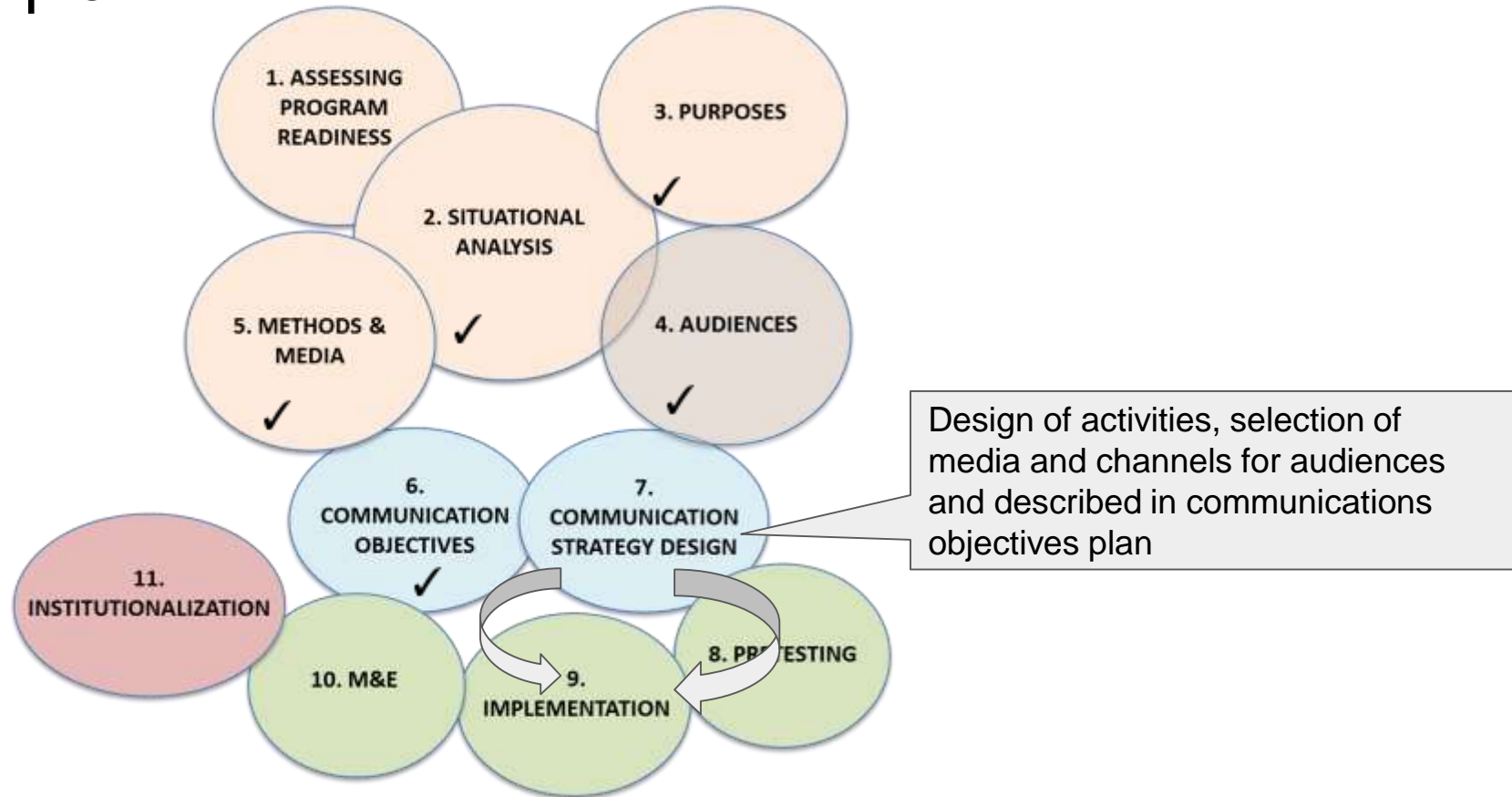


communication objectives aim to be measurable statements that guide the design and implementation of the Communication Strategy

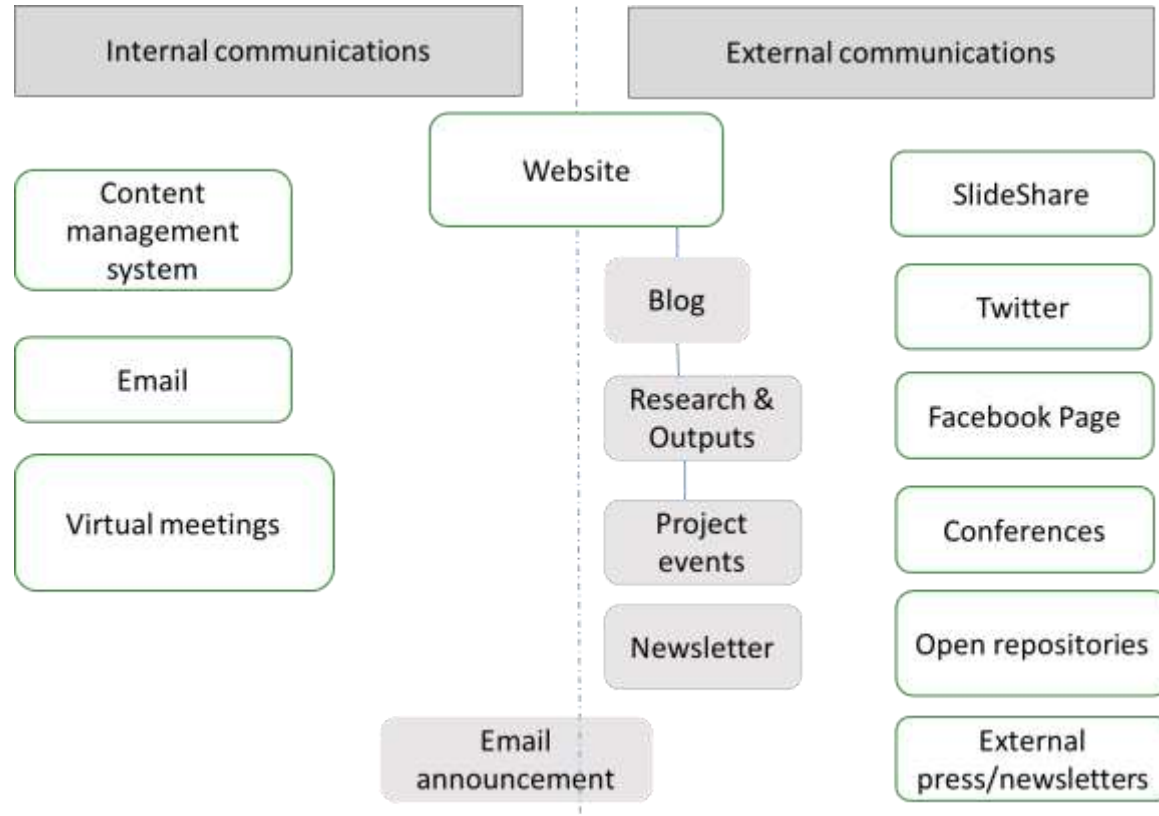
Writing communications objectives



Phase 2: Towards implementing communications plan




Phase 2: description of media and channels



Phase 2: content outputs and channels mapped to purposes




Type of content output	Channel	Align to purposes
Tweets	Twitter	Visibility, Networking (Primary) Knowledge Generation (Secondary)
Facebook posts	Facebook	Visibility, Networking (Primary) Knowledge Generation (Secondary)
Website - <u>Sub-project</u> pages	Website	Visibility, Knowledge Generation
Website - Gallery	Website	Visibility
Website - Directory	Website	Visibility, Networking
Website - About menu pages	Website	Visibility
Website - Network coordination outputs	Website	Knowledge Generation
Blogs	Website blog tool	Visibility, Knowledge Generation (Primary)
Weekly announcement email	Mailchimp (dissemination) Website blog tool (copy for dissemination)	Networking - Internal (Primary) Visibility (Secondary)
Newsletter	Mailchimp Published on Website blog tool	Networking, Knowledge Generation (Primary)

ROER4D website



Research on Open Educational Resources for Development
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- Taking a conference home – sharing the experience of #OER17
- ROER4D weekly update – 5 May 2017
- ROER4D weekly update – 28 April 2017

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LATEST BLOG

The Research on Open Educational Resources for Development (ROER4D) project aims to provide evidence-based research from a number of countries in South America, Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia. The primary objective of the programme is to improve educational policy, practice, and research in developing countries by better understanding the use and impact of OER. In order to address this objective, the specific objectives of the programme are to:


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  10 May

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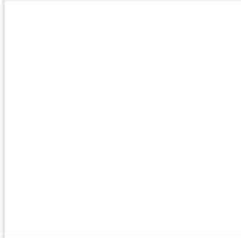
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 **ROER4D**
Published by Sukaina Walji [?] · 1 min · 





This week's update features forthcoming seminars on #OEP from the e/merge Africa network, news about #opentextbooks and links to internet use research in selected African countries from Research ICT in Africa.







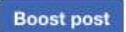
ROER4D weekly update – 19 May 2017


e/merge Africa network offers webinars on growing OEP The e/merge Africa Network is offering two webinars on the theme of growing open educational practices (OEP). The first webinar of the series t...


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 226 likes +1 this week
Gabi Witthaus and 14 other friends


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22

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Twitter account managed by ROER4D Communications Advisor Sukaina Walji @sukainaw
Cape Town
roer4d.org
Joined June 2013
112 Photos and videos

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ROER4D Retweeted
 **e/merge Africa** @emergeAfrica · May 17
Want to understand lecturers' adoption of #OER & #OEP - sign up to join @Glencox's webinar emergeafrica.net/25-may-underst... #emergeafrica @ROER4D

**Understanding lecturer's adoption of OER: a multi-factorial approach**
Join us for this
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presented by 

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www.roer4d.org

Research project on Open Educational Resources for Development in the Global South, focussing on secondary and post-secondary education.

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The adoption and impact of OEP and OER in the Global South: Theoretical, conceptual & methodological framework for the ROER4D project meta-synthesis

Cheryl Hodgkinson-Williams
OE Global 2017, Cape Town, 8-10 Mar 2017
<http://www.slideshare.net/ROER4D/>

 IDRC  CRDI  ROER4D  UKaid  WUWUWU

1 of 22

The adoption and impact of OEP and OER in the Global South: Theoretical, conceptual & methodological framework for the ROER4D project meta-synthesis 1373 views

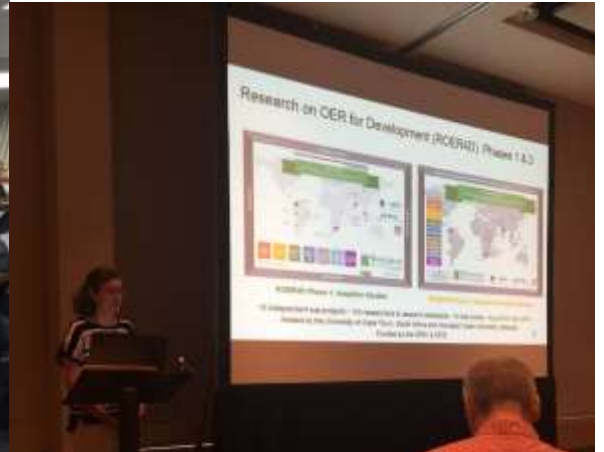
Presentations 47

Documents 1

Infographics 0

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ROER4D at conferences



ROER4D presence enhanced with social media

Use of social media to amplify conference attendance

Live tweeting during key presentations

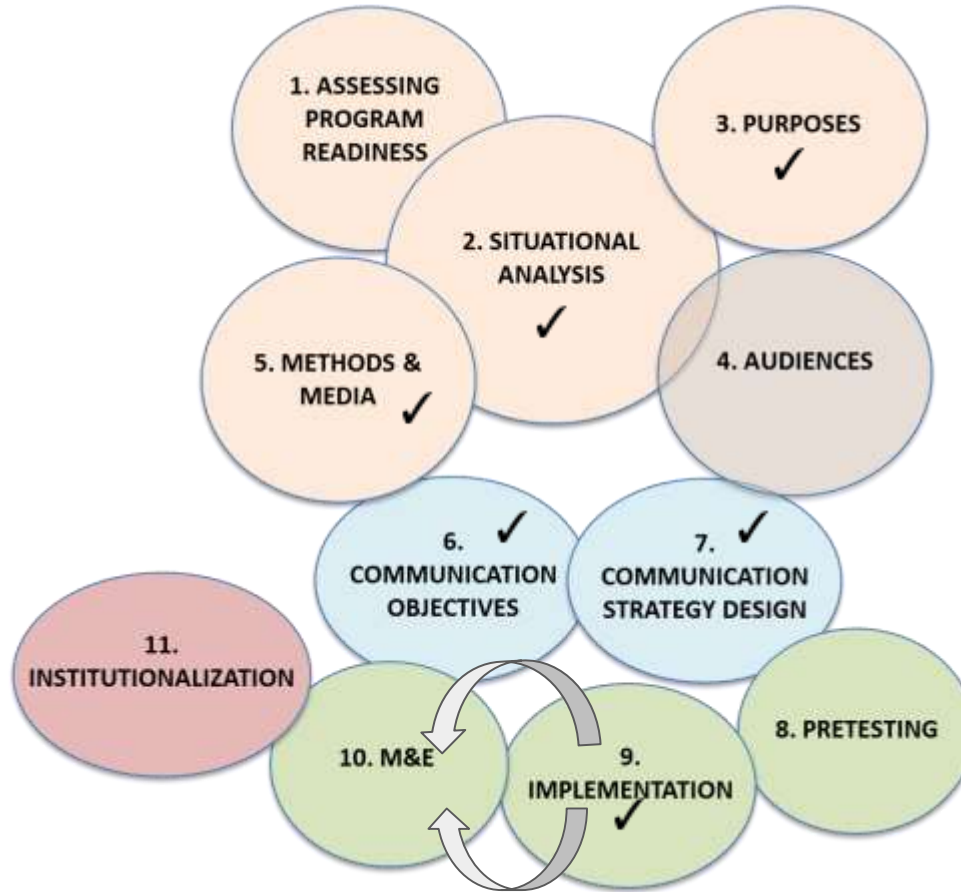
Participation in virtual events at face to face events

Set up appointments with key stakeholders

Virtual friendly “stalking”



Phase 2: Monitoring and iterating



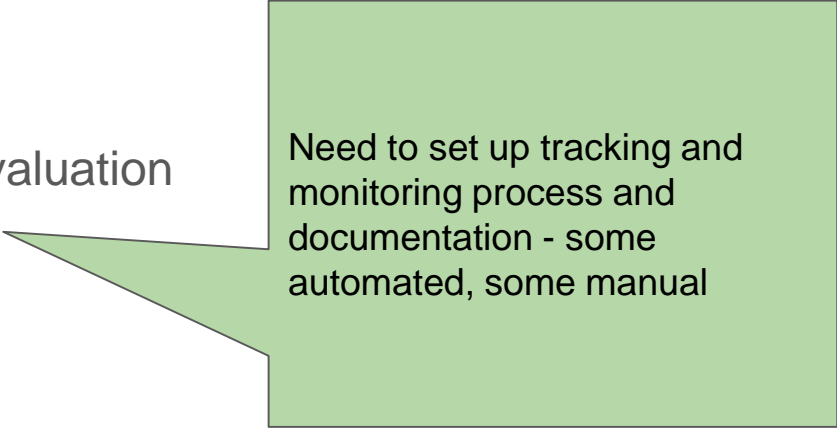
Purpose and use of monitoring

To track effectiveness of communications strategy

- track media mentions and requests for participation
- track ROER4D publications and outputs
- track follower counts on social media
- formal evaluation as part of ROER4D evaluation

Monitor website via Google analytics

- input into redesign of website
- track popular pages on website

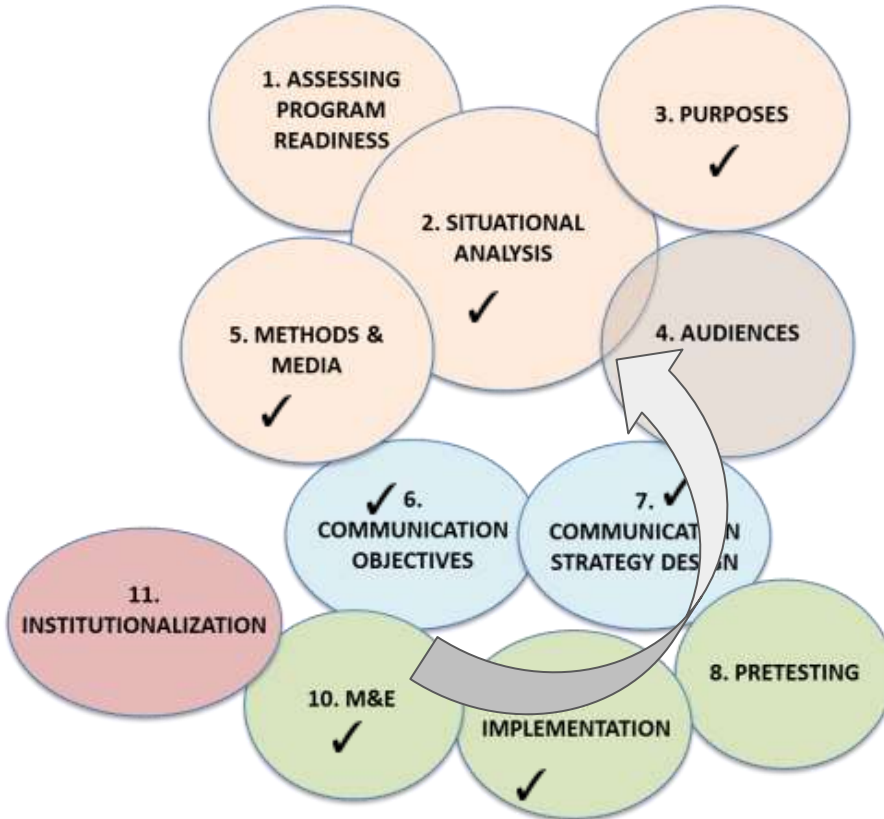


Need to set up tracking and monitoring process and documentation - some automated, some manual

Formal stakeholder analysis of communications

- interviews with researchers in networks

Phase 3: iterating and responding to audiences



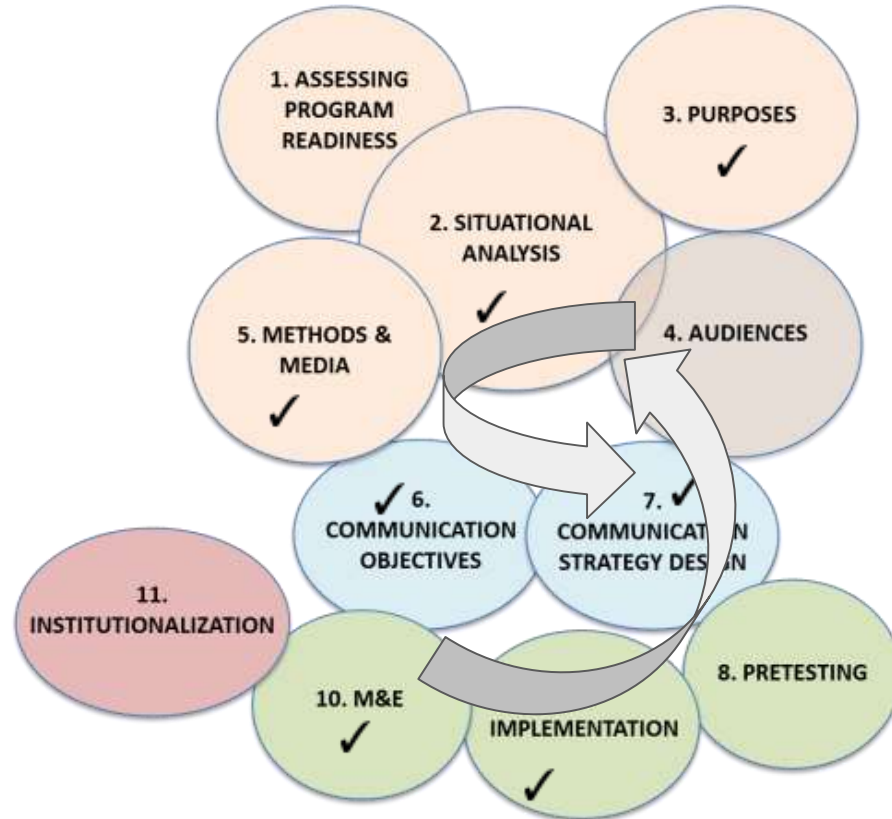
A responsive and participatory communications approach, enabled by social media, means ongoing audience identification and stakeholder engagement

Phase 3: stakeholder mapping and engagement

PURPOSE	AUDIENCE/STAKEHOLDER
Visibility (for project)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government/policy makers 2. Teachers/educators 3. Institutions (HEI, Schools) 4. OER/OE community (practitioners and researchers) 5. Global researchers 6. Funders 7. Development community 8. Others (specific interest/discipline) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Textbook publishers b. Open data community c. MOOC providers d. Language practitioners e. etc
Knowledge generation (specific research chapters with thematic and/or geographic focus will align to specific audiences)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government/policy makers 2. Teachers/educators 3. Institutions (HEI, Schools) 4. OER/OE community (practitioners and researchers) 5. Global researchers 6. Funders 7. Development community 8. Others (specific interest/discipline) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Textbook publishers b. Open data community c. MOOC providers d. Language practitioners e. etc
Networking	"Internal" ROER4D researchers and OER community

Mid-project stakeholder mapping exercise using data collected as part of communications activities

Phase 3: iterating and responding to audiences



Ongoing iteration between audience engagement and M&E data feeding into implementation plan and activities

Next steps

Design of final ROER4D outputs in progress

edited volume of research chapters as an e-book

papers and book chapters in progress

enhanced web pages to showcase research

video interviews with researchers in production

“policy briefs” for bite-sized intros to research

participation at educator, researchers, policy-maker levels in progress

looking for windows of opportunity for research impact

Challenges to implementing a communications strategy

Resources

Time, skills, aptitude

Social media engagement can be challenging for many

Buy-in from management and colleagues

Ensuring fresh up-to-date content

Blogging (but difficult to sustain)

Harvesting network for content

Persistence

Takes time to build profile and networks

Further resources

Walji, S (in press). An agile approach to Research Communication in the ROER4D project. [Chapter as part of edited volume for ROER4D project]

Draft chapter for review at

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hKUziomy3kI_ijir0GeJtgZF5YiGWu7nQEN28TSnHrE/edit#

(comments welcome)

Citation and attribution

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Acknowledgements

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