

EVALUATION RESOURCE

DEVELOPING AN EVALUATION DISSEMINATION PLAN

Transparency is a key practice of evaluation at USAID. As noted in USAID's [Evaluation Policy](#):

“[F]indings from evaluations will be shared as widely as possible, with a commitment to full and active disclosure,” and “The presumption of openness in the conduct of USAID evaluations will be manifested at two stages: (1) when an evaluation design is agreed upon; and (2) when the evaluation report is completed, that report will be disseminated.”

The Policy further stipulates that USAID evaluations of all types will include a *dissemination plan*.

A dissemination plan is not difficult to prepare and helps ensure that evaluations are useful and shared effectively. This guidance document and the associated template are intended to assist USAID Missions and Bureaus in developing a dissemination plan that satisfies the Policy and USAID's interest in transparency, accountability, and learning. USAID Missions and Bureaus may use the dissemination plan template as a guide to formulating and drafting dissemination plans.

Timing: Evaluation managers should begin initial planning for dissemination at the early stages of an evaluation—after a decision to evaluate has been made but prior to completing the evaluation statement of work (SOW). This way, dissemination activities can be written into the evaluation team's SOW and appropriately resourced and budgeted. As work progresses, the dissemination plan may be updated or revised as needed based on new information or learning.

Components: The first step in developing an evaluation dissemination plan is identifying stakeholders. With input from the program office, technical specialists, and implementing partners, identify the groups and/or individuals who are likely to be affected by or interested in the evaluation results. A smaller group of stakeholders (perhaps including the host government counterpart, key beneficiary groups, or local research organizations) will be consulted during the design phase. Decide on who will be included in this group during the stakeholder identification stage. Additional tools are available for stakeholder analysis.

For each identified stakeholder, think through USAID's goal in disseminating the evaluation results. Are we aiming to change policy? Influence the design of other projects or activities? Contribute to the technical knowledge base? Satisfy accountability concerns? Attract a new partnership? Prevent repetition of mistakes?

Articulating a goal for dissemination assists with the next piece of the strategy—identifying the appropriate communication tools. These may simply include reports, briefs, blog posts, press releases, graphics, and e-mails to listservs. They may also include more involved efforts including presentations, meetings, facilitated workshops or discussions, videos, and journal

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articles. Again, for the identified stakeholders, consider how they receive information and if there are existing forums or channels through which to reach them. Factors to consider include:

- Literacy level and native language
- Access to the Internet, radio, or other sources of media
- Existing websites, journals, or email listservs where dissemination would be appropriate
- Planned events or decision-making points
- Resources available for design and editing

The evaluation manager should identify a responsible party and timeline for each dissemination activity. In some cases, the development and dissemination of knowledge products from an evaluation would be included in the SOW for the evaluator(s). In others, USAID or another stakeholder should take the lead. For the timeline, consider external factors—such as the political cycle or project design decision points—that may influence your communications objectives, and build in time for copyediting, design, and translation, if necessary.

Finally, an evaluation dissemination plan may include products that are designed to monitor and document the impact of the evaluation and the associated knowledge products. These may include, for example, a follow-up survey or feedback forms at events.