



Food and Agriculture
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Unlocking the potential
of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture
in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific

Building the Professional Capacities of the Seabob Working Group (SWG) and the
Guyana National Fisherfolk Organisation (GNFO) Project.

Report of the Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Training Workshop for the SWG

March 18-19, 2026
Regency Suites Hotel, Georgetown,
Guyana

Acknowledgement: The “Building the Professional Capacities of the Seabob Working Group (SWG) and the Guyana National Fisherfolk Organization (GNFO)” is a sub-project of the “Sustainable Development of Fisheries and Aquaculture Value Chains in African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries (FISH4ACP)” project. FISH4ACP is an initiative of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations with funding from the European Union (EU) and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

Disclaimer: This workshop report is an output of the *Building the Professional Capacities of the SWG and GNFO* sub-project, implemented by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) under the FISH4ACP project. The views expressed in this report are those of CANARI and do not necessarily reflect the views of FAO, the EU, OACPS, or BMZ.

Background

The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) has been engaged by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), under the FISH4ACP initiative, to implement the sub-project [Building the Professional Capacities of the Seabob Working Group \(SWG\)](#) and the [Guyana National Fisherfolk Organisation \(GNFO\)](#).

This initiative supports industrial fishers, artisanal fisherfolk organisations, government, and civil-society stakeholders in Guyana to strengthen governance, management capacity, and inclusive participation in fisheries decision-making. It addresses the need for more effective, representative, and sustainable management of the seabob value chain, especially as artisanal fisherfolk assume a greater role in shaping the sector's future.

The project provides targeted capacity-building for the SWG and GNFO and promotes collaborative, democratic structures within both bodies so they can jointly lead efforts to advance sustainable fisheries management and resilience in Guyana.



Photo credit: Guyana Fisheries Department

Rationale for the workshop

Guyana's seabob (*Xiphopenaeus kroyeri*) fishery is a vital contributor to livelihoods and the national economy, supporting both artisanal and industrial operators. The SWG, established in 2012, brings together government, industry, and civil society stakeholders to support sustainable management of the fishery, which achieved Marine Stewardship Council certification in 2018. In 2023, the GNFO, representing artisanal fishers, formally joined the SWG, strengthening its role as a national multi-stakeholder platform.

To further strengthen the effectiveness of the SWG, CANARI facilitated a roadmap development and capacity needs assessment workshop with SWG members in Guyana from December 4-5, 2025. Through this process, participants identified **communication and stakeholder engagement** as key capacity development priorities to support more effective collaboration and participation in fisheries governance.

This workshop has therefore been designed in response to these identified needs, with the aim of strengthening participants' understanding and practical skills in communication and stakeholder engagement to support the effective functioning of the SWG and inclusive governance of Guyana's seabob fishery.



Group photo of workshop participants and facilitators

Photo credit: CANARI

Workshop overview

Workshop title: Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Capacity Building Workshop for the SWG

Workshop dates: March 18 – 19, 2026

Location: Regency Suites Hotel, Georgetown Guyana.

Participants: The workshop was attended by eight (8) members of the SWG, including representatives from the Fisheries Department, and other key stakeholders along the seabob value chain (*See participants list at **Appendix 1***).

Facilitators:

- Melanie Andrews-Bacchus, CANARI
- Kathryn Jones-Douglas, CANARI
- Kerresha Khan, CANARI
- Neil Marks, Media Engagement Consultant

Workshop Objectives

The workshop aimed to:

- **Strengthen participants' understanding of communication and stakeholder engagement** and their importance for effective collaboration and decision-making within the SWG.
- **Explore how communication and stakeholder engagement can support the work of the SWG**, including improving information sharing, dialogue, and collaboration among government, industry, civil society, and fisherfolk stakeholders.
- **Build participants' skills in developing clear and effective key messages** to communicate the priorities and work of the SWG.
- **Enhance participants' capacity to engage with the media**, including presenting messages clearly and confidently to increase the visibility of the SWG and the seabob fishery.



Methodology and Approach

The workshop used a participatory and interactive approach, combining:

- Plenary discussions
- Scenario analysis
- Small group work
- Stakeholder mapping exercises
- Media training and mock interviews

The workshop emphasised linking concepts to real-world situations faced by the SWG, enabling participants to reflect critically on existing practices and identify opportunities for improvement.



Workshop Agenda

Day 1

Time	Topic
9:30 - 10:00 a.m.	Registration
10:00 - 10:30 a.m.	Welcome, introductions, workshop overview
10:30 - 11:30 a.m.	Review and validation of SWG roadmap and workplan and standing orders
11:30-11:40 a.m.	Bio break
11:40 - 12:30 p.m.	Understanding Communication and Stakeholder Engagement
12:30 - 1:20 p.m.	Lunch (and group photo)
1:30 - 2:45 p.m.	Using Communication and Stakeholder Engagement to support the SWG
2:45 – 2:55 p.m.	Break
2:55 - 3:55 p.m.	Crafting Key Messages
3:55 - 4:00 p.m.	Wrap up and preview of Day 2

Day 2

Time	Topic
8:30 - 9:00 a.m.	Registration
9:00 - 9:15 a.m.	Recap and Reflections from Day 1
9:15 - 9:45 a.m.	Understanding Media Engagement
9:45 - 10:30 a.m.	Preparing for Media Interviews
10:30 - 10:45 a.m.	Break
10:45 - 11:45 a.m.	Mock Media Interviews
11:45 - 12:15 p.m.	Feedback and Reflection
12:15 - 12:30 p.m.	Workshop evaluation, Next Steps and Close
12:30 - 1:00 p.m.	Lunch (End of Day 2)

Understanding communication and stakeholder engagement

Participants were introduced to the following key concepts:



Photo credit: CANARI

COMMUNICATION

Communication is the process of sharing information clearly and effectively to raise awareness, build understanding, and support decision-making.

It is a key tool within stakeholder engagement, used to inform, clarify, and enable dialogue.

STAKEHOLDERS

A stakeholder is any individual, group, or organisation that can affect or be affected by a project, decision, or activity.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

This is a structured and ongoing process of building relationships with stakeholders by involving them, listening to them, and responding to their needs. It goes beyond communication to foster trust, participation, and shared ownership of decisions.

STAKEHOLDER MAPPING

This is the process of identifying and analysing stakeholders based on their level of interest and influence, to guide how they should be engaged. It helps prioritise efforts, reduce risks, and build support for decisions.

Understanding communication and stakeholder engagement

A reflective exercise revealed that participants generally understood these concepts, though some uncertainty remained around analytical aspects of stakeholder mapping.

Participants identified key gaps in current SWG practice, including:

- Limited structured stakeholder mapping beyond the SWG
- Weaknesses in systematic communication processes
- Lack of clear communication platforms/mechanisms to engage with external stakeholders

Stakeholder

A stakeholder is any individual, group or organisation that can affect or be affected by a project, decision or activity.

Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder engagement is a structured and ongoing process of building relationships with stakeholders by involving them, listening to them, and responding to their needs. It goes beyond communication to foster trust, participation and shared ownership of decisions.

Communication

Communication is the process of sharing information clearly and effectively to raise awareness, build understanding and support decision-making.

It is a key tool within stakeholder engagement, used to inform, clarify and enable dialogue.

Communication in the context of stakeholders

Communication with stakeholders is the strategic exchange of relevant and timely information using appropriate channels to manage expectations, build trust and support alignment.

Stakeholder mapping

Stakeholder mapping is the process of identifying and analysing stakeholders based on their level of interest and influence, to guide how they should be engaged.

It helps to prioritise efforts, reduce risks and build support for decisions.

Scenario exercise: Breakdown in communication and engagement

A scenario involving the sudden introduction of a fisheries regulation (reduction in fishing days) was used to explore the consequences of poor communication and stakeholder engagement in fisheries management. Participants gave their feedback on this scenario.

SCENARIO

The government took the decision to pass a new regulation which will take effect in three months. That regulation is to reduce fishing days which will also affect the Seabob industry. They have passed on all responsibility for stakeholder engagement to the SWG.

Before the SWG can put anything in place, word has gotten out and the result is there is confusion. There is resistance. There is misinformation spreading. Fishers are upset. Processors are worried about supply. The government is quiet. Activists are loud. Communities feel left out and, as usual, social media has multiple versions, including an AI-generated deep fake.

Plenary discussion on scenario exercise

Participants identified several key failures on communication and stakeholder engagement from the scenario, these included:

- Lack of stakeholder consultation before a decision was made
- Communication channels and messages not identified
- Absence of clear roles and responsibilities
- Weak coordination between institutions

In terms of a more effective process, participants outlined the following:

- Start with mapping key stakeholders that would be impacted by the regulation
- Engage in early consultation with key stakeholders
- Use evidence-based decision-making
- Establish clear communication and stakeholder feedback channels

This exercise reinforced that effective stakeholder engagement is not only procedural, but critical to building trust and ensuring successful policy implementation.



Photo credit: CANARI

Stakeholder mapping and analysis

Participants were introduced to **stakeholder mapping** as a useful process to support effective communication and engagement.

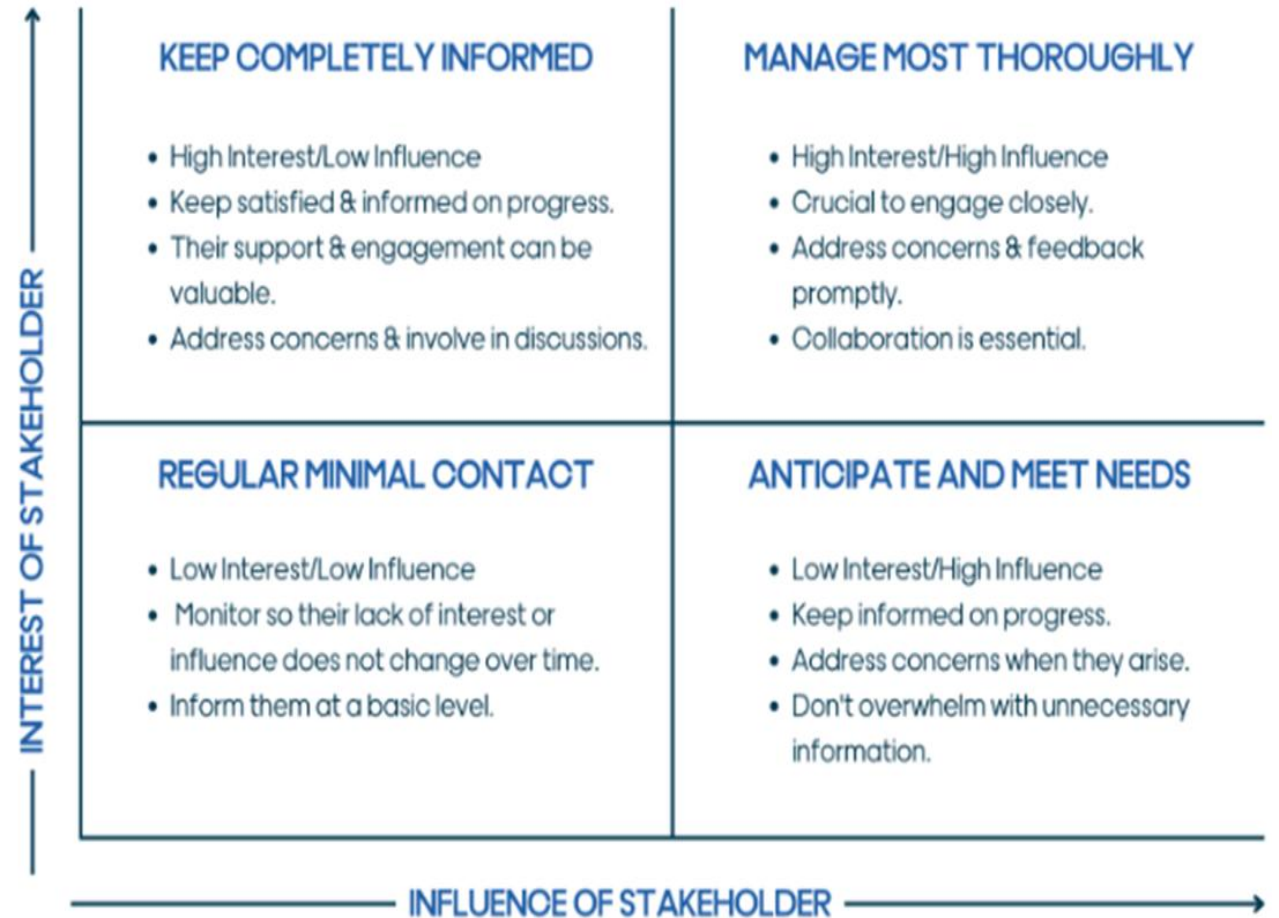
It was emphasised that, before improving engagement, it is important to clearly identify who stakeholders are, why they matter, and how they relate to the seabob industry in Guyana.

Key concepts introduced included:

Stakeholder: Any individual, group, or organisation that influences or is affected by decisions in the sector

Interest: The degree to which a stakeholder cares about, depends on, or is affected by decisions

Influence: The level of power a stakeholder has to shape decisions, policies, or outcomes

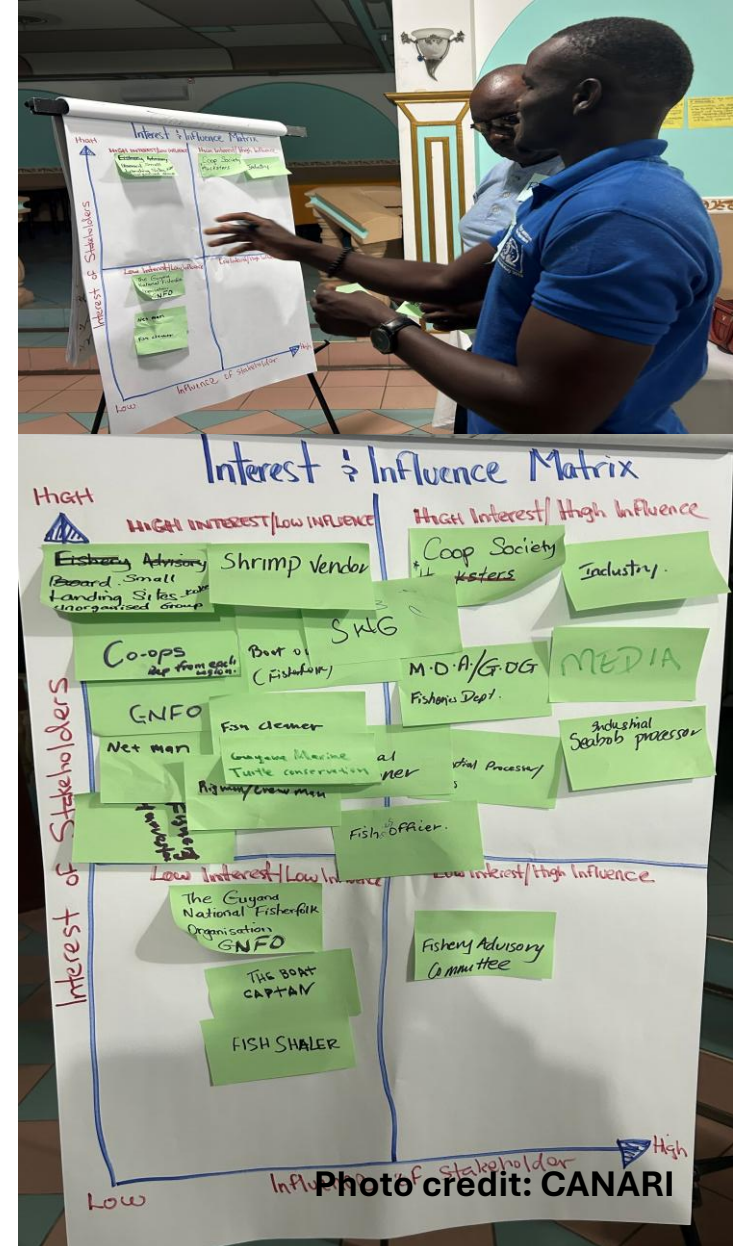


Mapping stakeholder interest and influence matrix

Participants undertook an exercise to identify key stakeholders involved in the seabob fishery and map them according to their levels of interest and influence. The previous scenario was used to guide stakeholder identification and mapping.

Participants observed that many stakeholders fell within the **high interest / low influence** category, highlighting issues related to equity and representation within the sector.

The exercise also revealed differing perceptions of stakeholders' levels of interest and influence. For example, some participants perceived the Guyana National Fisheries Organization (GNFO) as having high interest but low influence, while others viewed it as having both low interest and low influence. This highlighted how perspectives can vary based on individual experiences and understanding of stakeholder roles.



Designing stakeholder engagement strategies

Following the stakeholder mapping exercise, participants worked in groups to develop tailored engagement strategies for selected stakeholders. Using the same scenario, participants were asked to identify, for each stakeholder, their level of interest and influence, appropriate engagement methods, and suitable communication channels.

Stakeholder engagement methods identified included:

- Awareness campaigns and landing site meetings for fisherfolk
- Formal consultations and technical engagement for processors
- Participation in existing advisory bodies for high-influence stakeholders

The exercise emphasised that engagement approaches must vary depending on stakeholder characteristics.



Stakeholder	Details on Interest/Influence	Stakeholder engagement method?	Communication Channel(s)?
Fishers (Harvesters)	High Interest Low Influence Why? Livelihoods Prerequisite for Consumers Status within V/chain Little technical expertise (perception)	Awareness Campaigns Workshops Information sharing Meetings at Landing sites	In person meetings Flyers Media (all types)
Seabob Industries Processors	High interest High influence Contribution to GDP and Export Employment Livelihoods ↑	In person meetings and consultations and SWG meetings Stock assessment inclusion	In person meetings Official memos Emails Workshops
GINFO	Low interest Low influence Participation seems low as a unit they look weak Not practicing according to mandate	Awareness campaigns Training meeting at landing sites SWG meeting	SWG meetings FAC meetings Flyers (meeting) Media (all types)
FAC	Low interest High influence made up of administrative and fisherfolk leaders - more technical	Not all the chair of SWG attend meetings of the FAC	FAC meetings Emails Photo credit: CANARI

Crafting key messages

Following the stakeholder engagement strategy exercise, participants focused on developing clear, simple, and effective key messages to communicate the role of the SWG and key issues affecting the seabob sector.

Facilitators provided guidance on what makes a strong key message and introduced the **Head-Heart-Hands** framework.

Participants then worked in groups to develop tailored messages for different stakeholder audiences, which were shared and refined in plenary to ensure clarity, relevance, and impact.

What is a key message?

Key messages are short, clear statements that communicate the main point GNFO wants others to understand or act on.

A strong key message should be:

- ✓ Clear and simple
- ✓ Focused on one main idea
- ✓ Relevant to the audience
- ✓ Action-oriented (for advocacy messages)

What do you want people to remember from your talk or interaction?

The **Head-Heart-Hands framework** was also introduced to guide key message development:

Head: What people need to know (facts, evidence, and key information)

Heart: Why it matters (emotional connection and relevance to people's lives)

Hands: What to do (the action or change being encouraged)

Facilitators emphasised the importance of tailoring messages to different audiences and ensuring clarity, relevance, and impact.

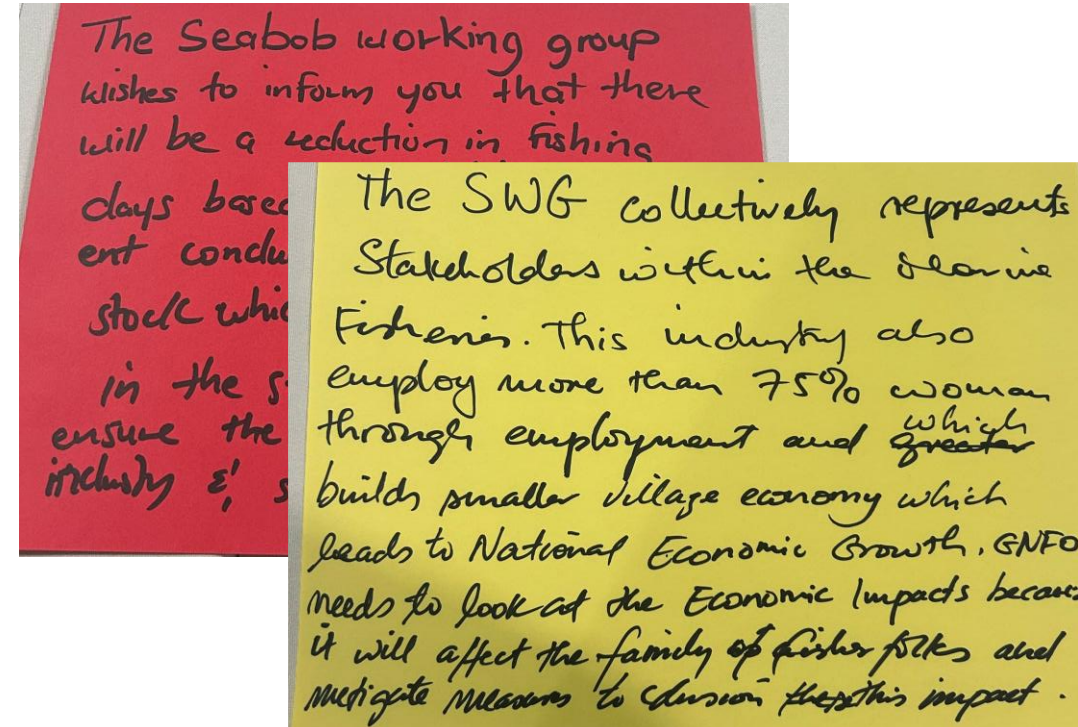
Crafting key messages



Participants worked in groups to develop key messages tailored to different stakeholders. The exercise emphasised:

- Clearly identifying target audiences (e.g. fisherfolk, government)
- Using evidence to support messages
- Using clear and purposeful language to emphasise importance and urgency

Facilitators noted that crafting strong key messages takes time and refinement to get them right, and that these messages will feed into the next session on media engagement.



Media Engagement and Storytelling

Media Engagement Training

A dedicated session on media engagement was facilitated by Mr. Neil Marks, Journalist and Media Engagement Consultant, focusing on:

- Understanding audience awareness gaps (e.g. unfamiliarity with the term “seabob”)
- Importance of clear, simple language (**KISS** principle)
- Structure of effective storytelling

Participants identified key messages about the seabob industry, including:

- Its importance to livelihoods and the economy
- Declining stock concerns
- Role in food security

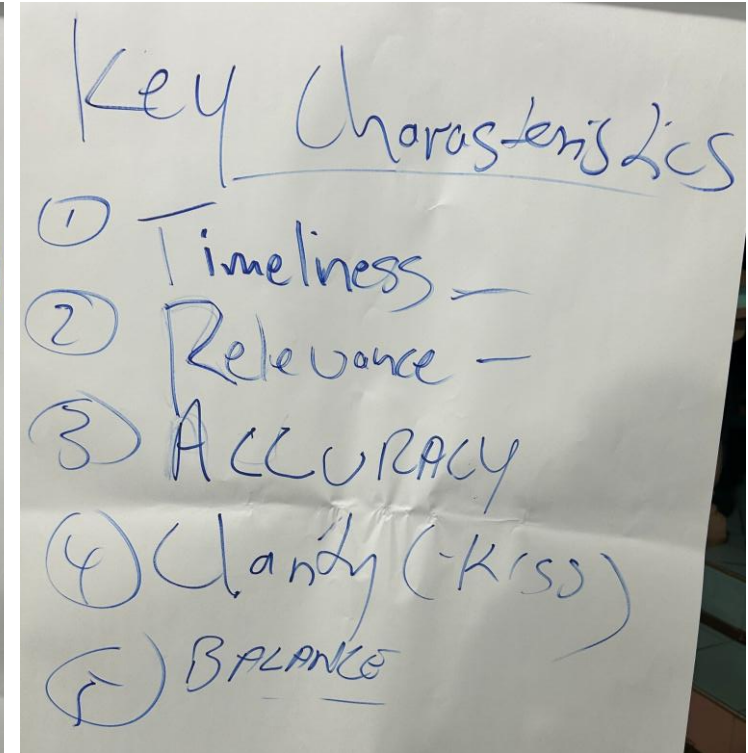
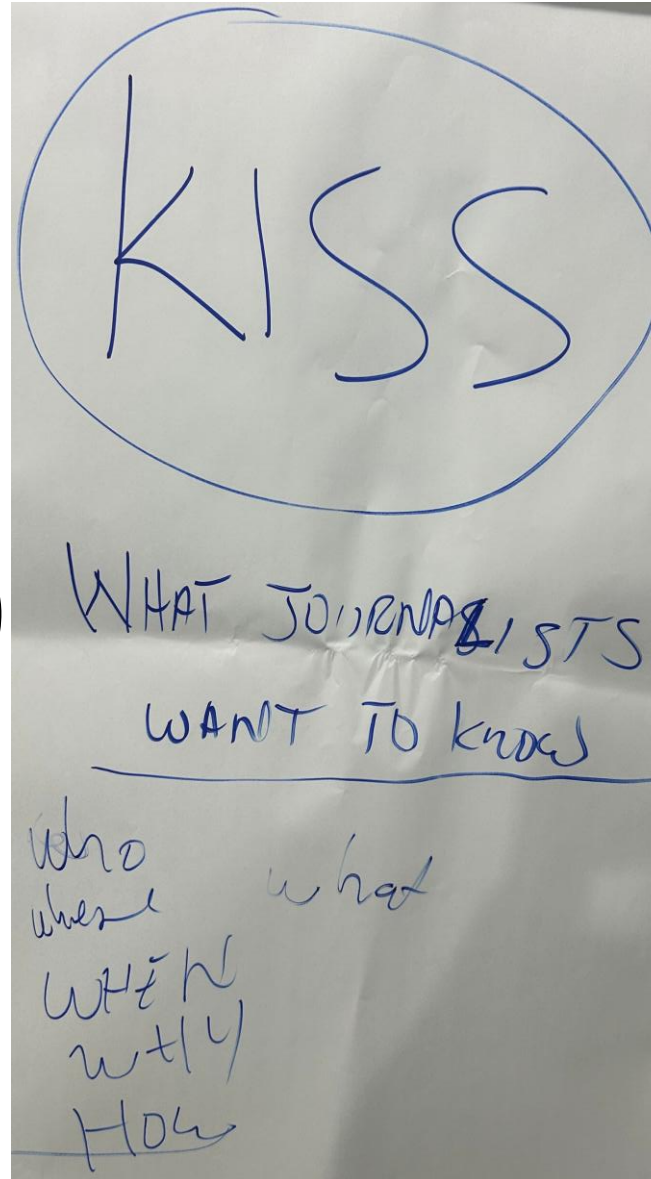


Photo credit: CANARI

Developing compelling stories and messages

Participants practiced framing issues around the around: **Problem → Impact → Solution** approach - clearly identifying the issue (*problem*), explaining why it matters and who it affects (*impact*), and outlining the actions or changes needed (*solution*).

They developed headlines and short messages, to improve their ability to communicate complex issues clearly and concisely.

The exercise highlighted the importance of:

- Accuracy and credibility
- Relevance and timeliness
- Clarity and simplicity

Participants recognised that:

- Technical language can limit understanding among broader audiences
- Communication must be tailored to non-specialist audiences
- Strong messaging is essential for influencing public perception and policy



Photo credit: CANARI

Mock interviews

Participants engaged in mock interviews to build confidence in on-camera communication.

The facilitator, supported by a camera operator/editor, also developed short news-style stories using footage from the mock interviews. These were reviewed with participants, reinforcing key communication techniques and the importance of clear, concise messaging.



Participants' reflections and workshop evaluation

All participants (**100%**) felt that the workshop met its objectives and that overall, the workshop was helpful to them.

When asked how was the overall workshop facilitation:
14% responded **very good**; **86%** responded **excellent**

Participants were asked: What is one key takeaway from this workshop that you plan to apply?

Responses



Communication- getting out the message in such a way that it achieves its objective and is simple, clear and informative. The sessions helped me to identify my short comings in this regard.

Communicating and general engagement.

How to better engage with stakeholders and share information with the media.

The use of the analysis tool shared in the workshop example.

The head-heart-hands concept.

I plan to apply how to communicate and to have effective stakeholder engagement that supports the work of the SWG.

Main Conclusions and Next Steps

Main Conclusions

The Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Capacity Building Workshop for the SWG was well received by participants and successfully met its objectives, with all participants indicating that the sessions were useful and relevant to their roles.

The workshop strengthened participants' understanding of communication and stakeholder engagement, enhanced their ability to develop clear and targeted key messages, and improved their capacity to engage effectively with both stakeholders and the media. It also highlighted key gaps in current practices, including the need for more structured communication processes, clearer stakeholder engagement approaches, and improved coordination among SWG members.

Overall, the workshop underscored the importance of systematic and strategic communication and engagement in supporting the effective functioning of the SWG and inclusive fisheries governance.

Next Steps

Building on the outcomes of this workshop, the next phase will focus on developing and institutionalising communication SOPs for the SWG under a subsequent LoA between CANARI and FAO.

This will include facilitating the co-development of the SOPs with the SWG, outlining key messages, target audiences, and communication channels to strengthen internal coordination, stakeholder engagement, and advocacy.

Appendix 1: Participants list

No.	Representative Name	Occupation	Telephone <i>(withheld for privacy)</i>	Email <i>(withheld for privacy)</i>	Day 1	Day 2
1	Bhanmattie VanBrook	Secretary/Boat Owner; Three Door Koker Fishermen Coop Society; SWG member			✓	✓
2	Desha Husbands-Spellen	Fisheries Officer; Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries Dept; Chair SWG			✓	✓
3	Hardat Malchan	Chairman; Rosignol Fishermen Coop Society; SWG member			✓	✓
4	Kadeem Jacobs	Fisheries Officer; Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries Dept; SWG member			✓	✓
5	Olanna Bacchus	Fisheries Officer; Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries Dept; SWG member			✓	✓
6	Rory Osborne	Fisher/Boat Owner; Wakenaam Informal Group; SWG member			✓	✓
7	Kadesha Shawyana Nedd	Fisheries Officer; Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries Dept; SWG member			✓	✓
8	Terrence Browne	Fisheries Officer; Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries Dept; SWG member			✓	✓