

Amplifying Voices in the Blue Economy

A Media Engagement Manual for Women, Communities and Development Projects

Amplifying Voices in the Blue Economy: A Media Engagement Manual for Women, Communities and Development Projects is a practical guide designed to strengthen how stories from the blue economy are told and shared.

The manual focuses on building skills in media engagement, helping women, community groups and project teams communicate their work with clarity and confidence. It covers key areas such as storytelling, working with journalists, creating content for different platforms and using media to influence conversations around livelihoods, climate resilience and local development.

Drawing from real experiences within coastal communities, the manual highlights simple, effective approaches that can be applied in low-resource settings. It also speaks to the importance of visibility, ensuring that the voices of women and grassroots actors are not only heard but taken seriously in decision-making spaces.

This manual is intended for practitioners, community leaders and organisations working in the blue economy who want to strengthen communication, increase reach, and support more inclusive narratives.



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Executive Summary

This manual provides a comprehensive guide for media engagement tailored to women and communities participating in the Kenya's Coastal Blue Economy. It has been developed to support the Blue Empowerment Project, offering clear strategies and practical approaches for planning, implementing and evaluating media activities. The manual draws on lessons learned during the project implementation period (2021 -2024) and community engagement, highlighting approaches that foster participation, inclusivity and visibility.

Effective media engagement is critical for amplifying the voices of women and communities, sharing knowledge and creating awareness of initiatives that promote sustainable livelihoods and the responsible use of coastal resources. This manual emphasizes understanding audiences, designing content that resonates and utilizing a mix of media channels to reach diverse stakeholders. It also highlights the importance of listening to communities, collecting feedback and using this information to inform and improve future media strategies.

While the manual is primarily designed for the Blue Empowerment Project, the strategies and tools presented can be adapted by other projects and organizations seeking to strengthen their engagement with communities. The approaches are actionable, context-specific and sensitive to the unique social, cultural and economic realities of coastal Kenya.

Field officers, community members and project partners are encouraged to use this manual to build stronger connections, enhance visibility and foster meaningful participation. By following these guidelines, they can not only share information effectively but also create spaces for dialogue, learning and collaboration. The ultimate goal is to ensure that media engagement contributes to sustainable outcomes, empowers communities and amplifies the voices of women and other marginalized groups.

This manual is structured to guide users through each stage of media engagement, from understanding audiences and planning campaigns

to implementing activities and measuring their impact. Each section provides practical tips, examples real-life scenarios and approaches that can be applied immediately. It serves as both a reference and a roadmap for achieving effective, inclusive and impactful communication across all stakeholders.

Introduction

This manual is a practical guide for media engagement designed for women and business groups in coastal Kenya, working within the blue economy sector. Developed under the Blue Empowerment (BE) Project, a low-carbon, gender-transformative initiative, it aims to address barriers to the empowerment of fisherwomen in coastal communities. The project promotes climate-smart integrated multi-trophic aquaculture (IMTA) of seaweeds and fish, enhancing livelihoods, building resilience and supporting sustainable economic participation. Anchored on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 on gender equality and Kenya Vision 2030, the BE Project focuses on strengthening women's agency, access to resources, and institutional support structures.

The training manual targets women and business groups across coastal Kenya, equipping them with media and communication skills to share experiences, promote sustainable practices, advocate for policies and strengthen business visibility. Through a combination of theory, hands-on exercises and peer learning, trainees/participants will gain confidence to engage with stakeholders, including the public, policymakers and potential markets, while ensuring that diverse voices within the community are represented.

Learn more about the project here: blueeconomy.acts-net.org

Objectives

1. Equip trainees/participants with foundational media and communication skills to raise awareness about their blue economy activities.
2. Enable women and business groups to leverage various types of media, including smartphones, social media and legacy media (TV and radio). Trainees will gain skills and knowledge on how to share success stories, promote businesses and advocate for sustainability.
3. Support business groups in creating content that effectively markets their products and services.

4. Foster collaboration and networking between women, business groups and communities across coastal Kenya.

Learning Outcomes

Through the training manual, trainees will be able to:

1. Enhance media literacy: Access, analyze and create media content effectively; communicate messages clearly; make informed media choices; avoid harmful media; and use media to support civic engagement.
2. Develop clear, trustworthy stories for their businesses or community initiatives.
3. Apply digital safety practices to protect credibility and sensitive information.
4. Promote inclusive communication, reflecting perspectives from diverse community members.
5. Mobilize resources, Increase visibility and influence, strengthening relationships with communities, stakeholders and potential markets.

Key Output: At the end of the training, participants will be able to develop a simple yet effective media engagement strategy.

Target Participants

1. Women engaged in seaweed farming, aquaculture and other blue economy activities.
2. Local MSMEs and business groups in coastal Kenya.
3. Groups and individuals representing diverse community voices, ensuring broad participation.

Beneficiary/Trainee/Participant Input

Participants will be encouraged to share additional challenges, insights and priorities from their local context in addition to information in the manual.

Module



Introduction to Media and Media Engagement in the Blue Economy

Pre-module Brief and Activity:

In this module, participants will explore the meaning of media and how it can be used to promote women's businesses, SACCOs and community initiatives within the Blue Economy.

By the end of the session, participants should be able to:

- Understand what media is and identify the different types (radio, TV, print and social media).
- Explain the importance of media engagement for women-led businesses and cooperatives
- Recognize how media can be used to raise awareness, share success stories and connect with markets.

Outcomes

Participants will understand how media works and how to use it as a tool to promote their stories, products, and community projects effectively.

Activity

Share one thing you're passionate about in your community/life/business: Note this is to allow trainees to feel comfortable and start reflecting about likely outcomes from this training manual.

Understanding Media

Media refers to the different ways people share information, stories and ideas with others. It includes traditional platforms such as radio, television, newspapers and notice boards/bill board, as well as newer spaces like emails, social media, blogs, podcasts and community websites.

Type of Media	Examples	Strengths	Challenges
Traditional	Radio, TV, community papers	Trusted, accessible even in remote areas	Costly to advertise, one-way flow
Digital	Facebook, WhatsApp, blogs	Cheap or free, fast, interactive	Internet needed, misinformation risks
Community Media	Local FM stations, community WhatsApp groups	Speaks local language, trusted voices	May lack wide reach

In Kenya's coastal counties, local radio stations such as Pwani FM, Radio Kaya and Radio Rahma remain strong sources of information. They reach many listeners because they use local languages and focus on community issues. At the same time, social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and new platforms like TikTok are becoming useful tools for communities and women entrepreneurs who want to promote their businesses, connect with customers and share their achievements.

Take Away: Media helps people **connect** and **share** their stories in ways that inspire action and build understanding.

What Media Engagement Means

Media engagement means building relationships with journalists, radio hosts or online audiences to share information about your work or community. For community members engaged in economic activities, it

helps entrepreneurs and groups such as SACCOs make their stories and businesses visible, attract potential clients and act as a tool where they can get advice or feedback on their products and services in addition to educating various groups or stakeholders on all matters business.

When used well, media engagement can help to:

1. Showcase products and services.
2. Attract investors, customers and partners.
3. Raise awareness about sustainable practices.
4. Show the valuable role that women play in the Blue Economy.

Media engagement can take many forms, such as giving a short interview on community radio, posting updates on various platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp, writing a short article or inviting a journalist to visit your group's activities.

The Role of Media in the Blue Economy

The Blue Economy includes activities like fishing, seaweed farming, marine tourism, and mangrove restoration.¹ Under the Blue Empowerment Project, activities are centered around the Integrated Multitrophic Aquaculture system – Growing of fish and seaweed together and value addition of harvests into items such as soap, body oil and dried fish.

Media plays a key role in helping these efforts grow by:

1. Creating awareness: Sharing information about the importance of protecting marine resources.
2. Highlighting women's efforts: Telling the stories of women who are leading or innovating in their businesses.
3. Connecting to markets: Helping small businesses and SACCOs reach buyers, tourists and new partners.

1 [Government of Kenya \(2018\). Kenya Blue Economy Strategy: Ministry of Mining, Blue Economy and Maritime Affairs State Department For The Blue Economy And Fisheries Strategic Plan 2023 - 2027](#)

4. Building community pride: Encouraging more people to get involved and support local initiatives.

Example/Activity:

Under the Blue Empowerment Project, Project partners from Kilifi and Kwale Counties involved in the blue economy have used local radio to share more about their experiences. Their visibility has encouraged other women to join similar ventures.

[Radio Rahma Kilimo Baharini Episode 1 Part 1](#)

[Radio Rahma Kilimo Baharini Episode 1 Part II](#)

Activity: Listen to BE broadcast done by Radio Rahma

Why Media Engagement Matters for Women and Business Groups

For many women in coastal Kenya, engaging with the media is a way to tell their own stories, show the impact of their work and inspire others.² It helps them:

Gain recognition for their efforts.

Build stronger business networks.

3. Mobilize community support for group projects.
4. Strengthen their confidence and leadership.

Business groups can also use media to inform members, celebrate achievements and attract partners. Through this, they build trust within the community and draw attention to the good work they are doing.

2 [Women's Economic Empowerment in Fisheries in the Blue Economy of the Indian Ocean Rim: A Baseline Report](#)

Activities

Activity	Discussion
Mapping Local Media: In small groups, list all the media outlets available in your area. Include radio stations, newspapers, community pages and online platforms.	• Which ones reach the most people? • Which are easiest to access for you, your group or business? • What kind of story would you want to share through each platform?
Learning from Others: Find/share a recent story in the media about any Blue Economy activity	• Who was featured? • What message did the story share? • How could you or your group share a similar story?

Activity 2

Task: On a piece of paper or in a notebook, write down:

- Your business name and a brief description (what you do). If not in business, write down something you would like to do or a dream you have)
- Three specific goals you want to achieve with media engagement in the next 6 months.
- Who your primary target audience is.
- Bring these notes to the next module.

Module



Content Creation through Storytelling and Visual Communication

Pre-Module Brief and Activity

In this module, participants will learn how to tell their business or SACCO story in a way that captures attention, builds trust and drives action.

By the end of the session, participants should be able to:

- Identify the key elements of a strong business story [beginning, challenge, solution, impact and vision].
- Apply storytelling techniques to share authentic and relatable experiences.
- Tailor their stories for different audiences and media platforms.

Outcomes

Participants will be able to develop and communicate compelling stories that highlight their work, promote their brand and attract customers, partners or investors.

Activity

After the introduction on media engagement, trainees share their expectations on the next module and give examples of what they think story telling is and why its important [this activity aims to draw examples within community such as narrations from the older generations to peer to peer exchanges and how they can learn from them in order to engage with wider audiences]

2.1 Why Every Story Matters

Every business has a story and a story that is worth telling. For women

in Kenya's coast these stories are rooted in strength, resilience, creativity and community. They reflect traditions passed down through generations, innovations born from necessity and the shared relationship between people and the ocean.

A story that is well told can be an important tool for change and influence. It can help a business attract customers, gain recognition and inspire others. Storytelling captures what you do, why you do it and how it changes lives. For women and business groups in the coastal counties, your story helps others see the value of your work and your contribution to the Blue Economy.

2.2 What Makes a Story Compelling

A strong story captures attention, stirs emotion and builds trust.

How?

Example:

Women in Kwale and Kilifi county through the Blue Empowerment Project have continuously shared their stories, highlighting their journey to economic empowerment, challenges and achievements:

Listen/Watch: [Blue Empowerment Project Stories from the Community](#)

2.3 Elements of a Good Business Story

When crafting your story, think of it as a journey with clear steps:

1. How did you start? What motivates you/what motivated you to begin your business or join a SACCO?
2. What barriers have you faced? These might include limited capital, gender bias/discrimination, market access difficulties or the effects of climate change on your work.
3. What steps did you take to overcome challenges? This could include adopting new technology, working together as a group or finding creative ways to reach customers.

4. What difference has your business made to you, your family or your community?
5. What are your future plans? What kind of growth or change do you hope to see in your business and in your community?

2.4 The Message (How to tailor your message to suit various media platforms)

Different media platforms require different ways of telling your story. The key is to match your message with your audience and the space where it will be shared. When told clearly and confidently a good story can reach beyond community and open doors to new partnerships, markets and opportunities.³

Platform	Approach	Example
Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp)	Keep it short and lively. Use photos or short videos that show your daily work	A post showing a group of women preparing seaweed for drying with a caption about teamwork and sustainability: https://web.facebook.com/share/p/17GFB8B52N/
Radio Interviews	Focus on key messages and use simple language. Speak clearly and share real examples.	BE Radio Rahma Broadcast: Radio Rahma Kilimo Baharini Episode 1 Part 1 Radio Rahma Kilimo Baharini Episode 1 Part II
Newspapers and Websites	Provide more details, quotes and context. Include figures or impact stories	A feature article on how your business supports youth employment or marine conservation: https://nation.africa/kenya/health/how-fish-ponds-are-mitigating-climate-impacts-in-kilifi-4267334
Videos	Combine visuals, voices and sounds from your environment. Keep it authentic and engaging.	BE Seaweed Harvesting: https://youtu.be/w4LPT4MNDRM?si=q5RjmaUjuWu3TY5K

2.5 Visual Communication - Photos & Videos

In today's digital world, strong visual content can make or break your media engagement. Good quality photos and videos grab attention,

³ [Women's Economic Empowerment in Fisheries in the Blue Economy of the Indian Ocean Rim: A Baseline Report](#)

tell stories and showcase the beauty and value of your blue economy business. In addition, they complement the stories discussed above.

Importance of visuals

1. **Captures Attention:** Photos or visuals are processed faster than text.
2. **Conveys Emotion:** Photos and videos can evoke feelings and build connection.
3. **Increases Engagement:** Posts with images/videos get more likes, shares and comments.

Tips for Great Photos

1. **Good Lighting:** Natural light is best. Avoid harsh direct sun or dark shadows.
2. **Focus:** Ensure your subject is sharp and clear.
3. **Backgrounds:** Keep backgrounds clean and uncluttered so they don't distract from your subject.
4. **Showcase Your Product:** Photos of fresh fish and seaweed straight from the ocean, delicious meals, clean waters, value added products
5. **Show Your Process:** Images of the team.

Tips for Simple Videos

1. **Steady Shots:** Use a tripod or lean phone/camera against something stable. Hold your phone horizontally (landscape) for most platforms.
2. **Good Audio:** Minimize background noise. Speak clearly.
3. **Keep it Short:** For social media, aim for 1-3 minute videos.
4. **Tell a Story:** Even a short video can have a beginning, middle and end.
5. **Use Captions:** Many people watch videos with sound off.

Basic Video Editing Tools

Mobile Apps: InShot, CapCut, Canva are user-friendly options.

Computer Software: Windows Video Editor (Windows) are often free and simple.

2.6 Activities

Task 1: Write/Share a short summary (150–200 words) of your business/ life story using the guide discussed above. Focus on one key challenge you have faced and how you addressed it.

Trainees can share their stories with the group or record them as short videos using their phones.

Task 2: Take 3 photos using your phone in the room (and another photo that showcases your business as an after training task). Participants can hold a photo walk to view photos taken

Module



Engaging with Traditional Media

Pre-module Brief and Activity:

In this module, participants will explore how to use traditional media such as newspapers, radio, and television to promote their businesses, group activities and community initiatives within the Blue Economy. They will learn practical ways to engage journalists, share their stories, and prepare for interviews or media coverage.

By the end of the session, participants should be able to:

1. Identify and understand different types of traditional media and their audiences.
2. Write short and clear press releases or media briefs about their business or SACCO.
3. Prepare for radio or TV interviews with confidence.
4. Recognize how to maintain positive, professional relationships with journalists and media houses.

Outcomes:

Participants will gain practical skills to use traditional media to increase visibility for their work, share impact stories, and position their businesses or cooperatives as credible voices within the Blue Economy.

Activity:

Participants watch news coverage of the BE IMTA Launch: <https://youtu.be/b8Bv9NcoQXM?si=cUgLc2F7CGY6RdfK>

3.1 Importance of Traditional Media

The digital age has brought new forms of media used by all in various walks of life. However, traditional media remains one of the most trusted and far-reaching communication channels. For many coastal communities in Kenya, radio, newspapers and local television are still the main sources of news and information.

Women entrepreneurs, community leaders and business groups such as SACCOs can use traditional media to raise awareness about their businesses, share success stories and promote sustainable practices in the Blue Economy. These platforms not only reach diverse audiences but also help build credibility for small and growing enterprises.

3.2 Working with Local Newspapers

Local newspapers such as The Coastweek, Baraka FM News (Coast) and The Coast Media Group's, Coast Newspaper regularly feature stories about business, innovation and community development. Building good relationships with journalists helps ensure that your story gets noticed.

Ways to work with local newspapers:

1. **Build Relationships:** Identify journalists who report on business, environment or community topics. Keep their contacts and follow their work – note to always keep engagements professional and respectful.
2. **Press Releases:** Write short, clear announcements about major events such as new products, partnerships or awards. A press release should answer who, what, when, where and why your story matters. Alternatively, have conversations with journalists detailing your story.
3. **Letters to the Editor:** Use this space to share your views on local issues such as sustainable fishing, waste management or women's economic empowerment.

4. **Feature Stories:** Pitch your story as a human interest piece that showcases resilience, innovation or the social impact of your business or SACCO.

3.3 Working with Radio

Radio is one of the most effective ways to reach people in coastal Kenya, where many rely on local stations for news and updates. It allows women to connect with audiences using familiar languages and relatable stories.

How to use local radio:

1. **Interviews:** Prepare to speak clearly and confidently about your business. Practice responding to common questions such as what you do and how your work supports livelihoods or sustainability.
2. **Community Segments:** Offer to share your expertise during radio segments about the Blue Economy or coastal development, for instance seaweed farmers can give insights on best times to plant and harvest.
3. **Advertisements:** If you or your SACCO or group has a budget, consider running short, impactful adverts during community programs to promote your products or services.

Note: Before an interview, write down three key messages you want the audience to remember. Repeat them naturally during the conversation.

3.4 Working with Television

Television offers more appeal because it combines sight, sound and storytelling. It is important to note that while it may not be as accessible as radio, local TV stations and regional outlets often look uplifting and inspiring stories to share not only locally but also internationally that reflect community progress.

How to engage television:

1. **Local News:** Invite local TV crews to cover community events, product launches or environmental activities.

2. Documentaries or Features: Pitch your story as an example of women's leadership in sustainable business. Offer visual moments like harvesting, processing or group meetings

3.5 Best Practices for Working with Traditional Media

When interacting with journalists, preparation and professionalism make a lasting impression.

1. Be Prepared: Know your key messages, facts and desired outcomes.
2. Be Professional: Arrive on time, communicate clearly and follow up with appreciation after an interview.
3. Be Clear: Avoid technical terms and explain ideas in simple, relatable language.
4. Be Enthusiastic: Let your energy and commitment show; passion helps the audience connect with your story.

Every interview, feature or article is a chance to show the world what coastal women are accomplishing through creativity and collaboration.⁴

3.6 Activities

Trainees practice short introductions or interview simulations in groups to help build confidence before engaging with real media representatives.

Task: Imagine your business or SACCO has just introduced a new environmentally friendly seaweed made product. Write a short press release (about 150 words) announcing the launch. Include:

1. Who is involved.
2. What the product is.
3. When and where the launch took place.
4. Why it matters to your community and the environment.

Example:

The Blue Empowerment Project has continuously engaged various forms of traditional media such as radio and TV to highlight its work.

Listen/Watch: [Blue Empowerment Project Stories from the Community](#)

Module



Digital Media Tools

Pre Module Brief and Activity:

In this module, we will strengthen our digital tools usage for personal use as well as for business. By the end of the training, participants should be able to:

- Demonstrate basic skills in using mobile apps, social media, cloud tools and e-commerce platforms to support business activities.
- Navigate social media and profile setup for visibility
- Gain basic knowledge of online marketplaces

Outcomes

Participants will be able to use digital tools to communicate, organize and promote their businesses effectively. They will also get an introduction to more complex tools like websites.

Activity:

Trainees identify digital tools they are familiar with or have heard of and what they think about them.

4.1 Using Mobile Apps for Communication and Business

The rise in smartphone accessibility in Kenya is promoting digital content consumption. More affordable devices and data bundles are allowing more individuals to connect online. Coastal communities and enterprises have widely adopted WhatsApp Business, Facebook marketplace and Instagram and TikTok for customer engagement, order tracking and marketing. WhatsApp Business is leading in use due to its low cost and

ease of use. Its features, such as automated replies, product catalogs, and broadcast lists make it ideal for informal businesses.

4.2 Introduction to Online Marketplaces

Online marketplaces offer entrepreneurs access to national and regional markets. Popular platforms in Kenya include Jumia, Kilimall, Masoko and Facebook Marketplace. Apart from Facebook Marketplace, the other three platforms provide logistics support.

Understanding Advantages and Disadvantages of Online Selling Platforms

Advantages	Challenges
Reach More Customers – Online platforms allow businesses to connect with buyers across Kenya and beyond, increasing visibility and sales opportunities.	Selling Fees – Some platforms charge listing or transaction fees, which can reduce profits.
Easy Setup Tools – Many platforms provide ready systems for posting products, tracking orders, and managing payments.	Competition from Other Sellers – Online spaces can be crowded, making it harder for new sellers to stand out. Unhealthy competition can also occur through deliberate negative reviews and harassment
Customer Trust Through Reviews – Positive feedback and ratings can help build reputation and attract repeat customers.	Need for Digital Skills – Some sellers may struggle with using online tools or understanding digital marketing techniques.

4.3 Navigating Social Media and Profile Setup for Visibility

Key Platforms: Facebook, Instagram, TikTok WhatsApp Business

Social media is a primary visibility tool for businesses especially those that are youth-led and women-led. Facebook and Instagram are popular for showcasing products, while TikTok is emerging for storytelling and viral marketing. Visibility on social media involves posting relevant and timely content, being discovered, engaging with your online community and having a lasting impact. Additionally, the systems favor short-form

video, interactive elements and user-generated content, with platforms like TikTok and Instagram prioritizing relevance.

Best Practices:

- Use a consistent brand name and logo
- Include contact information and location
- Post regularly with engaging visuals
- Use hashtags to increase reach

Profile set-up	Navigation Tips for Better Engagement
Facebook	
1. Create or Link a Business Page 2. Start with a personal profile to access Pages, then create a new Business Page via the “Pages” section. 3. Visual Branding 4. Upload a 720 x720 px logo for your a) profile picture (circular crop) and an 820x312 px cover photo 5. Bio and Details 6. Write a keyword-rich “About” section 7. Add contact info, location, and a Call to Action button like “Shop Now” or “Contact Us.” 8. Complete the Setup 9. Enable notifications, add a category (e.g., “Seaweed Products”), and invite initial connections strategically.	a. Post Strategically Share Reels and polls 3-5 times weekly at peak times. Encourage lengthy comments with questions to signal quality to the algorithm. b. Boost interaction by replying to all comments within 24 hours; cross-promote with Instagram for 20% more reach. c. Use Facebook groups for niche communities. d. Monitor insights for engagement metrics; aim for 1-2% rate by refining content based on top performers. Video Demo: https://youtu.be/d1RMO_DPids?si=f362LToNi6OUHeMZ

WhatsApp Business

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Download and install the app, verify a dedicated number. 2. Visual branding - Use a cropped, high-res logo (500x500 px) 3. Add name, description, location, website, email, and category. 4. Advanced features - Set up catalogs for products; add quick replies and labels. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Messaging best practices - Respond in less than 1 hour b. Personalize with names or emojis. |
|--|---|

Instagram

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Switch to business account - From your personal profile, go to Settings > Account > Switch to Professional. Link to Facebook for seamless management. 2. Use a high-resolution logo (110x110 px minimum) for the profile pic. 3. Craft a bio under 150 characters with keywords depending on your business 4. Add address, and contact options. 5. Create Story highlights like "Tutorials/How To's" or "Behind The Scenes." 6. Optimize for search by including niche keywords in username and name | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Post Reels (3-second hooks) and carousels 4-7 times weekly; use polls in Stories for 15% higher interaction. b. Algorithm hacks - Tag locations and collaborate on posts for cross-exposure; respond to DMs promptly to build trust. c. Track reach through Insights; refine based on demographics (e.g., 70% of users discover products here) <p>Instagram Explainer Video: https://youtu.be/WWowlkwZi1w?si=ssYfqmSK1QCQNBf5</p> |
|--|---|

TikTok

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Switch to Business Account: From a personal profile, tap Profile > Menu > Settings > Manage Account > Switch to Business. 2. Add a clear logo (200x200 px) and an 80-character bio with call to action (e.g. Shop link in bio) 3. Include website and cross-links to Instagram/Facebook. 4. Add location and pursue verification for credibility (requires 500K views). 5. Optimize for trends by pinning top videos to showcase your niche. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Content Strategy - Post 3-5 videos weekly with trending sounds/hashtags (3-10 per post); hook in 3 seconds for 65% watch time increase. b) Boost reach with TikTok challenges; collaborate with other entrepreneurs influencers for engagement lift. c) Use keywords in captions for search. d) Monitor views/followers via dashboard; aim for 2.5% engagement by refining based on audience insights. |
|---|--|

4.4 Building Your Online Presence through Websites

While social media is crucial, a dedicated website serves as a digital store and resource for information, offering more control over a business. Websites offer:

1. **Credibility:** A professional website builds trust and legitimacy.
2. **Information Hub:** Provides detailed information about products and services
3. **Direct Sales:** If applicable, enable online ordering or booking.
4. **Control:** Unlike social media platforms, content is owned by the business

Simple Website Options

1. **WordPress.com:** Offers free and paid plans, very flexible.
2. **Wix/Squarespace:** For visually oriented businesses, though typically paid.
3. **Google Business Profile:** A free listing that includes a basic website and map presence, vital for local search.

Content Ideas for a Website

1. **Homepage:** A clear overview of the business.
2. **About Us:** Your story, your team, your mission.
3. **Products/Services:** Detailed descriptions, pricing, photos.
4. **Gallery/Portfolio:** Showcase your best work or products.
5. **Blog:** Share updates, industry insights, related to your business.
6. **Contact Page:** Easy ways for people to reach you.

Basic Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

1. SEO helps people find you on search engines like Google:
2. **Keywords:** Use words and phrases your customers might search for (e.g., fresh seafood, fresh fish, seaweed soap, “”).
3. **Mobile-Friendly:** Ensure your site looks good on phones.
4. **Fast Loading:** Optimize images to load quickly.

4.1 Activities

Task: Outline the key sections you would want on a simple website for your business. List at least 5 you think are essential pages or sections and a brief description of what content each would contain.

Task: Plan 3 social media posts for the upcoming week for your business. For each post, decide:

- Which platform you will use (e.g., Facebook, WhatsApp).
- The main message or visual you will share.
- At least 3 relevant hashtags you will use.

Module



Media Interactions, Crisis Communication and Crisis Management

Pre-Module Brief and Activity

In this module, participants will learn how to handle media inquiries, respond to criticism and prepare for reputational challenges or crises affecting their business, SACCO or community initiatives in the Blue Economy. For women in business in the Blue Economy, it is important for them to have tools to address harassment and Online Violence Against Women (OVAW) as they navigate online spaces.

By the end of the session, participants should be able to:

- Respond to media requests professionally and in a timely manner.
- Address negative feedback, criticism and harassment with composure and credibility.
- Develop a simple crisis communication plan tailored to their business or group.

Outcomes

Participants will gain confidence in managing media interactions, protecting their reputation and turning potential challenges into opportunities for demonstrating accountability and resilience.

Activity

Participant share stories of harassment, negative comments or criticism they have heard or experienced when online. In instances where this isn't available, Facilitators can give examples.

5.1 Handling Media Inquiries

As highlighted in Module 3 and 4, both traditional and digital media play an important role in society today. Media inquiries are not limited to traditional media only but can also come through digital platforms. When journalists, radio hosts or community media reach out, how you respond can shape public perception. A timely, confident and respectful response demonstrates professionalism and builds credibility.⁵

Best practices:

1. **Respond promptly:** A quick acknowledgment, for instance “Thank you for your question; I’ll get back to you shortly” shows respect and keeps communication open.
2. **Be prepared:** Keep your key messages ready.
3. **Be honest and transparent:** If you don’t know an answer, say so. Commit to finding the information or refer the question.
4. **Stay on message:** When conversations are not aligned with the theme, gently go back to what’s most important for your business or community.
5. **Be polite and Respectful:** Treat all media professionals with courtesy. Even tough questions can be answered graciously.

5.2 Dealing with Negative Feedback, Criticism and Online Harassment

Criticism, whether shared face-to-face or online, can feel uncomfortable but it also provides an opportunity to show accountability, professionalism and care for your customers or community. For instance, a customer can complain about a product saying it doesn’t work well as they were informed. It is important to take note of the criticism but also respond in a way that doesn’t damage one’s reputation.

⁵ Handling Media Inquiries: Best Practices, Journalism.co.uk, <https://www.journalism.co.uk/handling-media-inquiries>

Tips:

1. **Pause and Reflect:** Do not respond immediately when emotions are high. Take a moment to breathe and think about what is being said.
2. **Understand the Message:** Read or listen carefully to identify whether the comment raises a valid concern, a misunderstanding or an unfair attack.
3. **Acknowledge the Concern:** A simple acknowledgment such as *"Thank you for bringing this to our attention"* shows respect and openness.
4. **Clarify with Facts:** If the feedback is inaccurate, correct it politely with evidence or context. Always avoid defensive language.
5. **Offer Constructive Solutions:** When the issue is genuine, explain how you will handle it. This could mean replacing a product, revising a process or following up directly with the person.
6. **Know When to Disengage:** Not every comment deserves a reply. Once you have addressed the concern professionally, it is best to stop responding, especially if the conversation becomes abusive.

5.3 Addressing Online Harassment and Violence (OVAW)

Women who are visible online as entrepreneurs or community leaders sometimes face harassment or harmful comments. This behavior can range from disrespectful remarks and false accusations to threats or targeted bullying. Knowing how to manage such situations is essential for personal safety and well-being.

Practical Steps:

1. **Do Not Engage with Abuse:** Avoid responding to hateful or threatening comments.
2. **Document Evidence:** Take screenshots of messages or posts for records. This may be helpful if you need to report the incident.

3. **Use Platform Tools:** Most social media platforms allow you to block, mute, or report users who behave abusively.
4. **Seek Support:** Inform trusted colleagues, family, or members of your SACCO so that you are not dealing with harassment alone.
5. **Report to Authorities:** If online abuse turns into threats or persistent targeting, report it to the police under Kenya's *Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes Act (2018)*, which protects individuals against cyber harassment.⁶
6. **Prioritize Self-care:** Negative interactions can be emotionally draining. Take breaks from social media when needed and focus on positive engagements that build confidence and community.

5.4 Creating a Simple Crisis Communication Plan

A crisis could be any event that might harm your reputation, such as false accusations against you as a person, claims about product/service quality, environmental damage or negative media stories.

Key elements of a simple plan:⁷

1. **Identify a Spokesperson:** Choose one confident, informed person (or small team) to respond publicly.
2. **Monitor Mentions:** Watch social media, newspapers, radio and community forums for early warning signs.
3. **Prepare Holding Statements:** Have short, neutral statements ready (e.g., "We are aware of the concern and are investigating.") to manage immediate reactions.
4. **Gather Accurate Facts:** Don't rush to respond until you have confirmation. Mistakes in response often worsen the crisis.
5. **Communicate Consistently:** Make sure all channels (social media, media interviews, local networks) share the same information.

⁶ Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes Act, 2018 (Kenya) — National Council for Law Reporting (Kenya Law). <https://www.kenyalaw.org/lex/actview.xhtml?actid=No.5of2018>

⁷ <https://www.scribd.com/document/411803935/Harvard-Business-Review-Crises-Management>

6. **Conduct Post-Crisis Review:** After the issue settles, analyze what went well and what failed. Use those lessons to improve your processes.

5.5 Preventive Habits & Reputation Building

1. Maintain open communication with customers and community—respond to small issues early.
2. Use feedback loops such as suggestion boxes or satisfaction check-ins.
3. Be transparent about your processes (e.g., how you handle fish freshness, quality inspections, environmental measures).
4. Share regular updates of your work, so people see your work continuously rather than just when something goes wrong.
5. Build goodwill by actively engaging in community initiatives and demonstrating care beyond profit.

5.6 Activities

Your business receives a negative online review claiming “the seafood was not fresh.” Choose one of the following:

1. **Role-play response (with a partner):** Act as the business and as the customer. Practice a calm, respectful and solution-oriented exchange.

Write your response: Draft a public reply (around 100–150 words) addressing the customer’s concern, acknowledging the issue and offering a solution.

2. **Reflection:** After your response, reflect or discuss:
 - What was difficult about responding?
 - What points were you careful to include?
 - How might your response be perceived by the wider community?

Additional Resources:

Association of Media Women in Kenya (AMWiK) [Women-Journalists-Digital-Security-Kenya-2016.pdf](#)

Module



Advocacy, Communication and Policy Influence

Pre-Module Brief and Activity

In this module, participants will learn how to use media and communication strategies not only for business promotion, but also to influence policy, engage stakeholders and work collaboratively for community empowerment in the coastal Blue Economy.

By the end of the session, participants should be able to:

- Identify how media can help shape policy and reach decision-makers.
- Frame clear messages for policy makers, business networks and community stakeholders.
- Design a small collaborative media campaign involving community groups or SACCOs.

Outcomes

Participants will develop their understanding of advocacy through communication and policy influence, and will leave with an outline of a media-based advocacy plan for their business or cooperative group.

Activity

Participants share instances where they have advocated for social change, not only for the Blue Economy but also within their communities – who was involved, what was the issue, how was it solved.

6.1 Using Media for Policy Influence

In the context of policy the media can help raise the right issues, frame them so that decision-makers pay attention and build momentum for change. When you plan to influence policy, think of three linked audiences: the wider public (to build support), the stakeholders (to join the effort) and the policymakers (who can make the change). The media helps bridge these.

Key Steps:⁸

1. Choose a clear policy goal: what exactly do you want changed?
2. Use media to highlight the problem: show evidence of the issue in your community or business.
3. Show the solution and who benefits, note: decision-makers respond better when they see people will gain from the change.
4. Communicate progress regularly.

6.2 Framing Messages to Reach Policymakers and Stakeholders

A message must clearly state what you want, why it matters and what the audience should do. Good framing helps you speak effectively to different groups for instance, community members, media and officials. When framing your message, start by stating the change you want to see, then explain why it matters to people, the economy or the environment. After that, describe what the audience can do to support the change. The tone and length of your message should fit the setting. A short and clear message works well on social media, while a fuller explanation is better suited for a policy brief, a formal letter, or a meeting with stakeholders.⁹

8 Irwin D. & Kiereini N., "Media influence on public policy in Kenya," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 59 Issue 2, June 2021. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-modern-african-studies/article/media-influence-on-public-policy-in-kenya/1898A51318872635D6813DB9514A65C2>

9 What are you trying to say? Frame your message," Info-Activism How-To Guide, <https://howto.informationactivism.org/content/what-are-you-trying-say-frame-your-message.html>

6.3 Collaborative Media Campaigns for Community Empowerment

Advocacy works best when groups join forces. When women entrepreneurs, SACCOs and community groups work together they can use media to highlight key issues, build public support and show policymakers that the voice is collective.

Best practices:

1. Identify partners you can work with like other women's groups, community leaders youth networks.
2. Choose media that can reach both community and policymakers for instance local radio, newspapers, social media community forums.
3. Determine and share roles, like who will tell stories, who will manage social media, who will meet officials.
4. Use consistent visuals and stories: one logo, shared images common hashtags if using digital media. (Refer to Module 2)

Successful Case Studies from Policy Campaigns

In September 2024, The Media Council of Kenya (MCK) encouraged the maritime sector to work with journalists and media houses to raise visibility of the Blue Economy and influence policy and investment decisions: <https://mediacouncil.or.ke/media-center/mck-newsroom/news/mck-calls-collaboration-improve-coverage-blue-economy>

6.4 Activities

Task: Work in small groups. Choose one topic from your business or cooperative that could benefit from policy change, example: licensing process, support scheme.

Each group will:

1. Write down the policy goal in one sentence.
2. Identify the decision-makers (names or positions).

3. Select a media channel (radio, social media, local TV, newspaper) you will use.
4. Frame a short message (2–3 sentences) that speaks to the audience you choose.
5. Sketch the outline of a mini campaign (e.g., 3-step: social media post → radio interview → meeting with the official).

Module



Measuring Your Media Engagement Success

Pre-Module Brief and Activity

In this module, participants will learn how to measure whether their media activities are achieving their intended results. The focus is on using data, feedback and reflection to improve communication, strengthen inclusion and build lasting impact.

By the end of the session, participants should be able to:

- Identify the main indicators of success in media engagement.
- Use simple tools to monitor and interpret results.
- Apply feedback to adjust strategies for greater reach and inclusivity.
- Build a habit of continuous learning and improvement.

Outcomes:

Participants will understand how to track, evaluate and refine their media engagement strategies using both numbers and community feedback.

Activity:

Participants share their experiences on monitoring their activities, simple tools they use like written records and the challenges they are experiencing.

7.1 Why Measuring Impact Matters

Knowing whether your media engagement is effective helps you see what is working and what needs improvement. Through this, one can modify their strategies in order to ensure time, energy and resources are not wasted. Tracking progress provides evidence for partners, funders,

and community members and it ensures that time and effort are used wisely.¹⁰

7.2 Key Metrics to Track

The indicators you track will depend on your goals, but common examples include:

1. **Website traffic:** How many people visit your website and where they come from.
2. **Social media engagement:** Likes, comments, shares, followers and how many people saw your posts.
3. **Media mentions:** How often your community, business or SACCO appears in local newspapers, radio or online publications.
4. **Customer inquiries:** The number of people who contact you after seeing your media content.
5. **Sales or bookings (for services):** Changes in product demand that can be linked to a campaign.
6. **Customer feedback:** Comments, messages, or reviews that show how people view your work.

7.3 Tools for Tracking

The tools below are designed for those with limited to no budgets. Advanced software is not needed.

1. **Social media insights:** Most platforms, including Facebook and Instagram, provide free analytics showing engagement and reach.
2. **Google Analytics:** A free online tool for tracking website visitors and their behavior.
3. **Media monitoring:** Small groups can do manual checks by searching for their business name online or saving newspaper clippings.

¹⁰ United Nations Development Programme, (2009). Handbook on planning, monitoring and evaluating for development results. Retrieved from website: <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/handbook/documents/english/pme-handbook.pdf>

4. **Simple spreadsheets/documents:** Recording monthly figures for followers, mentions or sales/

For small businesses and SACCOS, simple tracking and honest reflection often go further than expensive data systems.¹¹

7.4 Listening to Community and Customer Feedback

Beyond numbers, meaningful feedback from customers and community members tells you how your work is received. Listening is a powerful way to measure trust and relevance.

Good listening practices:

1. Encourage open comments during meetings or events.
2. Ask for short written or recorded testimonials.
3. Conduct small surveys to find out what information people want more of.
4. Use radio talk shows or social media polls to collect ideas and concerns.

Community feedback helps ensure your media messages are inclusive and responsive. It also highlights issues that data alone might miss, such as cultural sensitivity or gender representation.

7.5 Making Decisions Based on Data and Feedback

Once you have collected information, the next step is to make sense of it. Look for patterns rather than isolated numbers. For instance, an increase in social media followers alongside more customer inquiries may indicate successful outreach. On the other hand, high post reach but low engagement may mean the content is not connecting emotionally with your audience. (Refer to Module 2 on connecting with your audience)

Use your findings to decide what to keep, what to improve, and what to

¹¹ [United Nations Development Programme \(UNDP\) \(2021\). Monitoring and Evaluation Made Simple for Community Projects.](#)

stop. Continuous learning builds stronger communication strategies and encourages innovation.

7.6 Continuous Improvement for Greater Inclusivity and Impact

Regular review of your work ensures that all voices, especially women, youth and marginalized groups are represented.¹²

Simple improvement steps:

1. Hold short reflection sessions after every campaign.
2. Invite feedback from team members or partners.
3. Set small, achievable goals for the next phase.
4. Share lessons with others so the whole community grows.

7.7 Activities

Task: Each participant lists three key metrics that match their goals. For each metric, they explain why it matters and how it will be tracked. Examples include counting radio mentions, recording monthly sales figures or directly asking five customers what motivated them to buy a product.

¹² OECD (2020). Communicating Development Results and Impact. Available at: <https://www.oecd.org/development/communicating-development-results.pdf>

Annex 1: Facilitator's Guide: Media Engagement for Women and Communities in Coastal Kenya

This facilitator's guide is designed to help facilitators deliver an effective and engaging 4-day media training program for women and business groups in the coastal Blue Economy. The content is structured across the modules provided in the Media Engagement Manual. Facilitators are encouraged to adapt activities as necessary, depending on the available resources and the unique needs of the participants.

Training Overview

Objective: This training aims to empower women (and communities) and women-led businesses in coastal Kenya to use media tools effectively to promote their Blue Economy ventures. The focus is on practical media engagement skills, with an emphasis on accessibility, creativity and community-driven initiatives.

Duration: 3 - 4 Days

Target Audience:

1. Women entrepreneurs in the Blue Economy (e.g., fisherwomen, seaweed farmers, eco-tourism operators).
2. Micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).
3. Community leaders and local media stakeholders.

Materials Needed

1. Writing material (Marker Pens, Post-Its, Notebooks, Easel and Easel Paper)
2. Access to a projector and screen
3. Laptop
4. Materials Needed
5. Smartphones or cameras for content creation.

6. Printed handouts (press release templates, social media tips, etc.).
7. Access to internet-based platforms (WhatsApp Business, Facebook, etc.).

NB: In instances where the above are not available, facilitators are encouraged to make use of what's available.

Training Schedule Draft

Day	Session	Objectives	Materials Needed	Activities
Day 1	Session 1: What is Media?	Understand the different types of media. Recognize the importance of media for businesses and community initiatives.	Flipcharts or whiteboard for brainstorming, Markers.	Mapping Local Media
	Session 2: Why Media Engagement Matters	Understand how media engagement helps raise awareness and connects businesses with customers and partners.	Projector for showing examples (if available), Printed materials with case studies (e.g., Blue Empowerment Project).	Story Sharing
	Session 3: Overview of Traditional and Digital Media	Learn about both traditional and digital media tools for business promotion.	Handouts summarizing media types and examples, Sample press releases and social media posts.	Discussion on accessible media platforms

Day 2	Session 1: Storytelling for Media	Learn how to craft and communicate a compelling story.	Examples of successful business stories, Story outline templates.	Story Creation
	Session 2: Visual Communication	Understand the power of photos and videos in media engagement.	Phones or cameras for practice, Visual content examples (photos, videos).	Photo Walk
	Session 3: Introduction to Digital Media Tools	Learn basic skills in using digital tools for communication and business.	Phones with pre-installed apps (WhatsApp Business, Instagram, etc.), Internet access if possible.	Platform Navigation
Day 3	Session 1: Engaging with Traditional Media	Learn how to engage with traditional media like radio and newspapers.	Example of press releases and radio segments, Guest speaker from local media (if possible).	Press Release Writing
	Session 2: Managing Media Inquiries and Crisis Communication	Gain skills in handling media inquiries and dealing with negative feedback or crises.	Crisis communication templates, Example of a media inquiry response.	Role-Playing
	Session 3: Addressing Online Violence Against Women (OVAW)	Learn how to manage online harassment and protect personal and business reputations.	Case studies on OVAW, List of digital safety tips.	Group Discussion

Day 4	Session 1: Using Media for Advocacy	Understand how to use media to influence policy and engage stakeholders.	Case studies of successful advocacy campaigns, Handouts with advocacy tips.	Campaign Design
	Session 2: Measuring Media Success	Learn how to measure the impact of media engagement and make improvements.	Examples of metrics (social media analytics, customer feedback forms).	Tracking Tools
	Session 3: Continuous Improvement	Learn how to continuously improve media engagement strategies.	Templates for tracking media success.	Group Reflection

Facilitator Tips and Best Practices

Facilitators are encouraged to use the schedule above as a guide to curate their training agenda, keeping in mind the social-cultural set-up of the training venue

1. **Adaptability:** Adjust activities as needed to suit the group's understanding and available resources.
2. **Encourage Creativity:** Encourage participants to think creatively and use available tools for content creation.
3. **Inclusive Participation:** Ensure all voices are heard, especially marginalized groups and create a safe space for learning.
4. **Manage Challenges:** When challenges arise, focus on problem-solving and adjust the approach to meet the group's needs.

Disclaimer

Where access to certain materials or tools is limited, facilitators should encourage participants to use what is available and be creative in adapting their approach. The goal is to make the training practical, adaptable, and accessible to all participants.