



European
Commission

Creative Communications for Evaluation Dissemination

How-to Guide:

Podcast



This How-to Guide is prepared by the
Evaluation Support Service of the DG DEVCO 04

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INTRODUCTION

Podcasts are an increasingly popular way to communicate evaluation results. The DEVCO/ESS study to understand the different ways in which evaluation results are communicated reveals that 6 out of the 18 institutions consulted use podcasts to disseminate their evaluations. Podcasts can be engaging; they are easy to share and provide convenient access to knowledge. These guidelines provide you with practical tips, examples, and references to additional resources to get you started on evaluation podcasts.

WHY PODCASTS?

Podcasts provide a great way of engaging your audience and presenting information in an audible format. This enables you to:

- ▶ convey key messages quickly and directly,
- ▶ amplify voices of participants, stakeholders, and evaluation experts
- ▶ reach a wider audience base
- ▶ personalize the evaluation “story telling” with special effects/music

WHO IS IT FOR?

Target audiences could include:

- ▶ The wider public in Europe, in the partner countries and beyond
- ▶ Different EU institutions
- ▶ Civil Society
- ▶ Academia, research, Think Tanks
- ▶ Media

WHERE TO MAKE IT?

Podcasts can be produced from any location, provided you have a recording device and, in case of remote interviews, access to internet and an online platform with recording options (e.g. Skype /Zoom/GoToMeeting/WebEx.)

The technical skill to make a podcast can quickly be mastered.

HOW MUCH TIME?

The production time of a podcast is usually relatively short – it takes around one week provided you can dedicate the required time for editing. While editing time depends on the complexity and length of the podcast, with a bit of practice a 20 minute podcast can be fully edited in 1.5 days.

HOW MUCH MONEY?

The production of a podcast need not be expensive provided that you can use a PC or phone for recording, do your own editing, and access free tools such as:

- ▶ [Audacity](#), [GarageBand](#), [Anchor](#) & [Music Maker](#) for audio editing
- ▶ Youtube’s [Audio library](#), [Free Music Archive](#) for music & sound effects

Hosting can also be free on your organizational website or at [Sticher](#) or [Apple podcasts](#).

WHERE TO START?

Have a read through the [Communication & Visibility Manual for European External Action \(2018\)](#), look out for existing templates for a podcast script or create your own.

Need inspiration? Have a look at the useful resources from the wider evaluation community on [page 5](#).

TIPS TO GUIDE YOUR EVALUATION PODCAST PLANNING

- 1 Decide on target audience & purpose**

What do you want to communicate? Who do you want to listen your evaluation podcast? How do you want the evaluation results to be used?
- 2 Agree on the podcast length**

Find the right balance between keeping your audience engaged and conveying key messages – the ideal duration time is no longer than 20 minutes.
- 3 Share the communications guidelines**

Share [EC Communication & Visibility Manual](#) with the evaluation team and consultants involved in the podcast production; they are bound to abide by the rules described in the manual, including branding, disclaimers, visual identity, approval etc.
- 4 Record sound while collecting data**

Incorporating audio recordings into the fieldwork enables dissemination outputs to be shared earlier in the evaluation cycle and allows more time to edit the content before it is shared externally. Examples include audio recordings of interviews/FGDs.
- 5 Capture material during the evaluation**

Ask the evaluation team to capture sound recordings/interviews during different evaluation activities (with consent from participants) which can be incorporated into the podcast towards the end of the process.
- 6 Respect image rights and obtain consent**

If images identify a person, consent forms are needed. Ensure that podcast producers /evaluation team are aware of the need to request and obtain consent before publication and include this provision in the evaluation ToR.
- 7 Think about crosscutting issues**

Cross-cutting issues like gender, climate change, and human rights addressed in your evaluation should also be mentioned in your podcast. Ensure a balanced gender representation, avoid gender biases and let the podcast reflect the sensitivity approaches used in the evaluation.
- 8 Choose your dissemination channels**

There are various online platforms such as [Sticher](#), [Apple podcasts](#), [Spotify](#), [Anchor](#), the [Europe Aid website](#), and other social media channels where your evaluation podcast can be shared. Choose the right channel for your target audience and make sure that you are aware of processes to follow for each channel.
- 9 You are not alone!**

Share your idea(s) and blogs with colleagues and the Communications focal point if you work in EU Delegations. Contact the Communication Unit of DG DEVCO and The Evaluation Support Service for more advice and publishing on the [Capacity4Dev website](#).

EVALUATION PODCAST - EXAMPLES



International Fund for Agricultural Development

ROOTS

Description: Series on the impact of IFAD-funded projects around the world, including personal stories and emphasis on the importance of evaluations.

Duration: Between 3'20" and 5'

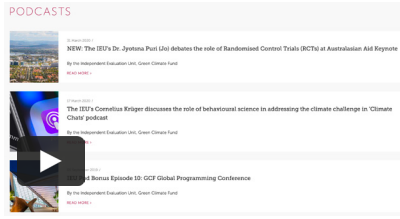
Cost: Produced in-house

Production time: Variable

Produced by: IOE evaluators

Languages: Multiple

Series: Yes – Roots



Green Climate Fund

Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU)

Description: Showcasing the work of the GCF to a global audience, through curated lectures and speakers from workshops and events related to climate, development and evaluations.

Duration: 25' to 1'30"

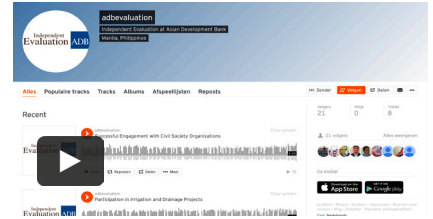
Cost: Produced in-house

Production time: 1 week

Produced by: GCF Headquarters

Language: English

Series: Yes



Asian Development Bank

Independent Evaluation Department

Description: Series to share insights about the evaluations and the lessons learnt. Topics include project sustainability, the importance of communication, and successful engagement with CSOs

Duration: 3'30" and 4'30"

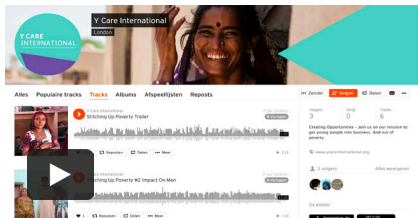
Cost: Produced in-house

Production time: varied

Produced by: IED Headquarters

Language: English

Full series: Yes – 8 episodes



Y CARE International

Stitching up Poverty

Description: Series examining the impact of a project aimed at educating women and girls in rural villages in Sindh province in Pakistan, made up of stories collected from the region using [Sprackler](#) tool.

Duration: around 12'

Cost: £550 / episode with use of free tools

Production time: 1 week

Produced by: team & consultant

Language: English

Series: yes- 5 episodes



Oxfam

Impact Evaluation of Cash for Work activities in the Za'atari camp in Jordan

Description: Evidence and learning from the impact evaluation of Cash for Work interventions in the Za'atari camp in Jordan, comprising evaluation findings & commendations.

Duration: 30'

Cost: Produced in-house, using skype and in-house editing software

Production time: 1 week

Produced by: Oxfam GB HQ

Language: English

Series: Oxfam in Depth/Real_Geek



Overseas Development Institute

When disasters and conflict collide

Description: Series exploring how policies and programmes can best respond to conflict fragile and conflict affected contexts, borne from a two-year research project with G.I.Z.

Duration: 24' to 32'

Cost: Produced in-house using free tools

Production time: variable

Produced by: ODI headquarters

Language: English

Series: Yes – 3 episodes

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ON EVALUATION PODCAST

1 Podcasts

- ▶ This [blog](#) describes how to write podcast intros and outros which captivate your audience. There are also useful links for voice-talent options, royalty-free music options and sound effects.
- ▶ This [blog](#) includes useful links for podcast editing software, tips on how to choose the best microphone and it also guides you through the recording and editing process.
- ▶ This [blog](#) includes advice on choosing a name, show and episode format, cover art creation, intro & outro music, equipment selection, audio recording & editing, submission to Apple Podcasts (iTunes) and promotion tips

2 A checklist to ensure optimum sound quality:

- ▶ **Wear headphones** to prevent the sound of the speakers being picked up and re-recorded.
- ▶ **Microphone:** A headset is ok, but ultimately you want a microphone that can be at an optimum distance from the speaker's mouth - preferably a bit above or below to avoid the direct force of the breathing and popping of the "B" and "P" sounds.
- ▶ **Room:** As much as possible, try to record in a quiet room with no airconditioning, windows shut, and soft furnishings to absorb sound; avoid echoey rooms.
- ▶ **Laptop:** If using a laptop for the recording remember to take it off charge as this can create a background buzz.
- ▶ **Stay clear from the mic!** Avoid the microphone rubbing on clothes or face and waving their arms/banging or tapping the table out of sheer excitement for making brilliant points!
- ▶ **Internet connection:** If using the internet ensure that all background applications which require the use of the internet are shut down on the laptop/computer to enable the best connection possible with no interference. Plugging to an Ethernet cable beats WiFi.
- ▶ **Do a test!** It is always good practice to do a microphone/recording test prior to calling in.

READ ON

TIPS



BE PREPARED

Sharing the questions you would like to use in the podcast recording in advance can help to guide the conversation. Use a [semi-guided loose script](#) so that the podcast sounds natural rather than over-rehearsed. The views represented need to remain impartial.



HAVE A TEST SESSION

It is advisable to make sure you set time aside to check the sound quality of your recording equipment and internet connection if this is relevant. To ensure optimum sound quality when recording [use the checklist above](#).



USE MULTIPLE VOICES

Consider including [multiple voices](#) (2-4) to keep the listeners interested. Including voices from external institutions can also help to demonstrate authenticity.

Find more guidance on disseminating evaluation results [here](#).

Design by Saskia Brand (lotusillustrations.nl).