



**Sustainable intensification of food production through
resilient farming systems in West & North Africa**

Deliverable D6.3
**SustInAfrica Communication, Engagement
and Dissemination Strategy**

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ABSTRACT

This report presents the communication, engagement and dissemination strategy and global planning of the SustInAfrica project. This strategy provides a description of the approaches and timing towards communicating, transferring knowledge to and engaging target audiences and stakeholder groups. The strategy is made operational in a plan that lists respective tasks, sub-tasks and activities, describes the division of responsibilities, and indicates task leads, involved partners as well as miles stones and deliverables. Furthermore, the roles and responsibilities within the SustInAfrica consortium and channels previewed to be used are presented.



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List of abbreviations and acronyms

DEU	Direct end-user
PAU	Public authorities
AFB	Agri-food businesses
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
SIC	Scientific Community
CIS	Civil Society
POL	Policy Level
CM	Communication Manager
PC	Project Coordinator
WPL	Work Package Leader
CR	Communication Representative



1. Introduction

SustInAfrica is a 5-year research and innovation project. Its activities aim to create high impact in **research, farming, SME and policymaking practitioners' groups and support sustainable intensification of agriculture in targeted regions in Africa**. Therefore, communication, engagement and dissemination activities are closely linked to the work done in WPs 1, 3, 4 to 5 and will be aligned continuously as the project evolves. In addition to that WP6 ties project messages to ongoing global and local public discussions about sustainable agriculture and food production.

The aim is to support and facilitate communication with African and national target groups (Table 1), including stakeholders, such as soil and farmer organizations, industry, policymakers/institutions, other research groups and media.

The overall objective of SustInAfrica's communication and dissemination strategy is to guaranty sharing and transfer project results and products developed and tested in WPs 2, 3, 4, and 5.

Internal and external communication, dissemination of results and stakeholder participation and engagement will be integrated into the plans of all WPs of SustInAfrica and coordinated by WP6. Dissemination of research and development outcomes supports distribution and upscaling of technologies developed in SustInAfrica (involved WPs: 2, 3, 4 and 5).

Table 1: Target audiences for dissemination.

Group	Level	ID	Target group
a	Direct end-user	DEU	Farmers, farming communities, farmer associations and unions, commercial organisations, entrepreneurs, and consumers associations.
b	Public authorities	PAU	Local, regional and national public administrations of each country
c	Policy	POL	Policymakers, networks, and institutions (AU, GSP, EURAGRI, USAID, GIZ, BUND), international bodies (UN FAO)
d	Agri-food businesses	AFB	Agribusiness, agroindustry, logistics, agricultural consultants, technology manufacturers, farming supplier companies, service providers, retailers (e.g., BlueSkies Ltd., RMG Ghana Ltd., JarDrops, AINOMA), Chambers of Commerce, trade groups. Cooperatives.
e	NGOs	NGO	Local and national organisations (e.g., SEKEM, ONG Karkara),
f	Scientific community	SIC	Research centres, universities
g	Civil society	CIS	Consumers, local and regional consumer associations, educators, students

2. Communication, engagement and dissemination plan

The SustInAfrica project understands communication, engagement and dissemination as follows:



- **Communication:** Facilitate knowledge transfer and sharing with African, European, and global target groups to create in collaboration with WPs 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 impacts in science and to boost agricultural research and South-South and EU-Africa collaboration.
- **Engagement:** Promote and guaranty auscultation of needs and expectations and involvement in the project within African, European, and global target groups to create co-creation within WPs 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, supporting customised impacts in sustainable agricultural research in south and north.
- **Dissemination:** Spread research and development outputs from WPs, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 to support sustainable and multifunctional management of arable land in Africa with targeted diffusion actions.

Based on the project's stages described in the grant agreement (Annex 1, page 15) the communication, engagement and dissemination activities of SustInAfrica will take place over three stages (Table 2):

- 1st stage (M01–M18). At this stage SustInAfrica will gather baseline information and set up demonstration trials in selected “core communities” of the targeted AEZs and communicate and engage farmers, communities, value chain actors, and stakeholders in the project. **Baseline information on social, environmental, economic, political, and agricultural systems of targeted AEZ and communities and related topics will be disseminated between all involved in the project.**
- 2nd stage (M19–42). In this stage the aim is to **increase visibility, communicate early results, and highlight benefits to key stakeholders**. Particularly the initial results of activities that aim to test and demonstrate sustainable agricultural and smart farming practices will be published. The initial result publishing will support the engagement of end-users and value chain actors, and civil society.
- 3rd stage (M43–M60). In the final stage the aim is to **consolidate the engagement of actors and disseminate the final results** of SustInAfrica through all target audiences. Final results from economic and policy assessment, development of sustainable business plans and concepts for commercialization, replication and up-scaling will be disseminated. Stage 3 will provide a foundation for future work and exploitation of results. Finally, SustInAfrica will **summarize the results for comprehensive dissemination** of the projects results and outcomes with an aim, draw exploitation plans to **provide a roadmap for implementation of the validated sustainable agricultural practices** within similar agro-ecological zones in Africa and Europe.

Table 2: Communication, engagement and dissemination plan of SustInAfrica. “For and with whom?” please see table 1.



For whom and /or with?	What?	How?	When?
1st stage			
All	Communication of project needs, and dissemination of SustInAfrica's progress, initial results and providing information on dissemination events.	Newsletters and factsheet, website and WP teams' presentations	M06–M18
All	Dissemination of conceptualised pathways for implementation of appropriate agricultural practices to support sustainable intensification in Africa.	Publication of news and alerts to media, social networks, website.	M12–M18
All	Communication of SustInAfrica's objectives and expected impacts, to open discussion and starting engagement process to select the most appropriate and sustainable agricultural systems for each AEZ.	Participatory start-up workshop in each country/ local authority	M06–M18
DEU, NGO	Dissemination of initial results on agricultural practices for sustainable intensification in targeted AEZs and start guaranty support, participation and involvement along the project	Factsheets and pilot surveys in local languages and according to literacy levels. Provision of material for FarmerLine to disseminate.	M12–M18
SIC	Dissemination of first scientific results, i.e., baseline assessments and surveys.	Scientific publications, conferences, scientific meetings	M12–M18
AFB	Communication, engagement and dissemination of selected commercialisation pathways for selected products, tools, and solutions tailored.	Involving most relevant value chain actors in decision-making process throughout key interviews. Publication in popular farming, agroindustry, and agribusiness magazines in Africa and Europe. In addition, through Twitter and Facebook. Provision of material for FarmerLine to disseminate.	M12–M18
2nd stage			
All	Dissemination of SustInAfrica's progress, main results, and providing information on dissemination events.	Newsletters and factsheet, website	M18–M42
All	Dissemination of agricultural, economic and environmental benefits of agricultural practices supporting intensification of African sustainable farming systems and how value chains should be optimised.	Publication of news and alerts to media, social networks and website	M18–M42



DEU, NGO	Communication, engagement and dissemination of evidence-based results on agricultural practices for sustainable intensification in targeted AEZs.	Factsheets in local languages and literacy levels. Farmer Workshops & Focus Group Discussions.	M18–M42
AFB	Communication and dissemination of assessed commercialisation pathways for selected products, tools, and solutions tailored.	Publication in popular farming, agroindustry, and agribusiness magazines in Africa and Europe. In addition, through Twitter and Facebook. Involving most relevant value chain actors in decision-making process throughout focus-groups.	M18–M42
DEU, NGO, AFB	Engagement of farmers and agri-food business to boost adoption of sustainable farming practices.	Creation of “Communities of Practitioners” based upon previous steps of communication by Farmerline	M18–M42
DEU, CIS, AFB	Engagement of the Communities Practitioners.	Field days: One technical visit organised by local and other participants of SustInAfrica during cropping season in each AEZ where field plots are established to reach direct end-users and introduce them in situ to the economic and environmental benefits of sustainable intensification.	M24–M42
DEU, CIS, PAU, NGO	Train on implementation and communicate potential socio-economic benefits of sustainable intensification of African farming systems.	Training courses for potential end users and seminars to specific end users such as investors, both done with the support of local participants. Expected at least one training course per AEZ.	M18–M42
SIC	Dissemination of scientific results, e.g., sustainable assessments	Scientific publications, conferences, and scientific meetings	M18–M42
SIC, CIS	Guarantee knowledge and formation transfer to youth	Teachers, students, and school children will be reached through direct contact with educational centres and social media and will be invited to visit the experimental plots as guided visits by SustInAfrica partners.	M18–M42
3rd stage			
All	Dissemination of SustInAfrica’s progress, final results, and providing information on dissemination events.	Newsletters, factsheets and website	M42–M60



All	Dissemination of agricultural, economic and environmental benefits of agricultural practices supporting intensification of African farming systems and how value chains should be optimised beyond SustInAfrica.	Publication of news and alerts to media, social networks and website.	M42–M60
DEU, NGO	Dissemination of approved and evidence-based results on agricultural practices for sustainable intensification in targeted AEZs.	Factsheets in local languages and according to literacy levels. Promote contacts between potential partners to contribute to create a network of practice.	M42–M60
AFB	Dissemination of most appropriate sustainable business plans and approved commercialisation pathways for selected products, tools, and tailored solutions Contribute to develop a network platform between relevant value chain actors in the process.	Publication in popular farming, agroindustry, and agribusiness magazines in Africa and Europe. In addition, through Twitter and Facebook. Participate within investor events & trade shows, local, regional and national agriculture shows/ <i>Salon international de l'agriculture et des ressources animals (SARA)</i> .	M42–M60
PAU	Dissemination of public policy recommendations to address barriers to adoption/ commercialisation.	Policy papers. Contribution to national, EU, donor group (e.g., OECD, UN) policy/ strategy/ planning discussions (opportunities to be identified).	M48-M60
POL	Roadmap and methodological guidelines for proper transformation of African farming systems toward sustainable and resilient systems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart farming overview (i.e., scientific publication) on feasible smart farming technologies, tools and solutions appropriate for sustainable African farming systems. • Benefits overview (i.e., scientific publication) on environmental, social, and economic benefits generated by sustainable soil management and agricultural practices. 	Deliverable of SustInAfrica	M55–M60



SIC	<p>Dissemination of scientific results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perspective publication on sustainable intensification of African farming systems, • Overview on smart farming tools and practices that support sustainable and resilient farming in Africa, • Overview on agro-ecological, traditional, and modern practices and their impact on generation of environmental, social, and economic benefits, and • transforming value chains for appropriate commercialisation of agricultural products and barrier and opportunities governing replication and up-scaling. 	Scientific publications, conferences, scientific meetings	M42–M60
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3. SustInAfrica Newsletter

Newsletters, mainly including articles are published on the project webpage as part of communication and dissemination activities. One of the purposes of the SustInAfrica website is to provide a platform for a dialog with relevant stakeholders. The SustInAfrica Newsletter will be published twice a year in following languages (English, French, Arabic). The purpose is to provide an understanding of the perspectives and positions of the key stakeholders of SustInAfrica in relation to one another; see table 1 in D6.3.

This newsletter is to reach target-group through personal subscription and publication in the social media of the project and partner institutions, when adequate.

4. Roles

To ensure effective communication, engagement and dissemination actions, there are several persons of consortium with different roles and backgrounds implementing the actions (Table 3).

Communication Manager (CM): Leads WP6 and takes care of administrative tasks related to communication, engagement and dissemination, such as deliverable preparation, reporting, etc. The communication manager coordinates the planning activities, monitoring and reporting. Guides the consortium with all communication, engagement and dissemination related issues, administrates website and other channels and implements everyday communication of the project together with the consortium.



Project Coordinator (PC): Supports the communication manager where needed, coordinates the administrative tasks in whole project, implements the formal communication with European Commission, acts as a face for the project where needed.

Work Package Leaders (WPL): Keep communication manager updated with proceedings and results of their work package, coordinates the messages, communication and dissemination actions from their work package.

Communication Representatives (CR): Plan and implement (together with communication manager) communication and engagement actions in core communities and other communities in different AEZs (agro-ecological zones in participating African countries) of the project.

Other Members of the SustInAfrica consortium (OM): Take part of communication, engagement and dissemination actions by actively promoting the project and its results in their own channels and networks.

Table 3: Roles and responsibilities within the SustInAfrica consortium. CM = Communication Manager, PC = Project Coordinator, WP = Work Package Leader, CR = Communication Representative

Beneficiary	e-mail	CM	PC	WPL	CR
Luke					
Nils Borchard	nils.borchard@luke.fi		x	x	
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5. Channels and strategy used

Participatory processes:

Participatory workshops are one of the key methods to reach and engage/ cooperate with core communities and other communities in different AEZs. The first workshops in 2021 aim to present the SustInAfrica project and establish ways to stay in contact and share information. Participatory workshops are mainly directed to target group g, citizens and communities in specified agro-ecological zones in the project. Thus, there will be at least 13 participative workshops.

These include start-up workshops that bring together the researchers, farmers and government staff to explain the purpose of the research and address any concerns.

Field Days happen when farmers and extension staff from the local area are invited to see the research trials at appropriate crop growth stages. Participating farmers and researchers explain what is happening in the research plots and any results.

Agriculture and Trade shows participation given most anglophone countries have a tradition of local, regional and national agriculture shows that attract large audiences. All countries participating in SustInAfrica have national agriculture showgrounds. The project will attend these shows to present the results of the research (depending on COVID-19 and security).

Website: The project website at www.sustinafrica.com will be the “business card” of the project as well as a home for all project-related information, news, publications and tools offered. It aims to offer basic knowledge of the project and its benefits for every visitor. Details of the SustInAfrica website are described in project deliverable 6.1, Website. Website and information on it, is targeted to all target groups described above.

Scientific publications: These are mainly targeted at the scientific community and other research projects and policymakers or specific practitioners. Abstracts and summaries can be easily converted to news items which serve also wider audiences, such as target groups b, c, d and f (Table 1), which represent authorities, organizations and companies.

Popular publications: The project will aim for several popular publications in magazines/ grey literature (both online and physical) focused on relevant themes: e.g., agriculture, soil management,



plant cropping and animal husbandry. This will be done both on national and international levels, emphasizing mostly to the result phase of the project. Popular publications are mainly directed to target groups from a to f (Table 1). We aim to publish in the first 3 ranked magazines per country involved and others found to be relevant.

Social media: SustInAfrica will use project partners' social media channels (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube) for boosting of the project outcomes and results, and to keep the work and themes the project is dealing with visible. Project partners have significant audiences which are already interested in their communication in their own channels, which helps in effective social media use. The use of existing social media channels will be designed with national contact persons and consortium members to make sure messages are targeted and well-planned. National languages can be used in partner organization's social media communication about SustInAfrica, which also helps in maximizing impact. Social media actions are mainly targeted to target groups a, f, g and h (Table 1), depending on content and channel used.

Fact sheets: Fact sheets will be used in events the project is organizing, such as workshops with core communities in Africa. Fact sheets are one-pagers describing the project and its actions and foreseen impacts locally and globally. Also, relevant contact information and places where to find more information will be given. First fact sheet of SustInAfrica will be produced in 2021. Fact sheets are targeted to all target groups, depending on where they are used and if they are composed for a specific occasion. Fact sheets will also include investor briefs on SustInAfrica outputs with commercial potential and Policy Briefs for Government Ministries and donor groups that make recommendations to address institutional barriers to adoption of SustInAfrica technologies.

Policy Fora: During the 5 years of the project, it is expected that National Governments and donors in the 5 countries will call for input into the development of policies, strategies and legislation. Examples include EU 5-year country strategic reviews, national government reviews of input subsidy policy, seed legislation, agricultural investment policy, climate change policy and others. Government "white" & "green" papers. Where appropriate SustInAfrica will provide evidence-based input into these fora.

Newsletters: These will be used to communicate progress and results to consortium members and other subscribers. All news items of the newsletter are published also as individual news items on SustInAfrica website from where they can be separately shared to different channels. Subscribers beyond the project consortium will be collected for example in project events, where people have the possibility to join the mailing list. Also project website will allow the subscription for the newsletter. First one will be sent out in autumn 2021/ spring 2022. Newsletters are mainly targeted to target groups from a to f (Table 1).

Press releases/ alerts to media: Media will be contacted with two types of alerts such as press releases about project results, and possible invitations to participate on local events, workshops or e.g., field days.

The project will approach mostly national media in each of the participating countries, and both national contact persons and partner organizations are responsible of contacting media nationally.



International media will be approached via CORDIS service and Alpha Galileo, in which the coordinating organization National Resources Institute Finland publishes actively.

Press releases and alerts to media are targeted to media, often either local media such as newspapers, or theme-specific media such as magazines. Thus, the final target groups are the users of the media.

Scientific conferences and meetings: Scientific conferences and meetings are mainly targeted to target group e (Table 1), other research projects and scientific community. Targeted conferences are: (ICSAPP) in 2023, [ICIEIPM](#) in 2023, [EGU](#) in 2025.

Promotional and educational videos: Relevant promotional and educational videos will be produced for use in general communication. The video will be a mixture of key information offer on a simple and pedagogic way to aid easy learning.

Promotional and educational videos are mainly aimed to target groups a, g and h, which represent farmers and SMEs and citizens in both core and other communities and participating countries. Dissemination of such videos will be through media and social network.

Farmerline' s module on mergdata, Educational module which is used for learning both online and offline will be leverage to engage farmer groups.

Direct communication: One crucially important way to communicate and interact in SustInAfrica is direct communication (visits and meetings, emails, phone calls) to and with different stakeholders, such as members of core communities, leaders of SMEs, unions or associations, or policymakers locally and nationally.

Indicators: Indicators for monitoring and reporting will be specific to the various channels that will be used. This will include, for example:

1. **Number of Clicks**
2. **Number of Views**
3. **Number of Shares/Retweet**

Communication actions cannot be fully evaluated if the measures are only quantitative. The project members will also collect qualitative feedback whenever relevant to get better overview of successfulness of the actions.

