

INVESTOR RELATIONS' COMMUNICATION IMPERATIVE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FINANCING: A TEMPLATE FOR NIGERIA'S FINANCIAL SECTOR

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Abstract

Using analytical and descriptive approaches, this study examines the communication role of Investor Relations (IR) in financing sustainable development within organisations. Investor Relations is a strategic management function that integrates finance, communication, and marketing to manage the content and flow of organisational information to all stakeholders. This process enables stakeholders to maximize relative valuation through an effective two-way communication framework that supports sustainable development financing. Communication for sustainable development finance emphasises stakeholder participation by giving diverse groups a voice in decision-making processes, as well as ensuring that information is understandable, relevant, and meaningful to stakeholders who are key players in Nigeria's financial Sector. It also involves explaining and disseminating information for training, experience exchange, and the sharing of technical knowledge and innovative technologies. Furthermore, such communication should foster policy acceptance by promoting policies that create new opportunities—particularly for rural populations—to access financial services and other critical resources. The paper concludes that engagement with the investment community through spokespersons, investor presentations, media relations, continuous media engagement, and financial literacy initiatives serve as an effective pathway to sustainable investment financing. These efforts are increasingly enabled by new media technologies and their sustaining platforms, which enhance the effectiveness of Investor Relations in achieving sustainable development goals as they relate to Nigeria's financial Sector.

Keywords: Communication, Financing, Investor Relations, Media, Sustainable Development.

Introduction

In Investor Relations (IR), communication remains a vital two-way mechanism for sustainable development financing. This process is evident when a company issues a news release or posts information on its website—forms of one-way communication from the organisation to the external environment. While such communication is appropriate and necessary, it becomes effective only when it incorporates feedback from stakeholders.

One-way communication, though useful, has inherent limitations. For instance, a company may disclose extensive information on cost-cutting strategies or new business development initiatives; however, without feedback from stakeholders, or whether these stakeholders understand how such initiatives affect the company's business model. Feedback, therefore, completes the communication loop, transforming the process into two-way communication. In this model, information flows reciprocally—from the company to stakeholders and from stakeholders back to the company—allowing both parties to speak, listen, and be heard.

This dynamic places additional responsibility on Investor Relations Officers (IROs). Beyond disclosure and message dissemination, IROs are required to actively listen. They must function not only as the mouthpieces of their organisations but also as their ears and eyes. Two-way communication is thus fundamental to investor relations, particularly when the objective is to educate investors and the wider financial community about the company's value. Education necessitates dialogue. Investors must be given opportunities to ask questions and seek clarification to deepen their understanding. Such inquiries should be welcomed by IROs,

as they provide insight into investor perceptions and expectations.

Beyond improved understanding, two-way communication fulfills a critical governance function. Investors are the owners of the corporation, and management has a fiduciary duty to act in their best interests. Part of this responsibility involves listening to investor concerns and expectations. IROs play a crucial intermediary role by collecting investor feedback and communicating it to management. If management works on behalf of shareholders, it must remain informed of shareholder evaluations of corporate performance. Consequently, investor relations departments must prioritise the establishment of effective two-way communication channels that facilitate ongoing dialogue between corporations and the financial community.

Development, which results in beneficial change for individuals and society, is a multifaceted process that enhances “the skill, capacity, and ability of a nation to utilise the resources in its environment for the improvement of the quality of life of its people” (Rodney, cited in Wilson, 2009, p. 191). Development at national and rural levels, across all sectors, is achieved through coordinated efforts by individuals and organisations, supported by adequate financial resources. This remains a central aspiration of nations striving for sustainable growth.

In this context, effective communication ensures that successfully implemented development finance projects are made known to the public. Such transparency keeps citizens informed about actions or inactions that hinder development, encourages accountability, and fosters an enabling environment for positive initiatives to thrive. Herein lays the critical role of the media as

the lifeline that supports and sustains development efforts.

Communication is central to all human activities, particularly in the context of development. The specialized form involved is development communication, defined by Nwabueze (2009, p. 79) as “the dissemination of development messages to a target audience to persuade them to adopt positive attitude changes toward development objectives.” Similarly, Eclean (in Anaeto, 2010, p. 4) describes development communication as a core form of communication used in reporting, publicizing, and promoting development at all levels of society.

This paper, therefore, adopts analytical and descriptive methods to examine the communication imperative of Investor Relations in advancing sustainable development financing for productive organizations.

Objective of the Study

Investor Relations (IR) should be focused on the basic communication of corporate actions, and this is usually followed by a phase characterized by an increasing emphasis on financial performance and results. Also, in more advanced firms, investor relations has developed into a more active marketing function, aimed not only at ensuring fair valuation but also at encouraging investors to buy or hold the company’s shares. This study, therefore, examines whether these three phases can also be observed in investor relations management when the focus shifts from financial performance to the communication of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

The Concept of Communication for Development in Relation to Investor Relations

Communication for Development (C4D) theory and practice have evolved in response to changing development approaches, emerging trends, and the growing need for the effective application of communication methods and tools to new issues and priorities. Over the past two decades, sustainable development has emerged as one of the most influential development paradigms shaping global policy and practice.

In 1987, the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) published its landmark report, which provided the widely cited definition of sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”, (United Nations Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 2015). Sustainable development is commonly understood to rest on three interrelated dimensions, often referred to as the *pillars* of sustainability.

Economic dimension: The economic dimension emphasizes that a sustainable system must be capable of producing goods and services continuously, maintaining manageable levels of government and external debt, and avoiding severe sectoral imbalances that could undermine agricultural or industrial production.

Environmental dimension: The system must sustain its resource base by avoiding the overexploitation of renewable natural resources and sink resources, while minimizing dependence on depleting non-

renewable resources. This includes the preservation of biodiversity, atmospheric stability, and other essential ecosystem functions that are not traditionally classified as economic resources, such as the aesthetic value of natural landscapes.

Social dimension: The system must achieve distributional equity, adequate provision of social services—including health and education—gender equity, respect for minorities, and political accountability and participation (see, e.g., Anand and Sen, 1964).

Two years later, the FAO, in 1989, elaborated the concept of Sustainable Agricultural and Rural Development (SARD), defined as “the management and conservation of the natural resource base, and the orientation of technological and institutional change in such a manner as to ensure the attainment and continued satisfaction of human needs for present and future generations.” According to FAO (1989: 55), sustainable development in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries conserves land, water, and plant and animal genetic resources; it is environmentally non-degrading, technically appropriate, economically viable, and socially acceptable.

Following the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, sustainable development was universally accepted as a guiding paradigm integrating economic growth, social development, and environmental protection as interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of long-term development. Subsequently, in September 2000, the United Nations declared Environmental Sustainability as one of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to be achieved by 2015. This goal aimed, among other targets, to integrate the principles of sustainable development into national policies, and to reverse the loss of environmental resources.

Over the years, diverse perspectives have shaped the holistic and integrated vision of sustainable development. Nevertheless, one central idea remains: there is no universal development model that ensures sustainability across all societies and contexts. Development is an integral, multidimensional, and dialectical process that varies from society to society, community to community, and context to context. Each society must therefore define its own sustainable development strategy, grounded in the resources and forms of “capital” available—not only physical, financial, and environmental, but also human, social, and institutional—while taking into account the needs and perspectives of the people concerned.

Sustainable development thus requires a participatory, multi-stakeholder approach to policymaking and implementation. This approach mobilizes both public and private resources and draws upon the knowledge, skills, and energy of all social groups invested in the future of the planet and its people.

Within this framework, communication plays a strategic and fundamental role, facilitating the interaction among development dimensions, enhancing knowledge and information sharing, and fostering the active participation of all stakeholders involved.

The Traditional Role of Investor Relations

“Investor Relations (IR) is a strategic management responsibility that uses the disciplines of finance, communication, and marketing to manage the content and flow of company information to financial and other constituencies to maximize relative valuation” (The National Investor Relations Institute (NIRI), 2001). The Institute, founded in the United States in 1969, was the

first recognized professional body for investor relations. According to one of NIRI's founders, the primary role of IR is to ensure a firm's "fair relative market value" (Savage, 1970). Similarly, Ellis defines the objective of investor relations management as "help[ing] a well-managed company gain appropriate recognition and credibility within the business community for its capabilities and longer-term prospects, and help corporate executives fulfil their fiduciary responsibility to ensure that investors who are selling or buying know they can do so at prices that fairly and reasonably reflect true value" (Ellis, 1985: 34).

Traditionally, therefore, investor relations has focused primarily on firm valuation. A long-standing assessment of the quality of investor relations was the annual survey conducted by the U.S. Association of Investment Management and Research (AIMR), which gathered evaluations from sell-side analysts and buy-side portfolio managers. High ratings in the AIMR survey have been shown to correlate with more accurate analysts' earnings forecasts and lower dispersion among these forecasts (Farragher et al., 1994). Similarly, higher AIMR ratings have been associated with increased trading volume and greater analyst following (Lang & Lundholm, 1993). By examining the impact of enhanced investor relations on variables linking share price and information quality, researchers have identified a causal chain connecting more effective IR to a lower cost of equity capital (Brennan & Tamaronski, 2000). The underlying argument is that greater analyst following leads to higher institutional ownership, which in turn increases liquidity and reduces the required rate of return. Consequently, success in investor relations has traditionally been evaluated in terms of market valuation and the financial drivers of firm value.

From a different perspective, Marcus & Wallace (1997) argue that the role of investor relations has evolved through three distinct phases. Hockerts & Moir (2013), in their study "*Communicating Corporate Responsibility to Investors: The Changing Role of the Investor Relations Function*," further explore this evolving role. Based on an inductive qualitative study involving interviews with investor relations professionals from twenty firms, the authors examine how the IR function responds to growing investor concern about CSR. Their findings highlight increased awareness of CSR issues among IR professionals, as well as differing levels of concern between mainstream investors and socially responsible investors (SRIs). The study suggests that the investor relations function is moving away from a predominantly one-way "broadcasting" approach to CSR communication toward a more interactive model of relationship management.

Communication for Sustainable Development Finance

In line with the evolving vision of communication for development, the participatory approach emerged in the late 1980s as a defining feature of the application of Communication for Development (Com4Dev) to Sustainable Development. Com4Dev is conceived as the planned and participatory use of communication processes, methods, and tools to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and information, promote stakeholder participation, and encourage changes in attitudes and practices aimed at achieving development goals agreed upon by all stakeholders.

At its core, Com4Dev emphasizes dialogue, participation, and knowledge sharing. It takes into account the needs, capacities, and perspectives of all actors involved through

the integrated and participatory use of communication processes, media, and channels. In this sense, Com4Dev fulfills three main functions as provided by Food and Agricultural Organization (FOA), (1989: 16):

1. **Facilitating participation** by giving voice to diverse stakeholders and enabling their engagement in decision-making processes.
2. **Making information understandable and meaningful**, including the explanation and dissemination of information for training purposes, experience exchange, and the sharing of knowledge, technologies, and best practices.
3. **Fostering policy acceptance** by supporting the enactment and promotion of policies, particularly when these policies create new opportunities for rural populations to access services and resources.

Within this framework, communication is understood as a vital social process that extends beyond the transmission of messages or the use of media, encompassing their interaction within networks of social relationships instead. Com4Dev approaches and methods are particularly suited to addressing the complexity of Sustainable Development challenges. Specifically, they contribute to:

- i. Improving development opportunities by ensuring equitable access to knowledge and information across all sectors of society, especially among vulnerable and marginalized groups
- ii. Enhancing the management and coordination of development initiatives through bottom-up and participatory planning processes;
- iii. Promoting equity and inclusion by fostering networking and social platforms that influence policymaking;
- iv. Encouraging behavioral and lifestyle changes that support sustainable

consumption patterns through awareness-raising and education initiatives targeting large audiences;

- v. Promoting the sustainable use of natural resources by acknowledging multiple interests and perspectives and supporting collaborative management through consultation and negotiation;
- vi. Increasing awareness and community mobilization around social and environmental issues;
- vii. Supporting economic development and employment opportunities through timely and relevant information; and
- viii. Facilitating conflict resolution by promoting dialogue and understanding among diverse social groups and interests.

A Strategic Approach to Development Financing as Powered by Communication

To achieve this transformation, the Report of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing, convened by the United Nations (New York, 2014), proposed a strategic approach based on a comprehensive analysis of financial flows—from sources to uses—including the intermediaries that channel these resources. This framework builds upon the Monterrey Consensus while introducing new elements to address contemporary global challenges.

In particular, development financing integrates emerging priorities such as climate change into the substantive financing framework; treats the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in an integrated and mutually reinforcing manner; and highlights how policy design can incentivize investment by recognizing the complementary nature of different financing sources and by examining the mandates and incentives of various financial intermediaries. This analytical

approach is articulated through nine key precepts.

Communication and Sustainable Financial Development

Within this broader financing and policy framework, communication plays a fundamental role in fostering sustainable development at both the rural and national levels. According to Nwabueze (2009), communication contributes to development in society in several key ways.

First, it draws the attention of governments, development agents, and citizens to pressing development needs. Second, communication mobilizes the populace to support and participate in the implementation of development policies, and projects, thereby facilitating the achievement of government development objectives. Third, it keeps the public informed about the state of development through reporting on the initiation, progress, and completion of development projects—such as road construction, school building, housing projects, and the condition of health facilities—highlighting both achievements and areas requiring intervention.

Fourth, communication plays an educative role by enhancing the capacity of citizens to identify and utilize opportunities for self-improvement and economic advancement. For example, informative and educational content on sustainable finance strategies, entrepreneurship, family planning, or stock market participation can empower audiences to initiate businesses or engage in investment activities. Similarly, success stories of community-led development initiatives can inspire other communities to undertake comparable efforts.

Fifth, communication facilitates participatory development by creating two-way channels through which citizens can articulate their needs and priorities, which can then be incorporated into development policies. These policies are, in turn, communicated back to the public through the media, enabling alignment between government objectives and societal needs. Sixth, communication promotes accountability among elected and appointed officials by revealing whether planned and budgeted development initiatives are effectively implemented. For instance, discrepancies between budget allocations and outcomes—such as persistent inadequacies in electricity supply—can prompt public scrutiny and institutional investigation.

Seventh, communication strengthens the watchdog role of the press, making governance more transparent and responsive. Development-focused reporting increases leaders' awareness of public oversight and reinforces expectations of responsibility and performance. More broadly, communication acts as a catalyst for development by disseminating information that amplifies development efforts, exposes challenges, mobilizes support for development projects, and reinforces commitment to development-oriented responsibilities within public institutions.

In the same vein, Sustainable Economic and Financial Development Strategies cannot be mechanically imposed. Rather, they must emerge from the specific conditions, capacities, and developmental trajectories of individual localities and regions. Such strategies are guided by local and regional leadership structures and supported by consultation teams that collaborate through partnerships across a series of distinct and iterative phases of work.

Leadership Structure: Typically, the leadership structure for a Sustainable Economic Development Strategy comprises three core elements:

1. **Leadership Group** – Usually a pre-existing local or regional organization that has formally committed to leading and coordinating the overall strategy development process.
2. **Decision-Making Council** – A body composed of key leaders drawn from a range of public, private, and civic organizations, responsible for guiding the formulation, oversight, and implementation of the Sustainable Economic Development Strategy.
3. **Stakeholder Advisory Group** – A broader consultative body representing the full spectrum of public, private, and civil society stakeholders, which provides advice, feedback, and support throughout the strategy development and implementation process.

The Phases of Work to be done

The development and implementation of a Sustainable Economic Development Strategy typically proceed through five interrelated phases of work:

1. **Initial Consultation** – Establishing the overall goals, objectives, and scope of the strategy, as well as defining the work plan, roles, and expectations for the entire process.
2. **Strategic Assessment and Opportunity Analysis** – Conducting a comprehensive analysis of the area-wide economy to assess its current trajectory, identify key strengths and weaknesses, and determine the principal opportunities and challenges for sustainable economic development.
3. **Strategy Design** – Developing a Sustainable Economic Development Strategy that builds upon existing momentum, defines a clear strategic focus, and integrates a coherent set

of initiatives and actions. This phase aims to produce a dynamic, easily understood strategy supported by a robust and viable business model.

4. **Implementation Planning and Monitoring Framework** – Formulating a detailed implementation plan that specifies responsibilities for each initiative and action, establishes timelines and milestones, estimates costs, identifies potential revenue sources, and incorporates a system for monitoring progress and enabling adaptive, mid-course adjustments.
5. **Strategy Initiation and Full Implementation** – Launching the strategy and progressively advancing toward full implementation of both the Sustainable Economic Development Strategy and its associated Implementation Plan.

Why is communication imperative as a strategy?

To begin with, Investor Relations (IR) is fundamentally concerned with targeted communication directed at current and potential investors. Effectively presenting an investment case to institutional investors requires a clear understanding that not all fund managers share the same investment philosophy. For example, the nature of engagement with a hedge fund differs substantially from that with a long-term value investor. While understanding broad investment styles is essential, it represents only the starting point of effective investor communication.

Dirk – Deutscher (2009) describes Investor relations (IR) “as a function through which companies communicate with their shareholders. These shareholders are also called the financial community. This thesis will define IR as a highly specialized function of corporate communications, which include disclosure management and providing

information in a target-oriented and strategic way to the financial community in order to assist the evaluation of the company, as well as building a relationship to current and potential shareholders. Such a definition includes that IR touches the fields of financial communication and public relations (PR), but is usually organized as its own department directly situated under the board.¹ IR can also be described as a sub-function of corporate communication; nevertheless, some authors prefer a marketing approach. In the early stages, the term IR was used interchangeably with PR, and is still sometimes referred to as financial public relations or financial communications”.

Fund managers typically apply a range of investment filters to narrow their investment universe and manage risk. Common criteria include market capitalization, liquidity, gearing levels, positive cash flow, and exclusions based on ethical or social considerations—such as tobacco, armaments, or environmentally harmful industries. Consequently, companies must conduct thorough preparatory research before engaging investors, ensuring alignment with these criteria and avoiding unnecessary expenditure of time and resources for both management and investors.

Beyond information dissemination, Investor Relations is inherently relationship-driven. Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and Chief Financial Officers (CFOs) of top-tier companies often devote up to 40 percent of their time to IR-related activities. These activities include communicating financial results, meeting with shareholders, presenting at investment conferences, and marketing the firm’s investment credentials. For companies outside the top tier, the challenge is more pronounced. Smaller firms must compete for the attention of a limited

pool of small-cap analysts, fund managers, and investment advisers who act as gatekeepers to institutional capital. Unlike large corporations, these firms must proactively seek visibility and credibility within financial markets.

Investor Relations specializes in communicating a company’s strategy, financial performance, and long-term value proposition to investors and shareholders. Much like public relations professionals often draw on backgrounds in journalism or media, IR specialists bring expertise in financial markets and corporate strategy. Their role requires not only technical and financial knowledge but also the ability to translate complex information into credible, transparent, and decision-relevant messages.

Effective communication with financial markets requires an appreciation of the complex network of stakeholders and influencers surrounding a company’s stock. This includes understanding how analysts, brokers, and investment advisers operate, as well as the type of information they require to produce research reports and investment recommendations. Successful IR is not merely about polished presentations or well-crafted press releases; rather, it hinges on the quality, credibility, and transparency of the information provided and the degree of trust it inspires among its recipients.

More broadly, effective communication is critical to organizational development and managerial effectiveness. It enables managers to perform core management functions such as planning, organizing, motivating, and controlling. Communication skills—both written and oral—form the foundation of all business activities and have become increasingly important in today’s fast-paced and interconnected business environment.

Communication also serves as the key mechanism linking management and employees through effective two-way channels. Such channels allow management not only to inform, educate, advise, and direct employees, but also to receive feedback, suggestions, and grievances. By fostering both formal and informal communication networks across organizational levels, firms can enhance coordination, engagement, and a shared sense of organizational identity.

In the contemporary corporate world, effective management is inseparable from effective communication. Managers perform multiple roles that rely heavily on communication: they act as disseminators of information, entrepreneurs driving change, negotiators mediating between competing interests, and spokespersons representing the organization internally and externally. They also serve as liaisons connecting the organization to its external environment, including shareholders, customers, and business partners. Successful managers employ diverse communication media and strategies to fulfill these roles effectively through the employment of traditional and modern media channels.

External Communication: Reaching Beyond the Organization

An organization's activities extend well beyond its internal boundaries. Customers, stakeholders, dealers, media, and the wider public constitute its external stakeholders. In highly competitive markets, effective external communication is essential. Organizations employ a wide range of communication tools—such as advertising, customer care services, sales communications, and mass media—to engage with these audiences. Television, radio, newspapers, digital platforms, and outdoor media are widely used to promote

products and services and to maintain visibility. Also, webinar series, product information, client testimonials, executive interviews, analyst days, Advisor communications, online conferences, and trainings and retraining can shore up its internal and external communication.

Public Relations departments play a central role in managing external communication by broadening the organization's sphere of influence through publicity, advertising, exhibitions, films, and stakeholder engagement initiatives. Since society ultimately legitimizes organizational existence, cultivating a positive and credible public image through strategic communication is indispensable.

Laskin (2022) says 'Investor relations professionals are on mile one of this information highway, enabling timely and comprehensive disclosure in order to help all investors better understand the company's business and its value, and help investors better understand what they can expect from their investments in the future. In other words, the goal of investor relations becomes not just disclosure of information but educating investors and managing their expectations related to the accurate, or fair, value of the corporations'.

The largest professional organization for investor relations, the National Investor Relations Institute (NIRI), proposes the following definition of investor relations: "a strategic management responsibility that integrates finance, communication, marketing and securities law compliance to enable the most effective two-way communication between a company, the financial community, and other constituencies, which ultimately contributes to a company's securities achieving fair valuation."

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that sustainable development is a multidimensional and context-specific process that requires the integrated alignment of economic, social, environmental, and institutional dimensions. From the evolution of sustainable development thinking and financing frameworks to the roles of communication, leadership, and innovation, it is evident that no single model or solution can be universally applied. Instead, sustainable development strategies must emerge from local realities, capacities, and aspirations, while remaining connected to global frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals.

Sustainable development financing, as articulated by the United Nations and related institutions, extends beyond the mobilization of financial resources. It depends equally on effective public policies, complementary financing instruments, corporate governance, and strong international cooperation. Innovation—while often associated with technological advances—must also encompass policy design, institutional arrangements, financing mechanisms, and modes of stakeholder engagement. In this regard, communication plays a strategic enabling role by fostering transparency, participation, trust, and informed decision-making across all levels of society.

The analysis further highlights the critical importance of leadership structures, consultation teams, and phased implementation processes in translating sustainable economic development strategies into actionable outcomes. Participatory approaches, supported by Communication for Development principles, ensure that diverse stakeholders are engaged, marginalized voices are heard, and

development interventions are socially legitimate and sustainable over time.

In parallel, the evolving role of Investor Relations and strategic communication underscores the growing need to connect sustainability objectives with financial markets and investment communities. Clear, credible, and transparent communication—particularly around sustainability, innovation, and long-term value creation—is essential for mobilizing private capital and aligning investor expectations with sustainable development priorities.

Finally, in the context of digital transformation and initiatives such as Digital India, digitalization emerges as a powerful catalyst for innovation, job creation, and sustainable livelihoods. However, its transformative potential can only be realized through investments in education, skills development, and inclusive access to digital infrastructure. Sustainable development, therefore, rests not only on technological progress but on people-centered policies, participatory communication, and integrated financing strategies that collectively enable societies to meet present needs without compromising the prospects of future generations.

Recommendations

1. Reposition the Role of Media and Communication Professionals

In light of rapid innovations in communication technologies, increasing economic pressures, and persistent access gaps, there is a need to significantly rethink the roles, operations, and professional practices of new media and news professionals. Communication systems should be strategically oriented toward supporting inclusive economic development by improving accessibility, relevance, and

responsiveness to the needs of diverse social groups.

2. Diversify Sustainable Livelihood Strategies Beyond Agriculture

While sustainable livelihood initiatives have traditionally focused on agriculture and allied sectors, future strategies must place greater emphasis on alternative pathways such as economic skills development, entrepreneurship, innovation, and technology-enabled sectors. This diversification is essential to address growing employment demands and to enhance economic resilience.

3. Leverage Electronic Media for SDG Awareness and Engagement

Electronic mass media possess significant potential to engage broad audiences. News, features, documentaries, and development-oriented campaigns related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) should be designed in contemporary, engaging formats that appeal to people across age groups and socio-economic classes, thereby motivating active participation in development programmes.

4. Integrate Diffusion and Participatory Approaches in Agricultural Development Communication

A balanced integration of diffusion-based and participatory communication approaches is essential for driving government-led agricultural development initiatives. While

diffusion supports the wide dissemination of development messages, participatory communication ensures community engagement, local relevance, and sustained public support for agriculture-related development projects.

5. Adopt Integrated Communication Approaches for Development Financing

Governments should deploy a mix of communication approaches to enhance public understanding of sustainable economic development financing, including Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D), social marketing, health communication, and development support communication. These approaches can improve awareness, mobilize resources, and strengthen public trust in development financing initiatives.

6. Promote Communication as a Sustainable Two-Way Process

There is a need to reconceptualize communication as a continuous, two-way, and sustainable process. Rather than creating artificial demand for information, communication strategies should prioritize the dissemination and exchange of information that directly responds to the real economic and developmental needs of communities. Emphasis should therefore shift from persuasion-based diffusion models toward participatory economic information exchange and dialogue.

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