



# Module 3: Communicating Policy Recommendations

July 24-26, 2024

Panorama Summit Hotel, Tigatto Road, Buhangin, Davao City



Development Innovations and Policy Laboratory

Capacity Building Toward Innovative and Inclusive Policymaking  
for the Development in the Agriculture, Aquatic, and Natural Resources (AANR) Sector





## EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Know how to plan to communicate policy recommendations
- Differentiate policy papers from academic papers
- Know the characteristics of a policy brief
- Differentiate the types of policy briefs
- Distinguish basic elements of a policy brief



## SESSION CONTENTS

- The Task of Analysts
- Planning for Communicating Policy Relevant Information
- Packaging Policy Relevant Information
- The Policy Brief
  - What is a Policy Brief
  - Types of a Policy Brief
  - Process of Writing a Policy Brief
  - Policy Brief Examples



# THE TASKS OF ANALYSTS



For us researchers and analysts, our job does not end with analyzing Policy relevant information – **our job does not end with research.**

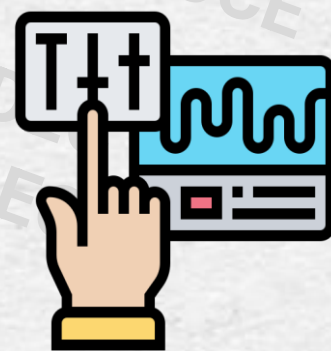
After creating and critically assessing policy relevant information, it becomes our task to communicate the results to stakeholders and policy makers.



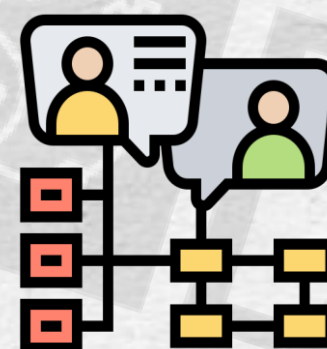
## THE TASKS OF ANALYSTS

### Knowledge and Skills needed in Communicating Policy Relevant Information

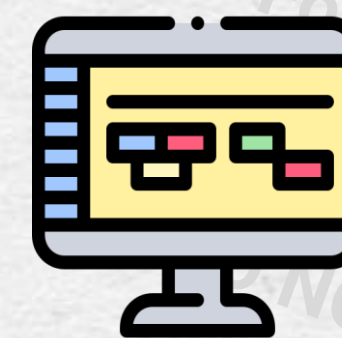
Knowledge and skills needed to conduct research and policy analysis are different from those needed in packaging them. The latter required the following specific skills:



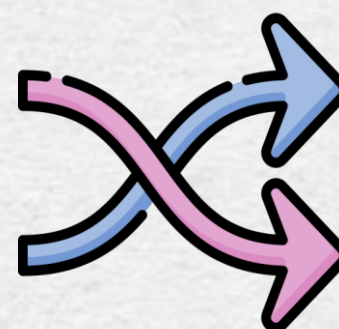
Synthesizing



Organizing



Translating



Simplifying



Visualizing

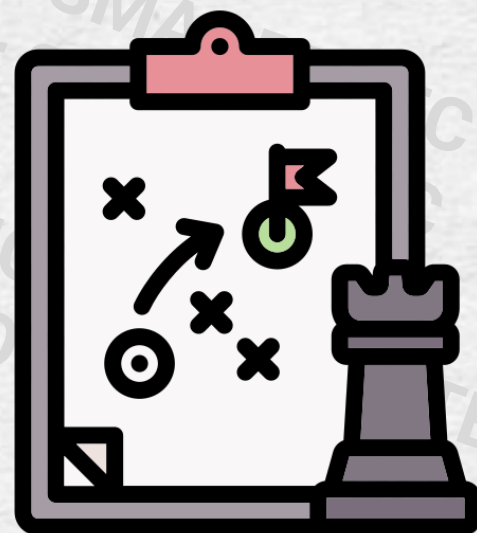


Summarizing



## THE TASKS OF ANALYSTS

# Knowledge and Skills needed in Communicating Policy Relevant Information



Planning

Communicating policy recommendations is a well thought out process. Before you do the actual packaging of policy recommendations, you need to strategize first.



## PLANNING FOR COMMUNICATING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

You are now done with Policy Analysis and you were able to come up with actionable recommendations. What are we going to do now with the policy relevant information that we are holding?



# PLANNING FOR COMMUNICATING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

1. Establish your goal
2. Identify your key audience
3. Decide on your key messages
4. Identify what will be your medium
5. Develop the material/package the policy relevant information
6. Specify a timeline



# PLANNING FOR COMMUNICATING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

## 1. Establish first what is your goal

- What is your purpose in engaging with a policy maker? What are you asking of them?

*Would you like to bring attention to a problem first?*

*Would you like to provide technical advice on an ongoing problem?*

*Would you like to advocate for a specific policy?*

- When you engage with policy makers, make your goal clear at the get-go.



# PLANNING FOR COMMUNICATING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

- Establish a realistic and measurable goal (why you want to venture on communicating the policy recommendations)

## Examples:

- Persuade the Government Procurement Policy Board to update Section 53.6 of RA 9184
- Encourage DA and DILG to extend the implementation of the closed season fishing policy in Zamboanga Peninsula



# PLANNING FOR COMMUNICATING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

## 2. Identify your key audience

- Plans for communicating policy recommendations are designed to **“deliver key messages to targeted and specified audiences”**

- 1) influential stakeholders who have a direct connection with the problem you are focusing on,
- 2) anyone who can influence the ‘influential stakeholders’,
- 3) other stakeholders



# PLANNING FOR COMMUNICATING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

- Keep in mind the questions:

- ❖ *Who do we want to influence?*
- ❖ *Who do we want to persuade?*
- ❖ *Who will be responsible in funding programs?*
- ❖ *Do you and your key audience share the same goal?*



# PLANNING FOR COMMUNICATING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

**DIFFERENT PEOPLE PERCEIVE AND UNDERSTAND MESSAGES DIFFERENTLY.**

**The least that we want is for our stakeholders to be intimidated with the information that we are going to divulge.**



## PLANNING FOR COMMUNICATING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

### 3. Decide on your key messages

- Key messages are those that you **want your target audience to focus on, what to act on.**
- ❖ There are many ways on how to surface and package this key messages, but one way to go around this is to **use concrete, and real-world examples, focus on policy implications**
- ❖ Be sure that when you decide on this, you could answer the question, **“why would a decision maker care?”**



## PLANNING FOR COMMUNICATING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

### 4. Identify what will be your medium of choice and what would be the communication strategies that fit your audience.

- ❖ *Will this be through a policy brief? Policy Note? Position Paper? Should you include an infographic, or will you just present through a meeting.*
- ❖ *What will be your outreach strategy? Who do you call? Who do you set up a meeting with? Do you ambush your decision maker?*



## PLANNING FOR COMMUNICATING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

### 5. Packaging your policy-relevant information

Policy relevant information can be packaged into 2 usual ways

1. Policy Memorandum
2. Policy Brief



## PACKAGING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

# The Policy Memorandum

## What are Policy Memos?

- brief, well organized, and concise narratives given to policy makers
- prepared over shorter periods of time
- based on the syntheses of the results of the policy analysis
- intended to be short and concise
- recommended courses of action could be expounded through a meeting between the analysts and the decision makers and stakeholders.



## PACKAGING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

### The Policy Memorandum

#### Should be ...

- Should not be more than 5 pages
- Should be clearly organized
- Should be written as little technical jargon as possible





(CR: BLGS-2020-10-13-001)  
2020-10-27-180

Republic of the Philippines

**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

DILG-NAPOLCOM Center, EDSA corner Quezon Avenue, Quezon City  
www.dilg.gov.ph

**MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR  
No. 2020- 144**



**TO : ALL PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS, CITY/MUNICIPAL  
MAYORS, PUNONG BARANGAYS, BARMM  
MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, DILG  
REGIONAL DIRECTORS, AND ALL OTHERS  
CONCERNED**

**SUBJECT : SUPPORT TO THE NATIONWIDE MEASLES  
RUBELLA - ORAL POLIO VACINE IMMUNIZATION  
CAMPAIGN AS PART OF THE CRITICAL HEALTH  
INTERVENTIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH**

**DATE : 27 OCT 2020**



## PACKAGING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

### The Policy Brief

#### What are Policy Briefs?

- concise summary of an issue, the options to deal with it, and some recommendations on the best option
- provide a good picture of what the problem is, the key findings regarding it, and present actionable and practical recommendations in response to it
- **Aimed at policy decision makers and other actors who either formulate or influence policy making, who are usually busy people and non-specialists in the issue area**



## PACKAGING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

### The Policy Brief

#### Characteristics of Policy Briefs?

1. Short and focuses on one problem or issue
2. Evidence Based
3. Convincing/Persuasive in Nature
4. Focuses on meanings, not on the details of the method
5. Answers to “so what?” after the research results are generated



## PACKAGING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

### The Policy Brief

#### What makes Policy Briefs different from Academic or the usual Research Papers ?

##### 1. Audience

- policy briefs are written for a more general reader, albeit someone who has a stake in the issue you are focusing on, or a policy maker

##### 2. Tone

- the tone of an academic paper is “for your information” the tone of a policy brief is “for your action”

##### 3. Terminologies

- clear language is used unlike in academic papers which are often filled with jargons; for policy briefs, complex data is translated or simplified.



## PACKAGING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

### The Policy Brief

#### What makes Policy Briefs different from Academic or the usual Research Papers ?

##### 4. Purpose

- academic papers will just present the findings and synthesize them. Policy briefs may use the same findings and synthesis but will relay the urgency of a problem and relay practical and actionable recommendations.



## PACKAGING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

### The Policy Brief

#### What makes a Good Policy Brief?

- Provides background for the problem
- Provides a clear picture about the **urgency of the problem**
- Clear and concise that it would be easy to see and comprehend the recommendations
- Recommendations are **doable, practical, and actionable**



## PACKAGING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

### The Policy Brief

**POLICY BRIEFS ARE NOT OPINION PIECES.**



## PACKAGING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

### The Policy Brief

#### Types of a Policy Brief

There are two distinct types of policy briefs, depending on what your recommendations would be or how you are going to present information/data

##### 1. Advocacy Brief

- Argues in favor of a specific course of action

##### 2. Objective Brief

- gives balanced information for policy makers to make up his or her mind; suggests ways on how to respond



## PACKAGING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

# Advocacy Brief Examples

## Farmer field schools on land and water management: An extension approach that works

Soil and water management is a major problem constraining the development of Uganda's agriculture. Our soils are being depleted: every year, once-fertile soil is becoming poorer because of poor management and inappropriate farming practices. The soil is compacted by repeated ploughing and continuous growing of the same crops. Water cannot seep into the soil, so it runs off, carrying away the valuable topsoil and our rivers brown. Weeds and soil-borne diseases further limit crop productivity.

Following a period when the extension system had deteriorated so far that farmers were almost abandoned, the government established the National Agricultural Advisory Services to implement demand-driven extension services. NAADS applies a range of approaches to help farmers produce more and overcome problems they face.

### Farmer field schools

A farmer field school is an innovative approach to helping farmers learn about and improve their production system. A field school is a group of 25–30 farmers who come together to solve a common problem, such as soil degradation, pests and diseases, or poor water availability.

The farmers learn from their experiences: throughout the season, they conduct experiments on their own fields, make observations, and evaluate the results. They are guided and helped by a facilitator – who may be a researcher, an extension worker, or one of the farmers in the group. Each new field school receives a grant, which it uses to pay for the expenses of running the school. Members also contribute to this fund, and may receive a loan to generate income to sustain the school. This fosters empowerment and business skills.

The group meets once every two weeks – more often at key times during the year. Farmer field schools that focus on land and water management learn how to manage their land more appropriately. They can also look at other topics that they themselves choose. The “students” graduate after they accomplish their objective, and each member is given a certificate in recognition of his or her achievement.



### Projects promoting farmer field schools on land and water management in Uganda

Several projects in Uganda have successfully used the farmer field school approach.

<b>INMASP</b>	Makere University and Environmental Alert	Pallisa and Wakiso Districts, 2002–5	5 farmer groups
<b>INSPIRE</b>	Africa 2000, Makerere Univ, CIAT, NARO, district governments	Tororo and Busia districts, 2002–5	48 farmer groups
<b>ULAMP</b>	RELMA, MAAIF, district governments	Mbabara, Kabarole, Arua, Kapchorwa districts, 1999–2003	1187 farmer groups
<b>Conservation Agriculture Project</b>	NARO, Africa 2000, district governments	Mbale and Pallisa districts, 2002–5	48 farmer groups
<b>Soil Productivity Improvement Project</b>	Africa 2000, local governments	Busia and Tororo districts	16 farmer groups



University of the Philippines Los Baños  
College of Public Affairs and Development  
Center for Strategic Planning and Policy Studies

ISSN 2704 - 2928

### CENTER FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING AND POLICY STUDIES POLICY BRIEF

## Addressing the Need for Climate Information at the Farm Level

Written by Francis John F. Faderogao, University Researcher 1

Issue No. 2 | 2020 | Agricultural Policy and Sustainability



### Changing climate, changing needs

Farmers traditionally use local knowledge and practices in deciding when to till the land, what crops to plant and when to harvest crops. To some extent, they were able to manage the risks and uncertainties that climate brings to their farming communities. But over time, farmers have observed changes in rainfall patterns - the rainy season has become more and more unpredictable. Unreliable start of the rainy season has often led to untimely planting decision, resulting in production losses as crops planted cannot tolerate the 'new unseasonal' rainfall patterns. As such, farmers have realized that they can no longer depend solely on traditional cropping calendars in making farm-level decisions.

More reliable, timely, and accurate agro-climatic information would be needed to reduce risks posed by the changing climate. The emerging concern, however, is access to such available information. Limited access or lack of information, for example, on historical rainfall and climate forecast, increases the risks in crop production due to climate variability.



# PACKAGING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

## Objective Brief Examples



### Natural Resource Perspectives 115

June 2008

#### Rising food prices: Cause for concern

Steve Wiggins and Stephanie Levy

**T**he current spike in food prices needs prompt reaction through various forms of social protection to avert poverty and hunger. Prices are soon likely to fall somewhat, but not to their previous levels. Higher prices mean problems for three groups: poor households struggling to cope with higher costs of food; governments of low income food-importing countries facing higher import bills and higher energy prices; and agencies such as the World Food Programme (WFP) that use food aid to combat food emergencies.

#### Policy conclusions

- Food prices have been rising since the early 2000s but spiked in early 2008. Even if they start to decline later this year, the next ten years will see food prices at levels above those seen in the early 2000s, thanks to higher energy costs, demand for biofuels, growing demands for staples as populations grow, and for higher value foods, such as livestock products, as incomes rise.
- Prompt assistance is needed for countries facing surging food and energy import bills and for low-income households.
- Low stocks threaten the functioning of agencies such as the WFP and prompt calls for land to be switched back into food production, from biofuels throughout the OECD, and from "set-aside" in the EU.
- In the medium term, economic and agricultural growth can offset the damage, but this will require more determined efforts to boost food production.
- Beyond action, a better understanding is needed of the 2008 price spike, to ensure that such events are rare. Increased variability of weather from climate change makes future price spikes more likely. If more can be learned from the current shock, then dealing with future ones may be easier.

#### Introduction

Since the 1950s, the real price of staple foods has been falling on world markets, interrupted briefly by price spikes in the early 1970s and mid 1990s. Low prices were attributable both to high levels of production in OECD countries as well as to the "green revolution" in Asia.

But since the early 2000s, food prices have been rising on world markets, and since 2006 have climbed strongly. The price of a tonne of wheat, for example, that cost just US\$106 in January 2000, reached US\$196 in January 2007, and US\$440 in March 2008.<sup>1</sup> Some exceptionally poor harvests have been important, but forecasts for the next ten years are for higher food prices than seen in the recent past owing to structural changes in supply and demand.

On the supply side, the rising cost of oil raises the costs of nitrogen fertiliser, machinery operations, and transport of food to market. On the demand side, the growing incomes of consumers in the emerging economies,

translate into rising demand for meats that in large part are produced by feeding grain to livestock. In addition, high oil prices and concerns over energy security in the US, make biofuels competitive, so that grains, sugar and palm oil are diverted into producing ethanol and biodiesel.

Food price rises threaten to reverse recent gains in poverty reduction. Low income countries are faced by heavy increases in the cost of imported food, draining foreign exchange, importing inflation, and putting a brake on their growth and development.

How, then, can governments and donors respond to these changed circumstances? In the medium term, growth can raise incomes to compensate for the higher cost of food. The right policies can help farmers respond to the opportunity by growing more and pushing prices back down. More support for agricultural research from governments and donors will be needed.



This series is published by ODI, an independent non-profit policy research institute, with financial support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of either ODI or Sida.

Overseas Development Institute  
ODI is the UK's leading independent think tank on international development and humanitarian issues.



ISSN 2704 - 2928

#### POLICY BRIEF SPECIAL RELEASE

DEVELOPMENT INNOVATIONS AND POLICY LABORATORY  
CENTER FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING AND POLICY STUDIES

### PARTE KO, PARTE MO SA IRIGASYON: Strengthening Capacities for Collaborative Water Governance towards Food Security

Written by Paulo T. Abiera, Dante B. Arcigal Jr., and Rosalie E. Lanceras  
DIP Lab Policy Hackathon POLISIYA PASYA SYENSA 2022 Second Place Winners

CPAf 25th Anniversary Special Release | DIP Lab | Issue No. 4 | 2023 | Water and Development



#### SUMMARY

This policy brief proposes a holistic approach for the sustainability of water supply for agri-food production in Sta. Cruz Watershed.

Water plays a critical role in agri-food production, particularly of rice, which is largely cultivated in irrigated ecosystems. However, irrigation is encumbered with intersectoral challenges resulting in food insecurity. Such is evident in the Sta. Cruz Watershed where farmers are facing rice shortage due to insufficient water supply.

This policy brief puts forward the need for a continuing capacity development program that embodies strategies for addressing the multifaceted challenges to the effective governance of irrigation water. Moreover, LGUs must provide an enabling environment for cooperation and collaboration among stakeholders. Resources also have to be mobilized to meet operational needs in irrigation systems.

Center for Strategic Planning and Policy Studies | Development Innovations and Policy Laboratory 1



## PACKAGING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

# The Policy Brief

## Major Elements of a Policy Brief

The following are the Basic Contents of a Policy Brief:

### 1. The Problem

- discussion of background and context

### 2. Key Findings

- why is the problem considered urgent?
- more information about the issues at hand
- based on research
- were solutions already implemented? have they been effective



## PACKAGING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

### The Policy Brief

### Major Elements of a Policy Brief

#### 3. Policy Implications

- answers the question “so what”
- If-then statements
- explain why the key findings are important to policy making
- should be supported by your key findings



## PACKAGING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

### The Policy Brief

#### Major Elements of a Policy Brief

##### 4. Recommendations

- Specific, actionable, and practical
- Must flow from the evidence presented
- Chosen from whatever method used

##### 5. Summary

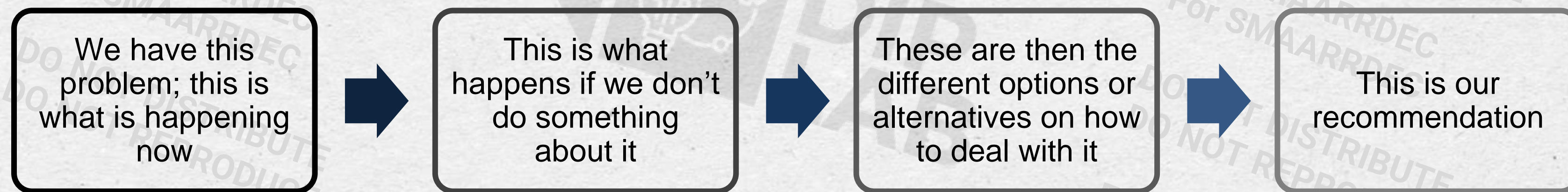
- A quick rundown of the contents of the policy brief
- Should capture the problem, the key findings, and the recommendations



## PACKAGING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

### The Policy Brief

#### USUAL NARRATIVE FLOW





## PACKAGING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

### The Policy Brief

#### Usual Shortcomings in Writing Policy Briefs:

- Drawing recommendations and implications that are not based on data
- Drawing recommendations before analysis/project was undertaken
- Giving recommendations or conclusions that were just hypotheses and were not supported by data
- Contains quantitative data that are not translated or simplified
- Misinterpreting data drawing unwarranted conclusions
- Providing generic recommendations
- Drawing vague conclusions
- Not providing policy implications
- Policy brief contained opinions
- Policy brief should not have been a policy brief



## PLANNING FOR COMMUNICATING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

### 6. Specify a timeline.

- ❖ *When are you going to deliver the packaged policy relevant information?*
- ❖ *Are you going to wait for a policy window? Or are you going to create one?*
- ❖ *Will you be proactive, or will you be reactive?*
- ❖ *Until when are you going to wait for your target to be accomplished? Will these be for the current set of administrators and policymakers? Or for the next one?*



# PLANNING FOR COMMUNICATING POLICY RELEVANT INFORMATION

GOAL (What is your target? Why are you venturing on policy communication?)	KEY AUDIENCE/S (Who are the stakeholders? Who are these influential stakeholders? Who are decision makers that you want to influence?)	KEY MESSAGES	MATERIAL (How are you going to package the key messages? Is through print media? Digital media? Policy brief? Position paper? Video explainer?)	OUTREACH PLAN (How are you going to deliver your material to your key audiences? Are you going to mail it? Are you going to set a meeting to be able to explain further your key messages? Are you going to explain your material to the secretary of your key stakeholder?)	TIMELINE (Will you be waiting for a policy window? When will this be? Do you have a timeline in mind?)



## References

Dunn, W.N. (2014). Public Policy Analysis Fifth Edition. Person Education Limited

Elazegui, D.D. (2018). Knowledge Sharing and Getting Started: Writing Policy Brief [Powerpoint Slides]. Presented during the CSPPS Seminar-Workshop

Lapitan, A.V., and Rola, A.C. (202) Writing the policy brief: A Quick Guide. CPAf, UPLBB

Food and Agriculture Organization, (2011), Food Security Communications Toolkit



# Contact us



University of the Philippines Los Baños, College,  
Batong Malake, Los Baños, Laguna, 4031



[facebook.com/diplab.uplb](https://facebook.com/diplab.uplb)



[@diplab\\_uplb](https://twitter.com/diplab_uplb)



[diplab.uplb@up.edu.ph](mailto:diplab.uplb@up.edu.ph)

