Tool 1.3B: Communications Plan

What is the purpose of this tool?
To assist local governments to agree upon and convey common messages regarding their vision and ambitions for low-emission development, and to effectively communicate these to stakeholders.

What does it do?
It guides through the key requirements and considerations in order to develop a communications plan.

Who should use it?
The Climate Core Team.

WRITING THE COMMUNICATION PLAN

RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES
It is recommended to develop a Communications Plan for the project at the start of the process. Climate resilience and low emissions development may be new topics for some people, it may raise anxiety levels or even negative reactions among stakeholders unless the rationale is carefully explained.

It is important to develop some clear messages at the start about why the local government is undertaking this work and what it hopes to achieve. There will also be other points through the process where clear messaging will be important e.g. after the initial emissions and opportunities analysis has been undertaken.

Further, for your local government to effectively plan and promote the implementation of actions which promote climate resilient development while reducing emissions, you would need to adopt a truly participatory approach that allows for dialogue and interactions between staff, citizens, civil society groups, research institutions and the private sector. This requires an open sharing of information and transfer of knowledge between these stakeholders that could lead to mutually agreed allocation of roles and responsibilities as well as the development of beneficial partnerships for developing an effective Climate Resilient Cities Action Plan.

Some possible objectives:

i. Build awareness among local communities regarding the benefits of moving to a climate resilience and low carbon economy
ii. Inform the community about opportunities and proposed actions to build resilience and reduce emissions and develop a Green Economy
iii. Invite the involvement of citizens in the decision making processes by soliciting their ideas and inputs
iv. Suggest how actions taken by individuals and groups can contribute towards the CapaCITIES

Care should be taken in the kind of terminology chosen: the use of complicated and technical terms should be avoided, and risks and proposed actions that the community can relate to should be used (i.e. securing the health and well being in the event of heat stresses).

Communications Plan may contain (sections 1-5 below in more detail):
1. Target audiences
2. Objective and key messages
3. Activities
4. Communication medium
5. Resources and coordination