

Preparing for communications design

Carbon Pricing Communications Training

Session 3



Learning objectives

- Understand the preparation that is needed to design a communications strategy
- Understand strategic decisions in structuring a communications strategy

Content

- 1 Introduction

- 2 Incorporate communications advice from the outset of policy design

- 3 Identifying national circumstances

- 4 Defining communication objectives

- 5 Identifying key information gaps for the audiences

- 6 Communication policy objectives prioritization

Introduction

Good carbon pricing communications begin early, in parallel with policy development

Objectives of the
communications
strategy

National
circumstances

Incorporating communications advice from the outset

- Target audience research is a part of communications, as it allows for understanding their attitudes, values, and concerns
 - Two phases:
 - Exploratory research
 - Test phase
- ➔ Good communication cannot boost a policy that has failed to receive stakeholder engagement and support throughout its development

Identifying national circumstances

The national context impacts communications decisions

	Political system and level of polarization	Dependence on domestic fossil fuels	Relative importance of climate change
Language and messages			
Audiences			

Case study: Costa Rica

Political system and level of polarization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Elections every 4 years• No particularly high level of polarization on climate change issues
Dependence on domestic fossil fuels	Very low
Relative concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relatively little knowledge about carbon and its effect on climate change• Car pollution is an important concern

Case study: Costa Rica

Pollution caused by
transportation

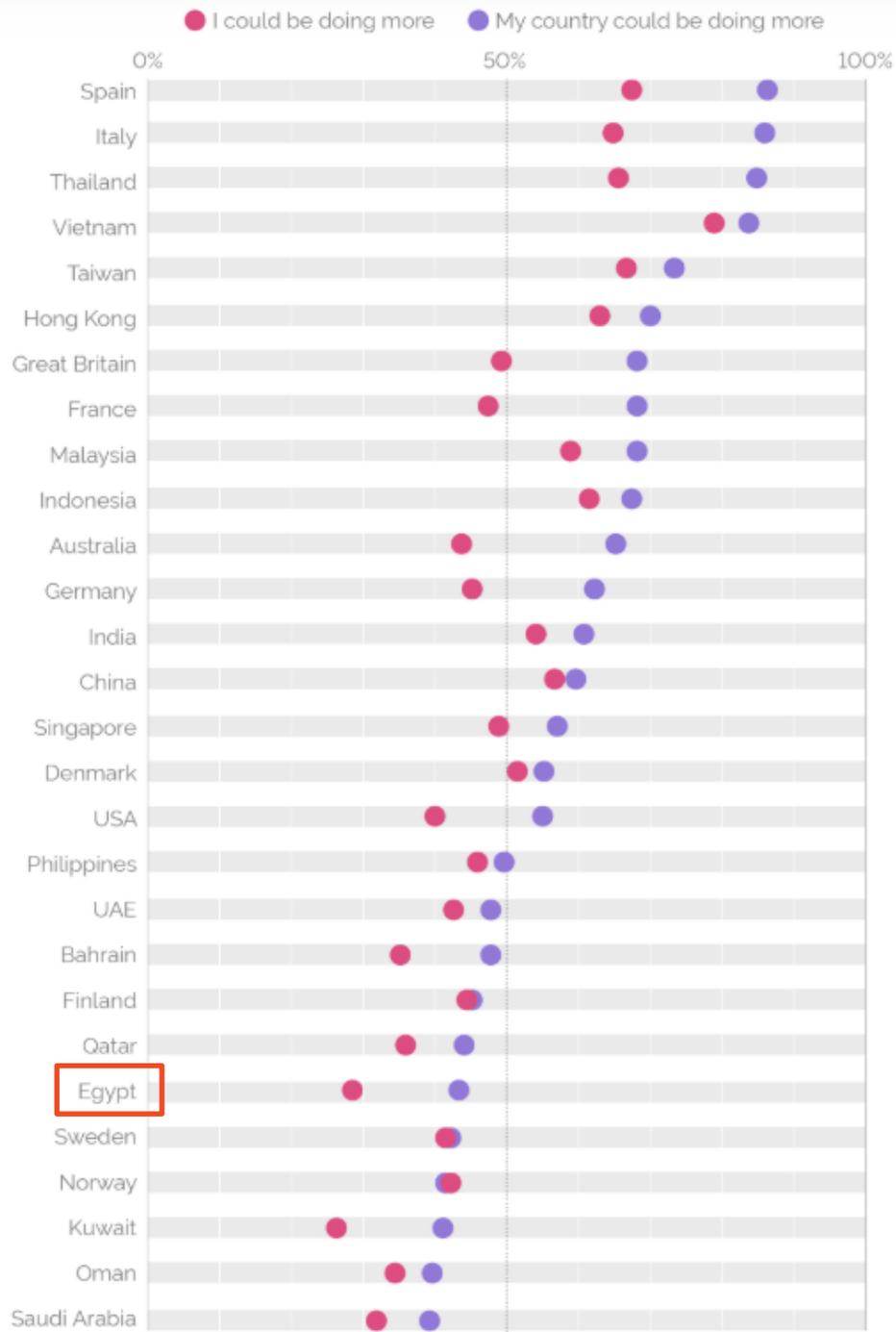
Calculated at an individual
basis, individual responsibility



Traffic Jam in San Jose | Photo by HTWJW | 2.0 Generic (CC BY-NC-ND 2)

Case study: energy subsidy-cuts in Egypt

Political system and level of polarization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start of reforms in 2014, when President Sisi came to power• Deep political divides in the country• Need for (political) leadership
Dependence on domestic fossil fuels	High
Relative concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Socio-economic justice concerns at the forefront• High vulnerability to climate change impacts• Relatively few people in Egypt think they could be doing more or their government could be doing more to tackle climate change (YouGov, 2019)



Do you think that your country / you personally could be doing more to tackle climate change, or is it / are you already doing as much as it / as you reasonably can?

% who say the or their country could be doing more

Case study: Egypt

“Bitter pill” but “Long overdue”

Long-term strategy of reducing poverty

“Dedicate 50% of the revenues to education and health”



Mohamed El-Shahed / AFP via Getty Images

Exercise | National circumstances

10 minutes

Which national circumstances may be at play in your country context?

Defining communication objectives

Gaining and maintaining support for carbon pricing policy

Making the carbon price signal visible

Ensuring an informed debate on carbon pricing

Obtaining feedback from stakeholder groups

Objectives should be regularly re-examined to allow communications to adapt to evolving circumstances

Defining communication objectives

Gaining and maintaining support for carbon pricing policy

Strong and broad support can ensure the carbon pricing policy's stability and resistance against changing political winds



Fridays for Future in Sanmoreno | Tommi Boom

Defining communication objectives

Making the price signal visible

Option 1:
Make the carbon
pricing signal
visible

Option 2:
Minimize the
visibility of the
carbon price
signal

Nuanced approach:
Communicate
costs to limited
audience

Defining communication objectives

Ensuring an informed debate

Informed debate particularly important when:

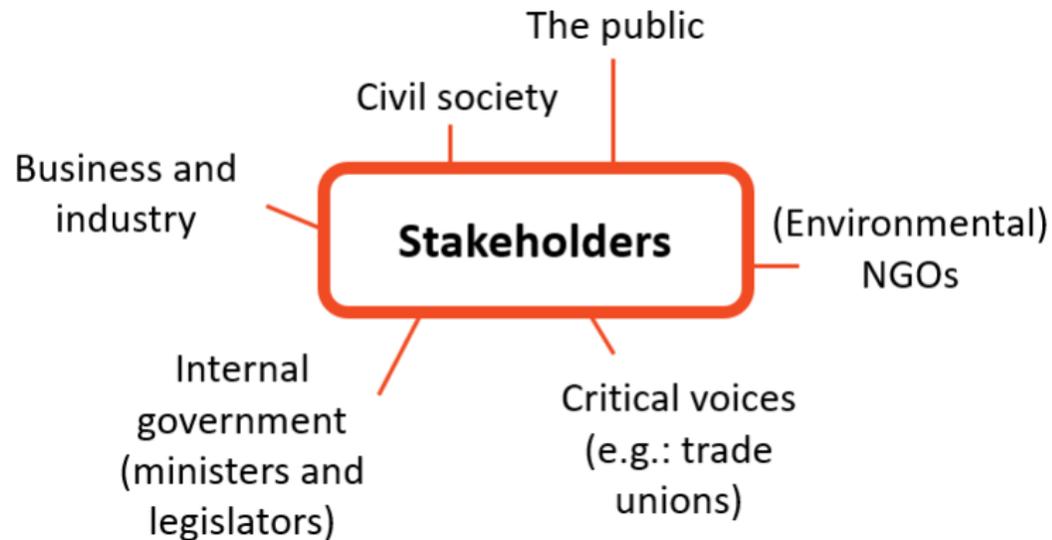
- Carbon price reliant on a public or legislative vote, or
- The issue of carbon price becomes politically contentious



Astrid Riecken | CTBTO

Defining communication objectives

Obtaining feedback from stakeholder groups



Help ensuring that the carbon price is robust and broadly understood and accepted

Identifying key information gaps for audiences

- Research can help focus communications on gaps in the understanding of the audience
- To identify gaps, it is first important to understand the information needs of the audience (linked to their role)
- Different needs may be identified for different target audiences

Communication policy objective prioritisation



Proactive communication with the public?

- Does the policy require high-profile independent legislation? Or a public vote?
- Is there likely to be significant opposition?
- Is the carbon price associated with a specific political party?
- How relevant is the public opinion for policymaking?

Exercise | Proactive communication?

5 minutes

Which factors should be considered in deciding to what extent to proactively communicate your carbon pricing policy?

Group work | Preparing for communications design

10 minutes

Shangri La wants to design a carbon tax policy, and has engaged you as a communications expert.

- The country has a high level of political polarization, with about 1/3rd of the population being highly concerned about climate change
- The country is highly dependent on fossil fuels
- Adoption of the carbon tax requires a public vote through a referendum.

List what you think would be the **communication objectives** in this situation, and **prioritize** them by considering the tradeoffs.

Questions?



Coffee break

(15 minutes)

