

SOLOMON ISLANDS

NATIONAL INFORMATION STRATEGY

To Empower All Communities To Better
Manage Their Marine Resources





Solomon Islands National Information Strategy to Empower All Communities to Better Manage their Marine Resources was developed by cChange, in partnership with the Locally-Managed Marine Area Network International (LMMA) and the Pacific Community (SPC), through the Pacific-European Union Marine Partnership (PEUMP) programme, with financial support from the European Union and the Government of Sweden. The views in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union and the Government of Sweden.

This National Information Strategy was developed in consultation with the Solomon Islands Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) and Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM), and its national partners, WorldFish (WF), World Wildlife Fund (WWF-Pacific) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC).

Acronyms

CBRM	Community-Based Resource Management (also known as Community-based Fisheries Management)
CMT	Customary Marine Tenure
FMA	Fisheries Management Act (2015)
ICE	Information, Communications and Education
ICT	Information, Communications and Technology
LMMA	Locally-Managed Marine Area Network International
MFMR	Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources
MECDM	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology
PEUMP	Pacific-European Union Marine Partnership
SPC	The Pacific Community
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
WF	WorldFish
WWF- Pacific	World Wildlife Fund

Document reviews

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1	01/06/2021	First submission to Solomon Government's MFRM & MECDM, SPC, LMMA, Worldfish, WWF-Pacific, TNC
2	20/08/2021	Final draft for MFMR
3	15/09/2021	Final submission

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Photo sources from WorldFish. Both cover and back page photos are of Santupaele village, Western Province and taken by Filip Milovac.



Contents

3
BACKGROUND

7-8
CONTEXT ANALYSIS

11
TARGET AUDIENCES &
BARRIERS TO ACTION

13-14
ACTIVITIES & TOOLS

17
COMMITTEES

19-24
APPENDICES

5-6
PROCESS

9
GOAL & OBJECTIVES

12
MESSAGING & BRANDING

15-16
FEEDBACK LOOPS

17
REFERENCES





Background

Through the Pacific-European Union Marine Partnership (PEUMP) programme, the Solomon Islands National Information Strategy was developed by cChange, a regional non-governmental organisation.

This National Information Strategy was developed in consultation with the Solomon Islands Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) and Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM), and its national partners, WorldFish (WF), World Wildlife Fund (WWF-Pacific), and regional partners, the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Locally-Managed Marine Area Network International (LMMA).

As outlined in the “Pacific Framework for Action on Scaling-up Community-based Fisheries Management” (2021-2025), a national information strategy is a critical component to upscale community-based management in the Pacific islands¹. This National Information Strategy endeavors to meet that need.

Based on key Solomon Islands partner input, the National Information Strategy is designed to add value to current efforts and partnerships and to leverage limited resources through developing

cost-effective and innovative information pathways that empower all communities to better manage their marine resources in the Solomon Islands.

Developing cost-effective and innovative information pathways is the central goal of the National Information Strategy.

Outputs delivered through the PEUMP programme through to December 2022, will substantially leverage the MFMR and MECDM commitment to upscale community-based resource management (CBRM). Their CBRM Upscaling Strategy “Solomon Islands Community Based Coastal and Marine Resource Management Strategy (2021-2025)” presents a roadmap for this National Information Strategy to be integrated into government strategies².

The outputs of the National Information Strategy will also help elevate the value of CBRM approaches in the Solomon Islands and guide future investment to sustain efforts beyond the life of this ‘project’.

¹ SPC “Pacific Framework for Action on Scaling-up Community-based Fisheries Management” (2021-2025).

² Solomon Islands Community Based Coastal and Marine Resource Management Strategy (2021-2025).

³ ‘Project’ refers to KRA 3.7 of the PEUMP Programme (communication activities and production and dissemination of information and materials for communities). The aim of KRA 3.7 is to contribute to sustainable management of coastal fisheries resources and ecosystems improved through mentoring and empowerment at the community level, providing relevant information to support effective management and policy decisions at all levels.

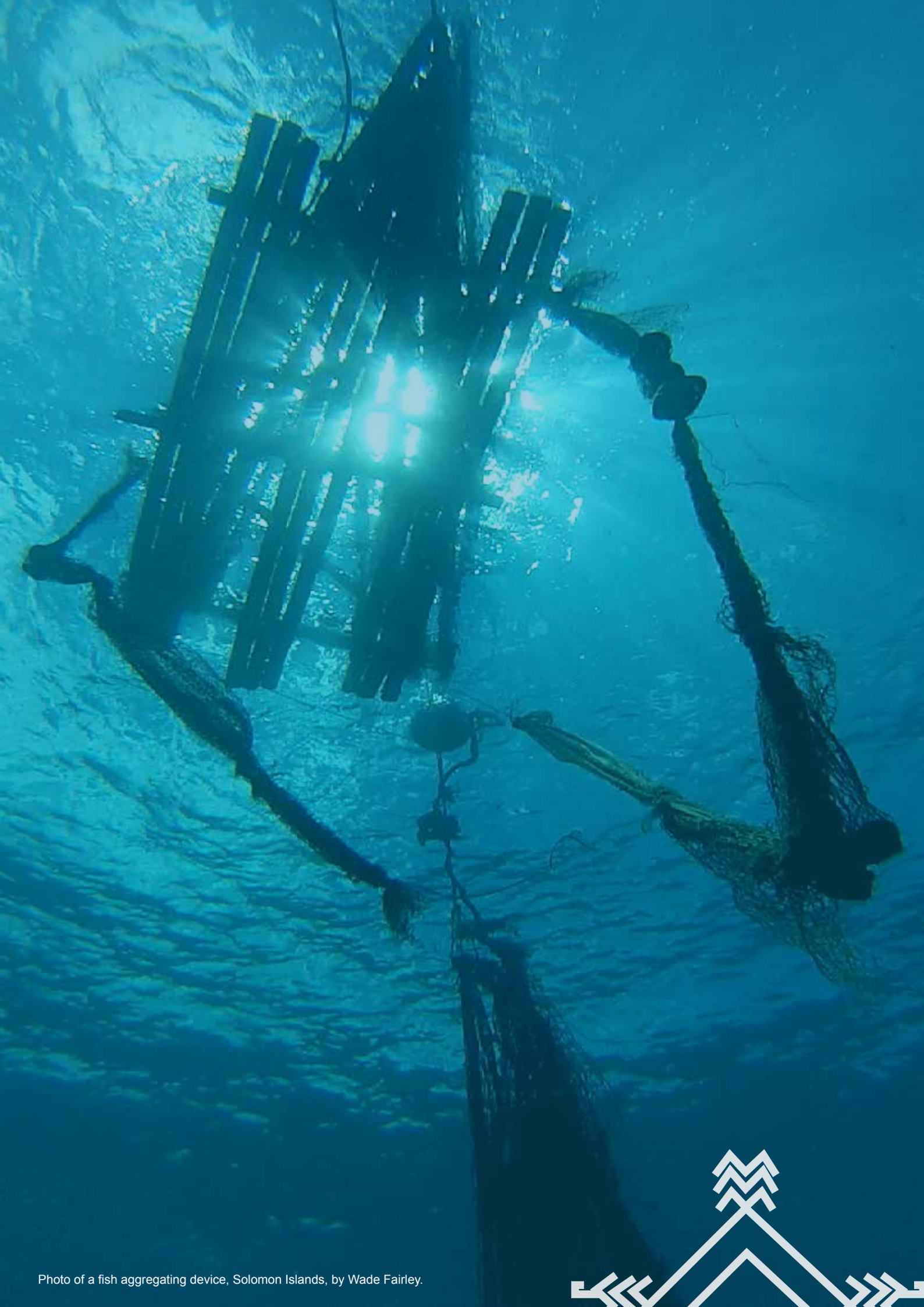


Photo of a fish aggregating device, Solomon Islands, by Wade Fairley.





Process

cChange initiated a staged process to develop this National Information Strategy to support efforts to upscale Community-Based Resource Management (CBRM) in the Solomon Islands.

The process was initiated following partner consultation and endorsement. The National Information Strategy is a product of Phases 1 to 3 (see Image 1, following page). After reviewing all relevant CBRM documents and research, cChange conducted key partner interviews and a three-day Zoom workshop held on the 5th of May to the 7th of May 2021. (See Appendix 1 for partner workshop and partner interview summaries).

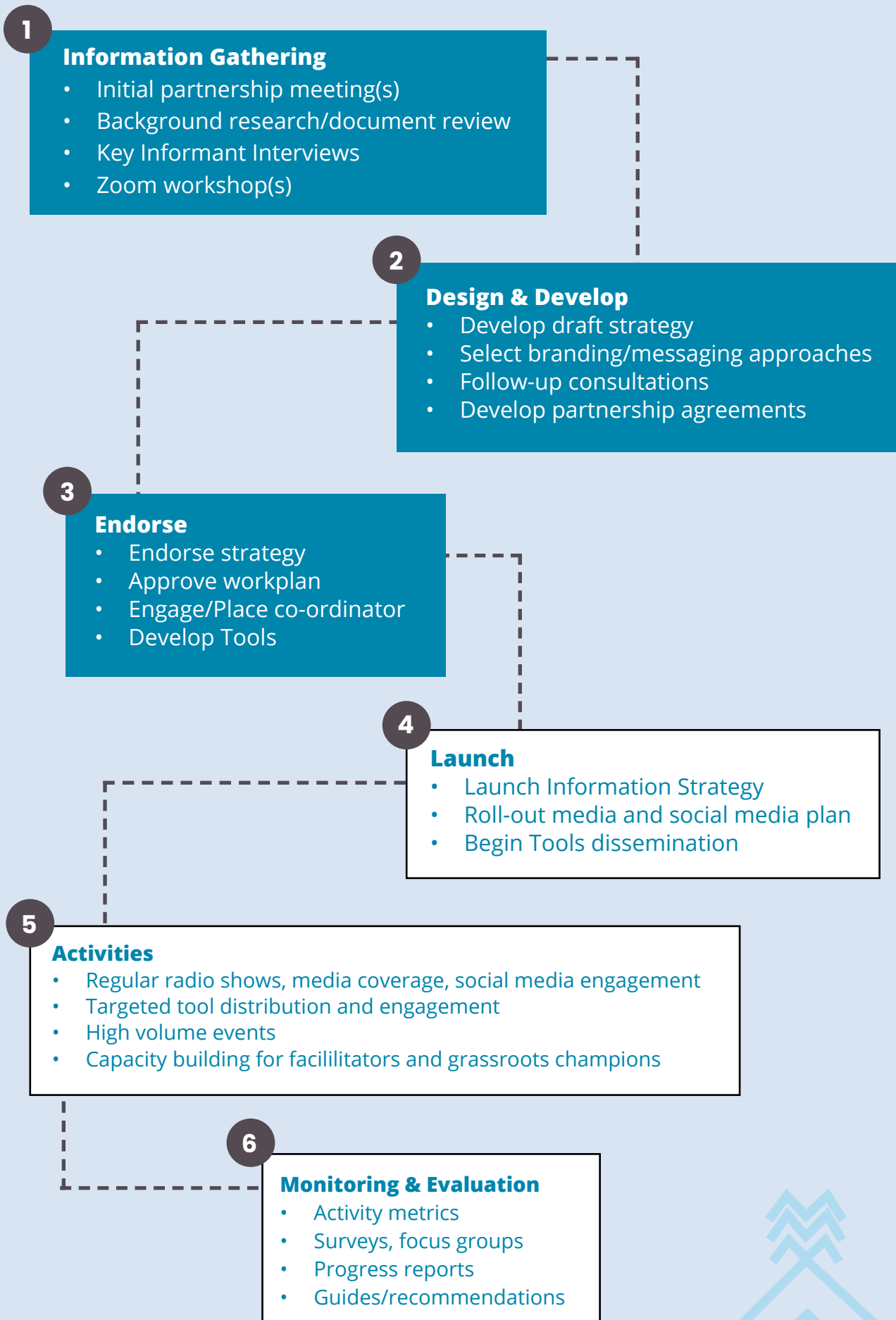
Phases 1 and 2 are critical to ensuring the National Information Strategy is appropriately localised, while Phase 3 identifies resourcing opportunities and needs to guide implementation. The National Information Strategy must respond to the local context, particularly key barriers and challenges of reaching all communities and stakeholders with information on CBRM in the Solomon Islands. The National Information Strategy must also integrate with government strategies, specifically MFMR and MECDM's commitment to upscale CBRM.

Of note, document reviews and partner interviews confirm partner interest, commitment, and support for developing the National Information Strategy. Partner interviews and the Zoom workshop also affirmed partners' eagerness to play an active role in the implementation of this National Information Strategy, demonstrated by an open discussion of challenges, and opportunities to collaborate.

As an output of the Zoom workshop, partners have committed to be part of a National Information Strategy Working Group by reviewing and endorsing the National Information Strategy and in turn, support subsequent processes to develop messaging, activities and outreach tools and monitoring and evaluation plans, as possible and where appropriate. The Working Group will be supported by a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), which will oversee the accuracy and appropriateness of tools and activities (see page 17 for an explanation on how the Working Group and TAC are expected to operate).

Following the review and endorsement of this National Information Strategy, cChange will commence on subsequent phases, including facilitating a locally-driven process to develop messaging and branding, initial tools and activities and developing partnership agreements.

Image 1: The development and implementation of the National Information Strategy process, which is informed by partnerships and campaign analysis throughout the life of the project.



Context Analysis

Nearly 75% of the population in the Solomon Islands is rural. This includes an upwards of over 4,000 coastal communities, which are highly dependent on healthy, resilient marine resources to support food security, livelihoods and cultural practices. However, with increasing population pressures and needs for livelihoods, including cash income to meet basic needs and other development aspirations, these resources face many threats from overharvesting.

Since the mid 2000s, CBRM has been a key framework to support coastal communities to manage their marine areas as 90% of inshore areas are under Customary Marine Tenure (CMT) in the Solomon Islands.

The Ministry for Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) is the lead agency that coordinates CBRM support for marine areas through the CBRM Section.

There is a strong partnership network with other ministries, such as the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM), specifically its Environment and Conservation Division, and site-based NGOs and research partners who support the facilitation of CBRM. This partnership approach leverages resources and capacity for national and provincial governments and partners, which is critical to deliver effective CBRM for coastal communities to implement marine resource management.

Due to geographically and culturally diverse communities, partnerships are particularly critical in the Solomon Islands to reach coastal communities. In addition, limited information, communications, and technology (ICT) infrastructure makes it challenging to reach communities without direct engagement, which significantly increases project delivery costs. Indeed, current CBRM efforts are very costly, thus are mostly concentrated on sites with easy logistics, according to MFMR and MECDM CBRM upscale strategy².



There is also limited resources and institutional capacity within national and provincial governments to support CBRM. The CBRM Section itself comprises of 5 full time staff. Each provincial government has one to two Fisheries Officers though CBRM is not their only responsibility.

Although actual community reach is unknown, it was suggested in partner interviews with the CBRM Section that approximately only 10% of coastal communities have received some support over the last two decades.

In support of more strategic approaches, this *National Information Strategy to Empower All Communities to Better Manage Their Marine Areas* presents a roadmap to reach the other 90% of communities through direct and indirect activities. By focusing on national media, strategic messaging, strengthening partnerships, and expanding avenues to deliver CBRM information, the National Information Strategy intends to scale down resource intensive intervention models of direct engagement to ultimately upscale CBRM.

This approach is consistent with the CBRM upscale strategy and broader regional efforts to upscale the delivery of CBRM information to reach all coastal communities, including the LMMA Network's 100 Percent Solution initiative.

In context, the National Information Strategy will endeavour to reach all coastal communities with information and guidance on self-diagnosing problems and local management solutions.

By taking a broad-partnership approach, including faith-based organisations and other non-traditional partners, innovative self-facilitation tools will be disseminated to coastal communities and those communities who currently participate in CBRM become seed sites to demonstrate the possibilities when marine areas are effectively and locally managed. The following image (Image 2) presents the National Information Strategy in this context.

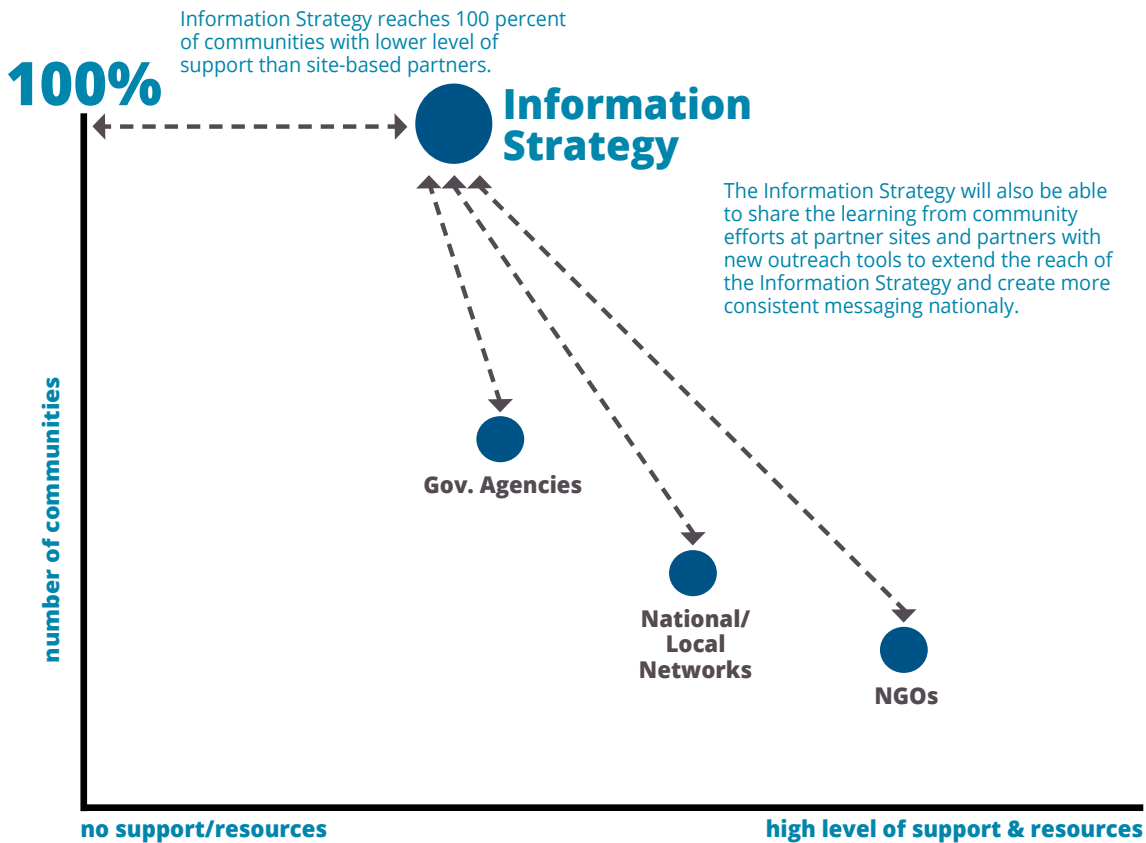


Image 2: Range of CBRM support to communities. Note: this graphic is for discussion purposes only and is not based on formal research.



Goal & Objectives

Given the challenges of limited resources and capacity in most Pacific Island nations and the need to engage with diverse and hard to reach communities, the overarching goal of upscaling CBRM strategies is to find cost-effective information pathways to empower all communities to better manage their marine resources across the region.

Indeed, this National Information Strategy is intended to address gaps and needs by developing cost-effective strategies to reach all coastal communities with a basic level of accurate and actionable information.

This overarching goal is supported by five objectives, which should be viewed holistically, where each objective creates enabling conditions to reach 100 percent of Solomon Island coastal communities.



OBJECTIVE 1: To provide essential information to all coastal communities and stakeholders regarding fisheries, resource management, ecosystems and adaptation to climate change and other threats.



OBJECTIVE 2: Support communities and stakeholders to become organised and committed to make better resource management decisions that address livelihoods, food security and coastal environment concerns/issues.



OBJECTIVE 3: Build and sustain lines of communications between communities and stakeholders, as well as between communities and provincial and national governments.



OBJECTIVE 4: To build institutional capacity, particularly in the host-government, to implement an information strategy beyond the life of this project.



OBJECTIVE 5: To elevate the value of investing in CBRM and provide recommendations to the government and other key partners to direct investment towards the most effective communications and outreach activities to maximise sector capacity and resources.

These objectives inform a roadmap to reach all communities through direct and indirect activities.

Activities include a mix of broadcast/media strategies, extensive dissemination of context-appropriate materials, targeted dissemination for key audiences, such as fishers, and finally, as possible, and appropriate, direct engagement for communities, through partners, community networks/groups and champions.

As part of the National Information Strategy, cChange, which manages the development and implementation, will work in partnership with MFMR and MECDM and partners to inform and adapt the most successful and cost-effective activities beyond the life of the project. This output will include identifying approximate budgets and resourcing needs for information tools and activities beyond the



Photo: Pulling in a fishing net, Fumato'o, Malaita Province by Filip Milovac.



Target Audiences & Barriers to Action

This National Information Strategy is intended to empower coastal communities to diagnose problems and identify appropriate local management solutions. Through the Zoom workshop and partner interviews, five key target audiences were identified as critical to reach for successful CBRM. Key target audiences include:

1. Fishers (men, women, and youth)
2. Traditional Chiefs and Community Leaders
3. Traditional Resource Owners (of fishing grounds)
4. Village/Community Development Groups
5. Fish Buyers and Sellers (Individuals and Businesses)

In practice, this includes large segments of coastal communities, but the categories identify clear entry points, such as women's groups, and potential engagement gaps.

To help guide decision making around messaging and outreach, several high-level barriers to implement CBRM for key target audiences were also identified:

- Meeting Daily Needs
- Lack of Alternatives and Access to Alternatives
- Resistance to "Outside Ideas"
- Conservation is About Taking Away Fishing Access Not Creating More Fish
- Weak or Unclear Governance Structures for Marine Management at the Community Level
- Lack of Knowledge of the Issues/Solutions
- Lack of Acknowledgement of The Problem
- Lack of Ownership/Lack of Leadership
- Risk of Losing Benefits to Bad Actors
- Internal Community-Conflicts
- Lack of Proof that CBRM Works

In addition, given the challenges in fostering behavioural change in resource use/management, key influencers, also referred to as champions, who will ideally facilitate local discussions on CBRM

were identified. The behaviours/practices around resource use are deeply ingrained and will require considerable shifts in social norms. For this to occur, dialogues must be sustained, for months, and more likely years, which CBRM partners are currently challenged to do in 5 percent of communities, let alone the other 95 percent.

Dialogues must ultimately engage people who are respected in the community and/or among their peer groups, who can sustain interest and participation in CBRM discussions.

To that end, Zoom workshop participants identified the champions listed below, as messengers to disseminate key messages and foster discussions about CBRM in communities.

Please note the following list of potential champions are not in priority order, and include influential institutions, such as faith-based organisations, community groups, and government extension officers.

- Faith-based organisations
- Women's Groups: Provincial Women's Councils, Mother's Union (Anglican), other community level groups
- Youth Groups: Youth Of Solomon Islands, Dreamcast Theatre, other Creative Youth Networks
- Other Local/Community Networks
- Provincial Fisheries
- Ward Members/Ward Development Committee
- Respected Community Practitioners/ Respected Fishers
- NGO-Supported Community Facilitators
- Nationally Known, Respected Solomon Islands "Celebrities," such as Sport Stars
- Members of Parliament
- Tourism Sector
- Media Sector

Messaging & Branding

A key component of this National Information Strategy involves addressing a long-standing challenge for CBRM: inconsistent and overwhelming messaging. This challenge was shared among participants who participated in the Zoom workshop and partner interviews.

In practice, this has resulted in multiple mixed messages, and sometimes conflicting messages, which reduce community awareness and engagement effectiveness. For instance, CBRM means many things in the Solomon Islands, including but not exclusively, biodiversity conservation, climate change adaptation, ecosystem-based/nature-based adaptation, fisheries management, and aquaculture, and more recently, gender inclusivity, poverty alleviation, alternative livelihoods, loss of livelihoods, food security, and health promotion.

It has been identified that one reason for messaging conflicts is that the delivery of CBRM is mostly grant-centred, and messaging is focused narrowly on each initiative's objective, and not focused on people and community perspectives and priorities. This approach translates to new messages being developed for each initiative that is funded, which over time reduces awareness and engagement effectiveness as target audiences are either

overwhelmed or fail to see relevancy of each new message. To address this issue there was consensus to develop an 'umbrella campaign brand' that can reflect many CBRM messages.

A campaign brand will be discussed and approved through the Working Group and TAC (see page 17). It is anticipated that key messages will promote why community-driven marine resource management actions are necessary to support food security, livelihoods and cultural practices.

The objective of an 'umbrella campaign brand' is to ensure that messaging/engagement is framed through local priorities and values. During the Zoom workshop, it was noted that communities have been practicing CBRM for generations, and the brand and messaging should reinforce this concept, especially as communities will need to identify and drive local actions. In addition, a consistent campaign brand will help audiences connect the multiple touch points for CBRM outreach and by extension, promote sustained messaging.

The campaign brand should be owned by the Solomons Islands, appropriately representing cultures and traditions in the Solomons Islands, and become a legacy of this project.



Photo: Community meeting to discuss marine resource management, Santupaele village, Western Province, by Filip Milovac.



Activities & Tools

The central goal of the National Information Strategy is to find cost-effective information pathways to empower all communities to better manage their marine resources in the Solomon Islands.

To identify and evaluate these pathways, there are four broad categories that will guide activity selection and tool development, which include:

1. Broadcast through media and social media
2. Extensive dissemination through both product development and distribution
3. Targeted dissemination to key target audiences
4. Direct engagement by supporting site-based patterns

BROADCAST

Broadcast media, and increasingly social media, provide the most cost-effective platforms for reaching the largest number of people. Therefore, broadcast media and social media are a key component of the National Information Strategy, with a focus on promoting community stories on CBRM efforts and associated CBRM activities of key partners.

This work will be managed by a cChange National Information Strategy coordinator, funded through PEUMP, and hosted by MFMR in Honiara. It is recommended that the coordinator supports advancing radio talk back programming and featuring community stories of CBRM efforts will be a key part of this outreach category.

The radio program will also provide content for news/issue stories for local media outlets, and content for social media posts. In addition, each radio show can be recorded and uploaded to social media for urban audiences and repackaged into MP3s as podcasts to maximise reach coverage in rural areas. These media outputs, including key topic briefs, with key messaging, and guides on giving radio interviews, will become a valuable resource for the Information, Communication and Education (ICE Hub), which is part of the CBRM Section, supported by the Pathways Project, to sustain media engagement beyond the life of the project.

See Appendix 2 for broadcast media and social media coverage in the Solomon Islands.

EXTENSIVE & TARGETED DISSEMINATION

It is also recommended that to scale-down to scale-up, the National Information Strategy creates and distributes a lite-touch information toolkit that includes a suite of tools to empower communities and enable key stakeholders to understand the drivers of overfishing and identify practical solutions and promote community-led actions. In an effort to reach all coastal communities, the toolkit, will need to be flexible to reflect the diversity of the Solomon Islands, including its communities, cultures, and ecosystems and distributed both in extensive and targeted dissemination activities.

Beyond providing access to critical information to support CBRM, the toolkit will also be designed to support self-facilitation guidance for communities interested in taking local management actions. This approach will look to overcome a key assumption that communities need a formalised community fisheries management plan to manage their marine resources, and that they need external support to develop such a plan.

DIRECT ENGAGEMENT

Finally, the National Information Strategy operates under the assumption that national and provincial partners cannot reach all communities. As noted in the section on champions, another cost-effective pathway for supporting CBRM will be providing partners and their extension staff the toolkit, and also engaging faith-based organisations, community networks and groups, and champions, who are passionate advocates of sustainable resource management. This falls under direct engagement and follows a train the trainer model.

Table 1 summarises recommended activities and tools.

	Community Reach*	Tools	Cost
BROADCAST	Community stories regularly in news media with focus on champions, issue stories, opinion pieces, letters to editors, etc. 	NEWS MEDIA & SOCIAL MEDIA: Access to good stories/source, photos, consistent key messages/photos, consistent key messages/framing, plus media list, camera, dedicated writer.	Low cost, staff time, with opportunity to boost posts for fee.
	Social Media Pages & Facebook Group 		
	Talkback Radio Show 		
EXTENSIVE DISSEMINATION	National and Provincial government offices 	RADIO: Show topics, program key message documents, radio interview guide/tips for guests, message box tool to prepare guests/experts, reliable guests/experts.	Medium cost, broadcasting fees and staff time: i.e., coordination time, topic development
	NGO offices 		
	CBRM IEC Hub, develop a contact database 		
	High Volume Events, e.g., World Environment Day, World Ocean Day, Provincial Celebration Days 		
	Transport hubs (e.g., Ghizo, Hiro, Sanga) 		
	Engage community markets and fish markets (e.g., have announcements at markets) 		
	Mobile phones/Flash drives/SD cards 		
	Police, health clinics, community centres 		
	Fish markets 		
	Letters to Chiefs 		
TARGETED DISSEMINATION	Letters to Church leaders events (e.g., engage in national gatherings/jubilees) 	CORE TOOLKIT PRODUCTS: Example tools illustrated booklets, Posters, power-point presentations, flip charts, scripts, booklets, picture focuses/illustrations, illustrations of management processes, exercise notebooks, with content/messages, billboards/banners, factsheets, life size posters, pledge products, videos, animations and MP3s.	Development cost varies. Project will create core materials to lower costs later. Print costs medium. Distribution primarily travel costs, can be supported by partnerships.
	Community Development Committees 		
	Fish markets 		
	Letters to Chiefs 		
DIRECT DISSEMINATION	Champions, including community groups, churches, etc 	TOOLKIT PACKAGES FOR TARGET AUDIENCES	Medium costs, if targeting billboards. Tools and letters fairly inexpensive, but print costs could be a challenge. Also staff time developing partnerships.
	MFMR, MECDM & Provincial offices 		
	NGO partners, community facilitators 		
		TOOLKIT PACKAGES FOR TARGET AUDIENCES	High cost to partners, but cost covered through existing activities.
		Information Flow One-way Two-way	

*An approximate estimation of reach. Dependent on ICT infrastructure.

Table 1: Recommended National Information Strategy activities and tools**

** It is recommended that a kick-start toolkit is developed while a full lite-touch toolkit is developed and distributed.

Feedback loops

To implement an effective National Information Strategy, it will be critical to monitor the suite of activities and tools employed over the life of the project and build lines of communications for coastal communities to provide feedback and insights to improve marine resource management in the Solomon Islands. This objective is often referred to as creating two-way communications, which can provide immediate feedback for a monitoring, evaluation and learning framework. It is critical to understand what the uptake of messages are and provide further information as key audiences move through the many stages of change.

For the Solomon Islands Government and coastal communities, it is also critical to provide input and receive feedback to improve provincial and national decision-making on resource management, to ensure decision-making is responsive to challenges and needs on the ground and ensure equitable benefits sharing.

These two objectives have considerable overlap and are presented here as one core activity to streamline implementation, integrate iterative learning and increase effective use of limited resources.

Please note as part of this approach, each activity under the broader strategy will present individual measurement/feedback opportunities. For example, each contact point for the distribution of a tool represents an opportunity to solicit feedback. The following table (Table 2) presents a high-level summary of key touchpoints and opportunities.

A key output will include a 'central communications platform', which part of this would involve identifying and building social networks (e.g., identifying all possible information touchpoints within rural and urban settings) for strategic information distribution with the end goal of enabling self-organisation and community-organisation, thus reducing resource needs for government and NGO intervention.

Additionally, a full monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) framework will be developed as part of the implementation. The MEL framework will focus on monitoring and evaluating key impacts areas. For example:

1. Behaviour change: the adoption of the call to actions (e.g., coastal communities establish and respect fishing rules).
2. Institutional capacity: the effectiveness of the National Information Strategy (e.g., cost-effective pathways to empower coastal communities and build institutional capacity to implement the strategy long-term are known).

The MEL framework, and ultimately the impact of the National Information Strategy, will be informed by three key actions, including:

1. Periodic national surveys to assess understanding of inshore fishery issues, awareness on national/community rules and regulations, support for CBRM and other national actions and challenges/priorities (i.e., leverage other surveying programs, e.g., Pathways).
2. Monitor effectiveness of tools and activities (e.g., message monitoring, audience awareness, follow up engagement trends, effectiveness to stimulate discussions).
3. Annual information strategy assessment to monitor the number of communities receiving information and the impact of this information and modify strategy and activities as needed.

Throughout the implementation, this National Information Strategy will be modified and improved as feedback informs the effectiveness of campaign messaging, tools, and activities, and their reach. Implementing an adaptive framework will be critical to evaluate the impact information pathways, including return on investment. It is envisioned, after this project is completed, within the final report there will be return on investment summary for activities, which can guide future information strategy budgets.



Activity Category	Touchpoint Opportunities and Process
BROADCAST	<p>Radio show reporting: Record community feedback on radio shows (questions, gender, locations, follow up engagement), assess show quality and accuracy, and create additional feedback entry points, such as Facebook comments/messenger or use a campaign toll-free number for coastal communities to call and text to share questions/issues for discussion on radio, pre, during and after shows.</p> <p>Social media monitoring, e.g., analytics and engagement insights in Facebook group discussions.</p> <p>Media analysis that tracks coverage, quality of coverage, and representation, and follow-up participant trends.</p> <p>Editorial meetings with publications.</p> <p>Intercept public surveys (short surveys at markets, public transport locations, high-volume events for the public to provide feedback and insights into awareness trends).</p> <p>Engagement monitoring, e.g., activity and tool tracking database.</p>
WIDESPREAD DISSEMINATION	<p>Activity and tool tracking database to monitor who and what communities receive information, including contact information for follow-up engagement to evaluate engagement avenues and uptake/impact and gaps.</p> <p>Create campaign toll-free number for people to call and text to ask questions, seek support, provide feedback, and record engagement.</p> <p>Intercept public surveys (short surveys at markets, public transport locations, high-volume events for the public to provide feedback and insights into awareness trends).</p> <p>Engagement monitoring, e.g., activity and tool tracking database.</p>
TARGETED DISSEMINATION	<p>Key stakeholder engagement surveys and focus groups, e.g., fishers, fish buyers & sellers.</p> <p>Intercept public surveys, short surveys at markets, public transport locations.</p> <p>Event records and monitoring, e.g., activity and tool tracking database.</p> <p>Stakeholder database: build a contact database for targeted engagement.</p>
DIRECT ENGAGEMENT	<p>Engagement monitoring, e.g., activity and tool tracking database.</p> <p>Targeted feedback that captures insights about information and awareness effectiveness and needs</p> <p>Build on existing surveys and outreach, e.g., Pathways Project, Provincial Network Meetings).</p> <p>Quarterly partner check-ins to capture direct feedback from the field.</p> <p>Periodic community rapid surveys to capture concerns/needs and priorities to publicise and track community views over time.</p>

Table 2: Possible touch-points to build lines of communication and capture feedback and effectiveness.



Committees

The National Information Strategy will be ongoingly informed by a Working Group, which is supported by a Technical Advisory Committee.

The Working Group will guide/support subsequent processes to develop messaging, activities and outreach tools and supporting monitoring and evaluation plans, as possible and where

appropriate. At the minimum, this Working Group will meet quarterly. However, it is expected that more frequent engagement will be needed in the lead up to the launch and implementation of the National Information Strategy.

Potential Working Group members are as follows:

Partner organisation	Representatives
Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) (A representative of MFMR will be Chair of the Working Group with support from cChange)	Peter Kenilorea, Assaneth Buarafi, Priscilla Pitakaka
Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM)	Agnetha Vave-Karamui, Trevor Maeda
WorldFish	Delvene Boso
World Wild Fund (WWF)	Shannon Seeto, Dafisha Aleziru, Minnie Rafe
The Nature Conservancy (TNC)	Willie Atu
The LMMA Network International (LMMA)	Caroline Vieux
The Pacific Community (SPC)	Céline Muron
cChange	Naomi Edwards, Scott Radway, Dorothy Wickham

In addition, it is recommended that this Working Group is supported by a Technical Advisory Committee, which comprises of subject-matter experts to ensure accuracy and appropriateness of content. This committee is referred to here as the Technical Advisory Committee, or TAC, for clarity.

The TAC will be periodically engaged, mostly via email, to review information and will be asked to apply best available science/knowledge to ensure the sound and balanced advice reaches communities.

See Appendix 3 for the Terms of Reference for the Technical Advisory Committee.

References

¹ *Pacific Framework for Action on Scaling-up Community-based Fisheries Management, The Pacific Community (SPC) (2021 – 2025).*

² *Solomon Islands National Strategy to Scale Up and Improve Summary for Community-based Coastal and Marine Resource Management” (2020-2025).*



Photo: Fishers in Santupaele village, Western Province, by Filip Milovac.



Appendices

Appendix 1: Background research

Partner Interview Summary

This summary document presents key themes identified in partner interviews hosted by cChange. A total of two partner interviews were hosted, including (1) the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources, and (2) Worldfish; with a total of six participants. WWF, The Nature Conservancy and Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Disaster Management and Meteorology were contacted to participate.

The purpose of the partner interviews is to understand any nuances which could compromise or help improve the National Information Strategy.

THEME ONE: STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

There are multiple organisations delivering various initiatives within communities (not just CBRM/ environmental/conservation/climate change initiatives) and this can create multiple mixed messages, and sometimes conflicting messages, which reduce awareness and engagement effectiveness. Coordination at the provincial level will be critical. It was suggested that networking with community development groups and agencies to inform them about the campaign could open opportunities to leverage reach (e.g., open information distribution avenues) and align messages.

THEME TWO: BUILD INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

Direct engagement through community facilitators to facilitate the development of community fisheries management plans has proven success. To improve the effectiveness of this model, it was suggested that there is always a need to increase capacity among the community facilitator network, particularly to improve the conversion of communities that follow through and sustain community management. For instance, 'capacity takes time to build' and the new provincial fisheries networks (e.g., Malaita and Western Province) is evidence on the benefit to build individual and institutional capacity ongoingly.

THEME THREE: BUILD COMMUNITY CONFIDENCE TO DO IT 'ALONE'

Messaging and tool development will need to be designed to overcome assumptions held by communities that they need government or NGO support to do CBRM. Communities need to build confidence and understand that they can do management (e.g., implement local management, rules, and regulations) without centralised support or having a gazetted plan. As expressed by one partner, "Communities have been doing CBRM for thousands of years, they just need encouragement and to know this is not anything new".

THEME FOUR: OPEN ACCESS FOR COMMUNITIES TO ACCESS CONTEXT-APPROPRIATE INFORMATION

Currently, communities cannot access information on CBRM unless they have a direct engagement with MFMR and NGO partners (e.g., via MFMR CBRM Standard Operation Procedures or attend a special awareness day event or follow social media and national broadcasting). When communities access information, the effectiveness of such information is unknown given there is a lacking feedback mechanism to measure impact. Information can also be conflicting and confusing as there are many messages for CBRM in the Solomons (see partner workshop summary). To open access to context-appropriate information, it was suggested that a 'central communications platform' could provide a mechanism to share learnings, develop structured or semi-structured mentoring and crowd-source support among social networks for technical, expert, and legal advice. Part of this would involve identifying and building social networks (e.g., identifying all possible information touchpoints within rural and urban settings) for strategic information distribution with the end goal of enabling self-organisation and community-organisation, thus reducing the need for government and NGO intervention.

Partner Workshop Report

This report presents a summary of the partner workshop facilitated by cChange via Zoom on Wednesday 5th May to Friday 7th May 2021.

The purpose of the workshop was two-fold: (1) to develop partnerships with core partners, and (2) confirm key conditions to localise this National Information Strategy.

The workshop was attended by four partner organisations from the Solomon Islands as suggested by the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR), as well as the LMMA International Network and an observer from SPC. Participants who represented their respective organisations are listed in the following table. Please note that Willie Atu, Country Director of The Nature Conservancy was an apology.

Role	Partner organisation	Participants
Partner	Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR)	Peter Kenilorea, Priscilla Pitakaka, Assaneth Buarafi
Partner	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM)	Agnetha Vave-Karamui, Trevor Maeda
Partner	Worldfish	Delvene Boso
Partner	World Wild Fund for Nature (WWF)	Shannon Seeto, Dafisha Aleziru, Minnie Rafe,
Partner	The LMMA International Network	Caroline Vieux
Observer	The Pacific Community (SPC)	Céline Muron
Facilitator	cChange	Naomi Edwards, Scott Radway

THE WORKSHOP INVOLVED A MIX OF PRESENTATIONS AND WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES.

Day 1: The LMMA International Network provided a brief presentation on upscaling CBRM. This presentation provided context for the purpose of the National Information Strategy, recognising the need to directly and indirectly support communities to manage their marine resources. cChange provided a background presentation on what is a National Information Strategy. The intention of these presentations was to outline the process to develop a National Information Strategy, potential tools and activities and conditions to change mindsets to empower communities to manage their marine resources.

A follow up discussion was hosted to review suggested objectives for the National Information Strategy.

A key takeaway from day one confirmed that this National Information Strategy must be context-appropriate to overcome the challenges of reaching all communities and stakeholders, a key indicator to measure if the strategy is successful.

Day 2: Building on the discussions hosted on day one, the second day involved understanding key elements of strategic communications to build a customise/contextualise strategy. Decision-makers and target audiences were identified, along with key influencers (e.g., potential messengers). Barriers to action was also discussed. These discussions informed a lengthy, and meaningful discussion about messaging and the potential activities and tools to implement.

A key takeaway from day two, as confirmed in background research and partner interviews, CBRM means many things to many people and holds many assumptions, which present barriers when engaging communities. There is not one-consistent message on what CBRM is and can be for coastal communities in the Solomon Islands. Having multiple mixed messages, and sometimes conflicting messages, reduces awareness and engagement effectiveness. To address this issue there was consensus, and much excitement, to develop an 'umbrella campaign brand' that can reflect many CBRM messages.

Day 3: The last day of the partner workshop involved a presentation on how to harvest community insights as a process to build and sustain lines of communications, also referred to as two-way communications. This presentation also included potential approaches to monitoring, evaluation and learning framework. The last session explored the technical aspects to implement the National Information Strategy.

A key takeaway from day three was an agreement to that hosting a campaign coordinator in Honiara will be more efficient for easy access to national media and being the headquarters for MFMR and other key partner organisations. It was also revealed that recruiting a coordinator with good writing and photography skills will be easier in Honiara as there is a developed creative network and access to in-country professional development.

Although most of all, there was much excitement to work as a collaborative coalition to upscale CBRM in the Solomon Islands. Partners who were present in the workshop agreed on forming and supporting a Campaign Team, who will inform the implementation of the National Information Strategy.

LOCALISING OBJECTIVES

During the workshop, there was an agreement that the following objectives are appropriate and realistic and respond to the draft MFRM CBRM upscale strategy. This section provides a summary of participant's reflections as we walked through each objective on day one.

CREATING CHANGE NOW (Short term objectives)

1. To provide essential information to all communities and stakeholders regarding fisheries, resource management, ecosystems and adaptation to climate and other threats.
2. Support organised and committed communities and stakeholders to make better resource management decisions that address livelihoods, food security and coastal environment concerns/ issues.
3. Build and sustain lines of communications between communities and stakeholders, as well as between communities and provincial and national governments.

SUSTAINING CHANGE (Long term objectives)

4. To build institutional capacity, particularly in the host-government, to implement an Information Strategy beyond the life of the project.
5. To elevate value of investing in CBRM and provide recommendations to the government and other key partners to best invest in the most effective communications and outreach activities long-term to maximise sector capacity and resources.

These objectives are not without challenges given the context on the Solomon Islands, but they do open opportunities to explore alternative models to upscale CBRM.

The first objective of reaching all communities and stakeholders revealed traditional and non-traditional target audiences and partners, and opportunities to build capacity to deliver CBRM at scale. A broadened partnership approach, including existing partners and new partners is critical as a key barrier is the capacity of the sector itself to respond to requests and engage at scale.

- Engaging chiefs and church leaders, being key influencers within communities, to share announcements and information was identified as an important tactic for this objective.
- In the Solomon Islands, alike other Pacific island nations, there are various CBRM initiatives and projects, funded by different agencies and philanthropists. On the ground, CBRM means many things to many different stakeholders – including but not exclusively, biodiversity conservation, climate change adaptation, ecosystem-based/nature-based adaptation, fisheries management, and aquaculture, and more recently, gender inclusivity, poverty alleviation, alternative livelihoods, loss of livelihoods, food security, and health promotion. Having too many messages for CBRM in the Solomon Islands reduced effectiveness as it can confused communities on what CBRM is and can be for their community.

- Participants agreed on the need to develop a simple and consistent message that can bring many initiatives together under an 'umbrella', one message approach. A campaign brand was also identified as a strategic leverage point to enable broad collaboration (e.g., beyond core partners).

However, the optimism that upscaling presents is not without challenges. Therefore, the objective of reaching all communities and stakeholders must be context-appropriate for it to be achievable.

To ensure all objectives are context-appropriate, it was confirmed in the workshop that the National Information Strategy must build on the decades of experience and rich learning among the CBRM network in the Solomon Islands. This is critical for the second objective: to support organised and committed communities and stakeholders to make better resource management decisions that address livelihoods, food security and coastal environment concerns/issues.

Part of the second objective is to scale-down to scale-up, meaning current efforts that focus on direct engagement and management plans should form part of a broader model that seeks to engage at scale, rather than be the dominant engagement model to deliver CBRM.

To scale-down to scale-up, the National Information must incorporate direct and indirect means to reach communities and stakeholders. This includes national media and social media, an extensive distribution plan for tools, targeted engagement, and direct engagement.

Activities and tools also need to overcome an assumption that communities need external support to develop a community fisheries management plan to manage their marine resources. Support is needed to formalise community fisheries management plans, though communities can and should manage their marine resources without formalised plans. In fact, the CBRM network in the Solomon Islands would not be able to respond to all communities should they request support to develop and formalise a community fisheries management plan.

As identified during the workshop, the expansion of CBRM community facilitator programs and provincial fisheries officers would benefit from simple self-facilitation information guides, booklets, and other information materials to increase their effectiveness in delivering awareness and engagement activities. This action responds to objective 4.

Another condition to scale-down to scale-up involves the third objective: build and sustain lines of communications between communities and stakeholders, as well as between communities and provincial and national governments. This objective requires identifying efficient avenues (i.e., information touchpoints and opportunities) for sustained engagement, and integrating feedback loops to capture insights and consider repurposing databases to enable two-way communications. Part of the aspiration to build and sustain lines of communication is to make information more accessible for communities to access information about CBRM and participate in provisional and national decision-making, and in turn, elevate the value of CBRM in the Solomons (objective 5).

Currently, there is no 'central communications platform' to share learnings, develop structured or semi-structured mentoring and provide access to technical, expert, and legal advice for communities. Therefore, communities cannot access information on CBRM unless they have a direct engagement with MFMR and NGO partners. This needs to be considered when designing an information distribution plan for information to reach all communities and stakeholders.

In summary, these objectives should be viewed as a holistic approach. One objective supports another to work towards the overall goal to find cost-effective information pathways to empower all communities to better manage their marine/fisheries resources.

Appendix 2: Solomon Islands audience measurements

Broadcast method	Reach /population penetration	Comment
Radio	90%-95%	SIBC has the greatest reach
Television	Low reach, ~20-30%	Limited national and provincial content
Newspapers	Unknown	Solomon Star, Island Sun, Sunday Isles, Solomon Times Online, Solomon Islands Herald. Reach to all Provincial Centers, transport hubs, Government Service Centers Can be low due to paid subscriptions
Internet / Websites	30%	Increasing 34% per annum, 96% of web traffic via mobile phone. Top searches: Solomon Island, Facebook. MP3, News, YouTube, MP3Juice, Gmail, Google, USP, Solomon Star
Phone	72%	Increasing 3.7% per annum, 61% of phone subscriptions have at least 3G connection.
Social media	19% total Facebook 17% Messenger 5% Instagram <1% Twitter <1% TikTok (unknown)	Increasing 34% per annum, 96% of social media traffic via mobile phone.

Appendix 3: The Solomon Islands National Information Strategy Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Terms of Reference

TITLE:

The name of the Committee shall be the Solomon Islands PEUMP-LMMA Technical Advisory Committee (SI-TAC).

PURPOSE:

The SI-TAC will be tasked with ensuring all information provided to communities is factual and technically accurate and can support practical local actions that can reasonably provide tangible benefits to communities. The SI-TAC will also ensure materials are socially inclusive. The SI-TAC will be exclusively focused on these technical areas.

The National Information Strategy will be implemented in partnership with the Solomon Islands Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) and Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM) and its partners and civil society, and coordinated through a Working Group of partners (see page 17 of the National Information Strategy).



MEMBERSHIP OF THE SI-TAC SHALL BE OPEN TO THE FOLLOWING:

1. Solomon Islands MFMR technical expert
2. Solomon Islands MFMR Legal Officer (as required)
3. An MECDM coastal resource management officer
4. LMMA International Network representative
5. SPC community-based management expert
6. Two to three NGOs partners from Solomon Islands
7. A gender inclusivity expert, if not included in the above expertise
8. cChange representative

TAC Process:

The advisory committee will be asked to apply strict criteria to ensure best advice goes to communities, i.e., based on best available science/knowledge and demonstrated to be effective for communities in achieving livelihood and natural resource management aims, including the equitable sharing of benefits.

As part of the review, information must also be vetted to ensure it is practical and appropriate for communities.

The committee will be mindful of the various gender and human rights elements that the project must respect, also including relevant policies and strategies of the Solomon Islands Government.

FUNDING:

The SI-TAC is unfunded. The costs of any member participating in Committee activities shall be borne by the member or their employer. However, meetings will be on an as needs basis, and conducted virtually. Ideally most reviews can be conducted via group emails and shared documents. Any SI-TAC member must be able to operate well through email communications and meet reasonable turnaround times for content/key messages.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE:

The Committee Chair shall be a Solomons Islands Government representative.

All advisory committee members will be given the opportunity to provide feedback on the content/tools developed for the National Information Strategy, including radio program content, video content, animation content and products as it relates to the practical actions/processes communities can take to improve the health of their marine resources and improve food security and livelihoods.

Should a member be no longer able to serve on the committee, a replacement will be sought.

Should a member be unresponsive or not provide feedback in a timely and reasonable manner, a replacement may be sought.

The cChange representative will be the Secretary to guide the review process, including sharing all content concepts and related products with members and schedule meetings as necessary.

REVIEW PROCESS:

As information and content is developed, there will ideally be a series of emails and discussions to develop core messaging and materials over weeks. This period will allow for each member to provide thoughtful feedback. With each review step, a specific timeline will be provided. If no feedback is received in that period, the non-communication will be viewed as approval.

However, there will be issues that emerge and circumstances that will require immediate review. For emergencies and minor developments, each member will be given two days to provide feedback. If no feedback is received in that period, the non-communication will be viewed as approval. These expectations will be stated in these circumstances.

