



Deliverable 6.2

Dissemination and communication Plan

VALMEDALM: Valorization of Mediterranean Almond orchards through the use of intercropping integrated strategies



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Document information

Deliverable Number:	6.2
Deliverable name:	Dissemination and communication Plan
Contributing WP:	WP6: Dissemination, communication, and exploitation plan
Contractual delivery date:	M6, November 2022
Dissemination level	Public
Responsible partner:	MORE
Reviewers	All partners
Version:	1

Executive Summary

The Dissemination and Communication Plan is an internal document of the VALMEDALM project which contains planned dissemination activities and also the tools to carry them out. Furthermore, this plan contains the internal communication plan established to organize, present, and promote actions among the project partners. On other hand, it also contains an external communication plan, that involves and reports to local almond producers, agri-food SMEs, the scientific community, public bodies, European and African policy-makers, and also consumers, about the VALMEDALM project, its members, services and achievements.

For the execution of this Dissemination and Communication Plan, it is necessary to design an attractive and intuitive web page containing all the information on the partnership. The website has been created and made available in English, having a public component so that anyone outside of the project can be able to obtain information about project VALMEDALM, namely where all events, publications, participation in congresses, and other relevant milestones will be announced. Moreover, the project has social media accounts through a Facebook, Instagram and Twitter profiles to ensure dissemination and public engagement with a wider and less scientific audience. There will be a freely available e-newsletter to regularly disseminate the project's advances to subscribers through the VALMEDALM website.

Project results will be arranged into key areas to be published in peer-reviewed articles, book chapters and mini communications for scientific audiences. Moreover, VALMEDALM members will be participating in National and International congresses as well as other events to establish synergies with similar projects and initiatives, inform the business fabric about the project and encourage them to participate in further project activities.

Therefore, the Dissemination and Communication Plan is subjected to the relevant annual reviews, according to the needs of the predicted programming.

1. Introduction

This Dissemination and Communication Plan has been developed by the project leaders who belong to the MORE – Montanhas de Investigação – Associação (MORE), the institutional leaders of VALMEDALM. There will be a communication committee which will ensure the maximum dissemination of the project's results for both the scientific community and the different business sectors directly interested in the development of the VALMEDALM project and also the general public. For its creation, the following reference documents have been taken into consideration:

- Communication Strategy Document
- Approved report of the Application Form for the VALMEDALM project

1.1. Objectives

The overall objective of this Dissemination and Communication Plan is to develop an internal and external communication plan in order to identify the necessary dissemination activities within the VALMEDALM project, as well as the existing strategies and tools to carry them out. The following are the specific objectives of the communication strategy of the VALMEDALM project:

- To raise public awareness about the project, its results and progress within target groups using effective communication means and tools, such as online and offline dissemination, scientific publications, and networking events;
- To disseminate the fundamental knowledge, methodologies and products developed in the project;
- To engage key players in the Mediterranean nut and legume industries on the project activities;
- To announce and promote VALMEDALM events, contributing to increase its attendance and potential engagement;
- To establish links and synergies with potential local Mediterranean nut and legume industries, SMEs, start-ups, investors, public bodies, and policy-makers;
- To guarantee the maximum visibility of the project
- To develop dissemination materials and tools (e.g. leaflet, poster, video);
- To disseminate VALMEDALM outcomes in articles, interviews, press releases, conferences, etc
- Ensuring the achievement of impact after the end of the project.
- Define target groups for disseminating the progress and outputs of VALMEDALM to ensure the widest possible dissemination.
- Participation at local, national and international level events and conferences.
- Develop a varied set of innovative and high quality, online and printed communication tools;
- Ensure wide visibility of the project results through networking activities linked to both project specific and external events;
- Monitor the impact of the communication activities.

1.2 Communication strategy

The purpose of this deliverable is to define and establish an agreement on a common approach and roadmap to an effective communication and dissemination of the VALMEDALM project. Moreover, with this plan is intended to help consortium members, as well as to involve and inform other external actors.

Internal communication plan

- ❖ Develop physical project meetings, handouts, bulletins, mailing lists, help desks, and digital networking (internal social media) have been established at the kick-off meeting;
- ❖ Other consortium meetings will be scheduled every six months, covering a multi-topic agenda of progress updates (i.e., future workplans, setbacks, communication strategies and the project website).

External communication plan

- Participation in international events (conferences, symposia, trade-fairs) related to the field of agri-food, more specifically within the productive sector, where the research results obtained by the members of the network will be presented and visibility will be given to it;
- Scientific publications;
- Conference proceedings;
- Press releases;
- Newsletters;
- TV and radio communication;
- Creation of a website and social networks;
- Local workshops will be held in the different demo sites;
- Development of articles, book chapters, workshops, webinars and collaborative meetings;
- Patents related to the development of innovative intercropping practices impacting weed and pest's development on crops, novel sustainable agro-ecological practices, increased nutritional and bioactive compounds in almonds, innovative guide to support farmers production decisions.

2. Target groups

The internal and external communication that will be developed during VALMEDALM aims to reach interested groups through different channels.

Table 1. Targeted internal and external groups to which the communication plan will focus on and the adequate channels to address each purpose.

Target group	Profile	Objective	Channels
Internal			
Consortium	All VALMEDALM partners	Ensuring that the consortium is up to date on project progress and results	Website Contacts via e-mail and online meetings
External			
Scientific communities	Academia/universities Scientists R&D organizations Researchers Students Public and private research centers	Disseminate the results obtained during the project and the events, seminars, and workshops organized by the network	Website Social networks Scientific publications Reports Conferences and other events

	Technological institutes Scientific journals and other press		(participation and organization) Seminars
Agri-food industry/Agro business sector	Local almond producers Food producers Plant-based producers Agricultural associations Start-ups Investors Agri-food SMEs Food industry	Publicize the results and the newly developed products, as well as transfer the generated knowledge	Website Social networks Promotional materials Events organization Informative bulletins Scientific articles Reports Participation in fairs Product demonstration
General public	Almond consumers Plant-based consumers	Promote the products developed under intercropping practices, collect information regarding local farmers and producers	Website Social networks Local workshops Practices and product demonstration
Policy makers	Health councils Decision makers Regulators European and African policy makers	Inform on the project outcomes	Patents Social networks Local workshops

3. Strategy and activities

This section includes the communication activities that will be carried out during the execution of VALMEDALM.

3.1. Internal communication activities

A website has been developed as the main communication channel of the project, which has sections regarding each partner as well as a section for all the news, events and publications resulting from the activities conducted in the project. In addition, frequent and regular communication will be maintained between the consortium partners by e-mail and other means of contact to inform, exchange and gather information of all the results generated in order to develop the External Communication Plan. This route will also be used by the project coordinator (MORE) to solve doubts or problems and to inform partners about the characteristics, information and emblems to be included in the material produced as a result of communication activities.

Table 2. Internal communication matrix.

Who	To whom	What	How	When
Coordinator	Partners	Information exchanged with the Project Officer	E-mail	Whenever received
		Reports, working documents, relevant communications	Project website	Continuously
WP participant	WP leader	Information about results and progress of the tasks	E-mail, Videoconferences	When requested
WP leader	Steering committee	Detailed progress of the WP, successes, and shortcomings	Face-to-face, E-mail	Plenary meetings
Technical committee	Partners	Results obtained in the different WPs next steps, additional requests	Face-to-face, E-mail	Plenary meetings, When needed
Partners	Coordinator	Any concern or problem at both scientific or financial level	E-mail, Phone	When needed

Periodical reports

Every six months, partners will deliver periodical reports of their activities, using a report template made available by the coordinator. These reports will contain both scientific progress and resource allocation information and will be used by the coordinator to evaluate the progress of the activities and to detect any deviations.

3.2. External communication activities

Visual identity

The visual identity plays a fundamental role in the communication plan. The identity was designed and thought so that almonds and intercrops can be identified in the logo and so that its elements are graphically coherent. The flower is related to the almond tree flower and the colour used has been chosen to underline the natural colour of the almond trees flower, in order to relate strongly with almond orchards. The dots and connections relate to the different intercropping strategies and practices to be used and studied in the project. Moreover, the name of the project is included in the logo to make the target audience remember (visual memory) the name of the project, and so that then interested audiences be able to find information through the name.



Figure 1. VALMEDALM logo.

Along with the VALMEDALM logo, all dissemination material will showcase the PRIMA and EU symbols to display the project's funding entities.



Figure 2. Symbols of the financing entities.

Wherever logos are not able to be included, a short acknowledgement statement must be inserted as follows: "VALMEDALM project has financial support provided by PRIMA programme, Call 2021, Section 2 Multi-Topic. The PRIMA programme is supported by the European Union."

Different templates have been designed to establish a similar image in all documents used during the VALMEDALM project:

- Deliverable Report Template
- Power Point Presentation Template
- Word Template
- Excel Timesheet Template

Website

The website is the gateway to the VALMEDALM project, where the concept and existing results will be widely disseminated, and where all stakeholders, media and general public will have direct access to update information. The website will contain PDF links of promotional materials and articles produced by the consortium partners. On the other hand, web-based dissemination will be enhanced by actively exchanging internet links between the project website and relevant organizations, related projects, and other initiatives.

All the website sections are freely accessible and will allow a consultation of the project's objectives, work packages, the consortium, the capabilities of each member and the services that they can offer, the existing demo sites, training and research materials, as well as news and events that will take place within the project activities.

This form of external communication is already fully developed.

Newsletter

A periodic e-Newsletter will be produced with input and support from all VALMEDALM partners. e-newsletters will allow to provide information on the progress of the project and show results as well as links to public deliverables, articles, news and events. Newsletters will be made available freely on the project website, in order to improve visibility of the project via electronic means, and sent-out to consortium members and their networks, industry, policy makers at European, national, and regional level.

Social media

The presence of VALMEDALM in social networks aims to strengthen the project visibility, promote the website and to help increase the network of contacts. The project has a social media presence through Facebook, Instagram and Twitter pages to ensure dissemination and public engagement with a wider audience. In addition, all consortium members will have the possibility to share these publications with their own networks of contacts on each of the pages.



Figure 3. Screenshot of the VALMEDALM Facebook page.



Figure 4. Screenshot of the VALMEDALM Instagram page.



Figure 5. Screenshot of the VALMEDALM Twitter page.

The development of these profile in the different networks allows to disseminate the results and the main activities carried out in VALMEDALM, as well as to power up the communication with potential service claimants offered by the consortium or with people interested in the work carried out, whether researchers and citizens in general.

Events

The VALMEDALM project will be promoted in conferences, congresses, seminars, workshops and other activities, with the purpose of informing and disseminating to local farmers, farmers associations, researchers and other stakeholders, about theoretical knowledge, development of field methodologies, applications, results and other advances of the project.

The VALMEDALM consortium will also be participating in high profile academic conferences organized at national, European, African, and international organizations that will assemble researchers and scientists from different domains and areas (such as sustainability and crop production, agronomic practices, pest and weed management, innovative business practices) related to the field of agri-food, more specifically within the productive sector. Moreover, other activities like workshops, seminars, visits and field trips, will be made in the existing countries of the project consortium with the similar purpose, to promote the application of intercropping practices, to inform and promote knowledge transfer with local farmers and farmers associations, to involve researchers in the VALMEDALM initiatives to encourage all of them to participate in the project's events.

Scientific publications

VALMEDALM will be arranged into key areas to publish peer-reviewed articles, book chapters, and different types of communications for scientific audiences. Such scientific outputs will cover theoretical issues, concepts, methodologies, and key results, setting ground for further research collaborations. Gold open access to peer-reviewed publications will be assured, thus facilitating scientific exchange, while all scientific outputs will be made available through the project's website in a pre-publication format. Scientific articles will also be made available through the use of partners repositories, such as the Digital Library of IPB. The following is an example showing a list of science journals where project results can be presented, however being open to other science journals that reveals to be relevant for the purposes of the project.

Table 3. Targeted journals for submission of publication.

Journal	Area of interest	Coverage
Food Chemistry	Agricultural and biological sciences; Food Science; Chemistry, Analytical Chemistry	International
Foods	Agricultural and biological sciences; Food Science; Chemistry, Analytical Chemistry	International
Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry	Chemistry and biochemistry of agriculture and food, in combination with biological/sensory/nutritional/ toxicological evaluation related to agriculture and/or food.	International
Food & Nutrition Research	Food and Nutrition Science; Chemistry, Analytical Chemistry, Health claims on foods	International
Journal of the Science of Food and Agriculture	Food qualities; Food - Health and Nutrition; Food safety; Food Science and Technology, Sustainable Production	International
Journal of Applied Botany and Food Quality	Botany and plant food quality	International
Agronomy for Sustainable Development	Agronomy, Cropping and farming system researches with ecological, genetic, environmental, economic or social sciences.	International
Agronomy	Farming and cropping systems, Soil health and plant nutrition for sustainable agriculture, Sustainable development of agronomy, Agroecosystems and the environment, Weed science and weed management systems	International
Journal of Agriculture	Agronomy, plant breeding	International
European Journal of Agronomy	Farming and cropping systems, Agroecosystems and the environment, Crop-weed interactions and management, Plant-soil relationships	International
Pest Management Science	Resistance of pests to pest management products and strategies, Economic impact of pest management products and methods, Formulation and application methods for pest management products	International
International Journal of Pest Management	Population dynamics of pests in relation to management strategies, Pest management systems including decision support and risk analyses, Novel pest management approaches, technology, methods and techniques	International
Plants	Plant physiology and ecophysiology, Plant diversity and conservation biology	International
Journal of Economic Entomology	Biological & Microbial Control, Ecology & Behavior, Field & Forage Crops	International

Scientific publications

Press releases will be prepared in order to provide news related to the project to the media. These outputs are intended to increase the visibility of the project towards the society in general and will be sent to the local and regional general press so that companies and the society know the objectives and benefits that the project VALMEDALM can bring them.

Publicity material

The VALMEDALM main elements of the project will be communicated in the form of publicity materials prepared by each partner in a clear language. These materials will be distributed in various gatherings, conferences, workshops and other events.

This material includes:

- Project brochure – aside from the PDF version that will be continuously available in the VALMEDALM website, the project brochure will have a printable version to be disseminated in VALMEDALM related events;
- Posters;
- Roll-ups;
- Leaflets.

3.3. Key performance indicators

A series of key performance indicators (KPI) have been defined to measure the impact of the communication activities carried out by the project consortium from the project start, these can include the expected results shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Key Performance Indicators and expected results.

Tool	Key Performance Indicators (KPI)	Expected Results (M36)
Website	Number of visits	300
	Number of downloads	150
	Number of documents and news published on the page	30
Social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)	Number of followers	500
E-newsletter	Number of published newsletters	3
	Number of online readers	50
Press releases	Coverage	n.q.
Scientific and technical journals	Number of posts requested	n.q.
	Number of published publications	4
Scientific conferences	Number of presentations	4
Trade fairs	Number of participations	2

Workshop/seminars	Number of attended workshops	4
	Number of presentations	4
	Number of organized workshops	20
Promotional material	Number of printed brochures	50
	Number of delivered brochures	50
	Number of posters	2